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**ONE-CANVAS METHOD: ART MAKING THAT TRANSFORMS
ON ONE SURFACE OVER A SUSTAINED PERIOD OF TIME**

A DISSERTATION

submitted by

ABBE MILLER

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

LESLEY UNIVERSITY
May 16, 2020



Graduate School of Arts & Social Sciences
Ph.D. in Expressive Therapies Program

DISSERTATION APPROVAL FORM

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Dissertation Title: ONE-CANVAS METHOD: ART MAKING THAT TRANSFORMS ON ONE SURFACE OVER A SUSTAINED PERIOD OF TIME

Approvals

In the judgment of the following signatories, this Dissertation meets the academic standards that have been established for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

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I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

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I hereby accept the recommendation of the Dissertation Committee and its Chairperson.

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STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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SIGNED: Azne Miller

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ABSTRACT

The one-canvas method is a practice of ongoing art making on one surface for a sustained period of time. Expanding on a pilot study, this inquiry followed an art-based research design guided by three questions: *1) Are there art therapy qualities that are unique to the one-canvas assemblage painting process? 2) What are the therapeutic qualities of interim periods during one-canvas work? 3) Can digital media that is used to document one-canvas processes further appreciation and understanding of therapeutic arts modalities?* Five adult participants including myself, used the method over three sessions. Individual summary videos that integrated three modes of digital media documentation were shared as the basis for review at a fourth session. Four primary outcomes emerged: Engaging with the one-canvas method (1) provided opportunities to experience a continuous process of change and transformation; (2) generated an enhanced sense of an integral dynamic between new creations and the loss of previous ones; (3) the time between sessions was significant; and, 4) digital media made notable contributions.

Keywords: one-canvas painting, sustained art making, transformation, change

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The one-canvas method is a distinct approach to ongoing art making on one surface for a sustained period of time. The images that are covered over are as valuable as the final form of the artwork. For many years, I have been passionate about exploring the interplay between image making and transfiguration, perhaps reflecting my own effort to decipher change processes as an artist through creative expression. Continuing to perfect this method has been significant within my own practice and for those who I teach, work with, and supervise.

Initially, I was exposed to ongoing art making methods where the painting surface expanded by adding sheets of paper. I began to take sequential photographs, essentially tracking the extensive ways that I was covering images in order to alter them. These acts deepened the perceptions I carry as an artist, and simultaneously, I began to rigorously cultivate my identity as an artist-art therapist. Attending Pat Allen's art-based research presentation on the *Sabbath Bride* (1999), a painting that evolved and grew larger over time, was inspiring. I experimented for twelve years with various paradigms and materials that could sustain image-making where forms are repeatedly covered over. As I have used this approach, adaptations to materials, methods, and documenting have been made, but the core concept of deeply respecting images as a collaborator in creative process, has remained as its heart.

During one-canvas work a single surface becomes covered with many layers of paint and assemblage, over long periods of time. Sequential photography preserves

evolution in memory, such that imagery that is re-worked still remains 'present' underneath the later configurations. There are often prolonged intervals between art making sessions, which I describe as *interim* periods. While using a comparable method for thesis work, Jo Rice (1987) keenly observed that as her painting unfolded, it created a transformational story-line that emerged from covered images *and* their compositions. While all art making is essentially concerned with process, this model encourages anyone who used it to stay open to what emerges and welcomes the transfiguration of any and all imagery.

I use this approach all the time. For the past eight years I have delved into rigorous study and listened to others who were integrating the process into clinical work, as educators, and for personal reflection. I have examined the role of the art therapist during one-canvas work, and while I have begun to conceptualize how another's skillful presence can enhance the process, this study primarily focused on the overarching method. To date, there have been only a handful of published articles focusing on one-canvas art making. They all examine the approach as a part of art-based supervision, which includes the role of the art therapy supervisor. My pilot study looked at one component of the process; the interim period. The only prior research about the model as a whole, is Rice's (1987). Thus, the Literature Review - Chapter II, includes an examination of prior works that are relevant to the method's four key components: art making over time using paint and assemblage on one surface; artistic and imaginative exploration of evolving imagery; integral use of interim periods; and, inclusion of continual visual documenting. What is most compelling to me is curiosity about the

consistent and persistent ways that images appear, and how they impact the process as a whole.

I also explored fine arts literature with hopes of shedding some light on the motivations for, and impacts of, using re-working and covering techniques, an integral part of this approach. What is it about building and scraping on a single surface over an extended period of time that affects artistic expression? Commentary on Picasso's continual re-working of the *Portrait of Gertrude Stein* (1906) and examining some contemporary artists' juxtapositions of color while using covering and scraping techniques, offered some intriguing insights into artistic change processes, though not specific to therapeutic applications.

I found some intriguing outcomes from the pilot study, where I used my own one-canvas assemblage painting as artistic evidence. The patterns and principles of the interim period coupled with the one-canvas process, were integral and reciprocal elements of a larger, cohesive method. I also discovered that a triangulation of digital media provided empirical documentation from multiple perspectives, thus affirming its inclusion in the methods for the present study. New discoveries from prior research are exciting. They remind me that there is still so much that is not known about creative expression. Thus, I designed this inquiry in order to discover more about one-canvas work, guided by three questions: 1) Are there art therapy qualities that are unique to the one-canvas assemblage painting process? 2) What are the therapeutic qualities of the interim periods during one-canvas work? 3) Can digital media that is used to document one-canvas processes further appreciation and understanding of therapeutic arts modalities?

I emphasize in Chapter III - Methods, that the flexibility of artistic inquiry was essential in order to holistically research the variabilities that are inherent to all art making. The integrity of the work stems from using an art-based researcher-as-participant model. This method offered me opportunities to reflect about the process from firsthand experience. I engaged four adults as my research companions and individually, we embarked on three sessions of one-canvas assemblage painting, with a fourth meeting for reflection and review. The artwork is referred to as the “painting” or the “canvas” because applying acrylics and/or gouache paints to canvas was the primary mode of art making. Further, the process called for me to observe and note artistic alterations (e.g., covering, scraping, blending), so I use several terms to accent subtleties of the change processes (e.g., transforming, re-working, metamorphoses, transfiguration, evolving, etc.).

Digital photographs and videos documented the work and were the primary focus for examination and review. This was an empirical discovery process that unfolded by immersing myself in watching and editing visual documentation, supplemented by the content and context of notes and transcripts. After much discussion with my advisor, the term *distillation* emerged as an accurate way to identify an ongoing process of evaluating and refining empirical evidence of the work. I responded as an artist when making decisions about how and what to edit so that creating the videos actually became another form of art making as research.

In the shared space of the final meeting it became clear that the videos were vital to how participants reviewed and were then able to embrace multiple meanings

about change processes. All of the participants, who had never done this practice before, found the approach to art making easy to engage with and enjoyable. Everyone shared that the experience, enabled by visual documenting and video review, was profoundly transformative. I concluded that creating and using video in this way has the potential to impact future art therapy practice and research.

The four salient findings are presented in Chapter IV – Results. Participation in the work provided opportunities to experience a continuous process of change and transformation, while generating an enhanced sense of an integral dynamic between new creations and the loss of previous ones. Additionally, the time between sessions was significant, and digital media made notable contributions. Chapter V – Discussion relates the research to the literature.

Definition of Terms

Distillation: An ongoing refining and discovery process through which outcomes emerge.

Emergent: Unplanned and arising unexpectedly (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Interim period: An extended time is spent away from the art making process, while continually working on one piece of art.

Sustained art making: Working on a single artwork over more than a single session with continual change to the imagery.

Touchstone: A fundamental or quintessential part or feature; a test or criterion for determining the quality or genuineness of a thing (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Transformative: Able to cause an important or lasting change (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

This chapter provides information about sustained painting and assemblage on one surface, with imagery that is continually changing. Previous works are reviewed by: a) citing art making processes relevant to four elements of one-canvas work; b) exploring visual arts references that are related to this method; c) identifying noteworthy gaps in the research; d) integrating findings from pilot study as prior discovery; and, e) recognizing research practices where digital video documentation has been a central part of art-based inquiry.

The research questions were formed by, and also informed the literature review:

Question 1. *Are there art therapy qualities that are unique to the one-canvas assemblage painting process?*

Question 2. *What are the therapeutic qualities of the interim periods during one-canvas work?*

Question 3. *Can digital media that is used to document one-canvas processes, further appreciation and understanding of therapeutic arts modalities?*

Four Elements of One-Canvas Approach

This section examines prior works that have contributed to four central elements of the approach: 1) *sustained art making over time using paints and assemblage on one surface*; 2) *artistic and imaginative exploration of evolving and transforming imagery*; 3) *the integral use of interim periods*; and, 4) *the inclusion of continual visual documenting* (Miller, 2018). Jo Rice's thesis study (1987) was a primary source for review.

Examining a one-canvas approach to art making is not served by bifurcating

process and product. Therefore, it is important to examine literature that reflects on images and how they are made as interrelated with the artwork itself. In this way, the inquiry is guided by the integrity of creative process as a whole.

Sustained Art Making Over Time Using Paints and Assemblage on One Surface

Sustained Art Making. It is not unusual for artists to spend a long period of time on one painting. Immersion in art making has been associated with self-discovery and emotional transformation (Lev, 2019), but is less common when we think of standard, single session paradigms within art therapy. Sustained art making can progress by using intuition, thoughts, and senses. There is no expectation about the finished product. Changes can be made without knowing how they might impact the composition. An example is Pat Allen's work, *The Sabbath Bride* (1999; 2005). The painting continually transformed for over seven years as it grew to over 8 ft tall. The central figure of the bride emerged as Allen followed creative impulse, sharing that the images were both spontaneous and compelling (2012). In contrast, some art therapy encounters begin with a pre-determined idea, directive, or image (sometimes from a sketch) and develop with plans to shape the composition towards a finished product, theme, or idea (Locher, 2010).

Sustained art making would likely lead to ongoing reflections about the painting process, which Art Robbins (1998) suggested would facilitate intrapersonal and outward 'listening' at the same time. Rice (1987) demonstrated this when she used a clearly structured and consistent art-based method, continually transforming her oil painting on a single canvas for one year. She photographed the various phases of the artwork

which, along with her daily journal entries, served as empirical documentation. Rice concluded that the evolving art making expressions impacted her relationship with the subject of the work (her mother) while changes were simultaneously reflected through the painting process (Figure 1). Additionally, the interim compositions could appear to be completed paintings, but they continued to be a part on an ongoing transformative process. Rice compared these temporary works to episodes that come and go over the course of a long relationship.

Figure 1

Sample Progression of Jo Rice's (1987) Ongoing Painting (reprinted with permission)



Rice's artistic practice produced a salient outcome similar to my pilot study work: The phenomena of the constantly transforming painting, coupled with the steady ongoing art making processes, provided a psychological touchstone (McNiff, 1998a). Her work was seminal as an empirical presentation, however her approach to art making did not integrate any assemblage media. Currently, it remains unclear how different media choices affect one-canvas work.

While I do not doubt that other art therapists work with sustained art making using a single canvas over time, I found no published material to verify this. Recently, through personal communication I learned that educators Jordan Potash and Diana Sabados used an ongoing sustained painting process with their graduate art therapy

students. Citing one-canvas work in supervision (Miller, 2012), the instructors guided students in a *Psychopathology: Art and Diagnosis* course (Potash & Sabados, 2016) to use a single canvas to develop an artistic response to the diagnostic criteria being reviewed each week. They were directed to “...add, layer, or incorporate your new reflection into the previous artwork” (Potash, 2016; Figure 2). Sabados felt that the sustained process emphasized the overlap between the concept of diagnosis and the human experience of mental illness. This communication also implied that students developed an empathic resonance to the impacts of diagnoses, which is a significant part of educating art therapy students, and applicable for practice.

Figure 2

J. Potash (2016): Sustained One-canvas Painting Process for Psychopathology Course



In non-clinical realms, two methods that have encouraged ongoing painting processes are cited as examples. Michele Cassou (1995) described spontaneous painting as a tool for self-discovery. Similarly, art therapist Aviva Gold's "Source Painting"™ (1998) combines elements of Gestalt therapy, Jungian active imagination techniques, and meditation with ongoing painting. Both of these models distinctly differ from one-canvas work. These models use tempera paint which creates a significantly different covering effect than acrylic or gouache paints, and their methods add sheets of paper to expand the surface size. This alters the space for images to interact quite differently than in one-canvas work, where the reliability of a consistent surface is ongoing. Lastly, since no assemblage media is incorporated in the two models cited, the potential for multi-sensory activation is reduced.

Materials. Within art therapy, it is important to consider materials based on their potential to stimulate emotional expression as well as their physical properties (Kagin & Lusebrink, 1978; C.H. Moon, 2011). Michael Edwards (2010) encouraged awareness of the tactile component of art materials by noticing how one's felt sense impacts the experience of knowing 'what is happening' during art making. Decisions about changing materials or modalities was a part of Mitchell Kossak's (2009; 2015) examination of therapeutic attunement during creative process. In this section, I examine the specific art materials used for one-canvas work, and their relationship to sustained art making. I address different approaches to handling paints, using the surface, and techniques for removal and layering of materials.

Paints. Traditional acrylic paints are quick drying, water-soluble and vary in opacity,

depending on color/pigment. Acrylic Gouache paints have similar physical characteristics to acrylics but differ because they have consistent opaque and matte (flat, not shiny) qualities. Both of these materials lend themselves to drying quickly so multiple layers can be over-painted with little bleeding or streaking. The physical qualities would not be as significant for painting during a shorter session that does not involve multiple layers of covering.

Art therapists Sharon Snir and Dafna Regev (2013) explored client reactions to five basic art materials typically used in art therapy (felt-tipped markers, oil pastels, gouache paints, finger paints, and clay). They found that working with gouache did not require special artistic skills and was likely to arouse a range of emotions because of its fluid nature and the diverse techniques that one could apply to using these paints. Additionally, pleasure, excitement, playfulness, and personal encounters with tension between release and control, were activated while using this medium. Citing Winnicott's theory on play (1971), Snir and Regev concluded that using gouache paints for art making held good potential for facilitating emotional change.

There are a variety of ways paints and the surface are used during one-canvas work. According to Maclagan (2001), the medium becomes a primary conduit for artistic expression, while also evoking a feeling within the person when the art is being viewed, thus contributing to the quality of the artistic encounter. Similarly, when exploring the contrasts between inductive and deductive artistic enquiry, Malcom Learmonth and Karen Huckvale (2012) found that mark making with paints led to an explosion of imagery, accompanied by "sheer glee" (p. 103). Moreover, they found that painted

images were spontaneous, authentically personal and, they posited, arose from the medium itself. In other one-canvas studies, acrylic paints have been examined primarily in relationship to their impacts on physical changes to the work (Miller & Robb, 2016). The literature suggests then, that paint's physical properties support the emergence of complex expression, while minimally addressing sustained covering processes.

Collage/Assemblage. The use of collage/assemblage technique refers to gluing-pasting-adhering pictures and objects onto a surface. Art therapists Scotti and Chilton (2014; 2018) explored some of the philosophical underpinnings of collage work, noting that the technique, which traditionally uses flat imagery (e.g., photos, pictures, papers), challenges both the artist *and* the person viewing the art to explore multiple meanings. Camic et al. (2011) concluded that when participants integrated found objects (typically 3-dimensional) as part of assemblage technique, they were more fully engaged in the therapeutic process, had increased emotional connection to the work, and expressed a sense of transformation related to the art making. Miller and Robb (2016) suggested that using collage/assemblage materials led to changes in meaning making during one-canvas art-based supervision. Adding collage materials over extended periods of art making could add substantial bulk to an artwork, when contrasted with a single session's applications. It is still unclear how this might affect the artist.

Further, expressive arts therapists Stephen Levine, Paolo Knill, and Ellen Levine (2004) compared and contrasted acrylic painting with collage art making. They identified five important aspects to consider: 1) both required attention to the size and quality of the surface; 2) collage work has vast resources of materials, which impacts the artist's

motivation to source imagery; 3) painting concerns itself with the quality of colors and mixing, while collage work can engage a high degree of complexity in images without high levels of artistic skill; 4) collage work has few tools requirements, while painting can stimulate a desire for a wide array of tools such as brushes, palette knives, and rollers; and 5) being able to shape the form when painting requires more skill than the cutting, tearing and gluing techniques that are used in collage art. Overall, the literature is clear that art materials' different physical properties can impact content, expressive qualities, and artistic process (Hinz, 2009). However, there is minimal examination of impacts for sustained art making on one surface.

Canvas Surface. Canvas, a very durable plain-woven fabric, is a traditional painting surface for artists. A framed canvas seems especially well suited for ongoing, single surface art making because it can accommodate numerous layers of paint and mixed media. Additionally, art therapists suggested that the canvas surface might symbolically represent a solid therapeutic space; one that can receive and hold multiple levels of emotional expression (McNiff, 1998b; B.L. Moon, 2009).

