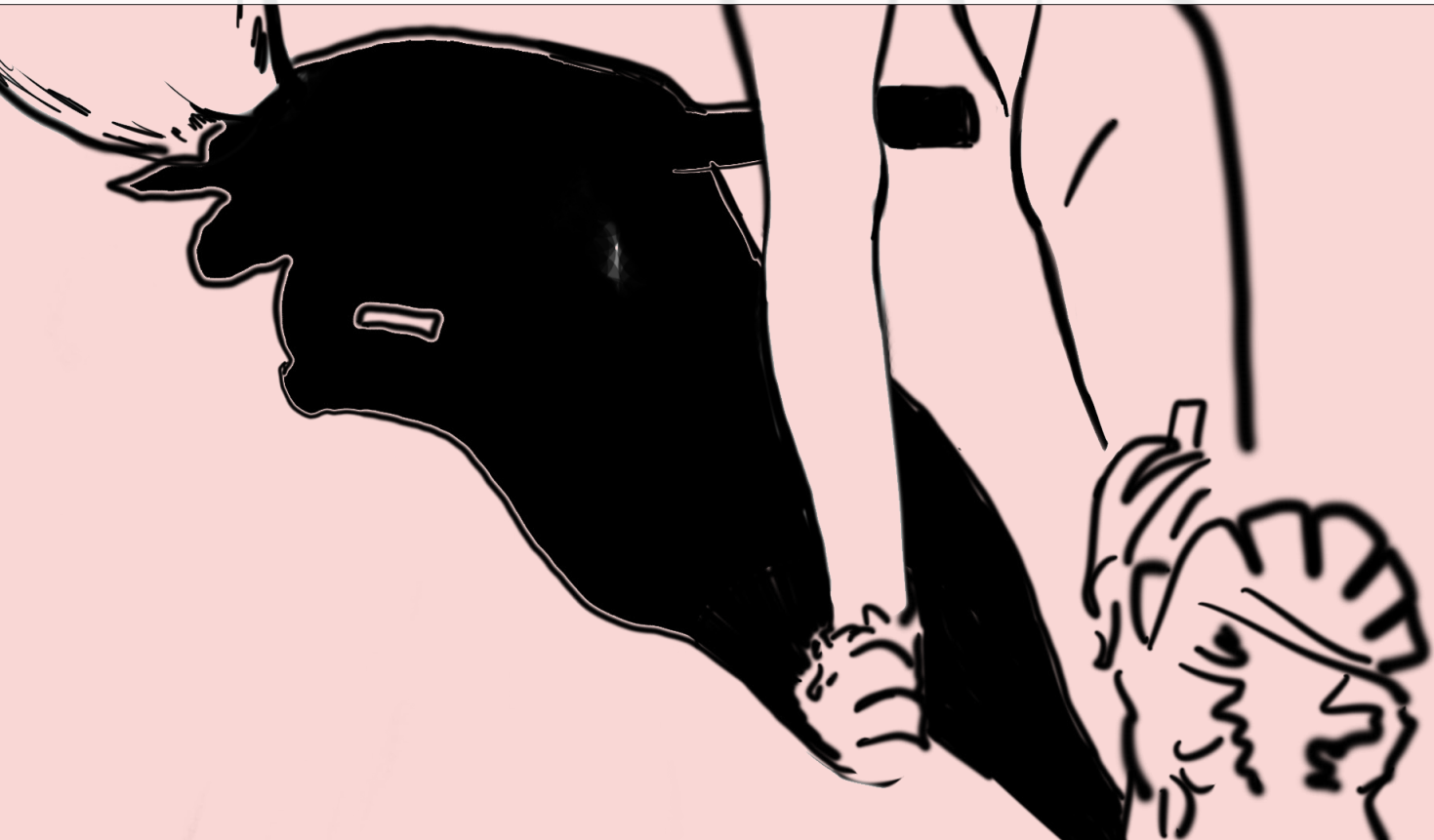


# PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSITIONS

# Playful Walking

WITH A/R/TOGRAPHY



## BOOK 2: ESSAYS

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Edited by Angela I. Baldus, Rita L. Irwin, Nicole Y. S. Lee, Daniel T. Barney,  
Joanne M. Ursino, and Zohreh Valiary Eskandary

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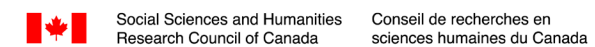
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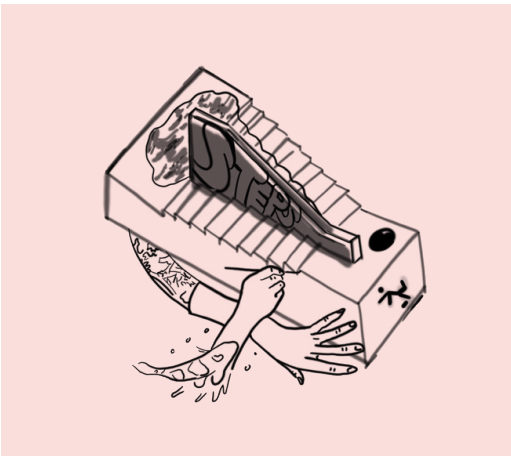
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Moving prompts different ways of seeing, thinking, feeling, and making. This simple claim can be supported by many forms of research and art that study persons, things, materials, and phenomena. A common practice people teaching life drawing will instruct beginning students to do is to ask students to move their pencil from the page and use it as a tool for measuring space or mimicking the angle of an object before them. A teacher might also instruct students to move out of their seats to observe both the drawing and the subject they are drawing from a distance. Movement provides new perspectives and acknowledges how our bodies take space and respond to space as we orient to our surroundings. Walking in a/r/tography can sometimes feel like an obvious progression from the kind of movement encouraged in life drawing. Other times walking with and in a/r/tography requires an understanding of art, research, and teaching that extends beyond common studio practices and visual arts practices. The variety of ways that a/r/tographers take up walking is part of what makes walking a generative, seemingly inexhaustible, practice. Each walking practice described in this book follows along this path of thinking and acknowledges what is unique to each event and person(s). The chapters are organized into thematic sections which highlight some of the prominent ways the methodology of a/r/tography has been coupled with the practice of walking. These themes include self, steps, sound, and spaces. Interestingly, the four themes can be folded back into one another in consideration of the qualities they share in addition to being observed as distinct from one another. This movement from separation to combination is something that a/r/tography has taken up conceptually, as practitioners and theorists working in the field of art education have sought to acknowledge the separateness of their artist, researcher, and teacher identities and the entanglement, in-betweenness, and merging of these identities. The editors of this book wish to invite readers to consider each thematic designation as one of several ways these chapters could be organized. In this sense, we have curated each section and included visual prompts to guide readers through the work. As with all embodied practices, walking implicates a sense of self, a number of steps, a chorus of sounds, and an organization of space. What we noticed is that each of these chapters seems to focus in on one of these aspects more than others and so we ask you to consider what each offer in relation to the focal points they measure, mimic, and draw on.



Illustrations by Angela I. Baldus

# PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSITIONS: PLAYFUL WALKING WITH A/R/TOGRAPHY

Angela I. Baldus

We begin with *Self*. The first chapter in this section is Geraldine Burke’s *Rendering Presence: Walking/Swimming Propositions in Lockdown*, which acknowledges how the pandemic disrupted her daily routines and led her to unexpected spaces of contemplation. Understanding the spaces she lives, walks, shares, and works in differently through the examination of her own positionality and studying these spaces newly with the company of her mother and her son becomes a kind of proposal or invitation for the reader to ask themselves important critical questions about place, access, relations, and experience. Burke’s reflective practice is followed by a piece by Wayne Elliott in which he takes up a/r/tography and the work of Michel de Certeau in *A/r/tography as a Platform for Movement Pedagogy*, describing his own process of walking with de Certeau in mind as a creative process that takes place in a continuous manner through different practices influenced by the movement in-between painting, mind-mapping, and theorizing. In the third chapter, Bruce Moghtader writes in *Walking: The Art and Practice of Existence* of the ways that walking has been theorized in and outside of a Western philosophical cannon and challenges us to consider how the practice of walking is further complicated by a feminist, critical, and ecological understanding of who we are. In the concluding chapter of this section *Walking as a Spaced Practice, Pattern as Pedagogy*, Geetanjali Sachdev takes us along for a walk in India that pays special attention to how we might observe patterns that repeat and how this repetition helps us form and informs our thinking.

Reflecting on what happens when we walk, the next section is called *Steps*. In the first chapter *Urban Palimpsest: Readings, Walking, and Images of the City—An A/r/tographic Proposal to Investigate the City* by Edward Jimeno Guerrero Chinome and Rafaèle Genet Verney, the authors describe ways of working a/r/tographically through metaphor by using familiar scholarly concepts of reading and texts to reimagine different aspects of walking in cities. The following piece considers the progression of steps outside of their destination. In *Walking Without Arriving*, Ken Morimoto philosophically situates what happens when we walk alongside aspects of being in the world that are often mitigated by a desire to arrive or not to arrive. Morimoto asks us to consider what is always already an arrival while actively contemplating, observing, and attending to processes that occur in-between. The steps section ends with a collaborative piece in

which Sunshine R. Sullivan, Alisha M. White, Nicole Damico, and Candance Doerr-Stevens together take up walking as a reflective, artistic, and community-building practice that they acknowledge to be a beneficial way of coping with stressful situations and means for making together in their text *Walking the In Between: Convening Time and Space for Our Entangled Selves*.

The third section is titled *Sound* and appropriately begins with a piece by a maker of music. Peter Gouzouasis reminds us in *A Walking Enílikogy (Feel the Beat and You’ll Find the Truth)* of the way in which walking has been rooted etymologically in pedagogy and extends from here to understand a long practice of making music and research as enílikogy, which is largely influenced by the relationships and experiences that had throughout one’s entire life. The second chapter is a collaborative piece that uses sound metaphorically and as a critical anchor. Adetty Pérez de Miles, Julie Usha Libersat, and Kevin Jenkins collectively harness the power of sharing experiences specific to themselves and the work of artists and artists collectives to show how pedagogies of cruelty are sustained when power imbalances, harmful narratives, and critical questions go unaddressed. In the chapter *Libretto in Four Acts: Tactics for Art Walking in Public Spaces*, their collaborative approach to writing and sharing experiences further supports their efforts to encourage art educators to be intentional and specific about their decolonial and empathetic practices in both their scholarship and teaching. The last chapter is again a more literal venture into sound. Matthew Yanko’s text *Soundwalking to Cultivate a Relationship with Nature* takes up the practice of soundwalking with children in Grade 1 as a generative means of considering varied experiences and reflecting on those practices that enable self-discovery, collaborative meaning-making, and how we understand ourselves as learners and teachers.

The last section of the book is called *Spaces*. The first chapter recognizes the ways spaces are understood through experiences and, in a lovely way, reminds the reader how these thematic designations fold into one another. Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç traces movement and shows how walking can lead to acknowledging different ways distance and relation play key roles in the construction of experiences, reflecting on our experiences, and remembering the significant points that construct our paths.

# Playful Walking

*Maintenance Holes in Two Countries and Two Cities* is a written and visual investigation of place and experience. Güneş Aytaç invites the reader to consider how walking in a/r/tography becomes a rich way of going back to experiences and considering the interrelatedness of our being. The second chapter shows how artists often disrupt space in order to experience it differently. In *Blink Walk and the Cartography of Sensory Spaces*, Adriano Morais de Freitas Neto and Larissa Rogerio Bezerra introduce walking a/r/tographically by beginning conceptually in an analysis of light and dark and the dominant ways lightness and darkness have been juttred against one another as goodness and badness. In an attempt to know darkness differently, they describe the practice of blind walking as a way of understanding space and relations differently. The section and the book end with a multi-faceted chapter that shows the vastness of a/r/tographical research and its use in disciplines outside of art education. *Exploring the Curves on the Wall of Colégio Arquidocesano in an Ethnomodelling Perspective* is a co-authored text written by Daniel Clark Orey and Milton Rosa, who approach walking through ethnomodeling, mathematics, and Freire’s dialogical methodology and in doing so recognize the interdisciplinary capacities for walking as a pedagogical practice which might seek to situate itself within different disciplinary lineages.

Each of these sections offers a variety of ways to consider, think, make, and know through walking. Before each section I (Angela) have rendered a description of what follows as both an illustrative introduction to the section and an invitation to know and consider ideas visually. A/r/tography has taken many forms over the years, but through them all, it consistently advocates for different ways of knowing. These drawings are visual ponderings on concepts, forms, and theories that show up throughout the book. May they be a playful guide that helps walk you through each section!



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SECTION 1

Self

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Self

Introduction by Nicole Y. S. Lee

The chapters in this section reveal the unique details that each person notices as they walk and move, the thoughts that arise in one’s interiority, and the trajectories toward which they are propelled as they navigate the world. For Geraldine Burke, walking and swimming with sea and sand in Australia, alongside her mother and her sons, move her thinking. Also from Australia, Wayne Elliott describes how foundational movement is to his understanding of his environment, his creation of visual representations of re-imagined spaces, and his construction of maps that consolidate diverse ranges of data. Walking in Canada gave Bruce Moghtader access to an unframed world, enabling a re-understanding of existence as something beyond rational preconception and organization. Geetanjali Sachdev attends to plants in India while walking, identifies underlying rules by which phenomena are organized as patterns, and designs botanical public pedagogy. These pieces of writing are autobiographical stories that bring together artistic, research, and pedagogical dimensions, with an emphasis on how the cerebral and contemplative shift understandings of perceiving the world.

Grounded in their distinctive voice, authors situate their selves-in-relation and selves-in-movement by attending to the human, non-human, and more-than-human entities that cross their paths. They discuss their ways of making sense of everyday fragments of encounters through a/r/tography. Particularly, authors share how they distill, translate, remix, juxtapose, and transform happenings that occur externally into deep senses of internal knowing. This embodied knowledge gained from bodies in motion informs what comes next. Some authors process rhythmic, textured, and patterned details in their surroundings and create flows and layers of meaning. Some authors trace the entanglement of ideas, thoughts, questions, memories, perceptions, music, readings, images, and dialogues, among other pieces that they carry with them as they walk. These chapters record moments of lives unfolding and the insights that form as one’s body moves in space.



From Figure 4: *Rendering haze*  
Notes: Making and remaking  
place/thought/possibilities with  
walking/swimming encounters,  
(Image credit: Geraldine Burke).

# RENDERING PRESENCE: WALKING/SWIMMING PROPOSITIONS IN LOCKDOWN

Geraldine Burke

Notes: Walking the locked down edge: longing and belonging

### Walking/Swimming/Lockdown

Walking the water’s edge, feet in sea, feet in sand, alive from the water’s chill. At times, I de-mask, strip down to my bathers, and submerge myself in the fresh, clear sea. The brain-freeze wakes me up; suddenly, I feel blood pump through my arms as I towel myself dry. I am alert, alive! Clarity of thought wipes away the sameness of lockdown, if only for the next hour or so. This is my respite from lockdown number 4, where we Melbournians are allowed a break from our inside lives to exercise outside for one hour each day within a 5-kilometre radius of home. Thankfully, this means I can access a much-loved local beach.

As I walk/swim with the water, I think about my elderly mother. It’s been such a long time since I saw her; 100 days of lockdown has disrupted the status quo of drop-in visits and afternoon teas of a weekend. She feels far away. Although safe in her aged care home, no family or visitors are allowed due to this latest lockdown. Previously, for what seemed like the shortest time, family members were allowed limited visits. Even then, one visitor at a time would sit outside on the balcony with her on the other side of the window. We spoke through the moiré pattern of the flywire screen. All complied with the no-touching rules, allocated distances, masks, and restricted time frames.

### To Gather Apart

I have taken to sharing my lockdown walking/swimming, and sea/sand experiences with my elderly mother as I experience them. On my mobile phone, I tell her about the colour of the sea and the weather; she can hear the tide and the seagulls. We chat about the kids and the family. The sea seems to offer back shared memories. I take panoramic photos of the setting and send them to her via email using a large font to describe where we were when we chatted together. Later I discover these prints are laminated and placed in a memory folder—a show and tell for Mum and the nursing staff.

### Beyond Ourselves

My twenty-year-old son, now in my Covid-bubble, starts joining me on these walks; it is a new way to be together in lockdown. We talk about these together/apart



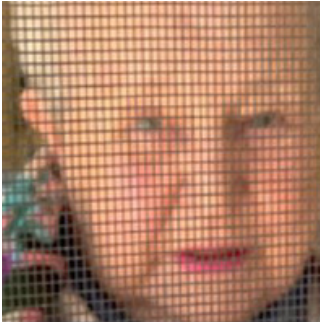


Figure 1: Top Right. *Walking/ swimming in lockdown* (Image credit: Geraldine Burke).

Figure 2: Top Left. *Through the flywire screen*, Notes: To gather/ apart: Elderly residents sit inside a special room with the window open, while one family visitor sits two metres away on the balcony. (Image credit: Geraldine Burke).



communications with his Nana and how the aged care home has recently introduced *Facetime* for the seniors to encourage real-time contact with loved ones. Before long we are walking the beach and talking with Nana on *Facetime*, a new experience for her. We chat about setting our walks to music ... creating a soundtrack for Nana. She shares that her favourite tune is *Clair de Lune* (Debussy, 1905), and quick as anything, my techno-savvy son sets up the technology to merge our real-time audio/visual with Nana's favourite music. Using our electronic devices, we pan the seascape. Walking in and by the water's edge, playing Debussy's alluring music while simultaneously waving and blowing her kisses, we see her engage from her room and from the comfort of her chair.

We listen together as the music washes over and through us.

*It's as if the music moves with the tide and the sunlight on the water.*  
*We re-see and re-feel the water through the intensity and affect that the music brings. All at once, I remember the comforting sound of Mum playing the piano to us as kids; the times she held my son, now walking beside me, as she sang lullabies to ease his sleep; and the stories of how the nuns let her play the piano for two whole years straight; and how, if not for meeting and marrying my father, she would have gone to the Conservatorium to study Music. And how she went on to have lots of children, with me being one, now walking with my son, and her, together across our generations. And all this as we are feeling the rhythm of the waves, the rhythm of life, the beauty of life, and the way the world goes on, despite Covid, as we re-see the mask-wearing beach walkers as connected and part of the greater picture ... the seasons of life.*

Figure 3: Next Page. *Sharing sunset walks*, Notes: Walking and talking with sunsets at the end of online-lockdown days. (Image credit: Geraldine Burke).

Later, I ask Mum about the experience. She says:

*It took me out of myself. Your four walls here are your home—you become comfortable, accepting that this is your home. You get used to not going out into the big wide world. The beach walks take me out of myself ... out of my room. Hearing Claire de Lune was beautiful. It took me back to my early life of playing the piano. It was a popular tune when we were young ... so very peaceful and romantic ... evocative of the sea ... and seeing the waves rolling in ... and the shining water ... and seeing you both and the people walking past wearing masks. I'm seeing us in our living world.*

When I ask my son about the way we played *Clair de Lune* for Nana at the beach, he says:

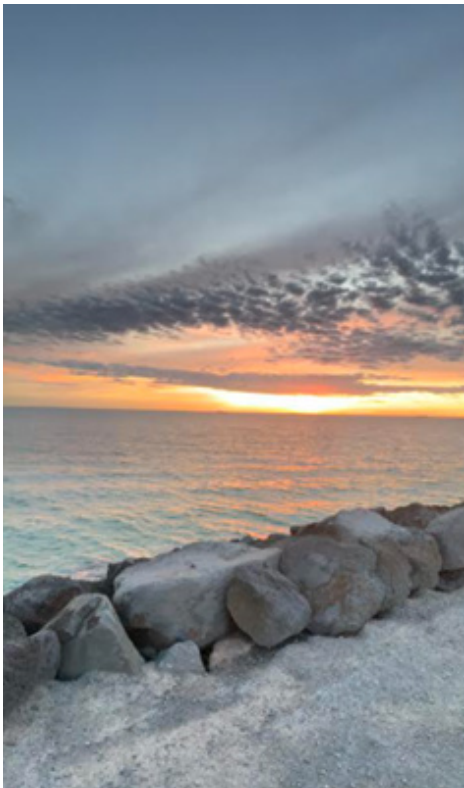
*Yeah, that was a moment.*

**Walking with/out Friendship**

*Australians all let us rejoice,  
For we are one and free;  
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;  
Our home is girt by sea;  
...  
For those who've come across the seas  
We've boundless plains to share;  
With courage let us all combine to  
Advance Australia Fair.  
In joyful strains then let us sing,  
**Advance Australia Fair.***

Excerpts from the latest version of the National Anthem of Australia, Advance Australia Fair. Composed in 1878 by Peter Dodds McCormick writing under the pseudonym 'Amicus' which means friend in Latin.





Today I walk the same beach again, still in lockdown, and make the choice to engage with *No Friend but the Mountains: A Symphonic Song Cycle* (Styles & Boochani, 2020) that responds to the words of Behrouz Boochani. It is inspired by Boochani’s award-winning novel, *No Friend But the Mountain: Writing from Manus Prison*, forged as an act of resistance while being detained in what he calls as ‘Manus Prison.’ The Australian Government refers to Manus as an Offshore Processing Centre, but for Boochani ‘Manus Prison’ is named as a developed theory of oppression and repression.

It is lockdown again, number 6.2, and this act of walking and listening to music has prompted me to think about my usual, everyday freedoms and the taken-for-granted ease of movement we had before Covid. As lockdown continues, people are doing it tough. Yet, this song cycle urges me to think about what Boochani describes as an “unofficial part of Australian history” (Smart Arts, 2021), the unseen/un-thought about, out-of-sight, ongoing lock-down-lock-up detaining of so-called illegal migrants who have sought shelter on our shores ... the same shores I am walking ... people who have been isolated, suppressed, and held nameless and voiceless within the Australian Offshore Processing Centres.

The music feels discordant, like the turbulent waves. The song cycle resists ease; there is no resting point I can hold onto. The music feels like a never-ending journey through a turbulent ocean, and at times, the Australian National Anthem is hummed alongside dark references to being caged. There are no joyful strains proclaiming friendship here. The wind is furious, and the waves are persistently fierce. The music inserts its presence into my easeful beach safety zone and pricks at my comfort. I can hardly bear it. Walking the shore, I think about the first sight Boochani saw when arriving in Australia after his pain-filled, perilous journey. His first vision of Australia was a young blonde girl playing at the shoreline, oblivious to the boat and the long, long, dangerous journey that had been made. Boochani (2019) writes in his novel:

She isn’t paying the slightest attention to us. She takes no notice of the weary and worn-out people, no notice of those standing on the pier. ... In the world of view of that child there is no place for affliction. In her world, there is no space for the hardship that comes from injustice (p. 79).

Am I so different to that child?

*My lockdown is inconsequential to the lockdowns we can impose on others, and for the most part not even acknowledge, let alone question the ‘gilded cage’ mindset of our Anthem.*

*I am inside the bars.*

*Locking out?*

*Or locked in?*

*Walking with sea/sand/lockdowns places me at the edge of our fault lines and our life force.*

*There is no way I could swim today.*

**Finding Stillness—Regardless**

Meanwhile ...

I chat with Nana (*via Facetime*) as we share another walking moment together/apart. She reports that, as lockdown number 6 persists, she has found a new sense of *stillness* in her isolated circumstances that is helping her find peace within herself. Tears of exhaustion, frustration, and appreciation fill my eyes as we chat. When our call ends, I wade out and submerge myself into the deep, calm call of the sea and notice how welcoming the water feels today. Inspired by my mother’s words I *still* my floating body and let the sea move me about. I am thinking and floating with the concept of stillness, feeling replenished by the vast blue sky, the sun on my face, and the embrace of the water.

As I am floating, I remember Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr’s call for *dadirri* (da-did-ee)—inner, deep listening and quiet. Ungunmerr is an Indigenous Elder from Ngangikurungkurr Country in the Northern Territory who suggests that this special quality of *dadirri* is:

Perhaps the greatest gift we can give to our fellow Australians. Dadirri recognises the deep spring that is inside us. We call on it and it calls to us. This is the gift that Australia is thirsting for. It is something like what you call ‘contemplation.’ When I experience dadirri, I am made whole again. I can sit on the riverbank or walk through the trees; even if someone close to me has passed away, I can find my peace in this silent awareness. (Ungunmerr, 2017, p. 14)



**Figure 4: Rendering haze**  
Notes: Making and remaking place/thought/possibilities with walking/swimming encounters. (Image credit: Geraldine Burke).



As I re-mask and walk back home, my now two allowable hours of exercise over (under 6:2 restrictions), I ponder the exquisitely painful yet unquestionably beautiful moments that Covid times bring. As Braidotti (2020) says:

Many of us are struck about how, in the middle of this pandemic, Spring is advancing, flowers are blooming, the earth keeps on growing—regardless. (Braidotti, 2020, p. 4)

**Rendering Haze**

A/r/tography offers me the possibility to render these walking/swimming moments as living inquiries that reverberate (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019) in and through other walks/swims/contemplations/Covid restrictions. As we move in and out of lockdown (at the time of writing we are in lockdown number 6, extension 3), the certainty of status quo life is re-rendered through a series of daisy chain adjustments and links that for me, conceptually, feel like walking through haze. This haze permeates the stasis of my/our previous certainties as I/we reframe assumptions and work at quick-change/slow-pace and absent/present possibilities. By taking on the notion of haze, *ambiguity* becomes a conceptual viewing point that permeates and heightens awareness of haze-filled moments. Yet, with each lockdown loss-and-pivot, the absence/presence phenomena provide awakenings. By walking/swimming with haze, we enter a place of entanglement and intra-action—where viewpoints are obscured or revealed in new configurations that divulge entry points for thinking and making pedagogical connections with the living moment. And in this way, I am awakened to the possibility of walking as trans-curricular, and full of possibility.

**Walking as Intra-Tangential Making**

As we walk, we are remaking Nana’s aged care room into a place to be with the sea and the world we live in. For my son and I, our walk with the sea and the breeze reaches out to stir Nana’s room as we see her lean into the screen experience from her chair adorned by her favourite quilted cover. As Page (2020) asserts, “Place is continually made and remade through the everyday social and material practices of the body. Place is more than a background for action, matter and thought. Place is a continuous, open, practised

entanglement of life” (p. 102). These walking/swimming/photographing/*Facetime*/music-informed practices enable mappings that are “by no means finished or comprehensive” (Page, 2020, p. 89). They are performances that open “methods to explore and examine the socio-materiality of our placeworlds” (Page, 2020, pp. 145-146). They are a continuum of making and remaking as an “ongoing praxic entanglement” that “enables a research process that is open, reflexive, flexible and responsive to innovative practices and the potential and possibilities of the unknown and unknowable” (Page, 2020, p. 145).

Page suggests this type of placemaking research has transformative power:

A continuous process of analysis of the intra-actions of perceptions, memories, embodied experiences, socio-material practices with theory, the power relations of place-worlds can be known and made meaningful and can then be framed as abstracted knowledge, where issues and questions can be debated and/or translated into policies and emancipatory practices. (p. 146)

**Allodial Blue Space Ponderings**

In walking/swimming the water’s edge, I re-walk within the same 5-kilometre zone each time. At the point of writing (August 21, 2021), the Delta strain of COVID-19 is more prevalent in Australia. Forty percent of the country is in lockdown as only nineteen per cent of the population are vaccinated right now. The Australian Prime Minister has stated that rolling lockdowns will persist until eighty percent of our population is vaccinated. In Melbourne, we have been in and out of lockdown with the number of non-sequential lockdown days adding up to more than half a year over the 2020-2021 period. Lockdown has become a groaningly familiar occurrence, as are the restriction zones. Yet, I am so grateful to be within 5 kilometres of the beach, and to make my lockdown pilgrimage to the same beach, across the seasons, as each lockdown hits. Because of this recursive journey, many intersecting concepts move in and out of view prompting thoughts of wellness, presence, absence, ownership, belonging, rights to land and sea. These sensed experiences—full of beauty, denial, discord, and belonging—create space for emergent place-based knowledge.

The benefits of accessing blue space through walking the beach and wild swimming also affect me. As per Elliott et al.’s (2018) investigation into *Recreational Visits to Marine and Coastal Environments*, from within my home/work context, I seek repeated and intentional exposure to the sea to improve my mood, to experience a sense of restoration from stress and to improve depleted attentional capacity. Their mention of wild swimming to reduce fatigue, promote vitality, and increase a sense of connection to place resonates with me. But in addition, I am specifically seeking blue space exposure due to lockdown and the stresses that ongoing restrictions and pivoting work situations bring. At first, I thought this walking/swimming was an act of wellness that enabled breaks from the online pivoting of work, and recuperation for an injury I sustained some months back. But now I realise these blue space exposures brought about through recursive walking/swimming are a type of launching place where embodied motion induces thinking in ways that proffer new intersections. After Henderson et al. (2021), I’m realising this “walking-thinking [and swimming] is an act that forces thought to become unhinged and, in that moment, permit[s] thought to come into contact with all kinds of affective points” (p. 55).

**Finding Fusion, Counterpoints and Care**

This time, as I walk the water’s edge, the pink of the morning sky, along with the fresh sea breeze, work sustenance into my body. The newly introduced 9 pm-5 am curfew (for lockdown 6.3) has encouraged me into earlier nights as a strategy to rise for early beach walks before launching into my online working days. Today I walk with the music of Dr. Gurrumul Yunipingu. As I walk his soaring tune, *Wiyathul* (Longing For Place) (2008) fills my being. His music seems to encompass sea and land with cinematic embrace, swirling and moving with the vast abundance of this place. It is as if the high notes sweep over the sea to the measureless horizon, while the lingering call of his language works into the particularity of each rock, up the ochre bluff, meeting the dissolving sky as herons dive back into the sea and seagulls hover in the wind. The morning swimmers seem to be in sync with his music’s pathos and rhythm, as do the dogs playing on the beach.

*A young mother cradling her toddler in her jacket walks along the pier. She is giving him early morning air, a reprise from lockdown conditions. Meanwhile,*

*‘bubble-buddies’ walk together sharing the moment. In this morning light, the epic, soulful music seems to fuse land/sea/sky with the frailty of our human quest hazing all into transient interdependence, with each other in substance and uncertainty.*

As the sun catches the side of a distant mountain, I notice I am noticing things differently. The profound knowing that resonates through Gurrumul’s music helps me touch a deeper call of place, one that provokes contemplation of a bigger picture. I think about the sacred custodianship and knowing of place that Indigenous people share: The long circular line of knowing across time and place and Gurrumul’s deep yearning for Country.

While immersing myself in this walking/music-filled encounter, I start thinking about the Japanese concept of *ma*, and whether it resonates in my experience in some way. Bai and Cohen (2019) suggest that *ma* enables attunement through a “living, breathing embodied experience that requires the perceiver’s presence, participation, and becoming with-ness, moment-by-moment” (p. 20), and that in “trusting the emergence” (p. 20), this state of being brings forth “unfolding possibilities” (p. 18). For Sameshima (2019), “the work of *ma* is autobiography, is curriculum, is immanent becoming, is learning to live with” (p. 13). For me at this moment, I find that *custodianship of the land* becomes a lucid, emergent thought as I walk and listen to Gurrumul’s music, and this pondering on care and custodianship of the land becomes another unexpected space of living inquiry made possible through ‘walking with.’ As with Lee et al. (2019), I am finding that “walking and a/r/tography [through living inquiry and reverberation] provide the conditions for lingering with emergence: that which is unknown yet comes to be known” (p. 689).

In this in-between space, I am reminded of Ma Rhea’s (2018) call to embrace an allodial pedagogy positioning pedagogical content knowledge in foundational “What if?” questions about the particularities of entitlement to land and water resources (p. 93). This, and how she refers to the idea of the “everywhen of place” (after Stanner, 1966) as forged by deep care and attunement to Country, is in stark contrast to the “surface dweller” mindset many of us have with “no experience of the connection between the human and the sacred in the sentient force of a place” (p. 85). Ma Rhea advocates for specialist teacher educators and teachers to employ an *Allodial principle* to “begin from a different place in conceptualizing what they teach about land and water” (p. 2).

I was privileged to play a part in nurturing this kind of shift when Monash University Museum of Art (MUMA) brought the international arts initiative, *Tree School*, to Melbourne. *Tree school* became the catalyst for strengthening a new community partnership between MUMA, MADA, and the Monash Faculty of Education, in which Monash pre-service teachers and local primary school students were invited to explore Indigenous perspectives by Indigenous Elder, N’arweet Carolyn Briggs AM and other Indigenous knowledge holders while engaging with a reclaimed culturally marked Boon Wurrung tree. All the educators participating in the collaboration agreed that the conditions for *learning-to-learn-with-* are fundamentally important when thinking through arts-based investigations that engage with Indigenous knowledge. Now, with Gurrumul’s cry sounding through my entanglement with a “sovereign” place today, I am wondering how we can walk this sea/land Country while questioning the absoluteness of current property rights. In 2007, the United Nations recognised the *sui generis* rights of the world’s Indigenous Peoples in UNDRIOs, a declaration adopted by Australia in 2009. For me, this begs more than one question. When will we truly recognise the primary relationship Australia’s First Peoples have with Country? How could I teach about the tension and lack of resolution? What would it look like if we were to fully acknowledge the socially and ecologically responsible custodial carers of Country in our teaching practice, and the sacred desire to protect traditional/ancestral lands for past and future generations?

**Unexpected Openings**

I have found that walking/swimming with sea and sand during lockdown moves my thinking. Tangential thoughts and emerging questions seem to fuse with embodied traces of music, readings, photography, and dialogue that persist, dissolve, and render themselves through haze-filled moments. These embodied experiences, performed as repetitive pilgrimages within the same 5-kilometre radius, hold the possibility for more than satisfying or surface-dwelling connections to place. Together the merging of fragility and strength create openings where unexpected discoveries and insights shift perceptions. As pedagogical propositions, they present an ongoing practice that reverberates in potent ways. They are catalysts to magnify and inform teaching practice that engages with the tensions and potential of our time.



Acknowledgment: My gratitude goes to my mother and sons for allowing me to share our story. And to this beach place—this land/sea edge of Boon Wurrung Country that sustains us during lockdown. I wish to continue our walking journeys together.

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Figure 1: Krakow, Poland, Acrylic on canvas, 2019 (Image credit, Wayne Elliott).

# A/R/TOGRAPHY AS A PLATFORM FOR MOVEMENT PEDAGOGY

Wayne Elliott

## Introduction

My practice is informed by the arts-based education methodology a/r/tography (Irwin, 2004; Springgay et al., 2005) and the theoretical influences of French philosopher Michel De Certeau (1984). A/r/tography and De Certeau both place emphasis on the role of practice, spatiality, and walking, which inform movement pedagogy. This chapter outlines how a practising artist, teacher, and researcher uses movement as a way of understanding the world and creating visual representations of these re-imagined spaces. There is an emphasis on moving in and out of the text to create one’s own journey of discovery.

Making art establishes connections to culture, place, community, wellbeing, and what it is to be human. Never has this been more obvious than in the last year where the COVID-19 crisis has created isolation, uncertainty, and illuminated how much we rely on interaction and connection. These connections provide a conduit for the a/r/tographer to be a meaning maker through the visual narrative of an arts practice. A/r/tography facilitates this connection through the act of walking, providing small steps that inform a movement pedagogy.

Movement pedagogy is a stratum of real, imagined, reflected, physical, and visualised movements and interactions that occur in a complexity of spaces. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) theorize that “perception will no longer reside in the relation between a subject and an object, but rather in the movement serving as the limit of that relation, in the period associated with the subject and the object” (p. 282). Movements can be a multiplicity of expressions, rhythms, physical acts, ideas, concepts, visualized lines, and marks on a canvas. Irwin (2013) proposes that “theorizing rather than theory and practicing rather than practice, transforms the intention of theory and practice from stable abstract systems to spaces of exchange, reflexivity, and relationality found in a continuous state of movement” (p. 199). These movements, encounters, and interactions inform and place the a/r/tographer at the centre of the learning process: “it is a process of invention rather than interpretation, where concepts are marked by social engagements and encounters” (Springgay, 2008, p.8).



The philosophical nature of the a/r/tographer places value and meaning on space through the immersive nature of walking, a lived experience. At the heart of this creation is the inner need to explore one’s interests and passions, to understand what it means to act and live in a meaningful way. The movement of creating art encourages a lived narrative that cannot be stated in a verbal or written discourse. My arts practice has been a lifelong learning, allowing me to travel and exhibit extensively around the world. The process outlined in this discourse creates spaces to re-imagine the landscape, prioritizing key elements to capture the essence of spatiality and narrative. (Website: [www.wayneelliottartist.com](http://www.wayneelliottartist.com))

In a world that is rapidly changing, we seek clarification that provides an understanding of how we perceive, as well as why and what is unfolding before our eyes. I outline throughout this discourse a multitude of emerging steps which move me forward in the journey. These steps are in isolation, merged, dissected, or reimagined to create an a/r/tographical response to the spatiality of the lived experience. At the heart of this immersion is creating belief through a/r/tography, a practical and theoretical multidisciplinary approach to navigating the world. This chapter illustrates how an arts practice that is painted and drawn informs my research through the methodology of a/r/tography and the lens of De Certeau. The a/r/tographer reflects and understands the world through the act of walking, focusing on exploring rhizomatic lines of inquiry and providing a springboard to engage in activities that unfold with each walking step. A/r/tography has at its heart the notion of uncertainty, a methodology which assists in navigating today’s world. It is the act of walking and immersion that is the catalyst for understanding the situational environs of our world. The chapter is recorded as a sequence of bodily encounters with walking at the heart of these travel stories. As Irwin (2013) states,

Walking invites individuals to pay attention to their senses by slowing down and being aware of one’s surroundings and one’s experiences. Walking allows researchers and participants access to experiences that are multi-layered, sensory, and affective which help us to reach beyond the personal to social understandings. (p. 204)

This movement is Deleuzian in nature, moving intuitively through a complexity of intermingling spaces, pedagogy, and aesthetics, unfolding to a philosophical approach to being human and making art. A/r/tography creates a framework that supports this movement pedagogy, the overarching movement is rhizomatic, which feeds a notion of venturing into unknown, in between spaces, difference, and exploring lines of inquiry. On the rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write that it, “has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo” (p. 25).

Acting tactically on the ground, while thinking strategically from a ‘bird’s eye’ view above, I constantly switch between the multiplicity of perspectives. These multitude of perspectives I represent in my artworks challenge the viewer to interpret my reality. At its essence, the identities of artist, researcher, and teacher/learner, continually feed and activate each other’s reflective movements. Like a Venn diagram, these identities are all intertwined to create the identity of the maker. No one identity takes precedence over the other—there is a flow and synchronisation, as each identity informs the other. Providing spaces and places for reflective practice is at the heart of this step-by-step movement of understanding and navigating one’s lived experiences. Through producing a/r/tographic imagery and text, I explore the value and meaning of space through the immersive nature of walking.

**Walking Step by Step**

Walking provides the vehicle to interact and immerse oneself in the spatial arena. Absorbing like a sponge, flying like a bird, crawling like an insect or swimming like a fish, one navigates the landscape. Walking provides a myriad of ways to engage one's body in the landscap. This interaction is akin to pedagogy that flows through a multiplicity of spaces, arenas, and strata via the act of moving. Exploring the paths, roads, trails, and back roads opens new possibilities and fissures. I map a complexity of ‘ways of moving’ that facilitates an understanding of a space and place. De Certeau (1984) contends that “intertwined paths give their shape to spaces. They weave places together” (p. 87). These pathways and spaces mould with the a/r/tographer’s own beliefs and passions to stimulate an artistic result.

The rhizomatic nature of the movement links ideas, differences, connected identities, flows, concepts, and representations, illuminating what is unseen or unknown. As a pedagogy, it is reflective and builds a self-belief that prioritizes actions. This process can move across lived narratives, exploring the context of the everyday, travel, and one's own neighbourhood. A rhizomatic movement, like the flow of musical notes responding to each step as one walks, observes, reflects, and explores spaces: "The rhizome offers intersections and connections in thinking, doing, and the sensations of meaningful making" (Ruopp & Unrath, 2019, p. 34). The emphasis is on the learner walking down the road to explore and discover for themselves. It is the experience of observation and sensory engagement that feeds the inner being. Walking creates a connection forward in an explorative way through spaces that are illusionary, virtual, manufactured, (un)real, and spaces within spaces.

My arts practice feeds my inner desires, passions, and aspirations, an enduring search to understand and navigate the world. The a/r/tographer is the agent and co-designer, responding and scaffolding as the movement is unleashed. These movements are made visible in the form of lines, shapes, edges, marks, spaces, and colour that are the constructive form of the artwork. I document these travels and movements, as "every story is a travel story—a spatial practice. For this reason, spatial practices concern everyday tactics, are part of them" (De Certeau, 1984, p. 115).

My artwork "Full Moon Ceremony, Ubud" (Figure 2) is a travel story that explores a Balinese village where I attended the *Full Moon* ceremony at the local temple. It is a landscape where religion is the central focus and where the sacred Banyan tree is a principal place to connect to deity. The organizational hierarchy of the community and the spatial layout of the buildings reflect these beliefs and practices. Tuan (1977) explores this, noting that "what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value" (p. 6). The artworks I create have values attached as I place emphasis on everyday cultural, social, historical, and spiritual practices.

This is a sensual immersion that provides the conditions for the artist to capture the essence of a landscape through walking, observing, exploring, reflecting, and re-imagining a narrative. One does not know initially; one must do to know, from a pedagogy perspective—this is at the heart of my learning. This knowing is illuminated

Figure 2: *Full moon ceremony, Ubud, Bali*, Acrylic on canvas, 2015 (Image credit: Wayne Elliott).





through the process of movement, placing the creation of knowledge in the hands of the a/r/tographer through the vehicle of one's own senses.

While this iteration is linear, there is a flow and focus that weave in and out in a chaotic manner, grabbing fragments and slowly joining them together. I focus on mapping and exploring the "lines of flight" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 21). De Certeau (1984) outlines that one "combines their fragments and creates something unknown in the space organized by their capacity for allowing an indefinite plurality of meaning" (p. 169). As one walks, a flow of fragments moves with each step, a genealogy of ideas cascading to a visual movement of understanding, knowledge, and representation. The emphasis is on the actuality of the moment, continually synchronizing, searching for meaning and narrative with each unfolding step. This chapter, too, offers fragments for the reader to take away and construct their own way of doing and thinking.

### The Arena

I focus here on the arena—the physical building and a metaphor for the mental and creative spaces that I traverse, exploring my understanding of the flows, textures, tactics, rhythms, objects, patterns, tactics, edges, and interactions that arise. These concepts come up in the physical reality of the arena and are also at play during the construction of the artwork.

Arenas have historically been an integral part of sporting events, arts, and cultural places throughout the world; they encompass a focal area that can be viewed from a multitude of points and angles. Within them, there is a multiplicity of objects, perspectives, and movements. As De Certeau (1984) notes, "a field of operations within the production of theory also takes place" (p. 78). Arenas engage with a field of actors and objects that create tactics, space, movements, flows, and meaning.

I use the model of the arena to inform the production of my artwork. Mimicking the landscape, I see the trees, rocks, houses, grasses, and rivers as players on the arena. An example of this is *Paris-Roubaix* (Figure 3), which maps the annual cycle race from Paris to Roubaix in France. This historical race weaves in and out of villages in the way I weave in and out of my thoughts, transferring to the canvas with painterly desires.

Figure 3: *Paris-Roubaix*, Acrylic on canvas, 2019 (Image credit: Wayne Elliott).



