

EMBODIED INTENSITIES: ARTIST-TEACHER RENEWAL IN THE  
SWELL AND AFTERGLOW OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENTIAL PLAY

by

BROOKE ANNE HOFSESS

(Under the Direction of Tracie Costantino)

ABSTRACT

Dear reader:

My dissertation explores the letter as an inquisitive and invitational form of writing that holds space, produces affect, and moves with intensities. The letters enclosed were exchanged between eight K-12 artist-teachers and myself over 16 months as we explored aesthetic experiential play in the context of a graduate program of art education and beyond.

In this process, it became visible that aesthetic experiential play—as it is lived, experienced, undergone—invites a swell and an afterglow. The swell is a movement that unmoors, and sets one adrift towards unanticipated, surprising possibilities. Afterglow is an illuminated space that unfolds with our commitment and openness to move in swell towards the ever expanding new. Through a post-intentional, arts based approach to phenomenological research, my students and I lived the question: *What is it to find oneself (or selves) in afterglow?* Offering creative lines of flight that escape descriptive and interpretative phenomenologies, post-intentional work endeavors to capture fleeting glimpses of the process of sensing and seeking understandings of phenomena which are always, already on the move. And so, drawing upon Deleuze's intensities and

Merleau-Ponty's embodiment, I theorized these movements and glimpses as the *embodied intensities* of afterglow.

In these embodied intensities, I began to conceptualize teacher renewal in professional development as the geographies of connectedness that artist-teachers live through in their multiplicity of practices. These geographies were mapped through four entangled threads: the course I designed and taught in an art education graduate program, the expansion of my art practice to include letterpress printing, the postcards and letters my students and I exchanged for one year after our course ended, and interviews at the close of the study. Crafting these threads as a text was my method of analysis; a method that invited three analytical articulations to body-forth: the postscript, the curatorial impulse, and the broadside. In the entanglement of these threads, my students and I co-constructed beautiful and complex maps of teacher renewal, generating a cartography that bears significance for attending to the process of professional development in art education.

Sincerely,

Brooke Hofsess  
*artist & researcher & teacher...*

INDEX WORDS: art education, artist-teacher renewal, professional development, post-intentional phenomenology, arts based educational research

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## Dedication

This work is an offering to my students, who have so beautifully swept me into the sweet speed of midst, where I continue to find more light.

## Acknowledgements

In attempting to bring my acknowledgments to bear on the page, I find myself woefully inept at expressing the vast community of support bestowed upon my doctoral experience.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my students, who have been my co-conspirators in aesthetic experiential play: Thank you for opening your lives to my philosophical wonderings and explorations. It has been a joy living in this inquiry because of my relationships with all of you. And, it is my deep hope that my joyfulness has been embodied in the crafting of this text, in honor of the wisdom, depth, and complexity you have so generously shared with me.

Words cannot express my gratitude for the enduring support of my committee members, who continuously embraced my desire for play and exploration within this dissertation process. Dr. Tracie Costantino: Thank you first for the patience, care, and support that you have so generously offered throughout my doctoral program. As my teacher, advisor, and mentor, you opened a generative space for me to wonder and flourish. Your careful readings and keen suggestions improved this work immeasurably. Thank you for supporting me in this journey at every stop, stall, and success. Dr. Carole Henry: Thank you for your thoughtful and encouraging marginalia. If not for your noticing *afterglow*, I might have missed its philosophical potential all together. Your enduring commitment to professional development and teacher renewal, and your active involvements and contributions to the field of art education are an inspiration.

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My interest in aesthetic experiential play in teachers' lives began many years ago, as a Masters student at Teachers College, Columbia University. And so, I would also like to extend my sincere respect and gratitude to my mentors, Dr. Judith Burton and Dr. John Baldacchino: Thank you for preparing me for this journey, and for your continued support and guidance.

Finally, I would like to extend my love, gratitude and appreciation to my friends and family. My parents, Alan and Barbara Hall, whom I so admire: Mom, thank you for encouraging my love of reading, learning, and wondering. You taught me how to teach with your way of being in the world. Dad, thank you for taking me with you as you captured the world with your camera, and then gifting it to me so I could catch my own. My siblings, Amber Owens, Jenna Hall, and Wes Sorensen, who are also my dearest companions: Together, we have played our way across the years: imagining, dreaming, envisioning possibilities. Thank you for the love you bring to my life. To

close, I would like to acknowledge my husband, Dustin Hofsess. Thank you for so openly and selflessly lending your life to my doctoral process. In every night you set exhaustion aside to read a draft of my work, in every nourishing meal you set before me, you manifested a desire that was never your own. You embody everything I strive in my becoming: kindness, love, forgiveness, patience, intellect, humility, creativity. You are my greatest teacher and my deepest source of light.

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I hope that this book is now a natural growth of mine – a rather disheveled rambling plant, running a yard of green stalk for every flower.<sup>1</sup>

Virginia Woolf

### Forward: Your Return

I have a letter left from you long unanswered, not that I had forgotten it—on the contrary: it was of the sort that one reads again, when one finds them among one's correspondence, and I recognized you in it as though you had been close at hand.<sup>2</sup>

Rainer Maria Rilke

*Hello Brooke-*

*It's so good to hear from you. I can't tell you how great it is to reconnect with you, and how timely your return is. 2010 was a difficult year- I'm at that age where I now care for elderly parents, and believe me I'm not complaining, but it extracts a toll. Mostly I think I'm tired, but sometimes it feels sad. You just changed that in an instant.*

*I've been able to keep a working friendship with several former students, and seen several go on to such exciting careers. Three, now four, university professors, a writer, a couple lawyers, even a photographer or two. As you are beginning to understand, that is the payoff in education. To plant the seed of a tree you may never live long enough to sit under. This might sound odd but god, I've missed you. I've never forgotten about you. How could I have?*

*I'm so gratified to see that you live the life of an artist. Over the years I've allowed that part of my life to slip away, not by intent but by circumstance, and let me tell you from experience, it's hard to reclaim. I'm so excited to see that books are still such a part of your life. I love books- all my students build artist's books. Books are god made solid. I've just begun making books again after a long hiatus, I love it so.*

*Look I don't want to go on too long or sound like I've completely lost my way here, but, wow... and hello...*

*Walker<sup>3</sup>*

Dear reader,

Playing around with a camera in the sun and in the low red glow of a high school darkroom at the age of 17 set me free. Free to imagine myself becoming so many things. For a long time now, I have wanted to bestow this gift upon others. And I have been a dutiful and inspired teacher. And I would be lying if I said that I didn't sometimes miss that awakened place of artmaking, especially when I am too exhausted from teaching to make any work of my own. This longing led me back once more to join a circle of learners- to ask new questions, to seek different answers, to understand more deeply the work of the artist-teacher. As one of my mentors wrote: "(t)he continuous work we do on ourselves is a gift to those we teach."<sup>4</sup>

For seven years, I worked as a K-12 art teacher before leaving to become a teacher educator. It was bittersweet to leave, for I had come to see the art classroom as a space where time can be lost and attention to the present can be found through play and exploration. Busy things could be slowed down: by the sweeping motion of a paintbrush where blue meets green and becomes ocean; where the fusion of two pieces of clay between fingertips becomes vessel.<sup>5</sup> As I began my dissertation research,<sup>5</sup> this intersection of play and aesthetic experience was the place where I began to wonder and write.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Dear reader,

One afternoon, as I worked to craft this text, my doorbell rang. When I pushed past the barking dogs, and opened the front door, there was a small Ilford photo paper box wrapped carefully in clear tape, waiting. In this and the shape of the handwriting, somehow I knew what was inside.

Unwrapping the delicate layers of tissue revealed something extraordinary; those thin papers protectively held the first artist's book I ever made. Its hard covers wrapped with the soft, gorgeous silk of an antique crazy quilt; its pages full of my adolescent poetry, photographs, and watercolor paintings. I barely recognized my then neat script, nor did I recall stitching the pages into book form. What I do remember is the way I learned to love coffee, classical music, and vintage Diana cameras because of those mornings spent in Photography I and II with Walker. I remember handing in the finished book; how he teared up and asked if he could keep it. I remember, in that moment, feeling seen; seen as a person with something to say.

He didn't criticize the way I had patched over a mistake in my writing with a tiny band-aid of paper, or the too low contrast of the photographs, or the self-indulgence of the poetry. I cringe to think how my life would be different had he handed me a rubric, a checklist, or any other form of assessment used to put pedagogical distance between ourselves and our students. He chose, instead, to see me as a young woman becoming; He chose to cry. And now, 16 years later, he chose to send me a gift; the gift of *finding myself in afterglow*.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S.

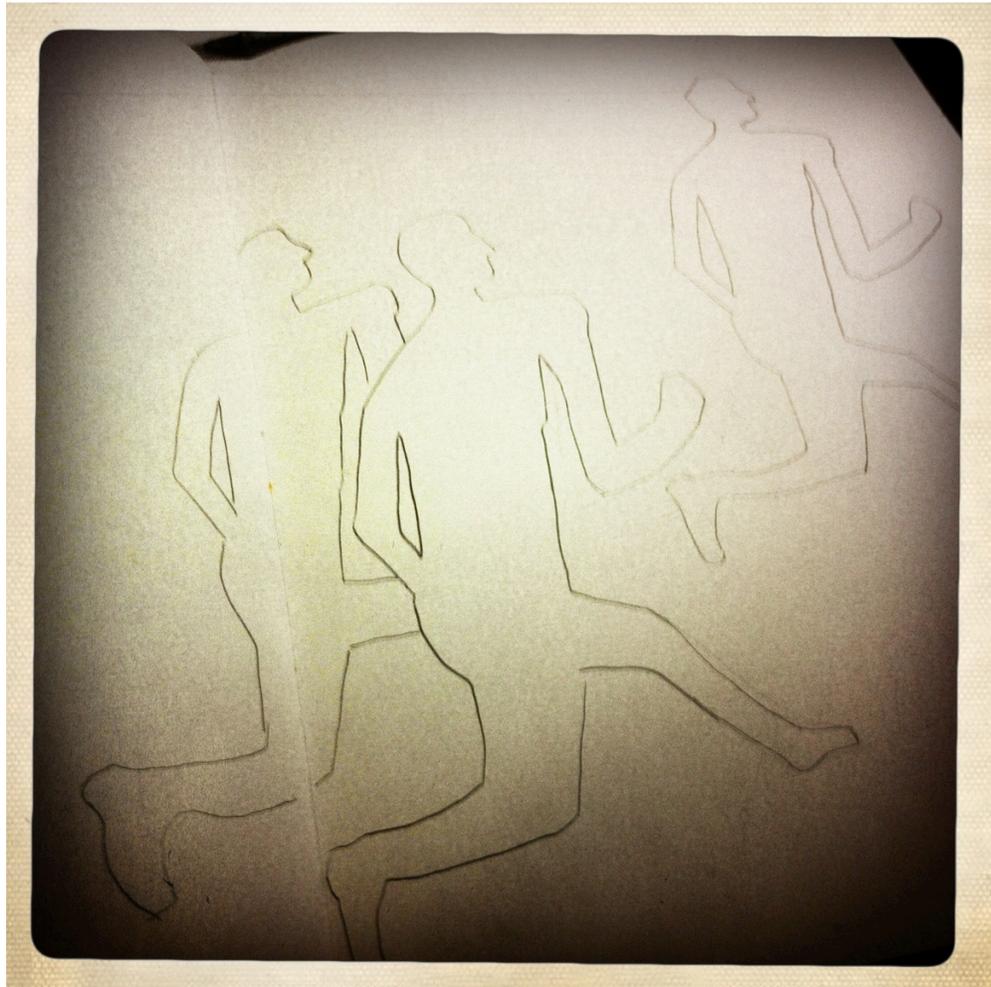


## Chapter 1

### A Body Rising Towards the World

The fact is that the beginning always begins in-between, intermezzo.<sup>7</sup>

Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari



*May 23, 2013*

Dear reader,

This opening chapter of my dissertation is composed of a bundle of letters. I invite you to imagine this bundle arriving at your door, enveloped in brown paper, wrapped with sturdy cotton twine. Imagine opening the package, and then, drawing each letter from its sleeve. Perhaps you notice the slightest trace of ink, or the earthiness of paper fiber. Perhaps you will slip into the cadence of my writing, hear me speaking to you. Perhaps you will read a letter or two, leave your chair for coffee, take a walk, mull in something, return on another day, circle a phrase, note a question in the margin, dwell in another concept...

At least, this is how I have imagined your encounter. For, I have come to see a myriad of ways that letters work on our lives—offering rich and generative spaces for dwelling with an Other, all the while inviting us to write different versions of ourselves as we map, render, and draft our worlds letter by letter by letter.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. These letters may challenge you to consider how both writing a letter *and* writing an academic dissertation *work*. The theories I invoked (and will soon write to you about) called me to explore the letter as an embodied form of writing-- an inquisitive and invitational body that holds space, produces affect, and moves with intensities as it encounters other bodies-- all on the rise towards the world.<sup>9</sup>

This story has no beginning and no end but has always been, and I slip into it over and over again in different places, and it is as if I too have always been there.<sup>10</sup>

Elizabeth St. Pierre



11

Dear reader,

This first letter is an introduction, an invitation to slip into the unfolding stories that await you. Because these stories have no beginning and no ending, I anticipate that you will be thrust into the sweet speed of middle spaces, a speed that stirs and entangles the many threads of my inquiry, the many ways my participants and I have lived in my dissertation process. You may notice that henceforth I simply refer to my participants as my students, for although most have made their way beyond the immediacy of my pedagogical reach, I will forever know them in that way.

I can recall a Saturday morning, one of the first I shared with this group of students, eight artist-teachers<sup>12</sup> working their way through a Masters in Art Education program, while also working in K-12 schools across North and South Carolina. That morning, there was some talk of thesis projects; some talk of what would follow

graduation, as we settled into the room. When the class began, I opened the space to questions. With all seriousness, Malik asked: How long do we have access to you? With all seriousness, I responded: For life—you have access to me for life. Without knowing it in that moment, I opened myself to envisioning a continuation of correspondence with these teachers.

Perhaps you will begin to see that I could never pinpoint exactly when or where this study began, that I could never really find a proper entrance. For, there are too many moments, memories, encounters that reach for me with their salience. So I choose to simply write; to write myself open to the intensities of these moments, memories, encounters, to allow myself to remember and to become moved.

I have often wondered about you, dear reader: What brings you to this inquiry, to these unfolding letters? Are you an artist-teacher? A teacher educator? Someone interested in phenomenology, Deleuze, arts based educational research?

I have further contemplated questions, such as: How will you encounter this dissertation? What will you unfold from the stories that linger here? My letters to you embody my desire to draw you into this inquiry. To lure you further and deeper so that you may discover something new, something not yet possible, something that moves you beyond.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. The slip is a symbol that often shows up in my artmaking. *Why?* Perhaps I am drawn to the way such a garment is positioned- in a space between. The slip hangs between the flesh of the vulnerable body and its world in a subtle, protective gesture. As I draw the slip image with overbeaten pulp onto wet paper, noun takes flight into

verb: slip, slipping, falling softly against the flesh of the world, what Merleau-Ponty understood as “not something one has, but, rather, the web in which one lives.”<sup>13</sup> In this way, I slip into an entanglement of meanings, events, experiences, subjects, objects, encounters, things, bodies...

I begin to understand that “as researchers, we are never merely interruptions in the ongoing events of others’ lives. We are always, already participating in the unfolding of their lives.”<sup>14</sup> And so, we slip in and we slip out.

Dear reader,

My work offers response to the many and varied calls for a research agenda in art education that addresses graduate education, professional development, and retention of art teachers. Specifically noted are a lack of studies that consider the influence of Race to the Top (RttT)<sup>15</sup> on professional development experiences for art educators or that address the quality of professional development in an era of evidence-based, outcome-oriented education policies. Further, my interest within the discourse of professional development in art education is to attend to the *process* of becoming-renewed by lingering in the generativity of *afterglow*.<sup>16</sup>

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Dear reader,

This dissertation began as I explored the theoretical intensities produced in the relationship between play and aesthetic experience. In other words, I believed that to play<sup>17</sup> as an artist, a philosopher or teacher is to resist binaries and standardization with fierce ontological traction, and to experience the aesthetic is to become, as Alfred Schutz said, wide-awake.<sup>18</sup>

As such, the conceptual figuration of *aesthetic experiential play* was drawn from theories that rendered play and aesthetic experience as potentially educative, transformative, and generative.<sup>19</sup> Most prominently, my readings of aesthetic experience and play in the writings of hermeneutic philosopher, Hans-Georg Gadamer educational philosopher John Dewey, and existential philosopher of aesthetic education, Maxine Greene, informed my articulation of *aesthetic experiential play* as a renewing, restorative engagement that seeks to heal the splitting wound of Cartesian binaries and its splintering implications for teaching and learning. Further, I continued reading, attempting to understand how this engagement might work in the professional development and renewal of artist-teachers.

This is where I began. For, I had to write from somewhere. And, as I wrote, this structure wobbled, loosened, slipped through my fingers as I lived in and through the network of practices moving, shifting, swelling in this inquiry.<sup>20</sup> In hindsight, I suppose I might have guessed that is what play would do.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. This is one of the many reasons, this inquiry demanded an alternative form of writing. By parsing this dissertation into individual letters, I aimed to evoke certain

aspects of the process of the experiences my students and I have undergone: the stops and starts, entrances and exits, speeds and slownesses. Which reminds me, I must bring you into speed regarding a few more things...

Dear reader,

The design of this inquiry was envisaged across 16 months of temporal space through four entangled threads. Each thread was designed as a different exploration of aesthetic experiential play in the professional development and renewal of artist-teachers. These threads were:

The course I designed and taught in an art education graduate program. This course evolved from the research question: *What might aesthetic experiential play bring to bear in the professional development and renewal of artist-teachers?*

☺ ☺ ☺

The expansion of my art practice from book and paper arts to include letterpress printing. This layer of inquiry questioned: *What might aesthetic experiential play bring to bear in the practices of my life—as an artist, a teacher educator and a qualitative researcher?*

☺ ☺ ☺

Written correspondence in the form of postcards and letters exchanged between my former students/participants and myself for one year after the pilot study ended. It was my hope this correspondence might address the main research question of this inquiry: *What is it to find oneself in aesthetic experiential play's afterglow?*

☺ ☺ ☺

Exit interviews conducted in the closing months of the study. These conversations with my students were loosely structured around a list of questions that crept in as the study occurred, questions such as: *What was it like to receive the postcards? Where did the postcards dwell this year? Describe the professional development offered by your school.*

Although presented in this letter with distinction, each thread embodied artistic, pedagogical, and inquisitive qualities that informed and transformed the other threads as they were lived out.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Dear reader,

In my last letter, I wrote to you about the entangled threads of this inquiry. My methodological approach involved a similiar entanglement. Through a post-intentional phenomenology, the embodied intensities of afterglow traveled as a body of inquiry: a body free to move and engage with other philosophies, a body thriving in exploratory, hybrid spaces, a “body which rises towards the world.”<sup>21</sup> In this sense, this body journeyed through the complications of bringing autobiographical, arts based educational research, hermeneutic, action research, and post-structural threads to bear.

Educational researcher and phenomenological scholar, Mark Vagle envisioned post-intentional phenomenology as a methodology of qualitative research.<sup>22</sup> Offering creative lines of flight that escape descriptive and interpretative phenomenologies, post-intentional work endeavors to capture fleeting glimpses of the process of sensing and seeking understandings of phenomena which are always, already on the move. In this, researchers are opened to encounter (and move with) what Vagle called tentative manifestations of phenomena, or perhaps sensations of the Deleuzian concept of *difference*.<sup>23</sup> As Deleuze wrote, “Every phenomenon refers to an inequality by which it is conditioned... Everything which happens and everything which appears is correlation with orders of differences: differences of level, temperature, pressure, tension, potential, difference of intensity.”<sup>24</sup> A concept that, I believe, invites thinking through the body.

When I *plugged into*<sup>25</sup> this concept of difference, other concepts followed suite: *becoming, repetition, affect, AND*. Before too long, the Deleuzian ontology of *intensities* had swept right through—a force that moved in and through this post-intentional body in every direction, at every speed, with affects of loss, desire, anticipation, and...

Of course, this changed everything. As Ellwood described: “(s)omething new happens when the teacher/researcher opens to the flows and intensities of encounter, to moment to moment opportunities for recognition and movement from the already known.”<sup>26</sup> To offer you an example, I must continue to fast forward a bit more:

As I lived deeper in this inquiry, my mailbox became a space and checking the mail became an event; a space where I stood as my body quivered. Moving up the walk, I could see three cotton envelopes poised in the corner of our tin mailbox. I stopped, as my skin shivered, thrilled by the tiny blue labels adorning the corners of each envelope. As Brian Massumi recognized, “the skin is faster than the word.”<sup>27</sup> My body sensed that these letters were from a new writer. For, I had come to recognize the way my student Ellen sealed her envelope and then signed her initials across the flap. I knew the Rilke quotes Virginia often wrote on the back of her letters. The letters were bodies that bore distinctions, marked by the hands of their writers in loving, hurried, wanted gestures. In this quiver of affect, this *embodied intensity*, my body cued me to a shift, to an awareness that the letters and postcards were *actants*<sup>28</sup> in and of themselves.

In this quiver, I returned to Merleau-Ponty, and his phenomenological exploration of what the body makes possible. As David Abram explained: “(t)he sensing body is... an active and open form, continually improvising its relation to things and to the world. The body’s actions and engagements are never wholly determinate, since they must ceaselessly adjust themselves to a world and a terrain that is itself continually shifting.”<sup>29</sup> And so, drawing upon Deleuze’s intensities and Merleau-Ponty’s embodiment, I conceptualized the *embodied intensities* as tentative manifestations of the phenomenon of afterglow.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. Even as I theorized these embodied intensities, I did not yet know how to analyze or render them. While I mulled in this, words lingered on sticky notes scattered about my writing space. Words like: *bodies, map, terrain, relation, geographies...*

Dear reader,

To continue where I left off in my last letter...

I later encountered something in the working notes of Merleau-Ponty's unfinished work, *The Visible and the Invisible*, which generated a spark with those lingering words. His note read: "The perceived world (like painting) is the ensemble of my body's routes and not a multitude of spatio-temporal individuals. The invisible of the visible."<sup>30</sup> I dwelled in that phrase—*the ensemble of my body's routes*—for quite some time, pondering the questions like: *How might I explore the relational terrain of renewal in our life-worlds? How might I create an ensemble mapping the routes this body of inquiry takes? What is invisible? What is visible?*

This pondering led me to take up Deleuze's proposal that: "we have to take things and find visibilities in them."<sup>31</sup> As my students and I played together, it became visible that the exploratory figuration of aesthetic experiential play invites a becoming-different. Moreover, this becoming-different provokes an *aesthetic swell* and an *afterglow*. The swell is a movement that unmoors, and sets one adrift towards unanticipated, surprising possibilities. And, afterglow is an illuminated space that unfolds with our commitment and openness to move in swell towards the ever expanding new.

As I made these differences visible through crafting a text, I left essences, codes, themes, and the neat and tidy five-chapter dissertation cold. They were no longer thinkable once this ontology of intensities swept in, and therefore, no longer writable.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

I imagine a cacophony of ideas swirling as we think about our topics with all we can muster—with words from theorists, participants, conference audiences, friends and lovers, ghosts who haunt our studies, characters in fiction, and films and dreams—and with our bodies and all the other bodies and the earth and all the things and objects in our lives—the entire assemblage that is *a life* thinking *and, and, and...* All those data are set to work in our thinking, and we think, and we work our way somewhere in our thinking.<sup>32</sup>

St. Pierre

Dear reader,

How can I express the complex forces of my analytical work? How can I pronounce the entire assemblage, the lively *cacophony* that post qualitative theorist, Elizabeth St. Pierre so eloquently rendered as analysis? Perhaps these questions are not answerable. Yet, as you read, I invite you to feel around for the contours drawn from the *lines of flight*,<sup>33</sup> the movements of creative action, that were followed.

Following Vagle's approach to crafting a post-intentional phenomenological text,<sup>34</sup> I wrote my way in the embodied intensities of afterglow as they formed salient "aggregates of intensities."<sup>35</sup> Crafting this text *was* my method of analysis; a method that continually allowed my understandings of *finding oneself* (or more accurately, *selves*) *in afterglow* to body-forth. As such, this text maps the shifts and deviations from my initial curricular and epistemological concerns (what I *thought* aesthetic experiential play might do in the lives and practices of artist-teachers) towards the unanticipated openings where ontological explorations exploded into bloom (where my participants and I *lived* what aesthetic experiential play might do).

You see, every time I looked again through the pages of my students' visual verbal journals, or re-read my students' letters, or re-read the transcripts of our conversations, I noticed new visibilities, new differences, new openings. As qualitative researcher Melissa Freeman noted through her work with philosophical hermeneutics:

“Meaning and understanding already exist in the world and the language we share, so the process of constructing meaning is self-reflective—making sense of the meanings and understandings we already inhabit, and transformative—applying new dimensions and textures to our continuously developing understanding.”<sup>36</sup>

The journals, letters, and transcripts had not changed. Yet they became different through my *becoming-different*. This becoming-different occurred as I engaged with what was other, different and new: reading, teaching, listening, setting type, photographing, writing, journaling, talking, mulling, and... In this way, I suppose you could say these engagements were my methods, along with their material compliments: visual verbal journals, student coursework, postcards, letters, and interviews. In this way, this text attempts to capture afterglow in all of its fleeting, fluid, generativity, as it too captures traces of my becoming-scholar.

What is more, I was drawn to Vagle’s use of the phrase *crafting a text* (rather than writing), because it spoke to the multiplicity of ways I engage in the world as an artist, researcher, teacher, and so on. Philosopher and feminist theorist Rosi Braidotti further inspired this fluid, generative approach to the process of writing through Deleuze, for whom it “makes no categorical difference between thinking and creating, painting and writing... These are all variations of experimentation, more specifically, an experimentation with intensities that foster patterns of becoming.”<sup>37</sup> In this view of writing, I was inspired to make visible the “joyful connections and resonances”<sup>38</sup> entangled in the threads of this inquiry.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Dear reader,

I have a bit more to explain about my crafting of this text, as it is so closely intertwined with my analysis. As I worked, I explored the questions: What *textual intensities* arise when qualitative researchers craft an arts based text? How are these intensities embodied as they become written? In the chapters that follow, you will encounter three articulations of textual intensities that bodied-forth in the writing of my dissertation. These articulations are: the postscript, the curatorial impulse, and the broadside.

My student Virginia reflected that it takes her several weeks to mull in the monthly postcard prompts I send. She explained: *I have to live with the questions for a while*. This resonated, for I had to live with the letters I received in response for a while. In the spaces between the letters, I continued reading and thinking; thinking and reading. And in this way, each time I re-read a letter, I experienced it with all that I had become in the meantime.

In this, I recalled Bronwyn Davies who wrote: “Deleuze emphasizes the importance of AND between each of our repetitions and becomings. We are this AND that, always becoming something more, something else... Lines of flight, one’s own and those of others, can be terrifying and they can be very exciting—and they can be a provocation that generates new intensities and becomings.”<sup>39</sup>

In this way the Deleuzian AND seeks a logic of connection, unfolding new possibilities that emerge for artist-teacher renewal and professional development, troubling the binaries and sense of disconnection that drive many art teachers out of the profession. As my student Ellen said: *You just get pulled apart*.

This text was crafted in the speeds and slownesses of written correspondence, which took shape as the postcards sent, the letters received, and then letters addressed to you, the reader. Therefore, I conceptualized the *postscript* as an expression of the Deleuzian AND within the space a letter holds. For it is additive, an offering, a bit more. It holds relevance in rhizomatic ways--to the reader, the writer, or the written; It opens new lines of creative movement.

In addition to the postscript, I employed the visual configuration of *∞ ∞ ∞* to choreograph movements that slipped in and out of the story, in and out of the entangled processes of data collection and construction and analysis.<sup>40</sup> I will write you on this subject again, taking up the other two articulations for your consideration. For, while the postscript came early in the writing process, the curatorial impulse and the broadside did not body-forth until much, much later.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S.



Dear reader,

You are about to slip into the next chapter, which unravels the first thread of this inquiry: the course I designed and taught that put the conceptual figuration of *aesthetic experiential play* into pedagogical and curricular lines of flight within a graduate program in Art Education at a small, public university in the Southeastern United States.

This opportunity for researching *A~E~P* within my own teaching practice came about when my department chair invited me to envision a studio-focused course for a cohort of artist-teachers in their final semester of a two-year program.<sup>42</sup> I had taught this particular cohort of students in the previous semester in a course entitled, *Art Education Thesis*, where Practitioner Action Research (PAR) was employed in varied thesis projects. My aim for this course was to leverage the problems, concerns and insights brought to bear in my students' thesis projects with studio provocations that might offer new and different connections to art making and art teaching.<sup>43</sup> The main question that underpinned the course design was: *What might aesthetic experiential play bring to bear in the professional development and renewal of artist-teachers?*

My readings of curriculum theories had illuminated that: "(p)henomenological inquiry invites you to teach as a mode of relation to yourself, to others, to subject matter. A contemplative and meditative self-reflexivity is required."<sup>44</sup> And so, my students and I spent a semester engaging playfully in a variety of aesthetic experiences. I required the keeping of a visual verbal journal (with at least one entry a day), although—as you will read—some of my students resisted this. Additionally, I expected my students to read a novel of their choice over the semester, along with the course readings. Some read two or three. We visited two contemporary art museums. The

course assignments were envisaged to offer various explorations of materials and processes of art. Throughout the entire semester, my students were encouraged to visualize curricular and pedagogical implications from all of their encounters. Lastly, as this was a low-residency Masters program during the academic year, we met a total of five times for sessions that ran from 9am to until the late afternoon/early evening (depending on the agenda). It felt important to maintain a connection between our monthly meetings, so I suggested that we exchange letters that reflected on our experiences. These letters were prompted by open questions I would pose, and posted to our course web page.

As a way of introducing you to my students, and to some of the conversations that transpired during our course, I have curated a selection of the letters we exchanged over the course of the semester. Additionally, you will find the prompts they received embedded within the letters, so that you may glean where my students were reaching in their reflections. This became the second chapter: *Unaccustomed Earth*.<sup>45</sup>

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. I should also mention that as I was teaching this course, I was also unraveling the second and third threads of this inquiry. For, this is when I began my own play in the letterpress studio, taking my first weekend course shortly after our course began in January, 2012. It was in the letterpress studio that I began to envision the stationary sets and postcards that would later slip every intention I possessed. Moreover, it was by being with my art making, being with my students, being with theory—all at once—that allowed for methodological possibilities to blossom and expand.

It was there that I began to see and to live within the multiplicity that arts based research inspires and commands.<sup>46</sup>

P.S.S.



## Chapter 2

### Unaccustomed Earth

*We need have no fear that our choices or actions restrict our liberty, since choice and action alone cut us loose from our anchorage.*<sup>48</sup>

Merleau-Ponty



Dear reader,

While it may be that indeed we need not fear, many of us do. I have often wondered: How might artist-teachers experience freedom in their choices and actions? What fears or restrictions would show up in the process? What moorings might loosen? What might be revealed about the ways artist-teachers encounter art teaching and art making? And further, how might these encounters invoke renewal in artist-teachers' teaching or creative practices?

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Prompt #1  
*January 21, 2012*

Maxine Greene<sup>50</sup> shared a rich personal narrative in the hopes of challenging us to face our own becoming. She relates moments and experiences that both bounded and expanded her growth as a scholar, educator, and as a human being.

Attend to these prompts in your monthly response:

*How do beginnings or being a beginner represent a realm of freedom? How have you experienced this idea in your education? In your teaching or creative practices?*

*What circles, walls or barriers are drawn between you and what you-are-not-yet as a teacher or an artist?*

*How do we help students “create themselves in freedom” as artist-teachers?*

*What connections can you build or explore between your novel and the reading? Yourself? Our January class?*

*What connections can you build or explore between our January class and our childhood art experiences? Your teaching practice? Your creative practice?*

February 12, 2012

Dear Brooke,

*I recently read an article about “becoming” an adult. I think back to myself only 5 or 6 years ago and feel that I don’t understand or know that person very well. The same is true for myself 10 years ago. I definitely feel a sense of freedom when I think of the changes of which I am capable.*

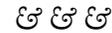
*In this program alone, I feel I have learned to learn more than ever before. I find myself open to new ideas that before I wouldn’t have taken the time to think about. Such ideas that have changed the way I think about some things completely - once I was open to them. Through readings, discussions and reflections, I have been able to acknowledge and actively engage in the process of my own becoming as an adult and a teacher. This has given me a kind of self-confidence that is new to me. Not that I have ever lacked in self-confidence, but now I feel it is warranted and because I know what I am capable of, no one can take it from me. I think this is what Maxine Greene would want. For us to encourage our students to be open to change and new beginnings, we must also be open to this ourselves.*

*One drawback I feel to becoming a better visual artist is the need to be one. I feel inspired to be a great educator and art processes inspire me to be this, but lately I don’t feel the need to make my own art. I feel like a traitor to admit this. I feel more inspired than I ever have before to be myself and express myself, but I never have the urge to express this through visual art. The creative outlet that I feel drawn to is dance. Only when I dance, do I feel I can fully find a release of stress and expression. I feel free. After all the talk we do about developing ourselves as visual artists to become better teachers in the visual arts, I have come to wonder if I can still achieve this while developing another art form other than the one I teach.*

*In the article I read, the author said to “move, travel, take a class, take a risk. There is a season of wildness and a season of settledness, and this is neither. This is a season of becoming.”*

*Thanks for challenging me to be open to change and becoming.*

Charlotte



*February 17, 2012*

Dear Charlotte,

Thank you for your reflection. The concept of *becoming* is one with a rich discourse; one that I continue to explore in my own work.

Your desire to dance is very compelling, and I notice you wondering how this may affect the artist-teacher you are becoming. I think perhaps the most important course of action is to engage with your compulsion to dance, and see where it leads you.

For instance, I wonder if perhaps movement and dance may lead you into thinking about the visual arts in new and different ways? This may be interesting for you to take up in our work with narrative this month. Perhaps you will explore questions such as: What would it mean to choreograph a painting or a collage? How could you visualize artistic movement using film or photography? How might still or moving images connect to the desire you feel to move? Moreover, how could you bring movement or dance into the work you do with visual arts education? There may be a richness there to explore and extend towards your lesson planning and teaching practice.

I am curious to see how these desires will manifest for you over this course and after.