Re-working. During sustained art making, there is an ongoing use of re-working technique to alter imagery. This might include artistic qualities of erasing, covering, revising, building, and transfiguring. A variety of re-working skills were explored from the perspective of the visual arts literature. Commentary on Picasso's painting process while creating the *Portrait of Gertrude Stein* (1906) offered some insight into a moment of radical transfiguring. After laboring through ninety sittings with Stein for over a year and-a-half, Picasso unexpectedly wiped out Stein's face. He then re-worked the portrait

until it was completed to his satisfaction (Mellow, 1974). Beyond commentary that he was frustrated with the portrait, little is known about Picasso's effort to revise the work. It does suggest the possibility of an artistic impulse to destroy and recreate rather than refine, which makes it relevant given the dramatic changes that I have observed during pilot study and prior one-canvas research (Miller, 2018; Miller & Robb, 2017; Robb & Miller, 2017).

Classic Layering. The classic fine arts system of layering refers to the intentional building of a specific image using an over layer of paint, applied with sensitivity to allowing the under layer to show through. Specifically, it is the interaction between the two layers that produces interesting effects (Slade, 1997). While the traditional technique is relevant, the *layering* observed during pilot study and prior examinations were contextually different; with building efforts that were often unintentional, and multi-media additions to the surface (Miller, 2018; Miller & Robb, 2018).

Society of Layerists. We can also contrast the handling of paint with a removal/adding process of art making. In 1982 a group of artists formed the *Society of Layerists in Multi-Media*. Specifically, their common practice was to make multi-layered art works using re-working methods (similar to the one-canvas process), while intentionally incorporating a complexity of media and a holistic worldview (Carroll, 2010; Hartley, 1998; Nelson & Dunaway, 2004). The artists in this society were inspired by Jung's (1916) theory of the *collective unconscious* (a universal, infinite realm of imagery) and believed that works of art could be tangible expressions of mystery and spirituality. Their emphasis on creative process as a whole, as well as claiming there is a

direct correlation between layering and transpersonal expression, are relevant to sustained one-canvas art making.

Techniques and Change Processes. It is important to examine the literature on how changes are made to compositions, as well as how materials might impact those changes. Snir and Regev (2013) found that clients felt it was important to use gouache paints because the material gave them the option to make changes and corrections to their paintings. Clients emphasized that they felt secure in knowing they had the option to revise the work. However, these were paintings produced in a single session. It is still unclear how connections between technique and emotion impact sustained art making, and vice versa.

Contemporary artist Peter Sacks alters and builds his artworks over long periods of time. Sacks noted that as he adds new layers of paint and assemblage he feels the presence of the materials that are covered over (Rothman, 2019). Artist Lana Grow continually layers paint and adds collage elements while selectively scraping off the surface numerous times. She remarked that a feeling of risk is always involved with this type of art making (Price, 2008). Mark Rothko's work is infused with blending, building, and scraping with color on a single surface over an extended period of time. He blended colors already absorbed into the canvas to create an effect, also seen during one-canvas painting in previous studies, of remembrance for what was being 'erased.' These contemporary artists offer some insight about sustained art making by identifying remembrance and risk. We are left with only hints about the intersections between materials, change, and re-working processes.

The literature has offered some insight into how artworks are physically shaped by painting for sustained periods, and by using a variety of materials to go back into the work rather than only refining what has already been set down onto canvas. Yet, the impact of encounters with art making that continually transforms over time is not evident from prior studies.

Artistic and Imaginative Exploration of Evolving and Transforming Imagery

Artistic and imaginative exploration is guided by complementary ideas: Attention to images and the artwork created is as important as the of making the art. A review of the conceptual landscape includes depth-oriented art therapists, and some examples of those who appreciated an imagistic approach to imagery rather than literalistic or simple symbolic interpretation. Particular attention is given to literature that has examined how clients and art therapists are encouraged to use multiple perspectives, curiosity, and openness to sort through what happens during art making and in the artwork.

Attention to Image. The model's conceptual landscape has drawn from C. G. Jung's method that focused on sustained attention to the image, particularly imagery from the unknown that "burst forth from the unconscious" (Jung, 1965, p. 199). Patricia Berry (1982/2017) and James Hillman (1977; 1978; 1979) help us relate to images more completely in keeping with Archetypal Psychology's encouragement to pay close attention to what is presented as it unfolds, while Edwards (2010) suggested that we treat images as if they were "living extensions of the psyche" (p. 12). Jose Abbenante and Linney Wix (2016) summarized that archetypal art therapists pay close attention to

images and how they are created, use an imaginal rather than symbolic approach to engaging images and encourage listening to images through the language of metaphor.

Further, Rudolf Arnheim (1986) suggested that artistic perception favors an awareness that images emerge with multilayered, not fixed meanings. In his seminal editorial, "The Coming and Going of Images" (2000), he encouraged us to notice the importance of an image's physical presence (as in *being seen*), as well as its ephemeral nature (what is *sensed* about it). Rice (1987) focused on both of these elements during her work, while I also empirically attended to these dynamics during pilot study. Overall, attention to our relationship with the images/artwork, specifically during one-canvas art making, has not been fully examined while concepts pointing towards explorations via depth work is well documented.

Evolving and Transforming Imagery. Ideas intentionally developed during any stage of a painting may or may not be reflected at the end of a one-canvas assemblage process. Shaun McNiff (1998c) and Pat Allen (1995) have written extensively about art making as an intuitive process where many elements, some outside of an artist's human intelligence and control, work together to impact the how the work forms, evolves, and is completed. The nature of a construction/deconstruction process during art making may have relevance for examining continually changing imagery. T. Robbins (1998) saw parallels between collage work and the mourning process, as both engaged processes of construction and reconstruction. However, the art therapy literature does not address a specific challenge of one-canvas work: the ongoing covering and evolution of a painting that for some, will be a finished composition.

We can, however, examine the nature of imagery and compositions that transform. Attention to evolving imagery suggests continuation. A completed transformation implies change that is lasting. Artist Alex Grey (2001) suggested that transformative art was an expression of something beyond what a person was aware of, alluding to unknown and unnamed processes. In a recent essay, McNiff (2019) pointed out that artistic process reliably transforms materials and emotions, and that using art making to transform difficulties is experienced across cultures. Additionally, transformative artistic experience where otherworldly or transpersonal associations arise, has been linked with artistic methods that highlight trust in creative process (Allen, 1995; 2005; Farrelly-Hansen, 2001; Franklin, 2016a; 2017; Maclagan, 2005; McNiff, 1989, 1992; B.L. Moon, 1994; 2007; Nelson & Dunaway, 2004).

Priscilla Vasquez (2008) even compared art therapy with processes of alchemical change (a permanent change). She concluded that art therapists like alchemists, recognize that transforming materials externally, such as in art making, will promote internal changes; and that these transformative processes are reciprocal in nature. I suspect that attending to a continually changing art making process invites many other possibilities, among them Rice's conclusion that, "...[the] painting can become the foundational framework of a story...which unfolds at each stage of the painting's process; messages that are being revealed through these images...exist as a personal transformational story-line..." ([2008] via R. Doyle Rice, personal communication, Oct. 22, 2018).

Therapeutic Qualities. Art therapist Joy Schaverien (1993) maintains that we

must pay attention to the ‘movement’ or changes that impact our clients in order for the work to be therapeutic. The essence of a therapeutic quality comes from its Greek root, *therapeia*, loosely translated, “to take care of, and be attentive to” (Etymonline, n.d.). I explored what might warrant attention during an evolving art making process, and how the practice of continually transforming imagery might extend care to those using the approach. I chose to examine potential therapeutic qualities of three components (*continual change, reflection, and completion*), and the role of the art therapist within the one-canvas model. These are both similar and dissimilar aspects noted as therapeutic in single-session work. Reflection has been substantially addressed in art therapy literature (Franklin, 2010; Kramer, 1986; McNiff, 2004; Stafford, 2016); however, there are noticeable gaps in the research pertaining to continually changing images and completion of artwork.

Role of the Art Therapist. A distinguishing factor between an art therapy encounter and art making for healing is the presence of the art therapist (McNiff, 2004). Denise Malis (2014) expanded on the role of the art therapist by concluding that our contribution was uniquely impacted by the primacy of an artist’s identity. During one-canvas work the art therapist’s role is to support the creation of formed expressions that are evocative, and ultimately representative of an authentic artistic voice. Here, the art therapist witnesses without judgment, stays open to not knowing (Miller, 2012), and is curious about artistic ways of knowing (Allen, 1995).

During this practice, the art therapist encourages participants to engage with

one's whole being (body, mind, sensing, seeing, responding, and re-responding) as Sullivan (2000) noted. Simple prompts, suggestions, and information throughout the art making processes can be offered. Similarly, the art therapist-educator's role using this method has been previously examined (Miles & Mullins, 2019; Miller et al., 2013; Miller, 2019; Robb & Miller, 2017). Outcomes from these studies found that supervisees overwhelmingly valued supervisor prompts, feedback, and communication that was fostered by a depth-orientation that focused on the art and art making (Miller & Robb, 2017).

Continually Changing Images. C.H. Moon (2002) and Lynn Kapitan (2003) suggested that art therapy is a process that is based on transformational acts of creativity. Were they referring to art that actually transforms, as we see with this method, or were they speaking to the making of art and its power to transform thoughts, feelings and perceptions? Perhaps both, as they are each relevant to how we pay attention and express care in art therapy. Within art therapy education, Sabados and Potash (J. Potash, personal communication Feb. 1, 2017) observed that graduate students struggled with the ongoing change processes of one-canvas work. They concluded that engaging with the change process heightened their awareness of, and compassion for the struggles of those with mental illness (D. Sabados, personal communication Feb. 8, 2017). Additionally, Rice observed that each one of the many changes in the compositions of her painting conveyed different emotional and psychological states. She concluded that "...the painting/thesis itself becomes the transformational experience of self-revelation and discovery" ([2008] via R. Doyle Rice,

personal communication, Oct. 22, 2018), however more understanding about the impacts of continually changing imagery is warranted.

Reflection. In its simplest form, reflection is mirroring back and is recognized as valuable as part of therapeutic relationship (B.L. Moon, 2009). Pilot study and prior publications have discussed how one-canvas work generates numerous opportunities for reflection during art therapy graduate study (Miller, 2012; 2018; 2019). Students used the process to reflect intrapersonally and with their peers as a part of group supervision (Prete, 2014; Robb & Miller, 2017). They overwhelmingly cited that personal growth, self-reflection, and feedback from others were positive outcomes from using the method. Art therapist Norma Irene Garcia-Reyna (2019) noted similar findings when using the method for supervision with graduate art therapy students in Barcelona, as did art therapist Katrina Bennett (2018), using the one-canvas approach as self-reflective art while working with female migrant domestic workers in Singapore.

In another paradigm, supervisor and supervisee painted side-by-side during one-canvas art-based supervision (Miles & Mullins, 2019). The ritual process of using the method along with the images that emerged were found to enhance relationship, self-reflection, and transformation. Collectively, these studies concluded that one-canvas work enhanced development of intra- and interpersonal reflectivity, but specific applications for clinical practice were not fully examined.

Completion. A typical expectation in single session art therapy is that the art making will be completed during one meeting. McNiff (1998a) suggested that Rice's ongoing one-canvas method raised the intriguing issue of determining when such a

painting would be finished, which has not as yet been specifically addressed in the literature. In prior studies, students suspended work on one-canvas paintings at the end of an academic term, and completion was associated with the conclusion of course work (Prete, 2014; Miller & Robb, 2017).

Recently, Amy Backos (2018) proposed that the experience of being witnessed contributed to the completion of an artwork in art therapy. Witnessing implies, as McNiff defined it, “a way of looking characterized by empathy and commitment” (2015, p. 67). Malis (2014) integrated these two ideas when she suggested that as artists, art therapists bring a heightened sense of visual awareness and compassion to the relational field. My pilot study findings affirmed that witnessing as reflective process did occur during interim periods, however, I also found that points of completion were arbitrary (Miller, 2018). Clearly, the idea of reaching a finishing point with this model evokes many ideas, as Jo Rice suggested, “...[it] promises to continue for the rest of my life and perhaps, inescapably on through the lives of my descendants” ([1997] via R.D. Rice, personal communication, Oct. 22, 2018). Further inquiry could be useful towards understanding completion within this model as well as its impact on endings to therapeutic process that are satisfying.

The Integral Use of Interim Periods

Working on a single canvas over extended periods of time necessitates encountering breaks in communication and spending time away from art making. I identified these pauses as *interim periods* (Miller, 2018). They may range from a few days to weeks and are similar to, but more prolonged than the silences or breaks during

art making and in therapeutic conversations. Heidi Levitt's (2002) work exploring reflective pauses during verbal therapy offered some relevancy to examining interim periods as part of the therapeutic relationship. She suggested that these non-action moments afforded time and space to question, increase awareness, make internal connections, and led to insights and realizations, thus impacting therapeutic process. Along with Levitt, art therapists Regev et al. (2016) suggested that non-art making moments expressed particular qualities of therapeutic process that differed from action-oriented art making. However, a paucity of prior research supports further inquiry about this integral component of the method.

Pilot Study. Findings from pilot study (Miller, 2018) posited that the interim period can be of therapeutic value. The patterns and principles were reciprocal elements of a larger integral process. An overarching, binding action that emerged was the *paradox* of the pause, proposing that in the perceived non-doing, much is happening. The Taoist practice of *wu-wei*, (natural action; action that doesn't involve struggle or excessive effort) can offer a way to view the significant characteristic of the time away from session. Merton (1969) suggested that this action emerges from "stillness" (p. 80), noting in particular that the nature of 'non-action' is different than a lack of action.

Tension. Tension was a consistent element of the interim period (Miller, 2018). Jacob L. Moreno examined the benefit of using tension after not having catharsis at the end of a session (S. McNiff, personal communication, April 2018). While exploring the art encounter and self-reflection, art therapist Karrie Stafford (2016) found that an

important quality of engaging in art making was the ability to stay with some of the tensions inherent in exploring the unknown. Additionally, McNiff (2014b) appreciated that tension could be a catalyst for communication and creativity, while Allen (1995; 2005) recognized the importance of cultivating artistic ways to stay present with the tensions of not knowing.

Four Principles. Four salient principles regarding the impact of the interim period were distilled: generates experiences of continuity and companioning; provides a tangible marker/touchstone for reflection; supports the contemplation of impermanence; and offers opportunities for incubation and gestation. The cycles of leaving and re-engaging with the painting provided reliable and continual experiences. Warren Lett and colleagues (2014; 2016) compared the ongoing movements of “companioning” during art making with the continual flow of life. Appreciating what Arnheim called, “the flow of comings and goings” (2000, p. 168), continually coming back to one surface generated new awareness for witnessing and engaging with the work as complex artistic expression. Both the interim periods and the canvas itself provided companionship during the work. As a marker or touchstone, the interim period acted as a means to assess creative process within a non-active part of art making. The time away provided a concrete visual marker to assess change.

One-canvas art making compositions are temporary and the accompanying reflections reinforced contemplation about impermanence. The time of separation was found to be beneficial to artistic process by allowing space for deeper introspection. The creative processes of one-canvas work, which included interim periods, were found to

provide time for incubation and gestation. I concluded during the pilot study (Miller, 2018) that artistic discipline combined with the one-canvas model seemed to provide the space for transformative gestation. This key concept was especially evident when reviewing the video documentation, which had captured art making and compositions in a way that enhanced curiosity about images that emerged in a progressive manner (McNiff, 2018b). As reciprocal elements of the overall process, the four outcomes provide context for further study about the entire method.

Inclusion of Visual Documenting

From its onset, the one-canvas method has included some form of continual visual tracking to record the constantly changing imagery. Currently, art-based researchers recognize that digital equipment can be used to generate visual documentation, which can impact methods and shape theoretical perceptions during enquiry (Harris, 2018; McNiff, 2018a; Nash, 2018; Rahn, 2008; Springham & Brooker, 2013). It is also important to recognize that an interface exists between digital video documentation and computer technology: The range of digital media that assist with the recording and making of art forms are always interrelated with computers and software (Carlton et al., 2018; Malchiodi, 2018).

As a form of empirical documentation, video imagery has been linked with stimulating memory and presenting footage from multiple perspectives (Lev, 2019; Yates, 2013). Bringing digital media into the research paradigm has been seen as a contribution to the field, because tools of creative and scientific investigation that are often separated have the potential to be integrated (Eisner, 2008; McNiff, 2013, 2014a;

Rahn, 2008).

As new types of digital equipment have become more accessible and affordable, the paradigms for including video visual documentation have also expanded. Typical protocol for contemporary art-based researchers is to capture the art making from multiple perspectives. Generally, one camera is mounted on a tripod so that a full view of the artist's gestures and body postures can be recorded. Another small camera is worn on the forehead or forearms to record details (McNiff, 2018b). Using these methods for my pilot study, I confirmed that digital video documentation did produce compelling empirical evidence from three different viewpoints. Researchers have also pointed to some of the challenges that accompany the use of digital media documentation, such as having to sort through an overwhelming amount of video footage (Lev, 2019; McNiff, 2018b; Miller, 2018). Research on editing processes for video-assisted research offers insight as to the value of working with large volumes of visual documentation. I address this in the next section of the review.