The perspectives of the arena make up the focus point in the landscape, providing boundaries of viewing and visualization. The perspectives of the arena take on a rhizomatic complexity, continually creating spaces that require a reflective 'joining the dots' mindset. Accepting a mindset that constantly searches for connections provides a fertile ground to develop ideas, concepts, and flows that transpire into a visualised response. This flow acts in a chaotic movement as it searches for linkages and assemblages that move towards meaning and narrative. Visualization begins this process by prioritizing objects and reimagining the arena in the form of thumbnail sketches. There is an emphasis on meaning and narrative, while focusing on the immersion and movement through the arena. Visualizing is a way of operating, of creating scenarios—an attempt to conceptualize the arena. It is a game of tactics and strategies, of negotiating obstacles and barriers, as one moves inside and outside the arena. I imagine what lies outside the arena: the influences that transpose and manipulate the arena.

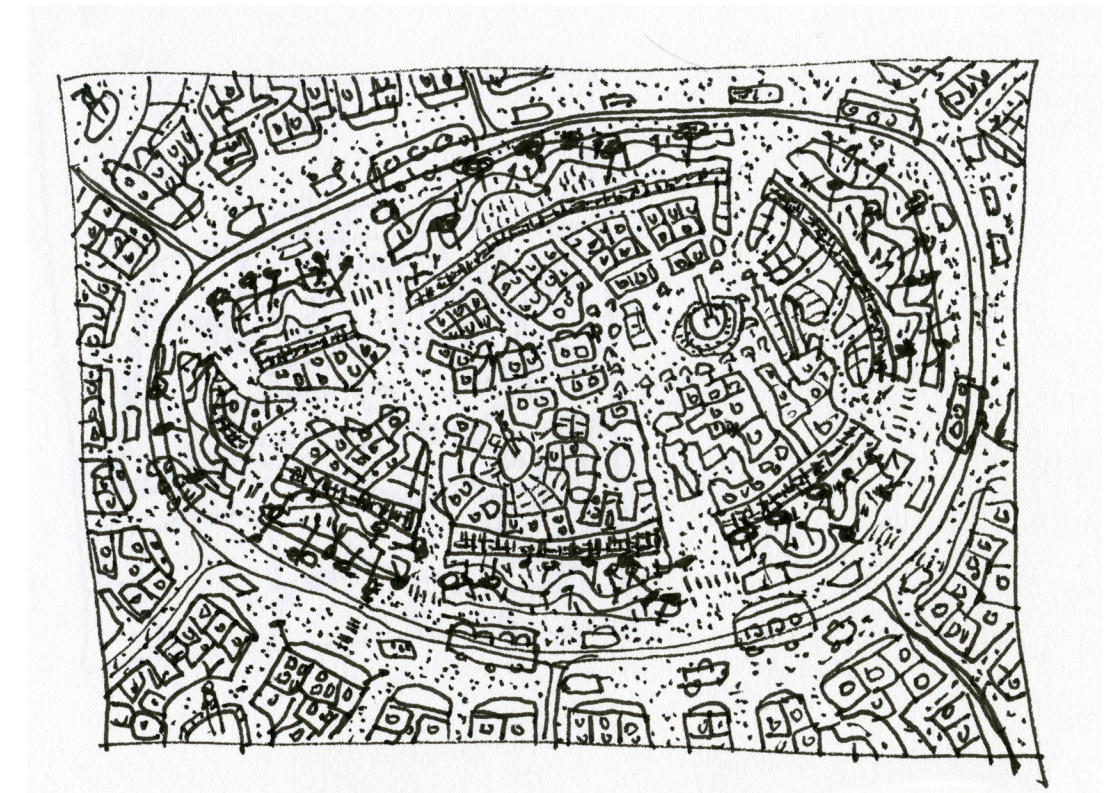


Visualizing acts as a catalyst to interpret the arena from the grounded perspective but also an imaginary ‘bird’s eye’ perspective. De Certeau (1984) compared seeing the whole of New York City from the top of a skyscraper, where he felt devoid of reality, to walking the streets of the city where he encountered everyday reality. I imagine ‘flying’ above the arena, zooming in and zooming out, synchronizing with my internal values and feelings. I attempt to imagine all aspects from above: the flow of a river as it meanders, the colouring of the soil, the density of the vegetation, and the nature of the cloud formation. I search for forms, patterns, lines, flows, and colours as movements of expression that transpose to my canvas. At a grounded level, I feel the wind in my face, the cracking of a twig on the ground, the flash of an animal as it scoots off into the distance and the rough surface of the rocks. De Certeau (1984) understood the importance of walking, “The story begins at ground level with footsteps” (p. 97). I absorb my surroundings like a sponge, at times not actually knowing what I am absorbing. The focus is just ‘being’ in the arena as I map all that interests me. Dwelling in a primal space where my senses are overloaded brings chaos to order and distraction to focus as a way of prioritizing and mapping aspects of the arena in the form of a visual narrative of a reimagined space. These initial maps are created in thumbnail sketches, much like a mud map.

#### Thumbnail Sketches (Mud Maps)

The thumbnail sketches (mud maps) are the links between the walking, visualization, arena, narrative, and the data generated. Thumbnail sketches and mud maps are visual ways of documenting my thoughts quickly, as in a visual diary or as a scrap of paper. ‘Mud map’ is an Australian term that refers to a hand-drawn map that was drawn roughly with whatever implements could be found. These sketches commit to mapping or a problem-solving exercise. As I walk, glimpses and visualizations in my mind become fragments of data that inform the mud maps. I create a multitude of thumbnail sketches, with each informing the next and creating prototypes of the imagined image. I am ‘walking’ across my sketchpad with an ink pen, a movement pedagogy of understanding the arena. Australian artist John Olsen (2020) spoke of this in the book *Son of the Brush*.

Figure 4: *Krakow*, Thumbnail sketch, Ink and pencil on paper, 2019 (Image credit: Wayne Elliott).



Throughout the process, there is a constant synchronicity between a multitude of arenas, strata, and spaces, as seen through the identities of artist/researcher/teacher/learner.

My mind finds a way of prioritizing, sorting, and reconfiguring these images to a reimagined image, which reflects the essence of my exploration and research. The flow of ideas, marks on the paper, and fragments of data slowly come together within the context of my narrative. Like the act of walking in the landscape, the ink pen mimics this by moving across the sketchpad, stroke by stroke, creating the thumbnail sketches. In this process, I edit my collection of sketches to capture the essence of the act of walking. Making mistakes is a positive way of working towards a thumbnail sketch that reinforces the visualization, aesthetics, and immersion.

The work evolves through a myriad of reflective practices, such as walking, music, riding a bicycle, conversing, or reviewing the data collected, each informing the other. Creating a collection of thumbnail sketches provides reflective data that continues to inform after the act of walking has ceased. This has been most evident over the past year of the COVID-19 lockdowns, when it was impossible to travel. I find myself playing back glimpses of these walking engagements as if my mind is trying to conceptualize my



thoughts and understand the key elements of the immersion. The immersion in the arena is the catalyst for my rhizomatic journeys of inquiry, which stimulates my artistic response. The process of making, in my view, is about the process of creating, problem-solving, adapting, and communicating as a lifelong learner. There is no shortcut; time is the constant that guides this development through our everyday actions.

Engaging others in this process allows for conversations to flow and new understandings to be revealed, much like how walking, conversations, reading, and writing clarify my thoughts and transpose the reimaged narrative to the canvas. It is not that someone provides the answer; it is more about embracing a capacity to articulate one's positioning. My art practice is not a reproducible template; each 'walking' step is a unique journey from the arena to the canvas, and each journey across the canvas is a varied stroke of action.

The thumbnail sketch 'Krakow' (Figure 4) is an example of mapping my walk in an arena, quickly sketching the lines, form, and narrative of the moment. This was the initial thumbnail sketch before my final artwork, 'Krakow' (Figure 1). 'Krakow' was an artwork that I created after spending two days walking around the city. I was not aware on the first day that there was a new and old city; both cities are steeped in history and culture. The 'bird's eye view' encapsulates the notion of the two cities and the flows of movement around the cities, providing a detailed micro-macro view of my immersion in the city environs. This act of walking is reflective in nature, as one creates a rich research database of readings, videos, photos, notes, and thumbnail sketches.

Reimagining the Arena

Creating a routine in preparation to explore and research the arena is essential to the success of reimagining the arena. Like an athlete that prepares for a game, the a/r/tographer enters the arena in a focused state—beforehand organising the materials such as ink pens, visual diary, pencils, camera, gouache, watercolour book, small easel, and paint brushes. This preparation is methodical and calculated, with a constant self-checking that one is ready to enter. I clear my mind of distractions by playing music to provide a sense of purpose, mood, and direction. Music provides movements that allow the learner to move in and out of the rhythms and flows, creating lines of inquiry. One

Figure 5: *Sketches from plane*, Ink and pencil, 2017 (Image credit: Wayne Elliott).

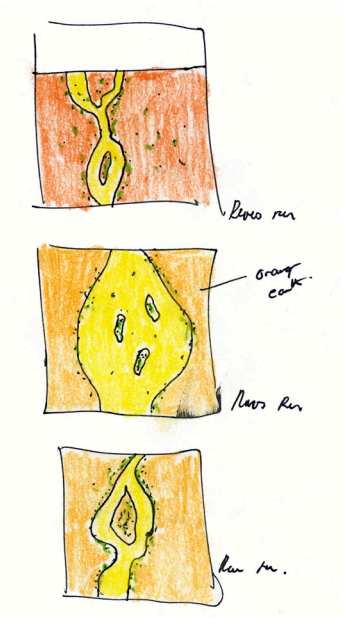


Figure 6: *Kaltjiti*, Acrylic on canvas, 2020 (Image credit: Wayne Elliott).



cannot see, but feels the stimulus and flow of ideas, a mindset that focuses before one actualizes walking onto the arena.

The journey to the arena can be a variety of modes of movement, including train, plane, walking, bicycle, and car, which create diverse reflective opportunities to prepare one's mindset. Travelling by flight, I documented the arid Central Australian landscape from the seat of the aircraft while flying from Melbourne to Darwin at a height of 35,000 feet (Figure 5). This is a movement pedagogy that is informed by soaring across the landscape from a 'bird's eye view.' Having the opportunity to fly for hours over the landscape informs the reimaging of the arena. I capture the flows, contrasts, interactions, colours, and lines that are etched in the landscape.

Upon arrival at the arena, a sense of anticipation sharpens the senses. No template exists, only a framework and a reflective step-by-step process that unfolds. I do not focus on a completed artwork. Rather, I focus on the act of walking and reading the landscape. Reading between the lines, as in a written discourse, one moves in and out of the objects that litter the arena. Similar to a player engaged in a sporting game, I read the play and understand what is unfolding before me. I search for connections and take a holistic view of the spatiality of the landscape. The perspective is viewed at ground level, while at the same time, one visualizes the landscape from a 'bird's eye view.' This process enables new ways of seeing that illuminate what is invisible to visible. I visualize an out-of- body experience, looking down on oneself walking through the arena, a sense of being alone as everything is unfolding. Tuan (1977) reinforces this notion and links this process to knowledge production,

walking is a skill, but if I can "see" myself walking and if I can hold that picture in my mind so that I can analyse how I move and what path I am following, then I also have knowledge. (p. 68)

The chapter reinforces visualization as a vehicle that allows one to prioritize objects and players in the arena, transposing mind visuals to the reimaged artwork.

*Kaltjiti* (Figure 6) is a reimaged arena, complete with prioritized objects/players/actors in the landscape. The driving inner force is not to represent the arena as a replica of reality but to capture the feel, essence, and narrative of the movement through the landscape. My visualization is constantly seeking a spatiality with reference to the

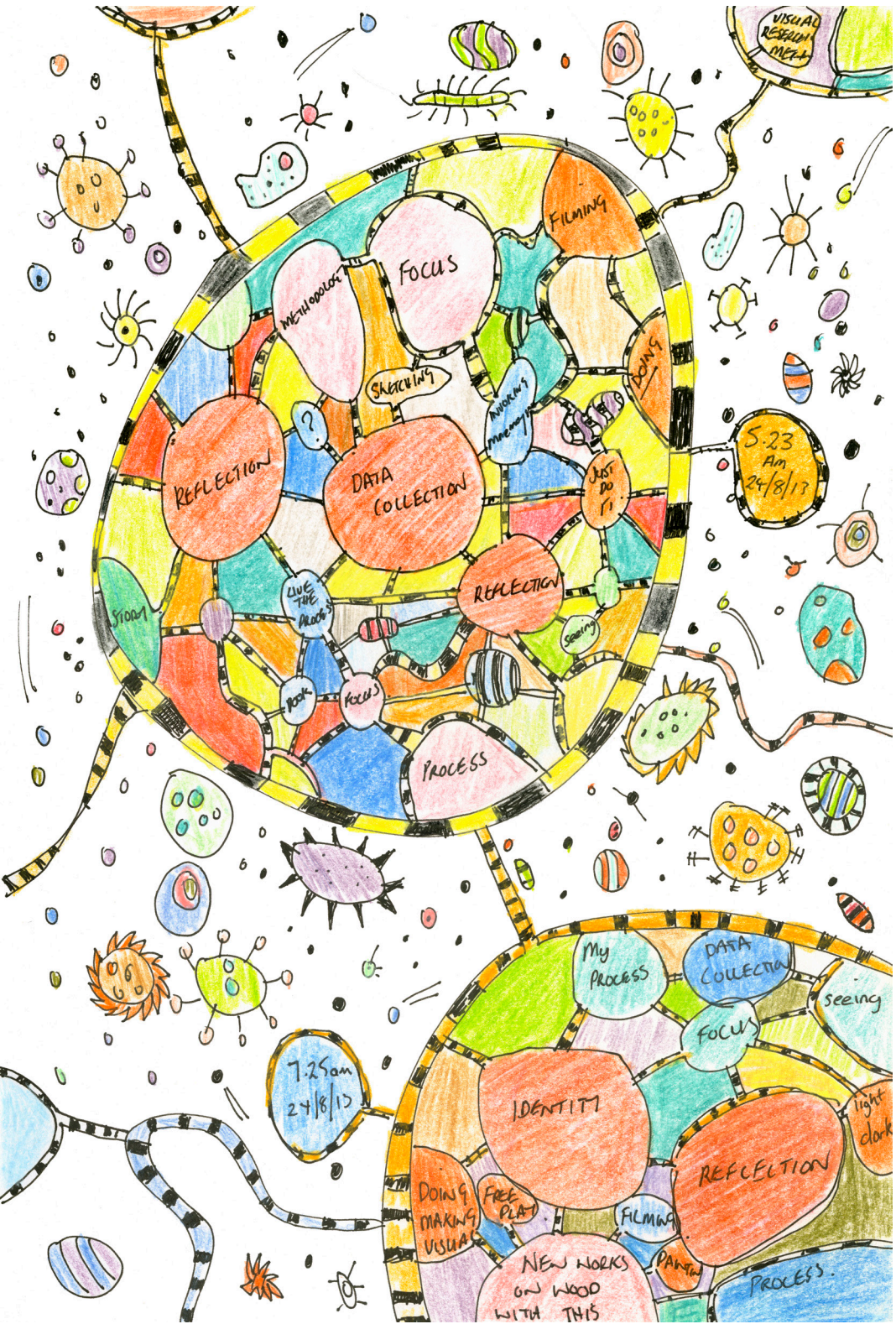
positioning and prioritising of objects within the arena which will transpose to the canvas. I visualize how this spatiality may look, quickly sketching an outline of the form and line to revisit at another point in time. The visualization imagines above, below, and in-between, seeking what may have gone before culturally, socially, and historically, like joining pieces together to create an essence.

Suggested edit: Visual data is captured using video and camera, reflecting the walk's sequential narrative. I use my Go-Pro, mobile phone, and camera to explore, zooming in and zooming out, searching for the prioritized aspects. The multitude of lenses provide me with further perspectives on how I view the space. These video and photo images are vital in reviewing and creating further opportunities for reflection. I constantly provide opportunities and awareness for reflection in spaces such as riding my bike, swimming, walking, listening to music, and driving a car. I always have a notebook to record these reflections that seem to come from nowhere yet are so vital to moving me forward.

There is no guarantee that walking will be a catalyst to create an artwork; it is a process that emerges over time. I visualize flows, shapes, objects, colour, contrast, light, and texture as I move through the arena to reframe and reimagine the landscape. This approach is an explorative problem-solving exercise that accommodates constantly changing parts and different ways of considering objects and actors. The narrative is never simple; it unfolds before, during, and after the act of walking, translating one's movements into a narrative that is represented as an artwork. Sometimes the leap is too far, and the connection fades, at which point the artist rethinks the strategy. Creating a mind map (Figure 7) informs the a/r/tographer of this rhizomatic exploration; it illuminates the ideas, thoughts, movements, questions, and lines of inquiry that sprout from a multiplicity of fertile grounds. This data is part of the a/r/tographical process, which informs the act of 'walking' the canvas. Essentially, I am mapping aspects of my movement pedagogy, a process that is synchronizing between the internal and the external arenas. Writing this down provides openings to entice and document a response for further reflection at another time and place as well.



Figure 7: Mapped movement pedagogy, Ink and pencil on paper, 2013 (Image credit: Wayne Elliott).



The Act of Walking the Canvas

Immersion, data, and thumbnail sketches provide a springboard to create the final artwork. I continuously visualize back to the arena, as well as viewing mud maps, photos, and videos that inform my production process. Visualization is a problem-solving exercise of reconciling the captured data and the memory of walking the arena so that I can construct images that are not prescriptive but rather weave the viewer through the canvas. I carefully select the type of art materials and the size of the painting; these are important considerations before starting the artwork. Once I have a thumbnail sketch that I believe reflects my narrative, I then move to the canvas. ‘Walking’ the canvas begins in much the same way as walking the arena, moving across the surface of the blank canvas with a pencil to outline the main form of the reimagined arena. Like following the actual paths in the arena, I create pathways and lines as I reimagine using my pencil on the canvas. The movement is intuitive, drawing upon the immersive nature of everything that has proceeded this moment. These visualizations invite reflections on the moments I spent walking. The art of moving the pencil or brush feels as if I am having to walk down that road again.

The act of painting on the canvas mimics walking across the arena, creating small brushstrokes that reflect each step. It resembles the tightrope walker who balances in the moment, constantly adjusting to stay balanced. One does not always know how the artwork will emerge in the act of reaching for different brushes or splashing several colours across the canvas. The movements transpire through small strokes and slashing full-arm movements. Each stroke is an act of exploration, my body and mind synchronizing to claw back the sensual moments in the landscape. A sense of chaos reigns before the form leaps from the canvas; there is a sense that one moves forward in an evolving nature. There is a point where the artwork comes to life, building upon all that has transpired.

As an a/r/tographer, movement has informed my research and socio-cultural engagements. The focus is on the a/r/tographer exploring the rhizomatic lines of inquiry, providing a springboard for a multitude of thoughts that unfold with each walking step. In many ways, all that precedes the final artwork is where the chaos of creation swirls to produce a reimagined representation. This forms a multi-disciplinary approach that

draws from practice and informs this assemblage of form. There are aspects of this process that one cannot articulate, but these are the moments of discovery that ignite the joy of creation. The fragments of this chapter create opportunities to reimagine your local neighbourhood, excursions into the landscape, and events that inform your own movement pedagogy.

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Figure 1: *Untitled*, (Image credit: Anja from Pixabay)

# WALKING THE ART AND PRACTICE OF EXSISTENCES

Bruce Moghtader

The invitation to walk with a/r/tography brought me instantly to Michel Foucault’s (1984) observation:

that in our society, art has become something which is related only to objects and not to individuals, or to life. That art is something which is specialized, or which is done by experts who are artists. But couldn’t everyone’s life become a work of art? (p. 350)

Foucault (1984) sought to “relate the kind of relation one has to oneself to a creativity activity” (p. 351). In the final years of his life, he focused on the question of how we become ethical human subjects, suggesting that attention to activities in everyday life can transform our relation to ourselves and also our relation to social, economic, and institutional structures. Foucault’s ethical turn was focused on the cultivation of the self, concerned with the “relation of a subject to itself” (Foucault, 1985, p. 29). I speculate that the *self* at stake is not a representation nor an interpretation but a process in relation to the world. If so, walking can take us a long way into what Foucault admired about artistic creation, namely the time, attention, and effort that it requires. Walking, strolling, running, and for those in wheelchairs, turning the wheels are modes of everyday conduct that connect the body to life movement.

My proposition is informed by a/r/tography as a methodological framework for self-experimentation with walking and situating the self in relation to the ecological world (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2017). As a form of living inquiry, a/r/tography transforms traditional binaries of theorizing and practicing art-based educational research (Springgay et al., 2005). *A/r/tography* gives primacy to *being* situated in the processes of making. While a/r/tography disrupts the categories of “artists, researchers, and teachers,” it focuses on the processes of creative activity “through embodied experiences and make sense of them in purposeful ways” (La Jevic & Springgay, 2008, p. 72). As an embodied experience, walking reawakens the senses. I propose that a/r/tography allows for contemplations on how walking escapes a universal perspective, providing educators with a point of view to play with the binaries between teaching and learning, but also making and (un)making.

Rita Irwin (2013) writes, “There can be no being a/r/tography without the process of becoming a/r/tography” (p. 198). In this, walking is a practice of becoming and creating may follow. Walking renders one beyond conceptual pathways into the uncharted territory of just being and just understanding (knowing). Because walking does different things to different people at different times, its lessons are potent to transforming the divide between being and doing in modern education. Walking is not the opposite of sitting, standing, or exercising. Walking is a process of connecting, orienting, and (re)learning what it means to be(come) human in the world. It offers a way of attending that destabilizes the relentless pursuit of speed and productivity. In appreciation of the proposition of walking as “coming to know a/r/tographically,” (Lee et al., 2019, p. 681), I begin by reflecting on my project to walk a/r/tographically.

**Walking Project**

Initially, I had begun this paper like any other paper. I have conceived it as a project. I have selected articles, books, poems, and drawings that invoked the individual, social, and artistic implications of walking. I was going to connect this literature to the collection of photos and field notes gathered during my walks and I was planning to conceive my encounters as improvisational performances with mindfulness, preparation, and effort. The project of attending to my environment was rejuvenating. The documentation and artifacts helped me walk with intention. Soon, every step became intentional. My curiosity was entertained on every path. The project had reawakened an inquiry into how fast I moved, how fast I wanted to move, where I would go, who I would meet, what I would find, and what I would need for the encounters. I was self-organizing to be more present to the act of walking. There were thoughts that urged me to plan, and at other times, I planned not to have a plan. There were reroutes and detours, construction noises and the car sounds, unanticipated weather changes, and greetings from birds. There were long walks lasting for five hours. There were short walks lasting for 20 minutes. There were times that I needed a map and other times that I abandoned the map. And then there were self-reflections about the grandiosity of life, how small I was—not simply on the map—more note-taking, reflection, and self-exploration. On one level, I was not going anywhere, going out to come home. On another level, just being out had transformed my

state of being. I became acutely aware of how much I judged the ‘good’ weather and the ‘bad’ weather. I learned a little bit more about my inclinations of wanting to know where I was going, my impatience with uncertainties, and my desire to be entertained. On longer walks, I regretted my ambition, and on shorter walks, I came home disappointed for having too little time—as if time was something I possessed.

The project awakened my senses to life. Every time going out, I was full of purpose, only to return to my room and back at my desk to write about walking. The sight of pictures accompanied by half-baked ideas got me nowhere on the page. I walked again, talked to myself, at times, recorded sentences and poems while walking so I could come home to make something out of walking. There was an irreconcilable distinction between the experience of walking and writing about walking. The art in a/r/tography was the living act of being a pedestrian and so I was reminded that walking is a kind of making that cannot be detached from the walker. My struggle to write about walking offered me a flight from the impositions of how I have understood what I committed myself to as a *project*. My proposition flows from re-understanding that walking ought to be for something other than walking.

Writing, dancing, improvising, and drawing are all artistic methods that exhibit things, but the aesthetic experience they offer transcends understanding. By the same measure, walking transcends our understanding of time and space. Similar to any artistic method, walking engages energy, form, and intelligence in movement, transfiguring human situatedness in time and space. Time and space are transformed through our modern mediums of communication and cyber-technologies that have changed how we communicate, travel, and occupy ourselves, but most importantly, how we treat our beings. Marshall McLuhan (2005) realized that cyber and information technologies are extensions of the nervous system that impact how we perform as living beings. Much of McLuhan’s work proceeded from his observation of the progression of technology into how we live as social animals. He observed that technological tools change humans’ relation to themselves—an internalization of a mode of being, in which being itself is occupied by the question of how to *do* being. Walking brings humanity outside the virtual habits that rework one’s access to the world. The cyber-technologies are virtual, presumably providing me with access, but the access they provide cuts me off from

the reality outside my windows. Walking gives access to the real world, unframed. It transcends human agency differently from the way cyber-technology frames human agency—where human beings are reduced to behavioural data and analyzed for profit, efficiency, and automation. Cyber-technologies facilitate “communication and control,” designed for the seamless “human use of human beings,” which is the title of Wiener’s (1965) book. Walking situates me in relation to the world.

As a pedestrian, I started to worship the air, the trees, the roads, and the creation, all being an end to themselves. Nothing was data (collection of facts or information) but movement. I was not just *learning*; I was *re-understanding* existence. The art of living that Foucault (1984) had in mind, is perhaps concerned with a mode of being that can undo *how* we have fashioned our existence. It is a nominal approach that disrupts rational preconceptions of how to do and how to be, creating the space of possibility to be otherwise. And so, I began to leave my notebooks, pencils, phone (camera), and wallet at home. I just needed my keys. No surveying (collecting data) and no maps as conventions of colonialism, internalized in me as a settler subject, were needed. As a result of this active dispossession, I came outside of my inclinations. What I initially thought was a project, and the ways in which I identified with it were shaken over time as I walked myself.

**Does Walking need a Philosophy?**

The shackles of thought that keep our identity firmly placed in habitual acts and feelings are loosened by movement. In my case, the more I tried to cognitively plan for a proposition, the more I had to play with reconciling theory and practice of understanding a/r/tographically. Before coming against my desires to produce something out of my walks, I had read *Philosophy of Walking* by Frédéric Gros (2014). Reading inspired me to walk but rendered my search for a theory of walking more scattered and with more questions than before. On one occasion, Gros (2014) discusses how walking moves us to freedom:

you can escape from the very idea of identity, the temptation to be someone, to have a name and a history. Being someone is all very well for smart parties where everyone is telling their story, ... But isn’t being someone also a social obligation which trails in its wake. (pp. 6-7)

As someone who has social obligations, I cherish my commitments to people. Having a name and a history perhaps helps me navigate day-to-day life. However, Gros (2014) had a point: identity is not something I have. It is something I grasp onto as I move in and out of spaces. In an evolutionary sense, walking came before we had started to draw and write. Walking is a predecessor to conceptualizing, labeling, and communicating our world and ourselves to ourselves. Looking at very young children, I speculate walking happens before identities become entangled with what we feel, think, and do.

For Gros (2014), walking offers liberation from both the stall and the speed of modern life. It connects us to “the rediscovery of simple joys, and the reconquest of the primitive animal” (p. 8). During long walks or nature hikes, commitment to time dissipates, and walking becomes “freedom of renunciation” (Gros, 2014, p. 8). For example, Henry David Thoreau is suggestive of the freedom that nature walks bring to life. Thoreau is an exemplary walker. He overcame cultural and social influences of his time through personal engagements with nature. Every day, Thoreau (1997) submitted himself to his instinct by settling on a path and freeing himself from his work. He walked away from worldly preoccupations, and in doing so, he gained insight into life. Thoreau (1977) writes, “[m]y desire for knowledge is intermittent, but my desire to bathe my head in atmospheres unknown to my feet is perennial and constant... The highest we can attain to is not Knowledge, but Sympathy with Intelligence” (p. 57). Thoreau demonstrates in his life and writing that sympathy and intelligence are lived, and walking in nature is a catalyst for them. Against Americanization and violation of the rights of Indigenous people, he defended human dignity, calling for the preservation of Indigenous people’s way of life. He objected to slavery and the misuse of power for profit. Thoreau’s moral sentiments, informed by his encounters with nature, were presented in his writings. For example, for Thoreau, rivers are not simply concepts. Patrick Morgan (2010) notes that “they connote not only geomorphology and aesthetics, but also gender and sexuality” (p. 47). Morgan (2010) added that “Thoreau creates the possibility for an ecofeminist reading, insofar as ecofeminism concerns itself with how both female and male subjectivity are created in relation to environment” (Morgan, 2010, p. 47). How was it that Thoreau saw beyond the limitations of the cultural consciousness of the nineteenth century? His defense for sympathy and intelligence comes in his book



on walking, where he suggests that character, value, and sense of the world come about by physically moving in the world at the speed in which attention, apprehension, and deliberation are possible.

Aside from Thoreau, Gros (2014) offers many other examples of thinkers, activists, and poets who, by walking, transformed themselves. “Walking, as they say ‘empties the mind.’ In another way, walking fills the mind with a different sense of purpose” (p. 97). Gros (2014) elaborates: “Not connected with ideas or doctrines, not in the sense of a head of full of phrases, quotations, theories, but full of the world’s presence” (p. 97). Gros’ book, *Philosophy of Walking*, attests that walking makes people, not philosophies. Philosophy is living in wisdom and pursuing knowledge, not the possession and production of wisdom and knowledge. Socrates did not write philosophical texts. He walked in the city of Athens, treated those he encountered as friends and cared for their soul(s). Walking manifests the art of making friends with life encounters. A lover of wisdom attends to encounters. While I walked, I pondered what Gros (2014) might think of Socrates.

Whether writing of Nietzsche, Thoreau, Rousseau, Kant, or Gandhi, Gros (2014) found ideas, thoughts, and actions come by stepping away from being seated. Something happens to the walking exemplars he focused on: the rhythm of walking gives form to the rhythm of their lives and not just what they thought and created. Gros (2014) noted that for Nietzsche, walking was not a distraction from work; it “was the work’s precondition” (p. 18). For Rimbaud, walking was the source of flight and forgetfulness of the self and the world (p. 52). For Rousseau, walking was a source of rediscovery of the natural human, “a long way to relearn self-love” (remote from egotism) (p. 75). And for Gandhi, walking was associated with the “idea of force and truth rolled into one, the idea that one should be anchored firmly to truth as to a solid rock” (p. 201). The decolonial movement led by Gandhi came about by walking as a form of non-violent objection to injustice, economic exploitation, and unrestrained profitmaking. Walking equipped Gandhi with spiritual truth against the illusions of Western economic progress that accompanied the exploitation of nature and hampered recognition of human suffering. He and those who continue to walk behind him ask for a different value system—one in which human development would not be reduced to economic outputs and one in which monopolies on power would not be the sole engine in steering social progress.

As I wondered by walking and studying, I noticed the philosophers and the philosophies of walking historically have been conceptualized in masculine terms and promoted Western individualism. Walking brought attention to the identity that Gros (2014) invites me to abandon. Ironically, Gros’ (2014) showcase of those who walked and transformed themselves were men. His book lacks even a single example of a woman. Creating, challenging, transcending, liberating, writing, and emancipating through walking is a man *thing* for much of the history of philosophy. In actuality, it is often women who care for humanity to walk. There are exemplary women walkers who help humanity see that the ignorant pursuit of progress and transcendence in modern civilization, often associated with masculine ideals and idols, have made little moral progress.

How many men have dared to follow the model of Mother Teresa of Calcutta? Men in power can only praise her and return to their concepts, intellectualization, and promises. In the manly search for transcendence, the philosophical tendency on what to do with human suffering only perpetuates human suffering by resorting to logic and rational scientism. Did Western philosophers not resort to walks and books to free themselves from themselves and reconstruct their aesthetic self, often with the illusion of a separate self that thinks? Saint Teresa lived among people experiencing poverty and nurtured their bodies and souls with love. She demonstrates how Western philosophy and scientific progress have done little to rescue us from the growing poverty generated by competitive individualism and remedy wealth inequalities between the Global North and the Global South. She did not donate to those experiencing poverty, she dedicated what she had, her time, to better the lives of others. She reminds us that loving humanity is distinct from the philanthropy of corporate elites. Philanthropists of our day sit and fly around the world comfortably; they walk when playing golf or in beautiful gardens, mostly for leisure and pleasure. They deposit cheques and build for-profit empires. The rich technocrats give to receive tax breaks, buy salvation, and delay social unrest, that is, even if they decide to depart from their wealth at all.

Saint Teresa walked the same ground as those she helped. She remained close to the human realm as she walked closer to the higher good. She was not in search of becoming a Saint nor a Nobel Peace laureate (Teresa et al., 1998). It was not her *project*. She walked, witnessed, touched, and loved humanity. Her compassion disrupts the

modern illusion that bureaucracy and technocracy help the world and transcend human consciousness. Saints do not need a philosophy of a walking to perform their art.

**An Education on Seeing**

Henry David Thoreau and Saint Teresa walked and expanded the dimensions of being human. They lived as exemplary humans whose practice of walking informed their being. In this section, I turn to a seeing that enables making. “Moving away from labels to particulars,” Irwin (2006) writes of aesthetic and spiritual experiences, and finds in walks an “opportunity to inquire into” one’s “taken-for-granted enthusiasm, intention and expectations” (p. 79). By drawing on *currere* as an embodied running of the course (Grumet & Pinar, 1976), Irwin (2006) emphasizes that in “*currere*, actions teach attentive to experience” (p. 77). *Currere* “is active and contextual,” and Irwin (2006) appreciates that going slowly by “walking the course” enables situatedness, presence, and relationality (p. 77). Walking connects human learning to the human body and the human body to the world. According to Ellyn Lyle and Celeste Snowber (2021), “walking practices open up the space not only to mindfulness, but bodyfulness, where the present moment has the capacity for the infinite” (p. 6). At stake is a “holistic teaching, living and being” (Lyle & Snowber, 2021, p. 6) that often escapes the text and subtext of modern education.

Walking uplifts the weight of an education that treats human life as vessels for knowledge and skills—used up when entering into a labour market. As Jardine (2021) observes, while industrial thinking remains dominant and intensified in the digital revolution that exploits human relationships, an education that considers the appreciation of beauty can help. Awaking a ‘walking curriculum,’ Jardine (2021) writes:

*Everything has its beauty, but not everyone sees it.* This sets out a pedagogical summons, to learn to see it, to seek out these lessons, to expect these lessons and, if our teachers fail us, to turn away and seek them out for ourselves. It sets out a course of action, a path that must be taken and retook to be understood. A long traverse of experience is set out, reading, waiting, if you want it. And it speaks in tongues that you must patiently become accustomed to study. (p. 43)

There is a profound mode of listening when seeing occurs. Re-entering human life and ecological co-existence over the spells of efficiency (the movement of Fredrick Winslow Taylor), Jardine (2021) finds that walking can inspire educators to slow down and attend to “eco-pedagogical thinking” (p. 45), which depends on insight and relationship. Walking enables perspective-taking on the metaphor of the mind as a machine. This metaphor conceives human beings as passive automata programmed to perform standards. Jardine’s view accompanies seeing into cultural misconceptions that impact professional practice and pedagogical promises. Walking can enable an education of seeing beauty rather than producing it. Seeing beauty is not so much an endeavour, another scheduled task, but as Kate Porter (2009) suggests, it stems from cultivating the way we look into things that will allow beauty to find us.

A pedagogical anthropology to the values and practices of modern education may begin by allowing persons to gain an appreciation of the world and by walking education *projects*. Here and there, the educational question of ‘who we are’ invokes questioning why humans ought to be something and *how* we have *arrived at* present conceptions and values that define our *being*. Walking activates the dynamism needed to relearn ourselves. Such an approach welcomes the thoughts of educators such as Ted T. Aoki (2005) and William Pinar (2019), who reconceptualize modern education by attending to lived experiences and self-knowledge. Walking can figuratively pave a path to the realm of inquiry into how we know ourselves by reflecting on relations we have established with ourselves and those around us. Walking may also be an act of deliberation on why, in our culture, knowledge is associated with gaining profit and power instead of an art of living.

Tim Ingold (2010) demonstrates walking offers an approach to knowing. Here, knowing is not gathered by picking up data here and there, documenting observations, collecting artifacts, and accumulating content. Ingold (2010) explains that the inhabitants of the world are wayfarers—their knowledge “is not built *up* but grows *along* the paths they take, both on the ground and in the air” (p. 134). There is a relation between the body on the ground that knows, and an exploration of the mode of knowing that is being. Ingold (2010) suggests the paths we walk and the winds we weather (our mood



and motivation) are necessary for understanding and being understood. Knowing is not merely abstractions or depersonalized facts. It is an ongoing recognition “of the body’s sensory entanglement in the lifeworld” (Ingold, 2010, p. 122). The type of knowing Ingold (2010) has in mind requires conscious awareness of co-existence. It is knowing as *growing* along with other beings.

Walking can be an *alternative* to an education that fills the head, detached from the body and the world. However, walking is so much more than a prescribed task *for* education; it is a process of being educated. Takayama (2020) proposes that walking undoes the decontextualized and universalized Western model of schooling, as walking is:

a way to immerse oneself in the local context. The direct experience of “smell, noise and the air” attainable only through an extended period of residence is deemed essential to understand the lived world and social space within which those being studied reside. (p. 87)

Such immersions resolve the subject-object duality of some academic knowledge because context is acknowledged as an integral part of reality and imagination. Keita Takayama (2020) follows Ingold’s construct of “knowing in movement” and being “constitutive of knowing” (p. 87). As one steps away from the universalized notions that knowledge is something that humans *have*, it becomes possible to understand the Anthropocene. The Anthropocene has come about by the scientific revolution and its over-emphasis on human agency and free will that observes and analyzes the world in terms of categorized knowledge to be consumed. This has led to an education filled with objectives and the neglect of the finitude of human apprehension of the limits and possibilities of existence. Walking is a break from ways of inhabiting ourselves as an unconscious species that, by induction and deduction, draft hierarchies of reason to structure the world as property for open use.

The moment-to-moment realization of impermanence embodied in walking re-centers understanding. Understanding is ephemeral, and being understood is a felt experience. If the self is an art in transition, at once complete and incomplete, what we may arrive at is not a future; it is now. Living with/in the pervasive commercialization of culture, so much that we strive for a future that we know little of, but we live impatiently for its arrival. We miseducate children to accept this as reality, for the future may bring

something more than we currently need: a peaceful world and a content life. Speed, optimization, and efficiency as modern values have not satisfied our anticipation for both a peaceful world and a content life. They have supported a fictional economy and an education that sustains it. The economism of our day has conceptualized education as consumption; that is, we are consumers and producers of ourselves. Despite of this, the subjective power of an art of existence may allow us to work on ourselves when we can and while we can. We can meditate, sing, and dance as we walk ourselves out of this world. Walking reworks how we ought to be, for it broadens the sensory experience of seeing and listening. As Gros (2014) notes, “walking puts us on the vertical axis of life: swept along by the torrent that rushes just beneath us” (p. 6). In this, walking is taking pleasure in the present and attuning to what awaits us.

Conclusion

As birds fly and the fish swim, humans walk themselves into an out of existence. Initially, I began to think of my proposition as something that is made from/by walking. I came to the realization of walking as re-entering the being that is central to the a/r/tographical methodology. A/r/tographical approaches to walking oriented me from a preoccupation with production that occupies my being and my culture. It oriented me towards reflective inquiries on what is an artistic practice. Walking, for its own sake, can be among those artistic practices that “subversively counters the dominant means-end technical rationality of our age” (Richmond, 2009, p. 531). Given the climate emergency and rabid consumerism (including information consumption), educators have choices. Perhaps, by walking and reflecting, we can remake the course of the beings that we are. Walking, and reflections on walking, can contribute to a curriculum of becoming—a curriculum concerned with the art of understanding. Walking is not merely educational. It can cultivate compassion and care when one is willing to see, listen, and consider. The models of a saint (Saint Teresa) and philosopher-artist (H. D. Thoreau) may also offer inspiring examples of what walking does to human person. Moreover, there are many other examples of those who reorient our beings towards love, sympathy, and intelligence, often teaching by living as examples. Stepping in (and out of) one’s shoes facilitates wayfinding in self-decipherment. The ground serves as the portal

that connects the pedagogical question of who we are to the worldly question of what sustains us.

For this, a/r/tography as a methodology of living inquiry is attentive to developing “the relationship between embodiment and ethics as a being-with” (La Jevic & Springgay, 2008, p. 68). La Jevic and Springgay (2008) elaborate, “[b]eing-with constitute the fabric of everyday life and the ethical encounters” (p. 70). The encounters are often conceptualized in terms of human-human ethics and embodiment as worldliness without attempting to instrumentalize the living world and living things as mere objects. Walking offers a modality of engaging with existence and yet transcends our apprehension of conduct. In this sense, walking is an in situ making, a performance of being. It can serve as a method, a method of no method, in which embodiment and ethics become one—for it is a practice of deliberating on the lived world. Walking for the sake of walking may lead to understanding that the self is not an isolated entity and one’s ways of knowing are conventions up for re-examination.

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Figures 1- 2: Sacred Fig tree (*Ficus religiosa*) leaves encountered as a repetitive motif, while traversing the streets of Bangalore, India in 2020. Visual encounter with streets, made possible through walking. (Image credits: Geetanjali Sachdev).

# WALKING AS A SPACED PRACTICE, PATTERN AS PEDAGOGY

Geetanjali Sachdevi

## Introduction

This research inquires into pattern recognition as a pedagogic tool for conducting a/r/tographic inquiry while walking. The repeated presence of specific artefacts and scenes form a part of many urban city streetscapes in India. Reflections of trees on car windshields, insects eating away at mounds of rice intentionally left on public sidewalks by homeowners, plants growing in crevices of tiled pavements, and vividly painted botanical imagery on vehicles—these reiterations operate as a public pedagogy, offering opportunities for the human capacity for pattern recognition to be called forth. Pattern recognition involves identifying underlying patterns within a system, referring to the way we perceive our environment and our attempts to find order and make sense of it (Alexander, 1977; Gleiniger and Vrachliotis, 2012; Yelavitch, 2011).

This study concerns patterns that relate to plants, identified while walking. After recognizing recurring plant motifs within Indian street environments, interpretations were made, informed by my perspectives as an artist/researcher/teacher, regarding their significance on the street. The street is read through the lenses of public pedagogy, an educational approach acknowledging that knowledge is manifested in various contexts and places that include urban spaces and public environments (Sandlin et al., 2011; Hickey, 2010). The key concepts of this study thus concern patterns, pattern recognition and public pedagogy.

## Background

### *Patterns and Pattern Recognition*

Patterns are ways of thinking, modes of behaviour as well as repetitions of form and colour existing around us. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, patterns are particular ways in which something is done, is organized, or occurs. Detecting patterns, or identifying an underlying set of rules by which phenomena are organized, is called pattern recognition—an innate human characteristic enabling us to impose structure and bring order to randomness and chaos, and critical to our ability to cope with complexity (Alexander, 1977; Gleiniger and Vrachliotis, 2012). Neuropsychologist Oliver Sacks (2008) observes that patterns a person recognizes, or that seem familiar, appear so not just because of an earlier encounter, but also because the person has an inner cognitive

experience of the same movements of that pattern. Swirling sensations of migraines explain Sack’s fascination for intricate Chinese vegetal patterns, tiles and tessellations, and herringbone and chequered designs on textiles. His interior mental states resonated with exterior movements visually expressed through geometry and scrolling designs. He proposes that certain similar forms of geometric art seen in many cultures are external expressions of universal experiences, and that arabesque-like visual externalizations are reflections of dynamics built into the organization of the human brains producing them. Christopher Alexander (1977) writes that “To work our way towards a shared and living language once again, we must first learn how to discover patterns which are deep, and capable of generating life (p. 8). In Alexander’s (1977) seminal work in architectural design, pattern refers to elements of a language, or entities, that both describe a recurring problem in an environment and identify the core solution, such that it can be used over and over again without doing it in the same way twice. Alexander noticed a pattern in which structures, towns, and buildings can only come alive when they are made by all the people of society—those who live within and use them, and those who share a common pattern language.