Warmly,  
Brooke



February 12, 2012

Brooke,

*Being a beginner is usually a frustrating experience for me because I find it difficult to give myself a grace period for my initial learning curve to take effect. When I experience a beginning in my creative practice I feel it is like walking into an open, creative space, and there is a boundless amount of room to move in any direction. That is freedom.*

*In terms of teaching, the first three years of teaching elementary art were really difficult for me. Although I liked children, I wasn't motivated about teaching that age level. I struggled to communicate to the students how to function in an art space in an organized and efficient manner. I lacked basic classroom management skills. And, I needed to learn how to empower my students how to be independent. After seeking some external support, things began to click. I began to really appreciate the age level I was teaching, and I experienced tremendous growth in my teaching career.*

*As an artist, I think the main barrier for me is finding the time to make art. I am considering this to be a time for soaking up new ideas. However, one of my goals for a long time has been to have my own art show. In the past, I have struggled with the organization and discipline required to make a unified body of work.*

*I think I am much more open to being playful in my art now than when I was a child. Although like when I was a child, I love making art and having the time to create in our class was fun. When I consider my teaching practice, I am reminded that it is important to build in time for playful exploration into my classes. When I consider my creative practice, I am reminded how fun art play can be. My sketchbook provides a place for me to explore.*

Claire



*February 17, 2012*

Dear Claire,

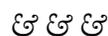
There were many aspects of your letter that resonated with me. It is challenging to get past the grace period or learning curve that you wrote about when beginning anew. It is interesting that you feel freer to play now as an adult, than you did as a younger person. Why do you think that is? How might that influence the way you approach art education?

The circles, walls and barriers you mention also give me pause. I still feel that classroom management is something I will be working on the rest of my life as an educator. I find that each circle of learners needs something quite different from me, and that uncertainty is a space where I can play and explore. It is exciting to hear how your research is creating openings for the way you approach your practice and relate to your students and to your pedagogy.

You mention needing stretches of time to think and work on new ideas for your artmaking. Keeping a journal has been one way for me to do a little each day, so that when days come open for creating, I feel a little closer to that connection, that desire to make and do. You mention having a show of your work. What type of work do you long to make? Paintings? Drawings? Little works or big? Perhaps your journal can become a space to fantasize about what you might do if given the opening.

Thank you for sharing these reflections with me.

Warmly,  
Brooke



February 11, 2012

Dear Brooke,

*Beginnings can connote excitement, anticipation and possibilities. In our beginnings we have no faction with whom to side, no concept to which we are wedded, and no claim we are trying to prove or maintain. In short, we have no baggage to drag us down. In that way, I think, beginnings offer us freedom. We are free in our beginnings to travel and explore in a myriad of directions. We have the prerogative to pick things up, examine them and slip them in our pocket. The moment we slip something into our pocket, however, have we judged it? Are we starting to form our own opinions and create our own attachments? Is it the end of the beginning? Or, do we simply set the things back down?*

*Beginnings can also conjure dread, doubt and trepidation in the face of the unknown. “What if I cannot do this thing that is before me?” has been one of my common questions. Actually, I have learned that it’s not what it is, it’s what I do with it that matters. What am I doing with it when I let self-doubt take control?*

*I have experienced this dichotomy in the face of beginnings throughout my life. I recall the self-doubt I felt when tasked with learning cursive writing in January of second grade; the idea of that beginning foreshadowed my entire holiday. Similar trepidations have assailed me more recently. They can surface whether I am anticipating my teaching day or standing before a stretched sheet of Fabriano with a loaded brush.*

*In recognizing and reflecting on this negative pattern, and realizing that it really is what I do with it, I consciously remind myself to choose excitement, anticipation and possibilities. In this manner, I am developing a new, healthy habit, identifying with process rather than product and honoring myself rather than what comes off my “assembly line.”*

*This brings me to the barriers that stand between what I am and what I am not as an artist, educator and person. The negative thought patterns and almost chronic self-doubt I have cultivated are probably the most imposing impediments in my journey of self-realization. If these thoughts occurred within me as a young student (and into adulthood), do they not exist within many of my students now? To this end, in trying to help my students [as Maxine Greene wrote] “create themselves in freedom” I tell them that they are capable of accomplishing goals that they think are unattainable. I combine this insistence with developmentally appropriate, yet challenging art projects. I always find at least one redeeming quality within a student’s paper and “pour on the praise.” This type of encouragement, I hope, helps create and instill within my students the self-confidence necessary to meet the next beginning with excitement rather than dread.*

*Both Hess' Siddhartha and Greene's "Teaching for Openings" speak to the personal condition I have described and to one another. Both readings explore traditional versus alternative life choices, stepping out and making a personal statement, self-discovery. I, too, am on an alternative path of self-discovery. Like Siddhartha, I experience personal dissatisfaction that is, at times, overwhelming. And, like Siddhartha, I want to effect a personal change. This feeling sometimes occurs despite others' positive response to my work and actions. Our last class was structured to give us the opportunity to "step out" and explore some media in alternative ways, to begin to effect a change. I ripped a large sheet of watercolor paper in two, something I would otherwise never have done. How can I take the abandon I found in that action and apply it to my art making and teaching? How can I translate that freedom, in a productive way, to my students?*

*The most memorable part of our class, for me, was the afternoon "personal" time during which I did something. I related that experience to my teaching practice, my students and classroom. If my most vivid memory occurs with a hands-on activity, is this even more applicable for my students?*

*The time was enjoyable because it offered me the opportunity to "go to my room" to draw, color and "make things" like I did when I was young. I also found myself feeling a bit frustrated because I wanted some materials that I lacked, specific brushes, spray bottle, etc. These attachments, I realized, were product-related rather than process-focused. With this observation, I relaxed, reminded myself to set my desires down and enjoy the "doing", to begin this creative experience with excitement, anticipation, possibilities and freedom.*

*Thank you for the time and experience. I look forward to next weekend!*

*Ellen*



February 17, 2012

Dear Ellen,

Siddhartha is a personal favorite. I was taken with many of the ideas that came up in your letter. Particularly, the idea you raise of attachments to *product* rather than *process*. I couldn't help but see a connection to the attachments you bumped up against and the attachments from which Siddhartha is trying to free himself. You also reminded me of the excuses we fall into about having the "right" stuff or the "right" space in which to create. This is an excellent example of barriers we create between our practice and ourselves. Perhaps awareness to these attachments is the key to breaking through. Thank you for this powerful insight.

Your letter reflects deep reflection on fear and creativity. Have you read the book *Art and Fear*? I read it years ago and found significant comfort in its pages. You ask a powerful question that many of us wrestle with each day- *what if I cannot do this thing that is before me?*

Thank you for taking up these difficult questions. I appreciate your deep reflection.

Warmly,  
Brooke

Prompt #2  
February 18, 2012

As you attend to these prompts in your monthly response, consider how your reflections might dwell in space between images and words- just as you might do in your visual verbal journal or the presentations we have done together.

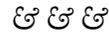
*How might you begin to visualize narrative as a structure in your creative practice? What new directions have you found to explore?*

*How might you begin to visualize narrative as a structure for a lesson plan? Work up an idea for a lesson plan or series of lesson plans.*

*Burnham and Kai Kee (2011) refer often to Dewey's idea of "an experience." Share about an aesthetic experience you have had in a museum or gallery. If you can find an image of the artwork involved, please include.*

*How does the Burnham and Kai Kee (2011) reading connect or disconnect with ways you currently use works of art in your teaching practice? What more do you want to learn or know about their approach?*

Integrate your novel into these prompts as it fits.



February 24, 2012

Dear Brooke,

*Introducing narrative as a structure in my creative practice has really helped to open my eyes to a new way of thinking about my work.*

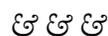
*As I read my novel at night, I have begun to keep a journal of ideas. Every page has given me inspiration to create something. Some of the ideas have nothing to do with the book, while others may mimic what I have read. I can see how literature and art are intertwined, now that I've been deeply exposed to the relationship between the two. I am convinced that the use of narrative has brought me to a world of art that I hadn't explored before.*

*At our last meeting, you mentioned to me that your art transformed after you explored a darker side, and that is what I am doing now. This is the new direction that I have chosen to explore, without regard for what I or anyone else may think. I know it's something that I need to do to release any inner feelings or thoughts that may be hindering me from fully expressing myself artistically. I have chosen to read *The Wizard of Oz*, a story I have loved since I can't remember when. Although it can be seen in many different ways, this is surely a novel filled with some sinister narratives. However, I don't think I understood this until I was a bit older.*

*I'm glad that I have chosen a novel that my heart is in, and that I could include it in this letter. Right now, it's storming outside, so I better get to work creating some experiential, narrative art. Thanks for the readings and push toward narrative structure; it's truly been an awakening for my art and me.*

Sincerely,

Judy



*March 14, 2012*

Dear Judy,

The freedom you are experiencing in the way you approach your creative practice, and in your reading for pleasure, is so very exciting. Yes, as I mentioned, my artmaking got so much more interesting when I began exploring. Particularly, exploring darker, more awkward, less refined spaces. Most of this exploration took place in my visual verbal journal. It was an invitation to write, draw, and express in ways I did not have the courage to do in a more public space. It was on those pages that I truly found my own style of markmaking, and eventually arrived at a better sense of my aesthetic as an artist. Puzzling through what I liked, disliked or was neutral about, without any fear of judgment or attention paid to audience was the work I needed to do for a while.

I wonder too, considering all you have written and our discussions, how you may be bumping up against tendencies towards perfectionism with your visual verbal journal? Do you feel as though something there is a 'letting loose' happening? It strikes me as so perfect that you are reading Wizard of Oz. The story begins with destruction. In the destruction, a journey begins. So, I must ask, what are you willing to destroy to begin a new journey?

You have made me reflect more deeply on the power of exploration and journaling. Thank you for such a thoughtful letter full of so many insights.

Warmly,  
Brooke



February 26, 2012

Dear Brooke,

*I'm beginning to visualize narrative as a series of themes woven together. Our personal narratives are not merely about a singular experience or idea (a thought I've been struggling with), but instead it is various aspects of experiences, ideas, and themes coming together to create a story. A narrative may be endless or have an "ending" that projects us into a new beginning. As we've discussed in class, it is a continuous spiral. The numerous situations swirling around my life have allowed me to come to these realizations.*

*Reading through Great Expectations has also reinforced these thoughts. A story I originally understood to be focused on love and heartbreak encompasses so much more. Themes of self-improvement, internal struggle, and social advancement are paralleled with moral character, loyalty, and affection. Various themes create the structure of the narrative. Reminding me, the forms a narrative may take are many. Whether written or visualized, narrative structure is able to become one in the same as an art form. Within narrative as structure, there is tons of room for creative play and expression.*

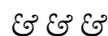
*I believe awareness plays an important role in Dewey's idea of "an experience." I feel it is a profound moment of conscious awareness in which our senses and emotions are transformed. As Burnham and Kai-Kee speak of, hoping "to inspire profound experiences- meditative, insightful, poetic, even transformative." I remember walking into a gallery space encompassing a retrospective show of sculptor Jim Hodges. It was not merely one piece that moved me, but the whole exhibition. I was so drawn to the balance of weight and delicacy in his work and the thought-provoking insightfulness his various pieces conjured within me. It was as if nothing else in the world mattered, except for the moving experience happening between his work and myself. I fell in love with his piece No Betweens, 1996 in which various artificial flowers were taken apart and sewn together petal to petal creating a large colorful curtain hanging from ceiling to floor. What was it about this piece? I don't believe "an experience" can justifiably be put into words. I will say I was moved by the vastness of the piece created by bringing together small delicate parts. Artificial flowers, which I see as stiff and cheesy reproductions of a beautiful natural creation, were presented in a way that forced me to see them differently. However, that is just the tip of the iceberg, as I cannot accurately explain this moment with words.*

*It is moments like this that I wish to offer my students when experiencing a work of art. I feel the best discussions my students and I have, when based around certain works of art, are those in which students open up their minds, raise questions, and share thoughts that are inspired by what is before them and, when suited, relate it to their own lived experiences. The most stagnant discussions are those in which students and myself are overly concerned with the facts and what the artist's*

*intentions were. Though these aspects are important, such discussions are too conclusive and leave very little room for dialogue. Especially in a choice-based learning environment, I can visualize such dialogue about works of art taking place as a class discussion, in small groups, or through individual reflection, offering the experience as a possible avenue to inform students' creative play.*

*And as I write this reflection I realize the spiral continues... how refreshing.*

*Sincerely,  
Virginia*



*March 14, 2012*

Dear Virginia,

I too find inspiration in the spiral. It is the spiral that moves and pushes us towards wide-awakeness; that keeps us in resistance of complacency.

Your letter moved me in many ways. For one, I too had an aesthetic experience with the Jim Hodges piece, *No Betweens*. I must have seen it at MOMA when I was a grad student living in NYC. I wonder, where did you see it? Hodges' work allowed me to envision beautiful possibilities from materials I considered uninspiring, like the artificial flowers. Do you know the work of Tom Friedman? His work moves me in a similar way. He makes magic from the mundane, which will be the guiding concept for our next session: a grounded/expansive materials exploration. We will move with materials from what we know (how we are grounded) towards the weightlessness of inquisitive play (how we are expansive, unfinished, forever on the way). Thank you for reminding me of Hodges. I had long forgotten that experience, and it will be a great visual provocation to pull in next month.

In regards to your reading of *Great Expectations*, I wonder, what are your great expectations, aspirations, and ambitions? What are the spiraling forces moving you in your creative or teaching practices? Are you moving deeper inward, expanding outward or perhaps both? Some of this may be waiting for you in a space beyond language; however, it may be worth playing with these questions in your journal.

Warmly,  
Brooke

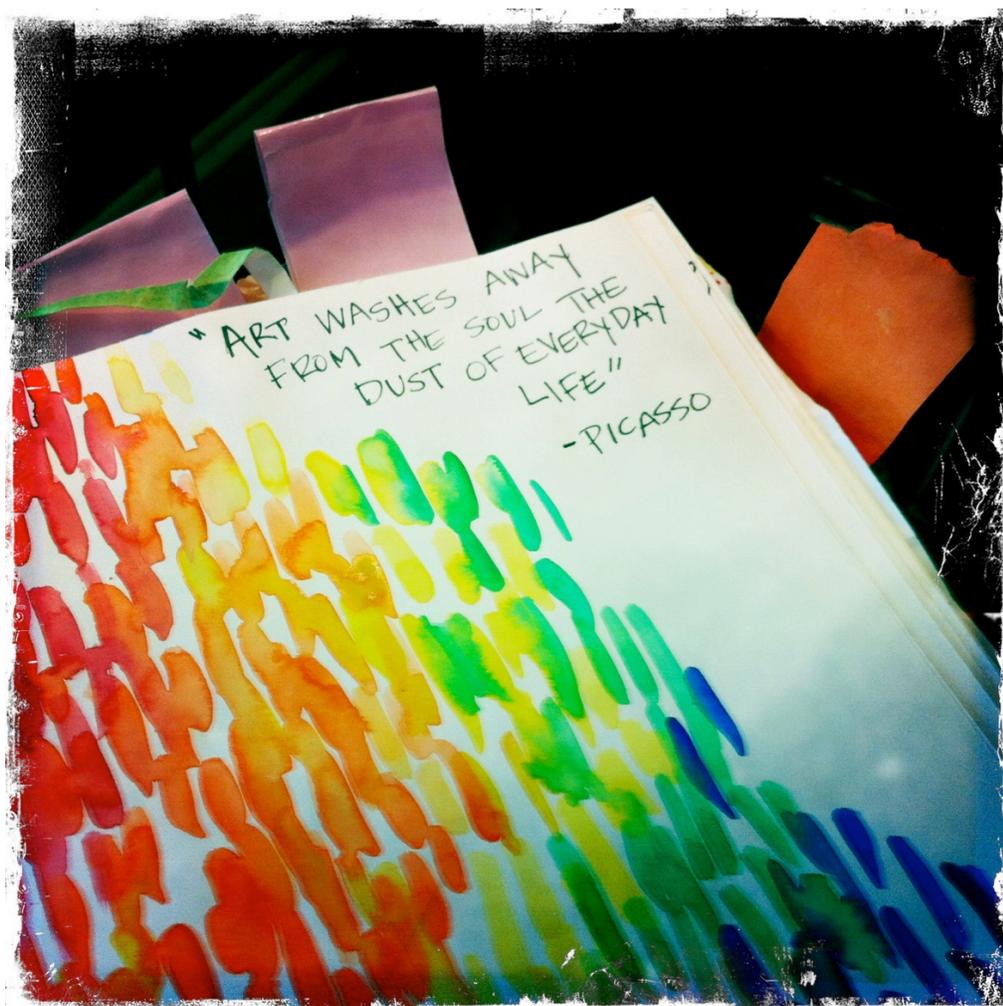
Prompt# 3  
*February 26, 2012*

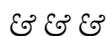
As you walk into the entrance of the Bechtler Museum, there is a quote on the wall by Picasso that reads: "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life."

*What is the dust on your soul in your teaching practice? What washes it away?  
What is the dust on your soul in your creative practice? What washes it away?  
What personal meaning have you made from our museum experience?*

Integrate your novel into these prompts as it fits.

୫୫୫





March 25, 2012

Dear Brooke,

*I see the 'dust' as all the stressors in life. I see art as a very emotional and expressive outlet and it is something someone can do to forget about their stressors and express any type of feeling through creating.*

*In my own creative practice, the visual journaling is a great exercise to "wash the dust off of my soul." This last month has been very stressful... with grad school, wanting to find another job, but also wanting to stay at a job I love. I feel like I am going crazy at times! On top of all of that, I have been planning a school art show for our Related Arts night for a long time now, only to be told last week by a few of my teammates that we are not having a showcase after all – I am so disappointed! ALL of these things are driving me insane, but sitting down and working in my visual journal washes that dust away. I can take my frustration and create pieces that reflect my feelings. I can express them and many times by the end, I am feeling better and have come to the realization that everything will be okay. Art allows me to relax and let go whatever it is that is bothering me on the inside. It has also made me want to fight for the hard work my students and I have put in. I have decided that I will be doing my own thing whether the other teachers want to or not. It may not be as big as I had envisioned it, but I promised the students and I won't let them down!*

*Our visit to the museum was great. I really appreciated the time you gave us. We went to the museum when we first started our graduate program, but it wasn't the same. Because we have come such a long way and have formed such good friendships, this experience meant incredibly more to me. I enjoyed working with a buddy and then coming together as a group to talk about what we saw – many times pointing out things that I would have otherwise missed. Our comfort with one another lends itself to a much more interesting and meaningful discussion, which we lacked in the beginning.*

Sincerely,  
Anne



*April 4, 2012*

Dear Anne,

I loved the way you opened your letter with the metaphor of dust as stress. As you wrote, the creative process often helps us deal with stress and feel more balanced, yet the more stressed out we get, the harder it is to create at all. What might be done about this for artist-teachers?

Your thoughts about the visual verbal journal as a place to work out the stress and dust resonated with me. I wonder, what is your favorite thing to do within the pages of your journal? Do you like to write or doodle? Make lists or ramble? What feels the most releasing of dust? Most liberating? Most daring? This may be something to consider thinking more deeply about for the final paper...

In addition to helping me see the dust as stress, you also have brought even closer to my attention, how the class community is working. We are so lucky to have such a tight knit group, where we can say and express without fear of rejection or critique.

Warmly,  
Brooke

p.s. Best wishes for the art show!



March 25, 2012

Dear Brooke,

*I hope all is well. This month has been very productive for me. I have been reading *The Women of Brewster Place*. It is a story of an impoverished community, blocked off from the rest of society by a brick wall. Drugs and prostitution have all but taken over, and the women of the community are faced with unthinkable hardships and misfortunes. At the end the women come together to tear down the wall and reclaim the community they call home.*

*This leads me to this month's reflection question, "What is the dust on your soul?" I've been thinking a lot about this question over the course of the month and it has really hit home. In my teaching practice, I would have to say I wish that I could expose my students to more art culture outside the school. I feel that I have not given my students much exposure to art museums and/or art galleries this year. That is one of the things I would like to work on for next school year. I think that without this type of exposure, students only get half of the equation of what it means to be an artist.*

*As far as my personal artistic goals, I have a mountain of dust laying on my soul. I don't know if I have ever told you this, but my life goal was not to become a teacher. I graduated from undergrad thinking that I would pursue my art career full time, and while I have accomplished some small aspects of this dream, I have yet to fulfill what I believe to be my true calling. Don't get me wrong, I really enjoy teaching, however I really feel like there is more beyond teaching for me. I find it ironic that my thesis work is about the preconceived notions of African Americans about art. In many ways, I am really talking about myself. I think that I'm worried I won't be able to make it as a professional artist. I don't know where to start or what to do to get to this goal. Much like the women in the novel I'm reading, I feel trapped. My brick wall is myself. As I continued on my journey throughout life, I can't help but feeling that I'm somehow running out of time.*

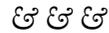
*It is for this reason that I have been considering moving. While I may still teach, I want to dedicate my spare time to pursuing my art career. Who knows, maybe it will lead me to my ultimate goal of practicing art full time. So there you have it. This is the anguish I live with on a daily basis. If you know of possible solutions to help dust off this old dusty soul of mine (laughing), then let me know.*

*In closing, I would like to thank you for the wonderful trip to the museums. One of the things that I learned most from that experience is that it is okay to let go and not be so perfect. I want to thank you and the entire group for helping me come up with ideas for my reflective journal. I can assure you that I have been trying the ideas and trying to stay loose and free. I look forward to showing you guys what I've been working on.*

*Until next class, take care and be well.*

*Sincerely,*

*Malik*



*April 3, 2012*

Dear Malik,

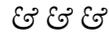
No, you had never before mentioned that your first ambition was to be a full-time artist. I, too, never intended to teach. I think, perhaps, teaching chose me.

Your metaphor of the brick wall is quite provocative, and I would love to talk more with you about this. I'm not sure that I have solutions, but perhaps, in attending to these (raw) truths, you can begin to clear new spaces. It is amazing to me how much we can get in our own way. We hold on so tightly to the seeds of our dreams, they cannot take flight.

I do sense that the visual verbal journal may be a great mentor to you as you decide where you are headed next, whether that is moving away or not. Don't worry that every move you make must take you forward, we learn from moving in all directions.

Thank you for reflecting and sharing so deeply, Malik. Let's keep this conversation going.

Warmly,  
Brooke



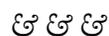
March 28, 2012

Dear Brooke,

*I keep thinking about this dusty soul business. I picture a cave that goes back very far. Very, very far. At the end you see an old stone structure with a small shrine. Kneeling at this shrine is my soul. It is feeling old and dusty. In my mind I see all of the things I can do, wish to do, want to do, playing like a pleasant dream. But when I think of this, my soul gets yanked back to that old, dusty place where I am praying at the shrine of higher education. The only crack that lets the light in is this Saturday class. I think about my time (I must stress the MY here), and I get a glimmer of hope. The sun hits my soul and cleans off parts of it like an archeologist gingerly dusting an ancient relic. This is how I feel right now.*

*I have been going through this process for four years. People around me have started grad school and finished before me. This adds dust by the dump truck load. The thing that clears this dust is MY time on these Saturday classes. The other aspect of my dusty soul is that I can't commit! For me, it's not a time issue. If you want to do something, you'll find the time. I have the time, but I don't have the motivation. But when I come to class on Saturday, I am motivated. I want to create! When I finally finish, I am afraid I won't have this fire I feel on our Saturdays. These are fears and issues I have to think about. I have to be aware of them. I have to focus on that crack beaming the light in, get up, dust my ass off, and get to work.*

*Sincerely,  
Erik*



*April 4, 2012*

Dear Erik,

In your letter, you draw many insightful and commanding metaphors. I think you are writing your way to knowing what it is that motivates you to create. Keep going with this! I think you may find Twyla Tharp's book *The Creative Habit* relevant. I read it a few years ago when I, too, felt unmotivated to work on my own art, in the midst of everything else I had on my plate. She writes about the importance of discipline and routine. I learned so much from that book.

I wonder, how are you finding the visual verbal journaling? Are you able to find reasons and motivations to play there? Just curious...

Awareness is an opening, you sure are right about that. When you are done with school (hopefully this spring!), spend some time chipping away at that crack. Allow yourself to be bathed in light and possibility.

Warmly,  
Brooke

April 28, 2012

Dear reader,

At the close of our course, my desk bore the weight of students' visual verbal journals, monthly letters exchanged during the semester, and my handwritten notes scrawled on post-it notes of all shapes and colors. I began to find things that provoked me to move, to slip. Like this excerpt from Virginia's final reflection (which was the fourth monthly prompt), in which she wrote about her experience during the course:

*My visual verbal journal is filled from cover to cover, as I've created in a way like never before – habitually, playfully, deeply. For the first time in my life I feel freely bound to my creativity in a loving embrace. Free to explore whatever comes to mind. Free to experiment. Free of obligation and expectation. Free to swim safely on the surface or dive deep into personal waters. Free to choose. Free to discover me as an artist... as a teacher... as me. This was a beginning for me and as Maxine Greene writes, beginnings have so much to do with freedom.*

*I am in awe of how liberating the act of creatively playing has been. It opens you up to the endless possibility of the world of ideas and materials around and within you. For me, it became a flow of action and reaction to the world around and within me – past, present, and future, each informing the other. Words and pictures danced gracefully across many pages as I faced your proposed question of what are my great expectations? Reading the novel *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, intertwined with my new creative experiences, I've come to realize that so often our expectations are skewed by our circumstances, experiences, and allowed misleadings, but most often by our limited perspective. When we challenge ourselves to live wide-awake and open to possibility, it is then that we allow*

*ourselves to live beyond expectation. Therefore, my great expectation is to live beyond expectation. Beyond the expectations of artist training, beyond the expectations of institutional education, beyond the expectations of everyday life, beyond my own limited expectations.*

I found that Virginia's words resonate with Gadamer's view of play as holding a sacred seriousness and freedom: "Insistence on the opposition between life and art is tied to the experience of an alienated world... play is capable of penetrating all the dimensions of our social life, through all classes, races, and levels of cultural attainment. For these our forms of play are forms of our freedom."<sup>52</sup>

Moreover, she used phrases like *free to choose* and *when we challenge ourselves*. These phrases point to the ontological engagement and commitment of *A~E~P* as a living expression of freedom. Virginia turned herself over to living out *A~E~P* as a commitment: *habitually, playfully, deeply*.

Additionally, her reflection blurred the same boundaries and binaries between art, play and aesthetic experience that I had been tracing theoretically in my readings. She did not separate *creatively playing* from discovering herself as an artist or feeling awakened by aesthetic experiences. Nor, did she separate the act of reading novels from the act of creating, playing, exploring, nor from her reading philosophy for her thesis. She spoke of them in fluid connection, building towards a reflective commitment to *live beyond expectation* in a world around and within her, rather than an alienated world.

Virginia used phrases like *flow of action and reaction* and *freely bound... in a loving embrace* to express the movement of *A~E~P* towards a space beyond. These expressions resonated with my vision of *A~E~P* as holding productive, generative, restorative tension that moves us towards becoming. Perhaps what is most profound

for me though, was the awareness Virginia revealed of a liminal space situated between her *own limited expectations* and her commitments to moving beyond them. As hermeneutic scholar, Shaun Gallagher explained: “An essential aspect of all educational experience, including play, involves venturing into the unknown, going beyond ourselves and experiencing the unfamiliar.”<sup>53</sup> When we play, we move to “unaccustomed earth.”<sup>54</sup>

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Dear reader,

What happens when we choose to live, engage, dwell in these playful, aesthetic, curious ways? My hope is twofold: that we may embrace the surprising, unanticipated outcomes of experience and that we may break open binaries, the Either/Ors created by educational systems.<sup>55</sup> I might have said *current* educational systems, but then Dewey observed: “Mankind likes to think in terms of extreme opposites. It is given to formulating its beliefs in terms of Either/Ors, between which it recognizes no intermediate possibilities;”<sup>56</sup> going on to say that such situations “compel us to compromise.”<sup>57</sup> And while I would change his language to make space for *humankind*, I believe his observation holds.

More recently, Parker Palmer echoed this sentiment, when he said: “we must teach our hearts a new way to understand the tension we feel when we are torn between two poles.”<sup>58</sup> His words gave me pause to consider what this new understanding might be. Perhaps, something like Virginia’s expression of being *freely bound... in a loving embrace* between competing forces.

When Gadamer freed play from the subject/object binary, he put this engagement on the move: Play became a process. When the play was no longer bounded to the player, it was free to engage more fluidly, as in “the play of light” or “the play of waves.”<sup>59</sup> And so, play became an ontological movement towards freedom; a generative process that “renews itself in constant repetition.”<sup>60</sup> The process of play became *bildung*, becoming, transformation.<sup>61</sup>

I find parallels here to Dewey, who stated: “Experiencing like breathing is a rhythm of intakings and outgivings.”<sup>62</sup> The play of breath repeats and renews. If we attend to productive, sustained tension created by the rhythm of our breath, to the flow

rather than the inhale-exhale binary, we may deepen our engagement. If we breathe freely, our breath becomes generative and restorative. In the same way, we may see the *either/or* as an opportunity to move fluidly, rather than choosing sides. The *and/both* move cuts free what anchors our becoming. *Imagine*, artist-teachers who feel free to move fluidly between becoming-artist and becoming-teacher.

Maxine Greene continued this lineage of resistance against binaries with her position that when educators practice attending, noticing and reflecting upon aesthetic experience- *either/ors* disappear and those we teach may rebel.<sup>63</sup> You may ask, what is there to rebel against? How about the binaries that stifle us and choke us out of the field- asking us to choose teacher or artist, beginner or expert, practical or visionary? How about the fact that “*(h)alf of all people who begin their careers thinking they will love being a teacher decide that they just can’t do it. Half.*”<sup>64</sup> *A~E~P* seeks fluidity, rather than unsatisfying compromises.

Inspired by my readings of Gadamer, Dewey, and Greene, I am envisioning an *aesthetic swell*- a wave-like movement that unmoors us and sets us adrift towards unanticipated, surprising possibilities. But, what stirs us to begin? Our relationship to the world is dialogical and curious and full of wonder.<sup>65</sup> Gadamer bared the heart of this relationship when he said open questions come from a desire to be led somewhere new in our quest for understanding. The question we ask is our first move. Therefore, we could say an open question acts as friction, it is the ripple of wind that releases a wave to swell and to crest.

We open surprising, unanticipated worlds as we embrace our curious and wondering qualities- when we become what Greene called “a philosopher-person--- someone whose life is absorbed in teaching, trying to move others to wide-awakeness

and reflectiveness, to learning to learn on their own initiatives; someone who has spent and continues to spend time trying to confront the questions that arise.”<sup>66</sup> There is a story I could write you in this regard... but that is for another day.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

*April 30, 2012*

Dear reader,

And now, that story: Modern, terracotta tiles laid cool and smooth against the backs of our legs and ankles as we sat, a cluster of bodies holding pencils and hardbound journals, on the balcony of the contemporary art museum. Our presence complemented by the long shadows of two bronze sculptures and the slightest brush of Saturday morning traffic below. I had made my first pedagogical move of the day. The balcony was accessed from a small gallery that, at the time, housed pages of a birthday book made for art dynast, Hans Bechtler. The works, intended as presents, were quite small and made on paper with materials common to any artist or public school art classroom: crayons, watercolor, cut paper collage. They shared a spontaneous and improvisatory quality that I thought resonated with our course focus: aesthetic experiential play in art making and art teaching. As my students discussed the birthday pages, I tended loosely to the circle, holding only as tightly as needed to keep the conversation flowing and pushing, like blood into the heart of this body of learners.

The discussion turned itself over to a connection between the loose, spontaneous feeling of these works and our shared practice of visual verbal journaling.<sup>67</sup> This journaling was another of my pedagogical moves, a move towards crafting a space for aesthetic experiential play to be played out on a daily basis. After a long silence, Malik spoke up. He expressed sadness, regret even. He spoke about feeling left out. He confessed that he was uncomfortable with journaling, with a practice that was (maybe) art and (definitely) not Art. As an artist-teacher, his days were busy; his time was precious, and playing, exploring openly didn't feel much like a priority. He proclaimed his perfectionism was getting in the way. Judy had confessed to ripping

pages from her journal, because they were ugly. And, now she explained her efforts to stop tearing pages from her book, as a result of some of the letters she and I had exchanged. In hearing others speak intensely, cathartically about their relationships with their visual verbal journals (our VVJ's, as we affectionately called them), had left Malik feeling as if he was missing out.

Greene helped me understand this even more deeply: "With situations opening, students may become empowered to engage in some sort of *praxis*, engaged enough to name the obstacle in the way of their shared becoming."<sup>68</sup> Malik had named the obstacle when he asked the questions: What am I missing out on here due to my attachments to finished products, to perfection? He became a philosopher-person; he released an aesthetic swell.

Anne took care of the cohort. You may know her type of kindness, the kind that coordinates flowers, onesies, and cakes for all the special occasions. And so, I was not surprised when she took action. Her plan involved someone from the cohort sending Malik a text message with a prompt to play out in his VVJ every day until our next class meeting. There was a sign-up sheet; a friendly sort of contract, I suppose. And so, Malik played in his VVJ. He played in pursuit of these questions and constraints until he broke through. In this, I recalled radical hermeneutic philosopher, John Caputo who wrote: "There are certain breaking points, let us say, in the habits and practices, the works and days, of our mundane existence... where the whole trembles and the play irrupts. Then we know we are in trouble. The abyss, the play, the uncanny- in short, all hell- breaks loose, and the card castles of everydayness come tumbling down. Something breaks through because the constraints we impose on things break down."<sup>69</sup>

You see, Malik challenged his assumptions of what artists do, produce, achieve, and began asking questions about how artists live. Questions such as: How is it to be artful, active, playful, curious, and wondering as we move in and through the world? For his final project, Malik wrote a reflective list of ways he was standing in his own way. He chose key ideas and words from the list and stitched them onto fabric bricks. Inspired by the brick wall metaphor in his chosen novel, *The Women of Brewster Place*,<sup>70</sup> he built a structure to hold the bricks and then knocked each free, as he read aloud to us from his journal. He literally broke through; allowing everything to collapse, be torn down, in order to start anew.

Malik's experience reflects the type of aesthetic swell I am theorizing in my work. It is a movement, a reaching, a breaking away. It is a finding a bit more fluidity in our way of being in the world. Where could an aesthetic swell take us if we let go? I recalled Dewey, who offered: "Like the ocean in a storm, there is a series of waves; suggestions reaching out and being broken in a clash, or being carried onwards by a cooperative wave. If a conclusion is reached, it is that of a movement of anticipation and cumulation, one that finally comes to completion. A 'conclusion' is no separate and independent thing; it is the consummation of a movement."<sup>71</sup> Each swell moves us to the next breaking point, if we let go and turn ourselves over to the unfolding; every ending carries us to new beginnings.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Dear reader,

What would it take for you “to live with all your burners lit”?<sup>72</sup> For me, it involves an expressive commitment with the many, many ways I work the world-- as a papermaker, book artist, writer, journal keeper, teacher, scholar, and lover of philosophy, poetry, and literature. As we choose to engage in *A~E~P*, as we unmoor ourselves and move with an aesthetic swell, we might experience this struggle to seek more undiscovered light within ourselves; we might experience the Deweyan storm. Or perhaps, we might experience something like Rene Magritte’s painting, *The Empire of Light* (1953-4).<sup>73</sup> Do you know the one? In his painting, the streetlamp is not all that illuminates. It is day *and* it is night. There is a glow emanating from somewhere beyond; from a place we cannot see, or name, or ever hold between our humble, human hands.