Visual Documentation. The use of video technology seems especially well suited to record ongoing art making processes. Initially, Rice and I used only still photography to document the sequential nature of sustained painting. Rice took daily photographs of her work while I took numerous photos during each art making session. Over time, I saw that the photographic representations appeared static, so I created photo-slideshows which showed sequence and evolution, while implying movement (Miller, 2012).

Megan Robb and I (2017) found that supervisees developed reflexivity by sequentially photographing evolving works during one-canvas supervision. We also

discovered that editing, creating, and sharing digital videos with peers enhanced recognition of transformational changes. Gary Nash (2018) studied the feasibility of including audio and still-image recordings as video documentation during reflective review with clients and art therapists, building on Springham and Brooker's (2013) model. Their model had expanded on Schaverien's (1993) 'retrospective review' of client artwork. Across models, two selected artworks were used for review of the entire therapy process, which Nash found to be a beneficial, arts-based, and patient-led process. Clearly, adding visual documentation adds another component to the art making experience and should be examined further.

Editing Presentations. Rahn (2008) highlighted the need to give critical attention to structure and artistry when editing visual presentations for research. Art-based researchers have noted that what is included and excluded during editing shapes the process of inquiry and impacts discovery, which I also found to be true during pilot study (Harris, 2018; Miller, 2018). Editing raw footage has been noted to help the researcher focus and has been described as a complex process with a vast array of options for creativity that will impact meaning (Duckrow, 2017; McNiff, 2018b; Rosenblum & Karen, 2009). The literature suggests then, that using and editing digital video media is an artistic and valuable process of active observation, construction, de-construction, and re-construction.

Art-Based Research

Donna Kaiser and Lisa Kay (2016) proposed that art-based research is a feasible approach that aligns with the worldviews of most art therapists. McNiff (1998a; 2013;

2018a) conceptualized and put forward two core elements of art-based inquiry: The empirical use of artistic expression by the researcher (possibly joined by others) is the primary research mode for experimentation; and, artistic expression is a salient part of communicating the findings. Learmonth and Huckvale (2012) posited that during art-based research, art making processes and their works are interconnected systems, while they are also primary evidence for distillation and discovery. Hervey (2012; 2015) outlined a research methodology for artistic inquiry that: may include the use of art making to collect, review, and present outcomes; could be a creative research project; might be impacted by the researcher's aesthetics; and, the embodied experiences of participants and the researcher are valued (2015, p. 6). Additionally, art therapists Pat Allen (2012), Barbara Fish (2016) and Bruce Moon (2009) have used and implored colleagues to integrate personal art making in research. Ideally, fluid movement between the roles of participant, observer, and researcher can also support empirical discovery (Learmonth & Huckvale, 2012).

There have been numerous recent publications exploring and expanding on methods for art-based experimentation (Leavy, 2015, 2017; Potash, 2019; Prior, 2018). Ideally, a research method should be aligned with its topic (Forinash, 2016; Jongeward, 2015; Silverman, 2017). This has led to research using art-based methodologies which have generated new models to advance art therapy practice based on topics of inquiry such as: a supervision method where the central process is therapist response art (Fish, 2012); therapists making art with clients during session (Lett, 2016; B.L. Moon, 1997; Teoli, 2019); and, movement and painting response processes (McNiff, 2004).

Kurt Lewin (1946) and later, Peter Reason (2003) put forward concepts of approaching participants as companions by following a research philosophy which ascribes to creating mutual relationship, and dialoguing with others during a research project. The term *companioning* was introduced and developed by Warren Lett and his colleagues (2014; 2016). It brings attention to developing a caring and reciprocal relationship between the researcher and others. These approaches have been documented as especially well-suited for enquiry where artistic process is central (Harris & Barney, 2015; Lett, 1998; 2011). Additionally, Springham and Brooker (2013) found that using the audio-image recording format with reflective interviews was non-invasive during for art therapy clients and offered new contributions to research.

Visual Video Presentation of Outcomes

An element of art-based research is that artistry is considered integral to how the outcomes are communicated (Holm et al., 2018; Leavy, 2015). McNiff also suggested that visual documentation can and should be used to create presentations with image, sound, and movement as the primary and most convincing evidence of any art-based research (2014a; 2018a).

Literature Review Summary

The four core components of the one-canvas method were used to organize an exploration of the model, primarily within the historical context of art therapy and art-based research. The conceptual landscape for the process was examined through prior works that explore how images are created, and what kind of attention they are given. Art therapists using this model are informed by an artist's identity. Artistic inquiry also

required interpreting and editing visual documentation as an artist. Most of the literature could only be applied to individual elements of the larger method, highlighting significant gaps in the research. Navigating this territory, it was apparent that the commitment to prolonged engagement with continual art making on one surface invites many possibilities, and more discovery. This research study will hopefully identify what they are.

CHAPTER III

Methods

The methods for this study holistically explore one-canvas work. I used direct artistic inquiry where participants, including myself, were engaged in personal experience with a distinct approach to art making. This chapter discusses the nature of how the art was created, observed, and then used for empirical review and presentation. The procedural flow and design expanded on the methods that were used for my pilot study.

Because art making is central to the one-canvas process, the wide lens of an art-based experiment aligned well with the topic. The foundation for my own participation stems from my passion to improve art therapy practice through direct, art-based research (Hervey, 2012; McNiff, 1998a; Prior, 2018). This approach aligned well with my personality and the intention of this project. I used artistic inquiry to rigorously observe my own processes as well as those of others. The research philosophy was based on mutual effort, where participants were approached as companions in artistic discovery (Lett, 2016). I approached other participants as companions and followed a research philosophy that was based on shared effort, put forward by Kurt Lewin (1946) and later, Peter Reason (2003). While I was informed by the epistemology of cooperative inquiry, I did not follow specific protocols. Rather, I committed to inquiry that followed an organic flow of art making, valuing every participant's emergent process as a part of our collaborative search for new knowledge about the one-canvas method. Every effort was made to co-construct the participant's experience, recognizing that my aesthetic values

would bias the inquiry and that my role as participant/researcher had integrity.

The Office of Human Research and Institutional Review Board at Lesley University reviewed a detailed overview of the research design and purpose and responded with approval to conduct this study (Appendix A). All participants signed a written consent form with approval to share audio and video documentation, photographs, and journal excerpts (Appendix B), and provided self-identifying demographics. Given a choice to use his or her name, or a pseudonym for confidentiality, four chose to use their own names, and one chose a pseudonym. All of the art making activities were conducted within current professional standards of practice and codes of ethics of the American Art Therapy Association and the Art Therapy Credentials Board.

Research Questions

The first research question focused on the overall process of one-canvas art making: Question 1. Are there art therapy qualities that are unique to the one-canvas assemblage painting process?

Given that interim periods are an integral part of the method and that my pilot study generated outcomes that were relevant and applicable for art therapy practice, a second question emerged: Question 2. What are the therapeutic qualities of the interim periods during one-canvas work?

Additionally, while I was initially quite resistant and uncomfortable with digital video technology, the actual method of making digital recordings and reflecting upon them became a significant and unplanned outcome of pilot study research. Therefore, a

third question for this research was included: Question 3. Can digital media that is used to document one-canvas processes further appreciation and understanding of therapeutic arts modalities?

Participants

Recruitment and Selection

Six adults (24 years and older) were recruited by word-of-mouth. I sought volunteers from outside the art therapy community as well as those who worked as professional arts therapists, who had never engaged in the one-canvas method but were comfortable with the idea of art making. I specifically chose a seemingly small number of study-participants (total of five) because I knew that each person would be generating a very large volume of visual, digital, and interview material.

Screening. I met with six possible participants in ½ hr screening interviews. They needed to be able to demonstrate the capacity for self-care, be willing to follow the design of the study, and review transcripts and preliminary results for accuracy. I excluded any of my current or former graduate students, current supervisees, and clients. I would not select someone if I concluded that they would be unable to tolerate mild tension between art making sessions. I journaled about my own comfort level as a parallel screening process.

Demographics

Five of six volunteers met the inclusion criteria after screening. Based on ease of scheduling, I asked four of them to become participants, and they all agreed (Brit, Kath, Abbe, Mike, Dana). Participants were between the ages of 29 and 61 years ($M = 41.2$, SD

= 13.2). Three out of five participants had prior experience with some form of art making, while two had not made any art since childhood. Four out of the five participants identified as female, and one as male. Please see Individual Summary Statements, including composite video and slideshow links/passwords (Appendixes F1-F5) for more details.

I met all of the selection criteria except that I have a great deal of prior exposure to the method, thus bringing a unique and important set of skills as artist/researcher. The foundation for my own art making participation in pilot study and for this current project stems from my passion for direct enquiry where I am engaged in my own experience with the creative process. I am able to observe and articulate what takes place when I am actively in an experimental situation quite differently than when I am observing and describing another person's art making experience. This allowed me to take risks, experience embodied ways of knowing, and express feelings directly. As a participant, my own art making process was quite similar to other participants; however, I note where there was divergence in my procedure. I used reflexivity and included my experiences alongside of the other four participants encounters.

Design

Meeting Design

Each participant was scheduled to meet a total of four times, over a period of about one month (once a week); one at a time, in my home-office studio in southern New England, United States. All of the documentation was gathered over six consecutive months. One-canvas art making occurred during the first three sessions.

There were two interim periods (time between meetings); each was about one weeklong. The fourth and final session was scheduled for one-week after the third session. It was designed for review and reflection and centered on watching and discussing the 1 min composite slideshow and the 8-9 min summary video of each participant's one-canvas art making process. Participants took the canvas home after this final meeting.

In order to visually document art making all participants wore a GoPro camera with head mount and were filmed by digital video camera attached to a standing tripod. I periodically photographed the compositions with my digital camera. Audio recordings captured brief conversations before and after art making and at the final meeting. I followed the same one-canvas process, but I painted alone in the studio, and I did not use audio recording, although the GoPro and video camera did pick up art making sounds.

Materials

Art Making Materials. Art making materials included one 24 in. x 36 in. (60.1 cm x 91.4 cm) museum profile canvas with 2-3/8 in. (6 cm) depth frame for each study-participant; a variety of acrylic and gouache paints with a range of sizes and shapes of brushes and palette knives; palettes; containers for water; rags for wiping brushes; drop cloths; and a mixture of collage/assemblage materials. Personal art making media could be brought to the studio. A standing wooden easel was used to support the canvas.

Video/Photo Materials. A GoPro Hero+ video camera was worn by each participant with a head strap camera mount; a Sony HDR-CX405 Handycam Digital

camcorder was mounted on a stationary 50 in. (127 cm) lightweight tripod; and still photos were taken by my iPhone 8X cell phone. All video/photo materials were downloaded onto my computer and then edited. Photo and iMovie apps were used for editing.

Audio Recording. The iTalk app on my cell phone was used to record all conversations. These were downloaded, transcribed, and reviewed for accuracy.

Journal. Participants were given a journal. A template (Appendix C) offered some flexible guidance for personal reflective journaling during interim periods. Anything that might be related to the one-canvas work (e.g., personal associations, dreams, questions, synchronicities, etc.) could be documented.

Procedural Flow

The procedural flow had four components: orientation; art making and brief conversation during meetings 1, 2, and 3; two interim periods that occurred after the first and second painting sessions; and, a final fourth meeting. All meeting dates were scheduled 1-week apart, prior to the first session.

Orientation. At the first meeting participants were oriented to the studio space and the layout of the paints, brushes, and assemblage materials. I re-oriented myself to the space as well. A copy of meeting dates/times (Appendix D) was distributed. In order to use the one-canvas art making method, especially the element of re-working compositions, all of the participants except myself required some instruction about the process. Because this method was new to everyone, I offered general written (Appendix E) and intermittent verbal guidance that focused on art making. This included guiding

participants to notice and follow artistic creative impulse, such as the urge to make marks or use certain colors without knowing *why*. I also clarified that using assemblage media was an option, not a requirement for one-canvas art making. Participants were then able to proceed with a degree of comfort and curiosity.

Meetings 1, 2 and 3. The procedure during meetings 1, 2, and 3 involved one-canvas art making, video and visual recording, and brief conversations with the option to journal. When I was one-to-one with participants, I was responsible for making sure that the research procedure was followed. When asked, I offered observations and suggestions about materials and/or focus. When I was doing my own experimental work, I focused on introspective observation as I engaged in the one-canvas work.

Art Making. Participants put on the GoPro camera and then began to explore any form of artistic expression (e.g., painting, assemblage, collage, scraping, etc.) on the canvas, re-working the composition in numerous ways. Imagery that was partially or completely covered over could be referenced at any point. Each meeting lasted between 1 ½ to 2 hr. Every session's rhythm was unique. I noticed my own emotional responses as I watched artwork being created and listened as participants tracked their own responses to the compositions. As a researcher, I was aware of my own bias as an artist and art therapist. I made conscious efforts to witness what was happening, then offered prompts, suggestions, and support, primarily when asked. I was also aware that anything I might say or suggest could influence and bias the work. Each participant decided to end the art making within the established time frame, although I was prepared to give a '10-minutes to go' time check. I used a phone alarm to track time

boundaries for myself. When art making slowed or stopped, I asked myself as well as others, 'Does this feel like a good place to pause; to stop for today?' and 'How do you know?'

Photo/Video Documenting Procedures. The video and GoPro cameras were turned on and off in synch with art making. The tripod was placed about six feet away from the easel. Both were left standing in place to assure visual consistency. The GoPro head strap mount was adjusted for each participant. During all of the art making, when brief pauses and changes to the composition occurred, I took still photos on my digital camera.

Journaling and Conversations. When natural pauses occurred participants could reflect by talking or taking a break. I was the only person who chose to journal during these short pauses. I suspect this was due to being alone in the studio while I was with the other participants. Conversations were interspersed throughout the time in the studio following a style that supported spontaneous reflection. Once art making was stopped for the session, we looked at the compositions together. I began with asking, 'What happened' and 'How do you know'? I then followed each participant's lead as they used self-reflective processes during brief (5-15 min) open-ended conversation. I also asked about material choices and perceptions about any impact they may have stimulated. I self-reflected using journaling when I was engaged as a participant. To conclude, each participant was thanked, and the time/date of the next session was reconfirmed. I adapted a type of closure to the meeting by checking dates for return to the studio on my calendar.

Interim Periods. Participants left canvases-in-progress in my care during the two interim periods. At home, we could choose to journal anything that might be relevant, and entries could take any form (e.g. written; sketches). We could also use this time to source collage or found object materials we might want to add to the painting. Two participants initiated taking their own photographs of the composition at 'pause' and reflected on the images during interim periods.

Fourth Meeting. These meetings occurred one week after the painting was completed. Sharing the summary videos with my advisor and participants opened other venues for reflection about the evidence of the work. Participant's thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and insights about their experiences were guided by open-ended and spontaneous questions that related to the research questions. I set up an 11-in. MacBook Air laptop computer to view the one-minute composite slideshows. Conversation addressed what it was like to watch the still photo slideshow and see the progression of the artwork. Next, we watched the 8-9 min composite summary video that was created from aggregate clips of the three art making sessions. Subsequent conversation focused on the videos as well as the nature of the experience. Participants were free to comment while the videos were playing. A playback function was used to pause and reflect on specific moments and individual images.

Concluding, I took digital photos of selected journal entries. Participants were given a flash drive with a download of all of their still photo images, and links to their two videos uploaded to www.Vimeo.com (with password protection). We discussed the care and tending of each painting, and everyone was thanked for participating. These meetings

lasted 1-1 ½ hr. For my own fourth meeting, I self-reviewed my videos and journal entries, created a composite slideshow and a summary video, and then shared them with my advisor for review. After each sequence was completed, I reviewed all of the evidence, and distilled preliminary outcomes for each study-participant. These changed and were further refined during examination of all of the work.

As planned, I went through the entire sequence (four meetings) with the first participant. I then used email exchanges with my advisor to reflect on this initial experience and to work on perfecting the method before conducting the study with others. Following this exchange, I made adjustments to the background setting (cleared visual distractions), highlighted art making sounds, and examined how I was integrating GoPro views into the video summaries.

Artifacts for Review

I reviewed the artifacts by responding as an artist. The extensive examination of the artifacts was cyclic with one component impacting the other. Empirical evidence was gathered from: still photos to create composite slideshows; a variety of journal/field notes; audio recordings and transcripts; five completed one-canvas assemblage paintings; combined GoPro and digital video camera footage used to create individual summary videos. To effectively review these materials, I embraced two assumptions that also support the aesthetic values of art therapy: 1) the ways in which art making communicates is different from linear and logical comprehension and language and 2) an aesthetic focus generates unique ways of understanding and creating knowledge. I sought to explicate the essential nature of what was being

expressed. I organized these findings into visual and written forms that, to the best of my capacity, conveyed how the outcomes related to what had happened during one-canvas art making.

Still Photographs

The still photographs (345 iPhone photos) were downloaded into the Photo app on my computer, then cropped for full display of the canvas. I selected still photos for an album that artistically conveyed sequential progressions, reflected visual re-configurations and/or transformations, and highlighted poignant moments. Five albums were created.