The notion of pattern is thus multifaceted — ranging from simplistic ideas of pattern as pleasurable visual designs, or as repetitions of motifs within environments, to more complex understandings of pattern as a system with elements of predictability and recurrence, and as a function of human perception and identification, dependent on who sees the pattern’s structure. From the different angles from which patterns can be explored, this paper focuses on how recognizing patterns relates to pedagogy and the inherent characteristic of repetition as an effective learning technique. Although epistemological dimensions to pattern—that it is a particular individual’s perceiving mind that recognizes and relates to his or her previously held knowledge—are equally if not more critical to pedagogical practice, this research explores learning possibilities offered by attending to patterns on streets.

*Repetition and Pedagogy*

While repetition is most often associated with rote learning, it also influences learning in other ways. The first psychologist to systematically study its role in learning and memory

was Hermann Ebbinghaus (1885/1948). His studies involving seminal experiments with nonsense syllables and the repetitions it took to learn them revealed that a single experience of two contiguous items establishes a partial connection between them, further strengthened by additional experiences or repetition. Researchers following from Ebbinghaus found that repetition provides opportunities to revisit, relearn and reinforce subject matter, thereby addressing learning issues with recall and retention. Thunell & Thorpe’s (2019) study where research participants were presented with rapid streams of visual stimuli, showed that individuals readily detect repetitions, both regularly and irregularly spaced ones, and that spotting and remembering repeating images can occur under a wide range of conditions. Halliday and Hassan (1976) while exploring of lexical repetition, noted that repetition generates cohesion—when encountering difference, a motif visited repeatedly serves as a unifying thread. Jane Sahi (2013), in the context of learning, observed a similar significance—repetition makes coherence possible, enabling “a flow and dynamism between different elements” (p. 2).

**Public Pedagogy**

Public pedagogy is a broad concept of pedagogy that theorizes various sites and phenomena for the learning and teaching contexts they provide, extending educational experiences beyond the classroom. Henry Giroux’s (2004) initial use of the term concerned “the diverse ways in which culture functions as a contested sphere over the production, distribution, and regulation of power and how and where it operates both symbolically and institutionally as an educational, political, and economic force” (p. 77). Public pedagogy theories acknowledge forms of knowledge manifest across different environments and through various media (Austin, 2017; Sandlin et al., 2011).

*The Street*

Conceptual boundaries of public pedagogy enable examining pedagogies outside formal institutional settings such as streets, malls, and markets. According to Hickey (2010), streets, even though transitory and fluid in nature, are key pedagogical locations introducing various information flows and discursive formations—its pedagogical operations implicitly influence its traversers.



Objects and encounters on streets are identified as forms of public pedagogy because images and ideas circulate through them. There are coke billboards outside provision stores that spark conversation—chemists and restaurants in India speak of this global brand’s ubiquitous local presence; insects eating cooked rice that is intentionally left daily on sidewalks near residences indicates a cultural practice where humans share food with animals; colourful botanical imagery on vehicles passing indicate a prevailing decorative painting style. Each of these instances reveals something about their environment and context.

**A/r/tography**

A/r/tography, an arts and education practice-based research methodology associated with living inquiry, examines areas between artmaking, researching, and teaching, bringing together practices associated with three identities: artist, researcher, and teacher. The methodology includes visual and written processes, as well as products of research texts (Springgay et al., 2005).

One condition for a/r/tography is that it must be a relational aesthetic inquiry. Images, sounds, gestures, and words work in relation to each other to offer additional or new meanings, bringing audiences into their relationship to process these meanings. Along with relationality, a commitment to renderings is vital. Renderings serve as conceptual frames for a/r/tographic processes, representations and interpretations—attending to sensual, tactile, and unsaid facets of artists/researchers/teachers’ lives. Visual, textual, and performative renderings are conditions under which aesthetic discovery can occur. Renderings include living inquiry, contiguity, metaphor/ metonymy, openness, reverberations, and excess. They can inform final outcomes and representation of the research, the actual doing of research, and ways by which audiences access a/r/tographical texts (Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Springgay et al., 2005).

**Method**

This a/r/tographic inquiry demonstrates the use of pattern recognition as a tool while walking, employing a public pedagogy approach to examine plants in street

environments in Indian urban contexts. The research involved visual and textual works of my experiences as a pedestrian walking along streets regularly, recording, interpreting, and rendering what I saw. A/r/tographers can determine appropriate renderings for their art and education practice, and also which renderings to focus on (Carter et al., 2011). This study focuses on living inquiry and contiguity.

When rendered through living inquiry, the a/r/tographer’s own life becomes a site for inquiry and lays it bare for provocative interpretations. Artmaking and teaching become inextricably intertwined, and visual, written, and performative processes are enacted through one’s living practice of artmaking, researching, and teaching. Living inquiry is an embodied encounter constituted through visual and textual understandings and experiences rather than mere visual and textual representations (Springgay et al., 2005, p. 902).

When rendered as contiguity, a/r/tographic inquiry explores the space where one idea, object, or location touches another. This bordering space is where meanings get displaced, and there is movement between art and graphy, image and word, visual and textual, and between text and individuals. Contiguity references the distinct roles of artist/researcher/teacher to highlight spaces between them, the activities that each role brings forth, and their interrelatedness.

***Walking***

As a research technique, walking is specifically used to geographically investigate spaces, often accompanied by photography as a visual research method (Gorman & Clayton, 2005; Hartel & Thomson, 2011). My personal archive of photographs contains images from my walks around parks, in markets, and streets, and in recent COVID-19 times, the driveway circling in my apartment block. I go on walks almost every day, and photography is my response to environments, led by my impulse to record observations. The possibility of using the photos as pedagogic material inevitably emerges. Figures 1- 8 feature a recent collection of photographs of leaves of the Sacred Fig tree (*Ficus religiosa*), growing across street crevices, exterior walls, and corners of various public spaces in two neighbouring localities in Bangalore, Vasanthnagar, and Cunningham Road.



SECTION 1: SELF

Figures 1- 8: Sacred Fig tree (*Ficus religiosa*) leaves encountered as a repetitive motif, while traversing the streets of Bangalore, India in 2020. Visual encounter with streets, made possible through walking. (Image credits: Geetanjali Sachdev).



Figures 9-10: Street art painted on walls in Orissa, announcing names of wedding couples (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).



Figures 11-13: Repeating floral motif in street art, painted by street artist Somnatha Das (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).

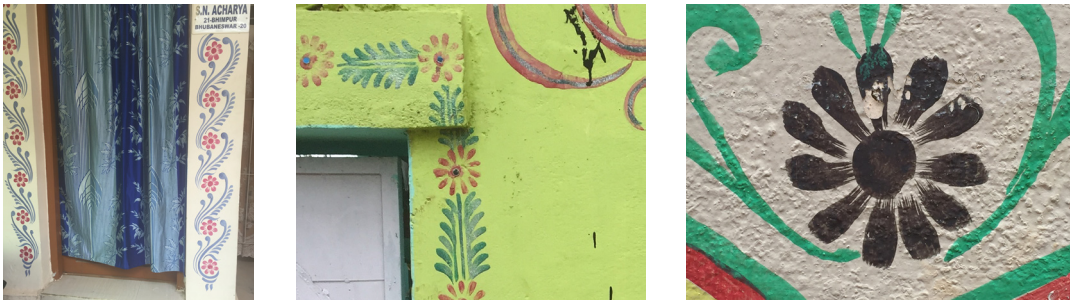


Figure 14: Artist Somnath Das's colleague showing me "tagore phool" (also called pinwheel flower) (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).



Figure 15: Poster for an exhibition in a botanical garden in Gothenburg, Sweden, introducing botanical imagery on various cultural forms (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).

PEDAGOGY WITH THE BOTANICAL

Geetanjali Sachdev

13 MAY – 10 JUNE 2018



Plants and plant representations are used across various art and design practices in India. Botanical imagery has historically been a widely used theme across a range of decorative art, folk and craft practices.

Vehicular art practices are lavish in their use of patterns employing flowers, buds, stems and leaves. Floor and wall art practices such as *Rangoli* and *Warli* use a range of plant motifs. *Torans* and *Pookalams* crafted with leaves and flowers decorate the entrances and courtyards of many homes in south India.

The significance of plants in Indian art and design lies in the fact that plants are intimately interwoven into Indian cultural and religious practices. Plants are integral to festivals, marriages, worshipping rites and daily rituals. Many flowers, leaves and trees are considered sacred, and associated with myth and tradition. They are part of the everyday life of people, and the manifestation of people's relationship with plants is visible through various forms.

The multiple modes in which plants are used as material for expression, and the art, craft and design techniques through which plants are represented are wide ranging. These modes and material operate as a public pedagogy, and tell of the plethora of art and design practices that actively engage with plants.

SECTION 1: SELF



As manifestations of my desire to capture visual encounters, photographs become trigger points for further probes when I reflect on a collection of images and repetitions within them. Pink (2020) notes that fieldwork photographs taken during activities we categorize as work, holiday, or leisure are only classifications. The images gain significance as a result of the ethnographic knowledge they offer and the meanings produced.

*Calling Forth*

An early street art pattern I began observing was in Orissa, in 2010, while on vacation in Bhubaneshwar and Puri. I kept encountering painted wedding announcements repeatedly on exterior street-facing walls (see Sachdev, 2019a) (Figures 9-10). While archiving these images, I noticed repetitions of a stylized circular floral motif (Figures 11-13).

*Tagar*

In 2016, I returned to Orissa to interview street art practitioners. In questioning them about this motif, I learnt that the Hindu Lord Jagannath, a widely worshipped deity in Orissa, wore this flower on his head, making it a popular motif among people. One street artist and his colleague took me to the real flower growing at a nearby location (Figure 14), calling it ‘tagore phool’. The name came from locals, who called the crepe jasmine flower (*tabernaemontana divaricate*) tagar. The plant is native to India and is a common flowering, ornamental, and medicinal shrub. The white petals are symbolic of purity and are hence offered in worship to Hindu deities.

This experience of learning about the tagar from street practitioners was presented as part of a series of posters at an exhibition at a botanical garden in Gothenburg in 2018, titled ‘Pedagogy with the Botanical’ (Figure 15). Accompanied by a workshop for garden visitors, the exhibition further led to a journal paper on engaging students with plants through street art.

*Did You Not Study Botany?*

While conducting interviews with street artists in Orissa, I spotted painted images of Hindu gods on what appeared as one large tree on the road. The priest present here

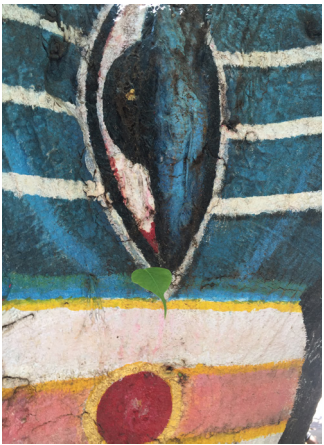
Figures 16-17: Temple shrine under the intertwined Sacred Fig and Banyan Tree. Priest praying to the Hindu God Shiva, painted on the tree trunk (Imager credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).



Figure 18-19: Paper leaf pack of die-cut outlines of leaves of Bangalore plants: Curry, Honge, Kachnar, Mango, Peepal and Temple tree, and the Aloe Vera plant. Paper leaf nestled within a sacred fig tree at a temple in Yelhanka, Bangalore, as part of an art installation by Ananya Menon titled ‘Peepal: A people’s initiative’, 2017 (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).



Figures: 20-22: Of Feet and Folded Hands (Image series, Courtesy the author). Heart-shaped peepal leaf, growing as a weed and under the third eye painted on Lord Shiva’s forehead (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).



revealed this to be two intertwined trees—banyan (*ficus benghalensis*) and sacred fig (*ficus religiosa*)—both sacred to Hindus, thereby making this location a temple shrine (Figures 16-17).

A devotee at the tree shrine, Hari Dharan, aged 70, expressed surprise that I could not distinguish between peepal and banyan. Dharan explained that anyone who had studied botany could distinguish them by their leaves, pointing me to differences in the two leaf forms and the sacred fig’s characteristic heart-shaped contour. Over the next few years, my knowledge of leaves grew through my creative and pedagogical practices. I designed corporate gifts using Indian state trees as a theme; introduced art and design students to plants by teaching them how to make wooden dyes of real tree leaves; designed a leaf-teaching kit comprising of local Bangalore trees; and led students to use die-cut paper leaves within street installations (Figures 18-19). These were all forms of public pedagogy through which my knowledge of trees manifested as different artefacts for various audiences.

*Peepal*

Spotting peepal leaves growing in unexpected areas (Figures 1-8) came after I designed the pedagogic material in Figures 18-19. Researching these surprising appearances revealed the plant’s weed properties. Native to Asia, peepal has been reported as potentially invasive to parts of Asia as well as the USA, Cuba, and the Pacific (Oviedo Prieto et al., 2012; Randall, 2017). This fact has opened possibilities to create cognitive dissonance through images within a future project—to juxtapose two contrasting ideas—the sacred fig as a divine symbol lying side by side with its avatar as an invasive and unwanted *ficus religiosa* weed (Figures 20-22).

*The Lotus Trail*

Repeating lotus motifs is another pattern that informed my pedagogic practice considerably (Figures 23-25). I first identified its use across a range of architectural and building elements—grills, gates, mouldings, and as planters in courtyards (Sachdev,

2019a) (Figure 26). Research into this widespread application revealed the flower as a potent national, political, and religious symbol<sup>i</sup>. I subsequently introduced these ideas to undergraduate and post-graduate students, drawing upon the lotus’s cultural significance within different art and design projects.

*Department of Botanical Art and Design*

Over time, after observing patterns of stylized plant representations across various indigenous and traditional art and craft practices in India, and inferring from public pedagogy theory that these art and design forms held educative potential for plant study, I decided to approach plant study for art and design students in India in ways that differed from conventional understandings of botanical art practice. I subsequently started and ran a botanical art and design department as a project for a few years, along with colleagues (Figure 27-28).

Botanical art curricula have traditionally focused on plant accuracy through drawing as its principal method of plant study. Thus, a teacher could assess the extent of a student’s understanding of plant anatomy by gauging a student’s plant drawing. However, my pedagogical project proposed that botanical understandings could be acquired through various media and through art practices other than drawing, and that these diverse ways of gaining botanical knowledge be brought into the art and design curriculum (Sachdev, 2019b). For example, in the case of rice, by making powder from rice grains and using it to draw, a student demonstrates their understanding of its material properties; by finding out and choosing a specific rice variety that is more popularly used among others, a student reveals their understanding of the availability of different rice varieties within a particular geographical context. Another example is the Holy Basil—by creating a photo-essay on aesthetically sculpted lotus-shaped pots within which this plant is grown in Hindu homes (Sachdev, 2019a), its therapeutic properties as a medicinal herb are discovered.

<sup>i</sup> The lotus is one of the most used ornamental motifs in India’s decorative arts and crafts (Bose, 1999). The aesthetic invoked by its visual form is considered to have beneficial effects on the mind and hence the flower is believed to help in concentration. In Ayurveda, it is used for its antiallergenic, anti-spasmodic, and astringent properties (Patnaik, 1999).

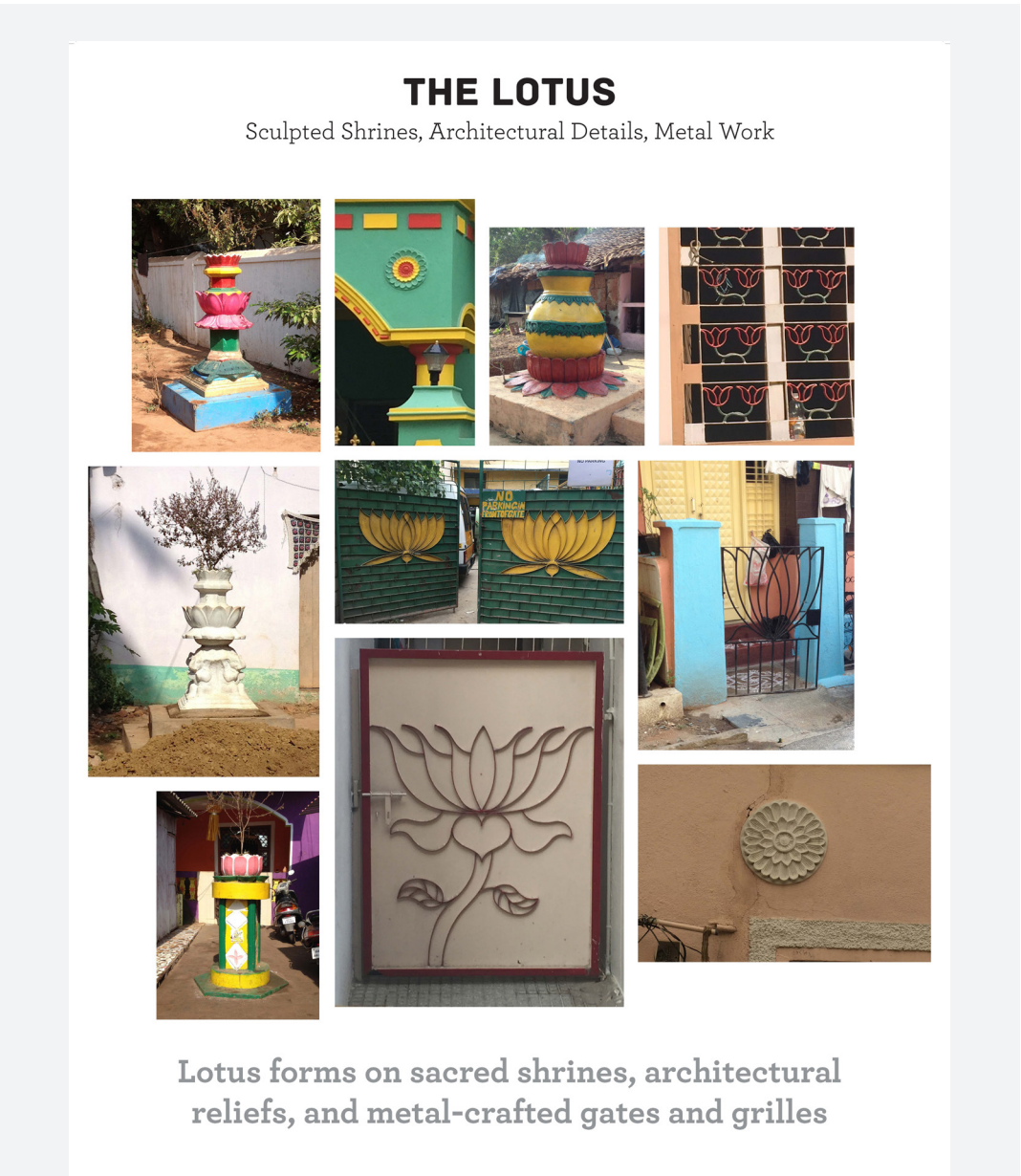


SECTION 1: SELF

Figures 23-25: Recognizing lotus-shaped planter-shrines, or Tulsi Vrindavans, while traversing the streets of Goa in 2015 (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).



Figure 26: Exhibition Poster 'Pedagogy with the Botanical', lotus motifs (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).



SECTION 1: SELF

Figure 27: Poster announcing and marketing Botanical Art and Design as an area of study at Srishti, in February 2015 (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev)

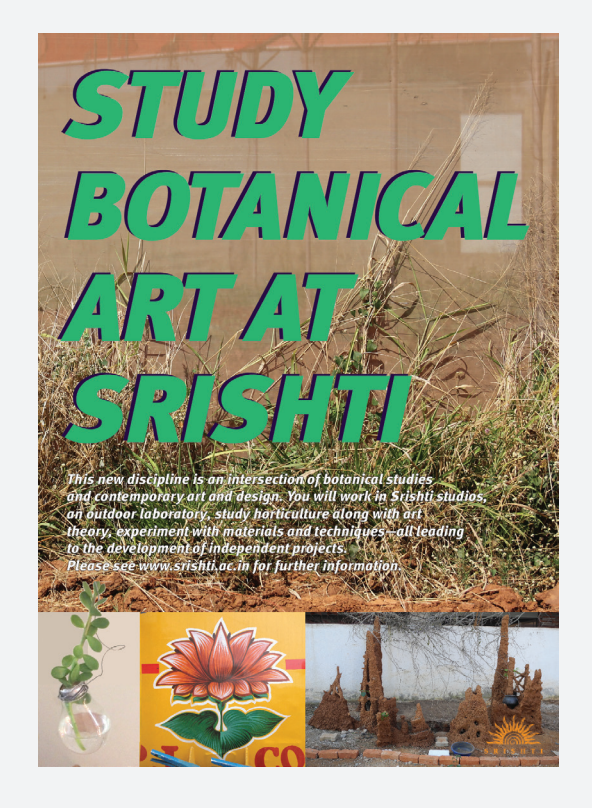


Figure 28: Poster for the Botanical Art and Design program offered at Srishti in February 2015, for the academic years 2015-2017 (Image credit: Geetanjali Sachdev).



The posters and flyers (Figures 15, 26-28) were designed to communicate an idea of botanical art that was not linked to accurate plant portrayals. The lotus motif distinctive of truck art style painting in the Indian cultural context (Figures 15, 27), the lotus grilles and sacred planters (Figure 26), hands crafting jasmine petal garlands (Figure 27), street wall painting stating ‘Pinaki weds Neha’ decorated with floral motifs (Figure 27)—images not conventionally associated with botanical art practice were intentionally placed with the word ‘botanical’ present. Posters and flyers were vehicles through which I positioned an idea of what the botanical could entail in art and design—they served as forms of outputs for communicating knowledge to provoke reflection on what could or could not be considered forms of botanical art. Placing the poster (Figure 15) in a botanical art garden and circulating the marketing flyers via email to colleagues in educational institutions in the UK and the US—these were deliberate actions of a pedagogue provoking new framings for a cultural grounding of botanical art practice and its pedagogy.

**Analysis: Connections and Multidimensionality**

A/r/tographic methodology is built upon Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) idea of the rhizome (Irwin & Springgay, 2008), whose central feature is the making of in-between connections enabled by multiple connections and growth in all directions, with no fixed beginnings or middle points. It is in these in-between and interstitial spaces that are open, where possibilities to interrogate and rupture understandings are exposed (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xx). Carter et al. (2011) suggest that the rhizome metaphor be imagined as a series of roots connecting an artist’s creative output to that of a teacher, researcher, and writer, where fixed boundaries between these three apparently different identities fade, and instead, each identity is supported and fortified by the other two, facilitating the emergence of new directions and eruptions that would have otherwise not been realized if one had positioned oneself within a particular way of thinking or had a specific epistemological orientation. According to Springgay et al. (2005) shift, rupture, and loss—foundational concepts in conducting an a/r/tography—create openings, blow holes, displace meanings and allow for slippages (p. 898); these are “concepts of what

research should be when a relational aesthetic inquiry approach is envisioned as embodied understandings and exchanges between art and text” (p. 900).

In this research, walking and photography, compiling image archives, putting forth a new proposition for botanical art, exhibiting work, and running a department became expressions of learning about plants via my own cultural surroundings. These practices are where living inquiry and contiguity became the wider frame of methodological concepts through which my a/r/tographical works were rendered—translated through images and text, through reflections on images, and through personal everyday experiences and my professional life. Recognizing, remembering, and delving into patterns while walking was a living inquiry into my surroundings, where what I saw repeatedly influenced my identity as an artist, researcher, and teacher led me to displace, challenge, and reframe prevailing educational approaches in plant study. Discovering contiguous relationships between traditional Indian art and craft practices, botanical art and ethnobotany, prompted me to frame and run a department and offer courses adopting interdisciplinary pedagogical approaches to plant study. As an a/r/tography, my renderings were visual, textual, and performative. The observance of patterns became conditions underlying the process of aesthetic discovery and enquiry. Process is important in a/r/tography; meaning-making through living inquiry is alive and moving, knowledge is constantly evolving and emerging, and the focus is not on gaining certitude. The a/r/tographic process involves constant adaptation and seeing the world through new lenses—individuals are free to be imaginative and think in new ways (Carter et al., 2011). According to Springgay et al. (2005), it is by paying attention to one’s identity and memories, by reflection, story-telling, interpretation, and representation that teachers/artists/researchers lay bare their living practices evocatively, as “a/r/tography is a living practice; a life writing, life creating experience into the personal, political, and professional aspects of one’s life” (p. 90).

**A Tool to Walk With**

Human survival depends on our pattern recognition ability—on how we perceive our environment and our attempts to find order and make sense of it. However, as Yelavitch (2011) insightfully observes, “we demand more of existence than mere survival. When



we recognize relationships among things, we interpret what we see, and add other layers of meaning that embellish and corroborate our encounters” (para. 2). My botanical encounters while walking both as a leisure activity and as an active search for pedagogic material, triggered new meanings about culturally relevant forms of plant study through art. Recurring visual confrontations with plant imagery increased the intensity of this search. Recognizing patterns served as a tool to gain a range of understandings about various plants. The peepal, tagar, and lotus, encountered through space and time on surfaces and objects, through their reiteration, invited me to delve deeper into reasons for their repetition and uncover their socio-cultural/historical significance and botanical attributes. These encounters functioned as learning methods, operationalized through the principle of repetition. Artefacts and scenes presented themselves at different times, across different intervals, and in various locations, such as on street corners, as architectural elements in the built environment, and on different surfaces. It is their recurrence that drove my curiosity to learn more. Their temporal or spatial reiteration thereby contributed to their public pedagogy (Sachdev, 2019a).

*Spaced Arrangement*

Spaced recognition refers to the timing or arrangement of content, of what is reviewed and its learning effects. Reviewing content is more effective when information is spaced out over time, versus being grouped together and collectively being encountered. A spaced practice can enhance memory and aid recognition (Kang, 2016). Spaced repetition is also the underlying principle of flashcards where new and difficult information to be learnt is shown more frequently, while easier and old information is displayed less. Spaced recognition increases the rate of learning (Smolen et al., 2016).

In this research, spaced recognition of plants occurred via their organic arrangement across surfaces and locations, and it is only through walking that spaced timing was possible to experience. Walking ensured that these plants got ‘re-viewed,’ again and again across spaces traversed. Re-viewing them over different periods of time made me recognize the same plant across different locations, from Bangalore to Orissa, among other Indian cities I visited. I initially saw the sacred fig used as a temple shrine,

and then recognized it again as a weed growing across street nooks and crannies. I first became repeatedly aware of the lotus painted on the backs of water tankers and then acknowledged its wide presence while encountering it in the built environment. This kind of spaced rhythmic encounter with the plants over time could only occur through walking. Re-viewing them increased my curiosity about them, drawing them further into my repertoire of material informing my creative practice.

*Consciously Designing for Encounters with Repetition*

Pedagogical operations of the streetscape can be invoked through attention to its repetition. Artist Aparna Caur (cited in Milford-Lutzker, 1999, p. 29) refers to a visual mantra where images and symbols get empowered because of their repetition. However, images that present themselves repeatedly not only increase in their effect and potency as they recur, but they also provide the opportunity to engage with repetition as effective pedagogy. They are opportunities to revisit ideas circulating on the street, generating a sense of cohesion as we walk, visiting the same motif again and again, against the backdrop of a changing and transient streetscape.

**Conclusion**

This a/r/tographic living inquiry investigated the theme of repetitions within patterns on streets as a learning strategy, through visual and textual interpretations of a pedestrian’s experience. As a pedagogical process and product, compilations of visual work kindled a desire to teach about plants through the lenses of public pedagogy and investigate the experience of receiving plant knowledge through my own cultural surroundings, informed by my identity as an artist, researcher, and teacher. Images, posters, and exhibits were aesthetically framed responses towards a living inquiry into an environment where I walked—through which I elucidated my position as a pedagogue.

A/r/tographic research offers methods to inquire into educational phenomena through artistic and aesthetic means, extending ideas about education, where renderings are created in relation to each other through aesthetic inquiry (Springgay et al., 2005). This research has demonstrated how an a/r/tographic research extended educational ideas by using pattern recognition as a conceptual tool with repetitions as a foundational principle.



Kyra Pollitt<sup>ii</sup> (2013) describes how she tested whether art practice could lend new insight to theoretical consideration by exploring narrative interviewing techniques through her course. Her narrative interviewing practices as a teacher emerged from her work as a therapeutic counsellor. In her course, she asked students to use her own personally-devised note-taking method, one that she used during her professional counselling sessions where she worked by identifying key topics that emerged during a particular session, and then noting along a timeline, the contexts and regularity with which the speaker returned to these topics.

The plants that I saw repeatedly in different and unexpected contexts inspired my curiosity to return to these spaces. Rather than a rote learning tool, repetition—enabled by walking—became the key device that prompted me to notice my surroundings. In a manner similar to Pollitt's, my walking sessions become what I refer to as narrative interviews of space, a method of note-taking of space via photography. Objects and situations that emerge in my awareness during a walk are first identified, and then varying contexts and regularities with which a space presents these recurring themes are noted. Lucius Burckhardt, urban economist and planner, cited Vrachliotis (2012), astutely noting in the context of Alexander's pattern language that the division of the environment can offer the impulse for design, alluding to our sense of agency being linked to the ways we divide up, or frame the world.

I have introduced the conscious use of the pattern recognition technique to several cohorts of art and design students over the years. One of the first exercises students embark upon is intended to sensitize them to a range of contexts stemming from their own interests and to identify patterns that they are curious about that push them to delve deeper into their own cultural surroundings. In doing so, I hope to have offered them a method to gain insights into their motivations as to what alerts them to act, engage with, and intervene.

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ii Blogging as Nana Frou Frou: <http://www.kyrapollitt.com/art/index.html>

*Being-Interwoven-with-the-Context and A/r/tography's Inbetween-ness*

An essential condition for understanding a concept of meaning or beauty founded on design patterns is the 'being-interwoven-with-the-context' or a structured contextualization (Burckhardt, year, as cited in Vrachliotis 2012, p. 35). In the context of urban planning and architecture, he refers to it as a design principle that generates meaning and asserts that this being interwoven is what turns the term 'pattern' into Alexander's notion of 'design pattern' is its ability to produce the cohesive force of meaning<sup>iii</sup>.

Within a/r/tography, the potential of in-betweenness is foregrounded for its potential for disruption, with the underlying value being the generative potential of rupture. Irwin and Springgay (2008) refer to Elizabeth Grosz (2001) in referencing and emphasizing the open and in-between spaces within rhizomatic connections: "The space of the in-between is the locus for social, cultural and natural transformations: it is not simply a convenient space for movements and realignments but in fact the only place – the place around identities, between identities" (p. xx). A/r/tography is located within this in-between- an area and process by which our perceptions and knowing through living inquiry get intentionally unsettled and disturbed. It is "...where meanings reside in the simultaneous use of language, images, materials, situations, space and time...[and create] the circumstances that produce knowledge and understanding through artistic and educational inquiry-laden processes (Irwin & Springgay, 2008 p. xix & xxvi).

Noticing patterns allows us to become interwoven with contexts, providing a structure to the environments encountered. Founded on our own curiosities, they drive our motivation to generate meaning. In order to make sense of what we find, we can discover our basis for struggle and challenge. It is in the repetitions I discovered through which in-between spaces emerged, where new thoughts collided for ideas to emerge.

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iii Before his notion of a 'pattern language' became famous, interestingly enough, Alexander used the term 'pattern' in " The Pattern of Streets (1966)", Journal of the AIP, Vol.32, No. 5. Sept 1966, pp. 273-278.

Hearing Visual Mantras

Davies and Parrinder (2009) theorize the pedestrian’s experience of the street is similar to the designer’s experience of process in design, lending itself to a particular ‘designerly way of knowing’ (referring to Nigle Cross, 1982). Critiquing the idea of design as a problem-solving activity and its accompanying social responsibility agenda to save the world, they recast design instead as a process of asking relevant questions about our world, and of examining their value. They offer this as a ‘designerly’ way of asking questions. An alternative to the problem-solving designer lies in the voyeur—the pedestrian in Michel de Certeau’s (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*, who walks the street without any preconceived notions, opening the self up to possibility and chance. Davies and Parrinder (2009) evoke an analogy between street experiences and the design process– both involve receptivity to the unexpected.

This paper ends by proposing that experiences of walking the street invite us to be open to encountering the unexpected and offers itself to a ‘pedagogic way of knowing’ that draws upon our pattern recognition abilities and is based in rhythmic encounters. It calls forth our capacity to recognize patterns as a research tool for creative pedagogic practice, allowing the potency of reiterations to be received by us, and to affect us, as their valency increases. Pattern recognition permits us to hear the visual mantras of spaces—what echoes, what holds meaning, and what we are motivated to attend to among diversity and chaos, which will fertilise our creative work. When being pedagogical is an inherent disposition for a creative practitioner, finding new patterns is being alive to new connections and to new ways of seeing, unafraid of rupture.

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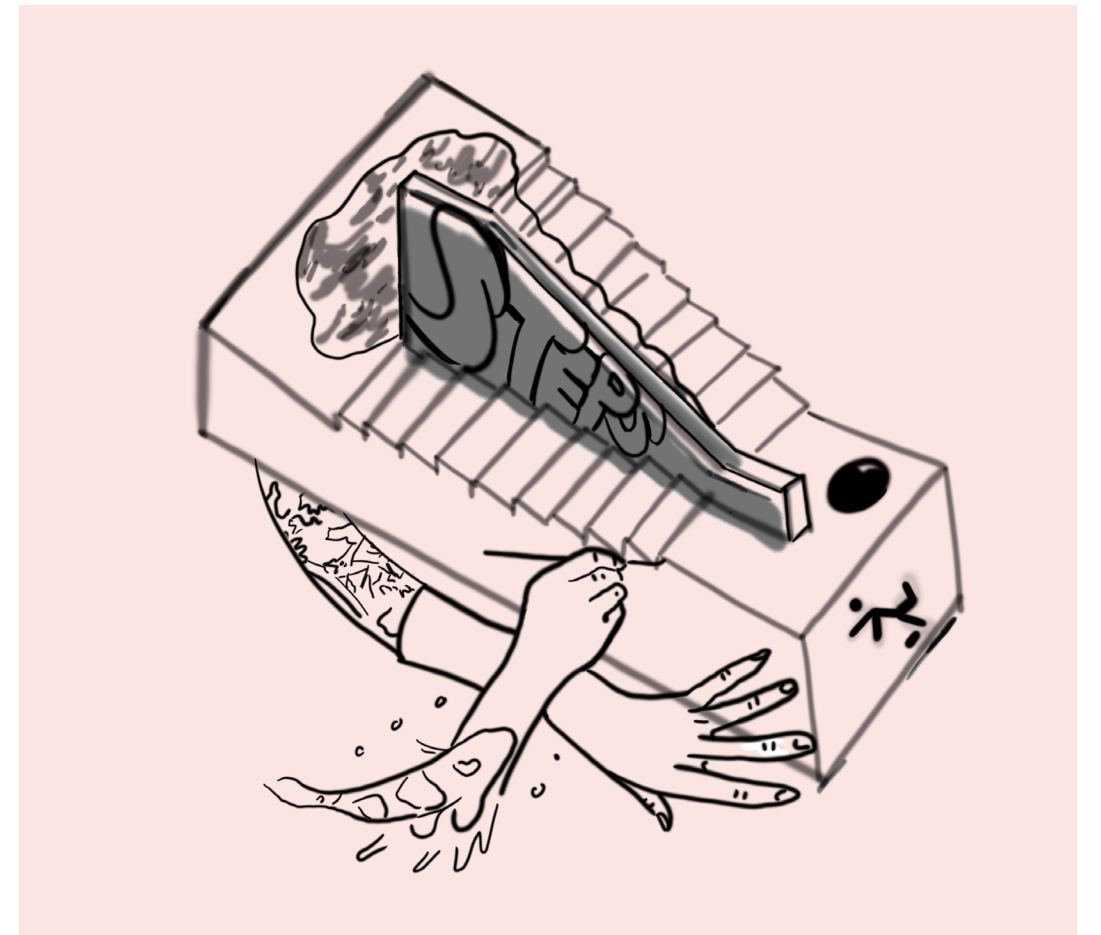
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## SECTION 2

# Steps

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Steps

Introduction by Zohreh Valiary Eskandary

The concept of Steps unfolds as an exploration in the following three chapters that collectively weave a narrative on the transformative power inherent in the act of taking steps, both metaphorically and literally. The first chapter, "The City-Text Metaphor," sets the stage through a metaphorical comparison between city walks and reading a text. Drawing from Roger Chartier's insights, the authors view the city as a literary work, encouraging creative interpretations of urban spaces. The chapter introduces the city as a subject and explores the urban walker as an active reader. Within the a/r/tographic methodology, the article navigates the creative process of the artist, teacher, and investigator, that involve different tools to visually represent and interpret the urban space. The second paper, "Walking Without Arriving," extends the exploration into the realm of pedagogy within a/r/tography research. Morimoto proposes the suspension of arrival as a methodological approach, drawing inspiration from the meandering Shinano River and the practice of slow scholarship. The concept of arriving with/out arriving becomes a commitment to potential, a continuous engagement with the unknown, and a form of slow scholarship that allows for a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in the research process. The last chapter of this section enriches the discussion by focusing on time, liminal spaces, and the entanglements of identity. The authors invite readers to engage with steps as a process of research-creation, an active pedagogy of self, and a means to be present in various dimensions simultaneously. Together, we navigate the winding paths of personal and professional growth, acknowledging the challenges, celebrations, and the impact of intentional steps on our individual and collective narratives. Steps, thus beckon us to embrace the ongoing dance of transformation, where each stride contributes to shaping our understanding of self, others, and the world around us.



From Figure 4: *Photo frame*  
17.0. Sample series composed  
of four gif video photo frames  
*City Chaos* proposed by  
Yaneth Plazas Miranda, 2018,  
(Image credit: Edward Jimeno  
Guerrero Chinome).

# URBAN PALIMPSEST: READINGS, WALKING AND IMAGES OF THE CITY. AN A/R/TOGRAPHIC PROPOSAL TO INVESTIGATE THE CITY

Edward Jimeno, Guerrero Chinome,  
& Rafaèle Genet Verney

## Introduction: The *City-Text* Metaphor

Everyday experiences and urban walks of city inhabitants are invisible actions that are amply presented in the urban panorama. Understanding a city and constructing a perspective on it are complex tasks with respect to both creative practice and artistic education. On a metaphorical/conceptual level, we could say that walking through the city could resemble reading a text. The investigation will begin with the exercise of editorial design to demonstrate everyday urban experiences, where texts, images and charts are ordered to produce an object book.

To this purpose, *Studies on Written, Literal and Historical Culture* by the French historian Roger Chartier (2006) is referenced. In its historiographic analysis of the object book, three agents are considered: the text, the reader and the practice of reading. These elements are conceptually transferred to actors that intervene in the public space: the city, the passerby and the urban walk.

The text, understood to be a combination of language codes, is replaced by the concept of the city. The city as a text becomes a system that allows the passerby to weave his or her own meaning and interpretation of the urban space. Reading the city cannot be limited to architectural constructions or elements of the urban landscape. The city is more of a subject than material, as explained by Mauricio Tenorio (2004) in his book *The Urbanist*. Moving around the city is not just going from one place to another; it is living within it and making its existence possible. The city is a literary work that incorporates fragments of everyday life wandering through the streets at specific times and places for each passerby. These fragments have an aesthetic substance that can be represented through artistic images and thus reveal the presence of these urban displacements.

The reader is understood as the urban passerby who displaces himself or herself around the city. Just as a reader encounters a text, so does an urban passerby encounter a city. In this relationship, the reader-passerby maintains constant communication with the *text-city* and establishes an active dialogue by setting his or her own journeys (Silva, 1992). The encounters with the *text-city* allow for the urban image to be tested in an unanticipated way and also to be found without having been lost (Buck-Morris cited in Brea, 2005, p. 154). The interpretation derived from this encounter converts the reader



into a powerful interpreter, composing a narrative substance laden with social and cultural elements in constant interaction.

Finally, the urban walk is understood like the practice of reading. Through this practice, the passerby reads the *text-city*, defining a unique city discourse. The urban displacements are like a type of negotiation between the reader and the text, using images as the channel of interchange, elements that trigger the combination of the smooth (routine) and the fluted (thinking, accidents) in the city space (Deleuze & Guattari, 2002). There are diverse forms of everyday practice, such as urban walks, bicycle journeys, bus trips, and the like. Reading the city generates urban perspectives derived from the interpretation of present images of displacements in the public space. Through these experiences, this investigation hopes to create an *object-book*: a palimpsest that gathers distinct readings of the city.

**Trace, Composition, Perspective: A Creative Process**

In the a/r/tographic methodology, the practices of the artist, teacher, and investigator are simultaneously researched. The educational experiences in this project are as follows: everyday actions are taken for analysis in the classroom, investigative analysis within the arts is favored, and creative experimentation is proposed. A/r/tography as a methodology is understood as a life practice, and consequently, the practice of developed investigation in pedagogic spaces is not oblivious to the artist's creative experiences (Irwin, 2013). This approach is similar to the method guiding this investigation which uses the creative editorial process as a point of reference to teach about the city from the sphere of artistic education. Editorial design is thus established as a creative discipline, as the field of action for this investigation, and is orientated with artistic education.

The use of a/r/tography as a methodology within the urban context allows for one to pay attention to the extraordinary experience of everyday experiences as the subject of investigation. It pedagogically opens spaces for the creation of stories and installations, promoting flexible interconnected networks among participants in an experimental way. Aesthetic relationships are also discovered, where time and space are inseparable and where present analyzed actions contain fragments of the past and

future, invoking memory. A/r/tographic methodology can modulate political, social and cultural elements as triggers for artistic creation. A/r/tography makes use of dynamic processes that mix the material nature of learning with the aesthetic nature of creation and investigation. These processes make it possible to connect vital (life) experiences with images and text, offering an ample margin of understanding that can encompass the concrete abstraction of these experiences. The parallel lines of a/r/tography that indicate the separation of its components (art, investigation, and teaching) are the boundaries where the pure potential of knowledge is located, where extraordinary acts of creativity and sensibility become necessary and possible (Triggs et al., 2010).

Using this methodology and in agreement with the metaphor established between elements of both the city and text, the scenarios of investigation through creation are explored, proposing a strategy to generate new knowledge based on the construction of artistic devices (Ballesteros & Beltrán, 2018). This investigation employs the rigorous creative process of editorial design, proposing three flexible stages of creation; a) tracing, b) composition, and c) perspective. Reading is established as an analyzable phenomenon, questioned and reflected upon, on which visual investigation is used to find an artistic representation.

The first stage in the process is to identify oneself with the name of the 'Trace.' It is characterized as the registered space of the found material on the contemporary urban drifts, where triggers are found that form key ideas in the investigation about the reader-passerby, the practice of *reading-urban-walk*, and *text-city*.

The second stage in the investigative process is 'Composition' and corresponds to the analysis of the gathered documentation in a series of images, consolidating feelings and experiences. The elements are classified, selected and edited after questioning.

'Perspective' is the third part of the process. It is the space for the generation of creative devices and artistic interpretation. In this phase of reading the city, urban representations based on everyday displacements are suggested, and distinct possibilities are discussed in order to understand occurrences based on visual elements.

Figure1: Construction of meaning: Urban Walk. Visual Map, 2019 (Image credit: Edward Jimeno Guerrero Chinome).