And so, as I write to you, I am envisioning afterglow as a concept that holds two ideas in tension. The first idea, is the *after*-- the meaning made after experience.<sup>74</sup> The second is the *glow*. Taken together, an illuminated space is created in our on-going commitment to openness and inquiry, which invite us to continue “throwing light”<sup>75</sup> upon our understandings of ourselves and world.

I share Greene’s concern for educational systems that ignore the simple premise that “we cannot *learn* anyone” in classrooms and in professional development for teachers.<sup>76</sup> In fact, it seems: “a human being will not, and cannot, simply change his old conceptions by being handed new ones- or by being handed a set of new premises and conclusions- as if some kind of instantaneous conversion were possible. Instead, learning happens through a slow and thorough process of engagement with new

meaning, in which the prejudices with which we begin slowly come to light, and are revised until we reach a transformed sense of things.”<sup>77</sup>

And, I suppose I am finding this idea of *slowly learning* to be critical for both artist-teachers and their students. If *A~E~P* pursues renewal and transformation, it must allow for learning to steep: slowly, patiently, openly.

I wonder: what might you make of this?

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

### Chapter 3

#### Floating Worlds<sup>78</sup>

We are not in the world, we become with the world; we become by contemplating it. Everything is vision, becoming.<sup>79</sup>

Deleuze & Guattari



*May 1, 2012*

Dear reader,

On our final Saturday class last month, I showed up with butterflies holding court in my body, and a box holding gifts in my arms. For months, I had been working in anticipation of that day, and what that day embodied for my research—the end of our course in aesthetic experiential play and the beginning of its possible afterglow.

You see, it was in the letterpress studio where I envisioned a way to deepen my understanding of afterglow, by continuing to exchange letters with my students beyond the end of our course. I began to envision sending these students a letterpress printed postcard each month for the next year, perhaps garnering a response, perhaps not.

And so, for the next few months I struggled to create letterpress printed stationary sets for each of my students. My fledgling printing skills were one challenge. Finding a press to work on, another. Determining what to print, yet another. Finally, I chose to blind deboss these papers with the words of William James - “we learn to skate in summer after having commenced in winter.”<sup>81</sup> Blind debossing is a process of making an impression into paper without ink. Imagine the way your feet sink slightly into damp sand as you walk the shoreline, leaving behind a delicate, but crisp impression. The blind debossing appealed to me as a subtle yet distinct tracing in passage as these papers moved from my hands to my students’, hopefully making their way back into mine. Each set had 12 paper, 12 envelopes (addressed and stamped), a pencil, and a paperweight (a river rock that I had tied a feather around as a reminder to be both grounded and expansive— to become a rooted dreamer<sup>82</sup>) tucked into a large envelope. My hope in giving these stationary sets away to my students was that they might continue to reflect and write to me each month for the year following our course

on aesthetic experiential play. My hope was to methodologically employ these tracings to construct a map or maps that addressed my research question: *What is it to find oneself in afterglow?*

And so, I reticently untied the third thread of this inquiry. With only faith that my former students would engage in these continued letters back and forth with me, long after any pedagogical authority I might have held disappeared, as grades were finalized, and life swept them on towards the new.

I will be honest that my hands quivered as I handed these bundles of letters wrapped in twine and envelopes adorned with stamps to each of my students. Yet, I let the packages pass from my hands to theirs, knowing it was time to let go. I let the open question slip away, because I knew that we learn through what we lose.<sup>83</sup> With the loss of stubborn misconceptions, by loosening our hold on deep-rooted ideas, we become open to the generous offerings of dialogue, to what we learn by listening to others. In other words, our losses put us in a dialectical relationship with each other and the world. In thinking differently about the world, we open ourselves to experiencing the world differently. We swell with dialogic possibility. We become open to qualitative inquiry at its fullest expression of inquiry.

In that moment, there was nothing much to do. No prints to run, no class days to plan, nothing to do but wait for unfolding answers. Or, more accurately, unfolding letters that might lead me to more open questions. So, on that last day of class, I breathed deeply and saw myself becoming the woman who eagerly anticipates a new ritual - a low grumble of acknowledgement from the dog, one, two, then three footsteps on the brick stairs, and then - maybe - sweet sound of letters dropped in a tin box at

half past four each afternoon. A woman poised to risk, to lose, in order to deepen her understanding.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. At the post office, I found myself unable to let these first postcards go slipping down the mail slot. So, I stalled-- deciding to wait in line, deciding that in somehow handing them to another human being I might be reassured. In line, I found myself unnecessarily checking the addresses again, needlessly smoothing the stamps with my thumbs. The clerk sighs and gestures across the crowded space as I finally, hesitantly hand the postcards across the counter.

*Honey—just put them right down that chute. Don't need to wait in this long line.*

I smiled softly into her words, feeling silly and comforted and full of anticipation—all at once. And then, I left—thinking how the month of May swept in, carrying the semester away with what felt like one big breath. I was left to wonder what exactly might have transpired between my students and myself. I was left to wonder what our learning had meant and what more awaited us. And, I was left to wait to see what these first postcards might invite.

As I waited, I clung to the words of Nicolas Bourriaud, curator and philosopher of relational aesthetics, who said: “Each artwork is a proposal to live in a shared world, and the work of every artist is a bundle of relations with the world, giving rise to other relations, and so on and so forth, ad infinitum.”<sup>84</sup>

And, I wondered: *Will any of them write?*

Hanging together: words in a sentence, and works of art in a space.<sup>85</sup>

Claire Bishop

*April 2, 2013*

Dear reader,

My first *curatorial impulse* occurred as I was transcribing the letters for inclusion in this chapter. This was a much different action than the *copy* and *paste* actions I had performed in rendering the previous chapter, *Unaccustomed Earth*. For, those letters had been exchanged electronically, lacking the materiality of these other letters.

As I pulled and unfolded each letter from its envelope, I found myself reveling in what vital materialist Jane Bennett conceptualized as “Thing-Power: the curious ability of inanimate things to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle.”<sup>86</sup> As I typed, I felt an affective loss as the materiality of the letters, the light from the window, the address labels, the stamped ink, the old wood desk, the envelopes, the handwriting, the drawings, the collaged pieces, the time of day, all quietly escaped as I worked through words alone. Once I had been struck by *thing-power* then came the question of how to map its vibrancy within the textual body of my dissertation, I wondered how to offer the reader a sense of the lively and wild and material-discursive work that is thinking, theorizing, analyzing.

And so, I began to photograph these *things*, and place them in the transcriptions. Not as descriptions, not as fodder for interpretation, but as textures that the reader might rub up against. The work of analysis flowed from my movements and sensations in following these curatorial impulses. In this way, my analytical work flowed (and continues to flow) too through movements and sensations of becoming.

The conceptualization of my analysis as *curating* became visible in the living. In fact, it was through conversations with my advisor, committee members, and writing group that I first began to refer to my analytical movements as curating. As they tilted their head at the word, listened over tea, or pushed my thinking with questions delivered by email, I was encouraged to push this idea forward into language: *I'm culling images and words to provoke an encounter between the reader and the written... I am hoping this analytical move will help me to keep the focus on the interconnectedness of meanings that comes into being through living in the embodied intensities of play.*

What is more, following these impulses slipped the humanist hold of a stable, subjective “self.” I was no longer *a* researcher producing *a* text. For, they allowed the poet to slip in, the visual artist to render the world materially, *and, and, and.*

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. Bourriaud claimed that the artist “catches the world on the move.”<sup>87</sup> To achieve such a feat, I often used my iPhone to quickly capture the light, the texture of colored pencil, the fingerprint smudge, the letter in hand, the just-this-ness.<sup>88</sup>

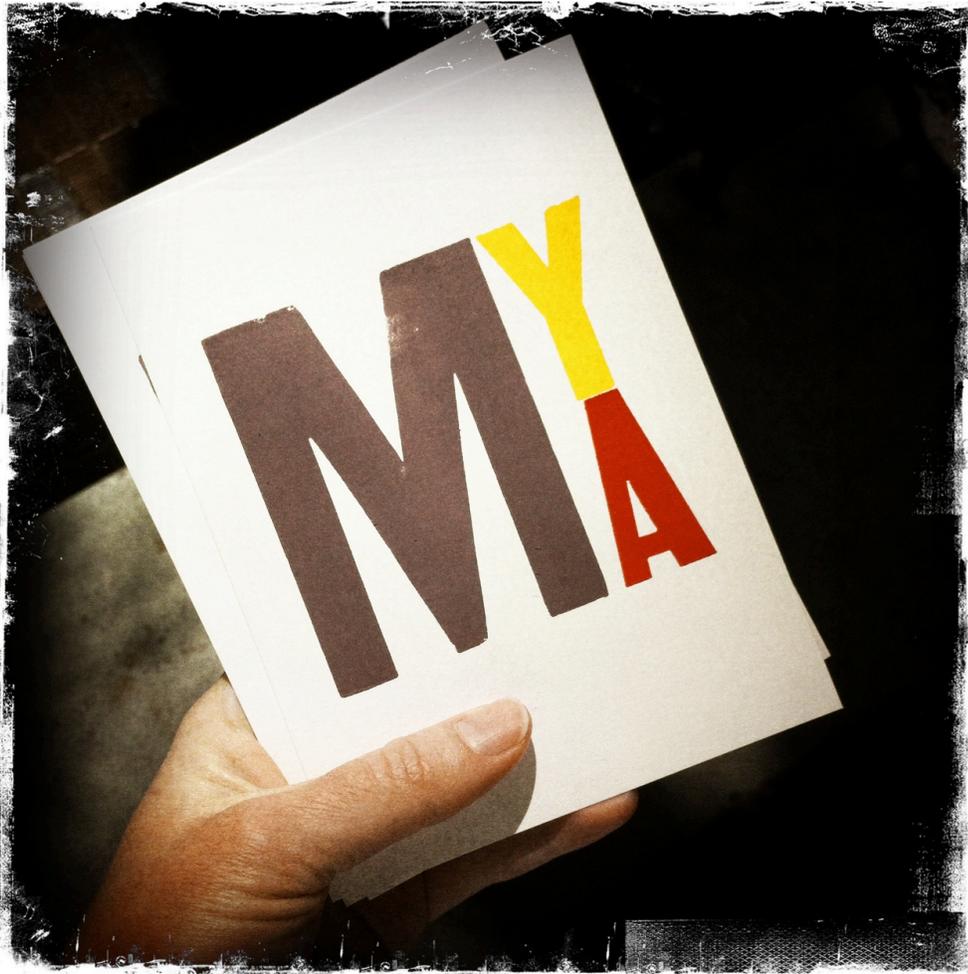
P.S.S.



## Finding Sweetness

*I am concerned... with enabling individuals to reflect upon their own lived lives and the lives they lead in common with one another, not merely as professionals or professionals-to-be, but as human beings participating in a shared reality.*<sup>90</sup>

Greene



May's postcards read:

"Didn't you ever fly in your dreams?" Even I had done that, though not often.

"Only when I was real close to flying in real life," he said. "Your dreams, what you hope for and all that, it's not separate from your life. It grows right up out of it."

"So you think we all just have animal dreams. We can't think anything to dream about except our ordinary lives."

He gently moved a lock of hair out of my eyes. "Only if you have an ordinary life. If you want sweet dreams, you've got to live a sweet life."

This passage is from a novel I am reading- *Animal Dreams* by Barbara Kingsolver. It made me wonder:

*What dreams are growing right up out of your life?*

*What are your sweetest dreams as an artist and teacher? How could you live a sweeter life, letting those dreams take flight?*

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. What are you reading these days?



After 24 days of waiting, a letter arrived. I read the whole letter through, and then returned to linger in Charlotte's opening sentences:

*Dear Brooke,*

*I am sorry it has taken me so long to respond. I keep thinking that I will paint something to send you or make my first letter be something worth looking at, but with my wedding 2 ½ weeks away, I am finding it hard to get anything done...*



*Dear Brooke,*

*I love the passage you shared on our May postcard. It made me think of dreaming differently. I've always thought of my dreams (while sleeping) as being separate from my life. And you always hear of "hopes and dreams," but when do we ever really stop to process them and apply them to our daily lives?*

*I've most often thought of dreams affecting my life and I never once considered how our lives affect our dreams. Now having considered this, I realize that, despite having always been a 'big dreamer,' as I have gotten older and as responsibilities and realities have begun to blanket my dreams, a part of the innocence and sweetness of my dreams have been lost. Does this mean my life is not sweet? Overall, I would say it is, but then again are we really here to live sweet lives? I think it's more about finding the sweetness in the lives we choose to live.*

*However, I feel I have so many dreams in so many directions. I'm not quite sure it's possible for them to all come together in my reality. But isn't that the beauty of dreams? So naturally unrealistic until those rare moments when they become reality and we are left in awe, sweetly reminded that anything is possible.*

*What dreams are growing up out of your life, Brooke? How do you pursue your dreams?*

*Here's to appreciating the sweetness of our lives and sweetly dreaming.*

*Always,  
Virginia*

☺ ☺ ☺

Dear Brooke,

*One image I drew in my journal (you may remember) is a head with wings. Other disjointed heads are looking up at him. It didn't come to me in a dream, but rather as visuals that ran through my head one night while I was trying to sleep!*

*What are the hopes and dreams growing up out of my life? Of course, completing my thesis and masters degree is an obvious answer at this moment. I am looking beyond that, however, to things I define as goals<sup>92</sup> rather than dreams, and I am identifying steps I can take to turn them into reality.*

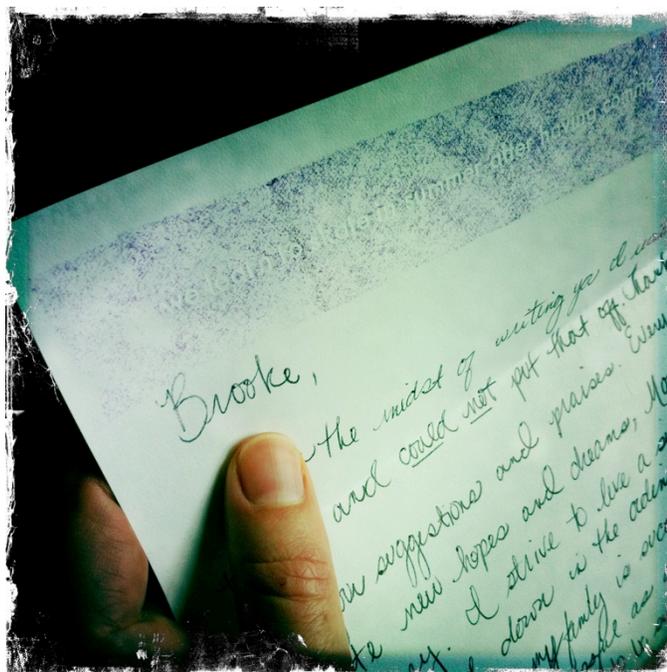
*Thanks for reminding me – I need to read!*

*Looking forward to my next card!*

Ellen

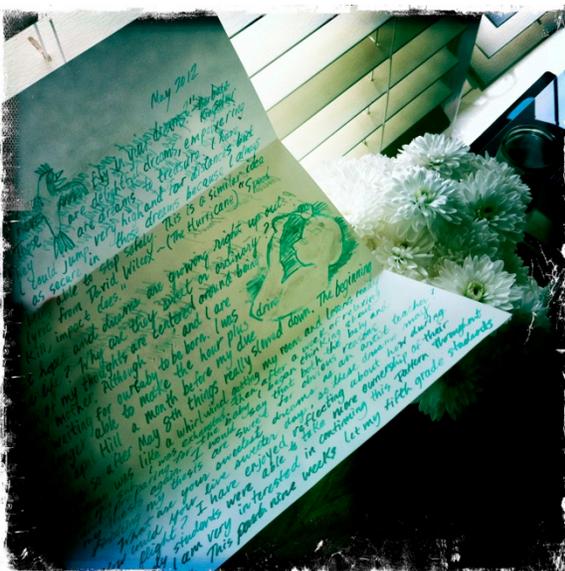
☺ ☺ ☺

I was drawn by the bold stroke of purple crayon Judy ran across the blind debossing. In her playful gesture, I found a bit of sweetness.



☺ ☺ ☺

I found that I had moved from my chair to the windowsill, where Claire's drawings, and velvety green penmanship, intensified.



94

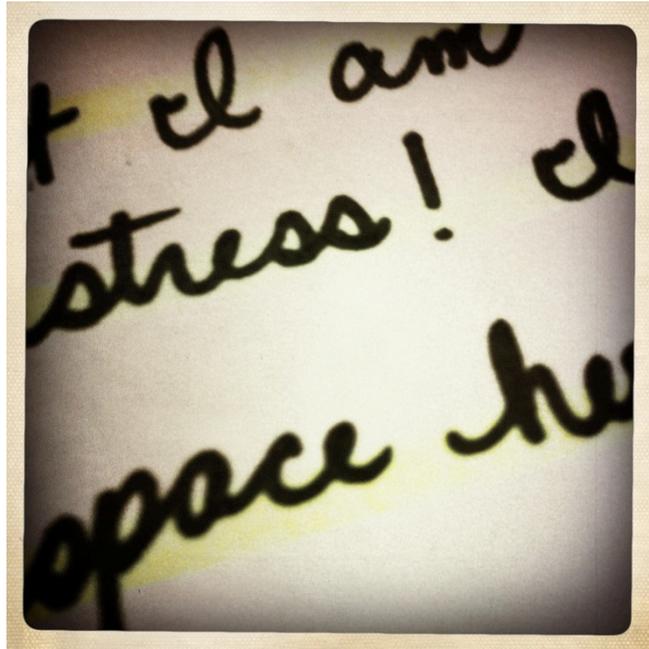
## POSTSCRIPT

Yes, Ellen. I do remember your *visions of stress*:



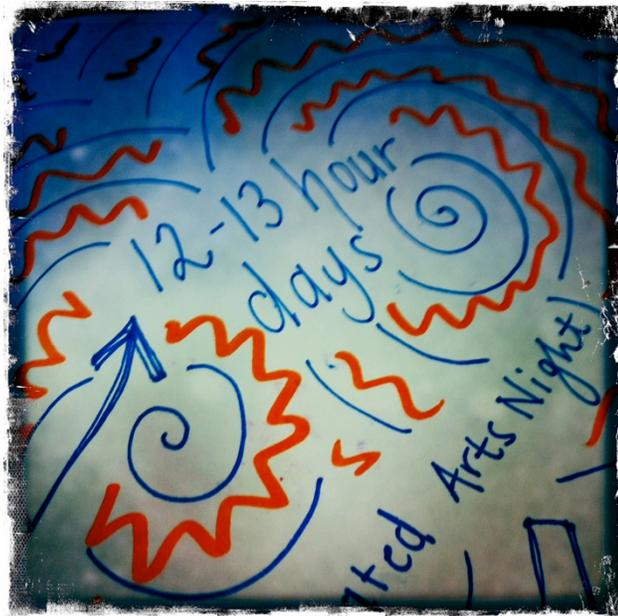
95

And Judy's hope to alleviate stress through her journal practice:



96

And Anne's long days prepping for the related arts night at her school:



97

☪ ☪ ☪

And Malik's tether:



Dear reader,

In the midst of receiving these letters, I was reading everything I could find on teacher renewal and professional development, especially as it concerned artist-teachers. And so, I began to contemplate my students' *tethers* and *stresses*, along with the literature.

Teacher renewal is often discussed (in the context of professional development) as the credits needed to keep a teaching license up-to-date or to satisfy a school mandated IGP (individualized growth plan) requirement. What I explored as *renewal* in the context of this dissertation was quite different.

I read towards questions like: What is it to experience renewal as an artist-teacher? And, how are renewal and professional development connected or connectable? In my readings on these matters, I came across this definition from Grundy and Robison: "Teaching is forever an unfinished profession. Thus, professional development is intrinsic to the vocation of teaching. By its very nature, teaching is never complete, never conquered, always being developed, always changing."<sup>99</sup> Ah, yes... Nothing holds still. Meanings, expectations, and standards shift and slide along in the context of current best practices, reform efforts, and government policies. Not to mention, as personal definitions are rewritten within artist-teachers own life-worlds, as they too experience shifting and sliding as "stayers, movers, or leavers"<sup>100</sup> in and out of classrooms. Linguistically, the word renewal even implies a sense of moving, becoming, reaching: words that I associate with Maxine Greene, who encouraged using Thoreau's words: "learn to reawaken and keep... awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep."<sup>101</sup>

It appeared from my readings that teachers are searching for “regenerative and generative opportunities”<sup>102</sup> earlier and earlier in their careers. Moreover, “the odd mix of staleness and stress that often befalls teachers... requires counterbalancing opportunities for growth, renewal, and challenge in order to retain quality teachers... (T)eaching is particularly susceptible to the negative impact of isolation, regimented schedules, and regulated advancement... (A)n underlying nagging question remains: *How do we keep good teachers teaching?*”<sup>103</sup>

I appreciated the question, as well as the attention given to the connection between teacher renewal and professional development as becoming critically important *even earlier* in the careers of teachers. For artist-teachers, this means attending to the plurality of their practice, which demands “ongoing professional development support for the deeply embedded artist identities of many arts teachers.”<sup>104</sup>

But, what is professional development? As I read on, I began to see professional development as more than half-day workshops or training seminars, and more as the processes of teachers learning together and alone as they experience the world in multiplicitous ways that circle back into their work in classrooms.<sup>105</sup> I also began to note both how graduate programs have become a vital component of professional development, and how teacher education had shifted to university settings in the past 150 years-- where the quality of learning relies heavily on the particular university and its program.<sup>106</sup>

With this, best practices of professional development had shifted too. Generally speaking, viewing teachers as dynamic learners has become a critical component to adult education.<sup>107</sup> What is more, as Macintyre-Latta and Kim assessed, “professional

development should be experimental, experiential, empowering, ongoing, contextual, collaborative, connecting theory to practice.”<sup>108</sup>

Further, I found that many of these newer understandings of professional development have infused teacher education with practitioner action research (PAR) at the pre-service level, as well as in graduate education,<sup>109</sup> and that PAR has been cited as a recommendation specific to the field of art education.<sup>110</sup> In my own teaching practice, I had witnessed the powerful effects of moving with the PAR spiral through my previous course with this cohort of artist-teachers.

In this sense, I began to see how my dissertation was drawing inspiration from studies much like art teacher educator, Nadine Kalin, whose findings illustrated the importance of collaborative research with teachers, and attending to the process that unfolds in the collaboration.<sup>111</sup> And, this brought me to recall something Maxine Greene realized about her work with teachers. She wrote: “I am concerned... with enabling individuals to reflect upon their own lived lives and the lives they lead in common with one another, not merely as professionals or professionals-to-be, but as human beings participating in a shared reality.”<sup>112</sup>

Given this, I began to consider professional development as a holistic, unbounded process of becoming that entangles personal and professional threads; a *becoming* sparked by opportunities for renewal. However, my understanding of *teacher renewal* required more time, more listening, more questions, more openness, more contemplation.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. As my students and I explored our sweet dreams together, a few questions lingered:

*How do artist-teachers experience these best practices in and beyond graduate school?*

*What professional development opportunities are open to K-12 artist-teachers working in public schools under RttT?*

*How might those who find themselves invigorated in their practices because of their graduate work continue to find renewal?<sup>113</sup>*

*And, how might attending to the process of our collaborative correspondence illuminate deeper understandings of teacher renewal?*

## Threads

Curiosity as restless questioning, as movement toward the revelation of something hidden, as a question verbalized or not, as search for clarity, as a moment of attention, suggestion, and vigilance, constitutes an integral part of the phenomenon of being alive. There could be no creativity without the curiosity that moves us and sets us patiently before a world that we did not make, to add to it something of our own making.<sup>114</sup>

Freire



115

*DR--*

In June, my curiosity endured; my restless questioning continued, postcards and letters cycled between dwelling and movement. As each month curled in to closing, I waded through the many questions feathering through the open spaces of my inquiry. I struggled to choose just one or two to pin down on these postcards. And, when I returned from the post office with the humid morning clinging to my skin, I settled into knowing that my questions hung delicately on a line of space and time and tensed waiting.

*-- BH*

P.S.



116

June's postcards read:

*Variations on a Blue Guitar* is a compilation of Maxine Greene's lectures on aesthetic education. It was during one of those summer lectures at the Lincoln Center in NYC that I first encountered her philosophy. This is a book I go back to often, for in its pages I can always find a little more. Little gems like this, where she plays with a line of Tennyson's poetry to make a metaphor for the generativity of aesthetic experiences: "How dull it is to pause, to make an end."<sup>117</sup>

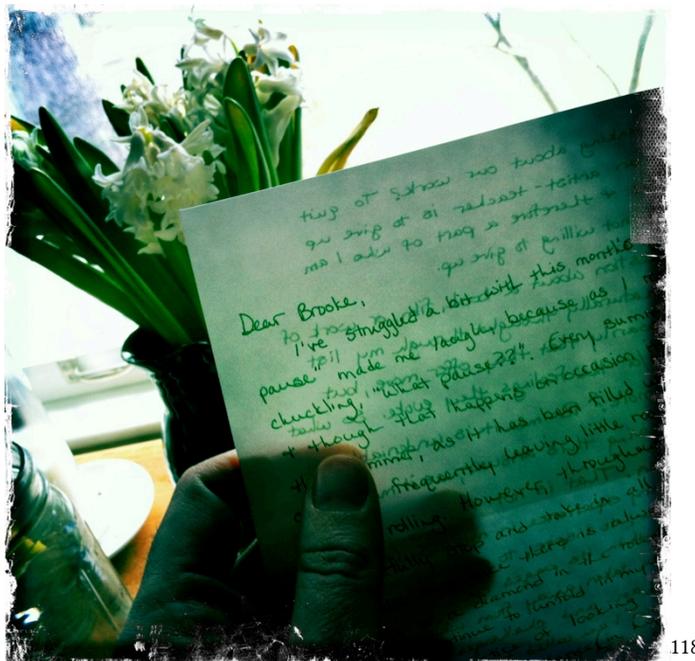
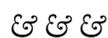
Just as I catch myself slowing into summer's pause, I embrace this reminder that what we learn through aesthetic experiences continues to unfold. If it is deep learning we choose to pursue, we must not pause in our enduring quests, in our searching, reading, creating, playing, and opening to aesthetic experiences. And so, I wonder:

*What meaning continues to unfold from the aesthetic experiences we have shared?*

*And, what is it for you to keep learning, moving, seeking as an artist-teacher in summer's pause?*

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. Is there something (a book, film, work of art) that always offers more?



118

Dear Brooke,

*I've struggled a bit with this month's questions. The thought of "summer's pause" made me laugh, because as I reflected on the idea I was left chuckling, "What pause??" Every summer I anticipate a change of pace, and though that happens on occasion, it is usually not the case. Especially this summer, as it has been filled with life's punches, good and bad, that have come so frequently, leaving little room for processing and no other choice but to keep on rolling. However, throughout our time together I have learned to purposefully stop and take in all that is around me. No matter how good or bad the experience there is always beauty to be found, whether exuberantly glorious or a diamond in the rough. This is how the aesthetic experiences we've shared continue to unfold in my life. It is in the depth I seek and find. It is the practice of looking at the world with a thoughtful eye and not merely a passing glance (in hopes of it becoming a meaningful habit).*

*There is always more, in the hopeful, not exhaustive, sense: more to take in, more to see, to smell, to hear, more to touch us deeply, more to propel us onward. As we have discussed, it is to live wide-awake and to embrace openness, open to endless possibilities, to "the more." Our minds can be so limiting, seeking to be in control of the uncontrollable, constraining our vision (in a very broad sense). An open mind, one that is wide-awake, must be aware of this and know the difference.*

*This openness, along with the will to act and react is what allows me to continue to grow as an artist-teacher. I continue the freeing habit of creating in a visual verbal journal. And, as the summer quickly moves along, in my head I am constantly*

*playing with new ideas for the school year ahead as I am challenged to continue the work of my thesis research. I wonder, just because we have a “summer’s pause” do we ever really cease thinking about our work? To quit learning, moving, seeking, as an artist-teacher, is to give up who we are. It is in my nature and therefore a part of who I am to my very core. Something I am not willing to give up.*

Always,  
Virginia

☺ ☺ ☺

Dear Brooke,

*I think our class was a total experience in itself! I certainly find myself noticing the beauty of the ‘normal’ or ‘common’ everyday objects that surround me. Having a limitless art class to create anything was very eye opening for me. Before, I was focused on the product, where as now, I can appreciate and find just as much joy in the experience itself.*

*As I was walking the dogs with my mom today, I picked up some leaves and used them in my visual verbal journal- this was something I would never have done in the past. I find myself not afraid to try new things- instead of questioning the materials I gathered on my walk, I just went with it and created something I wouldn’t have thought of before.*



Anne

☺ ☺ ☺

*The art exercises we practiced on Saturdays give me hope that I can fall into play easier and with greater success because I have already experienced some success in that endeavor. I realize I miss using a sketchbook. That ritual last semester was a great way to continue practicing artmaking on a small and manageable scale...*

Yes, Claire, I too hope you can fall into play with more ease.

☺ ☺ ☺

*The art room is full of thread, which makes me think of our class. I am still thinking heavily on how I am going to use what we learned to radically change my class. I have decided I want to try to dive headfirst and really shake up my classroom. Being there in summer, and seeing it empty, reminds me that now is the time to make changes.*

*You asked if there was something that always offers me a bit more. I think the first answer is dance. The second is reading (thank you for your book suggestions). I think it is the time I spend moving alone in my own head that keeps me going. And*

of course, these are the things I do not get enough of... I am planning on finding a spot by the lake to indulge in a good book, or 5.

Until next time,  
Char

☺ ☺ ☺

This summer I am also reflecting on the time our cohort shared. I think about the similarities that brought us together. It is our differences, however, that broadened my appreciation and offered me a growth experience. I still enjoy thinking about specific images that some of us created. I see threads that connect these pieces to each other and to their creators.

Looking forward to "July"!  
Ellen



*mid-morning, June 22, 2012*

Dear reader,

I have been thinking about threads, and of one of the course projects that invited an extensive exploration of thread. I gave my students a large spool, and the instructions to document their investigative play with the material each day for 21 consecutive days.

Anyway, in this I am reminded of Dewey, who emphasized that what makes play educative is the meaning that is made afterward through the experience,<sup>120</sup> stating that as we play, our “experience matures” and “purpose becomes a thread” that allows us to make meaning from our playful actions.<sup>121</sup> And, I am wondering how *A~E~P* engages threads of purpose connecting artist-teachers to their creative and teaching practices. Further: where reflective practice<sup>122</sup> might indeed illuminate these threads, might *A~E~P*'s afterglow instead play them differently? Might finding oneself in afterglow be understood as playing a sustained chord of tension that productively balances a commitment to reflective practice with disruptive generativity? Think of Malik, who allowed his reflections to swell and burst forth,<sup>123</sup> who tore down and started anew.

And yes, I realize that threads of purpose may not be so neat and tidy in this postmodern world;<sup>124</sup> as we Race to the Top<sup>125</sup> across the weakened, anesthetized terrain of No Child Left Behind.<sup>126</sup> Yet, we can learn, as artists do, to speak through the many languages of thread. We can learn to stitch, wrap, braid, and weave our sense of purpose as the years pass and everything swerves and shifts around us. We can ask: What tugs at these purposeful threads in teachers' lives? How might *A~E~P* help us

mend them when they snap, or make our threads more elastic and flexible in the first place?

*after dusk*

I was compelled to return to this letter, to these threads. To explain, before I pick up too much speed, that I am using the word *aesthetic* in a way that moves beyond issues of art, taste or beauty. In this sense, my use of *aesthetic* might best be understood through its opposite, the anesthetic. Going under anesthesia is an anesthetic experience; it dulls the senses. By contrast, an aesthetic experience wakes us up, and helps us to break through what Virginia Woolf called the cotton wool of everyday life. Artists who teach must struggle to break through the cotton wool of emails, meetings, grant deadlines, paperwork, grading student work and so on... to connect with the world in an aesthetic moment. And yet, when we succeed, how lovely the reward! We have painted, danced, composed or drawn our world awake. My work embraces this *breaking through* as an expression of renewal and connection. As Virginia Woolf explained: "Behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we—I mean all human beings—are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art."<sup>127</sup>

I see parallels between the hidden pattern Woolf described, and a concept that underpins phenomenological inquiry—the concept of intentionality. As Thomas Schwandt outlined, intentionality is a way of understanding how our engagement in the world exists before our consciousness of that engagement. In other words, we are always, already beings engaged in the world. Intentionality is sharply distinct from a Cartesian logic of: *I think, therefore I am*, which separates thinking subjects from an

objective world.<sup>128</sup> Further, intentionality has been conceptualized a bit differently over time and through the work of different philosophers.<sup>129</sup>

*February 12, 2013*

P.S. Experiencing embodiments of intensities, complicated intentionality a bit more. For example, what did those leaves call out to Anne? What did the thread spark for Charlotte? Simply put, instead of following Husserl and going back to the “things themselves,”<sup>130</sup> the agency of things burst forth in our play. This encouraged my reading and searching for an expanded conception of intentionality. I soon found myself in reveling in a vital materialism that acknowledged: “an active buzzing, a *creative-not-quite-human force capable of producing the new.*”<sup>131</sup> In other words, I opened myself to being affected by human and non-human intentionalities (students, envelopes, wooden type, mentors, stamps, catalogues, and, and, and... ). To better understand “the force of things”<sup>132</sup> or “thing-power,”<sup>133</sup> philosopher and vital materialist Jane Bennett suggested that we “call to mind a childhood sense of the world as filled with all sorts of animate beings, some human, some not, some organic, some not.”<sup>134</sup> And so it appears that play (across our lives) incites and entices thing-power.

In this I recall craft artist and educator, Paulus Berensohn, and pull a book off the shelf to find his words: “I had something as a child that I lost. That capacity I lost made paper into a million things; things I could cut out, paste up, fold, tear, wrap and fly. It made leaves into forests and the people in books I read into close personal and private friends. As with many of the rest of you, this gift of being able to make images, to express wishes, to not as yet separate reality from fantasy, was educated out of me. But here we are back again, given a second and third chance to play... in our own way... The thing is, I’m learning that if you ask ‘What if?’ often enough, you begin not only to

believe, but to know that it is possible to play again (playing can be very serious indeed), to make things that aren't happening for you, happen."<sup>135</sup>

But alas-- I have gained too much speed.