Composite Slideshows. Each participant's photo album was used to create a one-minute composite slideshow, without sound or written information. I used the classic slideshow setting for the transitions which gave the effect of one photo blending into the next. I attempted to present a consistent visual alignment of the photographs, and chose to include some changes in the orientation of the canvas when there was a flip (e.g. horizontal to vertical; or turning the canvas 'upside down') that marked a significant shift in the study-participant's aesthetic and/or emotional experience.

Field Notes and Journal Entries

I used a dedicated dissertation journal to keep field notes after every meeting throughout all phases of this project and kept a separate one-canvas journal when I was engaged as a participant. I regularly reviewed notes that captured anything that might be related to the inquiry, underlining key words and phrases and writing in ideas that came from this review. I also wrote notes during the video editing processes that

responded to emotional, visual, verbal, or non-verbal expressions, as well as sounds and movements from the process. Field notes and participant journal entries were both written and visual (sketches).

Audio Recorded Interviews and Transcripts

Twenty-two interview transcripts (367 min/ 6:12 hr) were produced. Each participant meeting generated 1-2 audio recordings (except my sessions) that were downloaded onto the iTunes app on my computer. I listened to them, took notes on them, and then had them transcribed. Four extended final interviews were also transcribed. The transcriber noted lapses in verbal communications, silences, and conversational sounds such as laughter. I manually highlighted words and phrases, then noted emergent ideas, questions, and intuitions, which pointed to emotional or significant responses to the work.

I would connect what was stated in the transcription to what I was observing directly from the art making processes and products, and vice versa. When I highlighted something in the transcripts, I would then review that moment on the video, where there might be additional verbal reflection that was captured during session but not transcribed. When I made note of something that felt significant while watching the videos or reviewing the photographs, I would also refer back to the transcripts to see if there had been any verbal reflections about this moment. I would note repetitive patterns and prevailing characteristics of artistic expression for each participant. While I did not have the digital video transcribed, I could always review the recordings with my field notes, to check for accuracy. Four participants read, reviewed, and approved their

own transcript contents.

Final One-Canvas Assemblage Paintings

After three sessions, five distinctly different paintings were created, one from each participant. I prepared for the fourth review meeting by viewing each final composition with curiosity, remembering what I had observed and remaining open to whatever might come to light when sharing the videos. I had made journal entries about my own visceral, artistic responses to each painting while it was in process. I then set those observations aside until the fourth review meeting was completed. Some of the qualities that I explored were intention, content, imagery (emergent and planned), color palette, artistic skill, relational dynamics, relational aesthetics, therapeutic value, and symbolic meaning attribution. After all five participants had completed the study, I again reflected on the completed paintings in relationship to each other, in order to distill any patterns or prevailing characteristics that might have emerged.

Individual Summary Statements

I wrote individual summary statements for each of the five participants when they had completed the four sessions and edited these continuously. Everyone read, reviewed, and approved their own statements prior to inclusion as Appendixes F1-F5.

Summary Videos

I created all of the summary videos by downloading raw video footage (1,811 min; 30.2 hr) onto my computer's iMovie app. I viewed and re-reviewed the footage at the same time that I was also extensively editing. The GoPro visual perspectives were blended with video camera views of the art making. I logically organized the video

timelines to reflect ‘what happened,’ making sure to include key moments of artistic processes, in an effort to convey the essence of the experience.

Individual Summary Videos. Footage was recorded on two separate microSDHC cards, then downloaded and viewed immediately after each meeting, while I simultaneously took notes. I then spent about one week editing video to produce a composite segment (3-4 min) for each meeting. A first round of edits focused on eliminating extraneous footage (e.g., blurred imagery, cleaning, or bathroom breaks). I organized sequencing between the GoPro recordings and the video camera footage, editing to make shorter clips (5-7 s each), added in transitions, and focused on how to succinctly convey what was happening during the second round of edits. By attuning to the flow of the clips with one another, a third round of edits moved the segment towards simple clarity of showing ‘what happened.’ During a fourth review of editing, I cropped each clip to about 2-3 s, and checked for sound, keeping only essential art making noises.

Each section was viewed in its entirety to assure balance and flow, as well as cohesion between clips. This was distilled from an average of 2 hr of film per session (1 hr of GoPro; 1 hr of video). When I combined one session’s video segment with the next, I used the ‘fade to black’ transition (2 s) to represent the interim period. All three segments were edited together to produce the final composite video summary video for each study-participant (7- 9 min) and videos were uploaded to vimeo.com with password protection.

Final Aggregate Summary Video. The final presentation video shows the

evolution of each composition and one-canvas art making. To edit this, I used another artistic-cyclic review, combining clips from raw video footage, five individual summary videos, and five slideshows. These were edited into a 5:50 min video (Appendix G) that illuminates an intersection between visual artifacts and art making.

The Role of Digital Media, Review, and Reflection

The use of video media was a significant factor in determining approaches for this inquiry process. The videos documented, in real time, both art making processes and the evolution of art product. Similar to the pilot study, the extensive review helped me to focus on the evidence of the work.

Editing as an Empirical Process

Creating the individual summary videos by editing raw film footage focused the examination and distillation of visual documentation. As stated, this included extensive review, reflection and, examination which had significant impact for the methods and outcomes. I wrote and revised preliminary outcomes and summary statements based on my interpretations of visual documentation, field notes, and transcripts at the same time that I was editing raw footage. As the edited clips became more focused, they helped me refine research outcomes.

Reflection, Review, and Examination. I perceived the editing as a cumulative, artistic distillation process; creating short clips that built upon one another. I used a *beginner's mind* approach of not knowing to complement my own extensive history with the one-canvas method. My review and reflection always started with, and circled back to the visual documentation, particularly the videos. It included moving back and forth

between reviewing/editing video footage and reviewing/editing still photos, while using a variety of feedback loops to track the sequential changes to the compositions.

When I reviewed other participants' videos and still photos, I observed patterns, artistic processes, and compositions that were emerging. Using my artistic sensitivities, I made selections based on what I empirically identified as significant. When I examined my own videos and photos, I reflected as an artist, noticing how I was relating to the process and the imagery. What I chose to include and exclude most certainly conveyed some aesthetic bias, thus impacting the distillation of the outcomes, and demonstrating how editing selectively shaped the creation of the final document. Of note is that while I reviewed *all* of the videos and visual recordings, other participants only viewed their own edited material.

Once the final composite films and slideshows were shared with participants and my advisor, I continued to process what happened, further distilling preliminary outcomes. I remained open to unexpected outcomes throughout this process. A crucial part of review was separating personal observations, thoughts, and feelings from generalized, empirical observations about content, imagery, and meaning. This was necessary so that implicit ideas about the unique therapeutic qualities of the process could be explored.

Final Presentation

The final presentation is the culminating effort to share the outcomes of this study. It has two components: the aggregate summary video and the written dissertation. They convey different but complementary aspects of five study-

participants' encounters with the one-canvas process. I approached creating the final aggregate summary video as an artistic process that conveys an overall sense of the work. It highlights outcomes that respond to Question 1. I was not able to effectively show impacts of the interim period (Question 2) in the video as this was a time when creative process was not visible, however the written portion does address these findings. It is hoped that the video itself is able to reflect discoveries that respond to Question 3. Consultation with my advisor about cohesion between written and visual materials was also crucial during this refining stage. I shared "in progress" drafts numerous times, and integrated feedback from an external editor and members of my committee.

Authenticity, Accuracy, and Trustworthiness

Participants gave direct input about their experiences, and reviewed their composite summary videos, summary statements, and their transcripts to ensure accuracy. I maintained prolonged engagement with participants, and immersed myself in the photos, the transcriptions, and especially video material in order to generate integrity to the work. I used a consistent and coherent set of procedures that matched the research questions and reviewed and examined all of the empirical documentation as a cyclical and simultaneous creative process.

Contrary to traditional academic data collection and theme analysis, this research continually examined the evidence for essential elements, processes, patterns, and expressions. I used a continuous cyclic process of review and examination. None of the material was categorized by themes; rather it was distilled to glean the essence of

the work with appreciation for its applicability in the field of art therapy. As such, the outcomes incorporate my own artistic bias and interpretations about therapeutic and personal growth values.

Summary

The methods were established to reflect the complexities that are part of any art making process. The three research questions that guided the study oriented to artistic experience, materials, and digital documentation. Five adult participants, including myself, painted on one surface with the option to use assemblage/collage materials for an extended period of time. Three forms of digital media were used to document the work, along with recorded conversations and journal notes. Artifacts were empirically examined in a cyclic process of review, led by the bias of an artistic sensitivity. Distilled video summaries were primary to the method and discovery process. The outcomes and their relationship to prior research will be shared in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Four key outcomes emerged from this project using the art-based methods described in Chapter III. The methods and discoveries were guided by three research questions: 1) Are there art therapy qualities that are unique to the one-canvas assemblage painting process? 2) What are the therapeutic qualities of the interim periods during one-canvas work? 3) Can digital media that is used to document one-canvas processes, further appreciation and understanding of therapeutic arts modalities?

For those participating in this specific study, engaging with the one-canvas method: 1) Provided opportunities to experience a continuous process of change and transformation, and 2) An enhanced sense of an integral dynamic between new creations and the loss of previous ones. Additionally, 3) The time between sessions was significant, and 4) Digital media made notable contributions. In this chapter I examine the findings and compliment them with selected quotes, images, and timeline markers in videos. A reference list for quick access to video links is included at the end of this chapter.

Discoveries

Elements, characteristics, and qualities of one-canvas art making were found to be interdependent parts of an overarching process. While the four outcomes are addressed separately, it is important to remember that the key discoveries were interrelated and did not occur entirely separately or in any fixed sequence. Thus, an

effort is made to weave the findings into and around each other; to holistically convey the essence of new discovery. Five participants' experiences generated four primary outcomes, gleaned primarily from visual documentation. Outcomes 1 and 2 respond to Question 1: *Are there art therapy qualities that are unique to the one-canvas assemblage painting process?*

1. Provides Opportunities for the Experience of a Continuous Process of Change and Transformation

Overarching and Ongoing Change Process. A unique feature was the overarching and ongoing change process that characterized using one surface over an extended period of time and in continuous art making sessions. As Kath shared, "I think if it had been 'come in once and do it,' it would have been flat...this feels visceral, and three-dimensional, and life-like." The continually transforming imagery was the most distinctive characteristic evidenced by the artworks and can be seen in all five individual summary videos and slideshows (See Appendixes F1-F5). Participants quickly came to expect that they could and would make numerous alterations to their paintings. They described the ongoing change processes with words such as, "evocative," "evolution in art making," "emergent," "transformative," and "similar to dream work."

Over the sustained period of time, participants shifted from hyper-focus on *what* they were creating to *how* they perceived what was happening. This came more naturally for Brit and myself, which I attribute to both of us having prior experience with therapeutic art making. Dana commented that she was learning a new rhythm that felt like being stuck and then opening up. A quality of learning a new rhythm applied to all

participants new to this process. Participants frequently used the words “freedom” and “playful” when they described their experiences with this continuous art making. When ‘in the flow’ they expressed feeling satisfied and relaxed about the ongoing change processes and what they saw developing, which also felt more natural over time. Participants talked about the flow of painting and rhythmic body movements mirrored this fluidity.

More restricted physical movements and brush strokes were observed when participants expressed hesitancy about how and what changes to make. Mike and others equated this with having a forced feeling, where they felt tight and rigid. It was most noticeable when meaning about an image became fixed or judged. Expressions of criticism (self and other) seemed to interrupt the flow of creativity. This is when participants asked for my guidance about how to proceed. I sensed and spoke with an artist’s awareness while supporting the growth of an artist’s voice in each participant, and curtailed questions that I might offer as an art therapist. Mike concluded that he could orient to rhythm and flow after noticing when he became judgmental about his art making, and that this was a critical part of the whole process. He generalized this as something he could apply to his life. At the same time that participants relaxed into embracing this new form of art making, they also began to express new curiosities about themselves as artists. Kath reflected, “I allowed myself to go there, I created it...it came from me,” and similarly, Mike celebrated being able to create more freely. Dana and Brit both shared that by using this method, their perceptions of themselves as artists had expanded.

Regardless of the pace, rhythm, or degree of changes to the work, all of the participants agreed that making art using this method's ongoing change processes was unusual, visually evocative, and emotionally impactful. Dana likened the artistic evolutions to watching her different psychic states. As participants were painting everyone also reacted at times with non-verbal expressions, conveying emotion by tearing up, furrowing brows, and soft gazing at the painting. The compositions' transformations were also seen as self-discovery through mirroring, which Kath equated with "the way we reveal ourselves to ourselves."

Using One Surface Over an Extended Period of Time. The choice to use a canvas as the primary 'container' for artistic work was not unusual but continuing to work on one surface with ongoing changes over time was novel for most participants. They commented about the canvas surface's size, its sturdiness, how *it* responded to experimenting with change processes. There were numerous remarks about the canvas' heaviness at the end of the third session, coupled with perceptions about the weight of meaning underneath all the layers. For example, Kath shared, "It felt like a weight had been lifted...the painting in and of itself carries great depth and emotional significance, however, it does not feel heavy at all." Mike also reflected, "Picking up my painting upon completion was an interaction all to itself," then he added, "It was much more dense than what I would have imagined... felt very much alive; giving off an energy that was both new yet very familiar."

Every participant creatively and uniquely applied materials to the canvas to alter the basic qualities of color, shape, texture, and line over a sustained period of time.

There were no consistent patterns of changes between the first, second, and third sessions except that with time, participants did experiment more freely with materials and art making techniques. I observed this shift by the end of the first session, as well as during each subsequent meeting. Some of the media's formal qualities and how they were impacting the changes to the compositions entered into conversation. Many commented on the usefulness of how quickly acrylic paints dried, and how they could be used to blend or create transparency. Kath shared, "The painting and working with the materials...I really noticed the paint, the heaviness of the paint, or the brush strokes that I was using [would] lead me to: *Oh, ok I want to do this...Oh, it [paint] moves ...a visceral movement to it*" (Appendix F2 video clips 0:35-0:48 and 4:16-4:20).

Four out of five participants experimented with kinesthetic and textural change processes by incorporating an array of found objects (yarn, bark, string, tissue paper, collage, feathers, glitter, glass bead, felted wool, etc.). These materials were described as "different," "intriguing," and "physical." Changes to the work using assemblage material were very noticeable, and quite often they were preceded by conversation about how incorporating them might impact the work. While observing in vivo, and later watching the videos, I often felt a disruptive quality when assemblage materials were used. This was reminiscent of breaking inertia in order to set action into motion. A degree of physicality was required to spatially navigate and integrate these materials, with added attention to choosing a preferred adhesive. Brit was concerned that using materials other than paints would make her work too "whimsical" and not be acceptable in the fine arts world, yet she used them a great deal. The only participant

who did not use any assemblage was an experienced oil painter, who shared that she thought about using an old book as 'found' material but did not follow through with this. She seemed curious about the addition of assemblage but did not feel compelled to integrate materials other than paints.

For all participants, the chosen medium impacted how each painting changed visually, which then generated some emotional impact. Intermittent emotional expressions seemed to come from participants' reactions to materials as well as content/meaning making. Orientation to meaning was acknowledged, yet the process emphasized continual and ongoing changes to meaning making. This meant that we did not focus on one meaning for any image, as is more typical in mainstream art therapy practice. For example, Brit's use of a lacey fabric was part of meaning making that related image to material, "...it was supposed to slightly cover up the goddess and give her a little protection," but this meaning was also free to change, which it did later when Brit connected the lace to her own femininity. Symbolic meanings were also connected to materials without locking them into a singular interpretation. During the review, Kath reflected that her decision to use a material other than paints felt unconsciously driven, "...it is the only part of the piece that has a different material...it is symbolic...a phase in my life of starting all over again, and you're building with new materials."

During sustained painting's short pauses, there were steps back from the painting, tilting of heads and consideration (quietly or out loud) whether to continue, stop, or re-work. These pauses ranged from a moment of contemplation (everyone demonstrated these moments of quiet inner dialogue) to poignant moments of

tearfulness that seemed to catch participants by surprise. If requested, these were also moments when I would offer guidance about how to notice a felt sense of the composition and its images.

These moments of reflection often marked that something important was happening. This was seen during Mike's first session when he expressed a desire to 'protect' a part of the painting that he felt represented vulnerability (the red dot). He made changes by applying torn white tissue paper as a covering because it was not too heavy or opaque, and it provided a quality of adding texture. Pleased with the visual effect and saying that the work felt settled, he stopped painting. Mike teared up as he spoke about how changing the composition led to a new feeling: He now felt capable of 'protecting' that vulnerable part of himself. Watching the video, we see the tenderness in how he applied the tissue paper, echoing another level of expression (Appendix F4 video clip 2:56-3:02). He later connected the material and change process with life's challenges through metaphor, "I just felt ...without it [tissue paper], it just looked too flat.... It [tissue paper] just added a dimension.... there's wear and tear in life. There's texture in life. There are rough edges in life. It's not all going to be smooth."

