EXPLORING A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY INTO THE 2004-2006 SEMESTER PROGRAMS BETWEEN ARTPACE SAN ANTONIO AND LOUIS W. FOX ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

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This qualitative inquiry explores a community-based art partnership called the semester programs that took place between Artpace San Antonio and Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School from 2004 until 2006. This narrative inquiry used interviews with artists and former Fox Tech art students involved in our program, along with my teacher/ researcher reflections, to make meaning from the data. The artists involved in the semester programs were Gary Sweeney, Daniel Guerrero, David Jurist, and Ethel Shipton. Former students interviewed include Eloy McGarity, Rosa Leija, John Contreras, and Jennelle Gomez, while I, Maria Leake represent the voice of the art teacher. Our stories of experience were analyzed and connections between situated learning theory, creativity theories, community-based art education, and memory research were all recognized as being exhibited during our community partnership programs.

There were seven patterns and themes that were noted as occurring within each semester program, as well as notable distinctions. The patterns and themes from the data analysis suggest that our community partnership reflected the following: learning and creative expression went beyond the individual; networks of support and communication were available to all participants; challenges were acknowledged; empathy between participants was an unintentional outcome; working together as a community of practice facilitated personal interactions and connections; learning and creative expression went beyond the traditional curriculum; and educational benefits were realized by all participants.

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For over fifteen years, the people at Artpace San Antonio have made contemporary art come alive for me and my students through custom-designed art collaborations between their foundation and Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School. Through their forward thinking educational partnership programs, they have nurtured and supported contemporary art experiences for thousands of San Antonians. For their vision, enthusiasm, and continued support, I am truly grateful. Thank you so much Kimberly Aubuchon for helping me hunt and gather most of the photographs used in this study and to Mary Cantu for serving as my expert reviewer.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> We are living in the middle of tomorrow's history. And we don't need to "imagine" making an impact-we simply can by engaging fully in the world around us. Contemporary art is the language of our times— we're hard-wired to understand its themes, materials, and messages.
>
> *K. Kanjo*

Preliminary Inquiry

In 2004, I spoke at a fundraising event on behalf of Artpace San Antonio, along with Kathryn Kanjo, the Executive Director of this contemporary art foundation. The purpose of each of our speeches was to give the local donors an understanding of the types of community partnerships that were being facilitated between Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School and Artpace San Antonio. Yet, even before our formal partnership began, individuals from this institution, which is commonly referred to as Artpace, have had a lasting and transformative role in shaping art experiences on the San Antonio community. In 1995, Artpace opened its doors in downtown San Antonio, creating a new venue from which the community could interact with local, national, and international artists, curators, and engage in learning partnerships and associations through various educational programs. In 2003, Artpace decided to design a new educational opportunity as an extension of their *ArtElements* programming which they titled Semester Programs. The *ArtElements* programs were initially structured to have high school students engage with contemporary art to learn new concepts and to create projects that both respond and reflect upon what they have learned (see Appendix A for the formal letter initiating our partnership). Our newly formed community-based art education collaboration partnership expanded upon this idea by bringing together a local artist with students and a

teacher from an area high school, once a week, for a twelve-week period. Fortunately for my art students and me, Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School just happened to be one short block away from Artpace, and so our community partnership commenced between a contemporary art foundation and our public high school. Figure 1.1 illustrates the timeline in which our community partnerships unfolded.

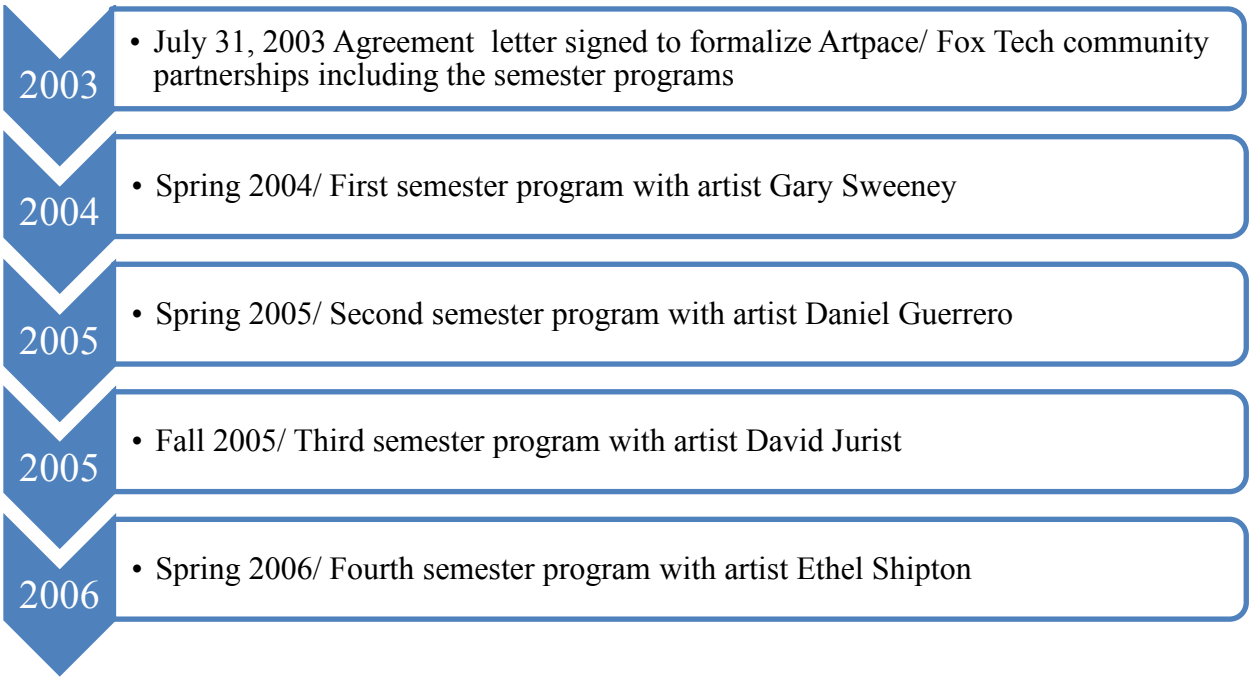


Figure 1.1. Timeline of semester programs.

Working directly with contemporary artists in our community gave us opportunities to move beyond issues and ideas addressed in textbooks and shift our focus to broader social, personal and historical issues that were more directly relevant to the lives of the students. The dialogues and interactions that ensued between my students and the corresponding artists, with whom they worked, spanned a range of themes support educational approaches favored by Barrett (2002), Gaudelius and Speirs (2002), McKay and Monteverde (2002), Milbrandt (2002) and Sullivan (2002). Within these engagements, art and life experiences become thematically interconnected with our human capacity to socially navigate ways to understand and interpret the

world. Partnering the artists with students and me as their teacher, encouraged constructive and collaborative dialogue that helped novices and experts explore art issues and ideas through informal learning engagements that helped all of us to learn, in accordance with supporters of social learning theory (Bruner, 1987; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1997; Wenger, McDermott, & Synder, 2002; Wells, 1999).

This study is intended to revisit and reflect upon the learning interactions and opportunities for visual and verbal creative expression that took place during the 2004- 2006 semester programs as recollected by the artists, students, and me as their art teacher. Each semester program is recognized and examined as a *critical event* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Webster & Mertova, 2007; Webster, 1998; Woods, 1993*)*. Critical events are not recognized as such at the time that they initially occur; rather as time goes by, the personal and educational significance of these experiences come to be noted as exemplary examples of contextually rich learning experiences set within a community of practice (Bruner, 1986). Facilitating an understanding of critical events can be assisted by researchers sketching out details about the place, time, characters, and events so that readers can feel as if they too are experiencing the situation vicariously (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). This is the overarching goal in this study; to have artists and students who shared this learning experience with me, re-construct the stories of the past, so that others might consider if the ideas might be applicable to their own interests (McEwan & Egan, 1995).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand how learning interactions between artists, high school students, and this teacher/researcher facilitated visual and verbal creative

expression during each of the four Artpace/ Fox Tech High School community-based art education partnerships, called the semester programs, which occurred between 2004 and 2006. The 2004-2006 Artpace/ Fox Tech High School semester programs are understood as being four separate twelve week community partnership programs that paired one contemporary artist living in San Antonio, with a class of high school students and this teacher/researcher at our downtown campus. Visual and verbal creative expressions are understood as how participants communicate thoughts and ideas with others, dependent on social and cultural influences. Creative expression is inclusive of individuals, art processes and products that reflect the collective contributions of members of the community. The artists involved in our community partnerships included: Gary Sweeney (spring 2004); Daniel Guerrero (spring 2005); David Jurist (fall 2005); and Ethel Shipton (spring 2006). The student participants selected for this study include Eloy McGarity (spring 2004), Rosa Leija (spring 2004), John Contreras (spring 2005), and Jennelle Gomez (fall 2005 & spring 2006). I represent the teacher participant from Fox Tech High School involved in each of the community-based art partnerships. Individual profiles of each participant are addressed in Chapter 4.

Research Questions

This qualitative inquiry has been driven by the following questions:

*How was learning facilitated by having one contemporary visual artist interact with high school art students and this teacher/ researcher, once a week for twelve weeks, during each of the four Artpace/ Fox Tech High School semester programs that occurred from 2004-2006?

* How was visual and verbal creative expression for the students, each artist, and this teacher/researcher supported or inhibited by having participants interact and share ideas during each of our community-based art partnerships?

ArtElements Semester Program: A Community Partnership

In 1995, I started working as a high school art teacher in San Antonio's oldest public high school, Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School; also known as Fox Tech or "La Techla" to our Hispanic student population. One day I decided to walk down the street to see what kind of art venue was located a block away from our campus, and stepped into the doors of Artpace San Antonio. During this first visit to this public institution, Riley Robinson, who was and still is the Studio Art Director, invited me to start bringing my students down to Artpace to check out the contemporary art installations. My initial shyness to take advantage of a new learning experience prevented me from taking Riley up on his invitation for many years. Eventually as I came to become a regular visitor to their exhibitions, and became more familiar with the individuals working at this facility, turning down this uniquely positioned educational venue was no longer an option. Students and I began informally becoming regular attendees to changing exhibitions and workshops sponsored by Artpace during and after school hours. Sometimes, we got an extra special treat when the former Executive Director, Kathryn Kanjo, would lead the tours of the exhibitions herself and would generate a lot of interesting dialogue amongst the students about the work and what it meant to them. Looking back, it's amazing to think how rare it was to have the Executive Director of a world respected contemporary art venue leading her own private tours of the facilities, but it happened on multiple visits. Additionally, we also had the option of having a bilingual staff member take us through the

exhibition for classes that had higher percentages of Spanish-speaking students. Direct interactions between individuals from Artpace and Fox Tech only became stronger over time.

Fox Tech's formal educational partnership with Artpace began on July 31, 2003, when the *ArtElements* semester program began to take shape in a written proposal, designed to allow one local contemporary artist to work with students for forty-five minute classes over a twelve week period (see Appendix A). Throughout this study, our community partnership between an art institution and a public high school have been described using a variety of terminology that share the same basic premise: learning takes place socially between participants who come from the local community to share knowledge and resources towards a collaboratively informed art project. Therefore, terms such as community-based partnerships, art education partnerships, community-based contemporary art partnerships, community partnerships, etc. are used to describe the same set of educational interactions that took place between 2004 and 2006 during our semester programs. Beginning in the spring of 2004, Artpace designed a partnership between an artist, Fox Tech High School students, and me as a local art teacher. Together, the artists, students, and I began the process of working together to explore, discuss, and create new works of art that would become a permanent part of the school's art collection. There were a total of four artists who participated in the semester program addressed in this study: Gary Sweeney, Daniel Guerrero, David Jurist, and Ethel Shipton. Each artist engaged the students in dialogues and discussions using a teaching and learning style that suited their own particular personalities. Likewise, each artist also had their own ideas about how to engage students in visual or verbal interactions in and out of the classroom setting. Artists also decided how much involvement they wanted students to have in the creation and development of the final public art product of the semester program. As a consequence of empowering the artists to custom-design their own

teaching and learning experiences, sometimes the students had a substantial role in the creation of the final product, while other times, the artist kept the final art installation a secret until the unveiling ceremony.

Exploring Contemporary Art Practices

How is contemporary art valuable to education? According to Mayer (2008),

> Contemporary art is about now! It's about figuring out who we are, who we are becoming, and how to live, know, and act. Just as our students are looking at the worlds around them and wondering what their role might be, what events mean, or what difference they can make, today's artists are pondering the same questions through their art. When we teach with contemporary art, the potential is present for learning that is centered not in the classroom, but in all the worlds beyond it and students' efforts to negotiate their relationship to those worlds. What could be more relevant? (p. 77)

In theory, learning that explores contemporary art can serve as a venue by which students can make connections between important social issues and their life experiences through art, thus offering a more holistic form of educational engagements for students (Gaudelius & Speirs, 2002; Sullivan, 2002); I absolutely can attest to the credibility of these theories to educational practice. Contemporary art encourages multiple and varied voices to share ideas and ways of working to negotiate meanings (Barrett, 2002; Mayer, 2008; Taylor, 2008; Villeneuve & Erickson, 2008). This process of making meaning is demanding on viewers as Villeneuve and Erickson (2008) have made clear, because it requires reflective thinking that connects and refines the ideas of others in personally meaningful ways. Milbrandt (1998, 2002a) also recognizes the significance of learning opportunities for art students when they become actively involved in making their own real-world connections with issues or themes that have personal relevance to their own lives.

Stuhr (2003), Wilson (2003), Tavin (2000), and Lai and Ball (2002) agree that it is necessary to reconceptualize how contemporary issues and ideas influence teaching and learning processes to expand the educational outreach opportunities of art education in the twenty-first century.

> Art education like all subjects, should be connected intimately to students' lives; therefore, curriculum, because of this connection to student life and their worlds, should be thought of as an ongoing process and not a product. I consider art education to be a caring, social space where critical investigations of and through relevant cultural production can be facilitated by teachers to help students to inquire into the complexities and possibilities for understanding and expressing life and death in new ways. (Stuhr, 2003, p. 303)

Wilson (2003) concurs that the content of our field should be influenced by contemporary artworks, the artifacts from our visual culture. We should explore the theories and ideas of our times to facilitate meaning making. This meaning making process requires looking beyond the discipline of art, because art is not separate from life. Consequently, pulling inspiration for artistic discourse from a variety of disciplines is what Tavin (2000) refers to as *transdisciplinary art education*. This interdisciplinary approach draws upon "conceptual and methodological tools from a variety of disciplines and fields like folklore, anthropology, and cultural studies" (Lai & Ball, 2002, p. 64). This network of overlapping and non-compartmentalized conceptions of art education align with the types of engagements that took place during the Artpace/ Fox Tech interactions between artists, students, and me as the art teacher. Relevancy to real life was never an abstraction from our perspectives as active participants; it was always part of the undercurrent of discourse and ideas shared between individuals, working interdependently. The focus was primarily on the process of exploring issues and ideas collectively, while the art served to extend these explorations in tangible form for other audiences to consider and develop their own connections with the work.

Life reflects culture and culture reflects life, and this is especially true in contemporary art. Gude (2007) believes that an authentically situated multicultural curriculum allows students "to explore the world through the eyes of others-understanding the meaning of artworks in terms of the complex aesthetic, social, and historical contexts out of which they emerge" (p. 9). Neither Gude (2007), nor I believe that multicultural curriculums should be standardized; rather they should naturally reflect the issues that are of local relevance and concern. The difficulty as art educators is deciding which identities and values to focus upon from our vast cultural pool of artists, and what forms of art, whether traditional or otherwise, will advance our educational objectives (Stokrocki, 2004). During our collaboration, each artist had a vision for what they felt would be the most appropriate and productive direction for my Hispanic student population, but their outlooks shifted and changed as their relationships with the students also underwent transformations.

Addressing topics of relevance to the artist, teacher, and the students encouraged each of us to think outside the standard art curriculum to think of ways to engage as many participants through our learning journey as possible. While each artist had their own variations on how to incorporate real–world issues into the learning process and with different messages incorporated into the art products generated, each artist was willing to let go of their ideas and have the students and I give our own input into how we also saw the project as having possibilities. Time and again conversations between various participants shaped the outcomes of our interactions, including the fact that we through discussions between the artist, myself, and the staff at Artpace, that it would be more beneficial to the students and the artist if they only worked with one classroom of students on a regular basis so that they could form closer connections and associations than having them work longer hours over a shorter period of time. The perspective

that teaching and learning can serve a greater purpose if it is not viewed as limited by only one possible vantage point, but instead adopts a postmodern perspective valuing inclusion rather than exclusion (Milbrandt, 2002b) was supported and a regular part of our experiences. We wanted students who did have previous art experiences to benefit just as students who had no prior art experiences. By having both me as the regular teacher in the classroom and the visiting artist, students got to have a collection of individuals to work with as our partnership moved forward. Students in art education programs should be provided opportunities to see how art has meaning in their lives, and how these connections might also represent shared or communal interpretations of the art (Barrett, 2002). Students become a part of the discourse exploring socially shared experiences when they are given opportunities to explore and represent their own life experiences and issues of importance to the community. Additionally, when students are given opportunities to connect the cultural content of the artists' work with their own vantage points, the artists' voice becomes a point of reference in the discussion and learning process (Nyman, 2002). Contemporary art practices embrace multiple perspectives as a means to engage with members of the community and share learning regarding issues and ideas of local interest and concern.