- *BH*

## The Releasing

*You can't burn out if you've never been alight.*<sup>136</sup>

Hargreaves

Dear reader,

As the month opened, I noticed how the neighborhood awoke at sundown. I lingered at the kitchen window, thoughts punctuated by the aural display of roman candles, sparklers, poppers and snaps. My nightly writing slowed with the escalating distractions of noise and heat. When I finally fell asleep on those nights, I climbed piles of questions I could pose; but they never fit quite right upon waking; they remained unsolved. And so, I spent much time carefully worrying them, working them towards smoothness.

- BH

P.S. July's postcards read:

I held a deep hope during our class that aesthetic experiential play might explode new possibilities for our teaching and creative practices. This month, I am reminded how bursts, ruptures and releases take many forms: the tiny blue burn dancing inside the candles on my desk, the spitting white heat of summer sparklers alive in our hands, the bold boom of a July firecracker in a pool of indigo sky.

And so, in these opening days of a new month, I am called to ask you:

*What about aesthetic experiential play exploded possibility for your art making or art teaching?*

*How will you continue to explode possibility for yourself as an artist-teacher?*

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. I recently discovered (and fell in love with) the paper installations of Kyoko Ibe at the SMOCA in Arizona. What new inspiration have you found?



137

☺ ☺ ☺

The Blue Ridge mountains and an eight-day letterpress intensive called me to leave home. After the first day, I wrote this in my journal:

*Needed more time to prepare (pause/think/pack), yet happy to be here. Noticed how I had to ease myself into commitment with setting a long passage in very small metal type. Very different from the work I have done (and enjoyed) with the looser, larger wood type so far. I noticed how overwhelmed and anxious I became sitting, setting the first few lines of type. It got loud. I questioned myself—my ability, my purpose, my intentions. I questioned my decision to be here—rather than studying, reading, writing, preparing for comps. And so, I sat, and I breathed, and I focused on the words (Rilke's) and why I chose them (as a reminder). Then, I had the thought to give the prints as gifts to my mentors, for all those who have taught me to love the unanswerable questions. Somehow, this idea of giving the prints away made it easier to settle in and commit to the work ahead. Soon, I was intuiting the sense of the California job case. Soon, I was out of my head and on the move.*



When I arrived home, there sat a handful of letters on my desk, weighted under the smooth belly of a stone:

*Brooke,*

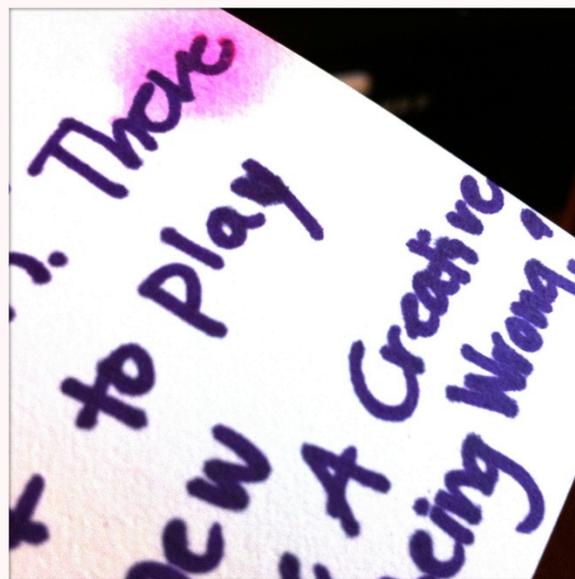
*Aesthetic Experiential Play - an awakening,  
enlightening, mind opening experience.*

*This play allowed me to see the freedom and choice in my own artmaking that I was lacking. The fear of doing something wrong or unattractive frightened me. The idea of releasing and just creating, playing is a freeing feeling. For me, it's the feeling, the freedom, the releasing, that explodes possibility. I am continuing this explosion by implementing centers in my art classroom.*

*My new inspiration is this: "To Live a Creative Life, We Must Lose Our Fear of Being Wrong."*

*Sincerely,  
Judy*

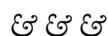
I absorb her letter, noticing the purple ink, smiling at a splash of pink, where perhaps the heat of her thumb has blurred the otherwise perfect page.





A list that Anne includes with her note, reminds me of the lists we made in our visual verbal journals:

*Aesthetic Experiential Play allows for:  
 freedom  
 exploration  
 new ideas  
 learning about self*

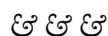


*Dear Brooke,*

*I watched a PBS show about happiness, and I am now doing an exercise where I take a moment to appreciate 3 new things a day:*

- 1. Making a connection between the Kyoko Ibe paper installations you mentioned and an installation I had seen at the NC Museum of Art called Rabble by Helmick and Schechter.<sup>139</sup>*
- 2. Finding several items that have been missing for several weeks.*
- 3. Remembering that even though visiting museums is a bit of a challenge with a newborn, I can find virtual inspiration by visiting museums on-line.*

*Take care,  
 Claire*



Ellen's letter reverberated the lull of artist-teacher routines<sup>140</sup> and the striated spaces<sup>141</sup> of schools that impinge *and* provoke creative lines of movement:

*I continue to explode my creative possibility by reminding myself to always remain present and observant with my teaching. It is easy to become complacent and bored with the daily teaching routine.*

In this, I found myself recalling Davies who cautioned: "Striated space imposes binary thought, it cuts and divides objects into categories, and divides people from each other and from the spaces they inhabit. Such divisions can become dangerous in their power to control and restrict possibilities. In striated space the binaries become naturalized—

the world is divided that way because it is that way—and they can create apparently insurmountable impediments to change.”<sup>142</sup>



I ease the letter opener carefully across the envelope, noticing that on the back, she has written: “*Pay attention to the minutes in life, for the hours will take care of themselves.*” –*unknown*. Inside, her neat script continues on:

*Dear Brooke,*

*The aesthetic experiential play I experienced during our time together set me free. Free from the preconceived and opened my eyes to the adventure of the unknown. Since then, I have used material and processes and created pieces that I would not previously considered, pushing me to go beyond expectation. My first visual verbal journal was a burst of glow in my life. For the first time I was encourage to “play” with no right or wrong to consider, to just create and be open to where my creativity leads me. I’ve carried this idea and practice into my teaching. I want to grant my students this freedom, to give their abilities wings to fly- abilities so often weighed down by specifications, standards, right and wrong.*

*In our ending time together, my personal theme was “beyond expectation.” In order to go beyond the limitations of expectations, one must also believe in endless possibilities. To have hope in possibility is to open avenues of awareness to the unknown and the untraveled. I find that no matter what I create through aesthetic experiential play, there is always a sweet interplay between my past experiences and knowledge and the possibilities of the experiences and attainable knowledge that lie ahead.*

*In the book I am currently reading (“Letters to a Young Poet” by Ranier Maria Rilke – a small read I think you would enjoy), Rilke explains to the young poet: “Go inside yourself. Discover the motive that bids you to write: examine whether it sends its roots down to the deepest places of your heart. This before all: ask yourself in the quietest hour of your night: must I write?... And if this should be the affirmative... then build your life accordingly to this necessity...” To deny ourselves the time to create is to suffocate a deep natural part of ourselves. I have found that I must make time for aesthetic experiential play or else there is a part of me that feels starved, denied, and miserable. And though I have aesthetic explosions throughout my creative play, I find a peace... in the steady glow of the creative habit.*

*I have recently found my inspiration in the power of words such as those of Rilke. As artist-teachers, we give life to the art that endures in and beyond our own lives and the lives of our students. Allowing for the occurrence of explosive possibility.*

*Always,  
Virginia*

Dear reader,

As Virginia was writing this letter to me, I was away, in the mountains, working intensively on letterpress printing. I was seeking renewal by way of being with my art practice. Specifically, I was learning the California Job Case, or the organization of movable type in their compartmentalized drawers. The idea is that with time and patient practice, printers will commit the layout to muscle memory, gaining the necessary speed for quickly setting documents to be printed on the press. And so, for hours, I sat in still concentration, working to set a lengthy passage from Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*,<sup>143</sup> letter by letter.

As I read Virginia's letter, at the mention of Rilke, I looked up from the letter to the printed passage, which I had only that morning slid into a small frame on my desk as a daily reminder of my commitment to my dissertation process; to loving the questions for which I have no answers. Immediately, my eye targeted a typo in the text. Frustration and agitation rose hot in the flesh above my cheekbones. I had probably looked at the print 100 times. How could I have missed it before now? Why didn't I catch the mistake before running so many prints? There were always, already many possible answers.

How many times have I encouraged students to trust the process, to not let things get too precious? How many times have I coaxed a student from the stuck place of a mistake made? And here I was, cursing and crestfallen over one letter "e" in the wrong place. What about the commitment I had made to carve out time, space and resources to begin, play, expand?

Noticing that typo (and my reaction to it) was a beautiful reminder: *we must live our pedagogies*. Greene reminded us this about teachers: “They are in a process-oriented profession. They are helping people become different; they are helping people find their way. And in helping other people find their way, the teacher is somehow finding her way.”<sup>144</sup> A finished print will always be more than letters and ink on paper because of its connection to the maker and the making.<sup>145</sup> I think of Claire and Anne’s letters, to their lists, and I open my journal:



146

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

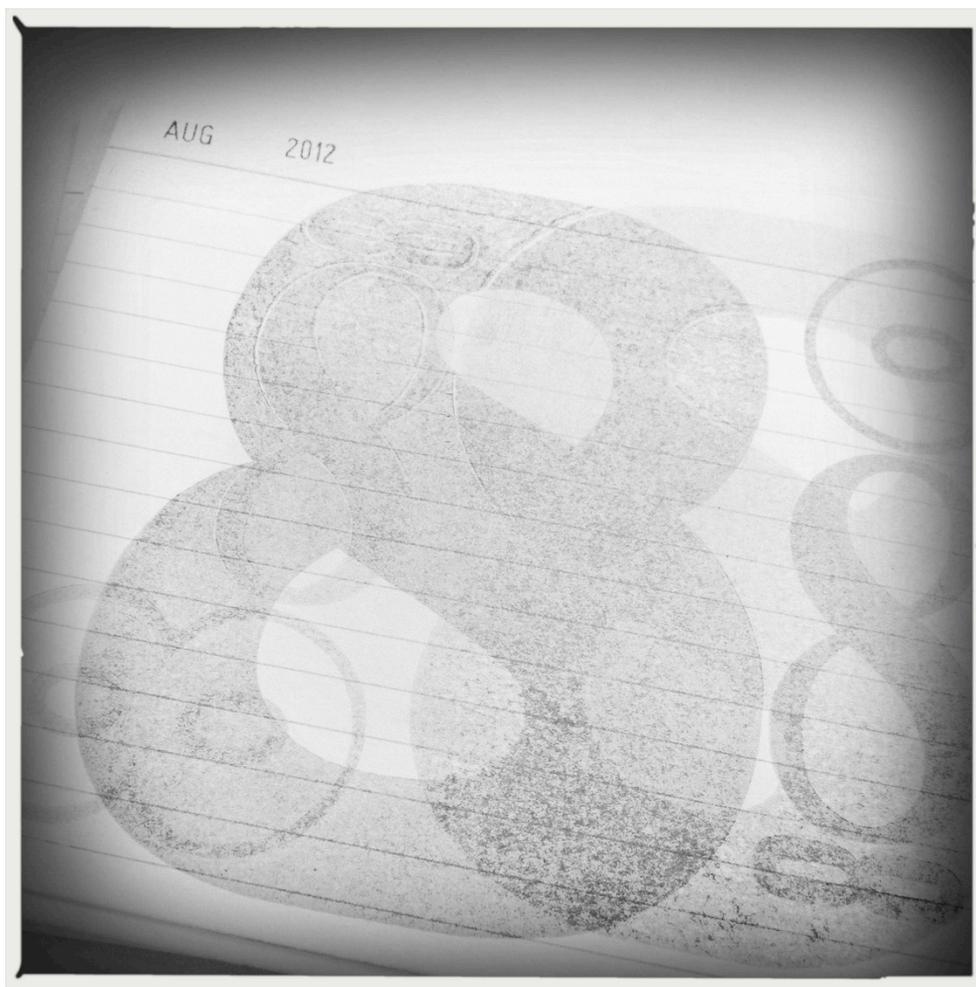
### In the Yet Unwritten Year

*When... a person chooses to view herself or himself in the midst of things, as beginner or learner or explorer, and has the imagination to envisage new things emerging, more and more begins to seem possible.*<sup>147</sup>

Greene

With what looked to be half the books off the shelf, I fortified myself with green tea, blue pens, blank papers, yellow highlighters, and pastel sticky notes of all sizes at the kitchen table. The excitement of beginning again was alive in my bones as I hummed and sipped and imagined. -BH

*p.s.*



August's postcards read:

At the end of the summer, I never can just slide into last year's curriculum or routine, and this year is no different. At the kitchen table, hours pass as I devour piles of books and leaf through my old teaching journals, making notes and feeling deeply all that is possible in the yet unwritten year. There are questions, uncertainties, and anxieties to be sure. And, there is the generous and optimistic gift that returning to the classroom offers us- the gift to change, explore, and try for even more as we continue our becoming as artist-teachers.

As we spiral back to our classrooms this month,  
I wonder:

*What is it like for you to be planning and preparing for a new school year?*

*What are your personal and professional development ambitions this year, and how will you pursue these aims?*

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. I hope you had a lovely summer break!

☺ ☺ ☺

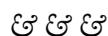
A letter arrives from Judy in which she writes:

*New beginnings are inspiring. Although I have to admit it was daunting early on in my teaching career because teaching is isolating and the curriculum guidelines are very loose. With experience, planning is a clean slate and something I look forward to.*

In her response, I was reminded of the difficulty inherent in learning to teach. In the first few years, I planned too much and I planned too little. Even my sleep was haunted by dreams that exaggerated and distorted all manner of daily ineptitudes: my entire lesson plan devoured in five minutes and the slow, painful demise for the next 40, my voice, tiny and useless, against the ever loudening drone of student chatter, my ears pounding out the rhythm of my rapid heart as I searched in vain for this tool or that paperwork while an administrator took notes...



A call for entries in my inbox reminds me that I am due to send off a letter of support for Ellen's exhibition proposal. For a moment or two, I lose myself in wondering what she has been painting.



*Brooke,*

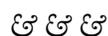
*I need a boost. School starts next week and I have just been informed that I am only getting \$200 for supplies for 725 students. How do they expect so much for so little? The strains they put on us can be discouraging. Sometimes I think I will not want to be in a school setting my whole career. Do you find the same satisfaction for teaching with your college students?*

*This year I am hoping to use... play primarily in my classroom. After our experiences in class, I definitely see more value in this. I am scared though. Mostly because I haven't figured out the logistics yet. My school grades- in elementary! I'm not sure I believe 1<sup>st</sup> grade art should be graded. So, my challenge for the next couple of weeks is to find my balance. A balance between standards and grading and play. I am planning on hitting up Amazon for some help.*

*I wish we could have another museum day! Perhaps it is the boost I need! I am in need of some new inspiration. I will be sure to look up the paper installations you mentioned.*

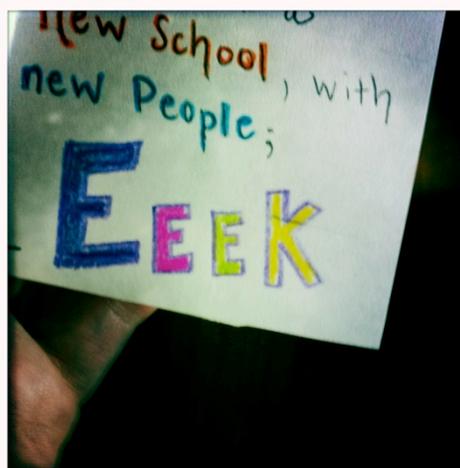
*Until next time,  
Char*

I do the math: \$200 for 725 students means Charlotte can spend \$0.27 per student on supplies. What type of art experiences can you provide a child for an entire school year for a quarter? Perhaps a more important question is: What happened to the enthusiasm Charlotte expressed in her June letter, only one month ago?

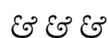


I keep returning to a line from Ellen's letter.... how did she phrase that exactly?  
*Rethinking and retooling lesson plans ...* I love the image this conjures: artist-teachers

reflexively tinkering and mending, fiddling and tweaking. Trimming off a bit here; hemming that a bit shorter there. I think of the tools Anne used to create this little book:



149



*“Do you not see, then, how everything that happens is forever a beginning, and... beginning in itself is always so beautiful?”*

*Dear Brooke,*

*I was quite apprehensive about the start of the new school year. I wasn't ready to let go of summer as I usually am. This was very strange for me. I know part of my apprehension was due to my desire to restructure my art room and curriculum, and feeling as if I had not a clue of where to begin.*

*I wanted to go into my room early and completely reorganize, but I did not. I wanted to delve into restructuring my curriculum, before the kids returned, but, again, I did not. I just couldn't find a way to wrap my head around it all. It was as if I was paralyzed by a fear of the unknown- the exact thing you taught us to embrace.*

*My students returned and had you looked into my art room, it would appear as if I had it all together, when inside I felt clueless and unsteady. I talked a big game to my students as I welcomed the new year and the creative journey we would embark on together. However, every time I sat down to upcoming lesson plans, I felt tempted to revert to old ways- ways, deep down, I longed to reinvent.*

*This is why I could not write this letter until now. I've never felt so mentally unprepared for a new school year (and to my own fault). All that I knew was my*

*desire to turn my elementary classroom into an elementary artists' studio. I want my students to know and believe that they are artists, expressing and expanding their creativity; letting go of the fear of being wrong.*

*I was stuck on the "how" questions. I know what I hope to happen, but how do I get there? How do I lay the groundwork for my students to get there? Where do I begin? I had been trained to create such structured art lessons, that upon taking a step back in hopes of offering more freedom, I didn't know how to plan experiences that would tap into our genuine creative nature.*

*So I began with you. I referred to activities we did in class. So far the experiences have been quite successful, with lots of positive student feedback and expressively intriguing works (a few pictures will be emailed). I've even begun to use the term "creative play" with my students and they seem to embrace it. Some students have found challenges in the choices of freedom, but with a little encouragement dive right in with the others.*

*On the first day of my experimenting with the 'markmaking explorations' one of my students expressed that he felt "alive!" making art this way. My favorite is when my students say "I did it wrong" or "I made a mistake" and I am able to reassure them that this is not possible since there is no right or wrong. I often experiment alongside my students- how freeing to creatively play with my students surrounding me. To creatively journey together.*

*I'm learning to take baby steps in this process and to enjoy the journey that is not just my own but my students as well. We're all learning as we go. Only so much can be planned ahead of time before it becomes too prescribed. I continue to take fearful steps to allow for beautiful beginnings.*

*Always,*

*Virginia*

Dear reader,

As I listened in these letters, I heard my students engaged in various dialogues with their professional practices. As Britzman explained (drawing from Bakhtin), the dialogic “allows us to move beyond dualistic perspectives and to focus, instead, on the polyphony of forces that interact, challenge, beckon, and rearrange our practices and the positions we take up in teacher education. We are invited to resign ourselves from the imperatives of finality and conformity, and view our practices as process and becoming. To retheorize our practices in teacher education, then, requires that we attend to the double problem of changing ourselves and transforming our circumstances.”<sup>150</sup> I mulled in this for some time- considering how dialogic openings pull and stretch at ourselves and our surroundings.

Artist or teacher? Researcher or educator? Beginner or expert? *A~E~P* doesn't require that we choose-- only that we engage at both ends, to keep liveliness in the middle spaces. And so, I looked further for dialogues aroused between these letters and the intensities they provoked in the literature of professional development in art education.<sup>151</sup>

For instance, Virginia wrote about the ways *A~E~P* afforded her freedom in art making and journaling, something she, in turn, would like to extend to her own students. In this, I recalled Mantas and Di Reeze work with teacher development. As they explained: “artful re-search and the co-creative process can help teachers access and reframe tacit understandings of teaching and learning... personal meaning making, which results from such a re-search process can be understood as embodied learning... As agents in their own learning, teachers can then begin to create more nurturing teaching and learning spaces for both self and the students entrusted to them.”<sup>152</sup>

And Charlotte, who began her third year of teaching this fall, addressed many of heavily cited obstacles to teacher renewal for artist-teachers: lack of resources, isolation, time constraints, a need for content-driven professional development, and current focus on standardized outcomes in learning, and therefore, in professional development.<sup>153</sup>

Like Charlotte, many art education scholars have serious concerns regarding the current educational climate and its impact on creative work.<sup>154</sup> As Olivia Gude explained, “(t)oday’s content driven standards for arts education reinforce a tendency to overlook actual processes associated with creative behavior....The standards do not represent the deep experiences of immersion, wonder, and not knowing that are described by creative individuals.”<sup>155</sup> In other words, there is no space in which to flow, become immersed, *play*. In her literature review of K-12 art education teaching, Burton concluded: “Notwithstanding contemporary calls for dialog, discourse, and constructivist learning, pupils still appear to be instructed... through lectures and demonstration. Despite a premium given to creativity and imagination, youngsters are still expected to accomplish predetermined or standardized ends often modeled by the teacher.... In spite of the call for diversity and respect for difference, there appears to be little tolerance for the truly divergent and different in the art classrooms of most American schools.”<sup>156</sup>

In other words, the teaching of art is not what we know it could be. Which begs the question, *why not?* As Amorino answered, the field of art education lacks “critical underpinnings which guide its own epistemology.”<sup>157</sup> We hinge everything on technique and wait for “creative thought” to “flow into the student’s artistic

repertoire.”<sup>158</sup> Elliot Eisner also identified the trap of “routine” that experienced teachers often fall into, stifling their professional growth.<sup>159</sup>

As Charlotte and Virginia wade through their *how* questions, I recalled Lind’s findings that art educators found it frustrating to apply high-quality professional development learning in “a system that isolated them from other teachers; a system that didn’t allow them the time to think deeply about their practice or plan detailed lessons.”<sup>160</sup>

I wonder further: What professional development do these artist-teachers experience outside of our correspondence? What supportive communities exist? The answers looked mighty bleak from the literature, which identified that artist-teachers must be prepared to take on more responsibility for their professional development with fewer resources, as the complexity of their profession increases.<sup>161</sup> In this, I made a note to ask my students about the experiences provided by their schools during our interviews.

Candice Stout’s study of veteran art teachers revealed telling ways that the field has changed since many of these teachers began their work in the 1960’s and 1970’s.<sup>162</sup> Her participants talk through major paradigm shifts, including: the desegregation of classrooms, the open school movement, the rigorous curriculum overhaul Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) brought to art education, and teacher accountability through standardized testing. Her participants explained: “The word ‘restricted’ comes to mind when I think about how teaching has changed. At every turn, there are more laws, more forms, more regulations, more restraints;”<sup>163</sup> and “Frustrated teachers hop from school to school looking for better conditions and they leave the profession at

alarming rates.”<sup>164</sup> What might all these constraints and frustrations have to do with teachers leaving earlier and earlier in their careers that I read about back in May?

As Maxine Greene called to our attention decades ago: “The rebellious teacher, the ‘reflective practitioner’... is asked to tamp down dissonant conceptions of what education might be and perhaps ought to be in a chaotic, uncertain time. We do not know how many educators see present demands and prescriptions as obstacles to their own development, or how many find it difficult to breathe. There may be thousands who, in the absence of support systems, have elected to be silent. Thousands of others (sometimes without explanation) are leaving the schools.”<sup>165</sup> I take these words to heart, where they reverberate within my fear that more and more teachers are asking the questions posed by Jonathan Kozol: “Why are we here? What is the job we are being asked to do?”<sup>166</sup> I fear they are leaving because they can no longer swallow their answers. After all, as Linda Darling-Hammond clearly articulated: “The problem does not lie in the number of teachers available; we produce many more qualified teachers than we hire. The hard part is keeping the teachers we prepare.”<sup>167</sup>

In listening to my students’ letters, I also heard Carol Jeffers, who asked: “When art teachers speak... what will university educators hear- if anything? As art educators, are we ready to hear that existing pre-service and in-service professional development programs have had little effect on art teachers’ professional lives over the past 15 years? *When teachers say loudly, clearly that they need help in addressing issues of funding, status, and viability, how will we respond?*”<sup>168</sup> As an art teacher educator, I found my work implicated in these letters, and also in my practice of teaching pre-service teachers. How do I/we prepare all levels of teachers to find their way through these

questions, encounters, and obstacles to renewal? How would I respond to the turmoil and tension of which my students wrote?

And I found myself going back to Greene once more: “You can’t promise anything by your teaching, but you can open doorways. You need enough confidence in the human psyche to believe that people will walk through the doorways- if you can open them- and see all the tentative results.”<sup>169</sup>

## Expectation is a Veil

Dear reader,

Hanging on my refrigerator door is a postcard that reads:

*Have no fear of perfection – you'll never reach it.*  
- Salvador Dali

BH

P.S.





*I think of Malik often and wonder: Will he ever choose to write? What question would reach him? While the peppermint tea I have brewed steeps into coldness at the edge of my old wooden desk, I sit and write September's prompt:*

In the movement of falling leaves outside my office window, I am reminded of the many ways we too let go through aesthetic experiential play during our class. For some, it was a release from the uncomfortable hold of perfection; for others, it was deep-rooted pedagogies—how we were taught or taught to teach. I hope to understand our experiences of letting go more deeply.

And so, I release these questions to you:

*What did aesthetic experiential play invite you to give up, relinquish, surrender? What new openings did this create?*

*Further, since our class ended, what challenges have you experienced in nurturing these openings? What challenges have you experienced in continuing to let go?*

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. I just began breaking in a new VVJ!

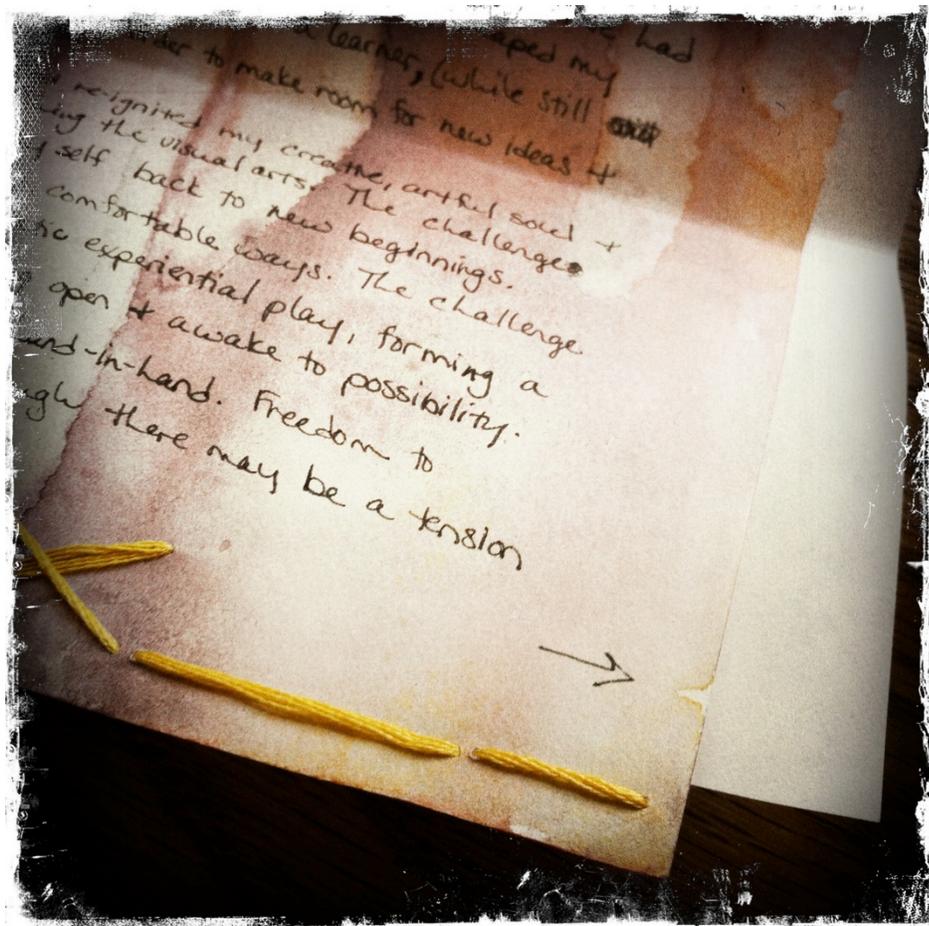
☺ ☺ ☺

Ellen opens her letter, saying: *There is a time to let go and a time to hold on.* In reading her sentence, I release a breath I hadn't known I was holding.

☺ ☺ ☺

I catch myself cringing at the careless way I had poked holes for stitching in my journal, as I turn the page the next day. My thoughts shift to Judy--to how she confessed to ripping the ugly pages out of her book; to how very easy it is to succumb to perfectionism. I wish it wasn't so... I wish I wasn't so...

☺ ☺ ☺



Dear Brooke,

*Through aesthetic experiential play, I have relinquished control. Control of the learned right-and-wrong ways of artmaking. Control of how my students learn, allowing my teaching to be more the guide and less the decisive factor. Relinquishing control of how art “should” look for my students and myself. This makes room for a more genuine creativity, tapping into the soulful depths of our creative unconscious, pushing beyond the pre-conceived and the safe harbor of the “known.” It allows for journey and adventure, navigating uncharted waters that challenge us to courageously face our creative fears.*

*I write this letter as my students create around me, allowing their interests, choices, and creative explorations to drive their work. They are capable of so much more than my mind can conceive, and of more than they are consciously aware. As am I... This is why we must move beyond and become anew... We must “give up, relinquish, surrender” in order to be creatively renewed. Through aesthetic experiential play I’ve learned to surrender my desire for perfection and my will to know the road I must travel to get to my destination. I’ve had to break from the confines of the pedagogies that have shaped my teaching curriculum from my beginning days as a learner (while still allowing them to inform my decisions) in order to make room for new practices.*

*Breaking free had refreshed and reignited my creative, artful soul and further flamed my passion for teaching the visual arts. The challenge lies in remaining open and bringing myself back to new beginnings. Battling the ease of regressing into old, comfortable ways. The challenge lies in the continual practice of aesthetic experiential play, forming a sort of creative habit, while still remaining open and awake to possibility. Creative pedagogies that can very much go hand-in-hand. Freedom to creatively play allows for new beginnings, though there may be a tension in this becoming habit.*

*In the tension, we find the challenge and beauty of habitual aesthetic experiential play. The action of the creative habit allowing for the freedom of creation through aesthetic experiential play. And we continue to propel forward. Spiraling on.*

Always,  
Virginia

☺ ☺ ☺

After five months of waiting for a letter from Malik, I received this note:

*Letting go has never really been easy for me. I’m a little ashamed to admit it, but I have a control complex... I plan to follow my own philosophy of teaching. If my students can learn to just let go and create, why can’t I? I know I can. I know I will.*

Yes, Malik. I know you can. I know you will.

☺ ☺ ☺

A line from Charlotte's letter floats in and out of my thoughts all day:

*Finding that artist/teacher balance is always an issue I think. I expect this is just the nature of what we do and who we are.*

☺ ☺ ☺

I moved to the couch, curling up into Claire's unfolded letter. She begins:

*I am delighted to hear you have a new visual verbal journal. I need to invest in a new journal or break out one of my half finished sketchbooks and start back up.*

*Aesthetic experiential play invited me to give up perfection. The time constraints helped me to focus on what was important. At times, I wanted to play with color and other times, I wanted to focus on shape.*

*So this play also helped me to relinquish control- I had to let go of what was comfortable. It was a safe place to stretch my creative potential. I think the opening I was looking for was the way to bridge the abstract and the representational in my painting. My goal was to create a happy balance.*

*My biggest challenge is finding time. I think this will always be my challenge. I know if I got out my VVJ I could do little things like I did last Spring, it's a good idea. As far as letting go, well there were times when I got stuck when I was writing and I left like such a failure. But I kept going back to it and powered through. I think I can be too hard on myself when it comes to writing- it's hard for me. I feel bad that it is hard for me, but it really doesn't matter- because I keep showing up.*

*Well, Brooke, I am finally caught up on my postcards. Sorry for the delay. I hope you are well and the semester is off to a wonderful start. Enjoy your family and have a lovely September. Fall is a beautiful season.*

Take care,  
Claire

P.S.



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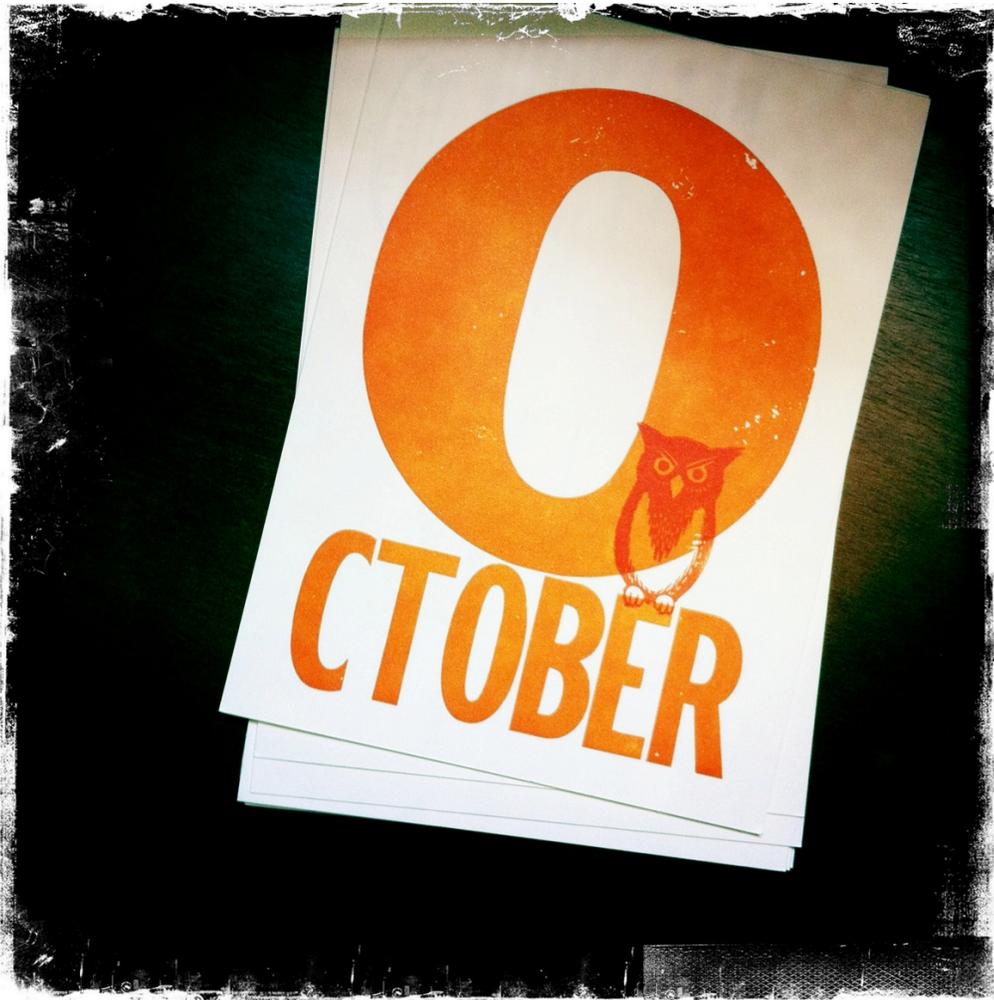
I remembered how my students closed our Saturday class:

*If we give our students permission to play, shouldn't we give it to ourselves?  
If we wait for the perfect moment, will it ever happen?  
Expectation is a veil—  
it gives you tunnel vision—  
like an eclipse—  
it closes off possibilities.<sup>173</sup>*

Slowly, Swiftly, Fluidly

Becoming is a verb...<sup>174</sup>

Deleuze & Guattari



October's postcards read:

Often, we pursue a question, a goal, an awareness in our reflective practice and in our professional development. This month, I have been thinking deeply about such things; I have been asking questions about *how* we pursue? How are we moving in relationship to our inquiries, ambitions, awakenings?