Process of Transformation. The various techniques used to transform the work such as covering and turning the canvas, were not unique to one-canvas work. However, the quality that stood out for participants appeared to be the expectation that by using a variety of techniques continually, over the three sessions, on one canvas, new imagery would constantly emerge. Some transformations to the compositions were fluid, while other efforts came after participants expressed that they felt stuck, unsure, or confused.

These feelings were accompanied by a pause with a blank stare, frowning, and/or hesitating. No one completely stopped the art making for any sustained period when they felt stuck. Participants would consult with me at this juncture. When I painted as a participant I would self-reflect or journal when I felt unsure about how to continue.

When stuck, everyone tried something atypical, such as a new brush size or different medium, and acknowledged that it was a choice whether or not changes would continue. When participants felt pleased after re-working an area I would see nods, smiles, sighs, taking a few steps back to gaze, and/or movement to another part of the painting. Brit's reflection was typical of the combined discomfort and relief, "...Oh god, I don't want to do this thing [re-work] ...but as soon as I did it, I was like: Oh, that feels so much better."

Adding/Covering. Covering with paints and adding assemblage was similar to a sedimentation process. At times it felt and appeared to be more sculptural than painting. When paints were used to cover and build in smaller areas, the changes were more subtle, and at times not fully noticeable until after the paint had completely dried. Covering a large portion of the canvas by adding paints produced the effect of significantly altering the composition, creating the sensation of a blank slate or fresh start. Brit, Dana, and I each included this almost-complete covering at least once (Appendix F1 video clip 3:37-3:57; Appendix F3 video clip 3:51-4:02; Appendix F5 video clip 2:48-3:20).

Dana initially used a classic painting layering technique for her octopus tentacles and what she identified as a child's face (Figure 3; Appendix F5 video clips 1:48-1:58 and

3:31-3:40). I was surprised that I felt some lack of interest as Dana repeatedly used this

Figure 3

White Covering (Dana)



technique painting nine tentacles, which contrasted strongly with the vitality I noticed when she used a looser, more unpredictable style of painting. In my field notes journal, I reflected that had I been in my art therapist role, I would have asked her to notice her felt sense while painting this way. Everyone spontaneously called the adding and covering technique *layering*. It was freely used by all of the participants and seemed to capture their attention, while I was used to it as part of the process. Brit reflected, "... I really think it was all the layering upon layering [of media] that really brought it forth [changes in imagery]." Kath also felt it was pivotal to the work:

How would I feel if it wasn't the layered process? I think it wouldn't be as impactful....[layering] uncovers things and really makes you continue to look inward in a way that, if you just went in for one session... I don't think you would get as much out of it.

Removing/Blurring. As I observed and engaged with scraping, blurring, and removing paints/media, they felt like processes of erosion and excavation. Rather than

silence, these techniques created many vibrant art making sounds, marking another

Figure 4

(Mike) Scraping



change in the work. Mike scraped diagonally across the entire canvas, effecting major changes to his composition (Figure 4; Appendix F4 video clip 2:10-2:28), I rubbed off paints (Appendix F3 video clip 4:53-5:11) and completely blurred out the entire composition with large, wide brushstrokes, while Brit pulled off strings (Appendix F1 video clip 5:59-6:14). Dana also described how she was inspired to scrape. She noticed how it took away a forced feeling, allowing her to relax and then different images were revealed to her, which she attributed to using this technique.

Continuous Art Making Sessions. The one-canvas process engaged us conceptually and experientially with continuity during each session and over weeks.

The work on the canvas was there to return to, as Brit reflected, "...just knowing I was returning, I was like Ok, it's not the end yet." Everyone named the continuous process as an integral part of feeling more and more connected with the work, citing a sense of having an ongoing conversation with a piece of art. The continual process seemed to enhance learning a new language of art making. All of the participants shared that they experienced therapeutic benefits. Words such as "presence" and "powerful" were associated with the practice. Bodily responses were also noted, especially for Kath who has chronic pain. She felt energy moving through her body, was free of pain while art making, and experienced a release after sessions; as did other participants. Reflecting, Kath shared what other participants noticed about the continuity of the process, "You come back in, you look at what you've done, and it might mean something different the next day or the next week, but that's exactly how life works...layering of things...then also sometimes you have to strip away."

The artwork continued to transform during each painting session, and over an ongoing arc of time (3 sessions). Each composition evolved with different pacing and rhythms that were unique to each participant. By the second and third sessions, participants were beginning to generate their own prompts to respond to imagery and impulses to continue changing the compositions. Examples of less complex visual change can be seen in Brit and Kath's work, where content from each first session's painting is still visible in the final composition (Appendixes F1 and F2 Slideshows). Dana's change rhythm was less complicated during each session, as she focused on extensively refining one image at a time. However, her overall composition transformed

a great deal from the beginning to the end of the experimentation phase (Appendix F5 Slideshow). In contrast, Mike's and my compositions transfigured more extensively during each session *as well as* over the prolonged period of time (Appendixes F3 and F4 Slideshows). We made visual changes more frequently and more broadly than the other participants.

Completing the Work. At the end of the third session, there were a variety of perceptions about each painting's state of completion. Taking and sharing photographs by participants was not part of the protocol, however Mike, Kath, and Dana chose to do this at the end of each painting session. As a participant, I found it jarring to 'be done' after just three sessions. I had always relied on my own aesthetic sensing of when a painting was finished rather than adjusting this to a pre-specified time frame. However, after sharing photographs of the final painting with some colleagues, something changed, and I felt that it actually was done. Mike and Kath reflected similarly as I had after sharing photographs of their final paintings with their partners, prior to the final meeting. Brit noted that before this work, she thought there would be an ideal end point. However, this pattern changed during the work, and after the final session she felt that her painting was complete, immediately hanging it in her office (Appendix F1, Figure 15). Dana, however, was clear that her painting was still a work in progress, and that it felt like a transcript or diary of the sessions.

2. Generated an Enhanced Sense of an Integral Dynamic Between New Creations and the Loss of Previous Ones

The process of working on a single canvas over an extended period of time,

which involved an ongoing covering of existing expressions, heightened a sense of new creations and the loss of previous ones. This dynamic was ongoing and continually reflected on during every art making session, as Brit reflected, "...you know that it was going to change drastically always ... I don't want that to happen. I just want to keep each stage....[and] you do keep each stage... signify it and cherish it... You honor it still."

New Images. The consistently evolving compositions generated a steady flow of new imagery that shared a surface with prior images. Making a conscious choice to create new images often felt like taking a risk, and was coupled with expressions of sadness, anxiety and/or fear. New, unplanned imagery was evocative. Ongoing new changes meant that at times, we would not know what might come next, using phrases like, "stepping into the unknown," and "leap of faith." As participants shared that they appreciated and connected with what had spontaneously emerged, they also began to eagerly anticipate an ongoing process of *revealing* as a part of the change process that could also mean a loss. Words such as, "surprise," "delight," "relief," "mystery," and "gifts from the unconscious" were used to describe these unplanned happenings, even as other images were covered over or scraped off.

When participants had a strong emotional connection to an image, it did not change much. As example, Brit noticed what she called an 'emotional' area of her painting around the edges of the central 'swoosh,' saying, "...it's like wiping away tears... [then] I didn't touch it much. I kept it be. It kind [of] reminds me of a sanctuary" (Appendix F1 video clip 9:24-9:26).

Loss of Previous Images. Many associations arose in reaction to imagery which

impacted decisions to cover/scrape or 'lose' the form. At times the loss felt like the 'death' of an image. This evoked intense feelings of sadness. The ongoing re-working appeared to be a vital part of processing loss, while ongoing painting on one-canvas contained contrasting visual elements, in a shared space. Additionally, for participants in this study, there was time and attention to grieve (acknowledge loss) while life continued (new images emerged; the painting was ongoing).

Mike identified that certain images were "ready" to be transformed, and everyone seemed to develop an intuitive connection to a vitality in the images that I called its 'aliveness.' Participants would look at a particular image and notice whether they felt interest or any emotional connection to it. This seemed to indicate some value, which then impacted whether it would stay. This was seen as Mike contemplated whether his red dot in the center of the painting would be covered. He stated clearly and with deep conviction, "I support it staying. It is very alive, and it is very present" (see Appendix F4, Figure 25).

During all five art making encounters, sensing when a component's vitality was waning became a central part of conversation. Sometimes the pull to alter the gestalt of the whole composition was stronger than a desire to keep a specific part/image in the painting. This signaled the beginning of an artistic change process, such as when Dana felt the octopus was no longer a vibrant entity. She chose to artistically explore how the different tentacles represented parts of her life. She approached the question visually by covering all of the tentacles with a white overlay of paint (see Figure 4) and commented that this brought a new energy of openness to continuing the work. Later,

she poignantly shared how she felt the loss more acutely, and brought the octopus into conversation numerous times, as well as briefly back into the composition.

The Dynamic Between New Creations and Loss of Old Ones. Perceptions and emotions changed continually as images came and went. A new awareness that loss could actually enhance the composition also emerged. Brit spoke of missing *yellow* that was covered by *blue*, but also recognizing that this stimulated some curiosity. Feelings of loss shifted when new imagery accurately reflected a participant's thoughts and feelings, such as when Kath intentionally cut into her canvas to create a black hole and didn't regret the loss of the intact surface (Figure 5). It was jarring to watch the deconstruction, but she embraced the new form, "...I love the hole in the middle ...because I feel like it's my heart" (Appendix F2 video clip 2:55-3:05).

Participants also reflected on this dynamic during the time away from the studio. Brit reflected on the 'comings and goings' of images during her drives, noting to herself what needed to change and transform. Similarly, Dana shared, "But it definitely stays with you. So, it's not like the process goes away.... it stuck with me enough that it made me both curious about these questions as well as the process in a way that felt very present." The interim period was pre-determined and similar to the time period between therapy sessions, which Brit, an art therapist, reflected on, "...it was almost too long." She questioned, "What purpose does that serve and how does it allow you to actually step back and think about it?" Others commented in a similar fashion, thus suggesting that a continuous thread was forming between the sessions.

I also journaled about time being a mitigator for the loss I felt, as a large face was

covered over, replaced by a newly blurred composition (Figure 6). Participants

Figure 5

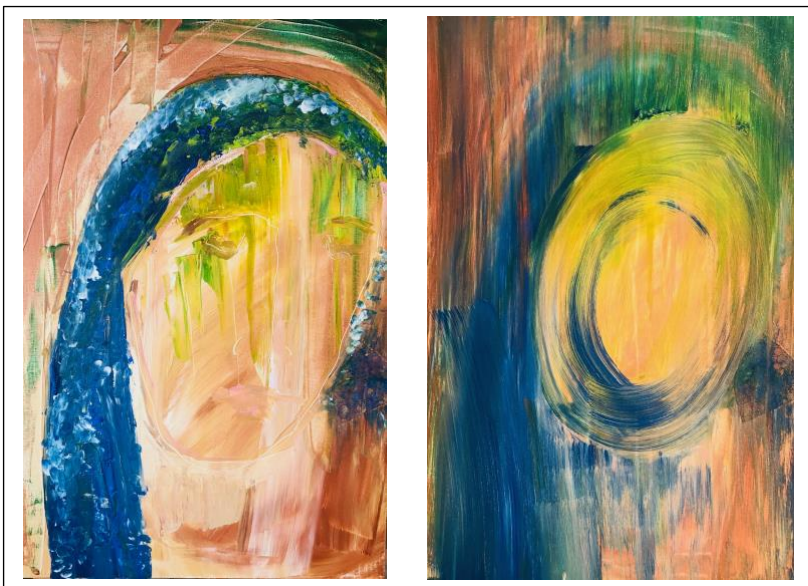
Hole in Canvas (Kath)



expressed feelings about the disappearance of images juxtaposed with seeing their metamorphoses on video during the final review. Similar to watching a life review video

Figure 6

Face That Was Lost (Abbe)



at a funeral, this seemed to bring some sense of closure to the 'new/loss' dynamic. Seeing the hole emerge during the slideshow, Kath commented as she watched the video and her covering with white paint, "I was like '*Oh god. It's all gone.*' It's not all gone...But, it is...I miss what's underneath.... It's there, I know it's there...it's still kind of like a sad goodbye in a sense" (Appendix F1 video clip 9:24-9:26).

3. The Time Between Sessions was Significant

Outcome 3 responds to Question 2: *What are the therapeutic qualities of the interim periods during one-canvas work?* The interim periods were significant, and three salient characteristics were identified: 1) A sense of continuity was enhanced by working on one canvas over the extended time period; 2) The stopping points or pauses in the painting and at the end of each session served as markers or touchstones that were used for reflection; 3) The extended time period generated what was described as processes of incubation and gestation that led to manifestation. These are similar to pilot study's findings, affirming the significance of the integral relationship between the interim periods and the overarching one-canvas method.

A Sense of Continuity was Enhanced by Working on One Canvas Over the Extended Time Period. Coming back to the same canvas over a period of three sessions generated a heightened awareness of connection between four phases of the process (art making, leaving, time away, return), and the evolution of the compositions. As time passed, the anxiety of "nothing will happen" shifted to anticipatory excitement of "what will happen?" Everyone left and returned with some unease but eager to continue work on the painting, noting the impact of the time away. Brit shared that during that "time

and space in between...even though nothing changes,” something did change.

Everyone expressed some tension when moving to the interim period and when anticipating return. There was a range of satisfaction with the product-in-process, leading to varying degrees of verbal and non-verbal expressions of discomfort when leaving. Participants spoke about the ongoing process with an anticipatory tone, wondering what might happen in the following session. The canvas-in-process was referenced as a companion that was being left behind.

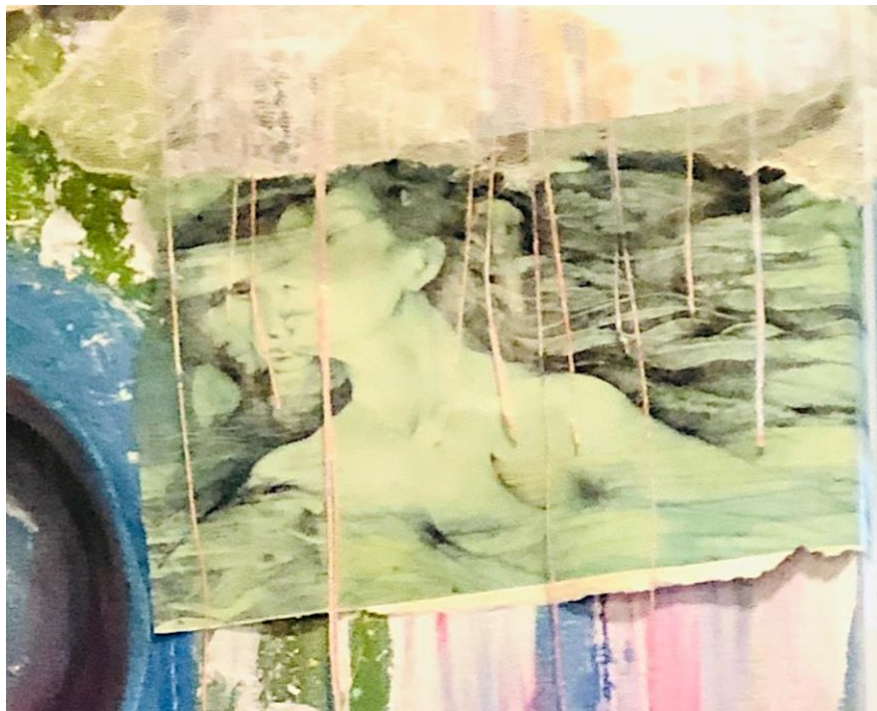
During the time away, a sense of continuity was marked by an acute awareness of predictable return. For four of the five participants, journal notes and sketches led to new ideas. I wrote about how I noticed that the yellow bird must remain, and that the chaos of the background needed to settle; Mike used a stream of consciousness method to record what his images ‘told’ him they wanted in the next painting session. The interim period was also a time when participants became more aware of not doing anything with the painting. Dana reflected, “In some ways it’s nice that it’s away, for me. Because then there’s no tinkering, there’s no: *let me fix this.*” Brit recognized a new way to companion her work-in-process without action, reviewing the painting in her mind almost daily. She enjoyed not acting on impulse and being able to give the art making process time and space, which seemed quite important to most participants.

Participants continually responded to tension in two ways that were impactful and interrelated. First, a recognition that changes could be made was settling; secondly, we all resourced ideas and materials during the interim. For example, Brit confided, “[the thought] I need to change it again...was comforting. It was kind of reassuring

where it wasn't solidified, it wasn't concrete, I could adapt with it ... it wasn't permanent." When she left the second session with some tension she responded by taking the time to look through collage images at home. She brought some to the third session and identified one as a goddess, an archetypal figure for her that became very significant in her process (Figure 7; Appendix F1 video clip 6:29-6:37).

Figure 7

Important Sourced Image for Brit



At return, I felt as though I was watching dear friends being reunited: Mike exclaimed to his canvas, "Hello, old friend!" Additionally, there were many thoughts about how the art work was kept during the time away. Mike shared that he was impacted by the illusion that his work had stayed in the exact same spot, saying that it felt like "object permanence." This was an interesting juxtaposition because when everyone returned, they also noticed what had changed in their compositions from the

last session. Brit felt that specifically, the interim period contributed to her sense of excitement when coming back to the work. The act of return highlighted the connection to an ongoing relationship with art making.