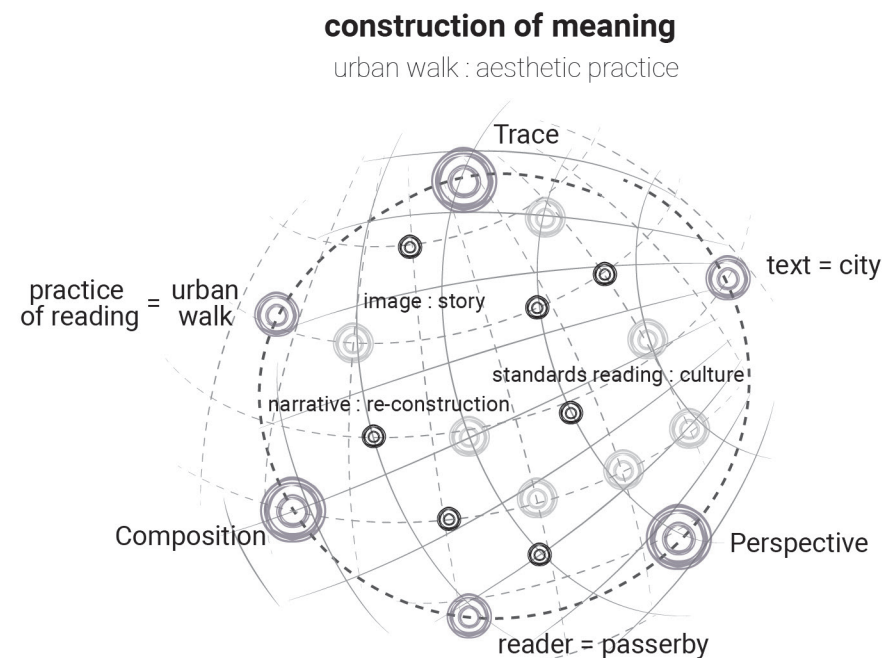


Figure 1 demonstrates how ‘Trace, Composition, and Perspective’ are three elements of a rigorous creative process that maintains rhizomatic attributes (Deleuze & Guattari, 2002), allowing elements from different stages of work to be linked. This creative/processual metaphor allows us to relate different aesthetic experiences that take place in the urban space from different fractions of time; these temporalities can refer to moments of memory, imagination, or the active practice of urban displacement and are connected in a rhizomatic way to understand the city. The ensuing educational experiences follow this train of thought. These show the possibility of understanding an image of the urban space from displacement in the public space. Different instruments are utilized to strengthen the investigation and the creation of the artistic experience; these can be easily applied in other pedagogic environments.

### A/r/tographic Experiences

#### Story-Image

The image becomes a powerful tool for investigating/teaching about the experience of the aesthetic. “There is always an image that teaches, even in a momentary abstraction of thought or action arising from one’s embodied experience” (Triggs & Irwin, 2019, p. 2).

The *story-image* emerged from everyday actions in resonance with the urban image. The passerby experiences this relationship, sending us aesthetic factors whose time between the lived moment and the narrated moment resides on a sociocultural axis.

The *story-image* acquires shape through the diction of subjective elements, which enrich the narrative action concerning the urban event. “Through reading, the series of occurrences are recombined in the memory of the reader to stay ordered as a sequence that has consequences” (Pimentel, 2000, p. 11). Therefore, in the *story-image*, the passerby creates consciousness by acting in the urban space through speaking.

The readings of the *text-city* have a metaphorical character; they are made based on other readings, and their similarities are quite flexible. The *story-image* is the instrument used to communicate the experience of finding the urban image based on a key occurrence that captures the attention of the passerby. The reading connects elements in nonlinear time, showing changing thoughts, transformations and alterations from the urban walks.

The *story-image* characterized by linear narration or nonlinear occurrences refers to the figure of the hypertext, understood as the capacity to share, add, and connect information through non-sequential structures and displace them to different contents (Scolari, 2008). In this way, the *story-image* is a hypertextual structure that moves us closer to the aesthetic experience of the passerby in the urban environment. The *text-city* is presented to the reader as the space where links are established nonlinearly, connecting different levels in one’s memory.

As an example, we can see the following *story-image* that derives from an aesthetic experience lived by the passerby/researcher in the middle of the urban space. The *story-image 22\_11\_2012* (Figure 2), is characterized by the accidental encounter of the reader with a visual phenomenon. The numbers in the title refer to the day in which the event occurred: the encounter of a foreign passerby with a ‘mobile bakery,’ something that is quite common on the streets of Toluca, Mexico. The visual narration describes the commercial dynamic of the event observed by the bystander reader. The investigator made a visual transcription as a typographic illustration, where the sum of the characters graphically identifies the verbal nature of urban grammar. The proposal by itself shows a possible *graphic-narrative-artistic* interpretation, representing an approximation to the

mental space of the city. Thus, the *story-image* enables the possibility of making sense of the unexpected and/or fortuitousness of the urban socio-cultural dynamic.

The construction of images from everyday actions recognizes the potential of the instants lived during the urban experience. As a visual result, it corresponds with the role of the image and its responsibility in pedagogical environments by a/r/tographically engaging in teaching and learning at the same time from an aesthetic/artistic action (Triggs & Irwin, 2019).

*Conversation-Image*

In this investigation, we also use the *story-image* as a methodological instrument. Based on conversations carried out on the internet, a series of typographic illustrations were created. The software allowing for the cyber chat was the medium for the interchange of electronic messages. In this exercise, the questions, responses and commentaries travel at imperceptible rates, allowing for coincidental encounters, putting a new communication concept, “a succession of misunderstandings” (Greimas in Scolari, 2008, p. 24) into play, with the possibility of generating new interpretations.

The visual proposal (Figure 3) reflects the vision of the urban reader without considering the specific geographic space where he or she is. The investigator tells an imaginary occurrence about the place of the interlocutor. Each conversation contains phrases with some orthographic discrepancies, demonstrating the everyday nature of electronic writing and alluding to the unique interpretative character of the reader in support of the appropriation of public spaces. This appropriation is complemented by the name and date, which are graphically highlighted elements of the proposal.

This exercise accentuates the concept of ‘negotiation’ by Chartier (2006), between narration, conversation, typography, graphic lines, feelings and the practice of reading, visual elements, everyday nature, images, memory, and the like, revealing different layers of reading that constitute the artistic creation of a *text-city* and defining a form of thought. In the following visual constructions that maintain the instrument of the *conversation-image* as their origin, some urban passers-by located in different cities around the world participated, and they voluntarily built the visual representation

of the urban experience with the researcher. This sample is part of a total of 7 visual constructions generated in 2014. The instrument continues to be replicated in other academic exercises, proposing the construction of new visual devices based on conversations that students have with people outside the classroom about the conception of urban spaces, daily routines, and/or visual events, among others.

*City-Gif*

Both the *Story-Image* and the *Conversation-Image* were instruments presented to the students in the elective class, *Animation and Audiovisual Composition for New Means of Communication* in the University Corporation Unitec, Bogotá D.C., with the objective of stimulating a proximity to reading the urban space. The word “laboratory,” “a space equipped with the necessary means to undergo investigations, experiments, and work of scientific or technological nature” (RAE, 2019, n.p.), describes the experience, an open stage favoring the encounter of different forms of thinking and constructing images. These encounters were materialized in a collaborative space between the teacher and the students, where they could think, discuss, and sculpt the image in movement.

The class, as a laboratory of artistic creation, maintains an arts-based investigative focus, where knowledge originates from plastic practice and its posterior reflection, clearly demonstrating and divulging investigative conclusions and/or results to an audience (members of the group). In this way, the creative process gains importance as a genuine method of thought and a free creative space, attributed to characteristics and styles of the *investigator-creator* while discussing new forms of thinking and doing (Ballesteros & Beltrán, 2018). This posture validates the developed processes in the laboratory/classroom as a subject for investigation by the creative disciplines.

Thus, the *City-Gif* project is constructed around urban thought and its representation through images. Like as in a workshop, the attributes of the city connected to the aesthetic experience and living in the everyday space are tackled. Throughout the entire process, the students were encouraged to undergo conscious urban walks, in which visual communication proposals of their interpretations of the transited spaces were established. The walks were associated to the way we think, discover, write and re-write the city.







In this practice, the *gif* instrument was used to visually represent displacements in the public space. Animated elements in *gif* format favor communication of visual narratives due to the flexible movement of images, with the help of shape and color. The students argued about the identifying characteristics of animated images, exploring questions like the sequentiality of the image or *buckle*, a cyclical representation of an event (Manovich, 2005). The students appropriated the *gif* as a visual tool for graphic narration of the everyday urban experience.

Creative acts are based on experimental exercises with animated images: stop motion, cut-out, and cinematography, emphasizing concepts related to the city. These were accompanied by narrative exercises. The final device was the execution of an animated *gif* whilst walking through the city (Figure 4), defining some very precise characteristics of photography and video. The conceptual content should link the concept of city space to the displacement experience through the public space. Some exercises were published on social networks, allowing for the extension of these proposals outside the classroom.

*Artistic Object City-Mental City*

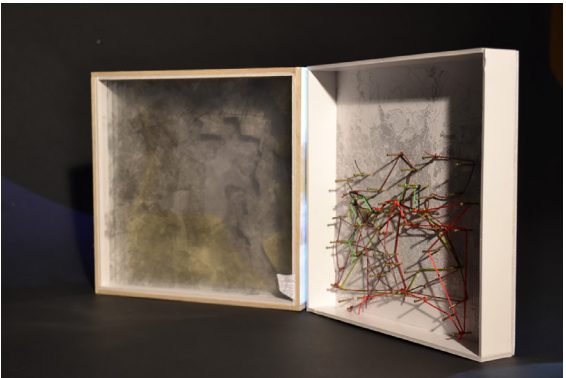
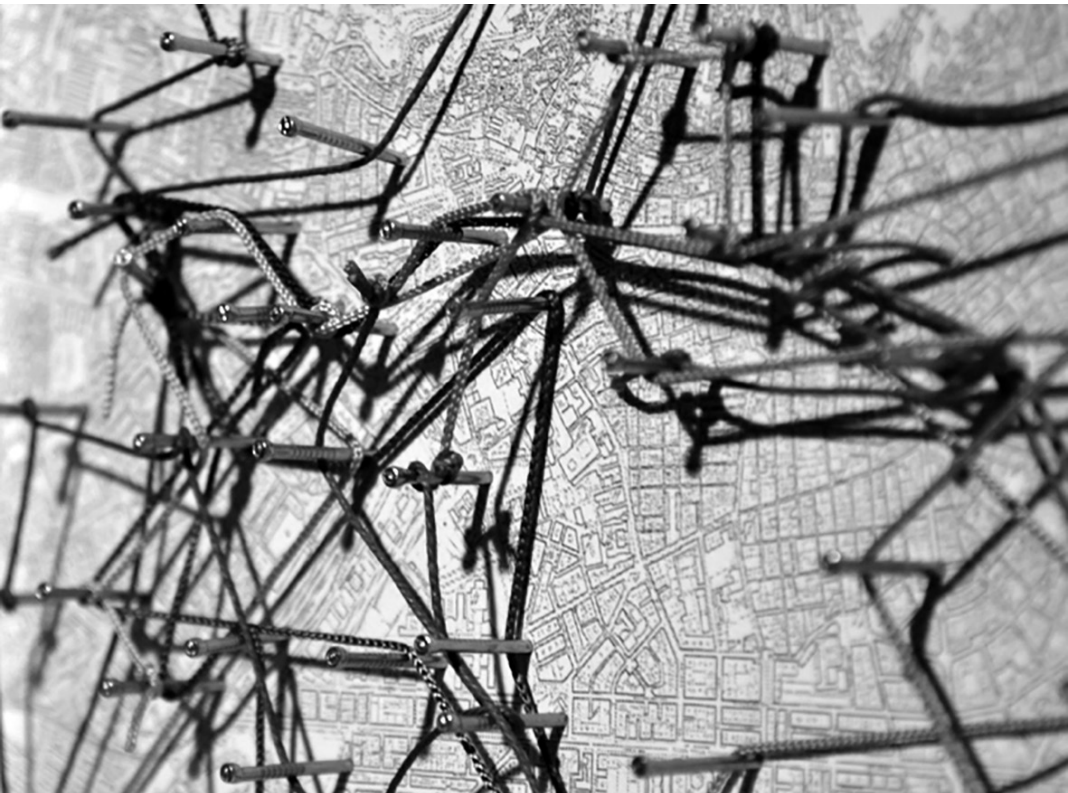
In this experience, the displacement through the urban space is epitomized in the *investigation-creation* mechanism and synthesizes in an artistic way the research *Urban Routes, keys to re-construct the city* (Guerrero, 2014), where the relations of the image in the urban space, the visual accidents, the systems of artistic thought, the editorial process as a creative process and the interpretations of the reading of the city are investigated. In the development of the research, the book as a concept was interpreted as a place of knowledge. In this way, the traditional concept of books as objective elements consisting of sheets of paper was supplanted and gave way to an artistic interpretation with a palimpsest structure; a city space was represented through an open box of four sides, two internal and two external. Using this perception, here we present a book of 178 pages, where each action undertaken in the process is identified as one of the pages of a traditional editorial piece.

The artistic installation is composed of subject matter taken by students reading the city, in the *Didactics of Plastic Arts* class at the University of Granada. They were urban

Figure 4: Photo frame 17.0. (2018) Sample series composed of four gif video photo frames *City Chaos* proposed by Yaneth Plazas Miranda, 2018, (Image credit: Edward Jimeno Guerrero Chinome).



Figure 5: *City space*, Visual essay composed of two photographs of the project, *The City, A Mental Space*, 2014 (Image credit: Edward Jimeno Guerrero Chinome).



passersby in the city of Granada, Spain or citizens of other cities who participated virtually. The experience was reconstructed by the investigator/educator/artist in an a/r/tographic way, establishing a link between the readings and the objective construction of the proposal.

One of the internal faces of the object contains a physical cartographic exercise compiled from a series of paper maps of the city of Granada, Spain, where the students extracted the part of the city they knew. They selected ten maps with holes, randomly placing them one on top of another. The arrangement allowed for the reconstruction of the cartographic piece of the unknown city with different layers of text.

Meanwhile, ten people who were unfamiliar with the city of Granada were summoned to do an imaginary exercise in this geographic space. Each student was sent an electronic message of a photo of the map used by the other students, accompanied by a list of ten actual places in the city. They were asked to trace imaginary routes and make short textual narrations of their proposals. With these tracings, the other internal face of the box was created, a virtual cartographic exercise composed of colorful threads, identifying each of the indicated paths.

In another phase of the process, the investigator physically walked by the places given by the participants in the virtual exercise. In these places, the urban passersby were asked to visually register Granada with a photographic camera, reconstructing the urban space from the point of view of another. This experience was registered in a textual narration entitled *Page 160* (Guerrero, 2017, p. 110). With the photographs obtained, panoramic images of the spaces were made using *visual media* (Marín & Roldan, 2014) as a composition instrument, a technique that allows for the superposition of images constituting a visual intersection.

A layer of images in the movement was added to the exercise; the investigator registered a sequence of videos in real-time of five points in the city, using blurred images as a graphic style to open interpretation to the observer by creating a palimpsest. Both the panoramic compositions and the video register were projected onto two external faces of the artistic installation. Finally, the closing page of the book identifies the artistic proposal's moment of exhibition. The book was displayed on a pedestal and presented layers of text about an unknown city, both real and imaginary.

The installation entitled *The City, A Mental Space* (2014), brings together reading the urban space from different viewpoints. Its representation makes use of the image, narrative, and plastic exercise. On the other hand, it also indicates the possibility of constructing knowledge through investigation, pedagogic exercises, and creative-artistic practices.

**Conclusions: City–Palimpsest**

This investigative project establishes grammar for interpreting the *text-city*, just as it investigates and proposes instruments and methods favoring comprehension, analysis, and representation through the practice of reading the urban walk. The visual results become Palimpsest devices with hyper-textual structures, an accumulation of readings and visual and aesthetic information that connects memory, subjective experience and daily practices, which maintain remnants of previous readings made in non-linear times and spaces, activating the re-construction of urban space. In the middle of the process, editorial design as a discipline provides tools for the construction of the visual material. On the other hand, the investigation generated some key points that the reading of the *text-city* continues to analyze using artistic creation, investigation, and teaching.

Key N.º 1: The image is a knowledge construct. In the city, some events affect the passersby's routes and occur accidentally within everyday routines. Each of these alterations that emerge in everyday actions can be understood with images. When an image is referred to as an event, it is possible to speak of it amply, taking it beyond the mere visual, relating it to the experience, and converting it into a link between concepts and reality in order to fix an aesthetic urban posture. Thus, the image becomes the possibility of establishing a dialogue with the city. Strategies like those of Kevin Lynch (2008) with his concept of paths, edges, neighborhoods, nodes, and boundary markers to categorize the urban image are established as methodologies to investigate the city. In this analysis, we try to categorize the image through moments (accidents), registers (captures), and hypertexts (stories), constituting units of memory and placing the image as a regulator of the urban walk experience.



Key N.º 2: The city is a mental space. The reconstruction of the city concept allows for the configuration of a perspective from multiple viewpoints. In this case, meaning is formed from a constructed network because of the presence of the image in the urban experience. The substance of this construction is so abstract that structures of perception and thought of the passerby are indicated, allowing for the placement of oneself in the environment and the generation of meaning with the space (Agusti, 2005). Therefore, individual relationships of the passerby based on his or her city experience contribute to the production of the contemporary city's collective space, characterized by social, political, and aesthetic tensions, according to Lefebvre (Martínez, 2015). Thus, to speak of the city as a mental space is to understand a unit of rhizomatic meaning with an undefined center, where the elements of the urban experience connect in different times and places like a complex network of thought.

Key N.º 3: The urban walk is a way to interpret the city. Tracings like those of the plaque *Val Camonica - Bedolina*, or the community itineraries of *Warlpiri* – Australia by Aboriginal societies (Careri, 2003), reflect the intention of thinking about everyday transitions and relating them to the visual image. On the other hand, practices like *Deriva* by the Situationists or *Transurbancia* by Franceso Careri (2003) account for the intention of considering methods to think about and teach the city, where the passerby comes closer to cultural interchanges and finds visual phenomena from everyday exercises. The urban walk is an instrument that allows the passerby to find meaning in the text-city, keeping peculiarities that occur in the public space in mind. The individual perspective of the transited space is determined by a complex network of connections constructed by the passerby, deconstructing and reconstructing through his or her displacement, understood as an aesthetic experience based on occurrences.

The displayed a/r/tographic proposals are understood as evidence to link rigorous processes of *investigation-creation* and, in this case, to establish the possibility of thinking about the city and materializing experiences of the urban walk-through images. The city joins memory, visual occurrences and the urban experience. The experimentation and analysis of these topics in artistic teaching support the research of visual representation instruments, the discussion of current social issues, and the possibility of proposing new ways to do and think.

Experiences such as those worked from social networks in *Conversations-Image* or artistic devices such as the *Mental-City*, are powerful tools that enhance in the classroom the creative capacity and the solution of problems through visual artistic practices. Proof of this are experiences such as the *Gif-City*, where in addition to urban thinking and the conscious notion of displacement, they make students reflect on the importance of aesthetics in everyday life. The results generated in these scenarios provide the artistic teacher with the possibility of creating new visual devices, as well as broadening the instruments for the investigative and creative practice from the arts. Finally, we can say that Tracing, Composition and Perspective are ways of thinking about the categorization of the creative process in order to support the investigation, creation and teaching of artistic education.

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With a group of colleagues, I set out on a walk toward the station in Nagaoka. Although the weather was clear on the day itself, signs of the heavy autumn rainfall could be seen in the damp, windswept leaves and fallen branches. Although it is still within the season for the autumn foliage, much of it has already fallen off the leaves. While conversing with a colleague atop a bridge spanning the Shinano River, a proposition came to me. Could one walk without arriving?

after autumn rain,  
swirl making dance of the  
Shinano River  
*akisame ya / nagare uzumaku / Shinanogawa*

Introduction

The ability to move without pre-determined mode or destination is one of the potential merits of walking as a method of research. Out of this openness, Irwin & Lasczik Cutcher (2018) extend a proposition to “walk without knowing where you are going” (p. xix) in the opening of *The Flaneur and Education Research*. Pursuing a/r/tographic research from unknowing creates the freedom to discover and come to know things that may not receive attention in more directed studies. In embodying a kind of scholarship that explores pedagogical concepts and experiences through artistic practice that ungrounds prefixed conclusions and enables different ways of knowing, the “methods, manner and means of a/r/tography are themselves in constant movement” (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2018, p.132). In this chapter, I extend the proposition of starting with unknowing to the suspension of arrival in its entirety to consider a/r/tographically the moment of arrival and its deferral as a pedagogical proposition.

Among a/r/tographic research, propositions have been employed to establish enabling constraints in lines of inquiry to allow “the research to emerge through a series of negotiations” (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019, p.10) and be present to aspects of being and presence through engagement with practice (Lee et al., 2019). As a research methodology that emphasizes practice as a “process of emergence that embraces ‘becoming’” (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019, p.13), taking up propositions in a/r/tography creates generative breaks



From Figure 5: *Untitled*,  
digital photograph,  
2020 (Photo credit:  
Ken Morimoto).

WALKING  
WITHOUT  
ARRIVING

Ken Morimoto



along the path of practice and experience that enable “artistic spaces to pause, to feel, to think differently, to engage with visual and textual ideas in new ways” (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2018, p. xix). As such, the aim of walking with propositions is not to achieve an outcome set by the proposition but to “loiter” (p. xix) and immerse oneself in the process by using the propositions as “lures for feeling” (Whitehead, 1978, p. 25). Likewise, with the proposition to walk without arriving, the purpose of the proposition is not to literally walk without arriving, but to find what may come to be known by playing with the concept of coming to arrive through engaging with this proposition.

### Suspending Arrival

Proposing to walk without a predetermined destination leaves space for the eventuality of arriving somewhere. In the instance of coming to know, the knowing becomes the point of arrival regardless of whether such destination is intended or not. One may suggest that this movement from unknowing to knowing is what is sought for through this method. The proposition constrains the impetus of the walk to openness by proposing to forgo a fixed arrival in favor of coming to an arrival that emerges in the process of attending to the walk. A/r/tography, as an “event of coming to new understandings” emphasizes “the stance or the disposition that is required for embracing the unknown and for allowing the process to unfold” (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019, p.14).

The proposition to walk without arriving attempts to suspend the moment of arrival entirely. Arrival can come in many forms. As a reaching for a prefixed destination, arrival is getting there. As an arrival at an unplanned location, it is getting somewhere. As opposed to the first proposition, walking without arriving focuses on opening the outcome and leaves the possibility of beginning with a fixed destination insofar as it is never reached or becomes the point of arrival. By not identifying a destination of arrival in the phrasing of the proposition, the terms of arrival are open to interpretation. Thus, critically engaging the proposition provokes questions about the nature of arrival, what it means to come to something or someplace, and the method of its deferral.

As a walking proposition, the proposition is not completely open. Several enabling constraints are built in within the phrasing of the proposition such that the proposition functions to guide and limit the practice and contemplation that transpires

Figure 1: *Untitled*, digital photograph, 2020 (Photo credit: Ken Morimoto).





in relation to it. For example, the constraint of resisting an open-ended arrival, at potentially any place provokes a study of each moment as a possible moment of arrival which must then be unfixed. Walking also grounds the proposition to movement so that arrival cannot be suspended through stasis. Working with these enabling constraints, the proposition may lead to an arrival without arriving that comes to a way of knowing in-between the coming to and moment of arrival “beyond the dichotomies of process and product” (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin p. 132).

Rivers and Propositions

There is something rather romantic and liberating about the notion of walking as a form of research. The implication of walking as method is that any space that is hospitable to movement, whether it be physical or conceptual, may open itself as a potential site of research. A trip, a stroll, an exploration, a commute, there are many ways that a walk may occur. The possibility that, at any moment, any walk may become research is an exciting proposition that invites the consideration of many seemingly mundane experiences. The walk across a bridge over the Shinano River, where I began to contemplate the possibility of walking without ever arriving as a proposition, is one such walk. For as much as engaging in practices that resist predetermined outcomes in art education is encouraged, all practice gets somewhere. What, then, is hoped for in the potentiality of practice when everything inevitably actualizes as something?

Pondering how the proposition to walk without arriving might be taken up, I look over the bridge down at the river flowing below. The water is a cloudy greenish grey from carrying sediments that have been washed in by rain upriver. As it flows downstream, invisible geographic features of the riverbed make the current draw numerous swirls that slowly spiral across the surface of the water. For a while, I observe the seemingly looping cascade of the eddies that enter my frame of vision and how they emulate forms of suspending kinds of arrival. The eddies are visual manifestations of ongoing negotiations of water and earth. The water forms swirls in response to obstacles that redirect the propensity of liquids to move in a straight line from the highest to lowest possible point of elevation. Insofar as the body of water being described is a river, the obstacles are redirecting forces and not a stoppage that completely restricts movement like in the

Figure 2: *Untitled*, digital photograph, 2020 (Photo credit: Ken Morimoto).



Figure 3: *Untitled*, digital photograph, 2020 (Photo credit: Ken Morimoto).



case of standing bodies of water where the liquid mostly remains in one place because it has relatively nowhere else to go. The redirecting movement creates the turbulence necessary for the eddies to form. As a kind of naturally existing enabling constraint, these underwater objects cause the flowing current to “loiter” and move differently (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2018, p. xix).

The objects that redirect the flow of the river are not static. The description of this interaction as a negotiation between water and earth is employed not only to mirror the emergent negotiations that underpin a/r/tographic research (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019, p.10) but also to remark on the negotiations of movement and position that goes on between the river and the environment around it. Though not quite as fast as the current, the riverbed is also shifting in response to the force of the river, moving, giving way to the river at one place, accumulating into a bank that redirects the river in another. These negotiations manifest in the short term as eddies and, in a more protracted sense, cause the topographic meandering of rivers that elongate the path of the river. The faster the river moves toward its destination, the longer it takes to arrive.

The physics behind the interaction of rivers with their environment, leading to the formation of eddies and the meandering path of the river, share similarities with the way propositions are conceptualized and practiced in a/r/tography. Propositions, like the objects at the bottom of rivers that provoke the appearance of eddies, redirect the tendency to frame experience against a linear understanding of causality that begin with solved expectations that lead to fixed outcomes. Propositions function as redirecting forces that enable recognition of “the exceptional that is always everywhere but outside the narrow groove in which we live and think and do” (St. Pierre, 2016, p. 7). Propositions in a/r/tography, too, are moving in close response to the circumstances in which it is engaged. They shift in relation to the subjects, the space, time, memory, theory, context, desire, and other variables such that even when phrased in the same way, propositions can provoke different responses and shift into other propositions. As Truman and Springgay (2016) suggest, “Propositions follow propositions follow propositions. But not in any linear or causal way. Although propositions follow, this following is not pre-planned or determined” (p. 260). The proposition to walk without arriving also emerged during the process of another proposition to walk to the station without following a predetermined path. The latter proposition, in turn, was provoked by a presentation on the a/r/tographic use of walking propositions. Including the proposition to walk without arriving, several propositions emerged both individually and collectively while walking to the proposition of following an undetermined path to the station.

### Slowing Down a River

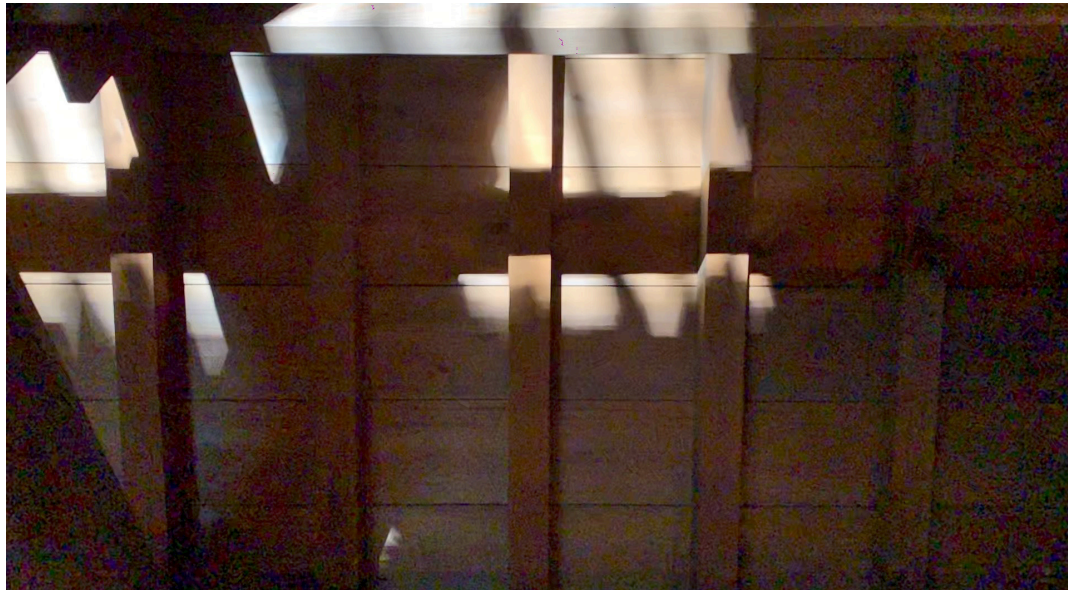
Despite all the spiraling and meandering, eventually, rivers arrive, connecting to the sea, another river, or another body of water. Alongside the proposition to walk without arriving, I wonder about ways that the journey of the river might be further delayed. After a while, I settle with taking a slow-motion video of the river flowing below. In making a slow-motion video, as opposed to photographing a still image, I visually preserve the actual movement of the water. By slowing the moving image to a near standstill, visual movement is brought as close to non-movement, delaying the speed at which the flow of the river approaches arrival as much as possible while maintaining a semblance of movement.

When looking at the whole image, the flowing movement of the current is barely discernible. On a closer examination of the individual disruptions on the surface of the water, very slight movements like the formation and dissolution of eddies become apparent. Looking at the entire screen, the image seems to be in stasis while focusing on certain aspects make motion perceptible at the expense of losing sight of the edges where the flow ends. Creating a visual play of being in-between movement and non-movement, the moment of arrival is suspended, encouraging a perceptual loop of switching between gazing at the seemingly unmoving whole and focusing on the identifiable moving particulars. A sense of arriving as a passing of a certain duration of time or a marked moment is also elongated in slowing the video down, wherein the experience of a matter of seconds is transformed into minutes, adding to the tactile layers in which the sensation of arriving is disrupted.

From there, I make videos of other things in slow-motion, beginning with other bodies of water and extending to other objects like clouds and the play of light on a wall. In so doing, I am also deferring the arrival of my engagement with the proposition in the form of completion. Every time I take a new slow-motion video as a part of the play with the proposition, the process continues. The expansion of subject matter also indicates a resistance against arriving at a fixed method, prioritizing experimental play in relation to a malleable proposition over the formalization of this practice as a fixed method. In one instance, I take a slow-motion video of clouds slowly moving across the sky. In comparing the slowed-down movement of clouds along with the flowing river, I come to appreciate



Figure 4: *Untitled*, digital photograph, 2020 (Photo credit: Ken Morimoto).



the things that are constantly in motion that go forgotten or unnoticed. Each instance becomes a way to think differently by seeing differently. In video format, the suspension of arrival can only be rendered imperfectly. Videos have a beginning and an end. When one gets to the end of a video, no matter how long it takes, one gets to the end. Perhaps one way of working around this finality is to create a looping video in such a way that the ending movements play into the beginning. However, even that would be an illusory perpetuity. Assuming that the video will most likely be stopped at some point, even if the work itself is an unending loop, that break would mark an arrival. Even if the video could be looped continuously, there are also other arrivals to be considered, such as the consummation experiences and loss of attention. Although conceptually possible, there are many difficulties that prevent the deferral of arrival in practice.

At least in this instance, what holds primacy is not the fulfillment of withholding arrival. Instead, engaging in an endeavor to stop arrival creates a moment of slow scholarship. Lasczik Cutcher and Irwin (2018) suggest of slow scholarship that “deep attention affords us greater resilience to weather the distractions, and indeed allows for further attentiveness in the midst of our busy lives” (p. 145). Slowing movement and playing in an elongated sense of time in responding to the proposition to walk without arriving created a space to linger and think through creative practice, the nature of arrival as a concept, and one’s being as in motion (Ellsworth, 2004) in relation to it.

Figure 5: *Untitled*, digital photograph, 2020 (Photo credit: Ken Morimoto).



### Arriving With/out Arriving

In walking along the proposition to walk without arrival using slow-motion videos, I now understand ‘arriving’ as ‘arriving with/out arriving.’ An arriving with and without arrival denotes a way of arriving is not a moment when a destination is reached, but as being in the process of moving toward arrival. If one is now arriving, they have not yet arrived. And once one arrives, they are then positioned toward another arrival. As propositions follow propositions, arrival can follow arrival.

To understand arriving as predicated by movement as opposed to the cessation of movement itself is not to dismiss the finality of the moment of arrival. Arriving is only possible in the imminence of arrival. Although walking propositions may privilege meandering, wandering, and being lost, it is not solely for the sake of being lost itself. But in becoming lost, or acknowledging where unknowing exists, the possibility to move toward knowing emerges. Wandering to wonder, the a/r/tographical event of arriving through a walk toward arrival is a “commitment to potential” that is “beyond the dichotomies of process and product” (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2018, p. 132). A river does not meander to meander but does so in the material negotiations of desires that manifest in the form of eddies and curving banks that eventually join another body of water.

Walking without arriving entails the desire to forgo an intentional arrival and the reality of arriving somewhere. As rivers eventually flow somewhere, walkers and researchers will also eventually get somewhere. Although where and how they end up may be unexpected or yet to be known, there will be a time when that unfamiliar becomes familiar. The proposition to walk without arriving engages a fool’s errand as the evasion of the moment of arrival becomes more difficult, revealing that one’s freedom to come and go is constrained by existential conditions that make events happen for and upon the walker. Being lost is itself not the end of walking without direction, but a means to find and be found in the experience of walking between the rhythm of starting and ceasing movement.

Lasczik Cutcher and Irwin (2018) incorporate visual propositions in walking research as a form of slow scholarship that intervenes against the stress of the everyday that impeded their “creativity and without realizing it, we neglect our creative engagement with the world” (p. 135). Similarly, walking to arrive with/out arriving creates a conceptual space to find becoming as situated in between a complex dialectic of potential and actuality that are also, in turn, shifting and becoming. In moments of heightened stress, one may be compelled to rush through or freeze in the face of overwhelming expectation. Emphasizing a slow and careful engagement, walking with/out arriving along with the river turned into an opportunity to take measured breaths without rushing or stalling to allow things to emerge at their own pace, to be in a state of what St. Pierre (2016) describes as a “productive confusion of not knowing ‘what to do’” (p. 7). With such a state in mind, one might come to know what to do through doing, and through doing one might come to understand such knowing as also permeable depending on the ongoing who, why, when, where, and what.

Even the Shinano River, despite being the longest river in Japan, eventually empties into the sea. A meteorologist might here observe that the path of water has not thus ended. After the water reaches the sea along the river, it returns along the clouds to the same and other mountaintops to begin the downward journey once more. Arriving with/out arriving as one finds themselves arriving on a proposition to walk without arrival.

My colleagues and I continue to walk in the direction of the station in Nagaoka while finding and experimenting with other propositions as they emerge. A colleague

points to the rust-coloured pavement. The colour is a result of the geothermal water used to thaw frozen roads in the winter and reminds the group of the colder days ahead. Finally arriving at the station, another colleague and I board a train headed to Tokyo, another arrival that will be followed by many more meanderings and eventual arrivals. as maple leaves fall,

walk to the arrival

of winter’s path

*momiji chiri / kuru fuyu gotoku / ikou kana*

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Excerpt From Figure 1: *Sensory Inquiry and Being in the Moment*  
(Image credit: Alisha White).

# WALKING THE IN BETWEEN: CONVENING TIME AND SPACE FOR OUR ENTANGLED SELVES

Sunshine R. Sullivan, Alisha M. White,  
Nicole Damico, and Candance Doerr-Stevens

## Introduction

The teaching profession has long been known to be a career that is both rewarding and demanding. When demands outweigh resources, however, teachers often perceive stress that can be damaging to workplace satisfaction. Unchecked, this stress can lead to workplace fatigue, burnout, and even departure from the profession (Guin, 2004; Kraft & Papay, 2014; Learning Policy Institute, 2018; Pressley, 2021). While the sources of these demands are multidimensional, often combining societal, structural and psychological forces, teacher educators are called upon to help teachers navigate and address these demands. Arts-based methods of inquiry and instruction have been shown to promote resilience and well-being among educators (Mackenzie, 2010; McCay & Gibbs, 2020; Sappa & Barabasch, 2020). Building on these findings, we explore arts-based methods to address the daily demands in which teachers and teacher educators walk.

## Who We Are and What We Did

Our Art Inquiry Group gathers as four teacher educators in English Education and Literacy programs who share, discuss, and expand our arts-based practices and pedagogies. Residing in different locations (Florida, Illinois, New York, and Wisconsin), we meet virtually, taking turns leading artistic processes and discussions<sup>i</sup>. Meeting each other through NCTE-ELATE, we committed to remaining connected throughout the year in between conferences. Throughout our first two years, our Art Inquiry Group metaphorically walked alongside one another in a way that expanded upon the traditional notions of a professional community of practice. We practiced multimodal inquiry, used visual journals (La Jevic & Springgay, 2008), nurtured our own creative artistic identities, shifted our awareness of the aesthetic in everyday life, and explored the varied streams and roots within our own humanity. This space cultivated opportunities for us to experiment with different media and artistic techniques and reflect on our individual journeys and shared paths. We value and view our time together as living inquiry (Leggo

<sup>i</sup> We usually meet one to two times a month for one to two hours on zoom. We also have a shared Google Drive folder where we each have our individual working folders as well as a Check-In Calendar where we record gathering notes and hyperlink resources and our own creative work.



& Irwin, 2014; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005), dedicating time and space to create, play, explore, read, reflect, and learn. As teacher educators we make space to support one another’s creative ventures and spiritual practices (Irwin, 2006; Wilson, 2004). While we began our gatherings with various creative and artistic interests and backgrounds, we used theoretical and pedagogical readings and artistic prompts to express the shifting meanings of our personal and professional lives and a/r/tographical identities (Irwin, 2004; Leggo & Irwin, 2014). We embraced a/r/tography (Irwin, 2013) as a method of inquiry to examine the entanglements of our multiple and simultaneous identities (Rust, 2016) as well as the unflattening of our academic and disciplinary mindsets (Sousanis, 2015).

As we embarked on our third year of inquiry, a public health emergency upended our daily practices and routines, further blurring the lines between private and public, artist, researcher, teacher, and parent. Intrigued by these new ‘in-betweens,’ we sought to incorporate both ambulatory and mapping practices into our a/r/tographic inquiries. Walking as a method affords opportunities to “think-in-movement” (Springgay & Trumann, 2018, p.130) alongside mindful “bodymind connection to the world” (Honeyford, 2015, p. 216). Such mindsets are paramount during a time when social worlds are limited to the walls of our singular homes and the four sides of a video conferencing screen. Walking invites us to step away from the screen and out of the private to engage with public placemaking. Mapping provides a disciplined method for visual ethnography (Pink, 2008) of these playful routes and mobilities in order to create places and practices within our new remote working realities.

In this project, we challenged ourselves to reconsider our relationships with walking, to explore walking methodologies and how they might help us process the new realities of living and teaching. We observed, questioned, and reflected on the purposes for walking in our daily lives, and how the circumstances of the pandemic shifted those intentions. We threaded, shredded, braided, and knotted our thoughts on walking through shared readings, individual walks with our initial propositions, taking photographs, mapping, recording audio and videos, and writing-- both individually and as a community.

We used similar prompts and developed collective frameworks in which we worked, at the same time our learning and expressions of that learning continued to

reflect who we are as individuals. We made verbal and written observations of the content, composition, and themes that we noticed across our materials. We considered these conversations to be walking with each other using images and words to walk through our explorations together. We were informed by the work of Lee, Morimoto, Mosavarzadeh, and Irwin (2019), who conceptualize walking as including “virtual and conceptual movement” (p. 682). We shared our walking experiences, showing the materials collected on the way to bring the others on the walk with us. We noted our differences and similarities in the images, techniques, and themes of our walks and reflections in and on those walks shared. Image content we had in common included landscapes and locations of our walks in nature and neighborhoods, such as the experience of being present in the moment and connecting with nature, our families, and communities. Our differences uncovered challenges where we invited ourselves and one another to consider and reconsider our individual boundaries and rhythms.

Theorizing Our Walks

*Walking*

Walking as an active form of inquiry spans a variety of approaches and modalities. Springgay and Truman (2017), frame walking methodologies as “research-creation, which draws attention to the conjunctive at work in its process. Instead of perpetuating an idea of art as separate from thinking, the hyphenation of research creation engenders ‘concepts in-the-making’” (p. 2). What becomes highlighted in this process is the act of inquiry, an “active pedagogy of self” (Irwin, 2006) rather than finite action. Lee, et al. (2019) describe these types of explorations as “lures for being present” (p. 683) and they share three propositions that informed our study: “being present to possibility” (p. 684), “being present in-between place and relationality” (p. 685), and “being present to interiority” (p. 687). Walking invited us to be present in this process, with our sensations, thoughts, and surroundings. In their book on critical walking methodologies, Springgay and Truman (2018) identify four main themes in their review of walking research: place, sensory inquiry, embodiment, and rhythm. These themes became a guidepost for our intention setting during our work together, inviting us to explore our experiences with land and geos, affect, transmaterial, and movement (Springgay & Truman, 2018). Each of

us experienced this self-discovery in different ways by employing walking methodologies to wonder about our relationships to self, to others, to place, and to nature.

*Entanglements*

Embracing our multidimensional identities as inseparable, we draw on the conceptualization of entanglements to reposition our professional demands as generative rather than depleting. Barad (2007) claims that entanglements occur as boundaries dissolve and the entangled cannot be untangled. In turn, “individuals do not preexist their interactions; rather individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating” (p. xi). Extending this boundary meshing, Rust (2016) further explores and names the ways in which the identities of women scholars in education are often entangled. Our identities of sometimes woman, sometimes teacher, sometimes scholar and sometimes mother are only some of the dimensions of our beautifully entangled selves. Our entanglements are not fully understood when considered by themselves as individual entities that turn on and off, instead they are explored in action with each other, an aggregate of relational tensions. In this sense, ‘entanglements’ allow us to see our many roles as willful tangles that push and pull on who we are, creating multidimensional beings with diverse human experiences.

*Liminality*

Victor Turner (1967) describes liminality as “a realm of pure possibility whence novel configuration of ideas and relations may arise” (p. 97). He added that when one finds themselves in the midst of a transition, they are “neither here nor there, betwixt and between all fixed points of classification” (Turner, 1974, p. 232); they are neither what they were, nor what they will become. Bjorn Thomassen (2009) suggests that liminality is applicable to both space and time and could be experienced by single individuals, groups, societies, and maybe even whole civilizations. It’s experienced as a break from routine, a retreat from the endless tasks on the lists. It can occur in a moment, across a week, month, year, and even decades. Thomassen (2009) clarifies that liminality is not always marked by a rite or a ritual; liminality is amidst our everyday lives and can be initiated in many ways. We agree and believe that we can learn and be transformed

in this time and space. Similar to Leggo and Irwin (2014), we’ve experienced liminality through our walking, something that is also part of our everyday. Seeking the liminality amidst our everyday practices, we have individually and collectively engaged walking as a form of embodied inquiry to break routines and re-anchor understandings. This transformation continues as we reintegrate into our various communities and participate in those spaces with our multidimensional and growing selves. This project offered us opportunities to “linger in the liminal or in-between spaces of knowing and not knowing, of questioning and transforming practice” (Leggo & Irwin, 2014, p. 156).

*Curious Knots of Inquiry*

Hoping to ‘linger in the liminal,’ we present our experiences with walking as knots of inquiry and sensation. Within each knot we bring into conversation a verbal vignette and a visual snapshot from our walking. The verbal vignettes are inspired by the poetic inquiry, and poetic transcription practices used in qualitative and arts-based inquiry (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008; Cole & Knowles, 2008; Leavy, 2019). Sometimes called found poems, these creations represent research findings in ways that disrupt what it means to represent research and make spaces for prioritizing participant voices. Alongside the verbal vignettes are key images that illustrate an aspect of the walking experience. Similar to Blaikie (2009), who pairs poetry and images to represent participants’ clothing choices, we hope that this deliberate pairing of image and poetic transcription will honor the entangled sensations and multisensorial experiences of our knowing. In doing so, we attempt to hold close the liminal for ourselves and our readers.