Exploring Community Art Education

This study explores a community-based contemporary art partnership between Artpace San Antonio and Fox Tech High School and the programs that sprung from our interactions over time, but this exploration calls into question, what is community? Congdon, Blandy, & Bolin (2001) view the term "community" as reflective of a place, learning group, or ethnic and family identification (see Figure 1.2). When community is viewed as *place*, people can come together to

a particular space and engage in formal or informal discourse to further learn about art and other issues of concern. When community refers to *learning groups*, these are the people who exchange ideas and stories that shape values and beliefs in both formal and informal institutions. Community can also identify with *ethnic and family groups* that correlate aesthetic preferences and values with their heritage. Conceptions of communities have also been described as being similar to organisms that have both individual and social qualities (Congdon, Blandy, & Bolin, 2001). These qualities allow personal experiences of everyday life to emerge in the form of stories we share with others (Dewey, 1916, 1934, 1938).

Figure 1.2. Three conceptions of the term "community" adapted from Congdon, Blandy, & Bolin (2001).

Artistic practices that take place within community-based contemporary art collaborations can be customized to fit the needs of various communities as elaborated by Bailey and Desai (2005).

> These community-based art practices are very much concerned with the nature of the artistic processes rather than solely with the art product. These artistic processes are largely collaborative and evolve through on-going dialog within a community. Because people see themselves and their experiences reflected in these local and collaborative artworks, these projects have the power to transform the social relationships between community members and dominant cultural institutions that determine how experiences get represented. Like multicultural education, art is often used to shift or challenge

> people's understanding about particular social issues and/or historical events and, in doing so, make visible issues facing different social groups in our society. (p. 40)

Within our Artpace/ Fox Tech semester programs, we tried to utilize our engagements as opportunities to initiate discourse and to create work that could be shared and contextualized for larger audiences to consider. For example, when Daniel was thinking through what he wanted to do with the students at Fox Tech, he had a general plan in mind. He brought up issues of discrimination against Hispanics that local heroes have tackled so that these social injustices could be challenged and overcome. Daniel got most of the students emotionally invested in his interests, and these shared concerns overlapped into our local community discourse. When we did share our final art product with the city, we had people at the dedication who were directly related to the people in the art project, and one Fox Tech student joined the panel of speakers who came together to commemorate this educational partnership. Through locally based engagements such as these, we were transforming our community by reflecting local issues and concerns in a very public forum and having individuals speak out on behalf of our educational endeavors.

Another relevant question to this study is how communities can impact art education? When artists and teachers use their community as a source for critical exploration, as Krug and Parker (2009) demonstrated in Wisconsin, local culture and social situations help various individuals to understand the meanings, values, symbols and the culture. It has been said that firsthand engagements with individuals from the local community are more likely to facilitate discussions about everyday life through shared artistic experiences (Desai, 2002). Indeed, we had individuals who also worked as a baggage handler for Continental Airlines (Gary Sweeney), a judge (Daniel Guerrero), a general contractor (David Jurist), and a museum preparator and curator (Ethel Shipton). Likewise, we also had students with a whole realm of personal lived

experiences and my own life experiences as a teacher and art enthusiast working together during our partnership. Collectively, we brought a host of issues, thoughts, and ideas together as an initiation point for discussions and navigating the artistic processes necessary to inform the development of a of public art project.

Expanding art education opportunities through locally initiated community partnerships, including collaborating with local art institutions and organizations, is an idea that is supported by Bolin, Blandy, and Congdon (2000) and Wilson (2000). Collaborations between individuals with extensive exposure to the arts with individuals who people who have not had the same exposure , invited interdisciplinary connections of art with other academic disciplines. These engagements often promoted unpredictable educational outcomes as Wenger (1998) and Wenger, McDermott, and Synder (2002) believe are likely to occur when examining a community of practice that pairs individuals with diverse backgrounds, interests, and skills. Communities of practice will be explored in depth in Chapter 2. These interactions can encourage learning connections in multi-directional ways, but not always. During the process of making and exhibiting art by partnering novices with experts in the community, contexts such as the place where the art is conceived and displayed fundamentally impacts the interpretation of the texts and artifacts from a socially informed perspective (Lai & Ball, 2002). It is an ambitious endeavor of educators working within a community to facilitate connections with new audiences and bridge the needs of people reflecting pluralistic populations in authentically grounded activities (Zucker, 2001). My experiences working with the community partnership between Artpace and Fox Tech certainly made the contexts of place, local histories, and display sites within the community, critical parts of the art education inquiry process.

Looking back at our community partnership between Artpace and Fox Tech, learning often went beyond bi-directional or pre-determined outcomes. For example, my students and I walked down to Artpace to see a controversial piece of art by Gary Sweeney (see Figure 1.3), an art piece unrelated to our semester program, and inspired an interesting exchange of ideas to take place between the students.

Figure 1.3. Gary Sweeney's *Sin Cuenta*, 2005. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

On the day of our class visit to Artpace to see the show, a new student had joined our class. This male student had never viewed contemporary art before and was incensed at how Gary's image used words to send a mixed message about people who cross the border illegally. It was interesting to listen while my other students used dialogue to contextualize Gary's interest in exploring border identity issues, using intentional word play with multi-layered meanings. The new student was angered by what he saw, while many of the other students found humor in the artist's play on words. The veteran Fox Tech art students explained that Gary deliberately challenges audiences to dance on the fine line between being the observer or the observed, being politically aware of mixed messages, and always cognizant that any situation can be interpreted from more than one point of view. This exchange that spontaneously took place between students exemplifies how Lai and Ball (2002) describe individuals from a community coming

together to creatively use their energies to focus and explore problems and themes based on real-life issues.

As a result of a multitude of experiences such as these, on-going community partnership experiences between Artpace and Fox Tech communities have fostered collaborative interactions that support multi-perspectival learning, qualities described by Wilson (2008) as the *third site* for pedagogy. A third site is "a pedagogical space at the margins of schooling where new forms of visual cultural production and meaning are encouraged" (Wilson, 2008, p. 8). There was no cookie-cutter approach to our partnerships between artists, students, and the teacher. We each had a hand in shaping our learning encounters that occurred and have held different meanings for us.

Exploring the Role of Creativity in Art Education

In March 2010, *Art Education* came out with an issue addressing the topic of creativity, specifically in the field of art education. As will be noted in the literature review in Chapter 2, concerns about creativity in general terms have been considered important ever since man was able to communicate ideas. Yet scholarly discourse specifically geared towards creativity in art education, has been experiencing tension between modernist and postmodern sensibilities for over sixty years. Personally, I agree with Freedman (2010) who has addressed this divide when she stated "modernist illusions, such as the idea that creativity occurs in a historical vacuum, when in fact, it always refers to some past occurrence being reconsidered in the present" underscores the limitations of most modernist conceptions of creativity (p. 9). The postmodern sensibility to understanding and recognizing creativity in art education in contemporary art practices makes an imperative connection between influential social and cultural contexts

informing how creativity is regarded within various communities (Zimmerman, 2010). This study has sought to highlight how participants have made connections between the social and contextually specific interactions that have impacted how and to what degree we have all been able to learn and express ourselves creatively with others over time.

While it is true that there are still innumerable definitions and conceptions of creativity, even within the postmodern school of thought, there are two recently published definitions that specifically relate to art education and correlate with the focus of this study. When Peralta (2010) discussed the work of former Artpace resident artist Juan Miguel Ramos, he said, "Creativity here is then a socio-cultural experience involving the artist and everyday people co-constructing narratives by which they shape understandings of each other" (p. 28). Within Peralta's (2010) conception of creativity, he recognizes the fluid relationship between the viewer and the work, the context of the work and the factors that influence how the work is read and interpreted by broader audiences. Meanings and interpretations of creativity are never fixed within this contextually dependent conception of creativity. Unlike Peralta's (2010) article, which focused on one particular artist, Freedman (2010) chose to speak about creativity in more general and abstract contexts. Freedman (2010) definition delineates the various critical attributes including contexts, purposes, and processes that inform how creativity should be considered in the field of art education. Freedman (2010) says, "creativity (1) involves critical reflection, (2) is based on interest, (3) is a learning process, (4) is functional, (5) is a social activity, (6) depends on reproduction, and (7) is a form of leadership" (p. 10). What Peralta (2010) and Freedman (2010) have done is to give readers options as to how to conceptualize and envision social cultural contexts informing creativity, whether it is on a localized scale or looking at creativity holistically. The value of these twenty-first century definitions are to give

this study a starting point for recognizing how contemporary art education discourse is re-considering creativity individually within each semester program and more holistically by addressing their impact over a three year period.

The Teacher as Mediator in the Artpace San Antonio/ Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School Community Partnership

While it could be assumed that if you put a well-financed artist into a classroom of high school art students and their teacher over a twelve week period of time that you have the successful ingredients for a community partnership to result and I would partially agree with that logic. However, it took a lot of personal investment on my part as the teacher involved in mediating the learning objectives of Artpace, with the overall curriculum objectives for art education within the San Antonio Independent School District, as well as my own desires to provide my students with learning opportunities that I felt would advance their appreciation for contemporary art to help in making our community partnership a success, from my vantage point. Both the artists and I shared our personal interest and passion for contemporary art with the Fox Tech students and our shared inspirations did have an impact on most of the students in the classroom. Each of us was invested in our own ways, but for me, I wanted students to have exposure to working with someone other than myself to broaden their exposure to the art world. I have personally had opportunities to work with contemporary artists at professional development workshops hosted by Artpace, but I wanted the Fox Tech students to have a similar opportunity to work directly with local artists who were also interested in engaging students in discourse addressing contemporary art issues and themes. I recognized from the time Artpace approached me to initiate this program that I wanted to be a part of it. I knowingly and enthusiastically

invested my time, efforts, and modified my curriculum to incorporate these community partnership opportunities to become a reality.

It would be deceitful however to say that all of the students involved in these programs shared my enthusiasm or were one-hundred percent invested in the outcomes and objectives of our community partnership. There were many students who were enrolled into my elective class by the counselors at our campus, against their wills, or unknowingly accepted the schedule made up for them, without having a personal interest in enrolling in an art class. However, there were many of my students who were socially engaged in alternative forms of artistic expression such as illegal tagging crews, tattoo art, and some were heavily involved in customizing lowrider vehicles. In fact, one of my students made it part of his routine to get out of school on Friday afternoon, jump in the car with his buddies, and drive to Los Angeles for the lowrider car shows. Instead of trying to ostracize many of these students and their interests, I did my best to welcome their perspectives into the conversations during the regular classroom interactions, as well as to get these students engaged in working with and sharing ideas with the visiting artists, because I do sincerely have an appreciation for these popular art forms as well.

While I may have a romanticized version of my relationship with my former high school art students, I always felt that open communication and being receptive to alternative perceptions was something that was encouraged and maintained during my ongoing interactions with the Fox Tech students, whether or not I was leading the lesson at any given time. I tried to create an environment where roles were not clearly laid out between who was the student and who was the teacher. The students had just as much to share during our discussions as I did. The same was true when I had each of the four visiting artists come into the classroom, sometimes I was teacher, student, and facilitator simultaneously. It was very natural for me to try and pull students

into the conversations that the artists had initiated whenever I felt that the artists could use some support to keep the momentum of their engagements moving forward. Also, perhaps it is significant to mention that I was very willing to let go of being the only person working directly with my students. From personal experience, I know how different personalities and a wider exposure to alternative forms of art can help in supporting and nurturing creative experiences, and so I wanted to make these opportunities available to not only the Fox Tech students, but also to me as the teacher.

Significance of the Study

Within a community partnership, teaching and learning most definitely does not occur in a vacuum. As members of a community of practice, working towards the same goals, we were socially interacting and continually making meaning from our involvement in everyday life. Just as Lave and Wenger (1991) have made clear, learning happens whether it is intended or not, and whether or not it is structured formally or informally. Whether we were in or out of the classroom, the artists, students, and I were constantly making meaning from our experiences. Our stories of experience focusing on learning interactions and forms of creative expression are looked at individually as well as across our recollections. The effort to reconstruct multiple stories of the participants' experiences during our 2004-2006 programs will hopefully add to discourse on how future community art education partnerships can consider the educational significance of trying to initiate their own localized version of a community partnership program. If this study does expand possibilities that might help to further improve educational practice in art education, then it will have been a useful endeavor (Barone & Eisner, 1997b).

During the 2004-2006 semester programs, I saw situated learning theories, creativity theories, and community art education concerns and the role of memory, connected to authentic interactions involving learning and creative expression. Together, each of us involved in the community partnerships helped to blur the boundaries regarding learning interactions and creative expression that challenged more modernist and traditional conceptions of artistic processes and artistic authority; an approach which supports the recommendations of Desai (2002). Each of these theories are addressed in-depth in Chapter 2.

Taking an up close look at our specific community art education partnerships has taken on the responsibility of revealing our experiences from necessarily subjective points of view. This study is rooted in what Dewey (1958/1997) refers to as "honest empirical methods," which take a critical look back on significant aspects of subjective experiences, reflect upon them, clarify what took place and how it has held meaning for people, and share that information with others (p. 282). Therefore, the goal of this study is to understand how our initial community partnerships established a foundation for learning interactions and creative expression that have held meaning from the point of view of the artists, students, and their art teacher over time.

Limitations of the Study

As an educational teacher/ researcher who was and remains an active participant observer of past and current semester programs, my situated vantage point has been influenced by my personal history, gender, values, and beliefs. Discourse can tease out my vantage point as either a strength or weakness to the study; but my tendency is to see my role as an informed participant as a strength. The strength of my vantage point has resulted from a continual process of self-reflections on our past experiences with the assistance of the artists and students who shared this

journey with me. Together, our networks of interpretations have made our past experiences accessible for others to understand within the contexts that were in place at that point in time and how we remember them in the present. This study has allowed our previously unheard voices, to be part of a narrative that will hopefully serve in informing a larger audience about how we were impacted by our participation with a community partnership between an art foundation and a public high school. Research is never neutral but instead reveals our particular local perspective (Desai, 2002). For all of these aforementioned reasons, I chose to see my role as teacher and researcher as a valuable perspective that grounds this study from an educator's point of view.

Time can also be viewed as either a limitation or strength to this study. As mentioned earlier, it is only with the passage of time that a critical event can be fully appreciated for its educational impact (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Yet, the passage of time also meant that opportunities to intentionally collect tangible artifacts and data that were originally generated from specific time periods during our community partnerships were more difficult to retrieve and reference. As a result, there are more examples of photos, speeches, news footage, etc. from certain semester programs than others. However, I never felt that a limited amount of images impaired the research process. The images found, in conjunction with the interviews, allowed for insightful dialogue to take place despite the imbalance of primary artifacts. Our shared memories counterbalanced this gap in information through useful and co-constructive articulation of thoughts and ideas.

More problematic than time, was the physical distance between participants that occurred over the years. When I moved away from San Antonio to Dallas, Texas, I was also moving away from where most of the participants in this study still live. The greatest challenge resulting from distance included locating the participants and finding convenient means to communicate

with them. Locating former students for this study was a real challenge because privacy issues of the school district, and their record keeping protocol made accessing student files impossible. Basically, online social networking sites were how I came to locate all former students referred to in this study. It took persistent inquiries, but in the end, one student involved in each semester program was located. In regards to communication, at first I tried electronic e-mail communications, but many of the participants were uncomfortable with e-mail or writing and preferred face-to-face meetings as the sole means of collecting data. Had I still lived in San Antonio, using only face-to-face interviews would have been so much more convenient for all of us, particularly me.

Certainly there are limitations to the conclusions that have been drawn during this qualitative study, namely that all conclusions can be contested and challenged due to people's subjective and individual interpretations of experiences (Bakhtin, 1981; Lowenfeld, 1964), yet diversity of perspectives is embraced as a strength by this researcher. Similarly, Anderson (1964) makes clear that there will be information that participants consciously or unconsciously decide to reveal and conceal, therefore it is up to the researcher to decide what information is critical to make sure these areas are explored in as much depth as is possible (Simonton, 1999; Stake 1995, 1997). I accept the possibility that participants might withhold certain information for unknown reasons, and thus this study deliberately utilizes our polyphonic voices to inform the study to help minimize omissions.

It has been my intention throughout this study of the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnerships to minimize power laden ways in which the subjects have been represented (Foucault, 1991; Rapport & Overing, 2001) by collecting multiple stories and accounts of our experiences; but perceptions shared can always be contested by alternate readings of the data.

This is a limitation I acknowledge and accept because if our collective narratives help to advance the educational landscape regarding how artist, student, and teacher participants involved in a community art partnership have made meaning from our experiences, then our necessarily subjective stories are valid, according to the ideas of Barone and Eisner (1997). Our stories are our own, but if they ring true to other people's experiences regarding community art partnerships, then this will be a welcomed outcome of this study.

Structure of the Study: Chapter Outlines

The structure of this study has taken a holistic accounting of the insights and interpretations of each artist, student, and teacher participant to make meaning out of our community-based art experiences. The goal of this qualitative inquiry has been to foster reflection, growth, and knowledge of our educational partnership by revisiting and restructuring participant's experiences for other readers to consider, in a format that connects images with stories from the artists, students, and me as the teacher/ researcher. In an attempt to keep the structure of this study simple and direct, the body of this dissertation follows a seven chapter format, as indicated below.

Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study and explains the personal and educational rationale for exploring the community partnership between Artpace San Antonio and Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School. Chapter 2 explores literature informing theories and research relevant to situated learning, creativity, community-based art education, and memory research. Chapter 3 explains the design of this narrative inquiry. Chapter 4 introduces readers to the eight participants of the study. Chapters 5 and 6 present the interpretative data analysis of the study in two parts. Chapter 5 focuses on in on the first two stages of the data analysis process

called narrative sketches and teacher/ researcher reflections. Chapter 6 addresses the third stage of the data analysis process called data reduction, and continues to include teacher/ researcher reflections. This exploration of a community partnership concludes with Chapter 7, which brings the study back full circle to the questions guiding this study and the implications of the community partnership programs between Artpace San Antonio and Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study explores how individuals with diverse backgrounds and areas of interest made meaning from their on-going interactions during the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership programs. Consequently, this review of literature has a strong bias towards systemic views of learning, which recognizes the social, multi-directional, inter-related concepts, and relationships occurring simultaneously during cognition.

There are two primary questions that this study explores and there are four major theoretical influences that have driven this inquiry process. The first question is concerned with how learning was facilitated by forming a community partnership between four contemporary artists, high school art students, and their teacher during the 2004-2006 Artpace/ Fox Tech Semester Programs. The second question centers on how visual and verbal creative expression were either inhibited or supported by this educational partnership. Revisiting and making meaning from each of the four semester programs has been informed by the theoretical insights from the fields of situated learning, creativity, community art education, and memory research. Situated learning theory recognizes that learning occurs through predominantly informal social interactions and communication involving individuals in real world settings over time. Systemic theories of creativity highlight the context dependent relationships that influence whether or not creativity is recognized by members of society. Community art education recognizes unique learning possibilities that arise when art connects people within a community and encourages personal communication about real life issues. Memory research, particularly episodic memory, involves exploring how personal recollections of significant past events are systemically

intertwined with other forms of memory that make up the narratives of our lives. Taken holistically, these theories have played a significant role in how this teacher/ researcher has tried to make meaning from the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnerships from 2004-2006.

The purpose of this literature review is to: 1) give credit to what others in the field have come to understand and share about each of these four major theoretical research strands: situated learning; creativity; community art education; and memory research; 2) discuss how each research thread connects with community-based contemporary art collaborations explored by other researchers; and 3) reflect on why these theories are viewed as being relevant to the 2004-2006 Artpace/ Fox Tech High School community partnerships (See Table 2.1). Collectively, this review of literature serves to reveal the theoretical foundations for viewing learning processes as dynamic, interdependent, and socially linked. Situated learning theory, which underscores how all of the experiences shared between participants have held meaning for each of us over time will now be explored.

An Overview of Situated Learning Theory

Situated learning, a term coined by Lave and Wenger (1991), looks at learning as an interactive relationship between multiple individuals and dynamic contexts that shape real-life experiences (Wenger, 1998). The processes and theories that have informed the development of this theory, reflect Lave and Wenger's (1991) insistence that learning cannot be separated from the contexts in which it occurs, nor can an individual be seen as being independent from the social and cultural influences which have shaped who they are, how they think, and how they interact with others. Rather than focus in on distinct actions, behaviors, or responses that occur in laboratory settings, which lack authentic relevance to participant's lives and thoughts, situated

learning theory looks to locations and settings where thinking is aligned with authentic, real-world experiences (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Lave and Wenger (1991) consolidated some critical processes and theories in their book *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation,* which promotes a comprehensive and interactive view of learning.

Processes of situated learning are understood to be both social and interactive ways in which learning is internalized (Lave & Wenger, 1991). All activities, tasks, functions, and understandings are not viewed as existing in isolation; rather, they are part of the broader systems where they have meaning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Rogoff and Lave (1984) anticipated this sensibility to learning when stating, "thinking is intricately interwoven with the context of the problem to be solved. The context includes the problem's physical and conceptual structure as well as the purpose of the activity and the social milieu in which it is embedded" (p. 2-3). Situated learning theory views learning as never being about simple assimilation or transference of knowledge; instead, learning is about transformation and changes as mutually interdependent (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The process of negotiation of meaning through discourse is one means of situating activities and interactions between the person, practice and social world (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Whether during informal or formal learning experiences, discourse allows for transmitting knowledge between participants in every imaginable domain (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Discourse involves learning how and when to talk and when to listen in silence (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Communication that encourages these social interplays especially during apprenticeships, allow both parties to inform the learning process (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Meanings change in our lives and allow us to share individual and collective ideas through dialogue (Wenger, 1998). Engaging with the community in various enterprises through dialogue, and how the communities

look upon our actions in response to these conversations, further expands social learning opportunities (Wenger, 1998). Finally, discourse changes who we are and shapes how our personal histories are related to the contexts of our communities (Wenger, 1998). Discourse allows us to form an identity, which is contextually based and responsive to our understanding of social participation (Wenger, 1998).

Legitimate peripheral participation is a social and interactive process that Lave and Wenger (1991) addressed when discussing how learners can navigate their way from novices to more active participants in the sociocultural community through situated activities.

> "Legitimate peripheral participation" provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. It concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice. A person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full-participant in a sociocultural practice. This social process includes, indeed it subsumes, the learning of knowledgeable skills. (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 29)

As learners change through these transformative encounters, their identities develop, and their form of membership into the community also evolves (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The underlying theories of situated learning are embedded in social practices that see relational interdependency between learning, thinking, and knowing within persons interacting in the social and culturally structured world (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Lave and Wenger (1991) have reminded readers that historical-cultural theories of learning should not involve abstract generalizations, but should focus on concrete cases of apprenticeship. With Lave and Wenger's (1991) strong insistence that learning must be explored by understanding the particular historical and social influences when conducting research, I tried to get the participants to tell me about what they remembered as being significant to them personally in their lives back at the time the semester programs were occurring, and what other kinds of influences may have impacted their

thoughts and abilities to express themselves. I also used their responses in conjunction with my own memories to contextualize the experiences for readers in the present to understand.

Theories of situated learning have been culled from a variety of sources and re-conceptualized by Lave and Wenger (1991). A chronological look at the development of ideas regarding situated learning can be partially understood by considering the work of two of the major authors in the field, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger.

Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger's Early Contributions to Situated Learning Theory

Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger first presented their ideas on situated learning theory during a July 1988 conference addressing scholarly concerns on activity theory, critical psychology, and learning in the workplace (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Lave and Wenger (1991) have insisted in their writings, that their ideas were influenced by series of discussions and collaborations with other individuals interested in understanding learning, no matter where it occurred. The development of Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory on learning has evolved over time, by questioning and challenging ways of exploring and understanding cognition.

Educationally, Lave and Wenger's scholarly investigations of learning in real-life settings, has allowed other researchers to apply and build upon their conceptualizations of learning as being multifaceted and dynamically evolving in the real-life social interactions that are basic components of everyday life (Chaiklin & Lave, 1993; Lave, 1988, Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff &Lave, 1984; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). Whether learning is formal or informal, occurs through apprenticeships or direct instruction, learning is highly dependent on the participants and outside influences working in tandem (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Learning is never just about the individual; rather it is about the individual

engaged in the world (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Thus, situated learning has led the way to viewing the complexities of learning as being socially constructed, maintained, dynamic, and necessarily set within real world contexts.

Learning in the Real World

Lave's early conceptions of the social nature of learning are reflected in Rogoff and Lave's (1984) *Everyday Cognition*, a book exploring thinking and learning in social contexts. The contributing authors envisioned learning as embedded within diverse everyday contexts, such as skiing as a model of instruction, or grocery shopping as a testing ground for applying arithmetic skills. Together, Rogoff and Lave (1984) challenged assumptions that cognitive skills can be effectively and personally understood in a laboratory setting, removed from real-life contexts. They provided pragmatic applications to prove their point such as having people be tested on abstract math questions in a classroom or giving a similar question in a grocery store setting, where practical application resulted in more correct responses (Rogoff & Lave, 1984).

In 1988, Lave wrote *Cognition in Practice: Mind, Mathematics and Culture in Everyday Life* and once again refuted what she called a "theoretical perspective that depends upon a claustrophobic view of cognition from inside the laboratory and school" (p. 1). In this publication, Lave (1988) returned to her observational and experimental study to see how math, as examined using the Adult Math Project, could be seen to have flaws when tested in a laboratory setting versus real-life settings, to illustrate her perspectives. Lave (1988) regarded these real world explorations of cognitive thinking as a social anthropology of cognition; specifically due the social nature of knowledge and learning as the result of interactions in everyday life.

In 1993, Lave stated it's a "difficult task of conceptualizing relations between persons acting and the social world" (Lave, 1993, p. 5), but her work with Chaiklin (1993) in *Understanding Practice: Perspectives on Activity and Context,* once again took on this challenge. Contributors to the text came from the fields of psychology, anthropology, education, cognitive science, sociology, computer sciences and communication (Chaiklin & Lave, 1993). Each contributor used studies representing their own regionally grounded concerns, to support the idea that persons acting within the social world provide richer data than would otherwise be possible in an artificial laboratory setting (Chaiklin & Lave, 1993).

Communities of Practice

Wenger (1998) expanded on his thoughts about the social nature of learning when he wrote *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. In this publication, he presented a social theory of learning (see Figure 2.1) where meaning is "learning as experience," practice is "learning as doing," community is "learning as belonging" and identity is "learning as becoming" (Wenger, 1998, p. 5). Building on the foundation of theories of social structure, identity, situated experience, and practice, communities of practice laid out a foundation from which to understand a multiplicity of influences on learning (Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott & Synder, 2002). Wenger believes that institutions are an excellent example of a complex community of practice which has interrelating aspects embedded within their structure (Wenger, 1998). The influence of institutions on the people who come together to interact in these locations have norms, rules of social structures, and patterns that might alter the cultural systems, discourses, and histories that are evolving amongst the individuals working together (Wenger, 1998). While in this study Artpace and Fox Tech were the two major institutions

working in partnership, I chose to focus more closely on the smaller community of practice comprised of the artists, students, and I who actually participated in the day to day interactions during each of the semester programs.

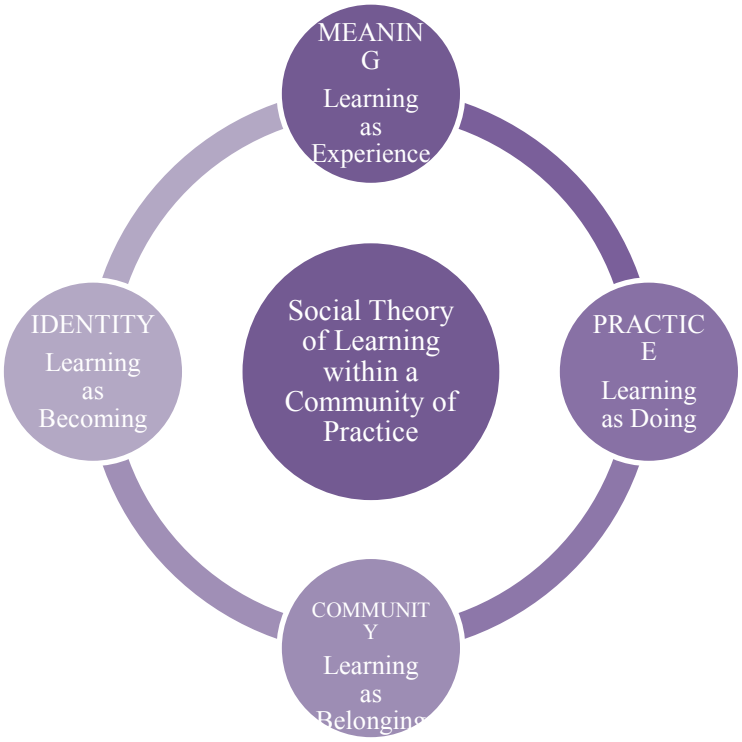


Figure 2.1. Social theory of learning within a community of practice as adapted from Wenger (1998) and Wenger, McDermott, and Synder (2002).

The impact of communities of practice on individuals working together requires close examinations of subtle interplays involving how identity and classifications are intertwined as a result of involvement with this group (Wenger, 1998) and this was the intention of interviewing participants in order to understand the complexities of each of vantage points. Studying identity involves understanding how the person has been impacted by their memberships, categorizations, associations and relations between individuals and groups (Wenger, 1998). When exploring issues such as race, gender, social class, age, and other classifications, these also have the potential to impact how identity is culturally and socially constructed (Wenger, 1998).

Exploring the everyday interactions that people have with their environment allows for local constructions of individual or interpersonal knowledge through conversations or events as situated (Wenger, 1998). Social practice, which is the final major axis which Wenger (1998) used to support his communities of practice learning theory, considered how people organize into groups and engage in mutual relationships that produce and reproduce certain ways of participating in real world activities (Wenger, 1998).

Wenger (1998) reflected on the secondary tier of theories that also impact a community of practice: collectivity, subjectivity, power, and meaning (Wenger, 1998). *Theories of collectivity* have looked at how people organize during various situations including informal local engagements with family members, community members, social networks, or more formal affiliations (Wenger, 1998). *Theories of subjectivity* have tried to understand how the individual makes meaning of their own subjective experiences in the world (Wenger, 1998). *Theories of power* have considered how issues referring to domination or collective agreements can lead to actions (Wenger, 1998). *Theories of meaning* have referred to how we come to own our experiences and make sense of "statements and realities" (Wenger, 1998, p. 15). Indeed during our time together, we each found and shared our own response to how we were socially impacted by the processes of being a part of a community partnership as will be explored further in Chapters 5 and 6. Wenger (1998) continued to articulate his strong belief in the power of communities of practice, in his next publication, which continues to highlight the power of social networks on communities of practice.

An Interdependent Network within a Community of Practice

The publication of *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing*

Knowledge (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002), has presented a pragmatic application of situated learning theory to understanding a community of practice. This structural model for understanding learning, reflects "three fundamental elements: a *domain* of knowledge, which defines a set of issues; a *community* of people who care about this domain; and the shared *practice* that they are developing to be effective in their domain" (Wenger, McDermott & Synder, 2002, p. 27). In this study, I envision the domain as being the art engagements that allowed students, artists, and I to explore real-world issues and concerns through shared learning explorations as supported by Artpace and Fox Tech High School personnel. Domains have a common purpose and value to their members (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). Domains are effective if they inspire members of the community to participate and contribute to the learning process and give meaning to their actions by sharing and spreading knowledge (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). The shared practice that united our particular learning community was centered on using art experiences as a means to learn more about each other as well as to create and share art with others. I believe this study strongly indicates that during our semester programs we did successfully unite the people of the community to work together within the art domain, to impact our learning experiences about art and its human connections through a shared practice.

According to Wenger, McDermott and Synder (2002), a strong community "fosters interactions and relationships based on mutual respect and trust" (p. 28). Together a community shares the learning process by exchanging ideas, asking difficult questions, listening to others, and being willing to take risks and make mistakes (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). The practice is viewed as the "set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories, and documents that the community members share" (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, p.

29). While it is the domain that establishes what it is that the community will focus upon, "the practice is the specific knowledge the community develops, shares, and maintains" (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, p. 29). Hopefully through the process of sharing stories about the Artpace/ Fox Tech community of practice, dynamic and systemic interplays between the many participants that helped to make this program into a reality can help other teacher who might consider initiating their own localized community of practice.

Historical Influences Informing Situated Learning Theory

The interdisciplinary nature of situated learning theory has developed out of a confluence of theories with common threads that underscore a vision of learning as socially situated, set within real-world contexts, and negotiated through interaction (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Influential to Lave and Wenger's (1991) understanding of interactions between the person, practice and social world are the ideas of *social practice theory*. Briefly, a theory of social practice emphasizes the relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning, cognition, learning, and knowing. It emphasizes the inherently socially negotiated character of meaning and the interested, concerned character of the thought and action of persons-in-activity. This view also claims that learning, thinking, and knowing are relations among people in activity in, with, and arising from the socially and culturally structured world. This world is socially constituted by objective forms and systems of activity, on the one hand, and agents' subjective and intersubjective understandings of them, on the other. They mutually constitute both the world and its experienced forms. Knowledge of the socially constituted world is socially mediated and open ended. (Lave & Wenger, 1991)

The discipline of sociology, highly influential to the work of Lave and Wenger (1991), is a lens from which everyday life is viewed as being made up of multiple realities where our conscious experiences the external world and apprehends it through inner subjectivities. Meanings that one person has may be shared with others or there might also be conflict. Social interaction in everyday life means we bring our memories and our subjectivities to our direct experiences with others. *Sociology* is a humanistic discipline that explores how society is created by people, inhabited by people, and thus is constantly being reconstructed in light of our interactions in everyday experiences. Additionally, sociology considers how human thought is founded in human activity and the social relations involved in that activity (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

Reality is socially constructed and there are different "realities" developed, maintained, and transmitted in social situations (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Nietzsche (1968) considered self-deception and mistrust as also taking a role on how man engages socially and impacts his conscious thoughts and actions. Historicism looked to see the relativity between different perspectives on human events and human thoughts and found that you must consider the contexts on their own terms, whenever trying to examine "reality." Society has a critical role in determining how human knowledge is ordered, but it is up to the individual to form an individual experience by how they look upon the world. The idea that knowledge must always be viewed from a certain position is the idea of "relationism" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 10). Relationism is useful to researchers if we systematically analyze as many possible varying socially grounded positions, in order to sift through and better understand human events.