The Stopping Points or Pauses in the Painting and at the End of Each Session

Served as Markers or Touchstones that were Used for Reflection. The end of each session marked a transition moment leading into the interim period. We acknowledged these moments of importance without fixating on them, but images were marked for interim contemplation. As researcher and participant, during a pause in painting, I also identified markers by orienting to what felt poignant or important, by noticing repetitive patterns of imagery or art making, and by listening to what participants were sharing about these dynamics. It became evident that the markers and their meanings were constantly changing, and that there was an ongoing awareness of sensing when something was ‘touching.’ These images were identified with a literal touch, word, or gesture; signaling that they were markers or touchstones in the moment. For example, Mike placed his hand on an area that he said felt like a “bear’s paw” (Appendix F4 video clip 4:37-4:39), and Dana referred often to the image of the octopus that emerged in session 1. She chose to briefly re-paint it in session 2 (Appendix F5 video clip 4:26-4:40). This led to the entire composition becoming a touchstone, as Dana used a photograph of her canvas at the end of the second session. Perhaps reinforcing some deeper level of meaning, the last remnants of the new octopus’ two arms played a central role in the composition at that point, and it became a powerful jumping-off point for her family session that next week (see Figure 30, Appendix F5).

The Extended Time Period Generated what was Described as Processes of Incubation and Gestation that Led to Manifestation. The terms *incubation* and *gestation* were noted during longer pauses in session, the interim periods, and during reflection about the overarching process. During the pilot study (Miller, 2018) and again this project, the approach provided what Jung (1965) called a *temenos*; a space for transformative gestation and manifestation, where images arise from the personal and collective unconscious.

The planned break of an interim period along with the freedom to pause whenever desired, seemed to generate anticipation and excitement for art making based on what was 'bursting forth' after periods of incubation and gestation. During the extended periods of disengagement from 'doing' to the painting there was a shift to 'being with' what had happened. It was a time to look deeply into and at the work. There was a slowing of process. Perhaps ideas were developing, or the imagery was 'percolating' as in a gestation process. There was a quality of being 'on pause' but not switched 'off.' The physical distance (stepping back and/or time away) from the work appeared to allow creativity to quietly ferment, as dough rises while it sits at rest in a covered bowl.

Additionally, working on one portion of the painting meant that for an extended period, part of the composition was left untouched. Most notably, when a large portion of the canvas was covered over with paint the composition seemed to enter into an incubation period of creative process. Every composition went through at least one of these phases. We see this clearly in Dana's work when she repeatedly almost

completely covered the composition with white paint; during Mike's full-canvas scraping; when Brit used white to cover; and when I blurred my entire composition or covered most of the canvas with blue. These gestation phases of wiping out/covering over the composition also stood out when we watched the summary videos, where emergence after incubation was much quicker than during the actual process.

4. Digital Media Made Notable Contributions

Outcome 4 responds to Question 3: *Can digital media that is used to document one-canvas processes, further appreciation and understanding of therapeutic arts modalities?* Digital video enhanced remembering by providing visual evidence of what had been covered over and at times, forgotten; and by stimulating an expansion of memory about what happened for both participants and myself as the person conducting the study. Viewing video also generated new perceptions for participants. Editing, repeated viewing, and sharing the video summaries with participants furthered the identification of research outcomes. The findings for this study affirmed that digital video documentation was able to accurately record art making process and the artwork as product. This was highlighted during the fourth meeting when videos were shared, which was an entirely new experience for everyone.

Enhanced Remembering. In comparison to a single session art therapy encounter, art making on one surface over three sessions created a myriad of interrelated experiences for participants and myself as researcher, to remember. Memory processes seemed to be woven into the fabric of this sustained and ongoing work. Participants had forgotten how many different transitions their compositions

went through.

Providing Visual Documentation. Digital video enhanced remembering by providing visual evidence of what had been covered over and at times, forgotten. Memories had faded over the three painting sessions and by the fourth meeting everyone was interested in recalling the evolution of her/his work. Participants pointed out images and parts of the process that had been forgotten while they were watching the slideshows and summary videos. Mike commented on imagery, “Wow. I forgot that it had so much to it...to see where it started. Every step of the way has contributed to the end result.” Everyone suggested that the covering was a part of this forgetting, commenting on not remembering what was underneath the layers of paint, as well as the different materials that were used. Mike was delighted with the video footage that showed how much he had used ‘bold’ colors. For him, as well as others, the video documentation was welcomed proof.

Expansion of Memory. Digital video stimulated an expansion of memory for both participants and myself as the person conducting the study. When I was reviewing raw footage, I had forgotten at least one image or part of the process for every session, including my own! Participants came to the fourth review session remembering some moments while other image’s evolutions had been forgotten. Watching the videos seemed to expand and disrupt preconceived ideas. Participants became aware of movements, visual/emotional expressions, a range of sounds, metamorphoses, and emotionally touching moments that they either had not been aware of or had not recognized as significant. Brit shared, “I don’t see the whole thing when I’m painting it.

Even when I step back, it's not the same." I repeatedly heard expressions of surprise, delight, and curiosity while we watched the short videos together. Dana hinted at recognizing that she had been in a kind of partnering with creative process, where "there is this kind of thing that moves with you."

Memory and Awareness. The three digital media perspectives impacted awareness and memory differently. The slideshows were described as "static" but clearly contributed to reshaping memories about the evolution of the painting. The GoPro video clips generated the most discussion and enhanced memory of detail, such as refined brush strokes (Appendix F3 video clip 4:31-4:50). Brit described the view as, "Up close and personal...it does look so different than what you see with your own eyes." Mike was delighted with new awareness about his brushstrokes and their changes that were made possible through the GoPro lens (Appendix F4 video clip 7:05-7:16). Viewing one's full body in motion through the lens of the video camera was at times a distraction for Dana and myself, but not for others. The wide view afforded a sense of painting with the whole body, not just hands and arms.

Viewing Video Generated New Perceptions for Participants. Having participants share their thoughts while watching digital videos generated unique perspectives about the essence of the work. Most significantly, watching them seemed to reinforce a core dynamic within this method: meaning matters and has multiple dimensions that continue to change. Everyone responded positively to the opportunity to have an extended back and forth conversation about their experiences. The combination of seeing and remembering at the same time generated new and impactful perceptions

about what had happened, some that even transformed while we watched the slideshows and videos together. Dana's perception about rushing through her last session changed, as she saw her process unfold in an unhurried manner. Kath's perception about whose hand was reaching up, strikingly changed as she watched, "The still photos made me see things in different ways...I know I said I wanted [another person] to reach a hand up, but now that I'm watching it, it's like I'm reaching up for help" (Appendix F2 slideshow 0:15-0:22; 4th Meeting Review Moments clip 0:21-1:03).

Each participant spontaneously went from viewing, to gleaning the essence of their own process. Dana felt that her work represented movement from a solitary focus that was sad, and then evolved into the image of a tree, which evoked happiness. The final composition felt full and generative, as it was filled with others and even the faces of ancestors. In reverse, Kath saw that her creative expressions transformed from focusing on others to reflecting her own truths, which was deeply moving for her. Both of these new perceptions emerged only after watching the videos.

Editing, Repeated Viewing, and Sharing Video Summaries with Participants.

Editing, repeated viewing, and sharing the video summaries with participants furthered the identification of research outcomes in an essentially artistic way. We were all emotionally moved. Everyone responded to the slideshows and videos and creating them engaged all of my artistic sensibilities. As a researcher, I experienced editing digital media as art making, using distillation process on multiple levels. Digital media had been used to accurately reflect and refine a version of creative process and was affirmed by all participants. Everyone agreed that visual changes and emotional expressions of the

overall experience had been effectively captured through the summary videos and slideshows. Watching videos also led to spontaneous distillation about one-canvas work by participants: its salient quality was identified as transformative/ transformational process. Kath summarized it this way, "...something so transformative but to call it anything other than that would not do our sessions justice...[the] method of layered painting is so meaningful, and it instantly pulls feelings out onto the canvas."

Chapter Summary

The one-canvas practice was heavily oriented to the making of and responding to multiple images of an ongoing composition/painting. A core paradoxical quality about this approach emerged. Participants noticed that the images and their meanings were ongoing and transient, while the 'painting' remained very present. When painting, and then later watching the videos, it was apparent that images would dependably continue to emerge, yet they were also impermanent, thus not dependable. What happened when these multiple realities co-existed?

Outcomes 1 and 2 respond to Guiding Question 1: *Are there art therapy qualities that are unique to the one-canvas assemblage painting process?*

1. Provides opportunities for the experience of a continuous process of change and transformation. A unique feature was the overarching and ongoing change process that characterized using one surface over an extended period of time and in continuous art therapy sessions.

2. An enhanced sense of an integral dynamic between new creations and the loss of previous ones. The process of working on a single canvas over an extended period of

time, which involved an ongoing covering of existing expressions, heightened the sense of both new creations and the loss of previous ones.

Outcome 3 responds to Guiding Question 2: *What are the therapeutic qualities of the interim periods during one-canvas work?*

3. The time between sessions was significant. Three characteristics were identified: A sense of continuity was enhanced by working on one canvas over the extended time period; the stopping points or pauses in the painting and at the end of each session served as markers or touchstones that were used for reflection; the extended time period generated what was described as processes of incubation and gestation that led to manifestation.

Outcome 4 responds to Guiding Question 3: *Can digital media that is used to document one-canvas processes, further appreciation and understanding of therapeutic arts modalities?*

4. Digital media made notable contributions. Digital video enhanced remembering by providing visual evidence of what had been covered over and at times, forgotten; and by stimulating an expansion of memory about what happened for both participants and myself as the person conducting the study. Viewing video also generated new perceptions for participants. Editing, repeated viewing, and sharing the video summaries with participants furthered the identification of research outcomes.

In Chapter V - Discussion, I will explore how a synthesis of the five outcomes relates these results to the literature.

Quick Reference to Video Links***Appendix F1 Participant #01 - Brit***

PW: OneCanvas01

Slideshow: <https://vimeo.com/311663639>

Summary video: <https://vimeo.com/359585722>

Appendix F2 Participant #02 - Kath

PW: OneCanvas02

Slideshow: <https://vimeo.com/317799760>

Summary video: <https://vimeo.com/318260306>

4th Meeting Review Moments: <https://vimeo.com/359634310>

Appendix F3 Participant #03 -Abbe

PW: OneCanvas03

Slideshow: <https://vimeo.com/321972453>

Summary video: <https://vimeo.com/324878412>

Appendix F4 Participant #04 – Mike

PW: OneCanvas04

Slideshow <https://vimeo.com/326335262>

Summary video <https://vimeo.com/326324840>

Appendix F5 Participant #05 – Dana

PW - OneCanvas05

Slideshow <https://vimeo.com/338002568>

Summary video <https://vimeo.com/338002954>

Appendix H Final Aggregate Summary Video

PW – MillerOneCanvas

Video: <https://vimeo.com/391046649>

CHAPTER V

Discussion

For participants in this study, the one-canvas approach to art making generated ongoing, sustained encounters with change processes. Transformation was explored from multiple and often paradoxical perspectives. Building on discoveries from my pilot study, this project generated four distinctive outcomes: 1) The one-canvas method provided opportunities to experience a continuous process of change and transformation, and 2) an enhanced sense of an integral dynamic between new creations and the loss of previous ones; 3) The time between sessions was significant and; 4) Digital media made notable contributions. This chapter examines these discoveries further and relates them to the literature.

Depth Work

Participants in this study appeared to confirm that the one-canvas practice aligned well as a depth approach. Participants, with very little intervention from me, leaned towards exploring the complex nature of what was happening. Working deeply, we embraced images that might not be clearly understood in the moment, or that might be hidden underneath layers of paints or assemblage materials. We stayed open to multiple feelings and meanings, while the practice reminded us that there was literally, much below the surface.

The work brought up many contradictory concepts both during art making and the interim periods. All of the art works and subsequent reflections included both personal and universal associations, as well as references to ordinary and non-ordinary

domains of perception. Over time, participants oriented to the imaginal approach that Berry (1982/2017) and Hillman (1979) discussed and experienced a type of non-directed thinking as “image piles upon image” (Jung, 1911-12/1952, p.19). Participants found that while meaning mattered, it was essential to pay attention to multiple meanings that were ongoing and changing. This is a distinction from much of mainstream art therapy practice, where a singular symbolic meaning is often affixed to an image.

Just as exploring changing meanings was a central part of the process during this study, multiple levels of awareness were also activated which Franklin (2016a; 2016b; 2017) has noted is a part of a transpersonal art therapy orientation. He and his colleagues (2000) posited, “The practice of creating art holds the same vast properties and experiences as the transpersonal perspective” (p. 108). Deeply personal material emerged, and at the same time unexplainable visual results were accessed. These were associated with mystery, expressions of wonder, revelation, and spirituality. This seemed to generate introspection and expansiveness about connections between art making, psychological processes, and the numinous. It echoed the premise that Allen (2005) and Farrelly-Hansen (2001) have suggested: Art making can be more than a temporal practice.

An Integrative Dynamic

Paradoxical aspects of the process also invited opportunity for integrative experience. We were asked to embrace and then let go of attachments to compositions that might have seemed complete, which was at times uncomfortable. Yet, some level of

integrative experience was not only possible, it was inevitable as images were continually separated and combined on one canvas; hidden by covering, and still present.

Partners in Exploration

Participants seemed to collaborate with paintings and images as intertwined parts of the process, which is evocative of Lett's (2014; 2016) work at the MIECAT Institute. When we view images as alive, as Allen (2012) and Edwards (2010) have shared, the alliance is a reciprocal process. Images came and went, but they kept emerging. We partnered in exploring their 'comings and goings,' through their physical and ephemeral natures, as Arnheim (1966; 2000) encouraged. The emergent imagery was repeatedly compelling. This appeared to be a salient factor that led to embracing the idea that art making was driven, in part, by forces of which we were unaware.

During exploration, paradoxical tensions arose. Allen (1995; 2005), McNiff (2015), Stafford (2016), and Moreno (1969) all acknowledged that partnering with tension could be a critical part of creative process. In this study, response to tension led to discovery that it was comforting to know that changes to the painting could happen. Everyone was inspired to resource ideas and materials when we did not feel satisfied with the painting, affirming and expanded on pilot study findings. Lev stated that (2019) tension during art making also reinforced a recognition of polarities. This supports examining how discoveries were generated by working with three examples of pairings of opposite energies.

Active Art Making/Interim Periods. The process thrust participants into a creative rhythm that included active and seemingly non-active periods of art making. Everyone

continued with the work after they paused or had extended breaks, suggesting that they had found a valuable way to engage the polarities of doing and non-doing. Merton's (1969) orientation to the Taoist concept of *wu-wei* is a useful way to view this 'both/and' dynamic. It recognizes that the nature of 'non-action' is different than a lack of action, and that both are generative. Specifically, participants encountered the novel and unfamiliar rhythms of non-doing as a vital part of a creative process, which was ultimately quite fruitful.

Revealed/Concealed. During this study participants had time and repeated opportunity to reveal, conceal, and revisit memory through the disappearance, emergence, coverage, and re-emergence of images and compositions. Four participants, new to the method, all attributed one-canvas processes with the emergence of unplanned imagery specific to significant personal losses. This dynamic may have been primed by the covering and ongoing transformations of images that were simultaneously revealed and concealed, identified in Outcome 2. This outcome is reminiscent of the association between the grieving process and collage construction/deconstruction that T. Robbins (1998) put forward. For all five participants the question arose: *What significance, if any, do the revealed then concealed images hold?*

What was surprising, given that this was not formal art therapy, was the degree to which participants disclosed these losses. Were participants reacting to my presence as an experienced art therapist, or to the method's reliable container? One surely impacted the other, creating space where personal losses were shared, and 'life' (art making) continued. Similarly, Miles and Mullins (2019) noticed that the ritual process of

one-canvas practice and its steadily emergent images, enhanced relationship. The outcomes suggest that a convergence of predictable, sustained art making on a single surface using ongoing change processes offered participants a novel way to integrate some of the challenging emotional polarities about feelings of loss while still being alive.

Paints/Assemblage. The choice to offer a variety of materials gave opportunity for multi-sensory expression, affirming prior research by Camic et al. (2011), Scotti and Chilton, (2018), and Snir and Regev (2013). The physical and emotional impacts of using different art media and the contrasts between them was seen in the work by four of the five participants. Similar to knowing that changes could be made at any time, awareness that a variety of media was available also appeared to be significant, especially regarding re-working techniques that were used to integrate multi-media on one surface.