And so, I ask you to consider:

*Who* might you become?

Further, *how* do you move in relationship to who you are becoming? What directions, speeds, or intensities does your movement express?

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. In your response, how will you move between images and words?



Her letter sat at the edge of my desk for weeks, resisting being folded and tucked away inside the box in which I keep the letters. The torn portrait of herself, and the vibrant bleed of tissue paper, her precise phrasing curving in between the fragments of image and color:

*Who might I become?*

*Me. Mentor. Ambitious Leader. Professor.*

*Articulate Artist. Effective Advocate. Wife.*

*Child-like Forgiver. Fearless Pursuer. Mother.*

*Continuous Knowledge-Seeker.*

*How? Reflect on what is behind. Remain conscious of now. Keep moving forward.*

*Always, Virginia*

Somehow, I needed all of it at my periphery.



176

☺ ☺ ☺

*Ahhhh.... the age old question...*

*What do I want to be when I grow up?*

*I want to be self-aware.*

*I want to develop a broader more accurate perspective of myself.*

*I want to revel in my process as well as my product.*

*I want to see the opportunities within the routine.*

*I am moving toward this place slowly at times,  
reminding myself of these goals.*

*In my more present moments,*

*I progress more swiftly and fluidly without thinking.*

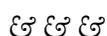
*I just "Be."*

*I visualize this movement as a positive, upward spiral.  
 It has purpose, but is not demanding.  
 It allows me to explore and to return to my center.  
 It affords me space to muse and doodle in a letter  
 Once a month to a friend.  
 It validates more than judges.*

*Like a bird hunting for insects in the short grass,  
 I find things that feed me and I anticipate my next discovery.*

*In this way, I might become. ~~a person who enjoys being myself.~~*

Ellen



Dear Brooke,

*I would agree that in my professional teaching practice I have often been in pursuit of a goal, but after the PAR project I think I might prefer to pursue a question. Honestly Brooke, I hate having to choose a goal each year to satisfy a school policy or district mandate. The reason I dislike it, is because I feel that they are not as honest. I am just jumping through an educational hoop. The goals haven't been personally relevant. Last year, I did try to make my goal more personally relevant but it still wasn't easy to account for it, according to their framework. I loved pursuing my National Boards, and then my Masters, because they were both relevant, art specific, and positively impacted my teaching. I need to learn how to meld the two.*

*Honestly, as an art teacher I want to become more student-centered, and really grow as an art teacher. But, at the same time, I want to become better at meeting the day-to-day organization, too. I want to streamline my work more efficiently, so that when I am trying to do a good job- I am not always at work! I am passionate about being a good teacher, but I want to be a better manager so I can also enjoy my life outside of work.*

*As an artist, wow, that is an excellent question. There was a time I really wanted my MFA in painting. Now, I just want to find time to paint. It's all good though. This is a wonderful season for me, motherhood. Eventually though, I am going to need to get a plan together and fulfill my dream of having an art show. Not so hard really, I just need to do it!*

Take care,  
 Claire

*ps. To address your question of how I will move between images and words. I don't know. I do know that I organize a letter when I write things down. Maybe I should try a stream of consciousness writing in my journal until something emerges to where I need to stop... and develop it through painting.*

Dear reader,

Deleuze and Parnet warned: “The question ‘What are you becoming?’ is a particularly stupid question. For as someone becomes, what he is becoming changes as much as he does himself.”<sup>177</sup> Despite their cautioning, I was drawn to wonder how my students might take up *becoming* as a movement that works in their own lives. In the text, *The Deleuze Dictionary*, Stagoll rendered an entry of becoming, stating: “Becoming is the pure movement evident in changes *between* particular events. This is not to say that becoming represents a phase between two states, or a range of terms or states through which something might pass on its journey to another state. Rather than a product, final, or interim, becoming is the very dynamism of change, situated between heterogeneous terms and tending towards no particular goal or end-state.”<sup>178</sup>

Deleuze’s concepts of becoming and difference travel in the interstitial spaces, as does aesthetic experiential play, which Gadamer made possible when he set play on the move *in-between* and not *inside* subjective boundaries.<sup>179</sup> In this, I envisage renewal as becoming-different, as dynamic movements between aesthetic experience and play, postcards and letters, teachers and students (to name a few of the heterogeneous terms I have brought to bear in this inquiry); movements that might be mapped as geographies.

As in the generativity of aesthetic experience and play, renewal is not an *end*, *product*, *destination*. You cannot arrive there, because you are forever on the move.

-- BH

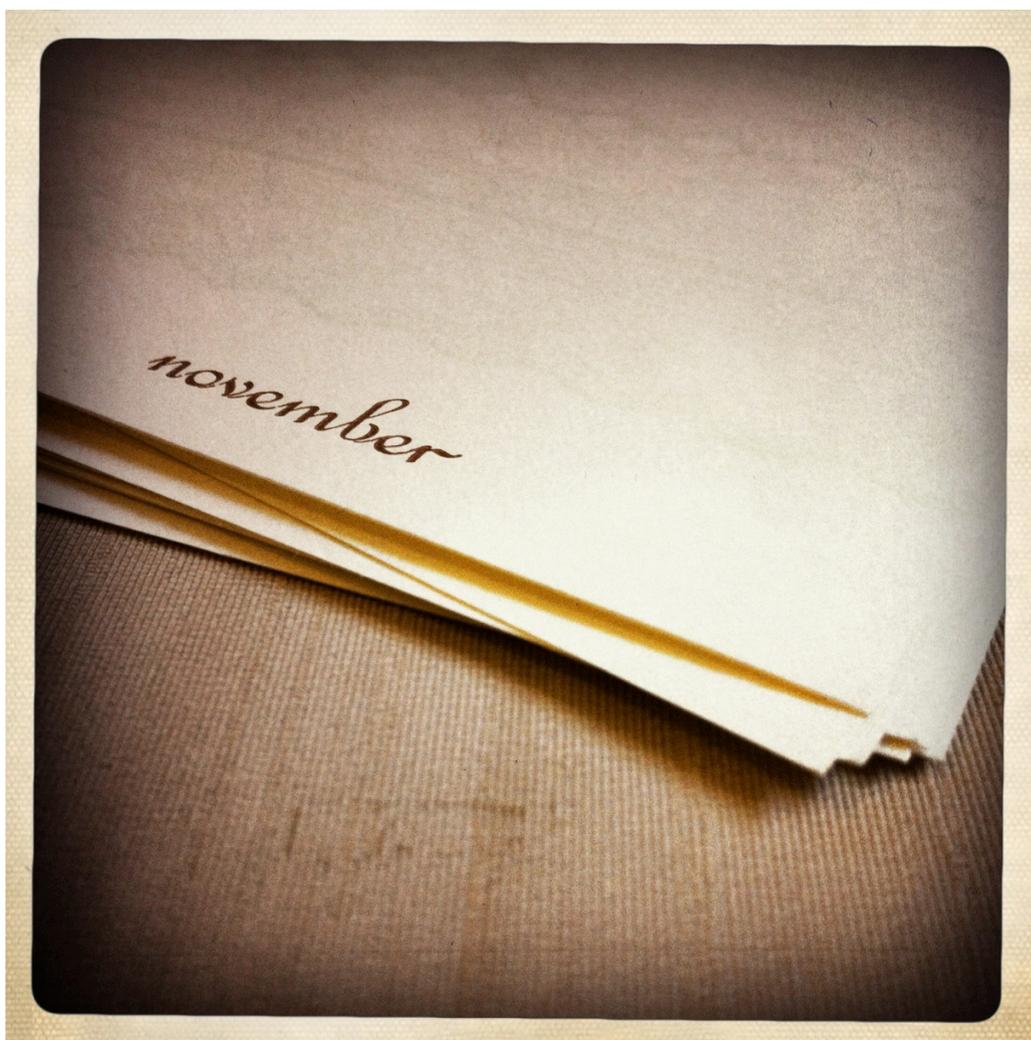
## A Capricious Seamstress

*Writing is a process of discovery.*<sup>180</sup>

Laurel Richardson

Dear reader,

As Ellen remarked, the lace pressure print on the November cards *is barely there... just a whisper...* Do you see it?



181

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. November's postcards read:

"Memory is the seamstress, and a capricious one at that. Memory runs her needle in and out, up and down, hither and thither. We know not what comes next, or what follows after. Thus, the most ordinary movement in the world, such as sitting down at a table and pulling the inkstand towards one, may agitate a thousand odd, disconnected fragments, now bright, now dim, hanging and bobbing and dipping and flaunting..."<sup>182</sup>

In this passage from Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, I am reminded why I sit with my journal each day. The blank page embraces unknown possibilities; offers my tentative hands a space to trouble fleeting impressions and observations of the world. And so, I find myself compelled to ask:

*What has the movement of sitting down to work in your visual verbal journal stirred in you?*

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. Are you sitting down with your journal these days?

☺ ☺ ☺



On delicate layers of tissue paper, Virginia wrote:

*Visual verbal journaling has stirred within me  
an awareness of the creative potential  
embodied within my human frame,  
awaiting opportunity to come to existence.  
There is freedom in a blank page and time, however fleeting, to create.  
We must get out of our own way.*

☺ ☺ ☺

Dear Brooke,

*As a gift to myself... for 10 minutes a day I will play in my VVJ. It is not easy to find the time for myself, but I will play. I must admit that your questions, and my reply, have inspired me to indulge. I hated to write no, so I am not. I have pulled a used sketchbook off the shelf, and will not be critical about what I put in it, that is something I learned from our class, to suspend judgment on myself. I am going to put some supplies in my backpack, and create my own art bag.*

*So, I have a question for you: What is your process for returning to what you have created in your journal? Do you return to what you have written or drawn? I don't have a pattern for reflecting that I am currently comfortable with- often I don't return to what I have written- maybe I have and didn't enjoy it. I think I might enjoy looking back over my images though. So how about you? What is your process like since you said you sit down with your journal each day?*

*I think if I had a positive view of journaling I might do it more.*

Take care,  
Claire

☺ ☺ ☺

Dear Brooke,

*Because I don't always have a journal or sketchbook in front of me, I often write and draw on an available piece of paper (as I did with the draft for this letter). In this manner, my inspiration is not limited to the confines or proximity of a physical journal.*

*I recently had one of these papers on my desk at school. I was trying to phrase a thought through my teaching day. I would write, teach, discuss art with students, walk around, glance at my sentences, and write a few more words- completely open and fluid... Since I often end up with many words and drawings on unrelated scraps of paper, I have begun making pockets on some of my journal pages.*

*Unfortunately, in my race to meet so many deadlines, I have not had the opportunity to sit down with my journal. I will do so this winter.*

*Keep those cards coming!  
Ellen*



Dear Claire,

Many years ago, I visited the home of a potter who lived down the road from Penland School of Crafts where I was learning about book arts. Row after row, his handmade journals filled an entire bookshelf. In this encounter I saw how one might take up living their life as an unfinished work of art, as a perpetual work in progress. With all the working notes, rough sketches, terrible ideas, sudden outbursts, stupid questions, long reflections, photograph documentation, and... As I write to you, the bookshelf to my right holds dozens of journals – some bound by my hands with waxed linen thread and covered with hand crafted papers, others simple, unassuming with plain black covers.

But, you asked about my process of returning to these books. Mostly, they dwell here on the shelf next to me, reminding me of this intention. I do return to them every now and again, however. Each dated entry, every scrawled notation, marks another capture of becoming – becoming-teacher, becoming-artist, becoming-inquisitive, becoming-playful, becoming-different. I suppose that journaling through the visual and the verbal is a reminder that my living is always, already a work in process – fluid, supple, smooth. In this way, perhaps a practice of journaling echoes the way you envisage your life. How do you imagine your process of living, Claire? How could a practice of journaling embody that vision?

I am inclined to keep several books at once: a teaching journal, a collection of poems and quotations, a log of my letterpress projects, a daily jotter- to name just a few. The daily jotter travels with me, and the rest dwell here most of the time. In this way, I return to specific books as I envision a new curriculum or search for this stanza or that recipe. What types of books would you want to pull off the shelves that don't yet exist?

Perhaps I am drawn to journaling for what is unexpectedly made visible when I sit down to spill my *selves* (artist, writer, teacher, researcher, and...) across the page. Perhaps I teach visual verbal journaling, because I believe it to be an integral part of teacher research,<sup>184</sup> and an inquisitive engagement with our multiplicity of selves. Do you know the work of Laurel Richardson (qualitative researcher and professor of sociology and gender studies)? She wrote: "I write because I want to find something out. I write in order to learn something that I did not know before I wrote it. I was taught, though, as perhaps you were, too, not to write until I knew what I wanted to say, until my points were organized and outlined. No surprise, this static writing model coheres with mechanistic

scientism, quantitative research, and entombed scholarship. Much of that writing is simply not interesting to read because adherence to the model requires writers to silence their own voices, to view themselves as contaminants... Writing as a method of inquiry is a way of nurturing our own individuality and giving us authority over our understanding of our own lives."<sup>185</sup>

Why do *you* write, Claire?

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. I love this idea of an art bag... What will you put inside?

p.s.s. I also love this snippet from Virginia Woolf's diary:

... I have just reread my year's diary and am much struck by the rapid haphazard gallop at which it swings along, sometimes indeed jerking almost intolerably over the cobbles. Still, if it were not written faster than the fastest typewriting, if I stopped and took thought, it would never be written at all; and the advantage of the method is that it sweeps up accidentally several diamonds of the dustheap.<sup>186</sup>

## Room for Magic

Theory seldom springs forth from nothing but is most often produced in response to problems of everyday living.<sup>187</sup>

St. Pierre



188

Dear reader,

My office window holds a blinding light within its frame. I look wonderingly at the postcards in my hands, while my body slowly adjusts to the cold after hours spent wrapped up in quilted covers. I cross the room towards a wool sweater left on the back of the chair, and, under its warm weight, feel my shoulder blades slowly begin to ease away from my ears.

I think about how, in letterpress printing, furniture is packed protectively around the type, which must hold tight and steady while the heavy cylinder rolls print after print. Traditionally, these wood pieces are laid flat, and thus too low to register on the final print. I think of how, in my play, I chose to upend these wooden pieces so they were revealed rather than hidden. This morning, I wonder: what happens when we reveal how we protect our pedagogy?

BH

P.S. December's postcards read:

Winter carries darkness and chill, warranting joyful rituals of warmth and protection. Sleeping under the weight of heavy quilts, meeting the day wrapped in the thickness of wool, noticing the heat of the tea mug as it steeps in hand. In these actions, these moments, I am drawn to consider the ways that we, as artist-teachers, protect our pedagogies from harsh elements that may dampen and cool our fire.

And so, I ask of you:

*How do you experience or encounter harsh elements in your teaching or creative practices?*

*How do you protect your pedagogies?*

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. Be warm!

☺ ☺ ☺



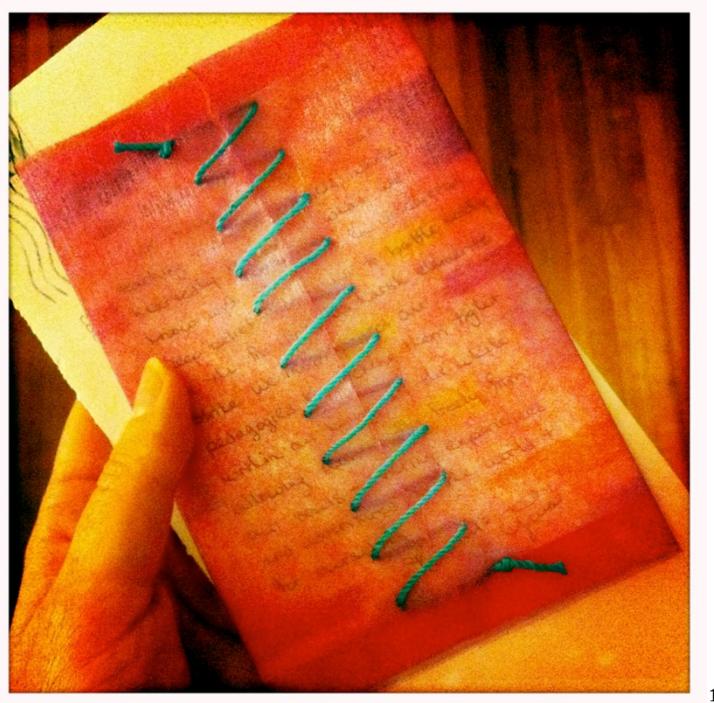
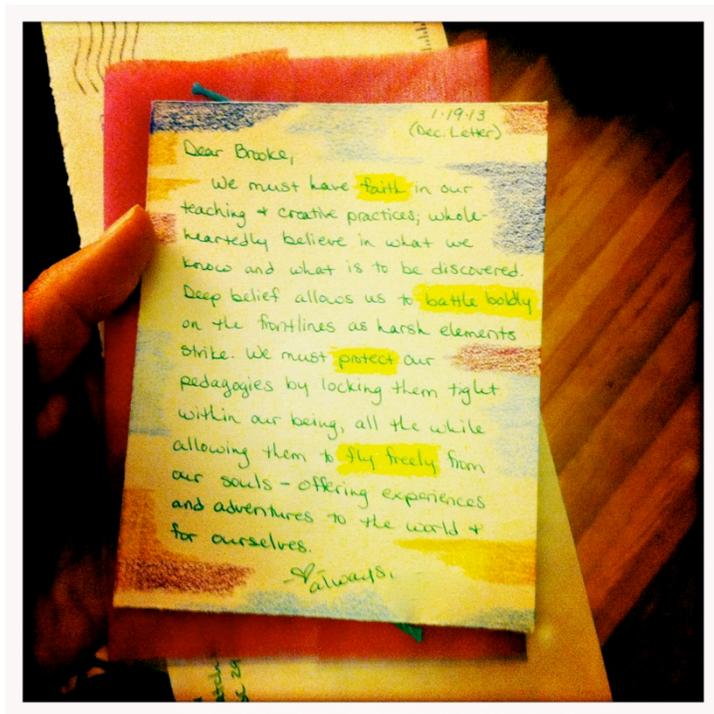
189

*Somehow, I am angry at the post. Even the holiday cards and birthday greetings are cast aside in search of a cotton envelope, yet none arrive. Oh, December—I never before thought you a lonely month. Forcing myself to the office chair, craving the arrival of a new letter, a different line of flight to follow. But there are none.*

*So I redirect my attention to the January cards printed and waiting on my desk. Three different post offices this week, and none of the stamps would do. Wedding cakes- no. Cherry blossoms- no. Nativity scenes- no.*

*Am I angry at the post when I should be letting go? Am I clinging to perfection when I should be playful?*

☺☺☺





*So many thoughts, so little time!*

*Dear Brooke,*

*How ironic, in the light of recent events, that your December card addressed the issues of harsh elements and protection! Was its postmark, December 14<sup>th</sup>, prophetic, coincidental, or your immediate response to the massacre that occurred that same day at Sandy Hook? As I replay that scenario, I imagine myself locking my doors, turning off the lights, and crouching with students under the tables.*

*This is imaginary... In the meantime, I experience REAL intruders in my creative practice. I feel the harsh tug of administration's desires, agendas, and schedules. Meetings and superficial displays of perfection often rob the creative time and energy necessary for my creative practice -- artmaking, research, and crafting art lessons. Since recent test scores have shown an "achievement gap" between the regular curriculum students and the special education students in our school, fine arts teachers have been mandated to include math, social studies, English language arts, etc. into our art and music units. Theoretically, this type of instruction can help close the test score gaps.*

*To accomplish this task without sacrificing my art pedagogy, I think and perform on multiple levels. For example- a math tutor sometime holds small group instruction in my room before my morning classes. As I prepare for art, I listen to her tutorials, pick up on sentient details, and weave them into my art lessons. Listening to this interchange, I realize creative potential in unexpected places, fulfill some mandates and protect my pedagogy. I also ask myself a question -- How could I not include math, science, social studies, and ELA in my art teaching?! They are inextricably connected! It's Life!*

*Finally, I remind myself that I am extremely fortunate, like those at Sandy Hook and so many other schools, I could be hiding under tables in the dark with my students waiting for the Angel of Death to pass us by.*

*Thinking good thoughts in your direction--  
Ellen*



*Dear Brooke,*

*I am moving from my DBAE training (which has merit and has positively influenced my teaching) to a more student-centered framework. My PAR project was a beautiful opening for my teaching. I am more aware of my decisions setting the course of my classroom adventures, and I am open and eager to move in a more student-driven direction. I still have questions about how students should set their*

*own goals and take a more active role in shaping the projects and their art education. I am curious what that would look like and how to manage that environment.*

*Honestly, it is hard to fit in the public school paradigm sometimes. My end of year evaluation was ok, but it was clear that the art classroom wasn't easy to assess. I can tell in the future... that I will need to plan my teaching so that it can fulfill the requirement of "the system." The end of the year assessment is standardized. So to some extent, I will let it inform my style. This is of itself isn't bad, but it doesn't take into account some of the great things happening... because it wasn't on the form. Where is room for magic?*

*Protecting myself may mean working backward some to meet the standardized norms. Assessment... is one of the loose threads in my teaching.*

*Take care,  
Claire*

Dear reader,

Sometimes you ask a question shaped like an arrow and the discussion explodes in flight. I was caught up in all of it; writing hard and fast and sloppy across the slick white surface. I was energized and eager about our discussion of play and exploration in the public school art classroom, and I remember feeling that we were really going somewhere. Reaching on tipped toes, I struggled to find the last little bit of empty space: to record our progress, our shared meaning making, the live event of our learning. And then, Erik spoke: “Process is a hard sell.” Something about that sentence hammered a tender nerve of my memory; it slipped our conversation and took me somewhere else.

I was framed in a doorway when I heard a second grade teacher instruct her 28 students to throw away their construction paper sculptures on the way from Art to recess. As they walked away, out of my pedagogical reach, their “docile bodies”<sup>191</sup> formed a picture perfect line; pleasing to her eyes. What she did not find pleasing was her students’ explorations, their artwork, which she referred to as “a waste of paper.” It was being witness to (and implicated in) moments like that when my progressive pedagogy in a prescriptive system of education felt like a burden too deep to bear.

The public school runs by a sharp, unforgiving clock that does not tolerate disruption, numbing my outrage in obligation to the next line of students already entering the art room. And so, *my* docile body was left to imagine the menagerie of constructed paper tigers, alligators, and kittens limply, lifelessly sliding down the black plastic liner. At the day’s end, I closed the door and committed to the computer, pounding my best practices onto the keyboard and into a letter. My tone was professional; my sentences and arguments crafted with all the careful pedagogical

decisions I had made for those students, her students. I copied the administration; I asked for 45 minutes of floor time at the next staff meeting where I lectured on the importance of exploration, process and dialogue for the holistic and artistic development of children and led the teachers in a paper exploration of their own. And yes, I won a few allies that morning.

In retrospect, I think these were all fine moves to make; moves I hope the teachers I teach will be articulate enough to make when advocacy calls. And, it is only with time and distance that I now see how these moves were not enough. Not enough to keep me in the classroom; to keep me renewed in my practice. In all of my explaining, teaching, performing monologues,<sup>192</sup> I did not ask my colleagues the very questions that would come to burn away the connectedness I had once felt to my work as a public school artist-teacher:

*How had these teachers arrived at their narrowed views of art education?*

*How it was possible for teachers to devalue children's artwork?*

These were certainly questions I asked in my teaching journal and to my husband over the dinner table. Perhaps I did not ask them to my colleagues because I had settled with living in answers: Art was the Other, and I was the Other's teacher.

I stuck it out for a few more years, pushing back against the demands for product-focused artwork from parents and teachers that demanded little more from my students than following directions and pleasing adults. Slowly I withdrew behind a closed door, protecting the pedagogy I cared so deeply about: play, exploration, creativity. More and more, I saw how the changes I wanted to see in education were not extending beyond my four walls. As Gadamer revealed, "the openness toward the spectator is part of the closedness of the play."<sup>193</sup> Closing my classroom door, or the

fourth wall, closed the possibility of experiencing “play as a process that takes place in the in-between.”<sup>194</sup>

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

## Joyful Prospects

However we live, there is always more.<sup>195</sup>

Todd May



196

January's postcards read:

There is something I find quite beautiful in the charismatic new year chatter declaring change, resolve, new beginnings. In this month, I am called to reflect, to repair, to redirect. And, to do what nourishes hope and invites joyful prospects in the days and months ahead.

And so, I hope you will consider:

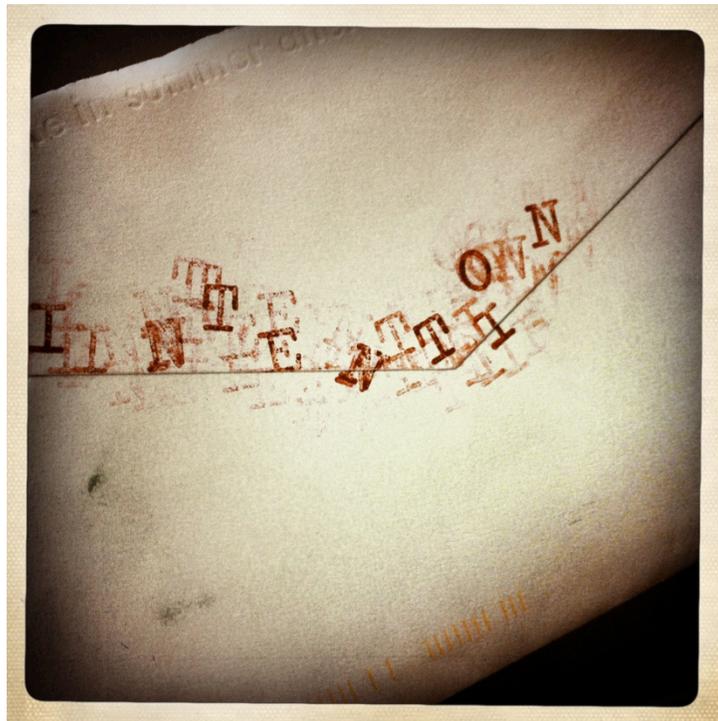
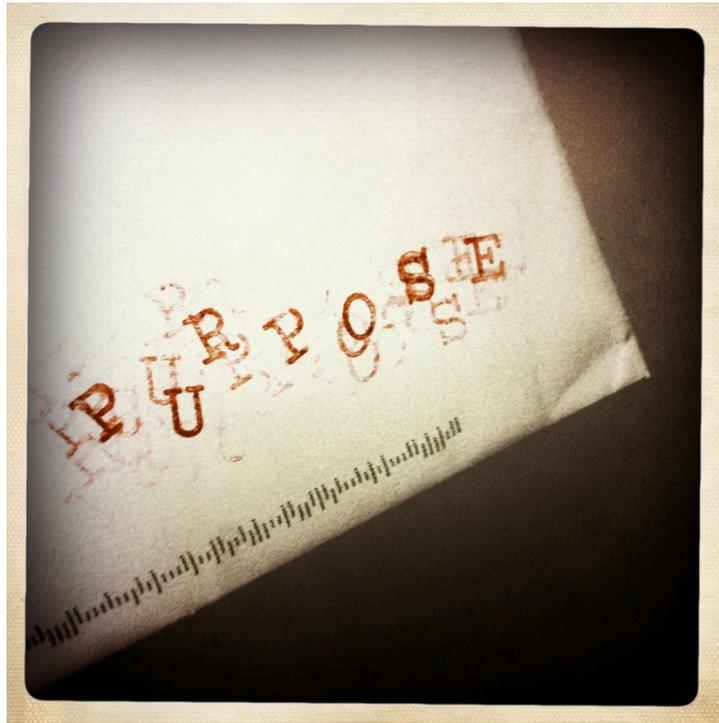
*What do you resolve to invite into your personal and professional life?*

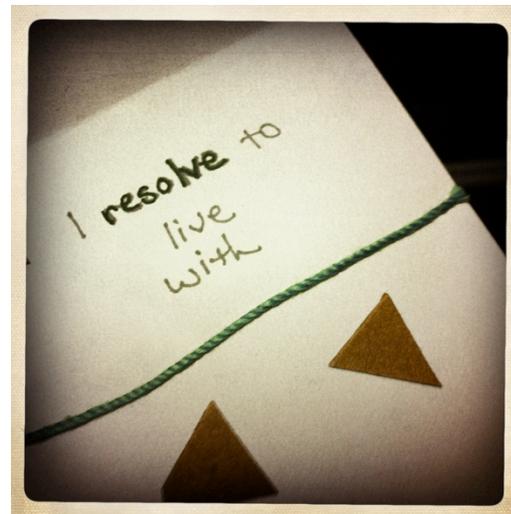
*How will you live in your resolutions?*

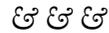
Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. How might you visually/verbally map your resolve?

୫୫୫







*Dear Brooke,*

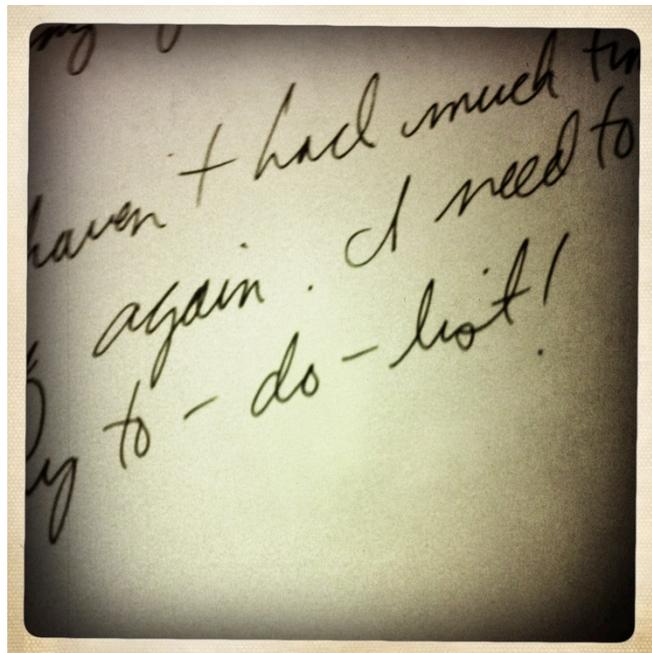
*Happy New Year! May it be bright!*

*I plan to finish my thesis and look for job opportunities for the 2013-14 school year. When I am working again and have more disposable income, I want to subscribe to an art education journal and rejoin the NAEA. Finishing my thesis is my biggest goal. (Side note: I just finished my second draft.)*

*Applying for jobs means an updated resume, teaching philosophy, and student samples. I have been reading Virginia's thesis (beautiful by the way), and am interested in learning more about art centers. I have the book *Engaging Learners through Artmaking: Choice-based Art Education in the Classroom*<sup>199</sup> – something I want to read. I want to make sure for my next job... my curriculum is challenging but student centered!*

*As far as my own art... I haven't had much time, but look forward to painting again. I need to get a new VVJ. That is on my to-do list!*

*Take Care,  
Claire*





201

Dear Brooke,

*Like the Roman God, Janus, I sit in the present looking simultaneously to the past and future. Currently, I hold this thought while working on a collage. During the process, voices speak to me from two directions. On one side, they whisper accolades about my creative concept. They tell me my colors dance, my shapes are perfectly proportional, and the transitions are seamless. From the opposite direction, accusations fly through bared teeth. They demand to know why I waste my time on such mundane dribble. They remind me of the countless images that already fill my flat files, portfolios, and sketchbooks... Both of these voices come from the same place. They are spoken from the mouth of the EGO!*

*In the days and months ahead, I resolve to ignore these voices of flattery and accusation. They distort my perspective, paralyze my productivity, and rob creative energy. Instead, I will stand, like Janus, in the present. I will invite contemplation and accurate perspective into my personal and professional life.*

*This description conjures a variety of visuals that I am currently using in my work and will be helpful in mapping and maintaining my resolve.*

Ellen

Dear reader,

As we wrote our way into the new, I was reminded that: “Deleuze’s ontology is not a resting place; it is not a zone of comfort; it is not the answer that allows us to abandon our seeking. It is the opposite. An ontology of difference is a challenge. To recognize that there is more than we have been taught, that what is presented to us is only the beginning of what there is, puts before us the greater task of our living. We have not finished with living; we are never finished with living. However we live, there is always more.”<sup>202</sup>

*Yours,*

*BH*

## Kiss of Immediacy

On Thursday and Friday we worked away at printing. Unvarying cold and gloom, which turns now to rain, now to snow. This is the Hell of the year. We seem to mark time in mud.<sup>203</sup>

Woolf

Dear reader,

It was a studio day and, in spite of the unkind weather, I found myself giddy and joyful over every little detail as I set up for printing. Even the sticky red ink became alert and deliciously alive as it spiraled and spread itself across the rollers.



204

-- BH

☺ ☺ ☺

I had gingerly pulled one of the February postcards from a sleepy stillness in the drawer after languidly walking the house sipping morning coffee and sifting through

possible questions to pose. The hot pink paper and red ink felt boldly feminine against the ruddy skin on my wintered hands. Carefully, I placed the card at the edge of my writing desk. The punch of color at my periphery a little gesture, an invitation to the question that had not yet come into view. Once again, the question I desired to ask was just beyond the reach of my tongue, the reach of my fingertips as they click, click, clicked the morning away.

And so, the question lingered just beyond my reach until a few days later when my attention caught on a photograph of a woman pulling a sheet of paper, her shoulders squared as she levels the mould and deckle, water streaming through the wet sheet of paper to the vat of hot pink pulp below; The color reminding me of the postcards waiting there. With “a kiss of immediacy”<sup>205</sup> I knew what it was that I desired to ask.

February’s postcards read:

The Penland School of Crafts summer catalogue arrived in the mail, making for a delightful distraction from my afternoon to-do list. I quickly settled in from the cold, shedding layers and belongings while the kettle began to putter and steam. With a few squares of bitterly dark chocolate from the cupboard and pages of possibilities to explore, I lost myself in lingering. Moving slowly from page to page, the course titles sang sweetly to me: “Press Play: Improvising Content,” “Unusual 3D Paper Techniques,” “Books with Substance.” It happens like this every year upon the catalogue’s arrival, I go swooning heart-first in a landscape of desire and fantasy.