Lave (1988) acknowledged the strength of social anthropology as a discipline because it has helped to advance focus onto everyday activities and places significance on individual

experiences within social systems in culturally organized settings. *Social anthropology* is seen as correcting the distorted relationships presented by functionalists, who believed in cultural uniformity and supported an agenda that learning could be transferred, regardless of contextual influences; Lave (1988) vehemently opposed this position. Both Lave and Wenger (1991) have repeatedly contended that context has been and always will be interrelated to overall cognitive processes (Lave, 1988). Similarly, *practice theory*, which is a cluster of theories, recognizes everyday life as being composed of a "broad range of issues and levels of analysis embedded in the focal concept. Practice theory emphasizes the dialectical character of relations fundamental to the socially constituted world-dialectics provides an obvious relational model for synthesis" (Lave, 1988, p. 15). This dialogue, however, is always contestable.

Marxist historical tradition, of which Vygotsky was a member, was admirably referenced by Lave and Wenger (1991) for having challenged how categories and forms of social life are historically and culturally produced and reproduced. Although Vygotsky (1997) supported the use of metanarratives as part of the Marxist philosophy of the time in Russia, Lave and Wenger (1991) value how he saw dialogue as integral to learning, specifically when elaborating on the *Zones of Proximal Development.* Within this conception, Vygotsky viewed dialogue between more expert teachers and less expert learners as a social navigation through the learning process where thinking is reformulated and connected in ways that help all parties to learn (Bruner, 1987). Bakhtin (1981), a contemporary of Vygotsky, also rejected the notion that human development can be considered a solo achievement (Bruner, 1987). Bruner (1987) suggested Bakhtin's (1981) ideas had a strong impact on Vygotsky's theories on the collective and social nature of human intellectual functioning. Both Bakhtin (1981) and later Bruner (1987), viewed

man as an expression of his culture and through dialogue, man is able to gain control of the world and himself (Bruner, 1987; Cole & Scribner, 1978; Davydov, 1990).

Vygotsky's theories, including the Zones of Proximal Development and *internalization*, were used as foundations upon which Lave and Wenger (1991) built their own conceptualization of learning. For example, Vygotsky viewed *internalization* as the individual acting independently to find meaning in the world (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Lave and Wenger (1991) extended Vygotsky's relational view between the person and learning, by always recognizing that the person cannot be separated from the activity set within the social community in which the activity occurs. Learning should be viewed as a *generative process*, where it is not about simple assimilation or transference of information, but it allows people to shape their own futures about what and how they learn (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Vygotsky's (1997) theories on the social behavior of children, which involve concepts of adaptation between the child and the environment, the environment and education, help to articulate how genuine social behaviors materialize.

The data collected in this study supports these conceptualizations of learning involving internalization and generative processes. Our learning experiences were never approached from a *banking system* perspective, as critiqued by Freire (1968), where knowledge is handed down from the experts to the novices, but rather we were mutually invested participants working within our contextually-rich world, trying to find our own path to learning about art, life, and others.

Vygotsky (1997) felt that while people were socially adapting to the environment, the environment was also undergoing inexhaustible changes that should allow for infinite interactions to be considered anew, and these ideas seem to be critically linked with how Lave

and Wenger (1991) believed learning must always be understood- in context. These ideas have emboldened a variety of scholars and researchers from a variety of domains to look for ways to connect to the community through networks that play upon our varied life experiences through social interactions.

> It is in these social interactions that, history grates on us and erodes our lives, a space of complete experience, of the unseen and incomprehensible as well as the tangible and everyday. It is the place where temporality and spatiality, history and biography are really written, fully lived, filling the entire geographical or spatial imagination. It was only through an understanding of this kind of space, this third space, this lived space, this heterotopology, that it would become possible for the spatiality of human life (the spatial dimension) to be seen as equivalent in importance to life's historicality (the historical dimensions) and sociality (the social dimension). (Soja as interviewed by Blake, 2002, p. 141)

Social behaviors set within real-world contexts reflect the internal spaces of the subject and recognize the fluid nature of human thought (Martin, 2005). Humanity does not stand apart from society. But rather, we are reflections of the confluence of life's complexities. Indeed our lived histories and our socially created learning experiences gave us tools to communicate with each other during our community partnership programs, as is further expanded upon when examining the connections between language and learning.

The Role of Language in Situated Learning Theory

Contexts involving the use of language and dialogue to socially negotiate ideas and meanings between participants are critically important in understanding how individuals make meaning from situated learning experiences. Part of personal expression through language that Vygotsky (1997) found particularly useful was when people were engaged in aesthetic discussions about original art as social endeavors, which can connect people from the present with experiences from the past. In the process of "reading" the works of art and formulating

interpretations based on what they internalize from the viewing, learning was viewed as occurring through the exchange of ideas relating to the work and people's lives (Vygotsky, 1997). Language is necessary to convey meanings and ideas, to transcend the here and now, and explore spatial and temporal dimensions in ways that can actualize a whole world (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

During our community partnership, language was an indispensible tool that the young and novice art students utilized to find a common ground for exchanging ideas with their peers and the artists. Language allowed each of us to contribute to the learning process, regardless of our age differences or interests, and our ability to use words to express our thoughts and ideas was a critical aspect to our learning. As the teacher in the classroom, when I could understand what the students meant, but their concepts didn't really come across to others, I would often try and subtly restate their key concepts so that others could better understand their thoughts. I too often get tongue-tied and look to others to articulate thoughts that I am trying to get at, but have a hard time expressing. This is yet another example of the power of language. Socially interacting with others and bouncing ideas around for further consideration and interpretation is a beneficial attribute of language.

Sociology values language as one the most important types of sign systems that humans use to express concepts, ideas and help to structure learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991). *Dialogic inquiry*, a language based theory of learning, between participants working to learn from each other has been correlated with Vygotsky, particularly with his *social constructivist theory* (Wells, 1999). Vygotsky's co-construction of knowledge

> focuses on semiotic mediation as the primary means whereby the less mature are assisted to appropriate the culture's existing resources and guided as they use and transform them for the solution of the problems that they consider important. In the place of competitive individualism, his theory proposes a collaborative community in which, with the teacher

> as leader, all participants learn with and from each other as they engage in dialogic inquiry. (Wells, 1999, p. xii)

Wells (1999) believed the tools of discourse that shape learning are culturally and historically situated and impact intellectual development through the process of making meaning. Discourse has allowed for knowledge construction, change, transformations, and helps individuals to become full participants in ongoing cultural activities (Wells, 1999). Vygotsky's *genetic method*, which was a method of studying how language was used as a tool in situations to understand concept development in humans, was a valuable technique in Wells' (1999) estimation. When discourse was found to be effective, it resulted in finding new understandings and showed progression of thoughts in which new understandings were built upon previous conceptions (Wells, 1999). Otherwise, ineffective discourse was not influential to the knowledge construction process (Wells, 1999).

The situated nature of dialogic imagination recognizes the power of the meaning of language to always be contested depending on the context in which it is used, and therefore always open for continual redefinition. As illustrated by Bakhtin (1981), as contexts change and are enriched by various new elements, so do the ways in which words, language, and discourse are reconsidered and reinterpreted (Wells, 1999). Language, culture and interpersonal contexts that take place when people share ideas and meanings through discourse can potentially cause numerous reciprocal relationships to emerge (Wells, 1999). Ownership of ideas can then become a point of resistance because language is always in a state of emerging and betweeness (Bakhtin, 1981; Rapport & Overing, 2000). Furthermore, Foucault (1991) challenged the idea that the words used by individuals are really theirs. Indeed, Foucault (1991) felt that words used by individuals with the intent to express their own original thoughts, were actually just reflections of the culture that has imprinted themselves on the person (Rapport & Overing, 2000). The

influences of language on our everyday experiences only further work in supporting how all learning is situated and contextually based, even if influences and contexts are not readily observable. Lave (1988) recognized Foucault (1991) for his recognition that historical descriptions and meanings imposed on everyday life rely through interpretations, which will necessarily reflect the views of some, while eliminating those of others. Bruner (1987) agreed that humans interact by listening and speaking and are actively interpreting and internalizing information, thus we are always socially constructing shared meanings within highly context-dependent situations.

During our artist, student, and teacher interactions, each of our abilities to utilize language, particularly between adults and the predominantly Hispanic teen culture, were noteworthy because language was a key ingredient in sustaining our relationships despite our differences in ages. Language was like a tool the allowed us to network ideas, and learn by sharing ideas. Informal dialogue that occurred within our formal school setting seemed to relate to almost everyone's preferred cognitive style of learning.

Implications of Cognitive Research on Situated Learning Theory

Everyday situated learning involves understanding participant's *cognitive style*; which is how an individual's preferred and habitual approach to organizing and representing information, impacts their choices (Riding, 2002). "Cognitive style affects the ways in which events and ideas are viewed. It therefore affects how a person may respond to and think about events in their life and make decisions" (Riding, 2002, p. 23). Lave and Wenger (1991) have rejected cognitive research that views learning as being comprised of isolated parts because then cognition becomes a singular entity set apart from the other influences on our thoughts. Instead, they support

looking for and understanding the complexities of inter-related and intra-related relationships through research studies as shaping learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Ethnographic studies, for example, which focus on people engaged in apprentice-like learning experiences, or experimental studies that compare how people learn in real-life settings versus in a laboratory setting, inspired Lave and other anthropologists to initiate their own context dependent studies that have tried to understand how learning is made relevant to people's lives (Chaiklin & Lave, 1993; Lave, 1988; Resnick, Saljo, Pontecorvo, Burge, 1997; Rogoff & Lave, 1984). One prominent researcher who helped to explore the complexities of cognition in everyday learning was John Dewey.

Learning by Doing

Activity theory has been influential to situated learning theory because it supports the idea that learning by doing is instrumental to development and strongly affirms that learning is a social process (Lave, 1988; Lave & Wenger, 1991). When Lave was working in Liberia with the Vai and Gola tailors, she recognized different levels of social interactions that the apprenticeship revealed as primarily unstructured instruction, but eventually led to their development as master tailors (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Lines became blurred in real life when considering how learning occurred in formal and informal environments (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Social behaviors in both formal and informal settings, made it almost impossible for the "separation of cognition from the social world, form and content, persons acting and the settings of their activity, or structure and action" (Lave, 1988, p. 16).

Dewey's (1938) research, which concluded that knowledge is a by-product of activity, also shared the social perspective that people do and learn things in the world (Menand, 2001). If

the results of those actions result in useful learning, then people can carry this learning along to the next activity. The connections Dewey made about thoughts about learning through social engagement, sound very similar to the ideas expressed by Lave and Wenger in 1991. In this letter to his wife and children written in 1894, Dewey explained his educational philosophy on the interconnections of thinking to activity (Menand, 2001).

> There is an image of a school growing up in my mind all the time; a school where some actual and literal constructive activity shall be the centre and source of the whole thing, and from which the work should be always growing out in two directions- one the social bearings of that constructive industry; the other the contact with nature which supplies it with its materials. I can see, theoretically, how the carpentry etc involved in building a model house should be the centre of a social training on one side, and a scientific on the other, all held within the grasp of a positive concrete physical habit of eye and hand…The school is the one form of social life which is abstracted and under control- which is directly experimental, and if philosophy is ever to be an experimental science, the construction of a school is a starting point. (Dewey as cited in Menand, 2001, p. 319-320)

Just like Lave and Wenger (1991), Dewey (1938) believed that activities should be actively continuous with life outside the school, and should advance with the natural instincts of the children in a social and goal oriented setting. Dewey (1938) felt that too often schools separated or falsely abstracted knowledge from activity, thus negating diversity in the people engaged in the learning. Instead, Dewey favored pluralisms which recognized that "people come at life from different places, they understand the world in different ways, they strive for different ends" (Menand, 2001, p. 377). Boaz also recognized the pluralisms inherent in representations of culture because he believed there are no absolutes in any culture (Menand, 2001). "Culture is only a response to the conditions of life; when those conditions change-and in modern societies they change continuously- cultures change as well" (Menand, 2001, p. 407).

When I was the art teacher at Fox Tech, I always tried to expose my students to a wide variety of art styles using locally available resources. In fact, when the administration asked me

and my students to brainstorm ideas to address the graffiti problem in our campus restrooms, the students and I tried a pilot program where some of the most respected student artists came up with art designs based on themes, like lowrider cars and our Mexican cultural ties, or promoting famous Hispanic military leaders to be created in the bathrooms by the ROTC. The students came up with the themes, did the work themselves, but our efforts were dashed not long after our completion. Even amongst the student body, public art in the public bathrooms was still not deterring the graffiti. The sad truth was that once the taggers began to vandalize the work we had completed, it really went downhill fast. However, the girls who designed sweet and cutesy images and requested new and pretty mirrors be installed into their bathrooms did protect and keep their environments clean for the most part. However, the administration took away our new mirrors, which I had paid for out of my own pocket, because many girls were taking too much time putting on make-up or fixing their hair. Regardless of the outcomes of our learning adventures, we were doing what Dewey encouraged, by making the activities relevant to the students' lives and giving them an authentic role in finding solutions to problems by taking action. Learning by doing was a critical part of our learning engagements.

Learning by Sharing Ideas

Geertz's (1983) anthropological research shared common interests with Lave and Wenger (1991) in that *cognition* is viewed as part of a continual process in which interactions with the world are symbolically constructed within a sociocultural milieu. Anthropologists share an appreciation of interactions that occur, the moments that are shared, the situations and processes that are shared and owned by members who participate in the exchanges in this community. It is through interactions that a synthesizing phenomenon occurs whereby individuals intersect with

public institutions, and thus create and maintain societies (Rapport & Overing, 2000). When individuals initially come to interact with each other, they are unsure what to expect, but as time goes by and routines emerge, the process begins to reveal socio-cultural structures that are constantly under revision (Blumer, 1972). In fact, each artist I interviewed said that they also felt a sense of apprehension coming into a new environment and working with people they had never met before. Yet their initial fears were subsided quickly because we were working together and needed each other to make our program a success. The artists' initial unease aligns with ethnographic studies that try and understand the "particularities of our interests, temperaments and situations. Our paths through this expanded terrain of anthropology may be very personal, revealing themselves only cumulatively, depending on practical circumstances and experiences" (Hannerz, 2006, p. 24).

Research in cognition, including Bandura's (1977) *Social Learning Theory*, supports Lave and Wenger's (1991) outlook that human thoughts and behaviors are learned and modified through social experiences. It is through reciprocal and continuous interactions between the behavioral, cognitive and environmental factors that human behavior can be understood socially (Bandura, 1977). Like Vygotsky (1997) and Bakhtin (1981), Bandura viewed the individual as being reflective of the environment or culture; individuals are neither "free agents" nor "powerless objects" (Bandura, 1977, p. vii). Bidirectional interactions between persons and their environment were considered paramount to Bandura's (1977) conception of social learning theory. Bandura (1977) reminded researchers that in "social interactions the behavior of each participant governs which aspects of their potential repertoires are actualized and which remain unexpressed" (p. 197). Symbols are viewed as representing events, cognitive operations, and create new forms of knowledge (Bandura, 1977). Symbols provide insight into the thoughts and

internal representations of experiences and can serve as a venue for understanding how others represent their thoughts (Bandura, 1977). Symbols can gradually become independent of what they used to refer to, and be manipulated to produce thoughts that transcend the boundaries of reality (Bandura, 1977). Bandura (1977) described two broad categories of social learning that were evident during our community partnerships.

Bandura's (1997) said learning occurs through response consequences or by modeling and places high correlations between the social interactions that impact learning experiences in authentic settings. Learning by *response consequences* occurs in everyday, direct experiences in which we are either positively or negatively reinforced by the actions we produce, but its impact on learning new information is difficult to determine (Bandura, 1977). On the other hand, learning through *modeling* allows learners to observe others who explore and perform new behaviors and decide what information to internalize and code for future applications by the observer (Bandura, 1977). Attentional processes allow the learner to decide which information to selectively internalize, and how the information will be interpreted by the observer (Bandura, 1977). The retention process involves how the person internalizes the observed behavior symbolically, whether it is visually or verbally, and commits the information to memory (Bandura, 1977). Motor reproduction processes are what allow learners to take the converted symbolic representations, select and organize them at a cognitive level and then actually implement them behaviorally (Bandura, 1977). Motivational processes of the individual learner will either encourage or inhibit their likelihood of adopting the modeled behavior depending on how they value the outcomes, and if this behavior is associated with unrewarded or punishing consequences (Bandura, 1977). Eventually, verbal or varied symbolic modeling like television or other media becomes substituted for behavioral modeling as learners mature (Bandura, 1977).

The social implications continue to expand as learners become more complex and sophisticated in how they creatively draw upon these stored observations of others to formulate their own synthesized responses to new circumstances and experiences (Bandura, 1977). While Lave & Wenger's (1991) conceptions of learning as socially situated have distinctions from Bandura's (1977) theory, there are many ideas regarding the need to view cognition in real-world contexts that both overlap and substantiate each other. Bandura's (1977) views of cognition being socially shaped and internalized either visually or verbally were ideas reaffirmed by me and the artist and students interviewed. In fact, often times, it seemed as if they could recall the images they were remembering from the past as if they were happening in the present. This was particularly notable when John Contreras, a former Fox Tech student and research participant, was walking through the Artpace gallery with me and he was describing works that had once been in these rooms, despite the fact that the rooms now had new installations in them and were not configured in the exact way they had been in years past. The influences of the environment working in connection with his memories made apparent his complex mental associations that had resisted being forgotten. His memories were complexly interwoven and reflective of how life experiences overlap past with present experiences.