In the results, I note that a disruptive process was activated when assemblage was added. This is similar to the breaks in attunement that Kossak (2015) explored. He noted the therapeutic value of being able to adjust, re-attune, and repair after disruptions. In this study, having one surface as the only option to work on was integral to repair: there was no getting away, you had to return that surface and re-work the imagery. This stimulated discovery of a wide variety of re-working techniques by participants. One person, who did not use assemblage, did encounter disruptions which did not involve materials as much as dissatisfaction with artistic content and her visual expressions. All artistic 'repair' involved re-working, and the inclusion of both paints and assemblage appears to have generated more opportunities to notice these disruptions. Sensing and noticing breaks within therapeutic relationship is important and worth cultivating as an inter- and intrapersonal

skill for clients as well as therapists, as Kossak (2009) and attachment theorists have articulated (Erskine; 1998; Sonkin, 2005).

The intensity of an ongoing 'both/and' dynamic that was seen and experienced during this study, and highlighted by these three couplings, affirmed what Rice (1987), as well as Potash and Sabados (2016) have suggested: one-canvas work appears to be a form of artistic exploration that is inherently integrative. Contrasting thoughts, feelings, and perceptions came together on one surface; compositions were repeatedly transformed, and eventually, everyone found a completion point in artistic expression where multiple truths shared time and space.

Transformations

The art works transformed. The physical changes to each and every painting are clear and lasting (See Appendix G), confirming the basic definition of a transformation. Artistic process may be impacted by interactions between our memories, our imaginations, and forces of creativity, and creative process reliably transforms experience and perception (McNiff, 1998a; 2019). Archetypal psychology concepts, and artists such as Grey (2001) and the Layerists, have also suggested that expressions from the unknown (mystery) can be significant part of transformative experience.

For participants in this study, engaging with the one-canvas process appeared to foster a transmission of sorts, coaxing forward aspects of an artist's identity that is both possible and generative for everyone. Two participants transformed old ways of seeing themselves as artists, while two others embraced an artist's identity for the first time. Additionally, during this artistic inquiry, discoveries affirmed the primacy of my artist-

self as integral to the model's therapeutic qualities, echoing Malis' (2014) recognition of the importance of an artist-identity for art therapists.

New Yet Ancient Rhythms

Participants encountered an unfamiliar way to paint. A new, yet ancient rhythm of trust in creative process, grew over time. The evolution of trust over a sustained period highlighted one of the unique differences between this approach and single session of art therapy. As I watched participants struggle with a new (to them) rhythm of painting, I remembered: *As a lifeguard I was trained to swim with the movement of the ocean's deep current, not against it, even if that seemed to initially take me further away from shore. Feeling the power of the current when out in the depths could be challenging.* Of note is that although I have used this approach for years, I also felt new and unfamiliar rhythms in my art making. A quality of almost primal playfulness was noticed as participants relaxed into the flow of continuously evolving art making. They were aligning with McNiff's entreaty to "trust the process" (1998b) and integrating vital steps which could support using this method as a self-initiated art making process.

Exploring Change as a Part of Life

Like archeologists, everyone agreed that the final compositions could only be fully appreciated by examining their complex change processes. This led to another dynamic that participants expressed: *Trusting artistic transformation was similar to trusting life's changes.* As reflected in Outcomes 1 and 2, participants repeatedly associated their encounters with the continually changing compositions, with life itself.

This perception is evocative of Lett's (2011; 2016) observation that connects the movements/changes of the life force with creative expression.

Change, as an acknowledged and vital part of life, is complex; we desire it and we are challenged by it. Developmental psychologist Joan Erikson (1988) suggested that change feels dangerous and is accompanied by elements of construction and destruction. Further, she asserted that without it, there would be stagnation and truncated growth, locking living beings into a mold. For participants in this study, one-canvas work provided numerous opportunities to explore artistic ways to crack the mold and encounter the potential of transformative art making.

Combining Transformative Elements

The outcomes suggest that a desire for integration through art making was fuelled by encountering paradox and polarities, and that re-working the painting was the core process available for artistic response. As colors blended, images connected, and compositions felt harmonious, participants felt satisfaction and settling; integration, perhaps. When this happened repeatedly, as was the nature of one-canvas work during this study, deeper emotional thoughts, feelings, and perceptions began to emerge. They coalesced during our final fourth meeting, when we were accompanied by video slideshows and summary videos. Perceptions transformed. Video documentation recorded the 'life story' of each painting and became another companion to transformative process.

Video Documentation and Transformative Process. Including digital media documentation and sharing the videos with participants and my advisor led to

transformative thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. This was another partnering, supported by prior works by Carlton (2018), Harris (2018), and Duckrow (2017) that recognized the potential to expand meaning when digital media were included.

Based on outcomes from this study, video documentation appears to have a great deal of potential for enhancing what Springham and Brooker (2013) cited as a three-way therapeutic relationship (client-therapist-artwork) and can be taken further by adding the intention of artistry. I made the videos artistically. When shared, they created emotional impact, as viewing artwork can. For participants, watching them was confirmation that change continues. Sharing access to the *visual notes* (individual summary videos) also expanded on Schaverien's (1993) work, where art therapy clients reviewed just two selected artworks made during the course of therapy. For this study, visual documentation enabled everyone to revisit an extended process of creating one artwork, and then continue their own processing beyond completion of the study. This expanded on Nash's (2018) use of audio-image recordings during client review. Sharing video documentation (via flash drive and access to uploaded videos) with participants also provided for a more egalitarian engagement in the research, affirming Lett's (2014; 2016) extensive explorations with companioning in art-based research. The outcomes were so profoundly impacted by artistically creating and then watching these videos, that I encourage their inclusion for future art therapy research and practice.

As compositions changed the paintings themselves mirrored and stimulated transformational thoughts, feelings, and perceptions; a conclusion that Rice (1987) came to during her seminal one-canvas work. But why did we make changes so readily

and so consistently? Was it merely being given permission to do so? The outcomes suggest that it went deeper. For participants in this study, there was something intrinsically satisfying, fulfilling and transformational during encounters with ongoing change processes on one-canvas, for a sustained period of time.

Reflections

It was essential to use art-based research for discovery about a continual art making process and embrace the bias that occurs during any form of creativity. The process of viewing another's art making and artwork, then creating summary videos was no exception. I made an effort to artistically honor observation, both my own and others, without compromising the essence of each person's encounter with one-canvas art making.

The concept of completion when making paintings over a sustained period of time continues to be intriguing and under-examined. Art therapy educators such as Garcia-Reyna (2019), Miles and Mullins (2019), Potash and Sabados (2016), and Megan Robb (2017) have already begun to incorporate this method in the classroom and may benefit from new discoveries about ongoing art making processes, and the work of sustained relationship for the person making the art, including the time between sessions.

Additionally, for clinical practitioners, the video review process seemed to show great potential. The filming, editing and reviewing of the art offered a unique evaluative and collaborative experience, conveying artistic processes and works of art simultaneously. This is much needed in the field of art therapy itself. Future research

could also engage groups of people doing the method together, exploring feedback loops and witnessing dynamics. More enquiry within art-based group supervision paradigms, as well as individual supervision aligns with prior research. While not conclusive by any means, these findings also open new consideration for the model's application for bereavement work, given that dynamics of loss and memory impacted the process so strongly.

Limitations

This study involved only five adults; none of whom were from a clinical population, and all were from a somewhat homogenous socio-economic (current status as upper middle-class) background of well educated, motivated individuals. These can be viewed as limitations of numbers and demographics. The role and impact of the other person during one-canvas work was not the focus of this study, but most certainly influenced and biased the outcomes. This limitation also lays the groundwork for future research about the art therapist's role while using this method.

Further, the one-canvas method grew out of many years of self-initiated studio work, which I and others, have continued. Participants experienced therapeutic value by using it. The art therapy field would be enriched by exploring how we can more fully bring our artist-selves into therapeutic relationship, while at the same time, fostering our client's sense of self as an artist. Additionally, future studies with both in-patient and out-patient client populations would certainly add to the knowledge base about using the one-canvas approach in art therapy. I also chose not to create typical response art to each participant's work, which may have limited me from other artistic ways of

knowing and understanding what was emerging from the evidence (Allen, 1995; Fish, 2012, 2019).

Conclusion

In the field of art therapy, there is often an arbitrary separation of art making process and product. However, participants soon found that unpredictable imagery and a predictably present canvas were partners to discovery processes that included simultaneous encounters with art making and their works of art. Sensing a paradoxical aspect to the approach, self-reflections often went deep, and new appreciation for an artist-self emerged. The five one-canvas artworks, coupled with each unique experience, clearly showed ongoing change processes that are unlike single session art therapy models. Working with the 'comings and goings' of images enhanced our sense of an integral dynamic between new imagery and the loss of previous ones, while creative process continued during the time between sessions. Artistically created video documentation summaries enhanced and expanded memory, while also generating new perceptions about transformation.

APPENDIX A**IRB APPROVAL****Institutional Review Board**

29 Everett Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel 617 349 8234
Fax 617 349 8190
irb@lesley.edu

DATE: December 5, 2018

To: Abbe Miller

From: Robyn Cruz and Ulas Kaplan, Co-Chairs, Lesley IRB

RE: **IRB Number: 18/19-020**

The application for the research project, "One canvas art making process" provides a detailed description of the recruitment of participants, the method of the proposed research, the protection of participants' identities and the confidentiality of the data collected. The consent form is sufficient to ensure voluntary participation in the study and contains the appropriate contact information for the researcher and the IRB.

This application is approved for one calendar year from the date of approval.

You may conduct this project.

Date of approval of application: December 5, 2018

Investigators shall immediately suspend an inquiry if they observe an adverse change in the health or behavior of a subject that may be attributable to the research. They shall promptly report the circumstances to the IRB. They shall not resume the use of human subjects without the approval of the IRB.

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM



29 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138

Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in the research project titled **One-Canvas Art Making Process**. The intent of this art-based research study is to explore elements of one-canvas art making as applicable to art therapy practice. The researcher is Doctoral Candidate, Abbe Miller; the faculty principal investigator supervising the research is Shaun McNiff, PhD.

Your participation will first entail an initial screening interview that is expected to last no more than ½ hour. During that interview we will go over the criteria for participation and we will discuss guidance for one-canvas art making so that you are oriented to the process with a degree of comfort and curiosity.

You will be asked to participate in **four** meetings at my private office/studio. Your only interactions will be with me. Three meetings will involve art making for about 1-1½ hour and the opportunity at the end of each session to briefly comment or reflect on the process. You will be at the office for about 1½ - 2 hours for each of these three meetings. The art making will be video recorded, and you will be asked to wear a GoPro camera with a head mount (provided for you). The video will focus on the art making that you do. No personal identifying material will be included in any presentations or written material. The fourth and final meeting will involve a review of the art making processes and the final painting, but no art making will occur. This final meeting will last about 1-1½ hour. We will agree to schedule dates for these meetings during the screening interview, and you will be given a copy of the schedule.

You will be asked to keep and share selected excerpts from a personal journal, and to engage in conversations that will be audio-recorded and transcribed. I will keep all video, photographic, and transcribed materials with password protection, in locked areas for 5 years after the research is completed. After this 5-year period, documentation will be destroyed.

Overall, your participation should span about 1 month, with 4 meetings that will be scheduled about a week apart. You will keep your final painting after the fourth meeting, and your journal will always stay in your possession.

In addition:

- You are free to choose not to participate in the research and to discontinue your participation in the research at any time.
- You have the right to remain anonymous to the public. If you elect to remain anonymous about your participation in this study, I will keep your records private and confidential to the extent allowed by law. I will use a pseudonym rather than your name on study records. Your name and other facts that might identify you will not appear when I present this study or publish its results.
- If for some reason you do not wish to remain anonymous, you may specifically authorize the use of material that would identify you as a subject in the research. I can discuss with you some of the potential risks and benefits for you if you do not wish to remain anonymous.
- Any and all of your questions will be answered at any time and you are free to consult with anyone (i.e., friends, family) about your decision to participate in the research and/or to discontinue your participation.
- Participation in this research poses minimal risk. The probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated are no greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. If you feel upset after any meeting or after having completed the study or find that some questions or aspects of the study trigger distress, talking with a qualified clinician may help. If you feel you would like assistance please contact referral sources listed in your area: *State of CT Department of Mental Health and Addictions Services*
https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=mental%20health%20services%20in%20CT&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&npsic=0&rflfq=1&rlha=0&rlag=41556554,-72812135,25214&tbm=lcl&rdimm=2116165715196063261&ved=2ahUKEwj_3YWcK9TeAhXuUt8KHaFpC5EQvS4wAHoECAEQIQ&rdoc=1&tbs=lrf:!2m1!1e2!2m1!1e3!3slAE,lf:1,lf_ui:2#rifi=hd:;si:2116165715196063261;mv:!1m2!1d41.7932353!2d-72.5644921!2m2!1d41.249643!2d-73.120069899999999;tbs:lrf:!2m1!1e2!2m1!1e3!3slAE,lf:1,lf_ui:2
 Or find *therapist referrals* at:
https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/connecticut?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI_vWMgP3gIVFInICh2o6wk7EAAYASAAEgK2dPD_BwE
- If any problem in connection to the research arises, you can contact the researcher: Abbe Miller at (203) 530-9526, and by email at amille34@lesley.edu or Lesley University sponsoring faculty Shaun McNiff at (617) 349-8562, and by email at smcniff@lesley.edu
- The researcher may present the outcomes of this study for academic purposes (i.e., articles, teaching, conference presentations, supervision etc.)

I am 24 years of age or older. My consent to participate has been given of my own free will and that I understand all that is stated above. I will receive a copy of this consent form to keep.

Participant's signature

Date

Researcher's signature

Date

There is a Standing Committee for Human Subjects in Research at Lesley University to which complaints or problems concerning any research project may, and should, be reported if they arise. Contact the Committee Chairpersons at irb@lesley.edu

APPENDIX C

JOURNAL TEMPLATE

DATE:

REFLECTIONS (Thoughts, feelings, things you noticed) DURING PAINTING PROCESS:

REFLECTIONS (Thoughts, feelings, things you noticed) DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD:

ANY QUESTIONS, CONNECTIONS, DREAMS:

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT MEETING SCHEDULE

MEETING #	DATE/TIME	ANTICIPATED TIME FRAME	WHAT WILL HAPPEN?	Please BRING
1		1 ½- 2 hour	Art making Conversation/journaling	Journal Own assemblage materials
2		1 ½- 2 hour	Art making Conversation/journaling	Journal
3		1 ½- 2 hour	Art making Conversation/journaling	Journal
4		1- 1 ½ hour	Review of video, slideshow, journal, overall process	Journal

APPENDIX E

OVERVIEW OF ONE-CANVAS ART MAKING PROCESS

During one-canvas work layers of paint and collage/assemblage materials are placed on a single canvas or surface, over a sustained period of time. Ideas that are intentionally developed during any stage of the painting may or may not be reflected in the composition at the end. The technique of re-working paintings might include qualities of coating, erasing, revising, building, transforming, peeling, and collaging using paints and other materials. The contents are often unplanned and unexpected, and they may also transform. Imagery is covered over but remains 'present' underneath the later configurations of the painting, and sequential photography preserves images before they are covered. There are prolonged intervals between painting sessions, described as *interim* or pause periods.

Any and *all* imagery is welcomed, without judgment. This is not about painting a pretty picture or painting anything that looks like anything at all. Sometimes, like when you are looking at the clouds, you will see the form of 'some thing.' When this happens in the painting, it can be useful to outline the shape or form that is emerging. Give it some attention and see what happens! I will be present during all art making periods and will be happy to answer any questions that you may have, especially if you are feeling stuck.

The one-canvas art making will end after our third meeting. After the fourth meeting and final interview, your one-canvas painting will be yours to take home.

APPENDIX F**INDIVIDUAL SUMMARIES FOR STUDY-PARTICIPANTS
[Includes Composite Video and Slideshow links]****APPENDIX F1****SUMMARY STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANT #01- Brit**

PW: OneCanvas01

Slideshow: <https://vimeo.com/311663639>

Summary video: <https://vimeo.com/359585722>

Brit is a 29-year-old, Caucasian female who has been a practicing art therapist for 4 ½ years. Her one-canvas painting remained fairly consistent throughout all three painting sessions, with most of the key changes seen in the background surrounding the central figure. I took 90 photos taken over the three painting sessions and edited these to 41 images for the final slideshow. Art making time (total time: 203.50 minutes; 80, 58:50, 65 min. each session) was edited to a 9:54 minute summary video. A total of 1:42.20 hour of transcribed conversations were a part of this inquiry.

Brit's ongoing changes processes might be encapsulated by the words "connection," and "return to cradling." She was taken by the process' affirmation of the power of emergent art making (Figures 8, 9, 10, 11), and stayed open and curious during the art making, which incorporated a variety of re-working techniques such as wrapping, blending, braiding, and weaving. During the third session, braiding was used as a repetitive artistic motion that felt almost trancelike. Brit often noticed the sounds of her art making and environment, such as heavy rain outside. Her painting gestures flowed over the whole canvas in large, repetitive strokes, and she often addressed the

“movement” in the work. She was engaged in the evolution of her composition during each session.

Figure 8

Beginning



Figure 9

1st Interim



Figure 10

2nd Interim



Figure 11

Final



Periodically Brit experimented with different ways to respond to her repeated phrase, *“There’s so much going on.”* She often looked at the composition and would notice when it was off-balanced or “not satisfying.” At times, she directly asked for my support and/or suggestions for prompts and reflection. In the third painting session, Brit brought in a collage image she called a goddess that ultimately became a central focus of her composition. Her work evoked a sense of poignancy and tenderness in me as I witnessed her process.