As this month opens, I wonder:

*How do you linger with your personal and professional desires?*

*What lifts you into fantasy as an artist-teacher?*

Yours,  
Brooke

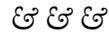
p.s. A few communities that may be of interest: Haystack, Women’s Studio Workshop, Bookworks, Squam, Arrowmont, SummerVision DC, Charlotte Teachers Institute, McColl Center, John C. Campbell...

☺☺☺



☺ ☺ ☺



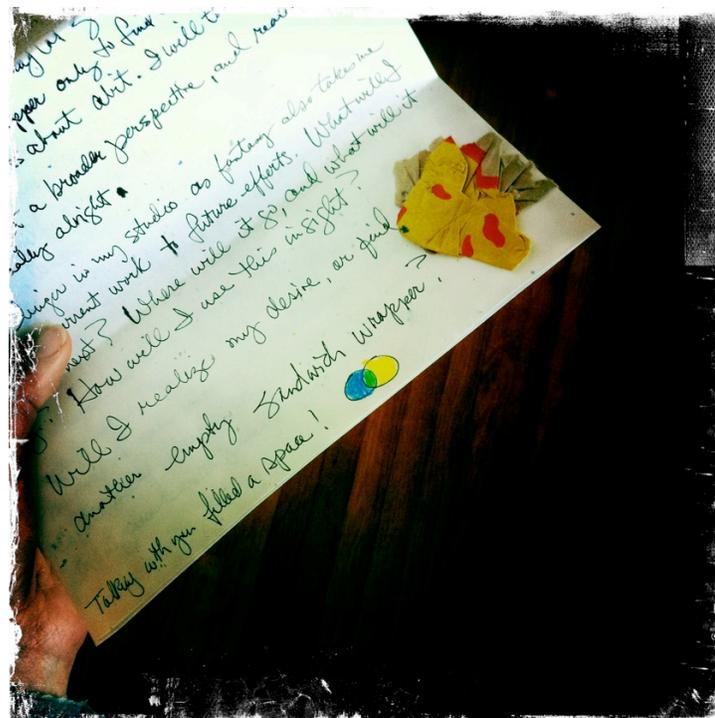


*I linger too long sometimes in my art studio. I remind myself that I should be creating new work, instead of fumbling through the stuff of flat files, sketchbooks, and window ledges. I peruse, remember, digress, recall and eventually, pick up a pencil, brush or scissors and begin my practice, desiring to create an image or make a statement more profound than any I have ever made before. I caution myself, however, against desire. It is a double-edged sword. Where there is desire, struggle and disappointment can often follow. Recently, I have lingered over a couple of concepts... tenants of Buddhist philosophy and my observations of birds.*

*What lifts me into fantasy? I suppose, at the present, I am lifted into fantasy by the unknown! I envision my upcoming exhibition. I wonder how the accompanying poster will look. I expect some disappointment, as I have specific desires surrounding its appearance. I am like the parking lot grackle descending on the vagrant sandwich wrapper only to find it empty. I will flutter, jump and toss about a bit. I will then fly back to my perch, get a broader perspective, and then realize everything is really alright.*

*To linger in the studio as fantasy also takes me beyond my current work to future efforts. What will I envision next? Where will it go, and what will it say? How will I use this insight? Will I realize my desire or find another empty sandwich wrapper?*

E.



☺ ☺ ☺

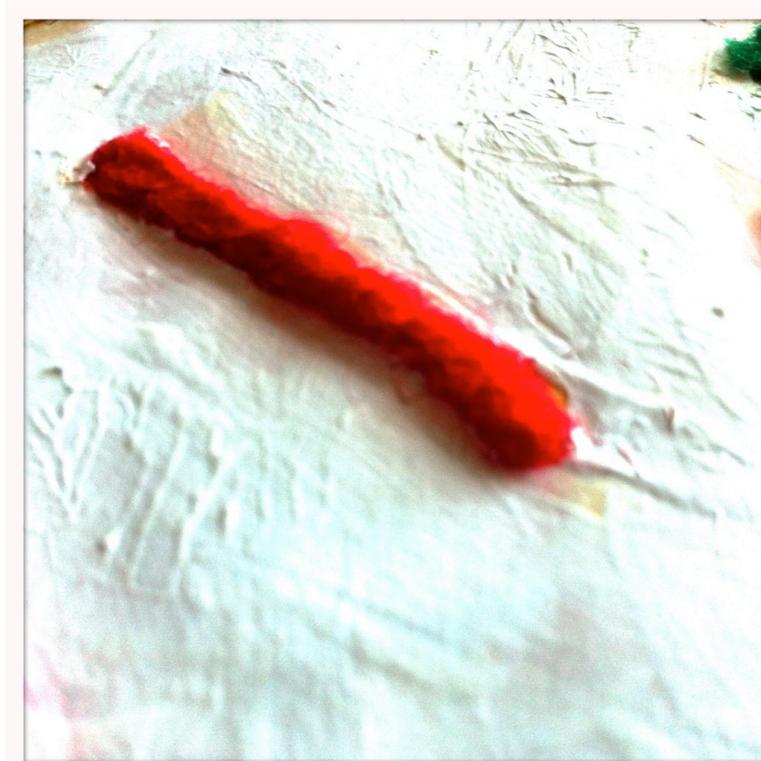
*Dear Brooke,*

*I loved your paragraph. I mean I loved it. As someone who struggles to write, I find your words to be a gift. In my world, your words are like a red scarf in a snow-covered landscape. (I will miss your postcards.)*

*Museums lift my personal and professional desires. Paint. Color. Going to grad school. Before that, it was getting my National Board Certification. Currently, finishing my thesis, reading about choice-based art education, and reworking my art teaching philosophy and resume as I pursue opportunities for the upcoming school year are how I am lingering with my desires.*

*For my son's one-year birthday, I am going to buy him an easel so that he and I can paint in our basement. Yeah, I got bumped to the basement when we moved.*

*Take care,  
Claire*



Dear reader,

In that kiss of immediacy, I realized not only the *question* that I desired to ask, but moreover, my *desire* to ask these monthly questions at all. And in this, I began to question my desire by returning to Gadamer.

In his major work, *Truth and Method*, Gadamer contended that questions come from our experience in the world, which is always shifting and moving- like wind or water.<sup>210</sup> Generation after generation passes fluidly as part of the ongoing conversation of tradition and history. Our experiences and our questions imprint one another. Yet, not all experiences (or conversations) involve questions. Moreover, not all questions function hermeneutically. As Freeman explained, “(t)he arousal of questions that the voice of the other awakens in people, or does not awake, is at the core of what Gadamer calls a genuine hermeneutic experience.”<sup>211</sup> As we are called to ask questions outside of our experience, we are called to hermeneutically experience the world.

All questions have direction or sense. Some questions, however, are “slanted.”<sup>212</sup> These questions are more *misdirected* than *wrong*. They are misdirected in the sense that they lean in towards what we already know. They seek answers that can be reproduced or repeated, and therefore, knowledge that can be bounded. In contrast, open questions are directed outward, designed for flight. Shaped like feathers or arrows, they point toward the qualities that make flight possible. They launch from experience - aiming for risk, loss, openness, and, to the other. If we risk enough to ask these open questions, we will find ourselves in dialogue with tradition of which we are always, already a part.

In this, I noted how the open, hermeneutic question becomes important for taking up qualitative research at its fullest expression of inquiry; inquiry that intends to

bring to light, rather than prove, verify, confirm. As Gadamer said, “(d)iscourse that is intended to reveal something requires that that thing be broken open by the question.”<sup>213</sup> When we sit down to write, think and play in inquiry, we may slip into new possibilities that challenge the grain. And so, the tradition of Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics offers us a place to slip into ongoing conversations. The question is our entrance and commitment to beginning the ethical, pedagogical, philosophical, methodological or political work we feel compelled to do.<sup>214</sup> When we bring post-structural concepts to bear, the hermeneutic question may be *both* entrance *and* a line of flight.

*yours,*

*Brooke*

### The Speed in which We Grow Wanes

Don't be one or multiple, be multiplicities! Run lines, never plot a point! Speed turns the point into a line! Be quick, even when standing still! Line of chance, line of hips, line of flight.<sup>215</sup>

Deleuze & Guattari



216

Dear reader,

I rent time at the letterpress studio by the hour. It can be difficult to slow myself down for breaks. Often, when I grow too weary or inattentive for printing, it appeases me to linger there, perhaps thumbing aimlessly through the vast cabinets of type. When I am not looking for anything really, I always find exactly *it*.

This time, *it* was a lead block with a winged hourglass on its face. Tugging the dingbat from its lodged position in the cramped drawer, releases the lyrics of a novel to sing from my memory: "*Perhaps [he] could make me a clock with disc brakes.*"<sup>217</sup>

Inattention is a trigger.<sup>218</sup>

I have not yet found someone that can make me such a clock, so I will head south at dusk, with my still damp postcards laid out on makeshift cardboard drying

racks in the back seat. I will think how quickly the time slipped from the day. I will linger in the next few hours, easing in and out of inattention as I drive home.



219

-- BH

P.S. March's postcard read:

"Be quick, even when standing still!"<sup>220</sup>

Sometimes I find myself  
*marching* against,  
*marching* past,  
*marching* from (x) to (y),  
*marching* in step (and out),  
*marching* on!

And so, I press on with our correspondence, hastening to inquire:

*How do you find yourself marching as an artist-teacher?*

*And, how does such marching affect you?*

Yours,  
 Brooke

p.s. Only 1 month to go!

☺ ☺ ☺



Before I opened the envelope, I sat. I sat imagining Virginia stepping, stomping, stamping her sneakers: paint to page, paint to page, paint to page. My hands traced the contours. Inside, I found the stationary densely coated with more of her pigmented footsteps. With oil pastels, she has written: *KEEP MARCHING ON!* My hands traced the waxy words.



*Dear Brooke,*

*How do I find myself marching as an artist-teacher? Marching implies movement, but what kind of movement? One can march with determination, or repetitively, or uniquely. The word reminds me of a steady rhythm... a clock.*

*As I reflect on the word and how it applies to me as an artist-teacher I would like to think of the reference to “march to the beat of a different drummer.” When I looked the word up in the dictionary, this phrase had an informal definition: to consciously adopt a different approach or attitude from the majority of people; to be unconventional. I wouldn’t want to be unconventional for the sake of being unconventional, but I like the idea of thinking originally. I would like to think that I could. And, I would like to think I could help others to look at something- an object, or an idea- and ask: What if?*

*As an artist-teacher it is easy to get comfortable (as a teacher- to just get by) (as an artist- to play it safe). It is healthy to be reflective, to set goals, to act. Actually PAR was really a wonderful type of research because the example of the spiraling was dead on! At times I know my marching has been each of these definitions- some better than others...*

*Take care,  
Claire*



*Dear Brooke,*

*I relate to your description of marching. I, too, often find myself marching, usually toward a deadline. I thought this steady pace would ease when I left a life of graphic design and public relations to focus on fine art, painting and teaching. This second career, however, carries its own unique collection of due dates, demands, and marching orders—report card grades due, art/music program performance, Kids Art Fair, Leadership Day, school accreditation visit, goals based evaluation due. The list drones on ad infinitum.*

*Many of these mandates are artificial. They require me to repeatedly prove my abilities, justify my existence, and spend my time and efforts.*

*As I march, I check one event off only to head down a long straight path to the next. This dogged emphasis on proof and product often overwhelms my process, usurps exploration and experimentation, and robs my creative energy.*

*This week I jumped through the art fair hoop, hoping that the drawings and paintings lined up in black frames met the expectations of parents and administrators. Next week I will check off my goals-based evaluation. Then I will head toward summer and respite. For a brief time, I hope, I can break rank.*

*Ellen*

Dear reader,

In mid-March, a lovely bundle of seven letters arrived from my student Claire. Many of them, you have already encountered, as I chose to fold them smoothly into the text. I made this curatorial decision because Claire so carefully attended to each prompt, that each of her letters seemed to belong with the other responses. Yet, I am also compelled to acknowledge the messy, complex, and beautiful forces that accompany lived experience. As she was finding her own way with a new baby, a big move, and a final thesis paper to write up, she wrote:

Dear Brooke,

*I am not sure if I ever mailed you a letter for September, so I am sitting down with the postcard and if it is my second response, so be it. If not, then I am glad to finally be sending it off.*

*I think journaling was where I learned to let go the most. I like my sketchbooks to look good, I don't like to leave room for error. I did find the class experimentation fun (perhaps easier for others) but sometimes it was hard. For instance, Virginia took some big steps, maybe even risks. And, Judy let her journal be ugly, which I am sure was hard for her. I saw them really explore.*

*So the class, the experiential play, yes I think it opened some doors for me—the cutouts were good for me. Toulouse-Lautrec—beautiful compositions, Degas—refreshing compositions. This is something I want to continue to work on.*

*So as I am reflecting on our class it reminds me to take risks- be free to fail- and to cultivate some things I may have been curious about but haven't taken the time to see where it could go. I hope you are still enjoying your VVJ.*

Take care,  
Claire<sup>222</sup>

A few days later, another rogue letter arrived:

Dear Brooke,

*First, I must apologize for taking so long to send you my letters! I have been avoiding my thesis (as you know) and I think that reflecting on my professional practice and art making, remind me of what I am avoiding. It is unhealthy behavior, and I think I can say, I am through avoiding. For now.*

*In October, you asked, "Who might you become?" I remember reflecting on this often during our class experience. Through just getting married, moving, starting my career, I wonder all the time about the person, wife, friend, and teacher that I am becoming. The thought that some people move through life never achieving their goals, or becoming the person they want to be terrifies me! I have proven how easy it is to hide from this goal and just be. Becoming someone I want to be can sometimes be tiresome.*

*You asked how we move in relationship to who we are becoming. I think, in life, the speed in which we grow wanes. At times, we change at lightening speed and look back at ghosts of ourselves, finding ourselves hardly recognizable. During our time together, I felt that I grew so much and so fast in my academic and artistic self. Meeting monthly kept my momentum rolling and kept me inspired. I miss this! Seeing everyone recently helped me to remember what it was like to be excited about learning more about art and teaching! I am diving back into the literature, like you suggested, in hopes of moving forward!*

*To be continued...*

*Char*

*Yes-- messy, complex, and beautiful.*

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

## Forces in Contest

I seek a process to transform this passage to another world in a middle place, neither here nor there, grasping both ends of the passage and pulling them together into a knot that refuses their oppositions, dualisms, exclusions, and sacrifices.<sup>223</sup>

Grumet

Dear reader,

Frustration settled thick as concrete poured across my shoulders. Perhaps it was exhaustion. Perhaps it was sadness. One postcard left to print, and a whole stack of prints that wouldn't do. Once again, I had to let go...



224

-- bh

P.S. April's postcard read:

"To speak of a dialectic is to speak of forces in contest: the factors that hold us in place, that stand in the way of our growing, and the factors that provoke us to act on our desires, to break through the obstacles, to become different, to *be*."<sup>225</sup>

Maxine Greene

I had quite a time printing this month's postcard having played with a rainbow roll– a letterpress technique that (in theory!) produces a smooth gradation between two colors of ink. In practice, the colors tended to take over one another, rather than creating a new hue in the middle. In my frustration, I thought of the binaries we discussed during our class. And, I remembered your voices saying: *We can make our own world. We can choose our own happiness over approval. We can find a middle way.*

And so, I wonder:

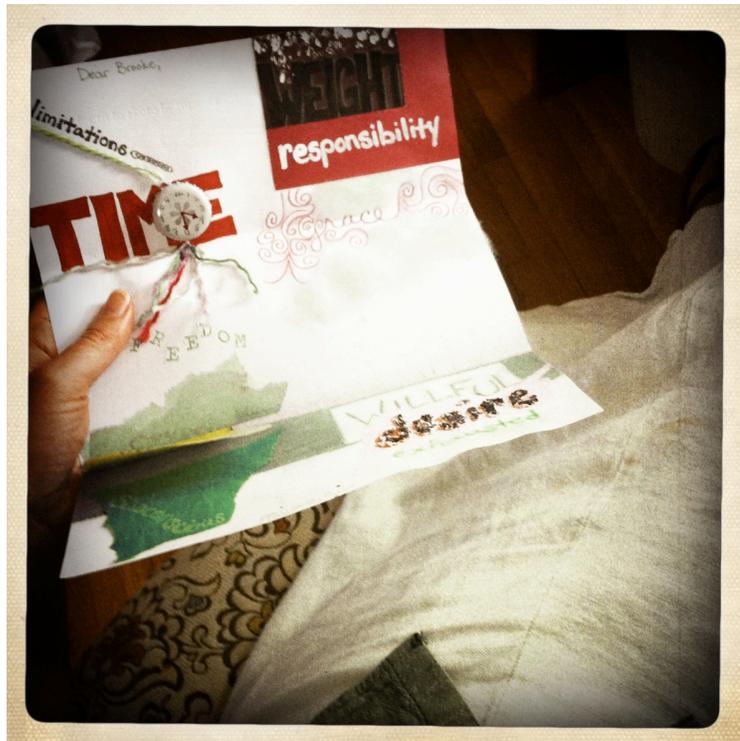
*What do you encounter when you attempt to create fluidity?*

*What "forces in contest" do you experience as an artist-teacher?*

Yours,  
Brooke

p.s. Please do stay in touch!

☺☺☺





Dear Brooke,

*I think when I attempt to create fluidity I need to separate my self from distractions. When I am lucky, this can be a state of mind, which means I don't have to physically be alone or in an ideal work environment. I think my personality allows me to do that, where I know others would struggle. (If I was explaining this to someone foreign to "creating" but who was familiar with the practice of yoga, it's about leaving the distractions and demands of the world to breathe and engage in a series of movements. It's very similar.) So, a mindset that allows me to participate fully in the moment allows me to attempt to create fluidity.*

*Often I feel the most fluid when I am painting or doing live drawing, it's an activity I am familiar enough with that I can let go (and not critique or judge myself), and have a conversation with my materials. I think fluidity requires the "ability to let go" and a "familiarity" with the activity and materials. I also think there needs to be a certain commitment of time... For me to get to a place of fluidity I need enough time to warm up and get the kinks out. I think there is freedom in a state of fluidity- like if you could ride your bike with no hands (which I cannot)... or dance really well. Fluidity also means the outcome is not guaranteed... There is some risk, but also adventure. Adventure brings new opportunities.*

*I think working in public education can be a challenge because so much of what is done. Testing students' knowledge of classroom objectives and using "data" (often numerical) to prove student growth within a defined period is difficult in the art room. This is even more difficult in an elementary art room when you only see your students once a week. I also found it frustrating being evaluated using a standard teacher evaluation instrument designed for the traditional classroom teacher. Teaching art in a public school, I often felt tolerated or there to provide a break for the teacher. I learned to develop a shell. Another difficulty was teaching can be draining, so that when you are off work, you feel too tired to make your own art. It's easier to just focus on your teaching and to develop that side of your title, to the exclusion of the artist. Even though I am speaking honestly, it is not always that extreme, the "forces in contest" work on a spectrum.*

*Take care & Keep in touch,  
Claire*

Dear reader,

The drone of the lawnmower outside my office window cut out, and the scent of fresh grass swept in, along with my husband who handed me an envelope.

I was left alone to mull in Ellen's letter, in the rainbow roll of color she had laid so smoothly with colored pencil, forming an ancient symbol of forces in contest. As her letter closed, deep emotion choked at the corners of my eyes and the back of my throat. My interior felt as tender and splintered as the eggshells Virginia crushed and glued across the page.

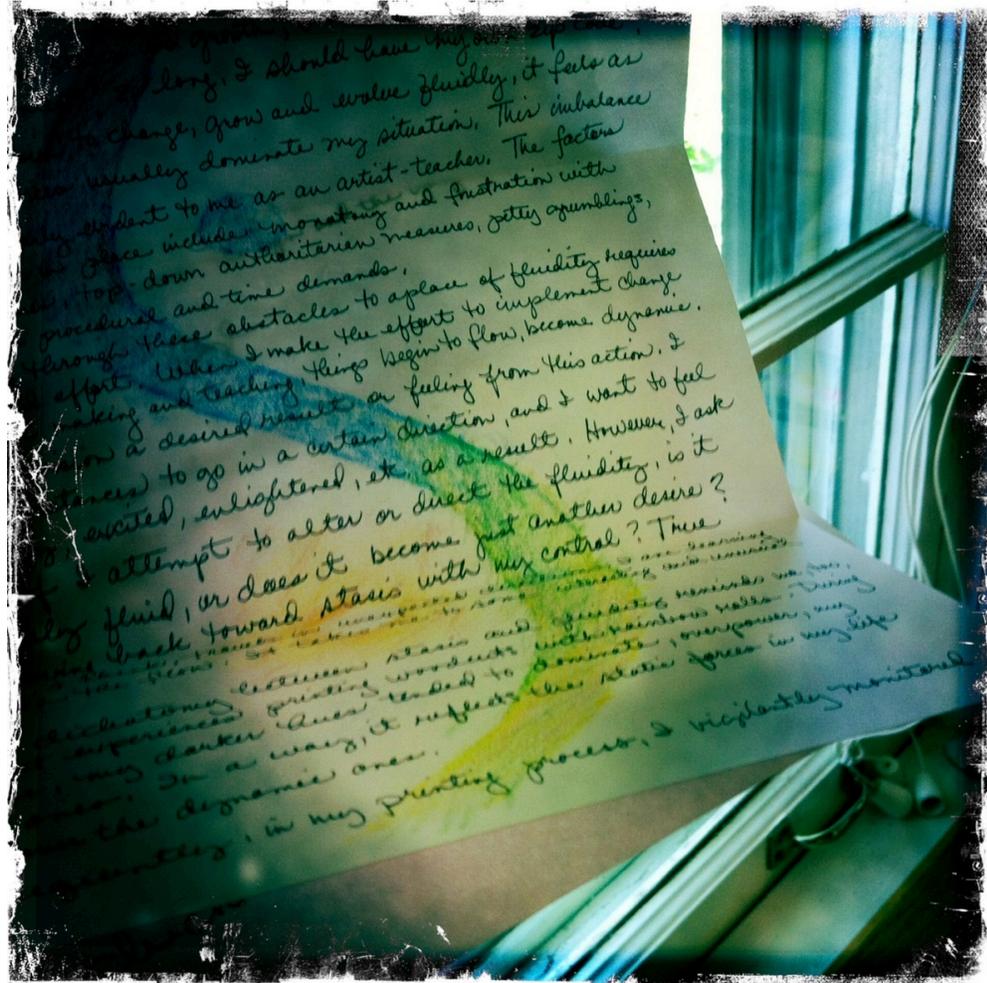


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Perhaps I knew this would be the last of the letters.

*BH*

P.S.



228

Dear Brooke,

*Life between stasis and growth; I have existed between these two “forces in contest” so long, I should have my own zip code! Although I desire to change, grow and evolve fluidly, it feels as if the static forces usually dominate my situation. This imbalance seems particularly evident to me as an artist-teacher. The factors that hold me in place include monotony and frustration with behavioral issues, top-down authoritarian measures, petty grumblings, and senseless procedural and time demands.*

*Breaking through these obstacles to a place of fluidity requires perspective and effort. When I make the effort to implement change with my art making and teaching, things begin to flow, become dynamic. I usually envision a desired result or feeling from this action. I want circumstances to go in a certain direction, and I want to feel warm-fuzzy, excited, enlightened, etc. as a result. However, I ask*

*myself: If I attempt to alter or direct the fluidity, is it still truly fluid, or does it become just another desire? Am I moving back toward stasis with my control? True fluidity, I think, travels in unexpected directions. I am learning to go with the flow. It takes me to some interesting and usual places.*

*This dichotomy between stasis and fluidity reminds me, too, of my past experiences printing woodcuts with rainbow rolls. During the process, my darker hues tended to dominate, overpower, my lighter ones. In a way, it reflects the static forces in my life prevailing over the dynamic ones.*

*Consequently, in my printing process, I vigilantly monitored the ink flow, scraping back the encroaching dark color, adding more light ink, and maintaining a smooth transition between the two.*

*The point, I think, is that I had to have the perspectives on the process, and constantly work with the materials to facilitate and maintain flow. In my life, as an artist-teacher and human, I also need to work as diligently, observe as closely and let go of some preconceived desires and notions. Then, I may realize fluidity, maintain balance among my demands, and walk the sinuous line between the yin and the yang.*

Ellen

*p.s. You are currently experiencing an exciting growth spurt, a breaking through obstacles, and becoming. I hope that our monthly dialogues have somehow helped you reach your goal. They have been reflective for me in ways I never imagined. As you transition, remember to balance, enjoy it all, and keep me posted on your progress, Brooke!*

E

## Chapter 4

## These Petals Are

*The only thing that matters is the 'Work in progress.'*<sup>229</sup>

Bourriaud



*May 2, 2013*

Dear reader,

Over coffee, a colleague told me the story of an artist who planted seeds as a work of art. When each seed became blossom, the artist plucked the petals gingerly from the stems. The petals were mailed away to his friends and family with this sentiment: All the while these seeds were becoming, I was thinking of you. These petals are my love for you.

Throughout the year of our correspondence, I kept adding to a list of questions that intrigued me about my students' experiences participating in this inquiry, as well as their experiences with professional development beyond graduate school. In the closing months of the study (between late February and late April 2013), I invited all eight of my students to participate in an exit interview. All eight accepted my invitation.

In anticipation of meeting with my students, I honed my list of questions. All the while, a broader question persisted: What work might a phenomenological interview from a post-intentional approach do? I began by revisiting and contemplating the work of hermeneutic phenomenological interviews in qualitative research. I found myself drawing again from Gadamer who wrote: "We say that we 'conduct' a conversation, but the more genuine a conversation is, the less its conduct lies within the will of either partner. Thus a genuine conversation is never the one that we wanted to conduct. Rather, it is generally more correct to say we fall into conversation, or even that we become involved in it. The way one word follows another, with the conversation taking its own twists and reaching its own conclusion, may well be conducted in some way, but the partners conversing are far less the leaders than the

led. No one knows in advance what will ‘come out’ of a conversation. Understanding or its failure is like an event that happens to us.”<sup>231</sup>

Thus, I softened into the horizon of this question, allowing the living out to inform my articulation of a post-intentional phenomenological interview. I opened myself to be led, and encouraged my students to bring their own questions to ask of me. In conceptualizing the interview as an open dialogue, Dahlberg, Dahlberg, and Nystrom (drawing from Merleau-Ponty) stated: “The ‘flesh’ of the conversation is what should be in focus and lead the interviews.”<sup>232</sup> And so, I embraced the interviews as opportunities to let the embodied intensities of afterglow body-forth as an event.

With these underpinnings, I began. Our interviews were conversational, most taking place in intimate settings (my home, their home) or over Skype, when a long distance stood between us. Friendly chitchat crept in here and there as we got caught up on important matters in each other’s lives: jobs, babies, partners, moves, thesis papers, and so on. I consistently asked the same ten questions<sup>233</sup> to each of my students (though not in the same order). Some of them chose to ask me their own sets of questions, which was the largest factor in the length of the interviews, which ranged from 40 minutes to well over 2 hours.

With each and every interview, my naïve end of “exiting” the inquiry slid and stretched farther beyond my reach. Our exchanges bloomed with consistency and wildness, revealing the steady entanglement that inhabits relationships. By this, I mean that there were questions that played overlapping responses from many of my students. For example, that it took *time* to cultivate a response to the postcard prompts. And, there were also completely unanticipated moments: when I cringed, when Claire cried,

when I became interviewee and Virginia became interviewer. When I felt what van Manen described as “a hermeneutic thrust” that lured my desire to understand.<sup>234</sup>

It remains unclear to me when I turned my analytical work of mapping intensities towards this fourth thread of inquiry, as I continued to invoke Deleuze, who offered: “We have to take things and find visibilities in them.”<sup>235</sup> Even before I began to transcribe the interviews, certain phrases sang out to me. In some cases, this initial salience was lyrical. As when Ellen talked about being alone to write and reflect as: *time for me to sit and float awhile*. In other cases, my curatorial impulse was again sparked, in that *something said* in an interview held significance in relationship to *something said* in class, in a letter, in a journal, or in my own reading. As when Charlotte spoke about how easy it was for her to revert to cookie cutter projects during her annual student art show, connecting back to our many class discussions of process/product binaries, and the often limited expectations for art education in public schools. And so, as I began my practice of transcription, I was often on the lookout for these salient phrases. By revisiting them in the deep listening that is transcribing, I was able to more fully en flesh the talk that surrounded and contextualized them. Sometimes I was surprised at the variation between what was said and what was remembered.

In all of this, the story of this artist lingered. Finding oneself in afterglow is neither seed nor petal. Rather, it is an event of the in-between, an encounter open to intensities, or “trigger points for movement.”<sup>236</sup> The more I listened, the more I found myself resisting egress.<sup>237</sup> As I contemplated the continuation of my research agenda beyond the immediacy of this text, as I envisioned my ensuing pedagogical moves with A~E~P, I desired more time to dwell with these conversations. I thought of Deleuze, who remarked: “Any work of art points a way through life, finds a way through the

cracks.<sup>238</sup> And, it occurred to me, that perhaps a place to resist egress, to find new movement, would be in the letterpress studio. Where I might continue to dwell with these curated words, and those cabinets full of moveable type, finding a way. As such, I offer the visibilities I have found in our conversations as sketches for letterpress broadsides.

Some visibilities felt strong enough as a single line of text—that lone petal that brightly lodges itself on the view from your office window. Others demanded to be more fully enfolded—words gathering together, the way that fallen petals will do, tucking into the fold of a concrete corner, dwelling there. Some are offered directly from the mouths of my students, and left to stream. Some have been played into poetic glimpses from my positions as the interviewer, the teacher, the listener, and... and... and...

To close, I did not wish to spend too much time dwelling in the layout of the broadsides at this point. For, I believe that work is better left to occur in the letterpress studio, where the shape of the worn wood type will demand its own exploratory conversation with me. My focus lingered in the curatorial crafting of the words. In this way, I evoked Richardson's work with poetic representations of interviews, where "the construction of text is thus positioned as joint, prismatic, open, and partial."<sup>239</sup> While these visibilities are not intended as poems, I do admit to lingering with the poetics I found in living out and lingering in our conversations.<sup>240</sup> Yet, you will see a few indications where my impulse to play with the type is already gathering force.

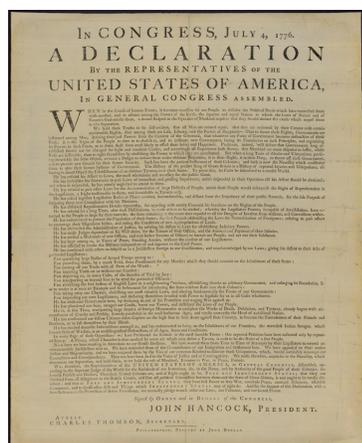
*Yours,*

*Brooke*

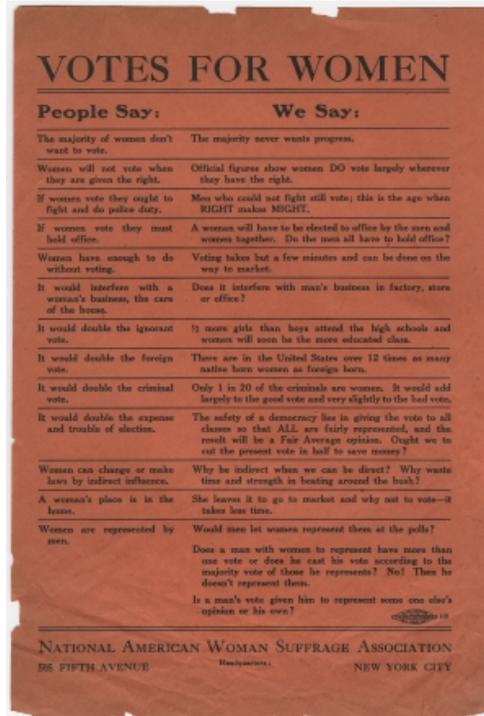
P.S. It happened much like this: “The concept will start to deviate under the force. Let it. Then, reconnect it to other concepts, drawn from other systems, until a whole new system of connection starts to form. Then, take another example. See what happens. Follow the new growth. You end up with many buds. Incipient systems. Leave them that way.”<sup>241</sup> In crafting these sketches, I ended up with many incipient systems; And, I will leave them that way— for these are the tentative manifestations, the embodied intensities, of afterglow. And with these systems, arose a new question: After the printing, where might these broadsides come to dwell so that others may fall into conversation around them?

P.S.S. Letterpress arose from a desire to communicate ideas widely through printed media such as books, newspapers, manuals, and broadsides.<sup>242</sup> While broadsides historically have been approached as one-sided posters quickly designed with large wooden type, modern letterpress printers have adapted this format for all sorts of purposes—from dense, graphic posters to subtly set lines of poetry. I have enclosed a few historical and contemporary examples.

The Dunlap Broadside printed over two centuries ago, alerting the world of American independence:

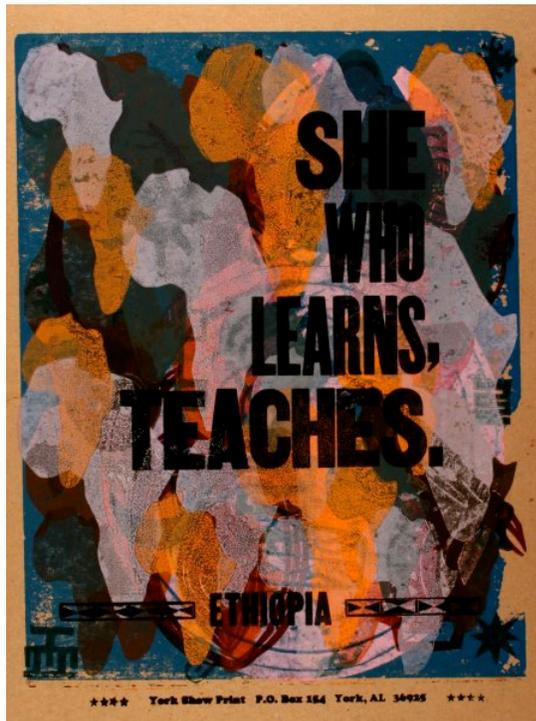


A poster circa 1910 printed in support of women's suffrage:



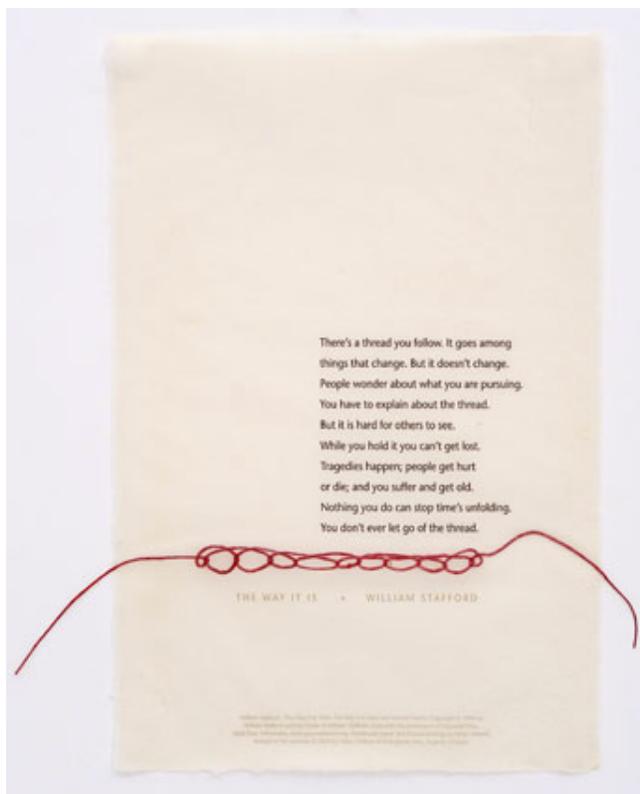
244

And, two exemplars from widely-respected contemporary artists. First, letterpress printer Amos Kennedy's lush and layered approach to broadsides:



245

Finally, internationally renowned paper artist Helen Hiebert's broadside featuring a poem by William Stafford:



246

Anyhow, back to those sketches...