Critique of Isolating Learning Behaviors in Cognitive Research

Modernist empirical research in cognitive studies was given a harsh critique from Lave (1988) due to its heavy emphasis on structural components of learning, while overlooking the complex interactions of the persons engaged in practice in the social world (Chaiklin & Lave, 1993). Lave (1984) pointed out that for far too long, children's capabilities manifest very differently in familiar environments than they do in the laboratory yet, this has not factored into

how researchers approach learning to better consider context. Gardner (1991) was one example of a researcher who pushed for concise categorizations of learning that did not allow for contextual variables, which have been viewed as limiting and short-sighted by Lave and Wenger (1991). In Gardner's (1991) estimation, there are intuitive learners, traditional students and disciplinary experts and each category has been clearly outlined with associations that do not allow for variables to learning situations. Despite the popularity of empirically based cognitive research such as Gardner's (1991), Lave and Wenger (1991) have continued to view learning as dynamic and thus all variables are necessary considerations if cognitive research studies hope to expand, rather than limit, future investigations of cognition.

Concluding Thoughts on Situated Learning Theory

The confluence of theories and contexts that have impacted the ideas and work of Lave & Wenger (1991) throughout the years, have opened up opportunities from which to consider learning as socially navigated and culturally situated within a network of contexts impacting all thoughts and behaviors. Learning is complex and interdependent, and demands researchers to look beyond the obvious and consider the more subtle interplays impacting the learning process. Cognitive research which has either limited or embraced the social and situated nature of learning experiences has also made an impact on how Lave and Wenger (1991) have continued to approach their own research practices, whether by studying how math is used in daily life in the grocery store or when apprentices learn by working with a seasoned veteran in the field, such as master tailors, or master butchers. Throughout the world, ideas from situated learning theory have had an impact on community-based contemporary art partnerships, as noted below.

Discussion: How do Situated Learning Theories Relate to Community-Based Contemporary Art Partnerships?

In Scotland, the Room 13 program has received attention for using situated learning as part of a primary school's art program that fosters community collaborations between an artist in residence and students working together on the school campus. Adams (2005) considers their model for learning through contemporary art as supportive of extensive forms of learning and communication because students play a significant role in all decision making processes involving their art program within their small on-campus community. The social and cultural dynamics embedded in the structural framework of the program are the driving forces of this student-centered community of practice, because it is the students who hire, and organize the program. Room 13 is located in Caol Primary School in Scotland on the school campus. Students can go into work during their lunch, after school, or during the regular school day if their regular teachers give approval. It is the student's decision whether or not they want to work collaboratively or independently from the on-site contemporary artist in residence or with other students coming into the space. The design of the community art program in Scotland allows situated learning to take place that supports how the students' individual learning styles can best be accommodated through this on-site educational program (Roberts, 2008).

At the university level, Rodenbeck (2008) has written about an artist/ professor, named Harrell Fletcher, who has been instrumental in developing a MFA program at Portland State University called Art and Social Practice. Fletcher's philosophy regarding this program is that while art historians study the history of art, studio majors address the creation of art, Fletcher's students address the practice side of art. Together, participants in this art and social practice program seek out ways to connect and share experiences and information between members of a community to increase and facilitate open-ended discourse. Fletcher's philosophy and artistic

practice aligns with situated learning theory because people engage in interactions that promote informal and formal discourse that involves real-life issues that are personally meaningful and relevant to various members in particular communities of practice. For example, in this article one project that had local spiritual storytellers interact with strangers who helped to reenact stories for new audiences. In another community collaboration involving art and social practice, a woman who did not have empathy for police officers designed an art partnership collaboration that had individuals from the community collect rubbings from officer's badges, while they were still wearing them. This community art collaboration between police officers and Fletcher's students helped to increase personal understandings and communication between these two communities that was conducted with a positive goal in mind. For Fletcher and his students in the Arts and Social Practice program, their primary purpose is to give individuals ways to operate in communities to form personal connections though processes of engagements (Rodenbeck, 2008).

In 2005, I had the opportunity to appreciate the philosophy behind Harrell Fletcher's artistic practices firsthand when he was a visiting artist at Artpace (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2. Talking with Harrell Fletcher about engaging communities in dialogue. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Fletcher's style of engaging individuals from various communities of practice was evident when speaking with him about an educational outreach program he was developing for San Antonians to participate in. Fletcher had invited local art teachers to participate in a teacher workshop he was leading, and he shared his ideas about art as a means to bring people together that might not otherwise be able to do so. In fact, he asked all of us with him that day to collaborate on this project by asking anyone that we knew, if they would be willing to speak publicly about their own memories and associations with the Vietnam War. On the day people did come together to share stories, I sat in the back of the room at Artpace and listened to people share stories for hours. Some of the people who showed up were former Vietnam veterans; others were the wives and children who felt the effects of losing their loved ones either physically or mentally as a result of their experiences. There was a room full of individuals who each had their own reasons for being there, wanting to reflect on their memories and associations with the events surrounding this critical historical event. Fletcher was connecting communities both locally and globally through this process of dialogue and collaboration in real and personally relevant ways. This event was recorded on a video camera and was included as part of the artifacts for viewers of the exhibition to re-engage with, by putting on the headphones and honoring these voices once again.

In his Artpace installation called *The American War*, Fletcher facilitated an alternate reading of the Vietnam War from the perspective of the Vietnamese people, thus the title of the installation piece (Artpace San Antonio, November 2005). Fletcher, who had just come back from a residency in Vietnam, used the stories and images of the people within the Vietnamese community as inspiration for his residency and tried to re-produce the actual environment of the original war museum he visited in his exhibition space. While in Vietnam, he spent part of his

time re-photographing images in the war museums, just as most tourists do, but then he took his process further by creating intimate viewing spaces where the psychological and deeply emotional relationships embedded within the images and stories seemed to command viewer's attention. Visitors to the Fletcher's exhibition were given a raw look at the real consequences of war and chemical weapons on the population of the Vietnamese people through the lens of the people who lived through the experience in Vietnam, as well as through the voyeur's eyes. Many of my high school students who accompanied me to the exhibition had never seen such direct and uncensored representations of war from a perspective other than what American textbooks select as appropriate content. Some of my students at the exhibition were also involved in the Fox Tech ROTC program, which was a huge program on our campus. For some ROTC students, they felt emboldened about the need to engage in war rather than feel empathy for people on the other side of the conflict. However, overwhelmingly, visiting the exhibition sparked a lot of personal dialogue about the real-world consequences and long term affects of military decisions to use chemical weapons and the mixed messages of propaganda that surround the portrayal of war, depending on who is telling the story. None of my students took a passive response to the exhibition; we all understood we were learning and using dialogue to question and challenge events of the past with issues still present today.

Bringing communities of practice together to focus on difficult social issues impacting local and global communities is also inclusive of the creative practices of artist Pepón Osorio. In one of his art installations called *Badge of Honor*, Osorio has addressed the theme of incarceration using an ongoing process of collaborations with social service organizations, students, school support groups, and local residents who lived in the Newark neighborhood. For more than a decade, many articles have been written about the social impact that *Badge of Honor*

has had on the individuals from different communities (Blatherwick, 1997; Burton, 2007; Connors, 1996; Davis, 2007; Fallon, 2007; Gonzalez, 1996; Kim, 1999; Lopez, 1995; Mesa-Bains, 2007; Perez & Lasalle, 1995). Osorio's artistic practice unites people from the community to inform the creative development of art, including when he continually went back and forth interviewing and sharing communications between a father who was incarcerated, and his teenage son who was still living at home with his mother. Osorio recorded the intimate messages between the two individuals separated in physical space and incorporated this dialogue into the installation looking at the short and long-term effects that incarceration has on families. *Badge of Honor* has been reconstructed in various communities around the world, each site inviting new opportunities for situated experiences between viewers, the work, and the themes explored to foster new associations about issues surrounding incarceration (Feldman Gallery, April 1996).

In 2008, I had the opportunity to interview Pepón Osorio regarding his most recent reincarnation of *Badge of Honor: The Project*, with families in North Philadelphia. He shared his philosophy for this collaboration in the following e-mail communication, which was part of the promotional materials he and others generated to share the purpose of the collaboration with larger audiences.

> About two years ago, Tyler's Arts in Community Program, The Lighthouse, Centro Pedro Claver, and Las Gallas got together to talk about the possibility of a collaboration. We wanted to create works of arts inspired by true stories, true events and real people in real-life situations. Understanding that it takes more than one person to find solutions to community challenges we deliberately formed triangular relationships among local families, Temple students and Las Gallas as mentors. These newly formed associations provided the space to share personal stories, build trust, and develop a sense of curiosity about each other.
>
> This project grew out of a traditional model of community life where roles are exchanged, knowledge is passed to one another and art is inherently tied to public life. While maintaining a dialogue with the art community at large we also felt the

> responsibility to position the artwork in the core of the neighborhood. Each student created artwork in the family's home. Las Gallas created a multidisciplinary performance based on the impact of incarceration on the women of the families turning personal stories into collective experiences. The Lighthouse housed the exhibition and created a reading table where each one of the project's participants suggested a book as a resource to engage with visitors. To respect the families' decision not to show the site specific work created by the students at their homes, the photographic documentation serves as a testimony of their interventions.
>
> We have merged all of our creative visions to bring awareness of the challenges ahead. This project marks the first time in Philadelphia history that multiple organizations have come together to make a collective, multi-disciplinary statement on the severity of incarceration in the Latino community. This project reaffirms that art can pull all the adequate resources of an academic institution and its neighboring community to bring about change. (P. Osorio, personal e-mail communication, March 11, 2008)

From Osorio's perspective, the various participants from the community took on issues that others might have considered undesirable, but were challenging and inspirational to those involved because their art had a cause. Osorio's mentioned during our phone conversation, that he and the other participants are still working together to publish their experiences. This upcoming collaborative publication will also include a reminder that the issues of incarceration continue to be a compelling social issue that has not gone away. To illustrate this point, Osorio will include an interview he did with yet another father and son, but this time, they are currently sharing a prison cell together (P. Osorio, personal communication, March 10, 2008).

With artists Harrell Fletcher and Pepón Osorio, their outlook on community-based contemporary art practice reinforces the core ideas associated with situated learning. *Contemporary art practices* involve discourse that shifts the focus from visual aesthetics to "inter-human relations" (Meban, 2009, p. 38). The original ideas may begin with the artist, but it is the people who participate in the production who give it meaning (Bailey & Desai, 2005). Processes are much more important than products when looking to collectively derive meaning from social collaborations. Aesthetics are re-conceptualized as favoring inter-connections and

relations between humans using dialogue (Gude, 1989; Meban, 2009). Learning is meant to connect and build knowledge through integration or weaving ideas together; a process of synthesis that uses interdisciplinary inspirations to foster learning (Marshall, 2006). Contemporary art practices, like situated learning, believe knowledge is integrated and always evolving (Marshall, 2005). Social, political, cultural, and economic issues relating to representation and disenfranchisement are addressed purposefully and in concrete ways (Bailey & Desai, 2005). Contemporary art practices blur boundaries and this allows for new meanings to be understood by individuals from diverse communities with varied interests. Learning is not limited to specific sites, art can emerge in hospitals, prisons, neighborhoods, parks, etc. (Desai, 2002).

Like the contemporary art practices of Harrell Fletcher and Pepón Osorio, Gary Sweeney, Daniel Guerrero, David Jurist, and Ethel Shipton began with an original idea for our contemporary art project, but through our ongoing interactions, the needs of the group became more important and that was our common ground connecting us together. Our "inter-human relations," as described by Meban (2009, p. 38), took center stage for all of the learning that took place between us.

Reflection: Why Situated Learning Theory is Relevant to the Artpace San Antonio/ Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School Community-based Art Partnerships

Situated learning theory was relevant to the interactions and experiences that took place between Artpace and Fox Tech High School during the 2004-2006 community partnerships in the following ways. Learning informally and formally through social interactions between artists, students, and the teacher were continuous, ongoing, and always unpredictable. Learning

was never about transference of knowledge and skills being hierarchically passed down from the expert to the novice as if learning is a one-way street. Social learning was about active negotiations and meaning-making engagements between individuals with various interests, backgrounds, and experiences that took place between the teacher and the student. Everyone was learning socially, through real-world experiences and discussions about issues and ideas of relevance to the majority of the participants. Together, we engaged in web-like and cyclical formal and informal interactions without any fixed outcomes. The social and cultural contexts made individual reflections of the 2004-2006 semester programs uniquely situated from the vantage point of each participant. Each of our subjectivities and memories informed our learning processes and the events that were meaningful to us.

Language was utilized to help us find and share common ground and meaning from our experiences. Together we were able to not only explore the here and now, but we were also able to transcend and connect with ideas informed by past accomplishments and future possibilities. The boundaries between the experts and the novices, the teacher and the students, were continually blurred and encouraged multi-directional learning to occur, based on real-world issues and concerns. Further contextual relationships between our Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership and situated learning theory are further explored in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Introduction to Theories on Creativity

What constitutes creativity remains contestable. According to Zimmerman (2009), *creativity* should be viewed as being "multidimensional with consideration of how cognitive complexity, affective intensity, technical skills, and interest and motivation all play major roles (p. 394). Lubart (1999) concurs that a confluence of factors such as "intellectual abilities, styles

of thinking, personality, motivation, and environment" all contribute to what he calls an *investment theory of creativity* (p. 11). Interdependent and postmodern conceptions of creativity which are inclusive of individuals from a diversity of backgrounds, and contextually situated have not always been the norm. In fact, there has been a long-standing tension between two major schools of thought regarding creativity from either the modernist or postmodernist point of view. To begin to outline the major schools of thought, I will begin by addressing postmodern and contemporary conceptualizations of creativity that I support.

Contemporary Conceptualizations as to What Constitutes Creativity in the Visual Arts

What is creativity in the visual arts, particularly contemporary art? Is it the artistic products generated by the artists? Is it the thought processes that lead to innovative and useful artistic solutions to problems? Can creativity refer to the interactions that viewers have with art to make the viewing process active and dynamic? Is creativity something that has a fixed definition and does it even exist? While there have been numerous points of view regarding what does and does not constitute creativity in the visual arts, a recent exhibition of Olafur Eliasson's contemporary art at the Dallas Museum of Art, seems to encapsulate many of the ideas that I support regarding how creativity or creative contemporary art practices can be viewed as connecting the artist, object, viewer, and process through discourse. In the exhibition pamphlet, Grynsztejn (2008) shares the following insights into the exhibition's complexities of multi-dependent contexts.

> The artist has carefully designed this exhibition as a journey through related, consecutive encounters unfurling in direct response to each visitor's unique experience. Impressions of light, temperature, wind, and humidity engage multiple senses, going far beyond our exclusively visual involvement with more traditional forms of art. Throughout this exhibition, we are called upon to engage overtly with the work at a physiological and

> even kinetic level, so much so that we actually contribute to its fruition by bringing to these immersive environments our own singular responses, afterimages, and physical movements.
>
> To the degree that we actively engage with the work, we come to a heightened sense of perceiving and doing. "Seeing yourself seeing" is how Eliasson describes this state of self-awareness and reflection, and it is his art's ultimate goal. It is a condition of creative involvement that the artist hopes may be subsequently carried by each of us out into the larger world so as to better act on our own lives and circumstances. In keeping with this idea, the exhibition title, *Take your time*, invites you to not only actively shape your experience of the show but also assume greater responsibility for your present and future role in personal and civic life. (Grynsztejn, 2008)

Grynsztejn's (2008) conceptualization of the work of one contemporary artist blurs and fuses boundaries of creativity between artist, art product, and viewer engagement. Creativity is an interdependent process made up of systemic relations connecting artists, with ideas and themes embedded within their work, and internalized in uniquely different ways with viewers who engage with the work.

Systemic views of creative involvement with contemporary works of art are shared by art educators, such as Gaudelius and Speirs (2002) and other contributors to their publication. Interpretations and discourse are viewed as being interactive and continually renegotiated from viewer to viewer, from one personal experience to another when creatively interacting with contemporary art. Self-actualizations take place within viewers engaging with art that is associated with creative persons, regardless of whether the person is referring to art they created, or if it is the work of others (Maslow, 1968; Smith, 2001). Maslow (1968) coined the term *self-actualizing creativeness* to describe the mental processes that healthy, creative people experience either when looking at products they create, or reflecting on the contexts in which the work is viewed or understood. The interdependent relationships between the person, product, processes, environment, and sensitivities of the viewer are all part of the socio-historical contexts that

cannot be neglected when examining the interdependent nature of self-actualizing creativeness (Anderson, 1964).

As noted in Chapter 1, addressing the topic of creativity specifically to contemporary art education took on a renewed interest in the March 2010 issue of *Art Education*. The issue recognized a variety of ways that creativity has been approached by art educators, based on current and locally relevant social and cultural concerns and references. Creativity is not approached as a one size fits all conception; rather, each author articulates how they have come to recognize creativity in various visual and verbal forms of expression. For example, Peralta (2010) discussed how the development of stories is a creative act engaged in by viewers with diverse backgrounds and interests. Gude (2010) also highlighted the importance of various factors influencing creative processes when working with students including using dialogue to break down resistance and anxiety by encouraging playful explorations and critical reflections from various perspectives. Freedman (2010) also makes clear that multiple contextual influences and circumstances work interdependently when considering creativity in contemporary art practices. Similar to Gruber and Wallace (2001) views that systemic relationships impact how creativity is seen, Freedman (2010) believes systemic factors are in place when exploring creativity from multiple vantage points. The concept of creativity is not fixed in time. The concept of creativity continually evolves dependent on how people interpret learning engagements within our socially and culturally rich world.