In the knots featured below, we render key moments from our individual yet shared walking experiences. Across our four inquiries, we found that our deliberate walking practices cultivated time-space instances for us to explore the entanglements of our multidimensional selves. In other words, walking offered a liminal space to renegotiate and reconceive of the many overlapping demands of our personal and professional lives. In some cases, the walking promoted an awareness and revealing of the multiple identities and roles we hold across the many contexts of our lives. Such revealing within the moving thought of walking allowed for an embrace of the plural positionings we hold. In other cases, the ritual of walking initiated a loosening and

Figure 1: *Sensory Inquiry and Being in the Moment* (Image credit: Alisha White).

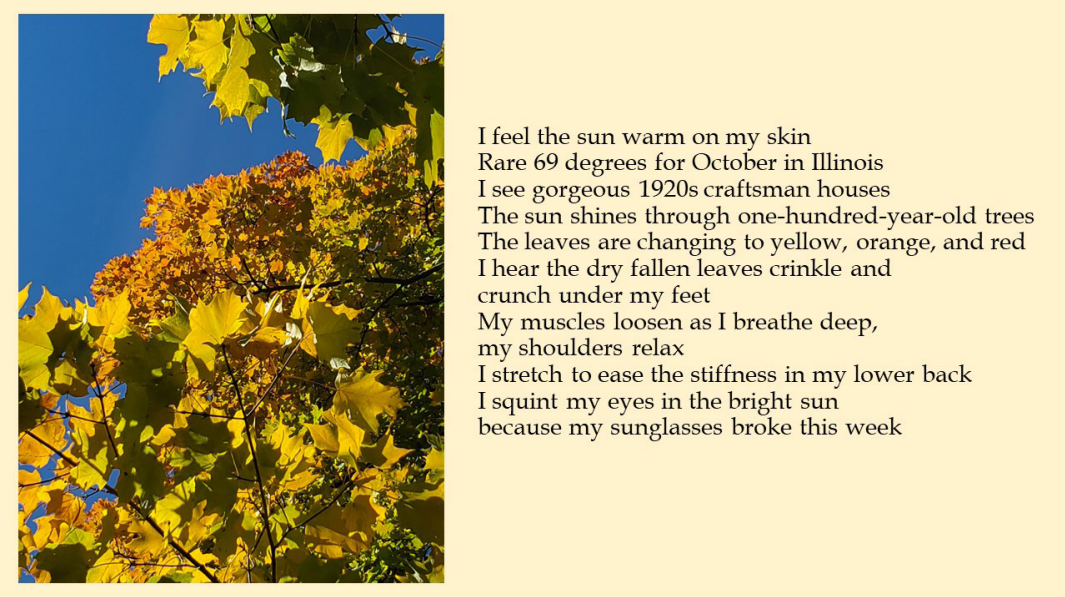
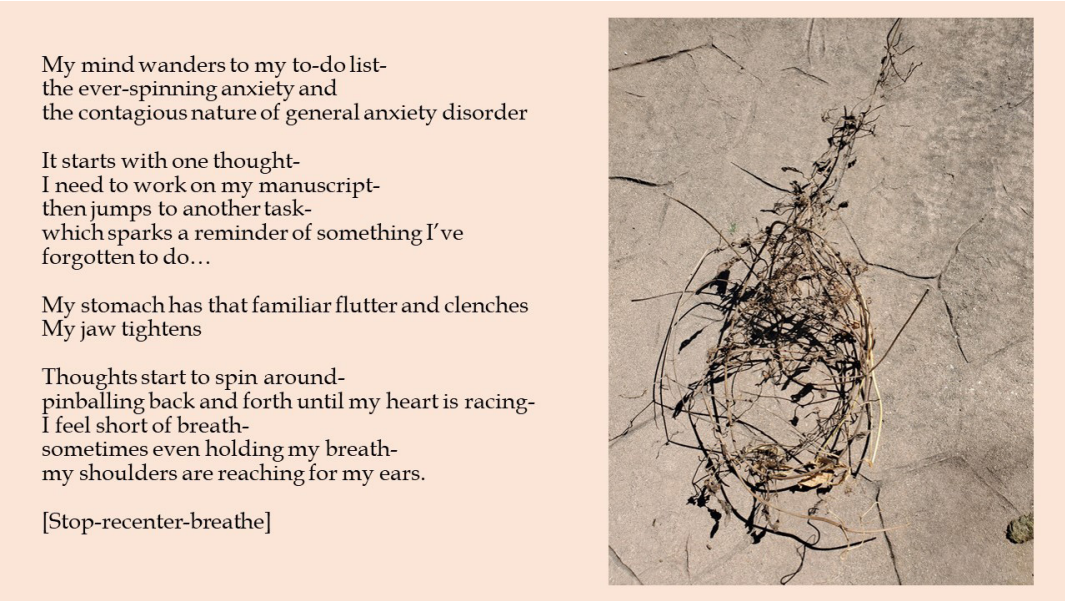


Figure 1: *Sensory Inquiry and Being in the Moment* (Image credit: Alisha White).



temporary release from the multidirectional pulls of our entangled selves, in ways that allowed a restorative reprieve and rewriting of these tensions.

Alisha’s Knotted Walking

Engaging in walking methodology became a significant part of my (Alisha) sabbatical year adventure, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic meant cancelling travel I had planned and limited access to local public spaces like the library, art center, and coffee shop. During my walks, I focused on being centered in my body, present in the moment, noticing my surroundings and internal thoughts and feelings, “being present to interiority” (Lee et al., 2019, p. 687). As is often the case for someone with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and anxiety, my thoughts swirl in and out of focus. The poetic inquiries below relate my sensory experience (Springgay & Truman, 2018), my thought process, and what I noticed about how my body reacted as anxiety took hold.

Metaphors have always helped me reflect on and talk about my experiences of multiple facets of anxiety. One facet of anxiety is a tornado spinning out of control, sucking every negative thought into the whirlwind, chaotic and destructive, keeping me up at night remembering mistakes from years ago or scripting lectures that are weeks away. Another facet is a little seed motivating, galvanizing, and inspiring. This maple tree seed is also spinning in joy, gaining momentum, and celebrating the dizziness of the dance. The trick is to recognize that the tornado and maple tree seed are both tangled parts of my experience and can be acknowledged without judgment. Like tangled branches of Queen Anne’s Lace in my poetic inquiry, anxiety and ADHD are entangled and inseparable from the rest of me.

My wandering attention aligned with an account of colleagues struggling with being present during a walking inquiry (Lee et al., 2019) noting, “these ‘pulls’ can also be framed as different ways of attending to the moment.” (p. 688). By disrupting the idea that shifting attention is negative, they offer a more forgiving practice of noticing and accepting the different ways I attend to experiences. This disruption provides an opening for accepting the directions my thoughts shift in while on walks and reframing my anxiety as an entangled knot of my identity that can exist as the tornado, seed, and dance simultaneously.



When our group discussed our need for self-care, I often commented on its importance in developing habits that support mental health. My routines and practices to balance mental health and the stressors of everyday life, such as physical exercise, guided visualizations, breathing exercises, as well as artistic practices that re-center me in myself to be present in the moment. But even so, our walking inquiry helped me notice how often I put off my routines to complete more “productive” tasks like starting laundry or grading papers. I noticed our discussions often revealed feelings of needing permission, or a disruption in priorities, to put mental and physical care ahead of productivity, at the top of an ever-present to-do list. We expressed gratitude for support from the group to attend to bodymind connections and labeled the experience after a comment by Sunshine, “listening to other voices to better hear our own.” We found that our engagement with walking methodologies helped us to “privilege an embodied way of knowing where movement connects mind, body, and environment” (Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 4). In giving ourselves permission to practice self-care, we ensure that we are also modeling healthy behaviors for our teacher education students, encouraging them to establish their own mental health routines.

Nicole’s Knotted Walking

For me (Nicole), walking in the liminal has very much been an exercise in experimenting with the questions: ‘For what purpose am I walking?’ and ‘For whom am I walking?’ When we embarked on the walking study, my intention was to carve out space to engage in mindful walking *just for me*, to embrace the “experiences found in ordinary moments of life” (Irwin, 2006, p. 75). This was not an easy feat for a mother-scholar in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a spunky two-year old in tow. The purpose of these walks took the form of helping my toddler get some fresh air and a much-needed change of scenery, with a dash of exercise for myself mixed in. I would push our stroller with determination, sometimes multitasking by listening to a podcast or audiobook, taking in small dribs and drabs of nature in the form of a glance upward once in a while. I felt disconnected with my body, with my neighborhood, and with nature, and I set out to reclaim walking that

Figure 3: *Mother-Daughter Tangles*. (Image credit: Nicole Damico).



OUR walks, not mine

embracing  
a reintegration of identities  
awakening  
the joy of shared experiences

viewing our world  
through her eyes  
noticing  
with her  
gazing  
with her  
closing my eyes  
as she rests hers  
listening as  
she cups her ears  
to the chirps of a faraway bird

Figure 4: *Willful Entanglements* (Image credit: Candance Doerr-Stevens).



In our early evening walks,  
we are shadows on the sidewalk with  
multiple, interlocking limbs,  
As we chase the disappearing sunlight,  
we build  
a new habit of walking, together, at dusk.  
In this shared effort to end the workday,  
close the laptops, and leave the house,  
we anchor ourselves in the now of each step.  
We re-entangle  
our lives, and remind ourselves that we are  
more than our childrens’ (mis)behavior,  
more than our email inboxes, and  
more than the papers graded and patients  
seen.  
We need this reunion with our bodies and  
each other to remind us that we are neither  
here nor there: we are both separate and  
conjoined.

had so much in the recent months resided in the land of mothering, teaching, and caring for others. I wondered: what might be revealed if I began walking as an act of self-care?

This walking inquiry began to transform into self-inquiry. Walking became an invitation to reconnect with the unfamiliar stranger of my postpartum body. I became mindful of my walking gait and the heaviness of my feet as I meandered through my neighborhood. I leaned into the inhalations and exhalations of my breath as I walked and wiggled my toes in my shoes. For the first time since I had given birth to my daughter nearly two years before, I noticed my body and its natural movement, the arches and round curves, the soft tufts of flesh of my belly underneath my shirt within which my daughter’s growth had been sustained. There was a new intimacy that evolved with my body, as a powerful vessel for sustaining life. I was present and grounded, both figuratively and literally, for the first time in a long while. The nature of this work allows for non-linear processes and the notion of liminality as a welcoming space (Sameshima & Irwin, 2008). This evolution invited me to reside in the liminal space of mothering and self-care, of scholarship and domestic life. The more I was able to be in tune with my own walking practices, the more they began to trickle into my walks with my daughter. I noticed that those mother-daughter walks took a different shape and became knotted in a way they hadn’t before. I was present with her, alongside her, instead of walking DESPITE her presence, as I had in the previous months.

I felt drawn toward her intentions as a way to uncover my own, pushing and pulling at the borders of my identity in ways that I had not anticipated. I began to ask myself: What would life be like if I could exist in both (all) spheres at once instead of forcing myself to view them as dualistic? If I could walk the “in-betweens” (Lee et al., 2019, p. 685) of life? How might I find joy in mindful being, mindful walking, by allowing the seemingly disparate spaces in my life to coexist? I am also attracted to the liminality within myself. The notion that I am continuously in the process of acknowledging the multiple and perhaps sometimes hidden identities (Rust, 2016) that make up my being, my be(ing) and be(coming) a mother, a teacher, a scholar, an artist, a dancer.

**Candance’s Knotted Walking**

In leaving the house and walking daily, even if for only a walk around a single city block, I (Candance) would loosen the ties of work, marriage, and motherhood that often pulled in opposing directions forming social binds and knots of confusion and self-doubt. After walking a few city blocks I am usually able to sense a warmth and energy. Similar to the ways in which Pink et al. (2010) position walking as an engagement with the environment that shapes perception, this surge in sensation restores a flow of thought and connection of ideas that help me to settle into a fresh mindset, a new home. It was my walks with my partner, Jimmy; however, that became something altogether different, a shared reality I struggle and resist to explain.

These short walks near the end of our work days were less planned, less scheduled. They were often only 20 to 30 minutes in length, a time before dinner, when the kids were done with their virtual schooling and playing one of their parent-approved video games. The walks often involved a short amble to the store to get milk, a walk along the sunny sides of the streets without a predestined route, or an aimless roam around our neighborhood to explore the different trees and plants in the nearby yards. They were, and continue to be, a time to detach oneself from the computer to assert, ‘I am done with work for the day, or for the moment, at least.’ This deliberate departure from work and our house forged a new social environment for my partner and I to be together and see each other.

Malnourished in spirit, we both needed the walking to reconnect with a sense of curiosity for ourselves, for each other, and for this life. Unknowingly, we used the walking to rewrite the rules and dynamics of interaction that governed most of our day. Through walking, we chose people over productivity. In this sense, walking was not an act to produce meaning, make something, or designate purpose—we *had done enough of that already*. Instead of being flattened and strained by the pulls to be productive workers, responsible parents, and contributing domestic partners, we could just be humans, grateful for this life, our healthy and able bodies, and this time together. In many ways, our coupled walks allowed for a relational aesthetics (Bourriaud, 1998), a creative practice to rebuild relations with each other outside of public productivity indicators for citizens, workers, and parents.



Figure 5: *Visual Journal*  
10.09.2020. (Image credit:  
Sunshine Sullivan).

10.09 Today it took me until I began walking up the country road (Gleason Hill) until my mind began to untangle itself from all of the undone tasks that await me on my computer, from my students, colleagues, and administrators. The tasks left undone at home- dinner, dishes, piles of laundry, the vacuuming...and then I heard a bird cut through the noise of the traffic- the noise of the lists. And my mind joined my body and could sense what my senses were trying to help me experience. The warmth of the sunlight, the autumn hews, the wind, the birds, and the dry and drying flowers and leaves. The rustles of those leaves and the sunlight breaking through them. And there was the caution barrel- what was it warning me about- yes the road that washes out sometimes...but today what did it make me aware of, what would it help me experience and know?

Figure 6: *Releasing is Not Failure*. (Image credit: Sunshine Sullivan).



After the sun has set.

I continue to walk  
asking why.  
Why  
did I feel  
failure for  
meandering  
as I allowed my ears  
and only the light through my closed eyelids  
to guide me?

Releasing is not failure.

The closing of my laptop continues to be a difficult overture, a rupture from the routine of work and the allure of sending one more email. I am still drawn to walking and a focus on community over commodity, and people over productivity, yet it is unclear to me how to preserve the practice in this way, how to seek liminality without scheduling it. For now, I hold close all possibilities at once in the palm of my hand, and at the ball of my foot.

Sunshine’s Knotted Walking

Walking is a portal to the liminal for me, or perhaps it is an act in and through the liminal. With every walk, I (Sunshine) return to other parts of my every day with a renewed way of seeing, listening, thinking, and being. Some walks lead me to the liminal as soon as I walk out my door, others require visual reminders or repeated calls from the birds, frogs, or the wind for me to silence and release the lists.

On days like this, my camera helps me slow down and consider what it is that I am drawn toward and what I might be able to learn from that luring image. Springgay and Truman (2018) describe this as an activation device, enabling “new ways of thinking, making, and doing” (p. 135). I record these in my digital journal for my own continued reflections and sharing with our art inquiry group. I’ve discovered that if there is a curiosity connected to an image, I am able to reflect on it longer with the picture and curiosity recorded.

Throughout these inquiries, I’ve realized that I seem to focus on the light, and at other times, I seem to focus on seeing with the light. I seem to shift between these light lenses unconsciously during a walk, moving in and out of the light, facing the light, and facing that which the light is facing, including my multidimensional self. Moving between these lenses helped sustain my walking in the liminal.

The places in which I walk are located in my ‘backyard,’ where I can either walk from my house or from my office. These paths offer liminal spaces for me to remember my wholeness as a human. Instead of residing in isolated roles of mother, partner, professor, leader and friend, I am invited to release isolating attempts and embrace my entangled self. I have slowed down and deepened my awareness that these roles can empower one another rather than tax each other. They need not, nor should not be isolated. However, my identity can only be truly multidimensional if I walk purposefully in and with these dimensions. If I walk with Sousanis’ (2015) invitation to see in new ways and imagine new ways of being, my multidimensional self can remain whole.

Equally important, I’m learning that my walking in the liminal is something I can do sometimes. I’m learning that I cannot sustain liminal walking long-term- at least not in complete isolation. As Palmer (2004) suggests, “only in community can the self exercise



Figure 7: *Releasing Allows Shifting and Sending* (Image credit: Sunshine Sullivan).



Figure 8: *Releasing Provides Nourishment* (Image credit: Sunshine Sullivan).



and fulfill its nature: giving and taking, listening and speaking, being and doing” (p. 39). Walking in and through the liminal is one way I have engaged in the work that Palmer describes as “being hospitable to the soul, in solitude and in community” (p. 49). My current liminal walking is happening here, beside our Art Inquiry Group. This space is

Figure 9: *Releasing Empowers My Standing Up* (Image credit: Sunshine Sullivan).

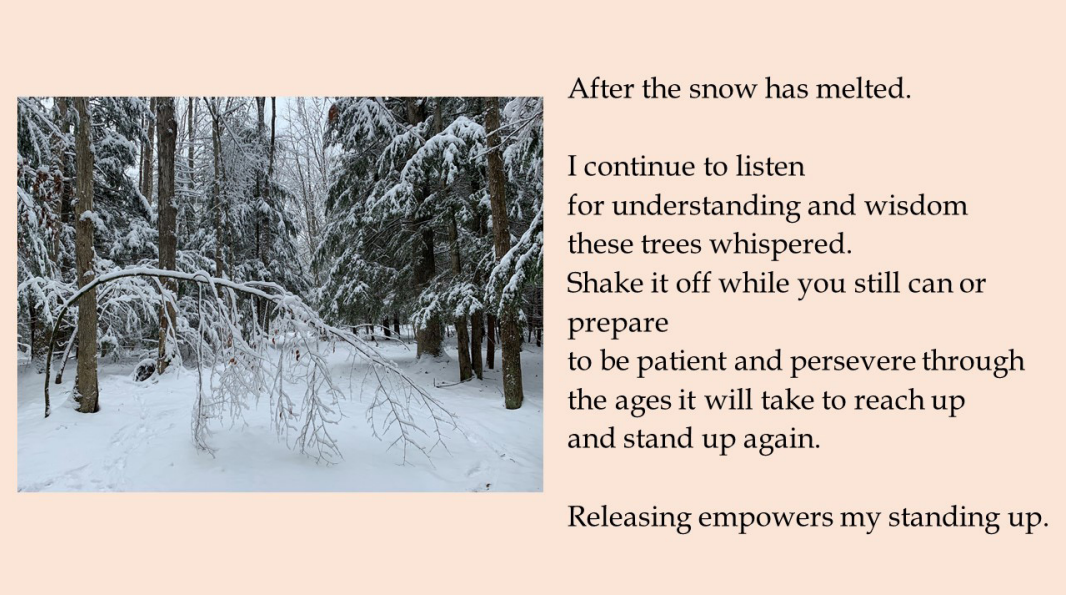
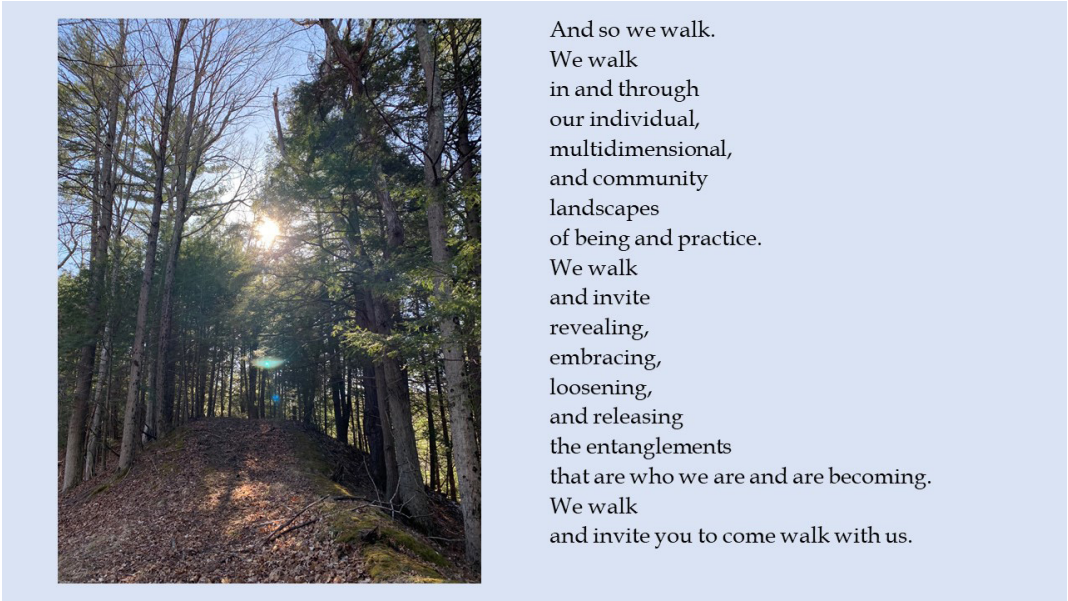


Figure 10: *A Closing Invitation.* (Image credit: Sunshine Sullivan).



new and uncharted territory with new discourses and ways of being and considerations for my presence. I am able to walk in this liminal space as an individual who is part of a community, supporting my every day and ongoing learning and stretching and strengthening work.

Conclusion

During this walking inquiry, we’ve come to embrace the idea that our multiple and ever-shifting identities will continue to flow and tangle. We continue to feel pulled in different directions by responsibilities and relationships at work and at home, often finding it difficult to take time for ourselves. Yet, though walking, we have formed a new relationship with time, one that allows us to be curious about these various tugs on our perceptions of time, energy, and attention.

In choosing to honor our entangled selves, we have re-inserted the importance of self-care and reflection in places where it was previously absent. Our art making, discussions, and written reflections have continually returned to walking as a practice of professional wellness. Rather than viewing walking as an indulgence outside of our professional duties, we position it as a necessary requirement of our mental health routines. Different kinds of walking and different purposes for walking were significant aspects of how we cared for our well-being, through movement, fresh air, shifts in mind-set, meditation, attention to nature, and deliberate time to ourselves and/or with family and friends. Exploring further Irwin’s (2006) aesthetic and spiritual pedagogy of self, walking created time and space to release ourselves from external measures of mastery, and to look inward with curiosity, wonder, and care.

Although this specific inquiry into walking may be coming to an end, our work is just beginning. As teacher shortages plague the U.S. and undergraduate enrollment in teacher education programs dwindles, addressing practices of self-care as part of one’s professional well-being is an imperative for preparing new teachers to thrive and remain in the field of education.

In turn, the walking routines we’ve incorporated into our personal practice have become inextricably linked to how we view our own teaching and how we support the teachers with whom we work. As teacher educator researchers, we’ve begun to ask new questions about the potential of walking within the professional lives of teachers. The questions pushing us forward focus on our students: 1) How will our students perceive walking and arts inquiry in the face of high-stakes assessments shaping the world of teacher effectiveness? 2) How can we support our students to uncover (identify) and

embrace (honor) their multidimensional and entangled identities in ways that can sustain them in the teaching profession? 3) And perhaps most importantly, how do we model and forge spaces for teachers to experiment and create their own personal and professional rituals and routines that will support their ongoing evolution as an individuals and members of communities of practice? These questions make visible only some of the next steps in our path. Much uncharted territory lies ahead, inviting us to stay curious and keep stepping up, out, and into the in-between.

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## SECTION 3

# Sounds

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## Sound

Introduction by Rita L. Irwin

After receiving the submissions for this book, the editors began the task of finding themes in an effort to cluster the work for readers. As visual arts educators, we often see themes of self and space, and even steps, because of increasing interest in walking research. However, sound is a sensory experience that sits on the margins of visual arts education and isn't prominent in our field. In this volume we embrace the concept of sound for its ability to take us beyond the typical or the known, and into an embodied interdisciplinary space. Sound, especially through song, interprets our thoughts and feelings, and seems to give life to another way of being in the word. Sound lifts our experience and provokes us to storytelling in lyrics, remembering the cherished and evoking the socially concerned. Walking has been embraced by many artists and philosophers over many for centuries. In each chapter in this section, walking is an essential feature to the author's artistic practice, and song is woven throughout. It is quite extraordinary to witness how singing our thoughts, perceptions, poetry, and images, brings to life other modalities, and inspires us to move our bodies and spirits in new ways. Song motivates us to act. Song conveys more than we can say to loved ones. Song inspires us to action. Integrating sounds into our work encourages a unity of form that reaches across artistic modalities, and as we see here, even across generations. These texts are excellent examples of pedagogical propositions that playfully walk with a/r/tography. We hope the chapters in this section will inspire sound based explorations in your artistic practices and in your own pedagogical practices.



Figure 1: Capilano Canyon  
(Photo credit: Peter Gouzouasis).

# A WALKING ENÌLIKOGY (FEEL THE BEAT AND YOU’LL FIND THE TRUTH)

Peter Gouzouasis

<https://youtu.be/nJXZxZDP2qc><sup>1</sup>

## Becoming with Enílikogy: A Living Inquiry

Autoethnography and autobiography have a celebrated history in arts based research and in particular, within a/r/tography. Most of my a/r/tographic inquiry has been rooted in autoethnography, and to write about ones thoughts and experiences as *artistreeacherteacher* in relation to others and the world in which we live is essential component of living inquiry.<sup>2</sup> In my artistic life, making music is the core component.<sup>3</sup> I’ve written many stories about teaching and learning, as well as my storied praxis. Most are imbued with my music and music making. As I learned to write ‘learning stories’<sup>4</sup> about the music teaching and learning experiences of children, I transformed ways of thinking about and writing learning stories and ordinary moments through creative non-fictional autoethnographies. I came to realize the reflexive power of writing, and rewriting, my self and the characters in my stories. And I reflexively make meaning based on my lifelong experiences in music teaching and learning.

However, for decades I’ve been perplexed by the use of the term ‘pedagogy’ to describe the art (or science) of teaching and learning across the lifespan. A ‘pedí’ (παιδί, in Greek) is a child. Enílikas (ενήλικας) means ‘adult.’ On the surface, the term ‘pedagogy’ seems appropriate for use in describing teaching and learning experiences of children and adolescents. Yet, the *pedagogós* (παιδαγωγός, in Greek; παιδαγωγικός is Greek for ‘pedagogical’ [note the placement of the accent]) in ancient Hellenistic societies was not a teacher—they merely led, or followed, a child to school and had nothing to do, either with learning or with teaching, the child.<sup>5</sup> As a person whose life has spanned the past six decades, I learn and teach differently as my thinking, learning, teaching and music making have evolved over the past 6 decades. And as adults (enílikas, ενήλικας in Greek), once we are shown ‘a way’ we are capable of learning to learn on our own in many ways. And we can become reflexive as we artfully story our experiences in arts teaching and learning. Thus, while it may seem disruptive to some readers of this volume and numerous papers on “walking pedagogy,” it seems reasonable to suggest that enílikogy is more apropos in describing the art of teaching and learning for adults.

While I used to sing Neil Young’s “I Am a Child” and recently discovered it in



the back pages of my repertoire, that song is only a metaphorical reply to Joni Mitchell’s “The Circle Game.”<sup>6</sup> Every song, every piece of music that I’ve played, on guitar or on the radio,<sup>7</sup> has a story about the places and processes of making it as a part of my repertoire. The notion of autoethnography as pedagogy<sup>8</sup>—herein conceptualized as *autoethnography* as *enílikogy*—is folded into notions of creative, non-fictional, autoethnographic stories that may be construed as autodidactic experiences.<sup>9</sup> This story is a call to a/r/tographers to embrace their rich, life experiences to become *enílikogical*.

*“Story is relational and reciprocal and, as such, entails moral responsibilities. As we tell stories and listen to stories, we stand in a moral relation to one another. The process itself is reciprocal, that is, I tell a story and you listen, and then you tell a story and I listen. But the notion of reciprocity extends beyond this. Reciprocity does not simply mean that we share stories back and forth, but that we have an obligation to listen and tell in ways that will sustain the dignity of one another and avoid domination.”*<sup>10</sup>

Music as inquiry, inquiry as music

*And you read your Emily Dickinson  
And I my Robert Frost  
And we note our place with book markers  
That measure what we’ve lost*<sup>11</sup>

While it seems like a lifetime ago, and pre-dates most scholarly works in a/r/tography, Karen Lee and I determined that “musicians are musicians. Their musician identities stay with them forever.”<sup>12</sup> Our interpretation of arts based research through a music essay in contrapuntal form enabled us to fuse philosophy, autoethnographic inquiry, creative non-fictional writing, notions of *artistresearchteacher*, and ideas on teaching and learning with our musical sensibilities. As dancers dance, actors act, writers write, and painters paint, musicians music. While Karen and I published in a refereed journal that dedicated a special issue to arts based research,<sup>13</sup> because it’s one of the earliest arts based publications in a refereed journal it hasn’t been widely seen or read by visual artists, poets, and newcomers to arts based research. Even at that time,

we addressed a “serious gap ... involving the roles and status”<sup>14</sup> of music in arts-based research and teacher education inquiry. The idea for that inquiry was inspired by a critique of the use of the term ‘counterpoint’ by our friend and colleague,<sup>15</sup> Carl Leggo, and spiraled into full-blown fugue—an exploration of how the form of an artform (in)forms the research and how the research (in)forms the artform<sup>16</sup> that has been a theme in most of my arts based works the past 24 years.

*“Knowing what is true ... should come from listening to as many stories as you can and deciding how to act responsibly.”*<sup>17</sup>

<https://youtu.be/zRxs0zrq3BU>

The present inquiry is inspirited by the lament for a friend. More than mere words trigger memories of playful frolics with poetry and music. So little time, wasted on academic endeavors that will long be forgotten. But the poetry and music that Carl Leggo and I performed and recorded will live on. Read and re-read, listened to, played and performed,<sup>18</sup> over and over—an enduring, infinite, *kairological*<sup>19</sup> form of living inquiry. “The nature of art, on which both the art work and the artist depend, is the setting-itself-into-work of truth,”<sup>20</sup> Karen Lee once pestered me. She was consumed for months about the truth. “This is the story of Peter. Truth. Truth. Truth.”<sup>21</sup> We searched for truth in the sand during long walks at Spanish Banks, wading into English Bay at low tide and talking about the possibilities of arts based research and music.<sup>22</sup> We did this walking because we somehow sensed, “The goal of research ... is to seek a truth, not *the truth*”<sup>23</sup> And a goal of ‘we search’ is to seek a truth through our sincere, lifelong engagement with the arts.

*“Good writing is most effective when we tell the truth about who we are and what we think .... When we tell the truth, we risk the possibility that people may not like us. But writing truthfully is the only way to discover what we know about ourselves and our world.”*<sup>24</sup>

I recall the many jazz concerts that I emceed at Grendel’s Lair, Chestnut Cabaret, Memphis, and other jazz clubs in Philadelphia in the 1980s. “Tell me the truth, brother!” people shouted at the height of a 24-chorus, torrential jazz solo on a *contrafact*<sup>25</sup> by Sonny Rollins. Sonny wailed the truth. I’ve always found truth in music—“Music is truth,

truth music.”<sup>26</sup> Nearly 25 years ago, the only thing I thought I knew for certain is what I’d been reading in too many confessional tales—John Cleese’s classic spoof, “this is my theory, and that is my theory, and that is that.”<sup>27</sup> But through that first duet exploration of arts based research that was metonymically composed as a two-part fugue, I came to an understanding—“If a work of music is coherent, whether I like it or not, it is true. It just is, and that is where epistemic and non-epistemic truths form a perfect unison. Being and becoming, untruth *and* truth.”<sup>28</sup>

*“We write and tell stories as part of a hermeneutic process of truth-seeking.”<sup>29</sup>*

While “the language of a poet” may be “heightened, exact, using rhythm not logic as its anchor,”<sup>30</sup> much of contemporary poetry lacks the rhythmic drive and sense of beat one more typically finds in most music. In contrast, much of the music I transcribe, compose, and perform is very rhythmic. Whether it’s a recurring fingerpicking pattern in “Written in the Light Heart”<sup>31</sup> or “Winter Alphabet”<sup>32</sup> or a chord melody arrangement of a jazz standard, I can think and audiate the sound of the music as I harmonize my footsteps to the music in my mind. It’s all about the beat. The steady beat is embodied in many ways, but mostly in the heart, mind, and spirit of individuals. And when like-minded individuals come together to collaborate in making art songs, a truthful exchange can emerge.

*“In all my writing, I am seeking, not Truth with a capital T, but a truthful exchange with others.”<sup>33</sup>*

No one seems to know the origins of the sayings, “Walks to the beat of one’s own drum,” and “walking to the beat of a different drum.” “Bang the Drum Slowly” is a novel by Mark Harris about a baseball player, and the television adaptation featured Paul Newman. But the title comes from an old cowboy song, “Oh beat the drum slowly and play the fife lowly, and bitterly wept as we bore him along.” Alan Lomax<sup>34</sup> first published that song, and like many folk songs it seems to have a connection, at least thematically, with an Irish song “The Unfortunate Rake.” And that song also has dubious connections to the famous early blues tune, “Saint James Infirmary.”<sup>35</sup>

*“As I was walking down by the loch,  
As I was walking one morning of late,  
Who did I soy but my own dear comrade,  
Wrapped in flannel, so hared is his fate ...  
Muffle your drums and play your pipes merrily,  
Play the death march as you go along ...”*

When I find a song, and learn about a song, I am driven to learn to play it. As part of the process, the song is mentally developed in my auditory cortex<sup>36</sup> and begins playing as a soundtrack to the handful of walks I do with my two Aussiedoodles—Mèli and Tèò—every day. My first walk of the day was accompanied by the three aforementioned songs, in whole and in motives that repeated over and over as we trekked the crescent roads alongside the forests of Lynn Valley.

My walking repertoire is always changing—some days it’s popular music, other days fingerstyle folk-rock and jazz, and other days plectrum-style blues and jazz. Of course, it’s not only part of my daily practice routine—the songs, and all facets of the songs, are with me throughout the day. There’s never enough time in a day, because academic life always interrupts the artist’s life. Yet, through it all, I’m always exploring possibilities of meaning and am open to new interpretations and new tonal qualities of my instruments. I am with my instruments and imagining the possibilities of tone colors and interpretations as I walk. Whereas “poetry invites readers to slow down,”<sup>37</sup> music can be in constant play with varying tempos. Sometimes slow, often fast, and sometimes engaged in rubato—accelerating and decelerating as the music guides the performer to interpret the feelings and meaning intended by the composer. Tone color (timbre; the quality of the sound), articulation, dynamics (the loud and soft of music)—those elements also come into play as music resonates and reverberates in our minds and the sonic (s)p(l)ace<sup>38</sup> that surrounds us.

Patti Lather once argued that reciprocity takes us beyond a concern for more and better data.<sup>39</sup> I flushed ‘data,’ and modernist and post-modernist notions of ‘validity,’ out of my arts based vocabulary in 2008.<sup>40</sup> All that is empirical is based on experience, and all that I story—in music and words (poetry and prose)—is based on my experiences in this world in which we live and play musically. “Musicians attend to reciprocity through

a give- and-take of musical interactions to develop a thick, rich, in-depth sound.”<sup>41</sup>  
Imagined and sonically present music is reciprocal. All that I audiate—all that I actively think as I walk—becomes physically present when I return home to play (and sing) the sounds I think during my walks.

Embodiment and relationality

*Is music making embodied?*

If one considers listening from a perspective of not only a perceptual act, but an activity that includes some aspect of comprehension of what is happening while actively listening to music or thinking music that has been heard in the past or present, the music—in terms of understanding the harmonic, rhythmic, melodic, and structural aspects of what one listens to—and that the comprehension involves both a cognitive (e.g., audiatonal) and perceptual framework, then the answer is a resounding yes. From the perspective that it is a cognitive function and by its very nature, all neural function—audiation—is interpreted as the conceptual, active thinking facet of listening, the creation and performance of music is an embodied experience.<sup>42</sup>

John Searle (1992) postulated, “the fact that a feature is mental does not imply that it is not physical; the fact that a feature is physical does not imply that it is not mental” (p. 15). Expert musicians who learn new music know that rather than merely ‘take meaning’ from an experience (e.g., looking at and playing the music notation on a page or recalling a rendition of a composition), we ‘breathe meanings’ into our music making. Thus, it seems reasonable to suggest that music listening is considered as embodied, but that there are numerous differences between the activities of listening in music performance and various activities of passive music listening. Embodiment is a person-centered approach to understanding—characterized as relational, complex, spontaneously active, self-creating (autopoietic), self-organizing, and self-regulating adaptive systems, with subsystems—from the genetic to the behavioral and sociocultural levels—composed of co-acting, co-developing processes functioning according to the reciprocal causality entailed by complex positive and negative feedback action loops. Another key feature of this relational developmental paradigm, derived from its relational and holistic character, is that all human behavior and development are contextualized and

situated. There are no split-off discrete pure forms (e.g., pure gene, pure environment, pure materialist) operating in isolation or additively “interacting.”<sup>43</sup>

I have conceptualized all aspects of music experiences as embodied from this holistic perspective and actively lived it through a/r/tography for over two decades.<sup>44</sup>

*“So I'll continue to continue to pretend*

*My life will never end*

*And flowers never bend with the rainfall.”<sup>45</sup>*

A muse’s way

Music is important, as the human need of it proves. I music to live, I live to music.<sup>46</sup> Music is the caretaker of its own possibilities. Carl and I believed in that maxim and applied it to music and poetry. We grew up together for nearly 30 years, and the many hours we spent talking, on campus walks to grab a cup of coffee, and in a/r/tography group meetings were invaluable to our *becoming enílikogical*. We grew up together, and as such, our notion of ‘pedagogy’ aged like fine wine. Our pedagogical understandings became enílikogical, and the sustenance of our hearts was with, through, and in a/r/tographic inquiry. Though we realized that much of what we’d written in collaborations hadn't mentioned the term ‘a/r/tography,’ we didn’t need to say it because we lived it.

<https://youtu.be/1je686sls9E>

I continue to be influenced by Carl’s ideals and love of all art forms as an ongoing aspect of the journey we began with the a/r/tography group over 20 years ago. That continuance, that sense of timeless becoming, has always been, and will always be, accompanied by a particular soundtrack. The last time I sat down and played an extended time for Carl was at a forest retreat,<sup>47</sup> and my solo rendition of this song filled the hall.

*“Though I know I'll never lose affection*

*For people and things that went before*

*I know I'll often stop and think about them*

*In my life I love you more.”<sup>48</sup>*



Forty years ago, Charles Mingus was my favorite jazz artist. I own every recording ever put on vinyl by Mingus or his wife Susan, from 1953 to 1990. Part of my “Covid music listening project”<sup>49</sup> was to pull a handful of vinyl LPs from my vast collection and listen to gems I hadn’t heard in decades. “All the things you could be by now if Sigmund Freud’s wife was your mother”<sup>50</sup> is loosely based on the Jerome Kern song, “All the Things You Are.” After walking with a rendition of this recording playing over and over in my mind, and thinking about other recordings of that song and the chord progression (with the potentials of a complex bass line), I imagined a path. I decided to explore a lengthy, 13-verse poem by Carl Leggo and use erasure poetry technique to form a new poem, and that poem inspired a newly composed (second) verse loosely based on the writing style of Leggo’s poem “Beachstones.”<sup>51</sup>

A walking bass line is composed of pitches of equal duration (i.e., the steady pulse) that create a feeling of being propelled forward. Sometimes, at the end of a phrase, there can be subdivisions of the pulse. Just as the walking bass line moves forward in time and acoustic space, imaginary bass lines often pace my daily walks with my Aussiedoodles.<sup>52</sup> This two-chorus-long walking bass line forms and (in)forms my walking enílikogy.

[https://youtu.be/ngXLW\\_qhpBQ](https://youtu.be/ngXLW_qhpBQ)

**All the things you become**

I am slowly learning

drawing silence

like the sun calls the sea

winter has arrived

somebody named the trees

with simple descriptors

I am sure snow will

come soon with poems

but with another poet’s eye  
silence falls like snow  
rural rhythms amidst urgent urban rhythms  
winter sky subtended

stillness and stability  
enough to stop the heart  
I am learning to live  
compose the senses  
open to language

&  
I walk steadily  
this way  
puppies pulling,  
that way

moss laden forest floors  
to and fro  
green slimes and brown mud,  
in and out of

fallen trees, rotting bark, mush rooms  
over and under  
a mountain valley winks  
at the foggy harbor below  
ship horns sound  
crows caw attention  
rains’ falling rhythms

all the chords you are  
sundry melodic possibilities

I close this ode with a quote from Ron Pelias, who I admire as much as our dear friend, Carl.

“What we decide to remember says who we are now. It is our ongoing testimony, our work as witnesses. What we commemorate each day by the telling of our tales is our necessary history and our moral mandate. In the chew of memory, we only have our contested pasts and plausible accounts, continually told and retold in good faith, to lead us to the future.”<sup>53</sup>

<https://youtu.be/-jvmRd7prT4>

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Endnotes

1 Throughout this storied essay there are links to YouTube recordings of music I have arranged and performed to accompany my walking enilikogy. I suggest you play the music softly in the background as you read. The final recording at the end of the story is of a walking bass line accompanying spoken poetry. Of course, there are intended metaphors and metonyms in the music, and the lyrics and titles, of songs (e.g., this first piece is “Long Ago and Far Away”), and they are open to the reader’s interpretation as to how they complement and elaborate meanings of the story.

2 Gouzouasis, 2008b, pp. 226, 229.

3 In all honesty, if I were not an academic scholar, I’d spend all my time composing and performing music

4 Margaret Carr, 2001.

5 Oxford English Dictionary (1971), p. 604. That is likely the reason why in 342BC King Phillip of Macedonia hired Aristotle to teach is 13-year-old son, Alexander the Great the Greek language, medicine, philosophy, ethics, religion, logic, and art. Of course, Socrates, who ridiculed ‘pedagogues,’ taught Plato (and it is only through Plato’s works that we know Socrates), who taught Aristotle.

6 The ‘child’ who “came out to wonder” (from Canada to Los Angeles, California) in the opening verse of this epic Joni Mitchell song was Neil Young. Young first met Mitchell while gigging in folk clubs in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Young wrote “Sugar Mountain” and Mitchell wrote “Circle Game” in response. I was fortunate enough to sing along with Jackson Browne (opening act) and Joni Mitchell (featured performer) as she led an audience in a rendition of “Circle Game” as their encore in a March 1972 performance at The Academy of Music in Philadelphia.

7 I was Music Director of WRTI/JAZZ90, the most listened to 24/7 jazz radio station (American Public Radio affiliate, Temple University) in the USA (and the world) from 1983-1988 and own a collection of over 4,000 jazz LPs and CDs.

8 See Banks & Banks, 2000.

9 Gouzouasis, 2018, 2019. I digress, to say that ‘a way to teach’ is *éнас τρόπος διδασκαλίας* (ένας τρόπος διδασκαλίας). In that phrase, you can see the Greek word for ‘steps,’ which is ‘skala’ (as in La Scala, the famous opera house) and also used in the music term, *scale*. Note the word *trópos*, which is trope in English, ‘a way, or turn, or direction.’ “Dáskalos” is a teacher. So teaching with a eye to a *way of step by step* instruction is already built into the word for teacher in Greek. An ‘artful teacher’ is an *éntechnos dáskalos* (έντεχνος δάσκαλος) – note the root of *technology*, which I discussed in the 2006 paper on a/r/tography in the *Arts and Learning Research Journal* and another paper from 2006 on arts based technology in education (*Arts Education Policy Review*) where I trace all the meanings and applications of of *téchne* in Greek. *Didaskalías* is related to *didactics* (διδακτική), which has obtained a negative connotation in English (e.g., “a literary means to a doctrinal end”;



SECTION 3: SOUNDS

see <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095717603>). But I can say that the term is used in Greek (and other European languages) to explain “*practical* steps in teaching.” And “practical,” of course, relates to *praxis*.