-- BH

*What was it like to receive  
the stationary sets?*

It was one of the most meaningful gifts  
I have ever been given. Because  
It was a gift that  
If you take it for what it can be,  
Continues to give.  
Not only between  
You and I. Or  
In theory or in practice,  
But, in experience.  
It was a gift that offered us so much more  
Than we realized in that moment.  
It is endless.  
It continues on  
In all aspects of our lives.  
That is the beauty of it.

☺ ☺ ☺

rare

sweet

amazing

beautiful

I loved receiving them.



I felt part of a very important project.  
They were beautiful-  
The envelope, the twine tied around it,  
It all said:  
We are in this together.  
We are doing this together.  
That you would value  
What would I say,  
Meant a great deal to me.

☺ ☺ ☺

Shame on me,  
Shame on me.

A week after-  
Out of sight,  
Out of mind.

I completely and totally  
Forgot about it. It just  
Went by the wayside.  
Other things from life  
Overshadowed.

☺ ☺ ☺

*He tells me*

It was genuine. It felt like you cared.

I hope to be that type of teacher. That my students feel like I care about them, because I do. I am not just there to collect a paycheck and go home.

*What was it like to receive  
the postcards?*

Receiving is remembering,  
Like looking at a photograph.  
Recalling not only specific moments,  
But the experience of being together.

☺ ☺ ☺

It brought about this beauty.  
A piece of mail that is not a bill or  
Some trivial thing you get in the mail.  
It is this thing you look forward to receiving  
That is lost because of technology.

☺ ☺ ☺

It is a big part of life. It really is.



When I get these,  
I cannot let them go.  
They stay with me.  
The words you say,  
The questions you ask-  
Once I read it,  
It is in me.

*You say it is in me.  
What does that mean for you?*

It dwells.  
Not just in my head,  
In all of me, because  
It dwells there.  
A seed is planted  
And it grows.  
It takes time.

☺ ☺ ☺

She explains her excitement  
Sending it off,  
For it to be  
In my hands.

I wonder how receiving  
Affects you?  
There is a give and take  
In the whole process.

*Even the ones who don't write  
are creating an asymmetry,  
which does something different.*

*Where did the postcards  
dwell this year?*

August and September are  
Pinned to her classroom wall.

The others dwell  
On her bedside table,  
With a half-written letter.



I have this special place where I keep them and they are one of my prized possessions.

☺ ☺ ☺

I guess, they dwell  
In my own little space of memory.

☺ ☺ ☺

### The Postcards

Move through her spaces

Perched on the kitchen table

On her desk at work

In a pocket in her journal,

Where they can be carried with her.

*We've been corresponding for a year now...  
What have you taken from that process?*

It's been a continuity, a structure.  
I've taken away that it is important  
To think about myself  
At several different levels.  
It's made me see things, look at things  
From several different angles.  
All of that helps me  
See more dimension in life.  
Helps it to not be so flat, so linear-  
Everything is not linear, things  
Kinda start sprouting off in different directions.  
And sometimes, that question might lead you  
To follow a line  
Off into a different place...  
This is what has happened to me  
So far, and I keep thinking  
That it will continue.

☺ ☺ ☺

I'm going to miss it.  
It is something that I don't do  
With anyone else;  
A connection I don't have  
With anyone else.  
It would be hard to find  
Someone who would be up for  
Challenging each other  
In that way.



A depth has been called out of me.  
I see that it is possible to live deeply, in  
A world that can be so shallow.

That is what your postcards do, they  
Put me in a place where I am  
Reflecting, thinking deeply,  
Processing my experiences,  
Considering where I am.

I am not so reserved with others  
About the depth in me.  
Being a teacher, and  
Being an artist,  
To create meaningful work,  
To be an example for your students,  
You have to go to there.

It has reinforced, validated  
This depth is who I am.

☺ ☺ ☺

It has made me think about the future...  
*What I will do without them?*



I was thinking recently of how  
My writing has changed.  
To begin, it was these long, wordy letters.  
I would write it out, go back,  
Fix the mistakes,  
Touch up little things.  
And then I started to play.  
Pushing more the visual, trying  
To get at the heart of things more.  
Not just in my responses,  
But in life in general.  
The idea of play has taken form in these letters.  
I think it is reflective of me transforming  
As my letters have been changing.

☺ ☺ ☺

The postscripts were little reminders-  
ps. You should be reading!

*What holds relevance from  
our course for you now?*

That last project,  
knocking down the walls,  
that wasn't just for show.

☺ ☺ ☺

Time to do something  
And see what happens. That  
Experimental time was really  
Valuable to me.



It was a chance to explore what you want to do, to take it where you want to take it. When I approach lessons with my students, I try to give them more choice, more freedom to find their voice. That is when the true artwork comes. If all the pieces look the same on the wall, what is the point?

I'm still working with that. It requires the instructor to relinquish control. And it is hard to do! It's like: What are they going to produce? It might not look like anything.

You have to trust what they are going to do.  
You have to trust in them.



The visual verbal journal  
We kept...  
You know, that is not something  
I typically practice.  
It helped me to ask:  
Why are you doing this?  
And, what's next?

I don't think we ask that enough. We just  
Go through the motions.  
I have become more aware of  
Who I am and  
Where I am moving.  
And I still do that, just  
Reflecting, taking moments  
Throughout the day.

☺ ☺ ☺

1. The act of doing- that is the most important thing.
2. You have to let go of what is holding you back.
3. There is not a perfect moment. You have to make your moments.



☺ ☺ ☺

It  
was  
time  
for me  
to sit and  
float awhile.



You presented the idea of  
Binaries in our lives-  
Being one        or        the Other.

I was able to weave together  
My identity as an artist  
and how that directly affects  
My teaching practice.

When you are more open you can see  
How threads can be woven together.  
When you are transformed,  
How can it *not* continue on?

*Describe your experience  
with receiving the prompts.*

It is a new challenge  
That I face.  
That your questions and your prompt  
Are going to pull out of me.

☺ ☺ ☺

You asking the question made me wonder:  
How am I going to resolve this?

☺ ☺ ☺

Your questions  
Take me deeper  
Than where I go  
On my own.

☺ ☺ ☺

Some of them are difficult...  
When you ask about going  
Between images and words,  
I am not sure I have a full  
Connection between the two.

☺ ☺ ☺

She lets the idea and the thought and the questions  
Float around in her, so  
She can process it in different ways.

☺ ☺ ☺

I'll read it 2 or 3 times,  
Set it aside,  
Go on about my business for a couple of weeks,  
See what happens.  
It's like something is in there hatching.

☺ ☺ ☺

I remembered that  
As an artist  
I am important.  
It is easy to neglect as a  
Mother, wife, teacher,  
Going to work,  
Maintaining a household.  
The artistic part of you can easily  
Be put down.  
It is much harder  
To put the teaching down, because  
That is what is asked of you all the time.

☺ ☺ ☺

It is a reminder  
It makes me think-  
All the readings we did,  
All the discussions we had.  
Because it is easy to slip back-  
Now I have an art show,  
The choice-based things  
Are not what is expected  
For me to hang up.  
So I say: *Draw this!*  
So they can say: *Oh, that's cute!*  
It is easy to slip back into that.  
It makes everybody happy.  
I already know how to do it.  
I don't have to think, and  
They don't have to think.

*Describe your experience  
responding to the postcards.*

Words, ideas come to her  
at random times.  
She starts to jot things down  
On post-it notes.

☺ ☺ ☺

Rather than jotting off: I'm doing fine.  
I want to give you a good answer, something  
With substance, to work the  
Writing and the visual together.

☺ ☺ ☺

She makes coffee.  
And the bed.  
Spread out across the covers,  
Writing.  
There is *Quiet* to sit  
and think inside.

☺ ☺ ☺

If I did not get these questions,  
I might think about things like this, but  
Certainly I would not go into the details that I do.  
Thinking and writing, and re-writing and re-thinking.

☺ ☺ ☺

Answering the postcards  
Woke up the person  
Inside of him  
Who wants to talk.

☺ ☺ ☺

As I move into the question,  
I want to be alone. To  
Feel what I need to feel  
Before I write.

☺ ☺ ☺

The quality of a letter is different.  
You are more careful of what you say,  
And how you say it.

☪ ☪ ☪

Once I start, I don't  
Walk away.  
It pours out of me, a  
Continual process.  
My leaving and  
Coming back  
Is in the receiving.

I am not willing to let it get too far away from me.

☺ ☺ ☺

It is hard for her to write  
On the unlined paper.  
Too much space for the  
Perfectionist to roam.



It took time,  
Because what you were asking  
Was significant.

I had to think for days  
Before writing.  
And sometimes,  
I had to take action.



My moment has finally come-  
Time for me to sit down,  
Bring this to life,  
Answer the question.

*Did any of the prompts resonate  
more or less for you?*

Oh, August was a struggle for me. Because  
It felt like I was going into the school year so blindly.  
There wasn't a solid thing I could say.  
It was like this open-ended question mark, so  
I was apprehensive.  
That was a very good question for you to ask me  
In that moment.

☪ ☪ ☪

Um... *(His body shifts slightly.)*  
I'm not going to lie. I've looked at  
the postcards, but- *(He gestures*  
*as if glancing at a pretend postcard*  
*before quickly setting it down.)*

Gotcha.  
*I shrug off the discomfort*  
*with a forced nonchalance.*  
Ok.  
Ok, cool.

*Describe the professional development  
offered by your school.*

There is nothing art related. And,  
I wouldn't expect there to be.  
I am 1 teacher with 1 set of standards  
In a school of 40 odd teachers.  
They aren't thinking of me.



That's something I learned very early. I sit there and think: How can I translate this to my practice?



Teachers volunteer to lead professional development.  
Hopefully arts teachers step up, so you can have  
something arts-focused to attend.

☺ ☺ ☺

She moves her hand  
In front of the camera  
Obscuring her face  
For a moment,  
Offering her answer:  
Thumbs down.

☺ ☺ ☺

You just get pulled a a  
p r t.

☹ ☹ ☹

Nobody knows what to do with us.

*Mmm...*

Nobody knows what to do with us  
When it comes to staff development.

☺ ☺ ☺

BUT, it depends on the principal if you can meet with the other art teachers once a month. There are maybe 5 of us, out of the 16 elementary schools... It shows you what the administration values.



She draws-

*Fiiivve hours, fiiiivvve hours on  
Closing the gap.*

She whispers-

*It got weird,  
Turned in to a tent revival.*

She recoils-

*It felt invasive. It got  
Louder and louder until  
By 4:30 he was screaming*

*I CAN'T HEAR YOU!  
AMEN!*

*Hand signals, body movements  
Getting people up there to  
Jump and gyrate around*

*WHAT'S YOUR NAME?  
(My name is Mary.)  
YOU ARE MY LITTLE MARY, NOW  
COME ON UP ON THIS STAGE!  
PUSH IT BACK!*

*And we were asking:  
Will this ever be over?  
How many more hours do we have to sit here?  
What will we have to do next?*

She confesses-

*It was awful. It was awful.*

She sighs-

*Do you think I can tell my administration any of this?  
Do you think any of us can say any of this?*

☺ ☺ ☺

You really have to go out there and seek it yourself.  
Maybe present. Ask, would the district support me in this?

☺ ☺ ☺

It's so focused on the classroom teachers that the special area teachers are just kind of out of it. You know?

☺ ☺ ☺

Are we going to goof off? If they don't pull us somewhere  
and make us sit down and look at each other...

We are mature enough that we would use our time wisely.

☺ ☺ ☺

I feel like I could be getting  
So much more.

☺ ☺ ☺

Needing to be sharpened,  
Staying sharp. Finding those  
Who sharpen me, or that we  
Sharpen together.

Is there anything else?

How many great ideas do we have that  
Just go by the wayside?  
No one ever knows but us, because  
It is within.  
We have to bring it to life.

*Do you have a process when you receive our letters? Do you have a place where you read them?*

Hmmm... I usually read them right here, at my writing desk. I make tea and sit down. To signal to my body that it is time to be with this response, to take it in.



With professional development...  
Maybe you don't sit and listen to someone talk.  
Maybe you talk.  
That's switching it around.

☺ ☺ ☺

It's coming down the pipeline:  
Kindergarteners will take an art test,  
Teacher salary will be based on  
700 art tests. So, while I think  
Investigative play is in their best interest,  
When it comes down to nuts and bolts,  
I don't want to say it has *no* place, but its  
Place is shrunk down very, very small.



Another thing I would say about afterglow.

It was a time of freedom, when  
I could just keep  
Drawing and drawing and drawing.

In the afterglow of each drawing  
Came a half-dozen more.  
And in the afterglow of those  
Came even more and even more.  
Literally, exponentially-  
One leading to another, leading to another.

My work is never finished.  
It continues into a place of  
Confidence and joy.  
Forever morphing, moving  
In different directions.

☺ ☺ ☺

*Your prompts call  
something  
out of me.*

*I often wonder  
do my letters, words, images  
call something  
from you?*

*Did you (or do you ever)  
want to respond?*

## Chapter 5

### We Learn to Skate in Summer

To teach is to bring our questions to others, to share as teacher and as students in this process of thinking about who we are on this earth. But that means of course, facing the paradoxical space that circulates in our attempts to say or write or teach about this life or this earth, to face the constant and beautiful return of the question and our imperfection at answering.<sup>247</sup>

Martusewicz

*May 7, 2013*

Dear reader,

I find myself compelled to take up Virginia's wonderings about what the letters I have received called from me. The chapters you have read certainly offer some insights to this regard, and yet—as I heard myself saying in response to her questions—there will be many stories lost to this text; Stories that slipped through my fingers while I wrote other ones into being. While there were phone calls, emails, and visits throughout the year, I did not directly respond to each letter I received. Instead, I poured my reactions back into the work. In other words, the letters were answered through my crafting of this text.

As I contemplated, *how to resolve her question* (to borrow an expression from Claire) another day's mail arrived, and with it, I was offered a new place to slip into the sweet speed of the midst.

A package arrived from Virginia. I recognized the envelope as the same one that held the stationary sets I gave away to my students one year ago. Now bearing my name, my address, and a heavy weight. Cautiously and impatiently I opened the seal. I

found myself holding a blank journal. On its cover, Virginia had glued a spiraling figure eight using the twine that had once held together her 12 letters and 12 envelopes.

Letters and envelopes that have all made their way back into my hands. I found myself opening the book, seeing this inscription:

*Dear Brooke,*

*In an effort to spiral on together, I offer this journal as a means for us to creatively communicate as we continue our journey. May it pass back and forth between our hands many, many times capturing our creative explorations, reflections, growing pains, and freedoms as artist-teachers.*

*What an incredible journey it has been!*

*May it continue to be...*

*Always,*

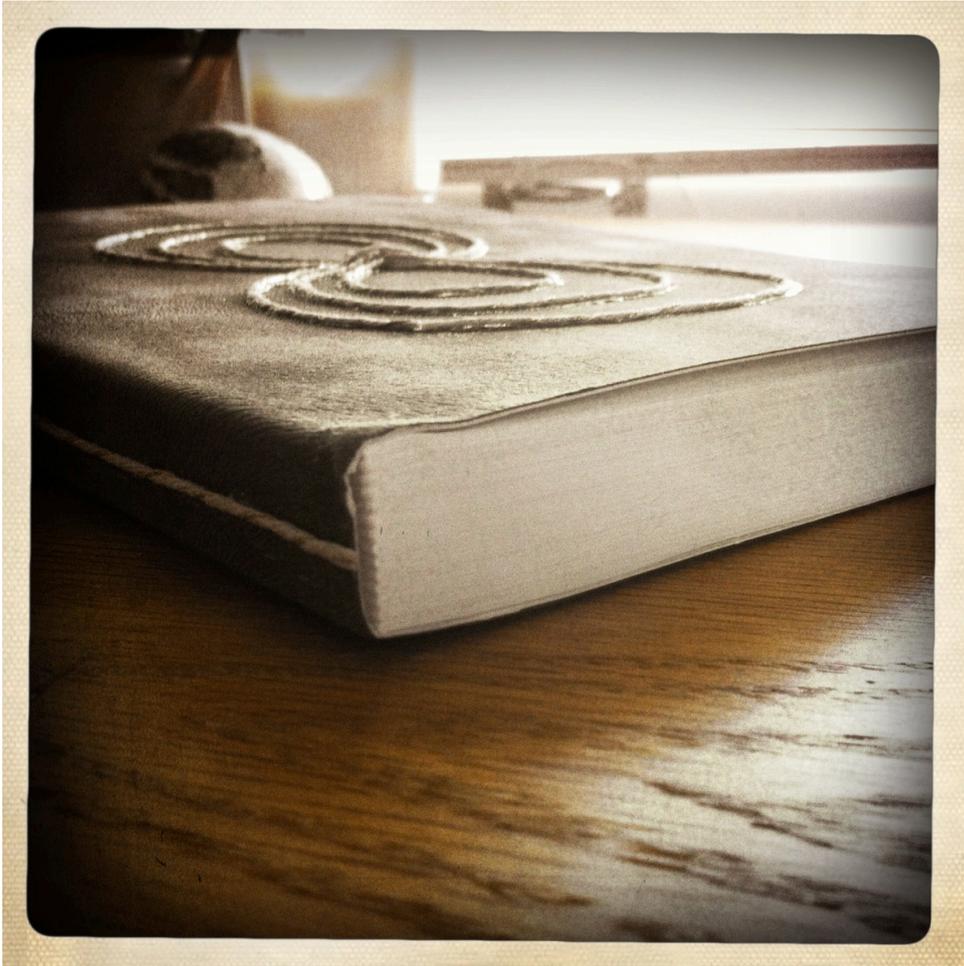
*Virginia*

For a while, I sat and thumbed through the blank pages. When I finally closed the book, my hands noticed another thin trail of twine running carefully down the spine. Awash in gratitude and light, I did not have the proper words to describe the deeply felt meaning this gift held for me. I still don't.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S.



Dear reader,

When we play, we move to unaccustomed earth. Yet, how do we travel? As Deleuze & Parnet wrote: Becomings belong to geography, they are orientations, directions, entries, and exits.”<sup>249</sup> My students have so beautifully swept me into the sweet speed of midst, where I conceptualized *teacher renewal as the geographies of connectedness that artist-teachers live through in their practices*. Actions and desires swelled; little bits of connection ruptured and tussled and eddied in “aggregates of intensities.”<sup>250</sup>

As I mailed postcards each month, as my students mailed letters in response, we co-constructed beautiful and complex maps of teacher renewal. The cartography we have co-constructed unfolds intensities of significance for the professional development in art education.

My students and I have drawn the world anew. By letting go and following the aesthetic swell, we have mapped geographies of connection unimaginable when this study began. I think of Deleuzian scholar Ronald Bogue, who encouraged: “The goal of teaching and learning is to think otherwise, to engage the force of that which is other, different, and new. What Deleuze details in his accounts of learning and teaching is that dimension of education that inspires all true students and teachers—the dimension of discovery and creation within the ever-unfolding domain of the new. It is also the dimension of freedom, in which thought escapes its preconceptions and explores new possibilities for life.”<sup>251</sup> As I attempt to convey the significance of this study, I find myself dwelling in the spaces where my students and I escaped preconception, where we explored new possibilities for living. And, I am reminded again how “the work we do on ourselves is a gift to those we teach.”<sup>252</sup>

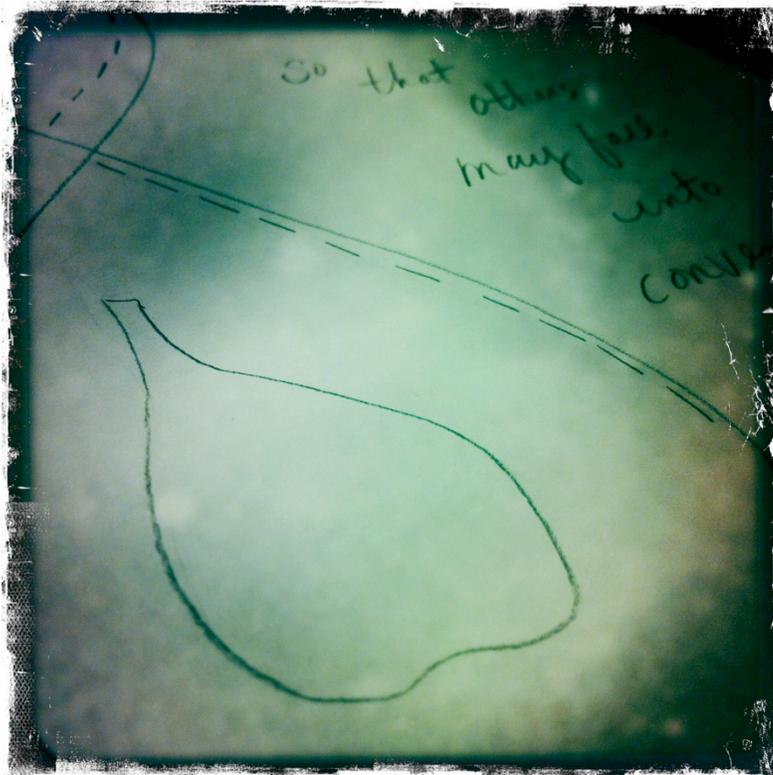
My work now is to begin to articulate a future research agenda. An agenda that considers how these implications may influence art teacher education beyond the immediate lives of my participants and myself. How could *finding oneself in afterglow*—in all of its tentative, shifting, fleeting, and forever incomplete manifestations—illuminate issues of teacher renewal? How could we envision effective change that is both practical and visionary?

Without any answers, I opened to the middle of our shared journal. I unsettled myself towards continuing our cartography. I let myself plunge forward, into the blankness, into the unknown, to find new questions to live in...

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

*P.S. How might we support artist-teachers beyond graduate programs?*



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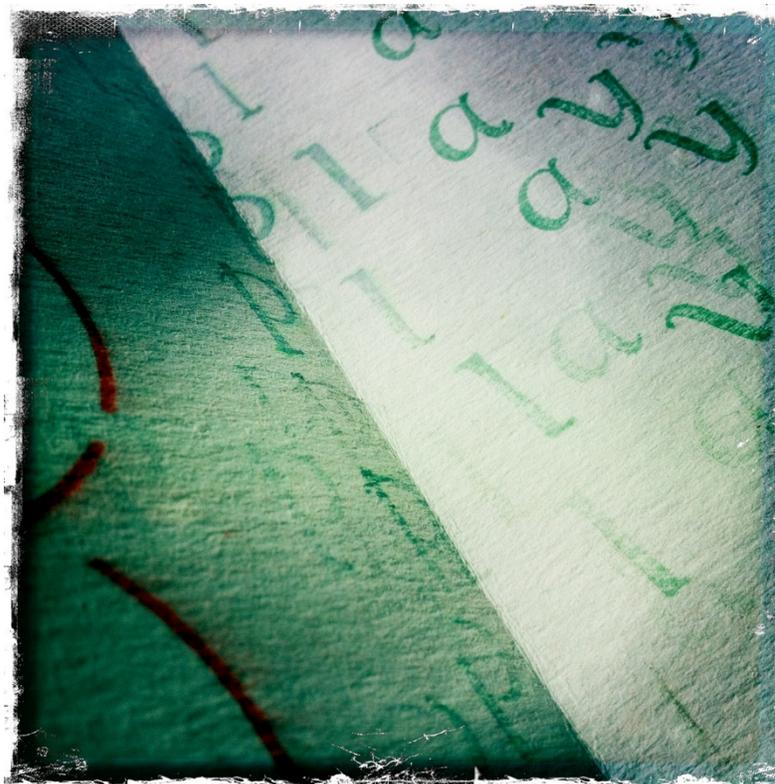
My students descriptions of the professional development offered by their schools generally fell into two categories: either their schools offer one-size-fits-all professional development that is not geared for arts educators, or they are asked to lead professional development for one another through PLC's (professional learning communities). This is very helpful information as an educator of pre-service teachers, and as one who is concerned with nurturing teacher renewal through professional development.

The communities that surround artist-teachers are rich and ready pedagogical spaces. If schools are not able to provide viable professional development experiences for art educators (recall Ellen's statement: *nobody knows what to do with us*), then perhaps artist-teachers could be supported in a broader context. I wonder: how might

universities, museums, cultural centers, and K-12 schools conceptualize more fluid and collaborative learning spaces for artist-teacher professional development? Further, how might this be envisioned and expanded for other teachers and their content areas?

Earlier, I posed the question: *After the printing, where might these broadsides come to dwell so that others may fall into conversation around them?* My hope in finding spaces to post these broadsides is that these poetic glimpses may be brought to bear in a larger discourse on professional development. Perhaps in the spaces (conference presentations, art exhibitions, published papers, focus groups with artist-teachers, and so on) where the printed broadsides come to dwell, others (artist-teachers, administrators, professors of art education, museum educators, and so on) may take up my wondering.

‡ How might *A~E~P* illuminate the value of the process of the experience of professional development in art education?



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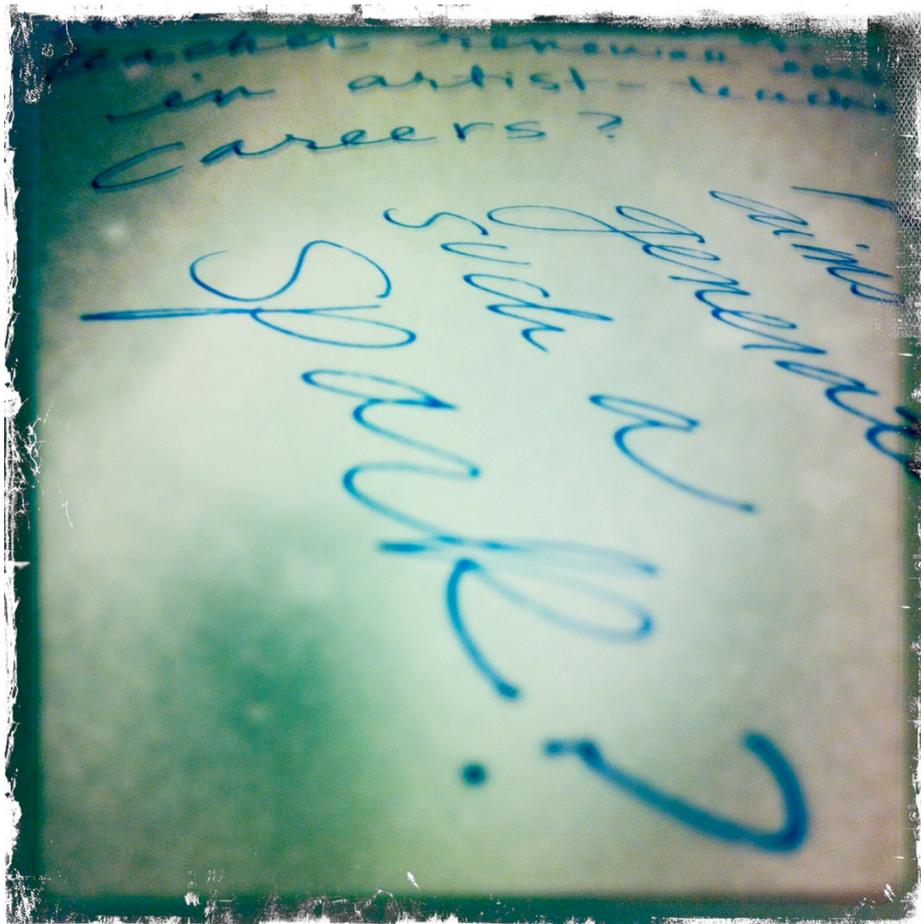
My hope is that this inquiry provokes an expanded vision of what *counts* as professional development. Through *A~E~P*, my students and I explored the process of the experience of professional development. Moreover, using an experimental method of letter writing to continue our engagement with *A~E~P*, opened us to remembering, creating, dreaming, envisioning, reflecting, connecting, transforming, and...

What is more, through these methods of letters and interview conversations, I learned to listen—openly, responsively—in this process. Not only to listen—to also open my work as an art teacher educator to what was heard, felt, lived.

Over the past 16 months, I listened to stories of perfectionist holds releasing, giving up a desire to know the outcome before one begins, to simply work on

something for a while rather than always attempting a masterpiece, the thrill of exchanging original works of art through the mail... I listened to the way Malik described receiving the postcards prompts as a process of waking up the person inside of him who wants to talk, and his request for a *share out reunion* where all eight students can gather to process their responses to the prompts together. I listened to the way Virginia spoke of this process as honoring a depth inside of her, and her intention to continue cultivating the depth so that it could be vibrant for others, including her students. I listened to the way Ellen described the permission this process gave her to have some breathing time, permission to escape the linear treadmill and to sit and float awhile in reflection. This listening slowly seeped into my work with graduate students, as well as my work with pre-service artist-teachers.

*How could pre-service education prepare artist-teachers to lead their own professional development through envisioning, conducting and presenting action-oriented, arts based research?*



255

As you have read, some of my students are actively seeking their own opportunities for renewal and growth, and some are not. I wonder: how might pre-service art education programs illuminate issues of teacher renewal earlier in artist-teachers' careers? Further, what curricular and pedagogical aims might generate such a spark?

By attending to the process of professional development, by listening to teachers' experiences, perhaps we might better prepare artist-teachers for careers in

school systems that may very well prove unable to provide professional development experiences specific to their needs and desires. Encouraging membership and participation in local and national conferences, envisioning opportunities to present and learn from one another, inviting reflective and reflexive engagement through course work (fore example, visual verbal journals), discussing how to create one's own opportunities for renewal and growth, are likely already elements of strong pre-service art education programs. Yet, might these be discussed more directly for the generativity and renewal these practices invite in one's life and career? Further more, art teacher educators could engage in these acts themselves, *with* their students.

‡ How might we switch things around?



256

Throughout our interview conversations, what my students found significant and memorable about our course often surprised me. In hearing them talk about what I offered them with my pedagogical approach, I began to question how *A-E-P* influenced my teaching practice.

Malik remembered the evening after our visit to the contemporary art museum, when we had dinner at my home; how I opened my studio to them so they could visually and verbally reflect on their experiences while the meal was prepared. He spoke about how creating in my studio space was so much more than getting a tour or a glimpse of your teacher's life. Many of them mentioned that they noticed me creating, playing alongside them on our Saturday studio days or that I kept a journal along with

them. And, in turn, I heard my students talk about working on their journals throughout their teaching day. Their raw, reflexive books open on their desks for students to walk past and question—did *you* paint this?! What lovely conversations I imagine taking flight from there; from the place of students' recognizing: *my teacher is doing with me.*

I had known from art educator, Elliot Eisner that students always glean more or less than the lesson you plan,<sup>257</sup> yet it surprised me to hear that my students took away so many of these little gestures as significant acts that cued them to the co-relational nature of our pedagogical space. As they shared these memories, I was reminded again of Deleuze who said: "We learn nothing from those who say: 'Do as I do,' ... Our only teachers are those who tell us to 'do with me.'"<sup>258</sup>

This has been the gift of aesthetic experiential play in my life—it opened me to teach from a place of *do with me*, not *do as I do*. It is an approach that, as Malik articulated, requires *trust* in the process and *trust* in your students. What if this *do with me* pedagogy was explored in pre-service art education programs? Or, as an approach to in-service professional development for artist-teachers? Well, to borrow a phrase from Ellen, *that's switching it around.*

- BH

## Coda: The Underbody

Your absence has gone through me  
Like thread through a needle.  
Everything I do is stitched with its color.<sup>259</sup>

W.S. Merwin



*May 14, 2013*

Dear reader,

Even as I stubbornly resisted egress, I found myself charged with the task of evaluating the work that I had undergone, in preparation of letting go of this body of inquiry on its rise towards the world. In this undertaking, I recalled Virginia who spoke of sewing and weaving as the work of pushing threads in and pushing threads out. And so, I turned the work over, explored what threads had been pushed in, under, and through. In this act, I was reminded that while we so often admire the *finished* side of knitted, sewn, or woven work, there is also an underbelly. Lively with all its knots, tails, starts and stops, this is where the work reveals its own becoming.

And so, I will leave you with another bundle of letters, which attempt to situate my rendering of this inquiry within the field of art education, and the discourse of qualitative research; Letters that invite you to engage with this construction in ways that were there all along, yet perhaps pushed in too far to see. This is the underbody. For, this is where you may unravel a knot, cast on a thread, make your own cut, send a letter or a postcard, invite someone to tea, open something in contemplation, keep a journal that maps your way.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Dear reader,

What openings does this rising body reach for in the literature? Where does it settle neatly into place? Where does it push back, plunge deeper, explore further?

This dissertation situated *A-E-P* in the discourse of art education, and more specifically, articulates its connection to teacher renewal, professional development, graduate education, and practitioner action research (PAR). My review of the literature was interwoven throughout the text, so that these connections might become enfolded in dynamic relationship to the intensities that arose in and through individual, cultural, and political forces.

Broadly speaking, this study attended to the ways teacher learning through professional development unfolds across time<sup>261</sup> and conversations.<sup>262</sup> Within this broad scope, my review dwelled in several points of focus determined by the limitations of my research design. I have outlined these focal points, these dwelling places below.

Wherever possible, I drew from scholarship pertaining to in-service teachers of visual art working in public schools with students grades K-12, as the participants of my study included: six elementary artist-teachers, one Pre K-8<sup>th</sup> grade artist-teacher, and one high school artist-teacher. At the start of this study, the participants (my students) included: one 2nd year teacher, one 3rd year teacher, one 5th year teacher, two 6th year teachers, one 7th year teacher, and two 10th year teachers. My K-12 teaching experience includes four years of teaching middle and high school art, and three years of elementary art. I used the term artist-teacher synonymously with art educator, art teacher, or visual art instructor. This review did not include professional development related to teaching artists or visiting artists in school settings.<sup>263</sup>

Excluding seminal works, this study drew primarily on current literature from the

United States (with very limited inclusion of international scholarship) as the American educational climate under government acts, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Race to the Top (RttT), were critical contextualizing factors for this study. All participants in this study worked in urban or rural public school districts across North and South Carolina, and I taught in an urban school district in North Carolina. My work with these students was embedded in a graduate degree program in art education at a small, public university in the Southeastern United States.