Interdependent and Systemic Conceptions of Creativity

During our engagements that took place from 2004 and 2006 between Artpace and Fox Tech High School, there were a series of interdependent relationships taking place

simultaneously. For example, I was visiting Artpace on my own to visit exhibitions and participate in community outreach programs, as well as communicating regularly with their education contact person about the status of our semester program collaboration. Likewise, on my campus, I was interacting regularly with my students and fellow teachers, and periodically with the visiting artists. I was also incorporating what we were learning by visiting other museum sites and other classroom projects, like preparing our student work for exhibition at local businesses. Additionally, I also chose to collaborate with other neighboring organizations like the Crowne Plaza Hotel to have my students create murals for their worker's dining room area. We also were contacted to paint mural for our daycare center next door. Besides my various roles as a teacher, my professional relationship also overlapped with the artist as well as the student's lives when we brought our shared the experience of working on developing and creating public art together. We were pulling ideas together in ways that allowed each of us to creatively make meaning from these processes. Thus our engagements reflected the systemic and complex relationships as described by Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 1996, 1999). His research highlights the interplay of creativity from a multidisciplinary approach, and posits that without considering multiple influences on creative learning, that only incomplete explanations can be possible (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999).

Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 1996, 1999) has written about the dynamic and interdependent relationships that influence how creativity is recognized. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) wrote *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* to help readers understand the mysterious processes where men and women come up with new ideas and new things. He sees creativity as the interaction between a person's thoughts and the sociocultural contexts under

which the work is viewed and created. His views are not unlike Maslow (1968) and Anderson (1964), who saw socio-historical influences impacting self-actualizing creativity.

Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) systems model, as adapted in Figure 2.3, illustrates how the domain, field, and individual work interactively in shaping how creativity is either accepted or rejected by the culture in general, and then specifically in reference to the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership programs.

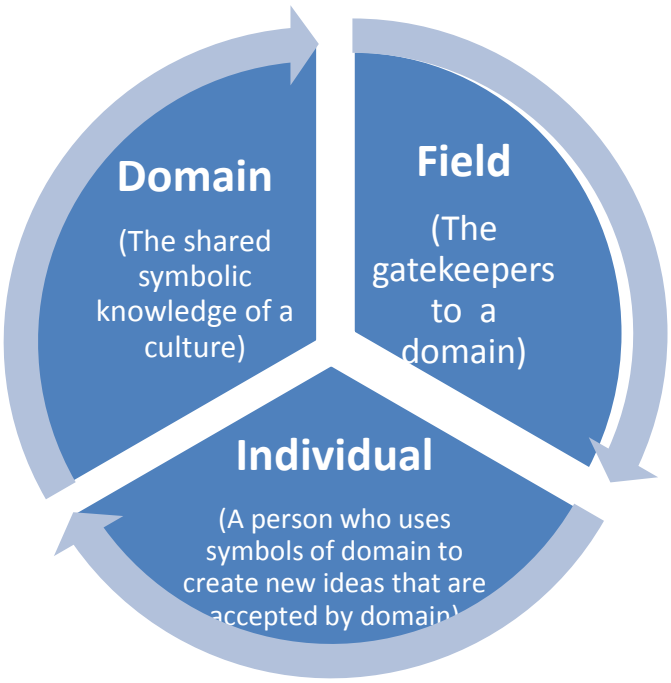


Figure 2.3. A socially interdependent and systemic model of creativity adapted from Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) systems model.

Within this conception, if and when work is valued by individuals who serve as gatekeepers to certain institutions or establishments, it is only then the work is added to the culture. *Culture* is seen as being a domain comprised of sets of symbolic rules and procedures. Thus this illustration reflects the efforts of many individuals working through social interactions to foster creativity as recognized within larger communities. The results of the interactions between the domain, the field, and the individual impact how creativity is either validated or rejected.

Applying Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) systems model to particular social and historical contexts that were present during our community partnership programs is an interpretive endeavor that will vary greatly depending on who, when, where, what, why, and how our interactions are recognized at any given time.

My interpretation of the domain was the field of contemporary art education that we chose to explore as part of our partnership objectives. The field is made up the many individuals from Artpace and the San Antonio Independent School District who needed to be on-board to support our venture from the beginning and throughout our partnership. The individuals who shared this learning journey with me make up the third aspect of our socially interdependent networks.

Csikszentmihalyi's conception of creativity looks beyond the individual to consider the complex interplays that work to inform how creativity is viewed by others.

> So the definition that follows from this perspective is: Creativity is any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one. And the definition of a creative person is: someone whose thoughts or actions change a domain, or establish a new domain. It is important to remember, however, that a domain cannot be changed without the explicit or implicit consent of a field responsible for it. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 28)

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) further elaborates on his interactive model of creativity, where producers and audiences play off each other. Within this conception, creativity is not viewed as being attributed to only one individual, rather, it is necessarily systemic and always evolving and shifting based on changing sociocultural contexts and relationships. However, despite this inclusive lens on creativity in general, Csikszentmihalyi has written how there are traits that do seem to be uniquely attributed to creative individuals. For example, creative individuals are often curious, adaptable, have access to the domain and field, are complex and divergent thinkers, and find novelty and inspiration in how they see real life. They tend to love what they do.

Furthermore, creative individuals are able to engage in deep critical thinking during a process Csikszentmihalyi (1996) calls "flow." Flow allows individuals to activate creative subconscious thoughts during activities like walking, showering, swimming, driving or gardening, and use this process to enlighten their thinking. The individual engaged in the world, interacting within its symbolic tools, and navigating a course to impact the culture is a highly interdependent conception of creativity.

While each artist involved in our semester programs was identified as being creative by members of the contemporary art field from Artpace, many of my students had limited exposure to artistic practices. This is one reason why I see our community partnership as having given Fox Tech students an authentically situated learning experience uniting them with a professional artist to have experiences that went beyond what I was capable of sharing with them alone. We definitely were playing off each other's ideas and experiences.

Dissanayake (1992) also favors a more inclusive interpretation of creative acts in reference to the visual arts, because she views art as being broadly reflective of human experiences. In Dissanayake's (1992) conception,

> making art is making something special and during the process of creative acts, the artist takes ordinary things and makes them more than ordinary, heightens their emotional effect, or to say the same thing-uses sensual/emotional ways of drawing attention to them, thereby emphasizing their importance and significance or making them alternatively or additionally real. (p. 97-98)

The act of making each of our art products reflective of our interests and preferences at the time of our community partnership were also examples of creativity. Our art was a partial reflection of our human experiences and thoughts.

Lippard's (1997) writing also makes clear the importance of context when looking at systemic influences on the creative process.

> When an artist creates a work of art, particularly when they have made a connection to a place, there are social interactions with people that can provoke a reaction or response, not just for innovation's sake, but to reflect deeply on experiences. Creativity goes beyond the person, to the place, the relationships fostered, to the connections felt and experienced. The goal of this kind of work would be to turn more people on to where they are, where they came from, where they're going, to help people see their places with new eyes. Land and people-their presence and absence-makes its arts come alive. Believing as I do that connection to place is a necessary component of feeling close to people, and to the earth, I wonder what will make it possible for artists to "give" places back to people who can no longer see them, and be given places in turn, by those who are still looking around. (Lippard, 1997, p. 292)

Lippard's (1997) description of deep and complex connections that people have with how they have come to appreciate the people, places, and the experiences as being interwoven with how we emotionally connect to these relationships through art, these kinds of complexities did surface during our community partnership in downtown San Antonio as well. Each art project, whether it was the final art product or the smaller pieces generated by the students in the classroom, were interconnected with the stories of our lives. We were not trying to make artistic statements that were apart from our experiences, but rather highlighted our layers of associations. These complex associations are most visible in the spring 2005 semester program with artist Daniel Guerrero. The work entitled *Yo Soy El Futuro* (see Figure 4.9), went beyond being a tribute to the local Hispanics from our community who shaped our legal rights and privileges in the United States, it fused stories of the past with the present. The work and the processes leading to its development connected our Mexican/American community to the struggle of minorities throughout the world. The context of our experiences transcended our San Antonio locale, but it was also deeply embedded within it, depending on how reader's used their bricoleur sensibilities to re-read and interpret the work.

Just as Vygotsky had spoken of people having a bricoleur sensibility to combine elements and images that already existed with creative imagination, the term becomes popular again in the

late 1990s not only with Lippard (1999), but also in the writing of Strasser (1999). Strasser (1999) for example, highlights the efforts of artists like Picasso, Braque, and Duchamp, whose art expressed a bricoleur sensibility and viewed them as being creative in their ability to re-conceptualize commonly used materials in clever and innovative ways. Strasser (1999) recognized these artists for their abilities to foster a visual dialogue between the consumer objects that had been both created and discarded by society and re-conceptualized by the artist's imaginations.

Each of these perspectives on the complex array of thoughts and influences impacting how researchers have come to appreciate and contextualize concepts of creativity as being informed from a confluence of life experiences in relation to connections between person and place, and approaching artistic expression with a bricoleurs sensibilities, are very much related to the situated nature of learning experiences. One aspect of creativity cannot be fully understood without also looking for alternative readings and influences on thoughts, experiences, and actions. We are engaging fully with the world around us and thus we continue to socially navigate our world through co-constructions of knowledge that shift and change, as contexts shift and change. Researchers such as Gruber and Wallace (2001) have continued to expand possibilities for educational bricoleurs who seek to continue to foster interplays between producers and audiences in twenty-first century discourse.

Twenty-first Century Discourse: Expanding Systemic and Interdependent Conceptions of Creative Processes

In 2001, when Gruber and Wallace wrote "Creative Work: The Case of Charles Darwin," they elaborated on how they believe research into creative processes as being directly or indirectly influenced by six different factors. Gruber and Wallace (1999, 2001) have

supported the use of an evolving systems approach or ESA to directly study creative processes of individuals who are widely recognized as being creative (see Figure 2.4).

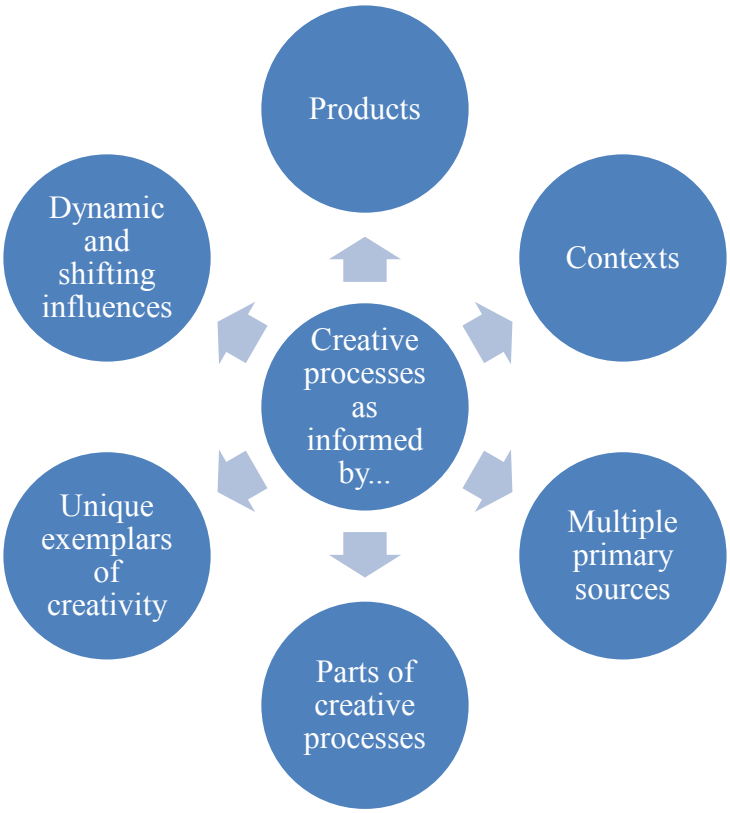


Figure 2.4. An interdependent and systemic model of creative processes adapted from Gruber and Wallace's (2001) evolving systems approach.

The ESA approach emphasizes analyzing the cognitive processes involved with creativity in addition to the social, affective and aesthetic influences as well. The focus of the ESA approach is to really look hard at one creative individual over a long period of time. Gruber demonstrated this approach when he reviewed the notebooks of Charles Darwin, which he felt were written with such clarity, it gave readers of the notebooks insights into the evolving thought processes of Darwin's mind. Gruber said that reading his notebooks helped him to understand the "developing work in terms of interacting, related elements. In a broader sense, it is the systemic because the system of individual interacts with other private and public systems" (Gruber&

Wallace, 2001, p. 346). Within this model, it is clear that creative processes as informed by a complex array of everyday contexts and can be manifested through a variety of forms, and can be understood as being informed from a variety of sources and influences.

The ESA recommends other researchers place a primary focus on conducting direct studies of the mental processes involved in what the creator actually creates, rather than using indirect and isolated tasks, as has been the preference in modernist studies. First, it is a direct study by looking at what the creator actually creates, meaning the products. Second, the researcher must understand the creator's work, which means knowing the domain in which the work takes place or the context. Third, there must be enough primary sources or materials available to study to allow the researcher to trace and reconstruct the creative work, rather than working from undocumented sources. Fourth, this approach looks at the parts of creative processes, including problem solving, metaphor making and imagery that when looked at holistically, give a better understanding of the creative process. All of the parts must be considered as part of the whole creative experience. Fifth, each creator is looked upon as being unique, and refrains from making any lists of traits associated with creativity. Researchers are encouraged to look to the activities and "attainments of the person himself or herself" (Gruber & Wallace, 2001, p. 346). Sixth and finally, the person or event under examination should never be seen as static or fixed. Instead we need to understand the person or event as being dynamic and undergoing shifting influences. The person or event is always seen as evolving and deviations from the norm are seen as an occasions for growth and change.

By looking at the details of the creator's life and work, Gruber and Wallace (2001) believe researchers can come to learn to see the uniqueness of each person. For example, when Gruber was looking at the notebooks of Darwin, because he was so meticulous about writing the

details of the evolution of his thoughts, Gruber compared the writing to being similar to a time-lapse photograph. Darwin wanted to make clear how his beliefs evolved. Through the writings, Gruber could learn about Darwin's societal relations with individuals within the scientific communities and other communities in which Darwin interacted. We can learn about how these relationships impacted his thinking and evolution of ideas. All of the parts are seen as building the complete picture.

In this study, it was important to utilize Gruber and Wallace's (2001) recommendations to be attentive to the multiple influences that might have informed the how the participant's may have come to view their creative engagements based on the variety of influences on their thoughts. For example, the artists have had many years engaging in dialogues about their work and sharing and defending their ideas with others, but this was not a common experience for many of the students. Similarly, the artists and I are much older than the students and we have a wider vocabulary and life experiences that have helped us to formulate responses that are more polished than some of the responses of the younger participants. Also, depending on how invested the artist and student participants were in the semester program, this too might play a substantial role in how they have come to internalize their past experiences. Each context did impact how I made meaning from the data collected, dependent on these range of considerations.

Contextual Influences Informing the Shift from Modernist to Postmodern Conceptions of Creativity

There are tensions between how perceptions of creativity have been understood from either Eastern versus Western points of view throughout time. Chu (1970) and Onda (1962) have described traditional Eastern views of creativity as focusing more on personal fulfillment or experiences of the self that often involve people focusing on their actions with a meditation-like

focus. However, Western culture which itself conceived of the concept of creativity, often alters how this concept is recognized depending on what is valued and judged to be socially acceptable at the time (Amabile, 1983). Hence when the efforts of ancient and tribal people who created cave paintings and other examples of primitive art such as the work of the Greeks, were described by the people of Western cultures long after they were produced, these works were assumed to be inspired by the Gods or muses because this was the popular conception at the time (Albert & Runco, 1999; Arieti, 1976; Boorstin, 1992; Smith, 2001; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). In the past, Eastern perspectives more often viewed the process of *self-actualizing* or learning how our actions connect to the larger universe as a form of spiritual or creative expression, (Aron & Aron, 1982; Kristeller, 1983; Maduro, 1976; Sherr, 1982), while today's postmodern perspectives open up an array of possible ways of conceptualizing creativity based on gender, age, cultural, historical, social and a whole host of other situational contexts. Shifting conceptions of creativity can be understood by looking at ideas supported by cultures of the past.

The idea of creative geniuses became popular when European culture embraced the accomplishments of select individuals during the Renaissance, particularly in males (Albert & Runco, 1999; Boorstin, 1992; Galton, 1869). Since the empirical sciences became accepted practice in Western society during the Enlightenment, observable knowledge associated with creative behaviors (such as novelty in products, divergent thinking, or other abilities to produce numerous variations of solutions to tasks) have been viewed predominantly in isolation, which is a behaviorist perspective (Barron, 1988; Jackson & Messick, 1967; Lubart, 1994; Lumsden, 1999; MacKinnon, 1962; Ochse, 1990; Stein, 1953). Even in today's twenty-first century consumer driven world, trying to market creative thinking strategies though popular literature such as the work of Cameron (1992) Goleman, Kaufman & Ray (1992), and May (1975) often

times the concept of creativity is still being oversimplified to physical processes, such as waking up and instantly journaling to capture your unconscious thoughts on paper. In my estimation, these self-help books seems to disconnect the complexities that influence creative thought and seem to reflect a limited understanding of the complexities of associations involved in expression by isolating behaviors to generate the desired results.