10 Hutchinson, 1999, p. 93.

11 Paul Simon wrote “The Dangling Conversation” in 1966. I’ve been singing and playing it since I was a young teenager. I have quoted Simon’s songs in another paper coauthored with Carl Leggo (2017) and played it for Carl, with many other Paul Simon tunes, on at least two occasions.

12 Gouzouasis & Lee, 2002, p. 140.

13 To my knowledge, this was the first special issue of a journal dedicated to arts based educational research.

14 See Mullen, 2002, p. 12. Carol Mullen was guest editor of *TEQ* for the special issue and she was an early proponent of arts based educational research.

15 See Norman & Leggo, 1994-1995.

16 Gouzouasis, 2008. While Karen Lee and I had structured the look of the 2002 inquiry to make it appear more layered and nuanced in a musical manner, based on the discussion of species counterpoint and fugal form, the space concerns of the editor of the special issue pushed us into a more traditional writing layout as well as the elimination of an important fugal episode.

17 Pelias, 2004, p. 9.

18 The music notation and poetry is provided to be recreated by future arts educators.

19 For one interpretation of *kairós*, in rhetoric, see Pender (2003, p. 96) for his discussion of expressive discourse in the personal writing of experiences in rhetorical situations, defined as any form of communication used to modify the perspectives of others. For me, music is a form of communication, which is why my music making is embedded in my text. There are many other interpretations applications of *kairós* in philosophy and developmental psychology.

20 Heidegger, 1971, p. 72

21 Gouzouasis & Lee, 2002, p. 130.

22 See Gouzouasis & Lee, 2005 & 2007

23 Furman, 2006, p. 136.

24 Lindemann, 1985, p. 161.

25 A contrafact is a music composition, a new melody, based on an existing chord progression. There are many such songs in the jazz literature, none more famous than the use of Gershwin’s “I Got Rhythm” – see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_jazz\\_contrafacts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_jazz_contrafacts) for a fairly comprehensive list.

26 Gouzouasis & Lee, p. 134.

27 John Cleese’s routine on ‘theory’ can be viewed at [https://youtu.be/hKc\\_1gc1pLg?si=FIUXWcGK6TfD0LLA](https://youtu.be/hKc_1gc1pLg?si=FIUXWcGK6TfD0LLA) as well as [https://youtu.be/cAYDiPizDIs?si=pDEOP1oipZCL\\_jO3](https://youtu.be/cAYDiPizDIs?si=pDEOP1oipZCL_jO3) The All England Summarize Proust Competition is another worthwhile comparison, <https://youtu.be/uwAOc4g3K-g?si=nldlfPg2NS2ySNM5>

28 Ibid, p. 135.

29 Leggo, 2007, p. 27.

30 Winterson, 1995, p. 87.

31 Gouzouasis & Leggo, 2017, p. 460-461.

32 Gouzouasis, 2018, p. 236.

33 Leggo, 2007, p. 30.

34 Lomax, pp. 74-76. Interestingly, preceding “The Cowboy’s Lament” is the song, “The ‘Metis’ Song of the Buffalo Hunters,” by Robideau, pp. 72-73.

35 See the 1960 Folkways Records vinyl album titled “The Unfortunate Rake” that contains 20 variations of that same ballad. As early as the mid 19th century, early variations of this song refer to ‘hospitals.’ See Jenkins, 2019, and Cecil Sharpe’s classic collection, 1932, which likely misled folklorists to create their own folklore narratives about these songs.

36 Audiation is a cognitive function, often misconstrued as ‘inner hearing,’ that resides in the auditory cortex, specifically the area called the Heschel’s Gyrus. See Guhn, Emerson, & Gouzouasis, 2020.

37 Leggo, 2004, p. 8.

SECTION 3: SOUNDS

38 de Cosson, 2003.

39 Lather, 1991. This paper, and others on notions of validity and interpretation, had a profound influence on how, why, and what I composed in a multi-voiced creative conversational essay, “Toccata on assessment, validity, and interpretation” in *Being with a/r/tography* (2008). The music element of *tempo* plays a key role in how that inquiry is read, performed, and interpreted.

40 Gouzouasis, 2008b, pp. 220-228.

41 Gouzouasis & Lee, 2002, p. 140.

42 There are numerous studies in neuroscience that correlate brain function, structure and plasticity with audiation ability and the development of music skills that enhance audiation and change brain function and structure. Peter Schneider is a leader in that field (see Schneider et al., 2023 and the references of that study).

43 See Overton & Lerner, 2010.

44 My earliest attempts to introduce this holistic model to a/r/tography, and arts based research in general, were introduced in 2008a. For various reasons, primarily based on misinterpretations of realist, mechanist, and materialist ontologies, it has been largely ignored. That said, I have been publishing papers about becoming, organicism, relationality (from a relational-developmental perspective), and audiation since 1985.

45 Composed by Paul Simon and recorded December 22, 1965 for the album, *Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme*, by Simon and Garfunkel. Released October 24, 1966 on Columbia Records

46 *Music* can also be a verb, like *dance*.

47 The UBC Malcolm Knapp Research Forest (MKRF) was established in 1949 as a facility for research, demonstration, and education in the field of forestry and allied sciences. Located in Maple Ridge, bordering Golden Ears Provincial Park, this 51.57 square kilometer “working” forest boasts more than 200km of trails and roads for walking and hiking. The last a/r/tography group research retreat took place here in January 2017 organized by Rita Irwin, two doctoral candidates (Natalie LeBlanc and Ching-Chiu Lin), and included George Belliveau, William Pinar, Carl Leggo, and me. I had just purchased my custom shop Taylor TF guitar and brought it, along with a mickey of single malt whiskey, to play around the fireplace (after I presumed everyone had gone to bed in their individual cabins) in the expansive, timber framed, acoustically lavish, main dining hall lodge after everyone went to bed, but Carl and Bill joined me for music and refreshments.

48 Lennon & McCartney, 1965, “In my life.” Carl loved the fingerstyle solo version I performed that evening in the lodge. Little did we know how ‘true’ John Lennon’s lyrics would ring.

49 The first call for papers for this volume was in 2020.

50 From *Charles Mingus Presents Charles Mingus* (1961). As is typical of Mingus, he introduces the song with the following cryptic message to the audience: “And now, ladies and gentleman, you have been such a wonderful audience. We have a special treat in store for you. This is a composition dedicated to all mothers. And it’s titled “All The Things You Could Be By Now If Sigmund Freud’s Wife Was Your Mother.” Which means if Sigmund Freud’s wife was your mother, all the things you could be by now. Which means nothing, you got it? Thank you.”

51 Leggo, pp. 10-13. Erasure poetry inspired my former doctoral student, Jee Yeon Ryu, who incorporated that technique in writing a dissertation comprehensive examination essay (2016) on Dewey’s *Experience and Education* (1938) and I’ve been sharing the concept and essay the past 14 years.

52 I didn’t start playing bass until graduate school—the bass player didn’t show up for ensemble rehearsal and the conductor directed me to the bass. The first time I picked up a bass I started reading the chart that was placed before me. The range of the bass is essentially the bottom four strings of the guitar, but an octave lower. I know how to read notation and play guitar, and also sing bass-baritone parts in solo vocal and choral works. Reading bass guitar parts was the next logical step. Presto, you’re a bass player.

53 Pelias, 2004, p. 58. Carl and I each bought a copy of this book in January 2005 at a conference in Athens, GA.



From Figure 2: Carmen Papalia, *Blind Field Shuttle*. 2012, Courtesy of the artists, (Image credit: Jordan Reznick).

# LIBRETTO IN FOUR ACTS: TACTICS FOR ART WALKING IN PUBLIC SPACES

Adetty Pérez de Miles, Julie Usha Libersat  
& Kevin Jenkins

**Prelude**

How do our bodies and the bodies of our students interact with relations of power, agency, and spatial imaginaries? How could a/r/tography reconsider and address the inherent questions as to which bodies are safe in public spaces and, in the face of physical precarity, who has the leisure to play in public space? Walking brings researchers into a relational position, activating a shared mode between artistic, pedagogical, and embodied research, and *flâneur* practices (the act of leisurely and aimlessly strolling through the city streets). What possibilities unfold when research takes place within walking in relation—to place, to one’s own embodied experience, to other participants, to personal history, to the environment, and to previous study? For intersectional bodies, however, the street does not provide a sense of psychological or physical safety. The simple act of walking can be an act of defiance: simply existing in a body that our physical infrastructures and social spaces disempower. Exercising the right to move, live, work, and play in shared public space is not unequivocally available to all.

Walking within an a/r/tographic lens through personal experience and exploring the work of artists and artist collectives whose work is mediated through walking as art, we question the history and foundation of walking research practice within the notion of the *flâneur*. Walter Benjamin’s (1999b) *flâneur* has been lauded by walking researchers for decades, yet the figure of the *flâneur* must be problematized to continue to serve the field of walking research fully. We enlist the oft-cited analogy proposed by de Certeau (1984) that considers the city as a text, punctuated by the walker’s movements and interventions, in order to reference the ways that a/r/tography is an integrated creative, theoretical, and embodied way of knowing that invariably relies on image and text and other arts-based forms of expression. We use the format of the opera<sup>i</sup> to reference the totality of the walker’s experience, engaged within a subjective experience, and the opera’s libretto format to organize our multiple experiences, voices, and process of inquiry. Before a quick discussion of opera, specifically the use of libretto as an entry

<sup>i</sup> In opera, *Gesamtkunstwerk* refers to a total work of art. Opera libretti, or liner notes, provide a companion to the action and lyrics to give subtext for the audience and to outline areas of improvisation or interpretation for the performers on stage.



point into our inquiry, it is worth noting that in “A Baroque Concerto: An A/r/tographical Interplay of Voices Researching Education and the Arts,” presented at American Education Research Association Conference in 2005, Peter Gouzouasis, Kit Grauer, Rita Irwin, and Carl Leggo performed their research within the structure of Vivaldi’s Four Seasons (Gouzouasis, 2013). Gouzouasis proposed “arts-based educational research as embodied, living inquiry through metaphor” (2013, p. 1). He applies the metaphor of tonality and modality in music as a way to relate to the benefits of applying and adapting across musical forms for an inclusive and holistic approach to arts-based research that is multi-cultural, multi-tonal, holistic, and embodied. In adopting the form of music (a western musical form) like Gouzouasis, we discovered opportunities, connections, and new perspectives within the exploration of a new form, opera.

Far from homogeneous, opera combines music, text, theatrical staging and costuming, body movement, and various forms of singing, and like any other art form, opera has evolved over its roughly 400-year history (Randel, 2003). Opera also has several genres besides grand historic or mythic serious moral dramas, or *opera seria*, such as various regional comedic forms. Additionally, as noted by Randel (2003), opera, following German composer Richard Wagner, “has exhibited abundant diversity in terms of subject matter, musical styles, philosophical viewpoints, and social aims” (p. 589). An example is *verismo*, with its “realism” and depictions of the contemporary proletariat that are often dark, even violent. The reader may detect a mixture of genres in this libretto.

Act I: Walking: Tactical Pathways Against Pedagogies of Cruelty

[20 November 2019: A large group of women stand in rows in La Plaza Aníbal Pinto in downtown Valparaíso, Chile, singing<sup>ii</sup>. The lyrics are compelling and the rhythm is contagious, feet tapping].

<sup>ii</sup> Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui’s concept-metaphor of the Aymara word *ch’ixi* (something that is and is not) and Gloria Anzaldúa’s code-switching are decolonial modes of play that move between languages, often disrupting the possibilities of facile interpretation and translation. Inspired by their work, we chose not to translate the lyrics of the song from Spanish to English, as our own way of playing with the reader, as a means to encourage the reader to pause, to think about the text and its potential multiple meaning(s). Rather than take for granted lyrics in English (if they had been provided), *ch’ixi* interrupts the contrasting framework (i.e., incommensurability) of language.

[Keep arms loose at your side, march in place to the beat for the first eight verses]

*El patriarcado es un juez  
que nos juzga por nacer,  
Y nuestro castigo  
es la violencia que NO ves.  
El patriarcado es un juez  
que nos juzga por nacer,  
y nuestro castigo  
es la violencia que YA ves.  
Es femicidio  
(LasTesis, 2019)*

[Blindfolded and singing with one voice: Place hands behind the head, squat up and down.]

*Impunidad para mi asesino.*

[Repeat Movement above]

*Es la desaparición.*

[Repeat Movement above]

*Es la violación.*

[Repeat Movement above]

[Through rapid rhythmic bodily movements: Run in place but without lifting feet from the ground; move forearms up and down in sync with the feet.]

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba  
ni cómo vestía.*

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba  
ni cómo vestía.*

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba  
ni cómo vestía.*

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba  
ni cómo vestía.*

*El violador ERAS tú.*



[With a metronomic beat, the walker’s steps mark time, shaping the thoughts you invoke.

Extend left arm straight out in front of you, pointing.]

*El violador eras tú/El violador eres tú/*

*Son los pacos/Los jueces/El Estado/El presidente/*

Hearing and feeling the sound through my skin, as I (Adetty) experienced the performance for the first time, I understood why in a short space of time, *Un violador en tu camino* had become a major protest hymn and performance to decry systemic gender- and sexual-based violence. Gender-based violence against women, transgender, gender non-conforming, and other types of gender expression is a form of inequity, in this case (and artwork), directed against women because they are women or because certain types of violence impact women disproportionately (United Nations, 2016). This phenomenon is a definition of and manifestation of patriarchy. The interdisciplinary feminist collective LasTesis, founded by Lea Cáceres, Paula Cometa, Sibila Sotomayor, and Daffne Valdés, created the lyrics, music, and choreography to address social injustice in Chile, in particular, the culture of violence against women (Kennon & Valdevitt, 2020; Kisner, 2021). As a result of the massive dissemination of the video performance on social media, the street intervention has been (re)created throughout the world—Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, Paris, Turkey, and India and in some places by hundreds of participants (Serafini, 2020).

Artists have often made use of walking as an aesthetic and performative practice (Richard Long, Allan Kaprow, William L. Pope, Hamish Fulton, Janet Cardiff, Kubra Khadem, Sophie Calle, Francis Alÿs, Signe Pierce, Regina José Galindo). Going beyond the idea of the flâneur as a detached observer of the city, LasTesis’s performative walks make their own mark on the city. Using sound and walking as a form of art and communication, participants explore their own relationship to their precarity, to the city as a site, and to other occupiers and producers of public space.

[March in place, move forearms up and down in sync with the feet.]

The rapist was you/the rapist is you/  
the police/the judges/the State/the president/

Women, walking and chanting the reverberating refrain, enact a radical method of protest to reveal the ways in which gendered public spaces are created and maintained. Redressing their audience through sound, movement, and image, the chants call out our complicity with the oppressive state apparatus and its systematic failure to stop the mass murder of women across Latin American countries (Pérez de Miles, 2006; Segato, 2018).

Inspired by the work of Silvia Federici and Rita Segato, LasTesis collective “seeks to transmit feminist theory through audiovisual language [*buscamos transmitir teoría feminista a través de lenguajes audiovisuales*]”<sup>iii</sup> (Rodríguez, 2019, para. 9) and to stage art collective actions that spread the message of social awareness of violence. For Martin and Shaw (2021), LasTesis’s “performance contributes to the relocation of art and theory, moving them from academic, theatre and museum settings to the streets” (p. 3). Further, their “performance transforms feminist theoretical knowledge and discourse into embodied street activism and, in taking theory to the street, counters public and populist conservative attacks on gender theory”<sup>iv</sup>(p. 3), for instance, institutional policies and practices that seek to identify and regulate knowledge and attitudes about of gender and sexuality in social system (e.g., through the law and education).

The city square is an extension of how public/private space is regulated and gendered. This inquiry brings us to our next act, which asks: How does the occupation of public space and embodied theoretical knowledge help disrupt oppressive social forces with/in/through art? We use the examples of our own walking inquiries and, through the feminist art collective LasTesis, ponder playful or creative movement in bodies with different abilities, embodied ways of knowing beyond the visual primacy of the flâneur and the motivations that drive us out into the world.

<sup>iii</sup> Our translations, unless otherwise specified.

<sup>iv</sup> There have been legislative proposals in places like Brazil to prohibit the inclusion of gender theory or the “ideology of gender” in education or “any practice that would compromise, hasten, or misguide the maturation and development of gender in harmwith the student’s biological sexual identity” (Segato, 2018. p. 199) (also see Verónica Gago (2018b). Critical times/the earth trembles. *Critical Times*, 1(1), 158-164.).

Act II: Siren Song: Agency & Peril

[Between Ponder, Broadway, and Panhandle Streets in Denton, TX. Between 1:00 – 3:00 in the morning]

The simple everyday act of walking becomes radical in a public space designed for and by the white cis hetero male body. Walking, let alone ‘playfully occupying’ public space is not safe for all bodies with intersectional identities. How can art engage in expression, play, or celebration in order to subvert traditional roles for bodies in public space?

As a ‘walking artist’ and female identifying and presenting body, could I (Julie) really ever understand Baudelaire’s flâneur, Hamish Fulton’s walking poems, or the agency and authority that Francis Alÿs’s body might inspire from onlookers (Pérez de Miles & Libersat, 2016)?

Walking has become necessary to temporarily provide respite from the nerve pain and incessant tingling brought on at night by Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS). Exercise is one of the few strategies for managing RLS symptoms, so I walk around my neighborhood at night, desperate for restful legs.

*As I walk past the silent tornado siren, I transfer my keys with attached rape whistle to my coat pocket, reminding me of the flashlight I always carried in India to keep an eye out for snakes on the path. If I found myself on a dark path with no torch, I would frantically skip, stamping my feet loudly and sing, hopeful that all the vibrations and noise would convince the cobra, who lived in the wall next to the path, to stay inside his hole.*

The siren or alarm as a symbol calls attention to how we as a society consider public space, its actual safety for everyone and how we might reimagine it.

*I turn onto Broadway Street and walk past the shelter for domestic violence victims on the corner of my street. I am reminded that public and private spaces are more dangerous than they appear. My familiar suburban landscape does not inspire alarm like the stereotypical dark alleys of the city on Law & Order, yet I bring my bewildered dog to give me at least the appearance of protection. I think of the irony of the title for the official publication of the RLS Foundation, ‘Nightwalkers,’ and the stereotypical image of sex workers languishing on urban street corners.*

Figure 1: Signe Pierce and Allí Coates, *American Reflexxx*. 2013, Courtesy of the artists. (Image credit: Allí Coates).



The presence of a female ‘flâneur’ or ‘idle’ woman ‘who walks the streets’ is in direct opposition linguistically to the cultural capital of the man ‘who walks the streets,’ the flâneur who is free to drift and get lost in the city as he participates in public life without judgment or condemnation. Not afforded the invisibility of Baudelaire’s (1964) “passionate spectator ... is a prince who everywhere rejoices in his incognito” (p. 9) (originally published in 1863). How do intersectional artists use their own bodies in public space to interrogate the power of cultural and social systems? During her performance *American Reflexxx*, Signe Pierce (2015) was attacked by onlookers in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Wearing a tight blue dress, heels and a mirrored face shield, Pierce suggestively walked up and down the boardwalk while a growing mob of people became increasingly aggressive towards her, eventually attacking her.

In *The Mythic Being* (1973), Adrian Piper demonstrates the power of stereotypes by assuming the identity and behavior of a man to provoke reactions in passersby. Mona Hatoum reflected on the struggles facing an impoverished Black community in Brixton in 1985 in *Roadworks*. With Doc Martens tied to Hatoum’s ankles dragging behind her bare feet, the basic action of walking becomes difficult. Afghani artist Kubra Khademi walked



the streets of Kabul in her 2016 performance *Armor*, wearing custom-made metal armor that accentuated her breasts, buttocks and groin over a traditional hijab. Khademi was forced to flee Afghanistan following death threats and a fatwa in response to her five-minute performance.

My night walks are motivated by physical relief rather than performance. This type of walking is distinctly different from experiments in the situationist *derivé* or creative wanderings that myself and others engage in as artist scholars (Pérez de Miles & Libersat, 2016). This walking is distracted, restless, and gleans no satisfaction from reaching a destination or completing a distance. Navigating in the dark, I read and move through the landscape with my other senses heightened. The night landscape provokes different questions for me as a walking body. How does walking as a whole experience engage in multiple ways of knowing and learning about the world around my body? How can I move through places framed with history and meaning using more than visual perception?

In *Blind Field Shuttle* (BFS), Carmen Papalia (2017) leads groups on hour-long walks, asking participants to shut their eyes in an exchange of trust to give participants the opportunity “to unlearn visual primacy and use their non-visual senses as a primary way of knowing the world” (para 1). Papalia (2017) uses BFS as a critical methodology to resist ableist notions of normalcy and to “uncover the unseen bodies of knowledge in fields influenced by visual primacy” (para. 1). As Papalia suggests, what unseen or invisible knowledge is there to learn about through our more than visual perceptions?

The built environment physically restricts and mediates access for differently abled bodies with egregious impacts for those who navigate streets and sidewalks with physically different bodies. During the 1985 Bus Accessibility Protests in Cleveland, Ohio, ten activists in wheelchairs blocked traffic to highlight the inaccessibility of the public transit system for wheelchair passengers (Quinlan & Bates, 2012). Performative protest and grassroots actions by disability rights advocates were key to making strides in accessibility strategies like sidewalk ramps, curb cuts and ADA compliance.

Figure 2: Carmen Papalia, *Blind Field Shuttle*, 2012. Courtesy of the artists (Image credit: Jordan Reznick).



In Monty Python’s 1970 comedy sketch ‘The Ministry of Silly Walks,’ John Cleese’s exaggerated ambulation is meant to poke fun at the inefficiency of bureaucracy, yet does so at the expense of those who move differently out of necessity. In works like *Regarding the Fall* and *Work it Out*, Bill Shannon, who walks with crutches and is also passionate about dancing, positions his own body in seemingly accidental but choreographed performances that call attention to sociocultural perceptions of ability and spectatorship (Richardson & Eisenhauer Richardson, 2019). How can the manner of our physical occupation of public space, like Shannon’s, liberate us from oppressive social forces?

*Seeking respite from my tingling limbs and aching muscles, I experiment with different movements for maximum relief. The deserted streets and darkness embolden me to move uninhibited. Moving differently out of necessity, I flap my arms like wings, thinking of the lesser-known story of the ancient Greek sirens who prayed to the gods for wings to search for Persephone when she was stolen to the underworld. Swinging my legs forward with each step or bringing my knees up higher, I shake, swing and jiggle my legs and arms, keeping in rhythm*



*with my silent restless siren song. Each step punctuates the wet pavement,  
rousing neighborhood dogs whose barks join the chorus.*

Nigel Thrift (2004) suggests that both the aspect of movement and the aspect of time provide richness beyond the linear form of inquiry based in semiotics and text-based artifacts. What walking contributes as a research methodology resides in the anti-materiality that rejects commodification and transforms walking into a relational practice, methodology and observational strategy, thus providing contemporary walking researchers and artists with rich connections and relationships.

Act III: Walking while Trans

Scene I:

[Paved walking path, early morning. To the left, a line of trees and shrubbery. To the right, modern three-story townhomes.]

I (Kevin) walk differently these days. I now walk by day since the park nearby closes at sundown in this small town so far from home, wherever that may be. Did a transient upbringing, moving from couch to couch and floor to floor, prepare me for the life of an academic as had a lifelong trans experience prepared me for transience—always on the move? Home is a temporary marker on a mobile app. Today’s marker is 1400 miles from the last, where my nearby park closed at 10 PM. Yet, like Patsy Cline, I still walked after midnight among weeping willows and along highways.

Walking for me was out of necessity, not pleasure, unless we think of pleasure as simply an absence of pain or discomfort. *There’s no place like home.* (Thank goodness!) Home was inhospitable. When the eight feet of clear space on the floor of my room proved insufficient as I wore down the carpet from pacing, out I went, preferably in the dark, where I did not feel so exposed. I had what my mother called ‘itchy feet,’ meaning I could not keep still in one place for long. I got that from her. Whereas she could drive when she needed to leave, I could only walk. She worried about me walking at night. She did not realize it was more dangerous during the day when I was exposed in the light—a more visible target.

Scene II:

[Public sidewalk on a small university-town mixed commercial/residential block with storefronts and a two-story house turned apartment building. Sunny midafternoon.]

*Never walk alone at night. Don’t make yourself a target. Walk close to women  
for safety. Be safer together.*

As I walked home on the otherwise empty sidewalk, a young woman moved forth slowly and with great confidence in my direction. She drew a deep breath and, turning toward me, her alto voice rang out fortissimo, “Hey, you faggot! Faaaaaagoooooot!” Her shrill laugh stopped short with the screech of her brakes as her car stopped short behind another at the stop light. When I caught up, I sang back out to my now captive audience, “The correct slur is ‘dyke’! If you are going to insult someone, at least get it right.”

Scene III:

[Schlossberg, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. Late night in winter.]

*Never walk alone at night. If you don’t have a friend to walk with you, walk close  
to strangers, particularly women, so that you can be safer together. Don’t make  
yourself a target.*

How many years have I heard these messages? I remember replaying them in my mind when I found myself isolated on the side of a hill in Freiburg, Germany, in the early morning hours of New Year’s Day 2001. I waited for nearly an hour at the meeting point for my group after the fireworks celebration. The crowds of revelers singing Lieder as they staggered along the winding paved path down the hill to catch the bus home grew thinner and thinner, carrying their voices far away with them. Heavy boots behind me to the left and right slowly drummed on the pavement and grew louder as they neared, and then rested ten feet away, partially blocking the exit stairs in both directions. I was alone at night. Their next steps toward me were barely audible. When a small group of young adults suddenly appeared around the corner, blowing noisy party favors, I loudly greeted them as if they were friends, lodged myself in the middle of their group, and joined them as they left the hillside, passing one of my would-be assailants.

Scene IV:

[Texas Woman’s University campus, Denton, Texas. A cold winter night with rain approaching.]

*Never walk alone at night. Don’t make yourself a target. Walk close to women for safety. Be safer together.*

How deeply were the messages to not walk alone at night engrained? How did they affect my habits? Leaving the Human Development Building after a night class I attended, I walked alone on the walkway between it and the Undergraduate Laboratory Building. My classmates had already departed campus or gone in other directions. A few interior lights from classroom and office windows indirectly and dimly lit the path. Walking hurriedly as the winds grew stronger, I saw a young woman approaching from my right on the larger sidewalk that intersected mine. I slowed my pace as I neared the larger sidewalk because I realized she and I were on a collision course with each other. I couldn’t move any faster than I already walked, and it seemed she hadn’t seen me to change her pace.

She passed by, and after a few moments, I turned to the left behind her to make my way to the car. The wind was stronger once I was no longer protected by the buildings. *Never walk alone at night.* I searched my peripheral vision for any danger. I listened as best I could for any footsteps, but the wind made that more difficult. I picked up my pace a little in hopes of reaching my car across the street quicker, away from the biting cold wind. *Walk close to women for safety. Be safer together.* I felt safer for being near the young woman, who was now only a few feet in front of me. My mind was no longer on my surroundings. I deliberated if I should go home and feed the dogs and let them out since I had been at work and school all day. *Be safer together.* I noticed the young woman turn her head to the left slightly over her shoulder. Or should I stop at the grocery store in another direction first since I was already out? She did it again, quickly twice. *Never walk alone at night. Walk close to women for safety.* Why is she looking over her shoulder? *Don’t make yourself a target.*

It was then I realized the threat was me! Eight months in transition to male, and passing already, it dawned on me that my presence following close behind her would

have made her feel unsafe. I stopped and bent down, pretending to tie my boot so that she could move on safely without me.

Act IV: Bodies in Public

Moving through public space materializes as a distinctively gendered practice. The history of walking, especially strolling aimlessly through the city in Baudelaire’s (1964/1863) and later Benjamin’s (1999a) writings, are excursions reserved for male pedestrians. “These flaneurs and their gazes [and mobility] are neither restricted by insecurity, convention, modesty, anxiety, or assault, nor by restrictions created through the controlling or commodifying presence of an other” (Gleber, 1999, p. 171). The colonial legacy and genealogy of the ‘other’ includes the ‘other’ of the ‘non-normative,’ i.e., the “other of man” or woman, the “other of hetero normativity,” the other of the “non-human species” (Segato, 2018, p. 201), and the ‘other’ of intersectional identities.

De Certeau’s distinction between *strategy* and *tactic* provides a useful lens to foreground questions related to walking, to “knowing the world through the body and the body through the world” (Solnit, 2001, p. 29). It is particularly significant to consider how strategies and tactics are employed by people who occupy intersectional identities. How do these strategies and tactics resist, subvert, and play with the script for public and private spaces, the roles for performers, and the context for shared interactions that determine access and mediate dynamics of power? A strategy, according to de Certeau, involves a set of processes and activities that are created and implemented by those who control power and manage the limitations of a defined space and identified subject (Hammond, 2017). As shown in the various acts presented in this research, subjects are ‘typically’ circumscribed by the exteriority of their ‘otherness.’ De Certeau, explains:

I call a strategy the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated. It postulates a *place* that can be delimited as its *own* and serve as the base from which relations with an *exteriority* composed of targets or threats (customers or competitors, enemies, the country surrounding the city, objectives and objects of research, [or female flânerie] etc.) can be managed. As in management, every ‘strategic’ rationalization seeks first

of all to distinguish its ‘own’ place, that is, the place of its own power and will, for an ‘environment.’ (de Certeau, 1984, pp. 35-6)

Alternatively, as de Certeau (1984) notes, the *tactic* is a different proposition, it is:

a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. No delimitation of an exteriority, then provides it with the condition necessary for autonomy. The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus, it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign [or white cis hetero supremacist] power. It does not have the means to *keep to itself*, at a distance, in a position of withdrawal, foresight, and self-collection: it is a maneuver ‘within the enemy’s field of vision’ ... It takes advantage of ‘opportunities’ ... [of] mobility that must accept the chance offerings of the moment ... It must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of the proprietary powers. It poaches in them. It creates surprises in them. It can be where it is least expected. It is a guileful ruse. (p. 37)

In consideration of de Certeau’s notion of strategies and tactics and following Segato, it has been proposed that the lineage of the “universal public sphere” belongs to men (Segato, 2018, p. 201), or at least has been strategically rationalized as the property of and belonging to individuals and groups who control and manage power, unliterally. Traditionally, this has been “*El Estado opresor [que] es un macho violador*” (Las Tesis, 2019), i.e., patriarchal men and the nation state, as LasTesis’s song calls-out. Similarly, it can be argued that the flâneur is unequivocally male, upper-middle class, white (Gleber, 1999), cis and heterosexual. The flâneur can traverse the city unimpeded, unencumbered. The female *flâneuse*, on the other hand, occupies the place of the ‘other,’ a subject of the male gaze and control, whose ability and access to spaces are encumbered by visibility, objectification, and vulnerability (Gleber, 1999).

The flâneur leisurely walks through the city, blending with, yet detached from, the crowd without any consequences. The *flâneuse* or female flânerie, on the other hand, is the place of the ‘other,’ not free to drift along the streets, chastised and disciplined by those in power for doing so, for dressing a certain way, for being out in public late at night, for walking alone:

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía/(x4)/ El violador ERAS tú* (Las Tesis, 2019). The risks to the Chilean collective and their participants while walking to and from sites of protest were eminent and real. LasTesis recently collaborated on a manifesto with the Russian feminist group Pussy Riot to condemn the police repression that ensued against participants following their protest/performances (McGowin, 2020; Provea, 2020).

The management of intersectional bodies in public spaces continues to be enforced through the built environment, visual culture, and the surveillance state. Benjamin’s (1999a) flâneur moves through the city without significant social interaction or commitment to social contract. Higgins and Madden (2018) make a related argument, they posit “the flâneur is symbolically framed as an observer rather than an actor. While critical [of the forces of capitalism/consumerism], he differentially enacts a way of being through seeing the world that is nonetheless framed as objective, neutral, and removed” in ways that render “invisible his own participation within its (re)production in the process” (p. 9). Rather than removed and aimless behavior, the *tactics* of the flâneuse, or the female flânerie of LasTesis, critique everyday experiences through calculated performative actions “determined by the absence of a proper locus” of enunciation (de Certeau, 1984, p. 37) and thereby invite opportunities for social enactment and transnational solidarity.

**Finale: In Unison**

In closing, how do our bodies and the bodies of our students interact with relations of power, agency, and spatial imaginaries? How could art and education reconsider and address the inherent questions as to which bodies are safe in public spaces and, in the face of physical precarity, who has the leisure to play in public space? We have engaged with these queries through personal experience and exploration of the work of artists and artist collectives, whose work is mediated through walking as art, and by questioning the history and foundation of walking research practice within the notion of the flâneur. Returning to an earlier query, what relational positions, creative practices, and pedagogical reconsiderations are possible through a/r/tography?

As a research methodology, living inquiry, educational praxis, and arts-based practice (from image/text to performance to libretto), a/r/tography brings to the forefront



the embodied, subjective, and relational nature of researching, teaching, and art making (Irwin, 2017; Irwin, Beer, Springgay, Grauer, Xiong, & Bickel, 2006). One of the aspects of a/r/tography that is important for our research is its association with *embodiment* and living inquiry. Springgay, Irwin, and Wilson Kind (2005) elucidate:

Our understanding of the term artist is embodied, holistic, and broadly defined.

However, it is imbued with the understanding that to live the life of an artist who is also a researcher and teacher is to live a contiguous life, a life that dialectically moves between connecting and not connecting the three roles. The dialectical in/between spaces amid these roles are dynamic living spaces of inquiry. (p. 901)

The artists we discuss in this chapter are situated in the in/between spaces of a/r/tography, in the forward slash of the artist/teacher/researcher and entanglements “where theory-as-practice-as-process-as-complication intentionally unsettles perception and knowing through living inquiry” (Springgay, Irwin, & Wilson Kind, 2005, p.xxi) and through one’s embodied experience in relation to other participants in a specific space and place.

The implication here is that by seeking tactical opportunities through living inquiry with the aim to unsettle the “cracks” (de Certeau, 1984, pp. 35-36) of white cis hetero supremacy, we must once again call attention to the fact that the exteriority of the female flâneur, for the most part, has been ignored, erased, and disciplined (in a Foucauldian sense).Further, the exteriority of the ‘other,’ women, people of color, and LGBTQ+, when it comes to walking and play, is often whitewashed and/or down-played.We use the examples of our walking experiences to contemplate creative movement and embodied ways of knowing as tactical interventions to contest practices whose power is to produce, demarcate, and control bodies with different abilities and intersectional gender identities.

The structure of patriarchy, that is, relations of gender based on inequity, is an ancient and persistent political structure, one that continues to be recreated and repositioned into socio-political, economic, and racial forms of supremacy and subjugation. These replicas of patriarchal systems, in fact, pattern the operations of all inequalities tied to status and power in all areas of life (Segato, 2014; 2016, 2018), including art and education. Segato (2018) uses “the phrase pedagogy of cruelty to name all the acts and

practices that teach, accustom, and program subjects to turn forms of life into things” (p. 209), for example, human trafficking, exploitation of labor, and femicide. The pedagogy of cruelty, she states, is established as “the repetition of violence and cruelty produces an effect of normalization and thus leads to the low levels of empathy that are indispensable for predatory enterprises” (p. 202).

*What pedagogies of cruelty are we inculcating in our art, curriculum, scholarship and publications? What tactics must we adopt against spreading a pedagogy of cruelty?*

What do educators teach or not teach that enables types of “normalization” that “lead to the low levels of empathy” (Segato, 2018, p. 202)? As simple as this may seem, comprehensive sex education, the adaptation of gender theory and decolonial practices in curriculum design, and the disruption of normative ideas about gender and sexuality in educational environments are foundational practices to dismantle pedagogies of cruelty. These ideas are not new and might seem self-evident, yet we (the authors of this text) are fully aware that serious conversations about these areas of inquiry and lived experiences are missing, neglected, or manipulated into something unrecognizable in primary, secondary, and tertiary education.<sup>v</sup>

What tactics, learning/(un)learning or otherwise, must we adopt against spreading a pedagogy of cruelty? Empathy, arts-based, and coalitional work are key to building decolonial futures and pedagogy. As conceptualized by Judith Butler (2004a, 2004b, 2015), *coalitional politics* is a critical lens and strategy that is significant because such coalitions disavow centralized forms of identity. In fact, “the absence of a proper locus” or “delimitations” on “exteriority” provides “the condition necessary for autonomy” (p. 37), as noted by de Certeau (1984), in ways that create intersectional opportunities

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<sup>v</sup> Some examples that come to mind include: state regulated abstinence-only sex education models, discrimination against gender identity and sexual orientation in EC-12 employment, the fact that LGBTQ+ educators must often remain closeted or risk losing their jobs, the normalization of heteronormativity and thus diminished appreciation and support for LGBTQ+ youth. There is also the normalization of entrenched Western, colonial, and patriarchal canons in literature, art, and education, the pillars of additive approaches to equity and diversity. These practices lead to a pedagogy of cruelty, i.e., pedagogy based on insensitivity and absence of empathy (Segato, 2016; 2018).

for coming together to contest those who control and manage oppressive power. As signaled in the song/performance, *Un violador en tu camino* (Las Tesis, 2019), pedagogies of cruelty normalize sexism, sexual harassment, misogyny, and femicide. Reframing the focus of feminist theorizing about victimization and paying close attention to differentiated forms of vulnerability through coalitional politics, LasTesis builds empathy through their arts-based activism with hundreds of people and organizations who have reached out to them to restage their street performance in a search for social justice.

LasTesis’s street feminism, as well as Signe Pierce’s (2015) *American Reflexxx*, Adrian Piper’s *The Mythic Being* (1973), and Kubra Khademi’s (2015) *Armor*, all highlight the complex intersections of gender-based violence. As discussed earlier, Pierce’s work involved walking up and down the street suggestively in a dress. Piper publicly assumed the behavior of men, and Khademi wore a custom-made metal armor over a traditional hijab in the public sphere for five minutes. Their work elicited sexism, racism, and intolerance that led to physical violence, hatred, and death threats against the artists. Crimes of violence against women, transgender, and gender non-conforming individuals, perpetuated with increased impunity worldwide, are not phenomena that can be reduced to isolated gender violence or ambiguous understandings of vulnerability (Butler, 2004b; Gago, 2018a, 2018b; Gilson, 2016; Segato, 2018). Systemic mechanisms that organize the distribution of power differentially across sexist, racist, ableist, and classist dimensions of social life are deeply rooted in intersecting inequities that are used to normalize violence and abuse.

Our script, or libretto, is written to reflect our own lived experiences walking and thinking through embodied notions of intersectional identities and differently-abled bodies in and through our built environments. Walking as an arts-based practice is significant for artists and educators interested in attending to “knowing the world through the body and the body through the world” (Solnit, 2001, p. 29). When we (artists/researchers/educators) come to know through our senses (body and embodied mind), when “we conceive of researching, teaching, and art-making as activities that weave in and through one another—an interweaving and intraweaving of concepts,

activities, and feelings—we are creating fabrics of similarities and difference” (Irwin, 2017, p. 28), these convergences produce ways of knowing that are divergent and therefore reject definitive categories, answers, and conclusions. As a practice-based research methodology, therefore, a/r/tography expresses multivalent, palpable, embodied, and active involvement among people that is relational. Considering different sense perceptions or ways of knowing, different abilities, and motivations for movements (far removed from the unincumbered flâneur), we identify the ways that the built environment teaches our bodies to move. We use the examples of artists and activists who use tactics to counteract the strategies employed by those in power. The absence of feminist and decolonial art education in social spaces is the result of pedagogies of cruelty. Critical interventions and tactics centered on creative practices and coalitional politics used by artists, collectives, activists, scholars, and educators are key to building empathy and decolonial futures.

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From Figure 3: Left. *Examining the sonic potential of the bark’s ecosystem.* (Photo credit: Matthew Yanko).

From Figure 4: Right. *Listening attentively to the creek.* (Photo credit: Matthew Yanko).

# SOUNDWALKING TO CULTIVATE A RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE

Matthew Yanko

## Introduction

“The trees take the wind so differently. Some snatch at it as if glad of the opportunity to be noisy. Some squeak and groan, and some bow meekly with low murmurs” (Carr, 1966, p. 128). In ruminating on how Emily Carr takes to sound to imaginatively portray the wind brushing against trees in a forest, I ponder the possibilities of broadening the creative and audible capacities of children through listening. Children are great listeners (Rinaldi, 2012). They possess the time for listening: a time that is rarefied, curious, suspended, generous, and full of waiting and expectation. Offering opportunities for young learners to listen to the natural world can enable them to hear delicate and quiet sounds that may pass unnoticed within a certain soundscape. Oftentimes, the more children know about how to listen and what a particular soundscape means to them, the deeper their connection with it may become (Yanko & Yap, 2020, p. 259).

There are numerous ways that walking can be used as a gateway to cultivate a relationship with place—one can physically walk through paint (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2017), meander and listen to a woodland soundscape, or even draw a diagonal line across a grassy field with one’s feet to create a sustained soft tone (i.e., Richard Long’s contemporary, conceptual walking art [Long, 2005]). In my context of learning as an elementary school music teacher, my students and I venture on various types of music walks, grow materials to use in the creation of instruments, and compose music with the living landscape.<sup>i</sup> Such educational experiences provide opportunities to bond with nature through reciprocal listening—as listening to nature and sharing one’s thoughts, songs, words, and feelings may empower children to discover how to listen with an openness to the environment in which they live. Moreover, such endeavours foster a

<sup>i</sup> The term “living landscape” stems from Abram’s consideration of the bond between living things\ and the landscape in which they reside. “The ‘body’—whether human or otherwise—is not yet a mechanical object in such cultures, but is a magical entity, the mind’s own sensuous aspect, and at death the body’s decomposition into soil, worms, and dust can only signify the gradual reintegration of one’s ancestors and elders into the living landscape, from which all, too, are born” (Abram, 1996, p. 19).



connectedness with landmarks in their environment that “speak to their hearts” (Yanko & Yap, 2020, p. 256).

In the current inquiry, I scaffold the ways in which my students and I have walked and listened to the world through *soundwalking* (Westerkamp, 1974). Soundwalking is an excursion with the purpose of listening to the environment. At the onset of this practice, one attentively listens to the total content of the environment. Physically and psychically, we take in many sounds consciously. We also do so unconsciously, but this can cause a desensitization to our aural faculties by shutting out sounds. Thus, to sensitize our listening abilities, Westerkamp (2007) recommends starting a soundwalk by focusing on the sounds produced by our movements in the environment. In reflecting on research to assist with our practice of soundwalking, I turn to Iscen’s (2014) study of how immigrants interpret sounds in a new environment, which found that a newcomer’s experience of different sounds, in a new context, clashes with previous sound habits and ways of knowing (p. 128). Taking that into account, I move beyond preconceived conceptions of sounds in an explored soundscape, to expand my students’ listening range and support them as they listen to acoustic features that they take for granted. I also encourage my students to listen to their “inner chatter, thoughts, and ideas” (Westerkamp, 2017, p. 151), and direct them to reflect on the sonic elements they hear and connect to.