Brit’s primary attention went to refining the relationships between the different parts of the work, especially those that were at the top and bottom of her composition. I was also aware of opposite energies that generated some tension such as; between movement/solid, contained/open expression. Brit also forgot three emotionally charged aspects of the evolution of her work: when she noticed that removing paint felt like “wiping away tears”; when she tore out the central crystal; and the prescience of the

mandala she drew in her journal [image] and the collage image she sourced to go into the “eye” of the ‘swoosh’ shape.

During the interim periods time away, Brit recognized that not having access to the still images was helpful for her, allowing her to “chill out and be more calm and not so critical of myself.” She made sketches in her journal between the first and second meetings and was actively engaged in reflection about the painting, often contemplating but not writing (Figures 12, 13, 14).

Figure 12
Central swoosh



Figure 13
Mandalas



Figure 14
Growth



I identified patterns of artistic attention to dynamics that seemed to express “nurturing” and “power” as Brit’s work transformed. During our fourth review session Brit shared that as the imagery evolved it began to have deep personal meaning for her (deciding about pregnancy). The work reminded her of decision-making challenges she was facing with her husband. My field notes, written before Brit shared these associations with me, affirm the power of unconscious visual communication, “*I associate a sense of effort to get pregnant or something around fertility*” (Field Notes Journal, Jan. 6, 2019 after 2nd painting session). Shortly after the study concluded, Brit shared with me that she was, indeed, pregnant!

As an art therapist, Brit was curious about reflectivity and reflexive nuance during the process and the painting's evolving composition. After watching the videos, she identified a metaphor: by covering most of the painting in white as a way to "soothe the chaos" she recognized a potential response pattern. Regarding the method, she commented that wearing the GoPro was physically uncomfortable, so much so that she ended her painting session sooner than she would have because of its distraction. She was always aware of the video camera and noticed the impact of viewing her body movements from afar (on video). Brit believed that she might use this kind of filming with clients. Upon leaving, Brit stated that she felt satisfied and complete. Hours after leaving the 4th meeting, she hung her painting in a prominent position in her private practice office and sent me a photo (Figure 15).

Figure 15

Brit's Final Piece Hung in Her Studio



APPENDIX F2**SUMMARY STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANT #02- Kath**

PW: OneCanvas02

Slideshow: <https://vimeo.com/317799760>

Summary video: <https://vimeo.com/318260306>

4th Meeting Review Moments: <https://vimeo.com/359634310>

Kath is a 32-year-old, Caucasian female. During her adult life, she had never engaged in any kind of art making. I took 40 still photo images over the three painting sessions and edited these to 31 photographs for the final slideshow. Art making time (total time: 191:20 min.; 85, 62, 44:20 min. each session) was edited to a 7:58 minute summary video. A total of 1:14.17 hour of transcribed conversations were a part of this inquiry.

Kath worked slowly and carefully, focusing on one section at a time during each painting session. Over the course of the three sessions her brush strokes became freer, and she shared that the process greatly sparked her interest. She noticed how the materials felt and how they guided her in the art making process. She identified an overarching theme for her work as “taking space.”

Kath began with an intention to explore the dynamic between herself and her twin sister. Each time the orientation of the canvas shifted from vertical to horizontal or horizontal to vertical, Kath felt a strong shift in emotional response to the work and imagery. While the overall composition did not transform radically, there were profound evolutions in meaning making that were associated with changes to the imagery. The re-

working that created change consisted of imprinting her hand that was then smeared across the boundary lines; adding layers of feathers; cutting a hole in the center of both layers; and creating sunset and water textures in the composition (Figures 16, 17, 18, 19).

Figure 16

Beginning



Figure 17

1st Interim



Figure 18

2nd Interim



Figure 19

Final



The painting began with a bi-lateral division of magenta and light blue colors, bifurcated by a cream colored, vine-like line that was intentionally textured with gel medium for thickness. When the canvas was turned horizontally, Kath was surprised that the tension between the colors released. This led to conversation about longing for different kinds of connection. An artistic solution spontaneously emerged as Kath added in her handprint, sharing that she wanted to have her sister ‘reach up.’ Meaning shifted again as Kath’s strokes loosened and she blended/blurred the purple. After creating a hole that represented heartache, she created a wing that guided her own evolution. Kath then saw the image of a boat emerge. This reinforced a sense of mystery with the unplanned “presence”/ image [purple] that she associated with her older sister (who had died unexpectedly). Few images were lost during the work, but several new

meaning making moments corresponded to planned changes in the composition and the newly emergent imagery.

Kath's painting gestures were contained and gathered more energy during the last painting session. She would often go over a mark, reinforcing the effort with color and shape. She was happy to experiment with some different types and sizes of brushes and palette knives. Kath responded strongly to using a spray bottle with water to blend paint and thin out opacity and used this technique repeatedly. She primarily used the acrylic paints and added feathers when she wanted a realistic effect of a wing. During reflection she noted that this was the only time she used different materials, which had significance, "I feel like that's symbolic...it represents that phase [getting sober] in my life...like you're starting all over again and you're building with new materials...layers of different pieces."

Kath was very engaged with verbally expressing what she was feeling (on emotional and physical levels) during the art making process. Kath was curious about how the art making was expressing emotion. She shared that painting triggered full body sensations, which led to personal connections with the process as well as the content. She used shorter pauses to reflect on what she was feeling in relationship to the composition and connections between her felt sense and conscious meaning making associations. Subsequently, Kath noted when felt sensations shifted.

Leaving for the interim, Kath thought a lot about her art making on that day, but not much during the week. She did not use the journal between sessions but came in each week energized with thoughtful ideas for continuing the work. During the final

review she stated that digital documentation was “spot on” and transformative to watch, revealing new things that she did not expect to see. Kath was very expressive and felt changed by the one-canvas process.

APPENDIX F3**SUMMARY STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANT #03- Abbe**

PW: OneCanvas03

Slideshow: <https://vimeo.com/321972453>

Summary video: <https://vimeo.com/324878412>

I was study-participant #03. At the time of this study I was a 61-year-old, Caucasian female. I am an artist/art therapist in private practice (38 years), art therapy educator, workshop presenter, and published author. I developed and use the one-canvas process as an art-based method for personal and professional reflection. For this study, to the best of my abilities I suspended any pre-conceived ideas about the process and what might happen during my participation in the study. I felt very limited by having only three sessions to make art, which I had never done before. I took 45 still photo images over the three painting sessions and edited these to 31 photographs for the final slideshow. The art making time (total time: 189 minutes; 60, 61, 68 min. each session) was edited to an 8:19 minute summary video.

When I began my painting, I consciously made an effort to set aside any thoughts about what I had observed during the first two participants' processes. I used a variety of gestures that ranged from flow over the whole canvas in large to numerous repetitive strokes, and then to very small and intricate detailing. I integrated assemblage materials (yarn, glittery yarn, gold leaf flakes, and birch bark), and painted with an assortment of brushes, palate knives, and tools such as sponges and cloths (Figures 20, 21, 22, 23). Periodically, I would step back to pause and observe the work from a distance, then use

self-reflection to sense what colors, textures, or parts of the composition would be re-worked. I gave myself sensually oriented prompts such as, “What color is the bird’s song?” or “What do I hear from the oval shape?”

As I followed creative impulse, the composition changed dramatically through the first two painting sessions. I made numerous changes by turning the orientation of the canvas and re-worked the piece using covering and scraping technique. During the third session, I paid a lot of attention to detailing small bird figures and flushing out two large central forms that seemed like tree trunks.

Figure 20

Beginning



Figure 21

1st Interim



Figure 22

2nd Interim



Figure 23

Final



While I was editing video, I discovered a personal connection between the concepts of ‘rest’ and ‘empowerment.’ Additionally, I saw imagery that I had forgotten, and images emerged that I did not see while painting. Blending and covering colors took “...me deeper into trust of process,” while scraping paints felt somewhat like carving/ sculpting energy. I wrote, “...feels like reading braille – needing tactile communication...”

As covering and uncovering happened repeatedly I noticed tension, especially after muting and muddying colors, creating a “fog-like feeling.” Overall, the ongoing

change processes occurred during rhythms of “blur → define; chaos → clarity.”

During interim periods I wrote regularly in my journal and sourced assemblage textiles. During the editing process I was less discomforted by the digital video footage than I had been during pilot study. The GoPro video capture was exciting to view as I explored some of the ongoing changes in a very small area of the canvas (especially when painting the bird and owl).

At the end of the third painting session I felt “...dissatisfied, incomplete and restless with the work.” After a few days, as the work incubated at rest and I reviewed and shared videos and the painting, I noticed a palpable shift: I felt affection for the final composition, its evolution and most of all, the processes of transformation.

APPENDIX F4**SUMMARY STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANT #04- Mike**

PW: OneCanvas04

Slideshow <https://vimeo.com/326335262>

Summary video <https://vimeo.com/326324840>

Mike is a 36-year-old, Caucasian male who works as a professional counselor. He enthusiastically attended all four meetings as and had never engaged with art making as an adult. I took 57 still photo images over the three painting sessions and edited these to 44 photographs for the final slideshow. Art making time (total time: 131:53 minutes; 42:04, 40:04, 49 min. each session) was edited to a 9:17 minute summary video. A total of 1:09.28 hour of transcribed conversations were a part of this inquiry.

Mike's composition changed through all three painting sessions, but he did not cover up the red dot that he associated with "bold vulnerability." He experimented with abstract expression, playful use of the paints, and exploration of imagery that he saw emerging as the paint dried (Figures 24, 25, 26, 27). He began with a broad intention to explore "growth," identified that the opposite energy to that was "death."

Mike began tentatively, using more controlled movements in his painting strokes. As he tried a variety of different brushes, his painting gestures became more fluid, stretching over the whole canvas. Mike added tissue paper to create a layering effect and texture when he felt the painting called for it, and used glitter in a playful way, as seen by his hands clapping as a final stroke of "ta dah!" He used large, repetitive

Figure 24
Beginning



Figure 25
1st Interim



Figure 26
2nd Interim



Figure 27
Final



circular strokes which he found soothing, and noticed a different feeling when he made smaller, more contained marks. When Mike experimented with flicking paint off the brush, he expressed surprise and delight with this level of freedom in art making.

Mike's work took on the quality of "learning the language of art making." He developed a rhythm between engaging and pausing. Initially, he would step back to pause and observe the work from a distance and process out loud, then request feedback and suggestions. By the second painting session Mike paused and reflected without asking for my input. He then shared his change choice out loud, sometimes asking for suggestions about what technique or color to use. He noticed the quality of colors (especially cooler and bolder colors) and his emotional relationship to these colors. By the third session, Mike appeared quite comfortable sharing where in the painting he wanted to work, and easily initiated making these changes himself. His process explored the following patterns: *freedom to play, messiness as liberating, interplay between taking risks and protection, and trusting the process.*

Mike's journaling focused on his inner spirit's vibrancy, playfulness, and boldness that he felt he had left behind in his childhood. He felt that the art making was re-

connecting him to these thoughts and feelings. This led to another childhood memory that referenced *risk* and *play* as qualities he wanted to reclaim. During the interim periods away, Mike also used a still photograph to reflect on the composition and stimulate his journal writing.

At the final review meeting Mike greeted his painting “Oh, hello friend!” He especially enjoyed associating emergent imagery with personal/archetypal meaning without attaching to fixed meaning (except for the red dot). The red dot was his “spirit within” and became a central figure in his artistic explorations. Mike oriented to evolving feelings along with the physical transformations to his art making; “It starts out so peaceful....and then you’re into the third chapter and you’re in the pits of hell....and then finally, you can breathe...”

Mike associated *his* different strokes, brushes, color use, and the range of feelings with the many possibilities of artistic expression via painting and assemblage. This was something Mike had never before been aware of. It was a deeply personal and visceral way of knowing his experience. After watching the summary video Mike was stunned, in a very positive way, saying, “I am almost speechless.”

APPENDIX F5**SUMMARY STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANT #05- Dana**

PW - OneCanvas05

Slideshow <https://vimeo.com/338002568>

Summary video <https://vimeo.com/338002954>

Dana [pseudonym] is a 48-year-old, Caucasian married female. She holds a PhD and works as an academic and researcher. She identifies as an artist with extensive training in oil painting and maintains her own studio space. I took 97 still photo images over the three painting sessions and edited these to 39 photographs for the final slideshow. Art making time (total time: 210:25 minutes; 82:05, 66:2, 62:5 min. each session) was edited to an 8:49 minute summary video. A total of 1:21 hours of transcribed conversations were a part of this inquiry.

The composition of Dana's one-canvas painting transformed a great deal from session to session, while the content *during* each session remained fairly stable (Figures 28, 29, 30, 31). She was the only participant who did not use any assemblage materials. Initially, she related to the canvas from a technical perspective; it was a surface to create art on, albeit she gave herself a degree of freedom that she would not have during art classes or formal art making. Dana seemed quite comfortable sharing what she sensed aesthetically and where she wanted to work in the composition.

Dana began with a broad intention to explore three aspects of herself: as academic, researcher, and artist. She oriented to the quality of the art product

Figure 28*Beginning***Figure 29***1st Interim***Figure 30***2nd Interim***Figure 31***Final*

throughout much of the work, and over time, developed a rhythm between looser, more sensuous brushstrokes that alternated with tighter detail work. She rarely asked for prompts or suggestions but when she did, it was because she felt stuck about what to do/paint next. Turning the canvas was very effective, as Dana shared, “that changes everything.”

In the first two painting sessions she would define a subject in the work (octopus; child’s face) and approach the renderings methodically, using fine arts layering techniques (light color undercoat; adding gradation of color; blending strokes). This was most evident when she worked on each one of the octopus’s arms with the exact same sequencing. It was also noticeable during her painting of the first child’s face (session 2) as it emerged. I noticed my own energy drifting when she used these techniques, and found myself waiting longer than I might ordinarily, to give a supportive prompt. I sensed that I felt somewhat protective about her art making space and process, given that she identified as an artist. Once I felt clear that if she continued to focus on fixed patterns of art making that she would not fully benefit from the process, I spoke up more readily. I did ask her to be curious about emotional responses rather than

technical skill in this process, and she shared that she was noticing emotional connections between brush strokes and energy. At the end of the second session she was struck by the visual content (family dynamics) and became tearful as she expressed surprise at how emotional she felt just by looking at the work.

By the third session, Dana painted images that were looser, and the artwork seemed to be infused with more energy and flow, similar to an impressionist style. She appeared to be internalizing some of the process oriented-prompts and became more curious about what might change and emerge over time. She also oriented to the potential for emotional impact (as occurred at the end of the second painting session). Overall, Dana had a strong drive to understand the process, coupled with curiosity about her imagery. She also shared a very interesting term, “palimpsest” to reflect on the layering of imagery with under-painting still visible. I encouraged Dana to be curious about her felt sense of subtle shifts and ‘conversations’ between figures in the painting. She attuned acutely and clearly heard, “whisper” being spoken between the two faces. This guided a key emergence during the third session.

During the interim periods, Dana appreciated the time away from the composition and returned to the process with a fresh perspective. She wrote/sketched once in her journal (Figures 32, 33), and shared that she was curious about the process while she was away. Dana found much of the GoPro outcome footage to be a bit disorienting with its jerky movement. However, she appreciated the close-up quality of watching brush strokes. She was less comfortable watching the video camera footage,

but she recognized that it fully captured the ongoing process of the work in a way that the still photo slideshow did not.

Figure 32

Octopus Journaling

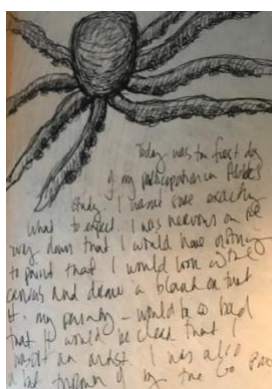
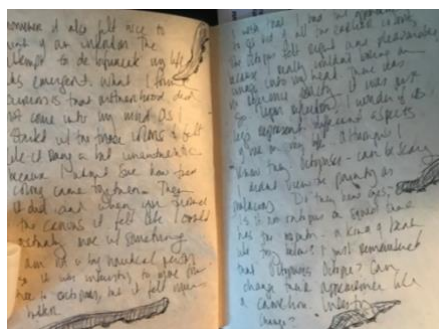


Figure 33

Journal Notes



During our final interview Dana compared the final painting to ‘session notes’ from therapy. She likened the evolutions to dream work. Dana was surprised at what emerged during each session and was open to exploring meaning without fixing to any one conclusion. Overall, Dana shared that she was impacted by the layered and transforming images that were part of the ongoing change processes of the work. She concluded the final session by sharing an awareness that her attention had shifted from individual focus, to relationship dynamics. Dana also felt that this way of painting connected her with a new sense of freedom in art making.

APPENDIX G**FINAL AGGREGATE SUMMARY VIDEO**

PW – MillerOneCanvas

Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/391046649>

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