In fact, for several decades, empirical studies of creativity looked primarily at the conditions and procedures of creativity during laboratory and field experiments, without considering how social and cultural factors influence learning in everyday environments. It was widely believed that by aligning creativity as a subset of intelligence, assessment tests could test creative responses to measure intelligence, as supported by many researchers (Brittain, 1964; Brittain & Beittel, 1964; Burgart, 1964; Burkhart, 1964; Cattell, 1971; Cox, 1926; Gardner, 1991; Gowan, Demos, & Torrance, 1967; Guilford, 1950, 1967, 1970,1975; Hoffa, 1964; Jones, 1964; Kincaid, 1964; Parnes, 1964; Torrance, 1974) and challenged by others (Runco & Albert, 1990; Sternberg & O'Hara, 1999; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Sometimes researchers like Lowenfeld (1964) also tried to distinguish and quantify how creativity was similar or different from intelligence, while others like Anderson (1964) were specifically interested in looking for measurable connections between the art products and processes as indicators of being creative.

To contextualize some of the various assessment tests that dominated research inquiries of the past, I will describe a few of them. The *circle test* involved measuring how many objects a person can make from a grid of thirty six circles or the *consequence test* looks at improbable events. A *situations test* analyzes how many ways a person can deal with a difficult situation. The *ask-and-guess test* also considers how participants use a storybook illustration to relate to three separate tasks. All of these measures involved using oral and written tasks to quantify

responses without considering any relationships between the individual and their environment or other factors influencing their performance (Henrickson & Torrance, 1964).

However, separating assessments of creativity from real-life situations was considered a research flaw if it was the only indicator of creativity according to Torrance, the inventor of the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (Torrance, 1977) and others. Torrance (1977) said assessments only reveal a partial representation of the complex interdependent cognitive systems at work and creativity can be best inspired by creative teachers who are given the freedom to design curriculum that will allow their students to think outside the box. Bruner (1962) agreed that many of the research studies that were being conducted within the popular modernist tradition were contestable and limited interpretations of creativity. More contemporary writers like Glick (1997), Sternberg & Lubart (1998), and Weisberg (1999) have condemned modernist strategies for having distorted investigations of creativity to the degree that that trend of research that isolated and de-contextualized the research process were damaging the field of inquiry. Similarly, according to Mason (1988) and Wonder and Blake (1992), criticized the idea that many modernist researchers were trying to highlight artificially- informed linear associations of creative thought that have a finite and measurable attributes. Indeed, many researchers like Hadamard (1945), Poincare (1921), Ribot (1931), and Wallas (1926) focused their research on trying to break down creative thought into finite and discernable stages but the validity of these types of claims became contestable in the eyes of Lubart (1999), whom I agree with. Gratefully there was some qualitative work being conducted by psychologists like Freud (1908), Jung (1923), Kris (1952) and Roe (1963) who also wanted to understand motivations behind creative development. As a result of changing approaches to examining the multiple influences on

creativity in either Eastern or Western cultures over time, studying creative expression will remain a challenging endeavor (Ludwig, 1992).

Challenges to authoritative and fixed truths in Western society were contested by figures like Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, etc (Rapport & Overing, 2000) as well during the 1980s. New conceptions for understanding and making meaning from creativity studies challenged the status quo on the topic. Postmodern concerns for respecting and honoring a population of meanings, being inclusive of people with diverse cultural backgrounds and interests, have remained cognizant of the need to challenge hierarchical metanarratives, have definitely allowed for new considerations of what constitutes creativity in the twenty-first century to continue.

Postmodernism acknowledges a world of multiple realities and discloses places of privileged histories (Nochlin, 1988; Pollock, 1988). It challenges the myth that claims space for certain individuals at the center of the universe and instead positions the person off-center as part of a changing cultural condition. Rather than accept the singular vision of the authorial voice, postmodern theorists draw attention to a more intriguing set of frames through which to view things. For example, while postmodernists argue against the relevance of absolute truth or grand, universal themes, they advocate forms of local knowledge characterized by multiple perspectives and cultural diversity (Sullivan, 2002, p. 25). Perhaps this is why in 1999, when the *Handbook of Creativity* (Mayer) came out, I was so surprised at how all thirty-one contributors to the book were still clinging to modernist conceptions of creativity. In fact of all the authors, only one (Martindale, 1999) discussed the relevance of context when researching creativity. There are indeed still tensions that continue today regarding creativity research. When Smith (2001) challenged both modernist and postmodern perspectives as being too restrictive and unsympathetic to researchers wanting to further explore creativity, I could relate to her

frustration. Even now on my pre-K through 5th grade campus, I am struck by how students are tested and labeled as being gifted and talented as if they are set apart from the other students. I've heard students who were tested for admission to the gifted and talented program and were not admitted because their scores were slightly lower than the minimum standard, and I wonder what kind of message that sends to the students.

So where do inquiries into creativity go from here? In 2009, Zimmerman beckons researchers to revisit conceptualizations of creativity as multi-dimensional and full of complex interplays of cognition and I agree. Creativity should not be viewed as a stagnant attribute that follows a consistent standard in various individuals, rather, different interests, backgrounds and contexts make conceptions of creativity open ended and subject to renegotiation. In my estimation, this broadly socially, historically, and culturally inclusive conception of creativity can help to facilitate more scholarly discussions as to how individuals make meaning from creativity research.

Concerns about Creativity in Art Education

Art education is intensely concerned with nurturing visual and verbal creative expression, thereby calling upon our bricoleur sensibilities to make sense of the world around us (Rapport & Overing, 2000). If art educators embrace postmodern creativity theories focusing on interdependent relationships of persons with the world around us, then we break down barriers as to what constitutes creativity when making, viewing, and interpreting art (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 1996, 1999; Vygotsky, 1997).

The interpretation process involved in understanding and making meaning from art products and processes is viewed as a creative endeavor combining life experiences with visual

and verbal expression which allows individuals to reconsider and view art from multiple perspectives (Blandy & Congdon, 1991). Barrett's (2002) views on interpretation, like Bruner (1962), acknowledge that authorship transcends the boundaries between the artist and the object. Rather, the interpretive art experience itself becomes a point of discourse from which an unlimited degree of perspectives can be pursued and collectively shared. Within this conception of art education, visual and verbal expressions have the capacity to shape experiences in uniquely situated ways from one person to another. For example, Bruner (1962) quoted Picasso as saying "a picture lives only through him that looks at it" to illustrate that the viewer, like the artist who created it, are ultimately united in the human experience and the conditions impacting the beholder (Picasso, as cited by Bruner, 1962, p.22). This process empowers viewers to reconstruct and actively fuse images with ways of knowing and understanding, as well as generate more variations of meaning (Barrett, 1994).

Diversity of thoughts and opinions informed by participants' real world encounters and experiences, add a level of complexity of thought to discourse that extends learning opportunities beyond rote memorization or "facts" collected from textbooks. Dynamic interactions and experiences inform authentic and personally situated learning experiences and this was the case during the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnerships. The artists sought and nurtured discourse that deliberately invited a variety of perspectives, to celebrate the range of opinions being shared with and by the students.

Gude (2008) shares this appreciation for interpretation processes leading to variations in meaning when addressing aesthetics because it allows artists and others to "draw meaning, pleasure, and purpose" when reflecting on art (p. 98). The interpretive process is ongoing and requires the active engagement of participants, influenced by situational and other context

dependent influences. The subjective nature of the individual expression makes the interpretation process one that easily allows life experiences to become revealed in the insights that are shared during interpretive discourse. In San Antonio, when we shared our art with the community, we were shifting our learning from our localized community of practice to more people. We shared our interpretations of the work and what it meant to us personally, and when we listened to other guest speakers and spoke with people in attendance at these events, we were once again learning by working with others and sharing perspectives.

Through the process of making meaning from viewing art, it is possible to unite the art object with the viewer's sensibilities to the contexts that have informed the creation and exhibition of the work; facilitating a creative unification of the visual with the verbal (Hamblem, 1991). Art criticism serves as a learning platform that invites social awareness and change because the rich contexts influencing creation and exploration of the work have different meaning in different communities (Asaro, 1991). For example, if *Here at Fox Tech We Think That We Can Change the World (*see Figure 4.2*)* was dismantled and installed somewhere else in the city or in another state, the message would not mean the same thing to new audiences. There may some aspects of the work that transcend its location, but other considerations make it uniquely intertwined with our own local and cultural contexts. Barrett (1991) clarifies that the process of interpretation is interactive and pluralistic and becomes a more dynamic learning process when there are a variety of voices and perspectives informing the discourse based on explorations of the contexts from which the work can be understood. Thus, the process of dialogue is a critical component of learning in art education, and it was a daily part of the encounters between artists, students, and the art teacher during our time together. Whether we

were having small or large group conversations, ideas were constantly being exchanged between me, the artists, and the students visually and verbally, including conversations.

Dialogic processes in art education can be effective in pushing boundaries between internal and external conversations to help students become an interactive participant in the meaning making process (Mayer, 1999). When students engage in the contexts of the works and connect these contexts with their own lives, listening and learning help to broaden understandings (Mayer, 1999). Looking and talking about art becomes a means of exploring work through multiple and layered dialogues based on exchanging observations, memories, and associations with peers (McKay & Monteverde, 2003). The strength of incorporating multiple forms of inquiry and viewing the work from multiple contexts, allows students and teachers to move away from fixed narratives or expert interpretations of what the art means, and locally grounds the issues and ideas (Darley, 2006; McKay & Monteverde, 2002). Discourse connects life experiences throughout the interpretation process with unpredictable outcomes, and this was evident during the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership programs.

On one particularly memorable day, I remember one of my female students used a story from her life to contextualize her work for the rest of us to better understand the messages that were subtly revealed through her visual presentation. She used a clean white trash can that had melted wax running from the bottom down to the sides. Hidden under the wax was a photograph of the student and her mother embracing each one another. She waited to explain what the work meant to her until she turned out the lights in the room and flashed the flashlight she had brought from home from the inside of the trashcan. This student was having a personal crisis in her home. Something had taken her father and her mother's husband away from them and this was the subject of the work. The long strands of melted wax had symbolic meaning to her, as did the

embrace, the light that broke through the chaos of their lives. Her story helped to make the work take on a new level of connection with each of us listening. There were so many memories and associations that would not have been apparent to viewers without her contextualization of the work. Discourse involving sharing stories did connect her life experiences with our own in ways that I can only imagine were internalized by each of us in different ways. We were using communication to explore a range of issues and ideas that revealed the complex fabric of our lives.

Discussion: How Creativity Theories Relate to Community-Based Contemporary Art Partnerships

Lai and Ball (2002) describe web-like interplays between history, culture, and place in contemporary art products and processes that reflect a systemic outlook of creativity between individuals involved in a community art partnership. Interdependent working relationships between teachers, artists, and students encourage imagination according to Black and Smith (2008) as well as supporting dynamic, cross-curricular, imaginative, and creative processes (Horn, 2008). Meban (2009) is even more specific in indentifying dialogue about contemporary art as being a creative and collaborative medium. He states that contemporary art dialogue can interconnect our interactions to set the stage for critical reflections.

Through social interactions and dialogue shared between members of a community, connective aesthetics take on a significant role in the development and outcomes of contemporary art products (Meban, 2009). Relationships made possible by contemporary art partnerships value the socially interactive processes of art. Partnerships involve a complexity of conceptual skills and strategies that help foster metacognition and thus meaningful and personalized learning experiences (Marshall, 2008). Creative development extends far beyond

any singular person, to the wider influences that inform the learning process, and how members of society come to value the thoughts, ideas, and products that result from working together. This was true in our community partnership as well. We were not all working towards only what the artist or I felt were important issues, we also provided numerous opportunities for the students to create more personal responses to the types of projects we were addressing. For example, I thought it would be fun to have the students make a slideshow of time-lapse images of *Remember This Time* on May 5th, or Cinco de Mayo, to have on display during our dedication event and to present to the artist David Jurist and Artpace. Through this process, we were once again re-constructing meaning from the art by re-envisioning it into a new media form and relating it to a day related to our Hispanic roots to share with others. The aesthetic aspects of the work were taking on new meanings for new audiences. Our creative acts were inspired by working with individuals from the community and using our time together to strengthen our communal bonds.

Reflection: Why Theories of Creativity are Relevant to the Artpace San Antonio/ Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School Community-Based Art Partnerships

In any K-12 public school system, there are various teacher, parent, and peer influences that all play a part in shaping the overall learning experiences of children. The expression that it takes a village to raise a child seems relevant when considering how creativity has played an educationally role specifically when working with former Fox Tech students. Each student, just like the artist and I, had their own life experiences that existed and have influenced their thoughts and perceptions long before their participation in the semester programs began. Consequently, we began to interact with each other and build on these experiences. Dialogues and interactions

involving the artists, students, and the teacher, intersected with real-world experiences and concerns to help in re-working of our previously held ideas with other points of view.

Creative processes went far beyond any singular individual during the Fox Tech/ Artpace community partnership. In fact, creativity was not described by the artists or students as being a unique characteristic of any one member of the group, just as supporters of systemic views of creativity have stated repeatedly. Rather, collaborative processes were often cited as inspirations for encouraging and supporting creativity as was pointed out during my interview with John Contreras, a former Fox Tech art student involved in the spring 2005 semester program.

> I remember hearing the stories Daniel would share with the class and what he would tell me personally about why we were doing this project and about the many accomplishments that these Mexican American leaders did for all of us. I remember him being very supportive to me about writing my speech that I gave the day of the presentation. I was glad that our class came to the conclusion to incorporate the colors of both the Mexican and American flags to symbolize how both these cultures have influenced us and how these leaders portrayed in the project helped change America and promote change and civil rights during these hectic times.

John's recollections of working with Daniel, as well as other recollections he had about talking with the family members of the people honored in the work reify how creative processes may have been facilitated to extend far beyond our initial experiences to new audiences. In fact, through the process of conducting this research and having John and the others help me to represent our stories for others to consider, we are still reflecting creative processes that have no definitive boundaries. Shared interactions within and beyond our immediate community of practice worked in supporting multiple forms of creative engagements that have gone beyond the time of our original interactions. Because our creative practices with each other were rooted in the concerns of the community and education, we had nothing to lose, but everything to gain by unifying our efforts to positively contribute to social learning interactions.

Introduction to Community Art Education

What is *community* in art education? This term has been interpreted by art educators with variations to represent how art and life are mutually reflective of each other (Blandy & Hoffman, 1993; Hicks, 1994; Marche, 1998; Marschalek, 1989; McFee, 1961/1970). Communities often refers to the individual people who come together for a common cause, concern, or purpose either formally or informally; through their shared interactions learning is taking place (Adejumo, 2000; Blandy and Congdon, 1988; Blandy & Hoffman, 1993; Carpenter, 2004; Marche, 1998 ; McFee, 1961/1970). Marche (1998) describes two broad categories of communities: internal or external. Internal communities reflect what occurs within classrooms involving the interactions of numerous individuals. External communities refer to the local environments outside the classroom. During our community partnerships, the internal communities were made up of the artists, me, and the Fox Tech students. Our external communities included the individuals from Artpace and the San Antonio Independent School District, as well as people such as spouses of the artist and I, and friends and family of the students, who shared in this experience with us.

Hicks (1994) points out that there are many different kinds of communities. Each person may belong to a range of communities influenced by our interests, gender, racial, ethnic, religious, ideologies, education and other factors. Too often, aspects of communities have been distorted, oversimplified, and de-contextualized in education. Therefore, Hicks' (1994) supports art education that serves in helping to facilitate a deeper understanding of communities through social reconstructions. "The goal of social reconstruction in art education is both to critique the privileged perceptions of dominant communities and to facilitate the negotiation of community boundaries by all students" (Hicks, 1994, p.155). McFee (1961/1970) agrees that representation

of communities should be democratic and reflect the values of all constituents. Within each conception of community, shared dialogues between individuals making meaning of their role in the world are helping members of the community to grow.

However, the conception of community art education that I feel the closely aligned with are those shared by Villeneuve and Sheppard's (2009). According to Villeneuve and Sheppard (2009), community as place means that learning is situated to make the greatest use of local resources that are accessible due to their proximity or availability. Proximity and access to alternative places to learn, such as museums or other settings, can play a substantial role in learning in and from the community. When community is viewed as a learning group, dynamic and ongoing relationships foster shared interactions in and out of the classroom. Community as social good means that mutual understanding and in-depth examinations consider the vantage point of people from different communities. Community traditions and heritage explores the local histories, traditions, art, and artists of the locality. Each of these approaches can be used interdependently or individually. However, whichever goal is utilized, Villeneuve and Sheppard (2009) point out that the goal is to expand connections between the creation of art products with the social world through informed and multi-perspectival engagements with others.