At the time of this writing, limited scholarship directly addressed the influence of RttT on the professional development of artist-teachers.<sup>264</sup> However, literature that addressed broader concerns regarding the quality of professional development in this era of evidence-based, outcome-oriented learning proved both robust and provocative.<sup>265</sup> As NCLB waned and RttT waxed, many called for other scholars to take up these issues (i.e. attrition, agency, affect, passion) in their own contexts and situations.

Specific to the field of art education, Conway, Hibbard, Albert, & Hourigan,<sup>266</sup> Galbraith & Grauer<sup>267</sup> and Sabol<sup>268</sup> found a lack of inquiries related to these issues (i.e. graduate education, professional development, retention of art teachers) and strongly encouraged new research in these areas. As Sabol affirmed, research related to “recruitment, certification, and retention of art teachers” is the path to understanding, action, and change in the field of art education.<sup>269</sup> Among his lists of suggested research questions are two that directly related to my own work: “What factors contribute to art teachers’ decisions to leave the field? What factors encourage art teachers to remain in teaching?”<sup>270</sup> Additionally, there have been empirical studies that specifically explore why artist-teachers are choosing to stay in classrooms,<sup>271</sup> as well as more philosophical

works that explain teacher renewal in a variety of contexts, including: The Lincoln Center Institute<sup>272</sup> and the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching.<sup>273</sup>

What is more, Kalin established a different approach to researching such an agenda, emphasizing “the value of *attending to the process in the experience* of teacher professional development in art education, especially as we tap the potential of critical perspectives emerging from collaboration among researchers and teachers.”<sup>274</sup> Her examination of the transformative potential of collaborative teacher research found that “further research is needed to determine the long-term effects of participation in these sorts of collaborative inquiries and the impact of student learning once a professional development officially ends.”<sup>275</sup> Kalin cites a widening body of literature that draws import for art teacher collaboration in professional development.<sup>276</sup>

Within these dwelling places, my work sought to contribute to new and deeper ways of contemplating the complex individual, political, and cultural influences that both illuminate and dampen teacher renewal, even with a relatively small sample.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

Dear reader,

As I move towards closing this text, I wish to leave you with a letter regarding my approach to evaluating the quality of this study.<sup>277</sup> My criteria for the qualitative integrity of this work were drawn from Vagle's method of post-intentional phenomenology<sup>278</sup> and from Barone and Eisner's influential work in arts based research.<sup>279</sup>

As Mark Vagle outlined: "The quality of any phenomenological study can be judged on its relative power to draw the reader into the researcher's discoveries allowing the reader to see the worlds of others in new and deeper ways."<sup>280</sup> I have sought to craft a text that might open the embodied intensities of our afterglow to you, to offer you new and deeper ways of considering how teachers become-renewed in professional development. In this desire, I found myself dwelling in the intersection of my visual and verbal imaginations, culling images and words together, playing through my curatorial impulses, and offering relational gestures. Further, my letters to you have been invitations to engage with this work—to sit and dwell and move with this inquisitive body. So, I left things a bit messy in places, a bit unfinished in others, attempting to lure your contemplation.

Given this, in concert with Vagle's assertion, I believe Barone and Eisner's criteria for assessing arts based research offers a comprehensive approach to evaluating this study. Their criteria include: incisiveness (gets to the heart of the matter), concision (parts contribute to the whole), coherence (holds a strong form that relates to the heart), generativity (takes the reader somewhere), social significance (amplifies important issues for others to consider), and evocation and illumination (provokes cognitive and emotional responses in aesthetic ways).<sup>281</sup>

In many ways, these criteria rest upon you. And so, perhaps you will consider: How have you encountered this work? Might you have discovered something new, something that pulls you deeper? What have you unfolded from the stories that linger here in your hands?

And so, we slip in and we slip out.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

P.S. This is the Rilke passage I set last July: “Be patient toward all that this unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, that cannot be given to you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.”<sup>282</sup>

Dear reader,

In the newspaper this morning I came across an editorial by a professor, which discussed why he teaches. He explained that while we often focus on short term outcomes (tests, essays, papers), the deeper pleasures of learning often come much later. These pleasures are not so much the result of what we still remember or recall about this author or that painting, but in reconnecting to our learning through our ongoing experiences. In what reading the paper, attending a play or visiting a museum calls forward in our lives. The author explained: "We should judge teaching not by the amount of knowledge it passes on, but by the enduring excitement it generates. Knowledge, when it comes, is a later arrival, flaring up, when the time is right, from the sparks good teachers have implanted in their students' souls."<sup>283</sup>

In this, I realized the complex and slippery work of evaluating my work, which endures in the generativity I have called, *afterglow*.

*Yours,*

*Brooke*

## Appendix A

### Individual Interview Protocol

What was it like to receive the stationary sets?

What was it like to receive the postcards?

Where did the postcards dwell this year?

We've been corresponding for a year now... What have you taken from that process?

What holds relevance from our course for you now?

Describe your experience with receiving the prompts...

Describe your experience responding to the postcards...

Did any of the prompts resonate more or less for you?

Describe the professional development provided by your school.

Is there anything else you would like to discuss or add?

## Appendix B

### Institutional Review Board Documentation



Office of The Vice President for Research  
DHHS Assurance ID No. : FWA00003901

Institutional Review Board  
Human Subjects Office  
612 Boyd GSRC  
Athens, Georgia 30602-7411  
(706) 542-3199  
Fax: (706) 542-3360  
www.ovpr.uga.edu/hso

#### APPROVAL OF RENEWALS / CHANGES

Request Date: 2013-01-21

Project Number: 2012-10433-1

Name	Title	Dept/Phone	Address	Email
Dr. Tracie Costantino	PI	Art Lamar Dodd School of Art 270 River Road N323 Lamar Dodd 706-542-1640		tcost@uga.edu
Ms. Brooke Hofess	CO	Art Education 704-907-2972	1127 Westchester Blvd. Charlotte, NC 28205	bhofess@uga.edu

Title of Study: Aesthetic Experiential Play in Teacher Renewal

45 CFR 46 Category: Continuing Review      Renew : No  
Parameters:  
APPROVAL OF ABOVE NOTED CHANGES.

Change(s) : Added individual interview and submitted  
corresponding interview protocol and addendum to the  
consent form; Increased sample size;

Approved : 2013-02-18    Begin date : 2013-02-18    Expiration date : 2016-12-22

NOTE: Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end data collection date shown above is not covered by IRB approval, and cannot be retroactively approved.

Number Assigned by Sponsored Programs:

Funding Agency:

Your request for approval of renewal and/or changes has been approved.

You must report any adverse events or unanticipated risk to the IRB within 24 to 72 hours. Refer to the IRB Guidelines for additional information.

Use the attached Researcher Request Form for requesting renewals, changes, or closures.  
Keep this original approval form for your records.

Chairperson or Designee,  
Institutional Review Board

## Appedix C

### Colophon

This manuscript features two lovely typefaces. Linux Libertine was used for the main body of the text. In addition, Adobe Caslon Italic was employed for the visual configuration, & & &, as this typeface features a particularly exquisite ampersand.

The stationary sets, as well as the May postcards were printed at Good Friends Press in Charlotte, North Carolina. The June through April postcards were printed at Asheville Bookworks in West Asheville, North Carolina.

All images (excluding the broadside exemplars in Chapter 4) were shot with my iPhone, using the Hipstamatic app.

This text was crafted from May 2012 to July 2013 in my home office, and on occasion at my favorite neighborhood coffee shop, Julia's. However, the view of the mailbox from my window made it too tempting to write anywhere but here most days, where the letters I received dwell, tucked away and yet always at the edge of my periphery as I work.

Brooke Hofsess  
2013

## Notes

## Forward

<sup>1</sup> Woolf, *A Moment's Liberty*, 43.

<sup>2</sup> Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, 26.

<sup>3</sup> My first exposure to the work of visionary photographers (Walker Evans, Diane Arbus, Duane Michals, Edward Steichen, Imogen Cunningham, Man Ray, among others) was through the author of this letter, and his pseudonym has been given in honor of that seed—one of many that he planted in my life.

<sup>4</sup> Vagle, "Post-intentional Phenomenological Research Approach," p. 424.

<sup>5</sup> Some of this text was reworked from an earlier publication; see Hofsess, "Methodology in the Afterglow."

<sup>6</sup> Hofsess, artist book, 1996

## Chapter 1

<sup>7</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 329.

<sup>8</sup> Claire, visual verbal journal, 2012

<sup>9</sup> Merleau-Ponty, "Phenomenology of Perception."

<sup>10</sup> St. Pierre, "Nomadic Inquiry," 276.

<sup>11</sup> Hofsess, handmade paper slip (cotton), 2011

<sup>12</sup> One additional student audited this course. Due to her work as a special education teacher, this student has not been included in this rendering of the inquiry.

<sup>13</sup> Butler, "*Merleau-Ponty*," 181.

<sup>14</sup> Sumara and Davis, "Enlarging the Possible," 304.

<sup>15</sup> Race to the Top Act of 2011. H.R. 1532, 112th Cong. (2011).

<sup>16</sup> This attending invited intensities in the literature to form salient aggregates of connection. As such, my review of the literature has been interwoven throughout the text. See: "Finding Sweetness," "In the Yet Unwritten Year," and "Coda: The Underbody."

<sup>17</sup> Beginning with Plato and Aristotle, we can trace play as a major theme in the work and writing of philosophers, educator/activists and educational psychologists, from Jean-Jacques Rousseau to Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Schiller, Johan Pestalozzi, Friedrich Froebel, Elizabeth Peabody, John Dewey, Johan Huizinga, Maria Montessori, Jean Piaget, Donald Winnicott, Jerome Bruner, Lev Vgotsky, Jacques Derrida, and Hans-Georg Gadamer. Play has been taken up in many historical moments and has been inscribed in relationship to many disciplines; the field of education is only one voice amidst a robust conversation. See: Caplan and Caplan, "Power of Play;" Macintyre Latta, "Possibilities of Play;" and Macintyre Latta, "Play the (Missing) Thing;" Pitri, "The Role of Artistic Play;" Schwandt, *Sage Dictionary Qualitative Inquiry*.

<sup>18</sup> Schutz, *On Phenomenology and Social Relations*.

<sup>19</sup> See: Costantino, "Critical Relevance of Aesthetic Experience in Art Education;" Gallagher, *Hermeneutics and Education*; Henry, *The Museum Experience*; Shusterman and Tomlin, *Aesthetic Experience*; Vilhauer, *Gadamer's Ethics of Play*; White, *Aesthetics Primer*.

<sup>20</sup> My gratitude to Christopher Schulte for encouraging me in this regard.

<sup>21</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 87.

<sup>22</sup> Vagle, "Post-intentional Phenomenological Research Approach;" "Reframing Schon's Call;" and "Ego-centric Predicament Qualitative Research."

<sup>23</sup> B.J. Hofsess-Thiel, "Joyful Digression."

<sup>24</sup> Deleuze, quoted in O'Sullivan, *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari*, 31.

<sup>25</sup> Jackson and Mazzei, *Thinking with Theory*.

<sup>26</sup> Ellwood, "Listening: Strategy of Attention," 50.

<sup>27</sup> Massumi, *Parables of the Virtual*, 25.

<sup>28</sup> Latour, quoted in Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, 9.

<sup>29</sup> Abrams, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, 49.

<sup>30</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 247.

<sup>31</sup> Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 96.

<sup>32</sup> St. Pierre, "Post Qualitative Research," 622.

<sup>33</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*. St. Pierre explained this Deleuzoguattarian concept, stating: "both individuals and groups are made up of a tangle of three kinds of lines: (a) lines of rigid segmentarity (sedentary lines like family, school, profession, etc.); (b) more supple lines of molecular segmentarity (migrant lines that operate at the same time as rigid lines but confound their rigidity, e.g., the hidden or mad things that happen within families or schools or professions); and (c) lines of flight (nomadic lines of creativity, lines that are always in the middle, lines of flux- not synthesis- that disrupt dualisms with complementarity)." St. Pierre, "Nomadic Inquiry," 124-147. Further, Massumi's notes on the translation of *A Thousand Plateaus* may prove helpful here, as he explained that *fuite* translates as flight or escape, meaning: fleeing, eluding, flowing, leaking and disappearing.

<sup>34</sup> Vagle, "Post-intentional Phenomenological Research Approach," 424.

<sup>35</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 15.

<sup>36</sup> Freeman, "Nurturing Dialogic Hermeneutics," 83.

<sup>37</sup> Braidotti, "Writing," 306.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

<sup>39</sup> Davies, "Difference and Differentiation," 28.

<sup>40</sup> See Cahnmann-Taylor and Siegesmund, *Arts-Based Research in Education*; St. Pierre, "Methodology in the Fold;" and St. Pierre, "Post Qualitative Research."

<sup>41</sup> Judy, visual verbal journal page, 2012

<sup>42</sup> Although the entire cohort was scheduled to graduate at the end of our course, some did not graduate until the following summer, fall or spring semesters due to a variety of personal reasons and interferences.

<sup>43</sup> This course was also inspired by my experience as a Master's student, and my pedagogical encounters with art education scholars, Judith Burton, John Baldacchino, and Jason Swift.

<sup>44</sup> Pinar et. al., *Understanding Curriculum*, 434.

<sup>45</sup> In cases where these reflective letters were quite lengthy or explored several themes within the same letter, excerpts were selected for inclusion here. These excerpts were chosen to give you a sense of the thrust of our discussions, concerns, and commitments throughout the course. Additionally, these letters have been edited to keep you, the reader, *in* the text. In other words, I chose to resolve distracting spelling, grammatical, and verb tense issues and to abbreviate some letters for readability. The student names used are pseudonyms.

<sup>46</sup> My understandings and applications of Arts Based Education Research (ABER) have been notably informed by the following resources: Barone and Eisner, *Arts Based Research*; Bresler, "Aesthetically based research;" Cahnmann-Taylor and Siegesmund, *Arts-Based Research in Education*; Knowles and Cole, *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research*; Springgay et. al., *Being with A/r/tography*; and Sullivan, *Art Practice as Research*.

<sup>47</sup> Anne, visual verbal journal, 2012

## Chapter 2

<sup>48</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 530.

<sup>49</sup> Anne, visual verbal journal, 2012

<sup>50</sup> Greene, *Releasing the Imagination*.

<sup>51</sup> Charlotte, visual verbal journal, 2012

<sup>52</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 130.

<sup>53</sup> Gallagher, *Hermeneutics and Education*, 49-50.

<sup>54</sup> Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth*, 3.

<sup>55</sup> See: Baldacchino, *Education Beyond Education*; Britzman, *Practice Makes Practice*; Dewey, *Art as Experience*; Greene, *Landscapes of Learning*; Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom*; Greene, *Releasing the Imagination*; and Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar*.

<sup>56</sup> Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 17.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>58</sup> Palmer, "Holding the Tension of Opposites," 85.

<sup>59</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 104.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>61</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*; Gallagher, *Hermeneutics and Education*; Vilhauer, *Gadamer's Ethics of Play*.

<sup>62</sup> Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 58.

<sup>63</sup> Greene, *Landscapes of Learning* and *The Dialectic of Freedom*.

<sup>64</sup> Reynolds, "Introduction," 3.

<sup>65</sup> Freeman, "Hermeneutics;" Gadamer, *Truth and Method*; Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar*; and Grondin, *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics*.

<sup>66</sup> Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar*, 50-51.

<sup>67</sup> I pause here to offer my sincere gratitude to Tracie Costantino for expanding my pedagogical vision of journaling into the visual and verbal.

<sup>68</sup> Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom*, 133.

<sup>69</sup> Caputo, *Radical Hermeneutics*, 269-270.

- <sup>70</sup> Naylor, *The Women of Brewster Place*.
- <sup>71</sup> Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 39.
- <sup>72</sup> Richards, *Opening Our Moral Eye*, 32.
- <sup>73</sup> See Rene Magritte. (1953-4). *The Empire of Light (L'Empire des lumières)*. Guggenheim collection, Venice, accessed on April 30, 2012, <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/collection-online/artwork/2594>.
- <sup>74</sup> Dewey, *Art as Experience* and Root-Bernstein & Root-Bernstein, *Sparks of Genius*
- <sup>75</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 301.
- <sup>76</sup> Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar*, 136. See Duckworth, *Having Wonderful Ideas* and Eisner, *Arts Creation of Mind*.
- <sup>77</sup> Vilhauer, *Gadamer's Ethics of Play*, xv.

### Chapter 3

- <sup>78</sup> Neumeyer, *Floating Worlds*. *Floating Worlds* refers to the title of a book I serendipitously discovered while in the final month of crafting this dissertation. It is a book of letters and postcards exchanged between two friends: an illustrator and a writer.
- <sup>79</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 169.
- <sup>80</sup> Virginia, visual verbal journal, 2012
- <sup>81</sup> James, quoted in Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 24.
- <sup>82</sup> Richards, *Opening Our Moral Eye*.
- <sup>83</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*.
- <sup>84</sup> Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 22.
- <sup>85</sup> Bishop, "What is a Curator?," IDEA artă + societate, accessed May 2, 2013, <http://idea.ro/revista/?q=en/node/41&articol=468>
- <sup>86</sup> Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, 6.
- <sup>87</sup> Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 14.
- <sup>88</sup> Deleuze refers to just-this-ness as *haeccity*. See Deleuze, *Negotiations*; Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*; and Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy*.
- <sup>89</sup> Talking through the curatorial over rose tea, 2013
- <sup>90</sup> Greene, *Landscapes of Learning*, 55.
- <sup>91</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, May 2012
- <sup>92</sup> Ellen often underlined words in her letters for emphasis. These marks were significant embodiments that allowed me to fall into the cadence of her manner of speaking as I read. In much the same way, you may notice that Claire often used ellipses to write through her contemplative pauses.
- <sup>93</sup> Judy, May letter
- <sup>94</sup> Claire, May letter
- <sup>95</sup> Ellen, visual verbal journal, 2012
- <sup>96</sup> Judy, visual verbal journal, 2012
- <sup>97</sup> Anne, visual verbal journal, 2012
- <sup>98</sup> Malik, visual verbal journal, 2012
- <sup>99</sup> Grundy and Robison, "Teacher Professional Development," 146.
- <sup>100</sup> Scheib, "Policy Implications for Teacher Retention," 5.

- <sup>101</sup> Thoreau, quoted in Greene, "Foreword," viii.
- <sup>102</sup> Margolis, "What Will Keep Teachers Teaching?," 161.
- <sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 185 (emphasis added).
- <sup>104</sup> Scheib, "Policy Implications for Teacher Retention," 9.
- <sup>105</sup> Christopher Day offered this more comprehensive definition: "Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group, or school and which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew, and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills, and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning, and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives." Day quoted in Kelchtermans, "CPD for Professional Renewal," 219-22.
- <sup>106</sup> Labaree, "An Uneasy Relationship."
- <sup>107</sup> Beavers, "Teachers as Learners."
- <sup>108</sup> Macintyre Latta and Kim, "Narrative Inquiry Professional Development," 139; *See* Lind, "High Quality Professional Development."
- <sup>109</sup> Zeichner, "Becoming a Teacher Educator."
- <sup>110</sup> *See* empirical studies by Bresler, Degge, Irwin, and May, as well as calls for this type of philosophical engagement from Greene, 1995, all quoted in Thurber, "Teacher Education in Art Education."
- <sup>111</sup> *See* Kalin, *Drawn Towards Transformation*.
- <sup>112</sup> Greene, *Landscapes of Learning*, 55.
- <sup>113</sup> *See* Bain and Ulbricht, "Graduate Study in Art Education."
- <sup>114</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom*, 37-38.
- <sup>115</sup> Virginia, visual verbal journal, 2012
- <sup>116</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, June 2012
- <sup>117</sup> Tennyson, quoted in Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar*, 46.
- <sup>118</sup> Virginia, June letter
- <sup>119</sup> Ellen, June letter
- <sup>120</sup> Dewey, *Democracy and Education*.
- <sup>121</sup> Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 290.
- <sup>122</sup> *See* Brookfield, *Becoming Critically Reflective* and Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*
- <sup>123</sup> Sartre, "Intentionality"
- <sup>124</sup> *See* Slattery, "Curriculum Development Postmodern Era;" Vagle, "Reframing Schon's Call;" and Vagle, "Ego-centric Predicament Qualitative Research."
- <sup>125</sup> Race to the Top Act of 2011. H.R. 1532, 112th Cong. (2011).
- <sup>126</sup> No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. H.R. 1, 107th Cong. (2001).
- <sup>127</sup> Woolf, *Moments of Being*, 72.
- <sup>128</sup> Schwandt, *Sage Dictionary Qualitative Inquiry*.
- <sup>129</sup> In contemplating the concept of intentionality, I returned many times to this rendering offered by Freeman and Vagle: "Intentionality is described in numerous ways. For instance, Merleau-Ponty (1947/1964) describes intentionality as the invisible thread that connects humans to their surroundings meaningfully whether they are conscious

of that connection or not. Sartre (in Dermot & Moran, 2002) has described intentionality as the ways in which we meaningfully find ourselves “bursting forth toward” (p. 383) the world. Regardless of how it is described, intentionality is a difficult concept to grasp... Part of its confusion lies in the strength of the image of the autonomous meaning-making agent orienting to the world with purpose and intent. Furthermore, intentionality means different things to different phenomenological and hermeneutic theories with some ascribing more focus or intent on the thinking subject and others seeing little or no input by the subject on the meaning that resides in intentionality. Intentionality is neither in consciousness nor in the world. It is the meaning link people have to the world in which they find themselves. People in their everyday contact with the world bring into being intentionality but not in the sense of choice or intent.”

Freeman and Vagle, “Turning Hermeneutics and Phenomenology,” 3-4.

<sup>130</sup> Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, 67.

<sup>131</sup> Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, 118.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>135</sup> Berensohn, *Finding One’s Way*, 90.

<sup>136</sup> Hargreaves, “Getting Burned,” 20.

<sup>137</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, July 2012

<sup>138</sup> Judy, July letter

<sup>139</sup> To view Kyobe Ibe’s paper installations, *see*

<http://www.kyokoibe.com/artwork.html#>, accessed July 2, 2012;

To view the collaborative work Claire mentioned by Helmick and Schechter, *see*

<http://www.sandcartstudio.com/Sculpture/HandS/Rabble/rabble3.html>, accessed August 27, 2012.

<sup>140</sup> Eisner, *Arts Creation of Mind*.

<sup>141</sup> Deleuze and Guatarri, *A Thousand Plateaus*.

<sup>142</sup> Davies, “Difference and Differentiation,” 23.

<sup>143</sup> Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*.

<sup>144</sup> Greene, quoted in Hatton, *Teaching by Heart*, 64.

<sup>145</sup> Dewey, *Art as Experience*.

<sup>146</sup> Hofsess, visual verbal journal, 2012

<sup>147</sup> Greene, *Releasing the Imagination*, 22.

<sup>148</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, August 2012

<sup>149</sup> Anne, August letter; Anne, August letter

<sup>150</sup> Britzman, *Practice Makes Practice*, 237.

<sup>151</sup> The focus of my review of the literature is described more fully in the Coda.

<sup>152</sup> Mantas and Di Reeze, “On Becoming Wide-Awake”

<sup>153</sup> Regarding lack of resources, *see* Jeffers, “Professional Development Art Education” and Upitis, “Teacher Professional Development Programs.” Regarding isolation, *see* Gates, “Professional Development Collaborative Inquiry;” Mantas and Di Reeze, “On Becoming Wide-Awake;” and Scheib, 2006. Regarding time constraints, *see* Hourigan, “Race to the Top: Implications;” Lind, “High Quality Professional Development;” and Sabol, “Needs, Issues, Concerns.” Regarding a need for content-driven professional

development, *see* Conway, et al., “Professional Development Arts Teachers;” Hourigan, “Race to the Top: Implications;” Sabol, “Needs, Issues, Concerns;” Scheib, “Policy Implications teacher Retention;” and Thompson, “Teachers as Artists.” Regarding the current focus on standardized outcomes in learning, *see* Conway, et al., “Professional Development Arts Teachers;” Hourigan, “Race to the Top: Implications;” Latta, “Play the (Missing) Thing;” Uptis, “Teacher Professional Development Programs;” and therefore standardization in professional development, *see* Hourigan, “Race to the Top: Implications;” Lind, “High Quality Professional Development;” and Macintyre Latta and Kim, “Narrative Inquiry Professional Development.”

<sup>154</sup> *See* Amorino, “The Artistic Impetus Model;” Burton, “Practice Teaching K-12 Schools;” Szekely, *From Play to Art*.

<sup>155</sup> Gude, “Playing, Creativity, Possibility,” 33.

<sup>156</sup> Burton, “Practice Teaching K-12 Schools,” 572.

<sup>157</sup> Amorino, “The Artistic Impetus Model,” 215.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 215.

<sup>159</sup> Eisner, *Art Creation of Mind*, 56.

<sup>160</sup> Lind, “High Quality Professional Development,” 15.

<sup>161</sup> Hourigan, “Race to the Top: Implications;” Sabol, “Art Teacher Recruitment, Certification, Retention” and “Needs, Issues, Concerns.”

<sup>162</sup> Stout, *Flower Teachers*.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>165</sup> Greene, *Dialectic of Freedom*, 14.

<sup>166</sup> Kozol, *On Being a Teacher*, 3.

<sup>167</sup> Darling-Hammond, “Keeping Good Teachers,” 7.

<sup>168</sup> Jeffers, “Professional Development Art Education,” 112, (emphasis added).

<sup>169</sup> Greene, quoted in Hatton, *Teaching by Heart*, 64.

<sup>170</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, September 2012

<sup>171</sup> Virginia, September letter

<sup>172</sup> Anne, visual verbal journal, 2012

<sup>173</sup> During our course, I took field notes in my teaching journal. This is a poetic glimpse of what I noticed one morning while a conversation was brewing.

<sup>174</sup> Deleuze and Guatarri, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 239.

<sup>175</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, October 2012

<sup>176</sup> Virginia, October letter

<sup>177</sup> Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 2.

<sup>178</sup> Stagoll, “Becoming,” 21.

<sup>179</sup> Vilhauer, *Gadamer’s Ethics of Play*.

<sup>180</sup> Richardson, 2000, 936.

<sup>181</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, November 2012

<sup>182</sup> Woolf, *Orlando*, 78.

<sup>183</sup> Virginia, November letter

<sup>184</sup> Anderson and Milbrant, *Art for Life*.

<sup>185</sup> Richardson, “Getting Personal: Writing-Stories,” 35.

<sup>186</sup> Woolf, “Moments of Being,” 65.

- <sup>187</sup> St. Pierre, “Deleuzian Concepts for Education,” 293.
- <sup>188</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, December 2012
- <sup>189</sup> Empty mailbox in December, 2012
- <sup>190</sup> Virginia, December letter; Virginia, December letter
- <sup>191</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 138.
- <sup>192</sup> Grumet, *Bitter Milk*; Vagle, “Critically-oriented Pedagogical Tact.”
- <sup>193</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 109.
- <sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.
- <sup>195</sup> May, *Gilles Deleuze*, 172.
- <sup>196</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, January 2013
- <sup>197</sup> Virginia, January envelope, *front*; Virginia, January envelope, *back*
- <sup>198</sup> Virginia, January letter; Virginia, January letter; Virginia, January letter; Virginia, January letter
- <sup>199</sup> Claire was referring to: Katherine M. Douglas and Diane B. Jaquith, *Engaging Learners through Artmaking*.
- <sup>200</sup> Claire, January letter
- <sup>201</sup> Ellen, January letter; Ellen, January letter
- <sup>202</sup> May, *Gilles Deleuze*, 172.
- <sup>203</sup> Woolf, *A Moment’s Liberty*, 33.
- <sup>204</sup> Vandercook no. 4 proof press
- <sup>205</sup> Lightman, *Einstein’s Dreams*, 42.
- <sup>206</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, February 2013
- <sup>207</sup> Virginia, February envelope; Virginia, February letter
- <sup>208</sup> Ellen, February letter
- <sup>209</sup> Claire, visual verbal journal, 2012
- <sup>210</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*.
- <sup>211</sup> Freeman, “Hermeneutics,” 387.
- <sup>212</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 358.
- <sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 357.
- <sup>214</sup> See Freeman, “Hermeneutics;” Freeman and Vagle, “Turning Hermeneutics and Phenomenology;” Gadamer, *Truth and Method*; Gallagher, *Hermeneutics and Education*; Grondin, *Introduction Philosophical Hermeneutics*; Schwandt, *Dictionary Qualitative Inquiry*; and Vilhauer, *Gadamer’s Ethics of Play*.
- <sup>215</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 24-25.
- <sup>216</sup> Charlotte, visual verbal journal, 2012
- <sup>217</sup> Zafon, *The Shadow of the Wind*, 329.
- <sup>218</sup> Massumi, *Parables of the Virtual*.
- <sup>219</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, March 2013
- <sup>220</sup> Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 24.
- <sup>221</sup> Virginia, March envelope
- <sup>222</sup> This letter was written on a fine piece of ivory linen paper, across the top of which, Claire added the following heading: we learn to skate in summer after having commenced in winter.
- <sup>223</sup> Madeline Grumet, *Bitter Milk*, 164.
- <sup>224</sup> Hofsess, letterpress postcard, April 2013

- <sup>225</sup> Greene, *Releasing the Imagination*, 112.  
<sup>226</sup> Virginia, April envelope; Virginia, April letter  
<sup>227</sup> Virginia, April letter (detail)  
<sup>228</sup> Ellen, April letter

#### Chapter 4

- <sup>229</sup> Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 96.  
<sup>230</sup> Hofsess, letterpress broadside on handmade abaca paper, 2012  
<sup>231</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 385.  
<sup>232</sup> Dahlberg, Dahlberg, and Nystrom, *Reflective Lifeworld Research*, 186.  
<sup>233</sup> This interview protocol may be found in the Appendix.  
<sup>234</sup> van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience*, 98.  
<sup>235</sup> Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 96.  
<sup>236</sup> O' Sullivan, *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari*, 20.  
<sup>237</sup> The exploratory intentions and embodied resistance towards "findings" in the dissertation of my colleague Joseph Pate (2012) was encouraging in this regard.  
<sup>238</sup> Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 143.  
<sup>239</sup> Richardson, "Poetic Representation of Interviews," 879.  
<sup>240</sup> In addition to Richardson, I found Cahnmann's "Poetry in Educational Research" helpful in this regard.  
<sup>241</sup> Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 19.  
<sup>242</sup> Rivers, *Little Book of Letterpress*.  
<sup>243</sup> "Dunlap broadside," accessed on June 4, 2013, <http://fontsinuse.com/uses/1666/the-dunlap-broadside>.  
<sup>244</sup> "Votes for Women broadside," accessed on June 4, 2013, <http://www.sethkaller.com/item/755-A-Broadside-Rejecting-Anti-Suffragist-Arguments>.  
<sup>245</sup> "She Who Learns broadside," Amos Kennedy, accessed on June 4, 2013, <http://www.kennedyprints.com/posters11.html>.  
<sup>246</sup> "There is a Thread," Helen Hiebert, accessed on June 4, 2013, <http://www.23sandy.com/Broadsided/artists/hiebert.html>.

#### Chapter 5

- <sup>247</sup> Martusewicz, quoted in Kind, "Learning to Listen," 178.  
<sup>248</sup> Virginia's gift, 2013  
<sup>249</sup> Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues*, 2.  
<sup>250</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*.  
<sup>251</sup> Bogue, "Search, Swim and See," 15.  
<sup>252</sup> Vagle, "Assaulting Displacement of the Social Sciences," 424.  
<sup>253</sup> Hofsess, shared journal entry, 2013  
<sup>254</sup> Hofsess, shared journal entry, 2013  
<sup>255</sup> Hofsess, shared journal entry, 2013  
<sup>256</sup> Hofsess, shared journal entry, 2013  
<sup>257</sup> Eisner, *Arts Creation of Mind*.

<sup>258</sup> Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 23.

### Coda

<sup>259</sup> This poem, "Separation" by poet laureate W.S. Merwin, was accessed on June 10, 2013, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poem/18094>.

<sup>260</sup> Judy, visual verbal journal, 2012

<sup>261</sup> See Kelchtermans, "CPD for Professional Renewal" and Uptis, "Teacher Professional Development Programs."

<sup>262</sup> See Lind, "High Quality Professional Development" and Mantas and Di Reeze, "On Becoming Wide-Awake."

<sup>263</sup> See Kind, et. al., "Artist-Teacher Partnerships" and Oreck, "Artistic and Professional Development of Teachers."

<sup>264</sup> See Hourigan, "Race to the Top: Implications."

<sup>265</sup> See Cochran-Smith, Feiman-Nemser, and McIntyre, *Handbook Research Teacher Education*; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, *Inside/Outside Teacher Research*; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, *Inquiry as Stance*; Darling-Hammond, "Keeping Good Teachers;" Day and Sachs, *Handbook Continuing Professional Development*; Johnson and Kardos, "Next Generation of Teachers;" Macintyre Latta and Kim, "Narrative Inquiry Professional Development;" Uptis, "Teacher Professional Development Programs;" and Witherell and Noddings, *Stories Lives Tell*.

<sup>266</sup> See Conway, et. al., "Professional Development for Arts Teachers."

<sup>267</sup> See Galbraith and Grauer, "State of the Field."

<sup>268</sup> Sabol, "Art Teacher Recruitment, Certification, Retention."

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, 547.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*, 547.

<sup>271</sup> See Ellett, "Seeing Life;" Stout, *Flower Teachers*.

<sup>272</sup> Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar*.

<sup>273</sup> See Rud and Oldendorf, "Place for Teacher Renewal."

<sup>274</sup> Kalin, *Drawn Towards Transformation*, 237 (emphasis added).

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>276</sup> See Kalin, *Drawn Towards Transformation*; Macintyre Latta, *Play the (Missing) Thing, and May*, "Teachers-as-Researchers."

<sup>277</sup> This study received IRB approval through the University of Georgia Human Subjects Office on December 23, 2011, and an addendum to the original application (that added individual interviews to my methods) was approved on February 18, 2013.

<sup>278</sup> Vagle, "Post-Intentional Research Approach."

<sup>279</sup> Barone and Eisner, *Arts Based Research*.

<sup>280</sup> Vagle, "Post-Intentional Research Approach," 23.

<sup>281</sup> Barone and Eisner, *Arts Based Research*.

<sup>282</sup> Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, 35.

<sup>283</sup> "Why Do I Teach?," Gary Gutting, Opinionator, The New York Times, accessed May 22, 2013, <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/22/why-do-i-teach/?smid=fb-share>.

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