A/r/tography guides my inquiry of soundwalking in the outdoors with 24 Grade 1 students. This practice enables me to embrace my identity as an artist, researcher, and educator in an ongoing inquiry over the course of six months through a rich process of doing, thinking, and making (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2018). A defining feature of a/r/tography is provocation. A provocation can come in many different forms. It can be a piece of art, an object, or a practice that provokes thoughts, ideas, and actions. A provocation calls the inquirer to think independently by encouraging their interest and exploration of those interests. By doing so, it can evoke the inquirer to engage in reflexive, recursive, responsive, and/or embodied modes of questioning and questing (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019). With that in mind, various provocations are presented as the inquiry develops to encourage the children and me to quest and question the sonic potentials of the world in which we live. As these provocations occur, our connections,

meaning-making, and knowledge of listening go beyond static understandings of how knowledge is constructed, and we engage with a more fluid and complicated knowledge of listening (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019). Thus, through an a/r/tographic practice, I bring light to what we notice and our interactions in the travelled soundscape. I explore, question, and reflect on how those influence a connection and bond to place through soundwalking and music making.

**A Soundwalking Story**

A/r/tography is a practice of living inquiry that combines life-writing with life-creating (LeBlanc et al., 2015). Leggo (2005) states, “autobiographical writing is not capturing the past. Instead, autobiographical writing is about re-creating a sense of self, re-visiting the past in order to render renewed versions of experience” (p. 122). In the following section, I present three creative non-fictionally crafted vignettes as a way of knowing based on my lived experiences with soundwalking. These vignettes are a teacher’s stories told from my perspective, and the details that emerge are those that resonate from my lived reality. Although these stories are my interpretation of lived experiences with soundwalking, I reflect on how a/r/tographers acknowledge the work of others in the documentation of their own work (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxiv). The experiences of my students in this investigation are just as valuable as my own, and I take into account their experiences by using various forms of voice to illustrate and elaborate multiple points of view. Thus, my a/r/tographic inquiry is created through a rigorous and continuous form of reflexivity and analysis that allows me to not only story and (re)story my experiences, but also the collaborative understandings and meaning-making of my students and self with the sounds of the natural world.

**Vignette 1: Our Wonder Tree**

On the first day back after winter holidays, a discarded pine tree is found on the school grounds and Ms. Liu presents it as a provocation to her Grade 1 class. The students are captivated by it and set it up as a wonder tree in their classroom. They make decorations



and attach their curiosities to its branches. One child asks if the tree is lonely, being away from its family. Ms. Liu and I take the question to heart and are inspired to find an answer.

Later that week, I led a discussion on listening that invited the students to listen to the world around them before we set out to search for the tree’s family. After the discussion, we depart the school and head to a nearby forest. We stop at the edge of the forest, and I ask the children to imagine their ears as microphones, capturing every sound around them. However, they struggle to listen to the minute details of their surroundings, and their ears are drawn to the noise of passing cars and construction in the distance.

We venture into the woods, away from the busy road, and stop to explore a cedar tree. Some of the students rub and tap the bark, while others explore the sounds of its evergreen branches.

“It sounds weird,” says Kevin, as he shakes a branch.

“Look at its bark. It feels and sounds rough,” adds Susan, as she rubs her hands across it.

We spend a few more minutes exploring, then continue further into the forest and pause at a rugged tree.

“There’s holes in it,” Peter says.

“Those holes might be from insects living in it, or even woodpeckers. Do you hear woodpeckers in the forest today?”

The children listen, but no birds are heard.

“Let’s become musical-scientists and see if we can zoom in to listen to soft sounds.”

The students examine the timbres of the trunk and branches. Peter takes a closer look at the holes and notices sap dripping out of it.

“I think I hear bugs in it,” he observes.

Karen touches the sap and rubs it between two fingers. “It’s a sticky tree. It makes sticky sounds with my fingers.”

After, we walk into a dense part of the forest and regroup with the class.

I explain, “So far, we have listened to individual trees, but all of the trees in the forest make music together. Listen and see how many sounds you can hear at once—like listening to the different instruments in an orchestra.”

Figure 1: Left. Students soundwalking in the forest. cedar tree. (Photo credit: Matthew Yanko).

Figure 2: Right. Exploring the timbre of the cedar tree. (Photo credit: Matthew Yanko).



Figure 3: Left. Examining the sonic potential of the bark’s ecosystem. (Photo credit: Matthew Yanko).

Figure 4: Right. Listening attentively to the creek. (Photo credit: Matthew Yanko).



We spread out underneath the trees and listen for a minute. It seems like an eternity. Finally, the wind tickles the trees and the children’s listening is noticeable in their facial expressions and body language.

Peter breaks the silence, “I hear so many trees scraping against each other.”

Daniella comments, “I hear far away car sounds. I also hear a bird tweet, like a flute.”

“I hear the bird, too, and water like a rushing tap in that direction.” Joe points further into the forest.

We follow the sound of the rushing tap and discover a creek.

Ms. Liu notices excitement in the children as we gather on the bank of the creek. She attempts to refocus their energy.

“Close your eyes. Imagine yourself standing tall and still, like a tree. Breath slowly in through your nose and gently out through your mouth. Listen to the still trees around you. Focus on your breathing—Think about the water that runs below your roots, listen to the water.”

We pause for a few moments and take in our surroundings. As everyone opens their eyes, Justin notices exposed roots in the creek bed and says, “I heard that tree taking a big sip of water to grow strong.”

Daniella says, “When I was imagining myself as the tree, I heard other tree’s branches moving slowly against the wind. Some were cracking and hitting other trees.”

Susan adds, “Me too, but it was a quiet sound. The creek was much louder.”

From the creek, we walk to a clearing and stop at a maple tree with a birdhouse perched on a branch. We listen to the soft murmur of the creek in the distance.

“I hear the leaves dancing in the tree. They are moving like this,” twirls Susan.

“Does the dancing make loud or soft music?” I ask.

“Soft.”

Daniella rubs a hand over top of a patch of moss, “This tree has green stuff. It’s soft.”

I respond, “It sounds like we have a soft musical theme developing with this tree.”

“What about the wonder tree? We haven’t seen its family yet,” Kevin comments.

We continue along the gravel path in search of the tree’s family.

**Vignette 2: The Timbre of Timber**

Over the past few weeks, we have been going on walks to better acquaint ourselves with the various trees in the forest. The children have come to develop an understanding and relationship with the trees that reside there. We have a discussion about the trees that they have connections to, and talk about how to join their symphony of sound.

The children scatter off to their favourite trees. I make my way over to Daniella to check on her progress.

“I wrote a song for my tree.” She points to the paper, “That’s the tree, the music, and the ground where I play. Would you like to hear it?”

I nod and she begins tapping a rhythm on the tree. She then moves to a pile of needles on the ground and twirls long circles in the needles.

After Daniella’s performance, Joe came to get me to see what his group had been working on. He explains that they created a song about their tree growing big and tall.

Karen begins their song by gently tapping a rhythm on the tree’s roots with her fingertips. Joe joins in by drumming on a large knot with two twigs. Justin ends the piece by stretching up to the high branches to rub a soft rhythm on them with his hands.

I reflect on the performance, “I like that everyone has a chance to make music with the tree. Your music has a fun upbeat feel to it. I also enjoyed seeing Joe’s sticks bounce off the tree’s knot. It looked like they were dancing together.”

In the distance, I notice Susan sitting next to a maple tree, her shoes off.

“Susan, are you using your toes to make music?”

“I am playing softly with my toes. I don’t want to hurt the tree’s roots. When I play down here in the dirt with the tree, we make soft music together.”

After a few moments of chanting and playing quarter and eighth note rhythms, Kevin joins in and rubs long circle notes in the grass with a hand to softly evoke a four-beat whole note in the grass.

“Wow. I like the gliding motion of your note. It’s a nice contrast to Susan’s toe tapping.”



As I make my way to another group of students, I pause and listen to various layers of music making that is occurring in the symphonic forest today.

Vignette 3: A Farewell to our Wonder Tree

Many of the needles have been falling off of the wonder tree in the classroom. We have a discussion of what happens when a tree loses its needles and brainstorm ideas of what to do with the tree.

“We should bring it back home so the other trees can take care of it,” Daniella says.  
Ms. Liu responds, “Taking it back home is a good idea. Where should we take it?”  
“To the forest. We haven’t found its family yet. Maybe we will find it there,” says Peter.  
“I know a spot where there’s trees that look like it,” Kevin states.

That afternoon we compose a farewell song. On Friday, we set off with the tree to return it back to nature, and stop in an open meadow bordering the forest to perform our song. A few students and I strum the ukulele and everyone sings.<sup>ii</sup>

“Goodbye tree,  
Goodbye tree,  
goodbye, goodbye, goodbye.”

As the song develops, we buzz the melody into our kazoos. A few students end the song with drumming that gets slower and fades to nothing. As the last drum strikes, Joe whispers, “That’s the heartbeat of the tree.”

We carry the tree into the forest to find a resting place.  
“Look!” shouts Kevin. “There’s the family.”  
“Where should we place the tree?” I ask.  
“Over there.” Kevin points at two adjacent pine trees. “There’s its mom and dad.”  
“Mr. Yanko what happens to the tree now?” Daniella asks.  
“Well, it will probably turn into a nurse log.”  
“A nurse log?” She asks.  
I look around and notice a stump with a small pine tree growing out of it. “Yes,

<sup>ii</sup> Goodbye Tree Song. [https://youtu.be/\\_9b806T6-LI](https://youtu.be/_9b806T6-LI)

like that over there. It will decompose and become a home for other plants to grow on.”  
Ashley ponders the location for a moment. She moves the tree between the pine trees

Figure 5: Left. Performing our Farewell Song to the wonder tree. (Photo credit: Matthew Yanko).

Figure 6: Right. Placing the Farewell Tree in the forest near its family. (Photo credit: Matthew Yanko).



and the nurse log. “Now it can look at the nurse log and see what to do to become one.”  
The children say their goodbyes to the wonder tree and venture out to reconnect with their favourite trees in the forest.

A Rumination on Soundwalking

The shared vignettes depict how our a/r/tographic soundwalking inquiry involved a continuous state of movement, which encouraged us to linger in emergent, unforeseen, and unexpected events (Irwin et al., 2017, p. 50). As with the provocation of the pine tree, this enabled me to disrupt traditional notions of classroom learning to support how my



students could come to discover new ways of knowing and understanding (Irwin, 2013). Analogous to how a/r/tographers are “constantly questing, and complicating that which has yet to be named” (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxxi), our soundwalks were emergent, ever-evolving, and full of wonder and exploration. There were no right or wrong ways for the children to interpret the acoustic environment. A continual process of questioning, in which the context, materials, and processes supported them to engage with alternate possibilities for understanding the natural world and community in which they live, learn, and play (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019).

Walking inquiries invite attunement with the environment (Irwin, 2006) that become bountiful through the layers of memories and subtle transformations that occur when returning to a familiar site (Triggs et al., 2014). Alongside that, place-based education emphasizes hands-on, real-world learning experiences that help students develop stronger ties to their community and enhances students’ appreciation for the natural world (Sobel, 2004, p. 6). We returned to particular places in the forest and connected with them on a deep level over the course of many visits, through observation, reflection, listening, and music making. By returning again and again to the forest, we engaged in walking, listening, and exploration as a means of *wayfinding* (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2018), through which we sought to find a safe and secure resting place for the wonder tree using the cues given by the natural landscape. Moreover, our practice of walking fostered a bond with the more-than-human world through the concept of music, whereby the children sought to portray the pine tree’s passing away through a decelerating drumbeat and other elements that were used in their song. In depicting the tree through music, we illustrated our understanding of it and its importance in our local environment.

At the onset of our journey, I sought to create a soundwalking experience that focused on attentive listening, with the aim of rediscovering and reactivating one’s sense of hearing (Westerkamp, 1974, p. 18). However, that was challenging for some of the children, and Ms. Liu scaffolded Westerkamp’s concept of attentive listening with mindful breathing to evoke stillness and direct the students’ attention. By mindfully listening to themselves in the landscape, the students attuned their ears to the world in which they live: “As we listen to the world around us, we come to understand more deeply our place

within it. Our listening animates the world. And the world listens back” (Adams, 2009, p. 104). Listening in such instances not only involves languages, symbols, and codes that are not only used to express oneself and communicate, but to communicate with the more-than-human world. Over time, through our sound walking excursions, the children began to develop listening skills that enabled them to hone in on the natural soundscape and perceive those heard sounds as a type of language uttered by the landscape (Farina, 2014). That type of meaning making was evident as the students co-composed with the landscape, and in their efforts to listen to the creek’s ecosystem while walking. The diverse ways of communication that center on listening illuminates how such inquiries can provide liminal spaces that are the anomalous and generative places of learning because they open new potentials for living with/in the world (Irwin et al, 2017, p. 50).

Our adventures in the forest illuminate how meaning-making and understanding can become embodied acts through walking. Embodiment pedagogy suggests that we relate to place in a highly visceral manner, which involves responsiveness from our heads, hearts, and all our sensory systems (Tooth & Renshaw, 2018). The shared stories show how our learning community embraced embodied ways of knowing, and brought to light the children’s understanding of what listening is and can be for them. Susan tapping her toes in the dirt and Kevin rhythmically gliding his hands over the blades of grass, not only illustrate that, but also show resemblance to the intent in Richard Long’s practice of walking as art. During this inquiry, we embraced different ways of soundwalking—at various tempos and locations, and through various ways of moving through the land. We came to experience how walking can slow the pace of thought in a rhythmic awareness of sensations and perceptions to fully engage with the aesthetics of place, experience, and movement (Lasczik Cutcher, 2018).

Digging one’s toes into dirt to make music with the roots of a tree, or strolling and listening to the canopy of a forest, illuminates how walking can be used as a creative moving practice that holds the potential for multisensory and relational encounters to a particular place. Listening can be seen as a metaphor for having the openness and sensitivity to listen and be listened to through all our senses, which is akin to how Leggo

poetically listens to lights —“Tuning one’s skin to listen involves a sense of aliveness of a body relating to the world at a particular moment” (Triggs et al., 2014, p. 25). Thus, our way of walking illustrates a *whole-body listening* that encourages an openness to the multiple ways of encountering and exploring the world through the senses. It illustrates an intuitive pedagogical practice that supports children to expand beyond their ears to allow for somatic, embodied, and sensory place-making connections—empowering connections through various sights, sounds, tastes, odors, and different ways of moving through place, and all of those pathways continually open outward from the perceiving body, like different paths diverging from a forest (Abrams, 2010, p. 39).

Notions of Becoming through Walking

An a/r/tographic inquiry is a dynamic and ongoing experience that incorporates text, the visual, and/or artistic form in order to challenge, provoke, and frustrate the desire one final, stable, or fixed meaning (Irwin et al., 2017). As such, my shared stories are “open to interpretation, construction, and further development in and through time” (Leggo et al., 2011, p. 250). The “after-effect” of my stories offer further potential in motion because they continue “to release potential through repeated visitations” (Mafe, 2009, p. 5). Our soundwalking practice enabled us to come to understand that by listening carefully, the sounds we heard were no longer unwanted noise, but a symphony of sounds that embody the more-than-human world, the children, and bond between the two. Thus, it is my hope that the shared vignettes inspire other educators to venture into the outdoors with their students, to connect with the world around them through the coming together of evoked sounds between environment and learner.

Our artographic walks with the living landscape illuminate a process of emergence that embraces becoming for my learning community and self. For me, this inquiry has created space, time, and awareness to not only attune my listening abilities to the children, the environment, and my inner self but also to attune my pedagogical practices (Irwin et al., 2017). I took into account how a reflexive researcher does not simply report facts or truths but actively constructs interpretations of their experiences in the field and then questions how those interpretations came about (Hertz, 1995, p. 431). I continuously

questioned my very being and becoming through a reflexive process of storying and (re)storying my lived experiences (Irwin, 2008, p. 28). In doing so, I shifted away from teacher-direct pedagogy towards a practice that provides opportunities for new sensitivities in learning to learn (Irwin, 2013). For the children, they discovered more about who they are within a classroom of learners and within the community in which they live. By listening to a soundscape in their community, the children attached value and emotion to what that soundscape metaphorically represents. When others journey and listen to the soundscape at that same place, there is the prospect that they will feel, share, and embrace the child’s value of what that place means to them.

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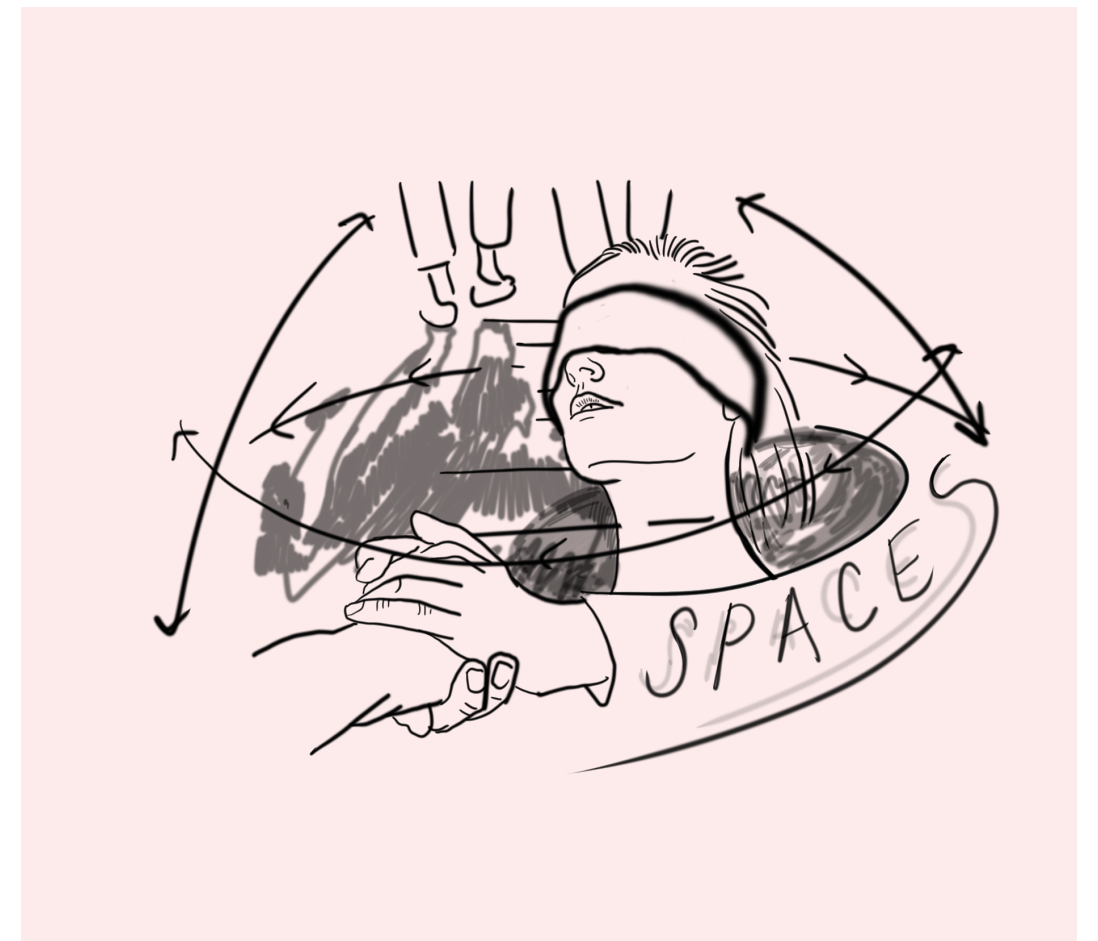
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## SECTION 4

# Spaces

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## Spaces

Introduction by Daniel T. Barney

*Space*, as a concept, has been theorized extensively in various fields, including geography, sociology, and cultural studies. Spaces—including natural, built, and imagined—shape our experiences and are shaped by our social, cultural, and historical contexts. They can include the fourth dimension of time, such as duration, memories, and speculations of spacetime. Walking and a/r/tography offer unique ways of engaging with and examining space, inviting us to consider how space is experienced and represented as artists, researchers, and/or teachers. In this book section, the authors negotiate various physical spaces and their relationship to walking and a/r/tography. Through the lens of a/r/tography, the authors examine the spaces they traverse, both physically and metaphorically. The essays in this section explore how walking and a/r/tography offer permission to engage with spaces to offer new and transformative ways of experiencing, representing, and doing space differently. How might we examine how walking and a/r/tography offer new ways of understanding urban spaces and how these spaces are shaped by power and politics? How might we consider the relationship between walking, memory, and the rural landscape, showing how walking and a/r/tographic practices can help us to connect with the past and the present in meaningful ways? Additionally, how might we consider the ways that walking and a/r/tography can be used in educational contexts to help students explore the spaces they inhabit to develop a deeper understanding of their relationship to the world around them? Overall, this section of the book offers a range of complex explorations of how space and its relationship to walking and a/r/tography might be taken up by art inquirers and educators/learners. By engaging with space through artistic and transdisciplinary educational practices, how might we develop a deeper understanding of our relationship with the world around us and explore how space is negotiated, represented, and exists beyond human experience?



At different times, I pass through the same space in different cities. I slowly walk the street and step on the maintenance hole coverings. The maintenance hole coverings carry me from the present to the future; they become the representative spaces of the sincere encounter between the past, present, and future.

During my postgraduate education in Fine Arts Education and throughout my doctoral dissertation period, my teachers always underlined my researcher identity with traditional forms of inquiry. Art-based education research and a/r/tography were still a very new field. Therefore, my artist identity and art productions were considered completely separate from research. I was also encouraged in result-oriented inquiry rather than a process-oriented one. This essay includes the process of my journey between two maintenance hole coverings, which I did while I was conducting my a/r/tographic research during and after my doctorate. This essay also covers my creation of the concept of ‘transit spaces’ as a way to share the layers, knitted with text and visuals, of this journey connected with my personal history. Discovering my artist, researcher, and teacher identities is a part of this journey. During my walks, I also encountered other maintenance hole coverings. However, I focused on two maintenance hole coverings that I encountered in Vancouver, Canada, and in my own country, which inspired very different feelings in terms of what they convey.

From Figure 6: *Road Stories 1*, 80x150 cm., acrylic, ballpoint pen and paper on canvas, 2017 (Image credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).

MAINTENANCE HOLES  
COVERINGS IN TWO COUNTRIES  
AND TWO CITIES

Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç

Figure 1: The process of my a/r/tographic walking, (Image credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).





In the process of forming my doctoral dissertation, I participated in my first a/r/tographic walking as only a researcher (or so I thought), which allowed me to interact with my past journeys. This walking experience made me realize that my artist, researcher, and teacher identities were not independent of each other. The starting point for this discovery and understanding process is held in the moment I encountered a maintenance hole covering in Vancouver, Canada. These maintenance hole coverings are objects that we encounter in almost every country and city: we are very familiar with them. And what we are familiar with can make it easier to understand. As Gadamer (2004) reminds us, “what leads to understanding must be something that has already asserted itself in its own separate validity. Understanding begins ...when something addresses us” (p. 298).

These spaces, which I have come across many times in my own country but passed by without being aware of them efore, are, in a sense, a representation of the past, transience, change, and transformation due to their usage area. Therefore, this a/r/tographic walking means a long-term walk that communicates between my past and my future and, in a way, refers to the process of my life. With that said, the end result of this walking project is not important; what is important are the new ways I explored and will continue to explore in different cities across time.

**Realization**

About five years ago, I went to Vancouver, Canada, to learn more about a/r/tography as a research methodology, which I might use in my doctoral dissertation. During my 10-month stay, I began to understand a/r/tography better and I found myself questioning my experiences as an artist, a researcher and a teacher. Thus, I became both ‘researcher’ and ‘researched’ in my inquiry (Cole, 1994). During these a/r/tographic walks, my autobiographical stories were built by knitting together both literature and visuals, which led to new methods and meanings due to the rhizomatic nature of a/r/tography (de Cosson, 2003; Irwin, 2003; Springgay, 2004; Irwin, 2004; Springgay & Irwin, 2004; Springgay, Irwin & Kind, 2005). This is because a/r/tographic applications encourage us not to start from one point and reach an endpoint using a single way but to discover

more meaning by deviating to different access new points through rhizomatic relations (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005). Thus, while writing my own personal history, I created some conditions to rediscover the meanings of a past storyline and researched new ways of experiencing the past (Denzin, 2008).

Being interested in a/r/tography encourages researchers to put themselves on a journey of discovery, learning about themselves and about themselves in relationship with others. In fact, there is an organic and living relationship between researcher and research, as if they are parts of a sophisticated dance that is always evolving. In other words, art-based educational research is a creative process that is temporary and frequently full of tension, but generally transformative and tense (Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis & Grauer, 2006). In research, these areas of tension are an incentive to keep learning, to appreciate new perceptions, and to seek meaning. The vibrations and tensions created by going back and forth between the past and the present, through visual imagery and scholarly literature, allowed my research process to develop, grow, and create new meanings.

**Transit Spaces as Living Inquiry**

As Irwin and Springgay (2008) stated, living inquiry refers to the ongoing living applications of being an artist, researcher, and teacher. In addition, living inquiry is a concrete encounter formed with life experiences through visual and literary meanings rather than only visual and written descriptions (Springgay et al., 2005).

The a/r/tographic journey that I started in Vancouver continued after I returned to my country. I decided to name intermediate spaces, which are for me an embodied and symbolic form of living inquiry and took me to the destinations both on this long-term journey of mine and in my past journeys, as ‘transit spaces.’

*Transit* means crossing from one place to another, carrying, transportation and transfer. It refers to the starting point of a process to the point at which we will arrive. In this sense, it also defines intermediate spaces that include the transmission process between the past and the future (Güneş, 2018). In other words, we can term the

in-between where we are in the transmission process between the departure point and the destination point as ‘transit spaces.’ A point that may feel like an arrival is not an end, but the beginning of another way. They are intermediaries and possible spaces of change and transformation that can deviate to places and ways that we do not expect and, as such, are full of uncertainty. As for a/r/tography, it brings us to spaces of inquiry in between art/writing/teaching/research processes and artist/research/teacher identities. A/r/tography is a research methodology that is situated in the in-between (Irwin & Springgay, 2008).

What I observed in my a/r/tographic walking is that transit spaces become fluid making boundaries blurred. In other words, “things that approach and adjoin each other are ‘close’; they touch each other, their edges become common, the end of one determines the beginning of the other” (Foucault, 2013, p. 46). Thus, transit spaces create new meanings by connecting with each other, communicating with each other, and animating each other. As for me, I engaged in a living inquiry by processing my encounters in transit spaces with artistic and literary expression through the spaces in between my roles of artist, researcher, and teacher, their relationship with each other, their variability, and transitory nature (Springgay et al., 2005). As Barone and Eisner (1997) remind us, artistically grounded research can generally be strengthened through storified narratives and provides proper images that give us frameworks for a clear focus.

I had never thought of writing about myself before I started my a/r/tographic walking. This situation made me feel quite nervous because I was opening up personal and professional layers of my life to everyone: this was not a common situation as an academician in the country in which I live.

Ellis and Bochner (2000) reflect on the significance of personal stories used in research because narrative truth seeks to keep the past alive in the present. Stories show us that the importance and meaning of the past is incomplete, changeable, and reviewable based on the possibilities of our current living conditions. Stories reorganize, redescribe, create, extract, and review something. Meanwhile, there may be mistakes in tone, detail, central topic, and many other issues. However, this feature of storytelling

does not endanger the personal narrative project because a story is not a neutral attempt to reflect the realities of a person’s life. Also, Ellis and Bochner (2000) continued: “Life and narrative are inextricably connected. Life both anticipates telling and draws meaning from it. Narrative is both about living and part of it” (p. 745-746).

As Richardson (2000) indicates, writing is a research method that is a way to reveal something about yourself and your topic. It is also a method of invention and analysis, in other words, a way of discovering and creating. By writing in different ways, we explore new aspects of our research topic and our relationship to these aspects. In addition, one person’s experience of writing and creating life may offer others an opportunity to pursue deeper and perhaps new interpretations of their own lives. These arguments encouraged me to write about myself. Thus, as I wrote about my life, I began to think more and more about who I am and the connections that helped shape me.

According to Irwin and Springgay (2008), the purpose of a/r/tography is to open ourselves and others to new or renewing relationships, concepts, and actions. Another purpose is to be open to possibilities for noticing that which has not been noticed, or is unknown or unseen. Springgay et al. (2005) explain this with a fabric metaphor they used as a way of understanding a/r/tography:

As living inquiry, a/r/tography is a process of opening texts, of seeking understanding by continuing to un/ravel and to stitch back in response. Fabric ...expounds the meaning of an open text. Openings are a foundational part of the cloth—its fibers woven and strands joined together with spaces in/ between. There are openings like holes worn with time, reflecting the fragility and temporality of meaning. Other openings are cut deliberately and act as invitations to enter into and look through, offering new views and perceptions, encouraging dislocations and disruptions. ...These holes are not empty spaces needing to be filled. They are located in space and time, allowing artist/ researcher/teachers to move within the research text, penetrate deeply, and shift the boundaries of perspective. (p. 905-906).

In this context, after I started my a/r/tographic walking, my encounters with transit spaces led me to some general questions about spaces: *How do spaces make us forget their typical function and turn into to an artistic movement? How does art affect our perception? How does our perception affect our art? Can the same kind of spaces create the same emotions?* However, rather than looking for answers to these questions, I am “interested in beginnings, not in endings” (Greene, 1995, p. 15); in other words, I am interested in the rhizomatic relations, and my aim is “to open up to new possibilities of being, not to seek closure” (Ingold, 2013, p. 11).

**Maintenance Hole Coverings**

Vancouver was my first experience to travel internationally. The multinational and multicultural nature of this city, which I had never witnessed before, gave me a rich array of new experiences. With this motivation, I was spending most of my days outside. I was walking, taking the bus, and breathing in the air of the city because “it is, in short, by watching, listening and feeling – by paying attention to what the world has to tell us – that we learn” (Ingold, 2013, p. 1). On one of my a/r/tographic walks, I noticed a maintenance hole covering by chance on one of the streets in the city center.

I walk the same street almost every weekday during the week. However, I did not immediately notice the maintenance hole covering on the street during my walks. This was not an ordinary maintenance hole covering. This common object was turned into a work of art. After doing some research about it, I learned that the design was named *Four Frogs and Four Tadpoles*, created by Susan Point and her daughter Kelly Cannell. They won the maintenance hole covering design competition organized with the theme of “Art Underfoot” in 2004, and it has since been used on a number of maintenance hole coverings around the city (Kronbauer, 2020). When I took my own photo as I passed over the maintenance hole covering, I had no information about the contest or its theme, *Art Underfoot*.

Figure 2: A/r/tographic walking on the street in Vancouver, Canada, 2016 (Photo credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).



As I passed over the warm and friendly images of the frogs and tadpoles on the maintenance hole coverings, contrary to the cold and hard structure of iron, I thought of the formal and vital transformation these creatures underwent during the period from birth to adulthood. In ancient civilizations and many cultures, frogs symbolized cleansing, rebirth, transformation, metamorphosis, and the mysteries of life. They were associated with transition due to their easy passing from water to land within their lifecycle and the mysteries of life and unknowns due to their being active at night (Harris, 2020). The fact that I encountered the frog images on these maintenance hole coverings, which became a common object within this city and were handled with an artistic sensibility, reminded me of “the transient nature of our lives” (Harris, 2020) and the transformations we undergo in terms of knowledge and experience.



Writing, Meaning Making, Art Making

Transit spaces are metaphorically a bridge that enables us to reach from one place to another and with the same purpose brings together many identities, in other words, establishes connection. However, in my opinion, transit spaces that allow us to gain new experiences and shape us are both a “‘gate’ ... the threshold of change” (Irwin, 2013, p. 106) and a metaphor for establishing the connection.

My a/r/tographic walking allowed the spaces between my artist, researcher, and teacher identities to communicate with each other. Thus, the experiences I gained while passing over the maintenance hole coverings on my walks, allowed me to realize the importance of transit spaces for me in my past experiences. In this way, as an artist/ researcher/teacher, I produced a series of paintings called *Road Stories*.

*Everyone says I can't remember, but I think I remember, or so I expect because I was just one year old. I couldn't even walk yet... That's when I had my first experience with transit spaces. In a rural region to the east, living with limited job opportunities, some educational problems, and harsh climate conditions forced my father to find a job in the west, and eventually, he started to work as a driver at a governmental institution in İzmir. For this reason, my family immigrated by train from Kars to İzmir, from one end to the other of Turkey, in 1978. At that time, for a large family with limited belongings, it was the best option to travel by train. When we immigrated, we were 5 siblings, and the oldest was 10 years old. Of course, it must be difficult to deal with so many children, especially during the 39-hour train travel. During this time, my disappearance had not even been noticed. I got out of the wagon by crawling, and while watching the rails between two wagons, I was noticed by two passengers and brought to my family. If they hadn't noticed and brought me to my family, I probably wouldn't have survived. The reason why this memory always comes up while I am in the dark and I hear the sound of the rails is uncertain. But the reason may be that I really remember that memory, or that it has settled in my subconscious because I have listened to this memory repeatedly. What is certain is that this transit space is a threshold for me. While this threshold included leaving behind certain things such as lifestyle, social and cultural traditions, and close and distant relatives, it also opened the gate to a completely different life.*

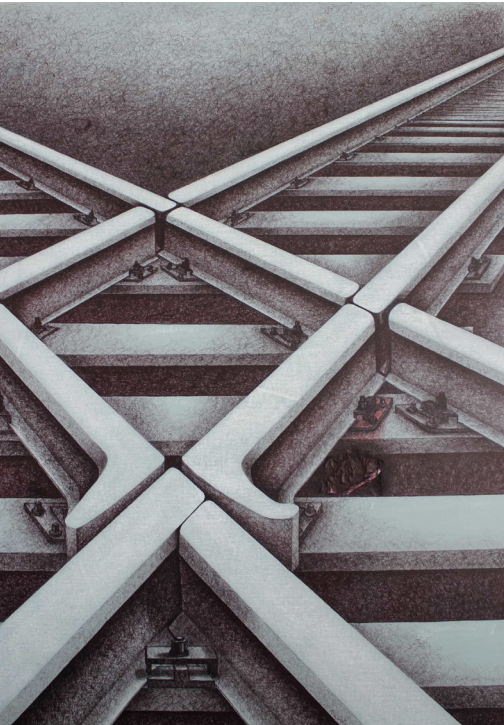
Figure 3: *Road Stories 9*, 30x80 cm., acrylic and ballpoint pen on canvas, 2018 (Image credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).



Train travel has been very important to me, and I explore them as my transit spaces in my art works. Sometimes, I also use ready-made objects in my canvas paintings, along with acrylic and ballpoint pens. Due to its ink being volatile, the ballpoint pen is not a common material in canvas painting, but that is exactly why I use it, because, just like memories, it will fade gradually. In addition, the sound of the scribbling with the pen reminds me of the sound of the train on the rails.

Figure 4: Left. *Road Stories 5*, 100x70 cm., acrylic, ballpoint pen and paper on canvas, 2018 (Image credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).

Figure 5: Right. The same painting (*Road Stories5*), photo was taken in 2021 (Image credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).





Writing about myself felt like an archeology of memory in a sense, as it led me to think more about the meanings of my life experiences. Writing enabled me to explore possibilities for living a meaningful life in the world (Leggo, 2008).

*It's a little hard to remember, but my next long journey was from İzmir to Ankara with my grandfather and at that time. I was four years old. I was going to stay at my grandparents' house for eight months. We would be 6 siblings with the new member joining our family. My sister (a year younger than me) and I were still very little. Naturally, it was increasingly difficult for my mother to take care of all of us. Therefore, it was decided that my grandmother would take care of me for a while. Perhaps our discussions with my little sister were effective in creating this situation. Who knows? My first journey away from my family was a different experience for me, like the other journeys. When I went on this journey, there was chaos in Turkey. The cause of this chaos was the 1980 military coup. I vaguely remember that a few soldiers searched my grandfather's house one morning. I watched what happened, a little surprised, a little curious, and mostly in fear. I would learn things that I didn't understand at the time, but surfaced much later. Books that were forbidden to be read or even to be possessed were searched. How strange that books were searched as if they were some kind of weapon! That's when I realized the power of books, reading, and knowledge.*

I have had many journeys that I consider a turning point in my life and that I have described as a threshold for myself. By using the visual as well as literary writing through a/r/tography, I had the opportunity to take these journeys out of mediocrity and experience them again. Thus, just like Bickel (2008), I turned the autobiographical to the universal by presenting to the public and to the academic research community.

*I was very excited to take the special talent exam of the Department of Fine Arts Education of the university in Edirne. On the other hand, I was very nervous about taking this exam after a nine-hour bus journey I had made alone. I could not sleep during this journey. The night had never been this long. I went there several times after high school, but I always had my big sister with me back then. My big sister was a midwife in a small*

*village in Edirne and I accompanied her for four months so that she would not be alone in the health house. I never imagined that I would come back to Edirne after our last ferryboat journey with my big sister in stormy weather in company with the wild waves of the Bosphorus.*

When the bus had a break, I tried to suppress my excitement by eating the crispy scone that my mother made for the journey. Also, I drank a stale tea I bought. Taking food with us on our journey was considered a tradition. My father took frequent long-distance trips for work, and sometimes it took days for him to return home. Due to financial impossibilities, my mother always prepared food for my father to eat on the journey. She often wrapped it up in newspapers or pages of our school notebooks. Clean, blank pages were invaluable because they were necessary for six children whose education coincided with almost the same period.

Figure 6: Road Stories 1, 80x150 cm., acrylic, ballpoint pen and paper on canvas, 2017 (Image credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).



After I crumpled the pages, I added the used notebook pages to draw the rails - important symbols of my transit spaces. These written pages represent the papers wrapping the food prepared by my mother and accompanying me/us on these journeys.

These papers are an integral part of my transit spaces both in my journey of reaching information and in my journey of change. They quietly accompanied me/us, just like the crumpled blue paper cup I came across when I was passing over the maintenance hole covering.

*I have had a fear of heights since childhood, and I never thought I could get on a plane. However, it was much more frightening to take the Diyarbakır journey alone, which takes about 16 hours by bus. For someone who grew up in İzmir, the culture and geography of Diyarbakır city is quite different. Frankly, I had been very hesitant to go there. However, the enthusiasm and desire to start a job prevailed, and on the last day of the application, I found myself going from the airport to the university by taxi in the scorching desert heat. Everything happened so quickly that although I considered giving up, suddenly, I decided to hand over my documents. It was like everything was a dream, and I would wake up the moment when the wheels of the plane hit the ground.*

*After living with my grandfather and grandmother at the age of four, I did not expect that I would return to Ankara again. After that period, whenever my grandfather came to visit us, I worried that he would take me back there, and I would hide on the day he returned to Ankara. Since then, Ankara has always remained a cold and gloomy city in my memory. Now, I have returned to this city for my doctoral education. Although I was a little worried about returning here, being at this university introduced me to a/r/tography and allowed me to go on a completely different journey than I could have ever imagined: Vancouver.*

*I have been so nervous for days that I have trouble sleeping. How am I going to get there? What am I going to do there? How will I communicate? I am constantly asking myself these questions. Which fear is greater? Is it the 15-hour flight or my fears about how to communicate there? I do not know. A completely different culture and a completely different way of life halfway around the world... That will be a great experience for me...*

Life can suddenly deviate to unexpected roads, as in transit spaces. Although we try to act in line with our plans, life can surprise us. It is like a rail that suddenly bends and joins to another rail. They do not compete with each other and are interconnected.

Figure 7: Road Stories 11, 90x150 cm., acrylic and ballpoint pen on canvas, 2018 (Image credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).



Opening

*My doctorate is finally over, and this period has been pretty hard for me. Now, it is time to return to the university where I work. Of course, my a/r/tographic walking is still going. I pass over again the maintenance hole covering that I have stepped on and passed over many times before without realizing it, but this time in my own country, in Diyarbakır, the city where I live. It is very different from the maintenance hole covering I passed over in Vancouver. Contrary to being treated as an artistic space, it is an object that has been reduced to its basic function. It is the same space, but this time, what it reminds me of is different; there is a feeling of insufficiency. Now, I am connecting with the future, not the past. How can I shape the transit spaces that shaped me through my artist, researcher, and teacher identities?*



Figure 8: A/r/tographic walking on the street in Diyarbakir, Turkey, 2020 (Photo credit: Nurhayat Güneş Aytaç).



Transit spaces and the past, present, and future create vibrations by leaning against each other. While my walking started with a maintenance hole covering in Vancouver, reminding me of my past journeys, another maintenance hole covering in another city made me think about my future journeys. In this way, in my a/r/tographic walking, where “I have become participant observer of my own life” (Bateson, 1997, p. viii), the productive tensions between writing, image, and research enabled me to shape the unseen, the unknown and the untold (Springgay et al., 2005; Irwin, 2004; Springgay, 2004).

According to Fineberg (2014), any work of art worth thinking about is not a simple representation that attempts to ‘resemble’ what we see in the world, but rather a palpable embodiment of a complex set of perceptions and emotions that the artist has based on their own experience.

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From Figure 4: *Photography taken on a blind walk*, 2017 (Photo credit: Leonardo Mendes).

# BLIND WALK AND THE CARTOGRAPHY OF SENSORY SPACES

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**Introduction**

This writing is done as a walk, but not as someone who hurries to reach a certain point, who forgets to feel their own body touching the street. It is also not a walk for those who walk in a shopping mall, a fully lit space where observation and surveillance are constant. The walk in these spaces takes place over distances; the vision travels through space faster than the body itself. This writing is done in drift, like a fisherman who, in the middle of the open sea, in the impossibility of seeing the moon in a dark night sky, touches the wind not to find himself but first to perceive himself.

This writing is done blindly, as if walking with our eyes closed and touching the world; let us open the possibility of space and body to become one. This writing is done blindly because it does not inhabit light, clairvoyance or wisdom, but wandering, experience and invention. The invention does not operate under the sign of sudden enlightenment of instantaneity. The invention implies a duration, a work with remnants, a preparation that takes place inside the plane of visible forms. Inventing an object is, at the same time, a process of self-invention. The invention of the self is, at the same time, the invention of the world. In this case, the invention connects with archeology since it comes from the Latin *invenire*, which means to find relics or archaeological remains (Kastrup, 2012).

To invent here is to perceive ourselves as an archaeologist, excavating and bringing forgotten remains and fragments of ourselves to the surface. This writing is done like the practice that inhabits here: in the darkness and in the desire to affirm it as an inventive process. Darkness becomes an inventive process because it is a contemporary proposal of possibilities; after all, a contemporary is the one who keeps his gaze fixed on his time to perceive not the lights but the dark. Contemporary is, precisely, the one who knows how to see this obscurity, who is able to write by plunging his pen into the darkness of the present (Agamben, 2006/2009).

It is by plunging our pen into the darkness that we wrote this writing and that we made this journey. We are interested in making some cracks in established concepts such as light related to vision and good, or, on the other hand, darkness related to blindness and evil. Does this light really make us see beyond, or does it limit the possibility of



feeling the world with our body? In this regard, Agamben (2006/2009) argues that it is necessary to neutralize the lights that come from the world to discover our darkness in order to make room for the unknown, for what is yet to be discovered.

Therefore, we propose a walking experience with blindfolds in an attempt not to deny sight as an important sense, nor to romanticize blindness, but to affirm the spatial experience as a bodily experience, free from hierarchies of the senses and situations where vision occupies a main position in the body. Above all, we defend the darkness as a zone of creation and fissure in the lights that overshadow us. We believe it is important to state that these practices are carried out by bodies still with the privilege of seeing in a society where vision occupies a higher position in the hierarchy of the senses, which will never account for the real experience of blindness. In addition, we also understand that when defending darkness as an inventive process, we also defend an education for and with the senses, which prioritizes not the subject of total, enlightened knowledge, but one who is constantly walking, wandering, who inhabits the darkness because it is perceived in constant experience. It is a walk with a proposition that makes us more attentive to the process existing in the unknown terrain (Truman & Springgay, 2016).

We invite some scholars to walk with us in this writing who reflect on walking as an aesthetic process (Careri, 2002/2013); who reflect on the dichotomy of light and darkness and the society that makes vision a greater sense (Crary, 2013/2016; Debord, 1967/1997); who produce relations between senses, body and city (Pallasmaa, 1996/2011); who engage with cartography (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1996; Rolnik, 2016); and finally, who talk about a/r/tography (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019; Lee et al., 2019).

**Light and Vision**

To blindfold ourselves and, for a moment, get denied the privilege of seeing in a society where vision is fundamental is an opportunity to move through the between spaces of knowing. Crary (2013/2016) shows us the capitalist desire to steal our sleep with the lights, bringing as an example a 1990 project of a Russian-European space consortium that would launch satellites into space to reflect sunlight to the earth, with the main objective of making our planet illuminated 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is an

example of the lights that immobilize us. The ambitions behind this program bring to mind a whole set of panoptic practices developed over the past two hundred years. That is, they refer to the importance of lighting in the original model of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, which proposed to flood the spaces with lights in order to suppress shadows and create conditions of control thanks to complete visibility (Crary, 2013/2016).

In this case, the lighting is associated with the need to watch, control, categorize, catalog, organize, and rationalize. The first practices of this point of view are brought by Mirzoeff (2016) as the models of surveillance of the enslaved on a plantation, dating from the 15th and 19th centuries, where an authority exercised a kind of panoptic function over the enslaved who worked there. The emergence of this pattern also coincides with the desire to 'see beyond' provoked by the beginning of modernity, illustrated so often in the Renaissance under the technique of perspective and its predominant lighting. The perspective as an illusion of depth, out of the two-dimensional plane and the total illumination of the screen, where nothing is hidden, is part of the same project to illuminate other territories from the navigations that left Europe to explore the environments and bodies that lived in the lands they arrived.

Also, part of the visual project of society is the camera obscura, pointed out by Crary (1990/2012) as an inseparable model of a metaphysics of interiority, a figure both for the observer, who is only nominally a free and sovereign individual, as for a subject privatized confined in an almost domestic space, separated from a public outside world. The author, identifying some functions of this apparatus, points out that one of the most decisive was the separation of the act of seeing from the body of the observer, taking the vision to the Cartesian place of the thinking thing separated from the rest of the body. This optical device made research on the eye possible, as well as the creation of numerous technologies in areas ranging from medicine and biology (such as the microscope), to astronomy (telescope), and to art and communication (photography and cinema).

At the beginning of the 19th century, however, this perspective instituted by the camera obscura gave space to another type of social organization also based on the body where the senses are hierarchized, and the view occupies a greater position. The

subject now turns to the physiology and psychology of vision and attention under the logic of factory production, where each function is partitioned and organized to consume the huge and new amounts of visual images and information that increasingly circulated in that same period (Crary, 1990/2012). The body now, in addition to surveillance and control, is endowed with a certain knowledge that, according to the author, was the basis to form the individual for the demands of mass production.

Currently, these regimes affect us in the form of light and spectacle, in the way that the affirmation of appearance and the affirmation of all human life - that is, social - as simple appearance (Debord, 1967/1997). In that matter, the Western knowledge project in which vision is established as the main sense is the legacy of the society of the spectacle. In this regime of the spectacle, as well as in a Renaissance work, everything is illuminated, everything is revealed and everything is shown. The lights that illuminate our daily lives reveal the overexposed bodies, with their stereotypes of desire, bodies blinded by the light, plastered in need for consumption, in a constant state of wakefulness - we are either watching or being watched (Didi-Huberman, 2002/2011). This state of constant control prevents us from walking and deviating paths, building drifts, stepping on the grass, sitting on the ground, stopping at the intersection, walking against the grain, and touching and being touched by the world.

Then, how can we build escape lines from these controlling lights? How can we inhabit the city as an inventive space? How can we look at this great light and not blind ourselves? The answer comes in and from the darkness.

**Walking in the Darkness**

To deny the lights, the eyes that look at me and the eyes that make me see, deny the constant feeling of vigilance and face the city in its darkness, face the noise and silence of traffic, the aromas, smells and flavors of streets, the skin textures of the city. The predilection for the eyes has never been more evident in the art of architecture than in the last 30 years, in which a type of work that seeks surprising and memorable visual images has predominated. Instead of a plastic and spatial experience based on human existence, architecture has adopted the psychological strategy of advertising and instant

persuasion; the buildings became visual products disconnected from existential depth and sincerity (Pallasmaa, 1996/2011). That is the reason we propose to face the city in the dark because its architecture also observes us. This contemporary city, built by buildings and offices that reinforce the hierarchical model of the senses and that makes vision the most important among those, produces an illumination to the body that inhabits it, creating sensory restrictions and limitations in spatial practice. The contemporary experience, very much guided by the tireless flow of production and dissemination of images, makes the practice with the city more and more an experience of the eye, disconnected from the rest of the body. This experience is also reinforced by the desire for movement, emphasized by the growth of automobiles and the constant acceleration of bodies (Pallasmaa, 1996/2011).

Thus, we seek to inhabit the city not by light, but through the absence of light, casting a shadow over the entire city. In that case, shadows are essential because they make the depth and distance ambiguous, favoring the invitation to tactile experiences and other sensory orders. By denying illumination and acceleration, we propose that one walks around the city blindfolded, exercising the feeling of drift, which means getting lost and realizing that there are many things to learn in the unknown (Truman & Springgay, 2016).

The walking body finds lost pieces of itself in space and leaves traces of its experiences in it. Thus, it was walking that man began to build the natural landscape that surrounded him. It is in this direct relation of the walking body with the environment that makes possible the perception/construction of the space, as well as its complex operation of appropriation and mapping. In this sense, the walk operates in the body of those who practice it, a tearing of themselves and an opening to the world, a perceptive act, but also a creative action; at the same time, it is reading and writing the territory (Careri, 2002/2013).

Therefore, by exercising this blind walk on the city, we want to provoke grooves in the way of walking, exercising slowness when touching the structures and the textures. To discover the city through the whole body and not just the eyes is a sensory experience. In a proposition like that, we confront the city with our bodies; our legs measure the

length of the arch and the width of the square (Pallasmaa, 1996/2011). Lower the body and touch the ground, jump and measure the size of the walls, smell leaves that sprout on the sidewalks, feel the layers of paints and glued papers on the walls, the layers of memories. All of this is like a sensory archeology discovering memories of the structures hidden in the shadows of the city.

To deny the lights of the city is also to escape the macropolitics that control everything that is touched by that light. In this experience, we are proposing to walk as fireflies that edge close to the ground, emitting a very weak light and moving slowly to draw a constellation in the sky. To affirm this from the minuscule example of fireflies is to affirm that in our way of imagining, there is fundamentally a condition for our way of doing politics (Didi-Huberman, 2002/2011).

As fireflies, we produce escape routes from an environment constantly monitored, illuminated and controlled, looking for darkness so that we can share with our next little ones more incendiary flashes of life.

**Blind Walk, A/r/tography and Cartography**

The power of these blind walks is created mainly by the body's willingness to open up to the possibility of sensory contact with objects in a particular space, a body that practices and intervenes with it (and not only on it) at the same time that it perceives the movements, the paths, the tensions and the possibilities created. It makes us think about how vibrating is the body that wants to dive into the geography of affections and, at the same time, invent bridges to make its crossing: bridges of language (Rolnik, 2016). Above all, such a body wishes to tear apart rationalizing maps of desire and, with them, to build new maps, maps of affection. Here, the first methodology that guides the experience of the blind walk is cartography.

Cartography as a research method presupposes another relationship with the object and the process itself. It can be understood as a method because it seeks an analysis of the methodological path; however, as explained by Passos et al. (2015), cartographic walking seeks a reversion in the traditional sense of method, so it is no

longer a walk to reach preset goals, but a walk that outlines the goals on the path/process. In this sense, we are interested in the perception about this journey, about the path that is being created, respecting with it the ramifications, escape lines and the connections that are being built by the process, having as meaning the accompaniment of paths, implication in processes production, network connection or rhizome (Passos et al., 2015).

Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1996) constitute the concept of rhizome from the observation of the structure of some plants whose shoots branched out to different points, creating infinite paths, with countless shapes without a defined direction. For the authors, the rhizome can be understood as a concept that does not close in on itself; it is open to experiences and part of a unit for a collective, considering that each point of the rhizomatic path is fundamental for other new paths to branch. Thus, a rhizomatic concept does not follow a linearity from one point to another, looking for finitude, but it allows itself to experience and get lost in the possible paths and connect knowledge built in the middle of the research. We understand that by placing the research as rhizomatic, we structure an approach that starts from a point that opens up to countless other possible ones, which may arise from the unfolding in the research, during the activities, and in the proposals given by the participants. So, the rhizomatic aspect of the research opens the door to the second methodology that guides this experience, a/r/tography.

When a body opens up to a practice, to an awareness of inquiry, and to a desire to share and build learning, that body is predisposing itself to live an artographic experience. According to LeBlanc and Irwin (2019), “a/r/tography is a generative mode of inquiry concerned with the ways in which art making, researching, teaching, and learning fold and unfold in and through practice and in and through time” (p. 2). In some cases, the a/r/tographic research uses the art practice and the metaphors to inhabit borders, creating, researching and learning ways of understanding, appreciating and representing the world. In this sense, we understand that a/r/tography is a method that takes us to walk not by the light of knowledge, but by the wandering darkness, by the awareness and reflection generated in each experience in the unknown. Like



the cartographer, the a/r/tographer also wants to share life, as their task is to give language to affections that ask for passage (Rolnik, 2016).

It is these two methods that guide the practice of walking blindly through the city. In this practice one person is blindfolded and another person takes them somewhere, in order to experience the path and register sensations through photographs. The blindfold is removed only at the end of the experience, when they return to the place where they began. The blindfolded person does not see the path with their eyes, only with the other senses. Both people walk around the environment; they try to experience the spatiality and the relationships that happen from touch, smell, taste, and hearing. The photographs were taken by both people, the blindfolded and the guide. The pictures are traces of the feelings and sensations lived during the walk and records of the experience.

In this practice, there is a connection and constant learning between the two people and the space involved in the experience. A wandering knowledge of listening and speaking, groping and walking. While the blindfolded person perceives themselves in a space now mediated by darkness, the guide person perceives themselves as a body that sees and at the same time a body that cares, in other words, a body that turns to the other and also perceives itself. There is no hierarchy between who learns or teaches, but a continuous drift, an exchange that takes place in practice, in reflection, and in shared relationships. Below is a narrative of a blind walking practice carried out from two perspectives: the blindfolded person and the guide person.

Experience Narrative 1<sup>ii</sup>

*Blindfolded person: Adriano Morais*

Sunday morning and undecided weather did not know whether it was raining or sunny. As agreed, Leo showed up at home willing to take me blindfolded somewhere unknown by me. He showed up with a bicycle and soon I discovered that I would venture down the avenues again on a bicycle with my eyes blindfolded. We waited for the rain to

ii This practice was carried out in 2017, before the Covid-19 pandemic.

stop and left around eleven in the morning. I put the blindfold on my eyes, got my camera, climbed on the bike with Leo and he started to ride. We were in my neighborhood, so I felt that Leo was afraid that the chosen place would not bring so many sensations. I said to him that any place was a good place. Until a certain moment I knew where we were going even though I was blindfolded. Due to the tiredness of cycling, we climbed a slope close to the house on foot, crossed Av. Bernardo Manoel<sup>iii</sup> with very fast steps and walked on the deteriorated cycle lane of the avenue (at a certain moment, we almost ran into a hole).

At some point, we had the idea of using the bicycle as a kind of guide object: while Leo pushed it holding one side of the handlebars, I held the other, let myself be guided and felt when the tire in front of it touched any elevation or hole. After a certain moment, I realized that I was in the Catholic church in my neighborhood due to the loud music and the conversations that came from the square. Leo decided to stay there, and when I said that I knew where we were, he wanted to take me to another place so that I would not use my visual memories to understand the place. We got on the bike again and set off for another location.

Figure 1: Left. Photography taken on a blind walk, 2017 (photo credit: Adriano Morais).



Figure 2: Right. Photography taken on a blind walk, 2017 (photo credit: Adriano Morais).



iii An avenue situated on Fortaleza, a city in northwest of Brazil.

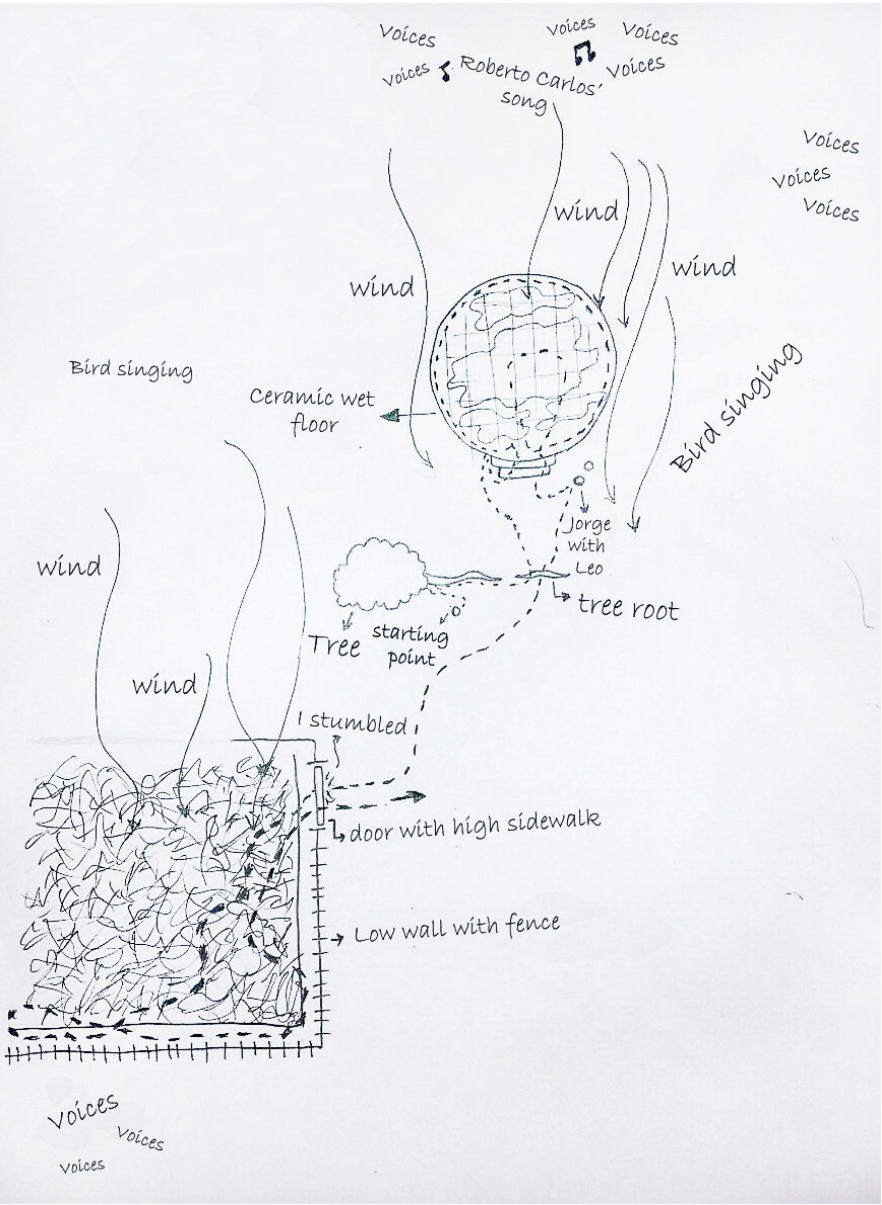
This experience caused an enormous change in the perception of time, and I thought for an instant that I had already left the house at least an hour before, but in fact, not even half an hour had passed when we arrived at the other chosen place. We got off the bike, and soon I came across a tree that was wet, easily peeled off its bark, and smelled it. It was almost a musty scent. I was feeling it, and I noticed that its roots had come out of the earth. I almost tripped over one of them. I walked a bit, and I realized that there was an open space, with a lot of wind and at a certain distance several people were laughing, talking and listening to a Roberto Carlos song. I suspected they were drinking. I came across a small sidewalk, climbed it, and then came across what I thought was another one. It was a set of stairs. I went up slowly. I touched the floor and realized it was ceramic; it had a lot of water, and it was a little cold. I took off my slippers and walked on that strange floor present in the middle of nowhere. I thought at one point that I was walking inside an abandoned house, but I soon reached the bottom of the floor. So I decided to go around the floor, and I realized that I was soon back to the starting place. When I touched my flip flops again, I discovered that I was in a circular structure.

While practicing that space, I noticed that Leonardo was talking to someone who asked questions about me and what I was doing. Leo replied that I was doing research and that I was blindfolded to be able to perceive the space without any visual information. At a certain moment I heard the voice of an unknown person saying: "the guy is blind, stop doing this with him". I found it interesting and went to meet the two to join the conversation. I explained the experience to him. The guy in question, named Jorge, had a deficiency in his leg and found the work we were doing very interesting. Jorge then asked if he could take me to another space, and I agreed. With a few strides, we were in another location. We opened a gate and entered.

Right from the start, I felt a lawn and a very low wall surrounded by a fence, and I immediately deduced that I was on a football field. The grass was very wet and prickly; I heard a lot of bird sounds and rarely anyone's voice. It started to rain: thick drops well away from each other.

After that, I invited Leo to leave. I said goodbye to Jorge, and he asked me to remove the blindfold so that I would know him and so he could know me looking into my eyes. I was tempted to do that, but if I did, I would have seen that place, and I would have seen who Jorge is. I preferred to keep what I lived with the senses at the edges of the known, being able to recreate a space that even if I pass through it and see it, it will never be the same space that I felt. When I got home, I took the blindfold off and created a map of the sensations I experienced.

Figure 3: Map of the sensations, Adriano Moraes, Drawing 2017, (Image credit: Adriano Moraes).



Experience Narrative 2

*Guide Person: Leonardo Mendes*

I was invited by my friend Adriano Morais, to participate in a blind walking experience somewhere in the city of Fortaleza. It was Sunday; the day was a little cloudy with small incidences of rain, so I used my bicycle to take him to the destination I had planned. During the rides, I tried to stretch the path a little until the arrival of the predicted location, turning in several corners and sometimes going on foot during part of the route. We had left the starting point around 10 minutes earlier when Adriano reported that it seemed a lot longer than it actually was. I imagined that the notion of space-time was compromised by the use of the blindfold.

The destination I chose as a proposal was a square in a neighborhood called Parque Dois Irmãos, at Fortaleza, Ceara - Brazil. The square was divided into an area for pedestrians and cyclists and a large soccer field nearby. I found it convenient for the day and the peculiarities of the space. On our arrival, I heard comments from a group of drunk people who were in the square referring to Adriano, who was having the first impressions of the place amid the blind walk, the sensations, and photographs.

A few minutes later, a young man found that unusual activity interesting in the place and approached it with curiosity. He asked me about it, and I explained that it was an experience of a blind walk for research. He was responsible for the square that was recently renovated, and he proposed that we enter the field to get a better impression of the place. After the end of the experience in the square, amid a few drops of rain, we returned to the starting point. Adriano removed his blindfold only at home.

The experience of guiding someone without vision brought me several reflections on how people with some kind of visual limitation manage to guide themselves and perceive the world around them. I realized that perception and senses change radically, especially when you have vision but are deprived of it.

The Starting and Ending Point

Even knowing the enormous difficulty in getting out of the lights, we understand that in these blind walking practices we build openings both in the way of inhabiting the

city, and in the way of building relationships and sharing knowledge. The blind walk is an a/r/tographic experience because it allows us to establish different connections with the world, creating a process of understanding our body as a part of the environment that surrounds us (Lee et al., 2019). Walking with a proposition as indicated by Truman & Springgay (2016), is a provocative way of making these connections between our body and the surroundings. Think and feel the world with our other senses, without the vision; it is a proposition that puts us in a border movement, taking off the possibilities that are more comfortable for us and letting our whole body take control of the experience in a new and strange way.

Finally, we know that this narrative fails to account for the totality of that experience and its potential. Our proposal in this chapter is to open up possibilities for experiences that can lead to the creation of other perceptions, developments, and practices. We emphasize that our intention is not to deny vision as an important sense, as we understand that there have been significant advances in technologies, sciences, and arts that recognized the importance of vision. With this proposition, our interest is to create opportunities to reflect and to discover the world through other perspectives and senses, opening possibilities to unfold learnings from the darkness.

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Figure 1: Aerial view of Ouro Preto (Photo credit: Daniel Clark Orey).

# EXPLORING THE CURVES ON THE WALL OF THE COLÉGIO ARQUIDIOCESANO IN AN ETHNOMODELING PERSPECTIVE<sup>i</sup>

Daniel Clark Orey & Milton Rosa

<sup>i</sup> This chapter presents the readers with reflections on our experiences based on our previous investigations and feedback related to math trails and ethnomodeling, which was published in Rosa and Orey (2018).

## Initial Considerations

The *Project Open Museum – Living City* was developed and inaugurated in September 2005 by the mayor of the City of Ouro Preto<sup>ii</sup>, in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. It was designed to encourage people to take pride in their city as well to enhance its historical heritage. This project also enabled the detailed survey of the residential collection and the record of three centuries of life, history, and culture that today are stamped on plaques on the façades of the houses and on interpretive panels in strategic points of the city. Figure 1 shows an aerial view of Ouro Preto.

As part of this project, routes in the historic center of Ouro Preto were developed to encourage people to walk in different neighborhoods and regions of the city. These walks were designed to encourage both the inhabitants and tourists alike to see, explore, and read plaques placed on important buildings, homes, and historical points of interest throughout the city. Figure 2 shows a plaque placed on the historical Fountain Passo de Antonio Dias.

This context allowed us to include these walks in an *Ethnomathematics* Course offered at our university by developing these trails that helps us to document numerous opportunities for conducting *ethnomodeling*<sup>iii</sup> research and collaborating with numerous students and with the Ouro Preto Schools. In these walks students began to perceive mathematical ideas, concepts, procedures, and practices in simple cultural artifacts, such as doors, sculptural details, walls, and paving materials of Ouro Preto. In this regard, Rosa and Orey (2016) state that:

There is an interesting pedagogical tool named a Math Trail that is used to show how to connect our thinking to the mathematics found in the cultural context of

<sup>ii</sup> Ouro Preto was the first Brazilian city to be declared by the United Nations as a Historical and Cultural Heritage of Humanity, in 1980.

<sup>iii</sup> According to Rosa and Orey (2018), ethnomodeling is a process of elaboration of problems and questions growing from real situations that form an image or sense of an idealized version of the mathema. The focus of this perspective essentially forms a critical analysis of the generation and production of knowledge (creativity), and forms an intellectual process for its production, the social mechanisms of institutionalization of knowledge (academics), and its transmission (education).

Figure 2: Plaque on a Fountain  
Passo do Antonio Dias  
(Image Source: <https://www.umasenhoraviagem.com/2018/11/ouro-preto-dicas-o-que-fazer.html>).



a neighborhood school. Activities with the trail demonstrate ways to get students working with each other in order to have them become active learners and to increase respect for their own community. Together with mathematical modelling, we have used this perspective in diverse countries such as Nepal, the United States, and Brazil (p. 12).

In this context, Shockey et al. (2015) described the development of *math trails* in Ouro Preto. During these tours, students explored local artifacts by looking for mathematical ideas, procedures, and practices developed locally. One such occurrence was in an amphitheater where students walked from toe to heel to measure the circumference and diameter of the theater floor.

In another development of these *math trails*, what we first observed was an interesting pattern in the wall of the Colégio Arquidiocesano (Archdiocesan College) along Rua Alvarenga, in Ouro Preto, which became at first a debate, then our investigative passion. Figure 3 shows the architectural pattern on the wall of the Colégio Arquidiocesano on the Rua Alvarenga, in Ouro Preto, in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil.

In 1927, the Colégio Arquidiocesano of Ouro Preto was founded by Archbishop Dom Helvécio Gomes de Oliveira, functioning as a school in the old palace of the Bishops, in Mariana, in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. In this same year, Archbishop

Figure 3: Curves on the Wall of the Colégio Arquidiocesano (Photo credit: Daniel Clark Orey).

Figure 4: Buildings of Colégio Arquidiocesano (Source: [http://www.arquidiocesano.com/?page\\_id=14](http://www.arquidiocesano.com/?page_id=14))



Dom Helvécio found great cooperation in Ouro Preto and began the construction of this school building on the Rua Alvarenga.

This project was accomplished through developing cooperation with with the Lyceum Society of Ouro Preto, and with the participation of many local investors. In 1933, the current collection of buildings of this school was constructed and inaugurated, and one year later, in 1934, this school started its activities. Figure 4 shows the current collection of buildings of Colégio Arquidiocesano. The wall can be seen at the bottom left of this figure.

In this regard, we would like to share elements of our observations and discussions about the architectural pattern in the wall of Colégio Arquidiocesano that may encourage people to undertake similar explorations in their own communities.

An Ethnomodelling Perspective

Mathematics is a dynamic, changing, and active system of knowledge; however, current research in ethnomodeling only furthers this supposition. This context enabled Rosa and Orey (2018) to define ethnomodeling as the “study of mathematical phenomena within a culture because it is a culturally bound social construct while ethnomodelling brings cultural aspects of mathematics into the mathematical modelling process” (p. 171).

The *ethnomodelling* process uses the reality and interests of the students versus the traditional model of instruction, which makes use of external values and curriculum without context or meaning. Therefore, the learning of mathematics does not mean that students passively receive or memorize ready-made concepts in prepackaged forms (Rosa & Orey, 2018). According to Freire (1998), this educational approach is named the banking model of education.



The learning of mathematics should be like that of becoming an artist or an athlete, as in learning how to play soccer, mastering a videogame, or writing a poem. Thus, from an ethnomodelling perspective, the construction of mathematical knowledge should incorporate the reality, daily life, and context of the individual. This approach should begin by placing new situations and problems in front of learners for them to master within their own context of their unique cultural and experiential reality (Rosa, 2010). It is helping them answer the question: “Why is this so?”.

It is only on this basis that new mathematics knowledge can be learned for the *construction* or *deconstruction* of individuals’ links to the larger mathematical universe (Rosa & Orey, 2016). It is with a sight towards the understanding, comprehension, and resolution of problems that we use mathematics. Beginning the journey from the students’ experience is logical and pedagogically sound. For these reasons, it is the intellectual activity of the students that must come as close as it can to that done by the very people who use mathematics in the real world. Like all empowered users of mathematics, students must be given experiences to enable them to learn how to: a) break a problem situation into manageable parts, b) create their own hypothesis, c) test the hypothesis they developed, d) correct their hypothesis, and e) make transference and generalizations to their own reality (Rosa & Orey, 2013).

Unfortunately, academic mathematics has become the major way in which to teach, and is the sole outcome of most institutions, what Freire (1998) referred to as the banking model, in which students face prior experiences as often passive learners and come to mathematics classes with a marked level of anxiety and distaste for the subject. Therefore, Rosa (2010) affirms that students need to feel empowered in order to participate in the decision-making processes that are often mathematically based.

A learning environment that involves students in mathematics empowers individuals to truly understand and interpret their own ideas and findings. Previous experiences that students possess take on new forms of mathematical knowledge by evolving innovative ideas and products when they try to solve problems that exist in their own communities (Rosa & Orey, 2014).

This approach often stands as a creation that incorporates the historical-cultural nature of mathematical knowledge by assisting students to reflect on the processes that they have learned with expectations that require them to demonstrate their thoughts and ideas to others. As they gain more confidence in developing new ideas for themselves, they can show the presence of mathematics in their daily lives (D’Ambrosio, 2002).

For example, Freire (1998) affirms that people create further explanations and alternative ways to work within a mathematically based reality through a *transforming action*. This action looks to reduce its degree of complexity through the choice of a system<sup>iv</sup> that it represents. In this isolated system, representations of this reality are often derived that enable the elaboration of ongoing strategies that *explore*, *explain*, and *increase* comprehension.

The study of the actions in this system allows us to reflect on the possibilities inherent within it and for it to become the object of critical analysis by the very learners themselves (D’Ambrosio, 2006). We define the process by which we *consider*, *analyze*, and *make* ongoing critical reflections on a system that is taken from our reality by modeling (Rosa & Orey, 2013). The applications are inserted as part of the ethnomodelling and are made through the system’s reality in which they instituted *ethnomodels* that:

(...) represent these systems are representations that help the members of these groups to understand and comprehend the world by using small units of information, named *ethnomodels*, which link their cultural heritage with the development of the mathematical practice. This approach helps the organization of the pedagogical action that occurs in classrooms through the use of the local aspects of these mathematical practices. (Rosa & Orey, 2015, p. 140)

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<sup>iv</sup> According to Rosa e Orey (2013), a system is a part of reality considered integrally. It is a set of elements taken from the reality and the interrelationships between these components.

These ethnomodels depict information and reflect observations that represent the local population’s own vocabulary, scientific and mathematical knowledge, conceptual categories, language of expression, and cultural belief systems. It also deals with a diversity of mathematical knowledge and a diversity of traditions that respects and includes the locals’ point of view (Rosa & Orey, 2015). Similarly, Albanese (2015), affirms that ethnomodels are cultural models and tools that help us to understand local knowledge that represents internal and consistent representations of mathematical knowledge that is socially constructed and shared by the members of distinct cultural groups.

This approach influences future analyses and reflections on the local mathematical knowledge because ongoing systems are an integral part of the considered reality, which is a set of features that include the interrelatedness between these essential components. In acquiring knowledge by using ethnomodelling, we learn how to work with innovative approaches and ideas by which we construct our own representations of the systems or problems under study. It is necessary that the established relations constructed between the system and its representations make the research valid.

This can be done through analyses of various ethnomodels that often end up guiding this pedagogy. Through significant and motivating pedagogical activities, learning itself becomes a creative and exploratory mathematical reality. The measure by which this is incorporated into knowledge and concepts that are essential for future performance in society are true marks of success. However, this incorporation is not given through simple, passive, or blind adhesion to a teacher or instructional materials (Rosa, 2010).

In so doing, ethnomodeling has as a main objective the development of quality reflections and the true participation of the learners so that they may be better able to trace parallels between their experiences and own reality. So, it is that we see modeling fitting into ethnomodeling-based projects being developed worldwide. This educational approach includes thinking in a critical and historical nature because it uses representations that must underlie the ethnomodeling process (Rosa & Orey, 2019).

Involvement in ethnomodeling requires an inner transformation that manifests itself as action when questions are both formulated and answered. Engaged hunger is a manifestation of this transformational process that seeks transcendence, which we observe when people engage in ethnomodeling activities. Consequently, teachers learn to instigate an inquiry process by demonstrating possible connections for learners to required school mathematical content (Rosa & Orey, 2013).

Thus, learners become deeply involved in the questions being posed, and actively contribute to the direction of their learning when they perceive what is making true meaning for them in a meaningful learning environment. Then, students are better able to gain true mathematical problem-solving experience and thereby develop autonomous attitudes and mathematical abilities (D’Ambrosio, 2007). Thus, this process enables students to recognize and learn to pose new questions for problems they face daily.

Ethnomodeling as part of this pedagogical action encourages teachers and educators to create a climate whereby errors that naturally occur are part of a teaching-learning process (Rosa, 2010). In this way, ethnomodeling becomes significant, especially when ethnomodels are elaborated and demonstrated (Rosa & Orey, 2019). Students learn as they apply their ethnomodels and learn to see mathematics as study field truly humanistic, practical, and pedagogically sound. This approach produces, indeed develops, further ethnomodels that are equally interesting and useful.

According to Rosa and Orey (2014), this process enables learners to learn how to engage in a process of continual modification of their decisions, to alter their reflections in order to develop mature discussions, and create ongoing analysis to develop conclusions that lead to the decision-making process. After further reflections, discussions, analyses, and conclusions have taken place, the presented models are presented, and the findings are shared with peers and colleagues.

When we consider that learners actively construct meaning, especially in situations found outside of schools help them to discover new ideas and master complex concepts, which enable the construction and mastery of mathematical concepts (Lewis &

Lewis, 1998). Thus, ethnomodeling is the study of problems or situations like a language for understanding, simplification, and resolution with sights for a possible forecast or modification of the studied object (Rosa & Orey, 2019).

In this pedagogical action related to developing *stations* and *math trails*, mathematics becomes a realistic tool for students that allows them to develop and use questions and techniques that are part of their own real-world environment. This process of creating or redefining conditions is important because students can really develop a deeper understanding of a phenomenon and have opportunities to act for its realistic transformation (Owens et al., 2003).

For example, Rosa and Orey (2014) stated that house numbering systems provide rich opportunities for exploring numbers systems and measurement concepts on the streets of Ouro Preto. This context enabled us to bring students “from rural areas to walk a math trail constructed in their one street town of at most fifty buildings. Most homes had no numbers at all” (p. 38). In this approach of this *math trail*:

Elementary students had drawn maps of [their] town to show houses marked with the names of those living there. A few homes did have numbers, but there was no apparent order to the numbering system. The students’ teacher organized an investigation of house numbering-systems and asked the students to write letters to the town mayor proposing a system for a new numbering system for the community. The result was a success – the mayor agreed with the students’ plan, and he sent workers out to place numbers on the buildings in the town! (p. 38)

This powerful and valid introduction to ethnomodeling exposed students to a diversity of realistic and engaging problems and ethnomodels. These can include the mathematical interpretations of problems that, in turn, are representations of the systems under study. Therefore, when we analyze a given situation for its mathematical perspective, the teaching-learning process itself stimulates thought, not just the mere memorization of basic facts and algorithms (Rosa & Orey, 2016).

In this context, educators and teachers must help students work with significant and contextualized mathematics, which consists of two processes: the creation of school

mathematics and the application of mathematics to solve questions outside the field of mathematics (interdisciplinary) to connect ideas within mathematics and other intellectual activity (ethnomodels). In other words, students need to work on authentic situations, such as the curves on the walls of Colégio Arquidiocesano, and real-life problems in order to connect their previous knowledge with the academic knowledge acquired in mathematics classrooms.

**Searching for Ethnomodels of the Curves in the Wall of Colégio Arquidiocesano**

It must be noted here that we were interested in checking if we could prove that the shape found on the curves on the wall of Colégio Arquidiocesano was either a series of exponential curves, parabolas, or a series of catenaries. What happened on the streets of Ouro Preto was something altogether surprising because the final results, important as they are, were eclipsed by the opportunity to discuss and debate about exponential curves, parabolas, and catenaries that contributed to the development of mathematical debates between us and our students. Figure 5 shows the patterns of the curves on the wall of this college.

As the work progressed, we had discussions with passersby as we worked on the ethnomodels. Neighbors would ask what we were doing, and in exchange for the history and context that they shared, in so doing, we shared the mathematical concepts and the patterns that many had never taken even the slightest notice of on their day-to-day walks along the Alvarenga street in Ouro Preto. This was the extremely natural and fluid essence of dialogical aspects of ethnomodeling.

The neighbors shared the history and stories of their experience growing up there. What we attempt to recreate here is our debates about mathematical processes by which we came to discuss and determine several ethnomodels for the curves on the wall of this college. Thus, by observing the architectural drawing of the façade of Colégio Arquidiocesano, we were able to determine ways to relate the functions of these curves to the patterns found on the wall of this college.



Figure 5: Left. *The Pattern of the Curves on the Wall* (Photo credit: Daniel Orey).



Figure 6: Right. *One section of the architectural pattern of the curves on the wall* (Photo credit: Daniel Clark Orey).



Then, it was discussed that the outlines of these curves might have certain similarities to either exponential, parabola, or a catenary. Students were interested in this debate and agreed to investigate these curves. Figure 6 shows one section of the architectural pattern of the curves on the wall of this college.

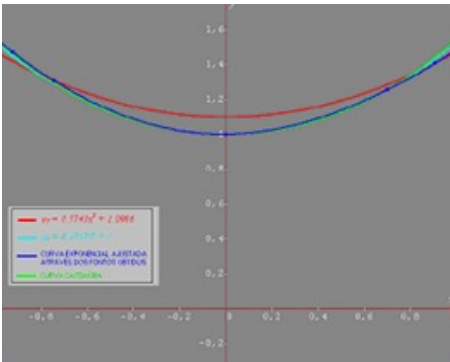
Posteriorly, in order to have the necessary arguments to answer this conjecture, some ethnomodels were elaborated and analyzed, and discussed. Initially, some curves were randomly selected on the wall of the college, and an x-y coordinate system was constructed using some of its parts as a plane. Strings were used to determine the x and y axes. Figure 7 shows the curve on a part of the wall of Colégio Arquidiocesano with the strings that represent the x and y axes.

After a brief discussion between us and the students, it was decided that the origin of the x-y coordinate system would be placed on the lowest point of the curve. At that point, there was no certainty if the lowest point was the *vertex* or the *apex* of the curve. Subsequently, some points were selected and placed on this curve, and then their coordinates were calculated, and values were determined for each point. By continuing with these procedures, some necessary adjustments were made to the points of the selected curves in order to have an accurate value of their coordinates.

Then, the points placed on the selected curves on the wall were placed in distinct tables for further analysis. The first ethnomodel was related to the adjustment of an exponential curve to a catenary, and the second ethnomodel was related to the adjustment of a quadratic function to a catenary. Figure 8 shows a graph of the exponential, parabola, and catenary curves.

Figure 7: Left. *Curve on the wall of Colégio Arquidiocesano with the x and y axes* (Photo credit: Daniel Clark Orey).

Figure 8: Right. *Graphs of three curves: exponential (blue), parabola (red), and catenary (green).* (Photo credit: Rosa and Orey (2013, p. 18)).



We observed that the graph of the exponential function (blue) is similar to the graph of the catenary function (green). On the other hand, we also obtained a quadratic function (red) whose graph is also similar to the graph of the catenary function (green). It is important to emphasize that, by observing the architectonic design on the curves of the wall of the Colégio Arquidiocesano, we were trying to relate them to several curves. Initially, we tried to check the similarity that seems to exist between these shapes and the exponential curve when we consider the shapes on the wall as a whole. Further, by analyzing these shapes individually, we were trying to relate them to exponential curves, parabolas, and catenaries.

However, we would like to highlight that when we visualized the shapes in only one part of the curve on the wall, we could observe the existence of similarities between exponential curves, parabolas, and catenaries. In this regard, after examining the data collected when we measured various curves on the wall of this college and trying to fit them into the exponential and quadratic functions through the development of ethnomodels we came to the conclusion that the curves on the wall of the Colégio Arquidiocesano was an approximation of the catenary curve.

It is important to emphasize that recently, the school spent a minor fortune to repaint, which for us, once the pandemic is over, offers another question: “How much paint was used to paint the arches on the wall of the school?”. Figure 9 shows the curves of the Colégio Arquidiocesano repainted.

Figure 9A: Left. *Curves of the Colégio Arquidiocesano repainted* (Photo credit: Daniel Clark Orey).

Figure 6: Right. *One section of the architectural pattern of the curves on the wall* (Photo credit: Daniel Clark Orey).



In so doing, Orey (2000) highlights that part of the process of learning to elaborate ethnomodels helps learners to understand how diverse phenomena occur as well as how the implications of the interrelation influence selections in systems through a holistic study of a given reality. It is not possible to explain, to know, to understand, or to carry out the reality outside of a truly holistic<sup>v</sup> context because they are no more than partial or incomplete visions of reality unless they can be seen as connected.

Exemplifying the Application of Catenaries and Parabolic Curves

Regarding this discussion, we would like to share some examples that may help to engender creativity in students. In this context, this is why the St. Louis Gateway Arch takes the shape of a catenary, while the cables on a suspension bridge form a parabola, which is also the result of the physics of each situation.

By applying mathematical concepts, Rosa and Orey (2013) stated that people are able to see that the catenary is the solution to a differential equation that describes a shape that directs the force of its own weight along its own curve so that, if hanging, it is pulled into that shape, and, if standing upright, it can support it itself. Figure 10 shows the Gateway Arch, in Saint Louis, Missouri, which has the shape of an inverted catenary.

<sup>v</sup> A holistic context consists essentially of a critical analysis of the generation (creativity) of knowledge, and the intellectual process of its production. The focus on history analyzes the social mechanism and institutionalization of knowledge (academics), and its transmission and diffusion (Rosa, 2010).

Figure 10: Left. *The Saint Louis Gateway Arch* (Photo credit: Rick Dikeman).

Figure 11: Right. *Construction of the Brooklyn Bridge* (Source: Museum of New York)



Conversely, according to Rosa and Orey (2013), the parabola does not have the same property, but is the solution of other important equations that describe other situations. For example, in nature, approximations of parabolas are found in any number of diverse situations. In the history of physics, there is the trajectory of a particle or body in motion under the influence of a uniform gravitational field without air resistance, such as the parabolic trajectory of baseball and projectiles. Parabolic shapes are also found in several physical situations, such as parabolic reflectors commonly observed in microwave or satellite dish antennas.

The mathematical properties of parabolas make them excellent models for physical objects in which a focusing component is essential. It can be shown that parallel lines drawn on the inside of any parabola are reflected from the curve of the parabola to its focus (Rosa & Orey, 2013). Thus, many telescopes and satellite television receivers are designed using parabolic reflection properties.

Parabolas also model the motion of a body in free fall towards the surface of the earth and are used in the design of bridges and other structures involving arches. In light of the facts discussed previously, the following question was formulated: “Do the cables of suspension bridges have a catenary shape?”.

The answer to the above question is no. In this case, it is interesting to note that when suspension bridges are constructed, before the suspension cables are tied to the deck below them, they initially have a hyperbolic cosine function shape, that is, the shape of a catenary (Rosa & Orey, 2013). This happens when the structure of the bridge

is being built, and when the main cables are attached to the towers and then, the cables are attached to the deck with hangers. Figure 11 shows the construction proceeds on the Brooklyn Bridge, in 1881, in New York.

In this regard, Rosa and Orey (2013) affirm that the cable of a suspension bridge is under tension from holding up the bridge. The cable is also under the influence of a uniform load, that is, the deck of the bridge, which makes the cable to be deformed towards a parabolic shape. This deformation happens because the weight of the deck is equally distributed on the curve. According to this context, we conclude that the catenary curves under its own weight while the parabola curves under its own weight and from holding up the weight of the deck at the same time.

Final Considerations

Any study of ethnomodelling represents a powerful means for validating contextualized mathematical ideas, procedures, and practices. This perspective forms the basis for significant contributions of a Freirean-based pedagogical action perspective in re-conceiving the discipline of mathematics. The use of Freire’s (1998) dialogical methodology is seen as essential in developing the curricular praxis of mathematical modes by investigating the mathematics that is part of students’ culture and constructing a curriculum that enables the enrichment of mathematical knowledge.

The use of ethnomodeling as pedagogical action for the teaching-learning of mathematics values the tacit knowledge of the mathematical practices of the members of the community by developing students’ capacity to assess the process of elaborating a mathematical model in its different applications and contexts by having started with the social context, reality and interests of the students. In the case of this chapter, the context in which ethnomodels arose was related to the curves on the wall of the Colégio Arquidiocesano.

In accordance to this context, ethnomodeling offers a powerful means for validating a student's real-life experiences and gives them tools to become critical participants in their community through their participation in *math trails*. In this process, the discussion between teachers and students about the efficiency and relevance of

mathematics in distinct and diverse contexts should permeate instructional activities.

Hence, Rosa and Orey (2016) emphasize that:

This approach allowed students the opportunity to learn and use mathematics in order to make a transformation and a contribution to the community. The idea of learning mathematics and giving back to one's community at the same time is motivating, because it gives all of us reason for hope and a feeling of belonging and connection. (p. 14)

Similarly, the discussions about ethnomodels allowed us to see that there are relevant mathematical reasons why the curves used in the architecture of the wall would be more like catenaries than parabolas. From the results of this investigation, we understand that mathematics that defines the required shape of curves comes from real physical laws as the catenary does, while the parabola is much more of an idealized mathematical abstraction.

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