Program Possibilities Using Community-Based Art Education

There are multiple contexts influencing how, where, why, and what will be explored in a community-based art partnership. Ulbricht (2005) advises educators to be clear about how they see a community-based education project serving a useful purpose in their programs, if they hope to enact local community support. Only with shared purposes and goals can this form of collaboration be successful and inclusive. Both informal and formal settings for learning are

conducive for community-based art partnerships, although informal interactions such as those between experts and novices are most dominant. Targeting a particular audience to work with, such as the homeless, at-risk youth or other audiences will also impact the themes, locations, and learning styles that will be best suited for each community program. Ulbricht (2005) points out that each community-based art collaboration should be uniquely situated to the needs of the locality, if it hopes to engage the people of that region. For example, Blandy and Hoffman (1993) have written about community-based collaborations that support and focus on human interactions with the earth. Each community partnership addressing this concern should be contextually and thematically bound. Community-based art partnerships may share similarities to other programs, but each set of variables associated with each locality will make each experience unique. Likewise, each of our partnerships with local contemporary artists were contextually and thematically informed by factors such as our age differences, gender, backgrounds and interests, as well as our reasons for working together, and a whole range of other life experiences that made our time together specifically situated to our community partnership interactions.

Gude (1989, 2007, 2008) has also shared her perspectives on community-based art collaborations from her dual role as artist and educator. Gude (1989) discussed how she and her partner became involved with a local community mural project and how the process of collaboration with people who lived and worked in the neighborhood, to be active members in the development of ideas, and the resulting product. She called this process the *aesthetics of collaboration*. Within this process, Gude (1989) and her partner chose not to just have the members of the community tell them what they wanted, but rather chose to include the ideas, and physical contributions of the local community members who were not necessarily accustomed to creating art work as part of a team. There were ongoing discussions that sought to bring together

the ideas of individuals, and when there was dissent, a negotiation process was used to bring about a harmonious resolution to the problems. These active engagements during the process of creating and interpreting art allowed the people to reflect on their life experiences in meaningful ways through the creation of community art (Gude, 2008). Collaborations within the community as described by Gude (1989), and experienced by each of us involved in this study, allowed for aesthetics and cultural content to fuse and create opportunities to explore personally relevant experiences and ideas through art (Gude, 2007). Our projects were not just about what the artists wanted or had in mind, it was also what the students and I added to the process. However, spring 2004 artist Gary Sweeney wished he would have asked for more student input regarding the development of rebus images that were ultimately used in the final art piece. Had I had the opportunity to interview fall 2005 artist David Jurist, I wonder what he would have had to say on the topic. Both David and the students created dioramas, but ultimately, the piece that was manufactured was David's design. However, I wonder if his design process was influenced in any way by how the student's envisioned their own work. Was David learning from the students as was clearly happening with the other semester program artists? That question remains unanswered.

Community Partnership Models: A Closer Look

Lynch (2006) defines a local arts agency as a private non-profit organization or government agency that promotes the arts at the local level, endeavoring to make them part of the daily fabric of community living. Each local arts agency is as unique as the community that it serves, and they should change as their community needs also change. However, all share the goals of serving the diverse art forms in their community and making them accessible to all

(Lynch, 2006, p. 42).Despite the vast array of partnerships and collaborations that have taken place over the years, the partnerships that seem to have close educational ties to this study will now be highlighted to contextualize how theory connects with practice.

Project ARTS (Arts for Rural Teachers and Students) was a three-year project that involved communities in three different states: Indiana, New Mexico, and South Carolina (Clark & Zimmerman, 2000). The Indiana site director, Marche (1998) shared how their rural locality attempted to create a curriculum that helped students from Stinesville Elementary School appreciate their local history. Grandparents shared stories about the industries and factors that turned this once thriving town into a less populated city. Architects and geologists gave context into the local limestone materials and how the five most prominent buildings in the downtown reflect aspects of the history less known in the community. Historians shared what role the Native Americans played in this geographic location and how populations have shifted over time. Together, this one community came to better understand the local histories and traditions. Clark and Zimmerman (2000) were the directors for Project ARTS and wanted to find a way for each of the three communities involved in the programs to share their individual insights with each other and accomplished this using teleconferencing, pen pal relationships, and sharing student generated videos between the three sites. Their interdisciplinary approach was an attempt to facilitate greater understandings of the local community through various socially structured interactions. While our partnership only focused on San Antonio resources, we also took full advantage of our local history to advance our understandings of the community.

Ulbricht (2005) has also written about what is happening in community-based art partnerships around Texas. Imagine Art, an Austin program, giving handicapped students the resources, such as personalized art instruction, space and materials, to realize their artistic

interests. Imagine Art organizers also work with special needs teachers within the school system to extend collaboration opportunities and provide another vital link within the community. In Houston, Texas Project Row Houses has been working to revitalize 22 homes in the city that had been slated for demolition. Together with public and private support, these homes have been transformed for positive social changes. Some of the homes serve artistic functions, such as serving as galleries, workshops, offices, day care centers, and others serve as living spaces and storage for individuals who call that area of Houston home. Interviews by artist Ricardo Ainslie with individuals from Jasper and Anson, Texas inspired a movie and photographic exhibition based on the shared stories revealed during their interactions. Creating art in Austin's African-American community was also important to artist John Yancey, who created a large freestanding sculpture that provides the history of the people who lived in the area long ago. While this work did not involve the community in its development, it does serve as being a product that can be read and re-read for current and future residents. Within Ulbricht's (2005) exploration of various community-based art projects within Texas, each of our Artpace/ Fox Tech semester programs in San Antonio's downtown location also connected with the community in locally situated ways that are further explored in Chapters 5 and 6.

In Boston, Massachusetts, there was another community-based art partnership called the Homelessness Photography Project which focused upon the social issue of people without homes. This project became the source of visual and verbal dialogue between individuals who traditionally would not have access to a visual medium or format to interact with others in the community (Miller, 2006). This program, which involved having homeless people take disposable cameras and document aspects of their daily life, was an example of an asset –based community building program. This form of community partnership recognizes that each member

of the community, even the disenfranchised, can link and share experiences to foster interdependent and creative growth throughout a community. Miller (2006) discusses how this program served in building positive bridges within the community, allowing the images to reflect an insider's perspective and share these experiences with a wider audience.

> The act of photographing one's world requires reflection on experiences, values, and identity to determine what one wishes to communicate, and which images will constitute that message. This product, the photograph, then continues the reflective process, through acceptance or rejection as an apt representation, contextual narration, reception by its audience, and the dialogue that it encourages. The photograph is a call to look. It captures a glimpse from a unique subjectivity, of a moment that will never occur again- an occurrence that may never again be observed in the same way. (Miller, 2006, p. 128)

The Images of the Streets project helped the local community to align real people with the issue of homelessness using both the process and the products as tools of communication. During our partnership, the artists, students, and I also utilized each of our insider perspectives to contribute to the development of our art project.

In Frenchtown, located outside of Tallahassee, Florida, the Seeing Our Community with New Eyes model was implemented to see if students and others in the community could be inspired to look at their hometown with a new appreciation (Villeneuve and Sheppard, 2009). According to the authors, Frenchtown has a rich history that has often been portrayed in a negative light in the local community, so this project was aimed at gaining an updated appreciation for past achievements and contributions from individuals from this area. Sheppard, who participated in testing out this model in his hometown community, was personally excited to share the information with his students. He described how he stayed up late to work on what he thought would be lessons that would really connect with his student's interests. However, he found frustration and disappointment were part of the learning process. Sheppard described how he was surprised at the level of discipline problems, and disinterested students that he had in his

classes. Sheppard initially viewed these behaviors as signs of limited initial impact on his part, but was equally surprised to find out later that the students went home to tell their families about what they had learned. This feeling of self-doubt was also felt by artist Gary Sweeney and Daniel Guerrero, as they revealed to me during our interview. They just didn't know if they were getting through to the students. I think that in the end, they do feel that they were able to reach most of the students, and I think they had made more of an impression than they realize. Even during this study, I had no idea how much being in my class meant to former Fox Tech student Eloy McGarity until I interviewed him. I didn't know about his home life situation, nor was I aware that the primary reason he came to school was to take part in my classroom. I knew he loved art of all types, but I hadn't really put together how much his working with me and with Gary really had on his overall high school experience. Talking with Eloy and Gary again was teaching me about learning engagements that I hadn't even been made aware of in the past, but were shared with me in the present.

Another model, the Community/Schools Partnership for the Arts (C/SPA) was developed in Florida's Sarasota County with the intention of saving the arts programming in the public school system (Stankiewicz, 2001). An internal lack of support within the school system led to the dismissal of the fine arts coordinator position and the elimination of art and music teachers. The C/SPA was a call to action to get the local community art organizations to work in conjunction with volunteers, and art educators to come together and brainstorm solutions to advocate the need for the arts and certified personnel in the school system. Through discourse and trial and error, it became apparent that regular classroom teachers, who were trying to teach the specialized content of art as a result of the elimination of art specialists, were having great difficulties making this transition. The regular teachers did not have the time necessary to

develop the knowledge and skills to become art educators, in addition to their regular classroom responsibilities, and their voices were a part of the process of working through community networks to advocate for the arts. This community partnership evolved out of a sense of urgency to get art educators back into the Sarasota County schools. While my experiences as a teacher working at Fox Tech High School were not threatened to the extreme that the art positions were in Sarasota, Florida, I did have my own dilemmas of working for the largest and oldest public school system in one this country's largest cities.

The San Antonio Independent School District did not have any support for fine arts teachers for most of my fourteen years working in the district. In my teaching experience, it was a sink or swim situation when it came to getting financial support to purchase the most basic art supplies. One hundred dollars was how much money I was given for most of my time working in this district and that was meant to cover any office supplies I needed as well as all of the art supplies for the year. When our district finally hired and empowered two wonderful individuals to represent the arts, we finally had representation working to garner supplies directly through the main school district budget, to prevent the local school administration from appropriating funds dedicated to electives. So often I wrote grants to get funding for projects for my students and this is what it took for me to follow through with educational objectives and learning opportunities that I felt would support my student's learning. However, I often met with discouraging opposition from the last administration I worked with at Fox Tech High School.

One example of a discouraging encounter that took place between me and my Fox Tech principal was when I wrote a grant for a sculpture garden to be built at Fox Tech, with volunteers from The Home Depot and local garden organizations ready to help. I had applied for and received over $8000 in grant monies for this purpose, and I did use all of the funds to purchase

trees, shrubs, and mulch as planned. Additionally, I had also coordinated with the people from our district to have a sprinkler system installed in these landscape areas to keep the plants alive for the long term. However, my principal went behind my back, and used the funds for the sprinkler system for another purchase that she wanted. As a result, I had to hand water the plants for many hours on a regular basis. As you can imagine, many of the plants died in the extreme heat because of inconsistent watering, particularly during the summer. Dilemmas like these often sparked a sense of urgency in me, that I don't know if others shared as well. As a result of our community of practice between me and the last administration on our campus being so weak, successes came more infrequently and finally fizzled out.

However, a much more successful consensus-based partnership, called the Conexion Comunidad Mural Project, had preservice educators from the Northern Illinois University and teens from the local Latino community center come together to work together to envision positive outcomes (Staikidis, Rex, Aulisa & Lim, 2009). The theme for this collaboration was based on research conducted by Staikidis (2006) where the holistic pedagogical practices of Mayan artists were examined as being exemplars of situated learning experiences. Mayan traditions of teaching about art revolved around issues of philosophy, aesthetics and cultural traditions as a means to help shape, inform, and perpetuate the beliefs of that culture. The participants of the Conexion Communidad Mural Project were originally part of distinct communities that came together specifically to participate in this art project. For example, none of the university preservice teachers were Latino, nor were they bilingual. The teens from the community center were bilingual and were personally connected with the history of the Mexican and Mexican/ American communities. This project helped to partner experts, such as professors who had experience and an art historical background on murals, communicate with the teens and

college students together who brought their own knowledge and experiences to the table. Together they learned from each other how to paint through trial and error. Ideas for the mural project came from research, but dialogue determined what ideas would be included. Various painting skills amongst participants shifted roles as to who was the expert and who was the novice, just as the Mayan artists favored. The partnership fused collaboration between individuals from different communities for the common cause of learning about each other; in fact, learning about the Mayan became secondary to the direct face-to-face interpersonal relationships that were building amongst participants. A lateral sharing of knowledge was how the participants in this study described the interactions (Staikidis, Rex, Aulisa, & Lim, 2009). Just as in our community partnership, communication played a critical role in our ability to shift roles and use interpersonal skills to learn from each other.

Common Threads in Community Art Education Discourse

Within the range of possibilities of community art education, there are some common threads that are worth repeating. Local resources and histories are paramount to facilitating closer connections within communities (Clark & Zimmerman, 2000; Villeneuve & Sheppard, 2009). Learning interactions are situated and reflect social, cultural, and historical contexts (Staikidis, 2006; Szekely, 1994). There are multiple levels of learning that occur visually and verbally during community art collaborations. Dialogue and the process of creating work are learning vehicles that are mutually interdependent (Miller, 2006; Staikidis, 2006). When people of different communities come together for artistic partnerships, there are possibilities for social change and empowerment (Hurtzel, 2007). Change at the local level can help to give voice to previously under-represented groups and expand representation within communities (Miller,

2006). Sometimes difficulties or challenges are the inspirations that lead to the formation of community art initiatives, but with the invested participation of people who are willing to take risks, and reach out to others in the community, positive changes can result.

Another common thread is that community-based art education partnerships give voices to previously unheard populations, such as the homeless, or individuals who have been stereotyped by society for a variety of reasons. Through intentional partnerships between individuals with different degrees of art experiences, learning occurs in unintentional and multi-directional ways. The concept of communities expanding discourse to address a variety of social, cultural, and historical issues does have a direct correlation to individual's lives, but with unknown outcomes that can only understood when viewed within the specific contexts in existence at the time of the community interactions. There will always be context-dependent readings and re-readings of any community-based art education partnerships, but the process of reflecting on these experiences leads to further learning and discourse that connects back to the lives of individuals. While it is certainly possible to have unsuccessful community art partnerships, if people involved in art education seem to have a common purpose and motivation for investing their time and efforts into the shared process then it is much more likely to be successful.

Reflection: Why Community-based Art Education Discourse is Relevant to the Semester Programs

The choice to establish Artpace in central South Texas was carefully planned out by its founder Linda Pace, with the local San Antonio community in mind. Studio Director Riley Robinson, who worked with Linda from the beginning, shared how and why the San Antonio community was so important to the goals of the foundation.

> Linda has often said that she wants Artpace to be in San Antonio because she wants to raise the level of dialogue in San Antonio. Artpace would fit in New York or London, but those cities already have very good contemporary venues. Artpace gives regional artists an opportunity to be seen by international arts professionals. (R. Robinson, personal communication, September 26, 2006)

Reaching out to the local community through art was apparent in our Artpace/ Fox Tech contemporary art community partnership from the beginning, as is noted in the proposal contract to formally begin our community partnership collaboration in July, 2003 (see Appendix A). "Based on your interest to incorporate more contemporary art into your curriculum, we believe the proximity of our campuses in an urban environment will prove to be a vital link- allowing for increased interaction between Fox Tech students, the exhibitions, and Artpace staff" (J. Jankauskas, personal communication, July 31, 2003). This proposal supports a willingness of individuals from Artpace, me as the regular classroom teacher, and the artist to work together to give Fox Tech students a chance to work first hand with a local artist. "We are looking forward to working with you and Fox Tech to realize these programs and other future collaborations. We feel this partnership is a benefit to both organizations- I am sure it will be a success" (J. Jankauskas, personal communication, July 31, 2003). Indeed, this purposeful outreach between a private non-profit arts organization and Fox Tech High school made this a most definitive example of a community-based contemporary partnership that were inspirational to the memories that the participants shared with me during our interviews. Memories of our lived histories during out time together during the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership have been the cornerstone of this narrative inquiry and thus merit being contextualized from the perspective of scholars in the field. This study places a critical focus on the memories of experience as understood by me, the students, and the artists, which have held meaning and

personal significance for the participants over time. Thus, it is important to this study to consider what topics and ideas have already been explored in the field of memory research.

Introduction to Memory Research

How can we learn from our memories? Memory concepts are a phenomenon of experience that no longer exist tangibly, but are connected to the real world through signs, objects, situations, or events (Tulving, 2005). Tulving (2005) describes the most frequently used conceptions of memory in cognitive science as being

> (1) memory as neurocognitve capacity to encode, store, and retrieve information; (2) memory as a hypothetical store in which information is held; (3) memory as the information in that store; (4) memory as some property of that information; (5) memory as a componential process of retrieval of that information; and (6) memory as an individual's phenomenal awareness of remembering something. (p. 36)

Memories are composed of a learned knowledge base which helps people find answers to questions, but this source of knowledge is dynamic and it too changes through expansion of ideas, new ways of thinking, refinement of thought, as well as being reduced or degraded intentionally or unintentionally; these changes are referred to as "priming" (Tulving, 2005).

When trying to make meaning from memory research, the emphasis needs to be on viewing learning as always undergoing continual readjustment and models and approaches are used to explore these complex processes need to connect theory with data for pragmatic applications (McKee & Squire, 1993; Pillemer, Desrochers, & Ebanks, 1998; Tulving & Schacter, 1990). All memory experiences are encoded through various brain networks and are linked to pre-existing knowledge in multi-dimensional ways (Schacter, 1996). An interdependent and systemic framework for approaching memory research should support the existence of multiple memory systems and subsystems that impact learning (Norman, 1986). Researchers in

the field of cognitive science support the development of models for understanding memory as comprised of multiple and intertwining systems and subsystems that cuts across disciplinary boundaries. With these goals in mind, I have created my own interdependent and systemic model (see Figure 2.5) for understanding how episodic memory, the type of memory that centers around meaningful personal experiences of the past, are informed by intersecting memory subsystems.

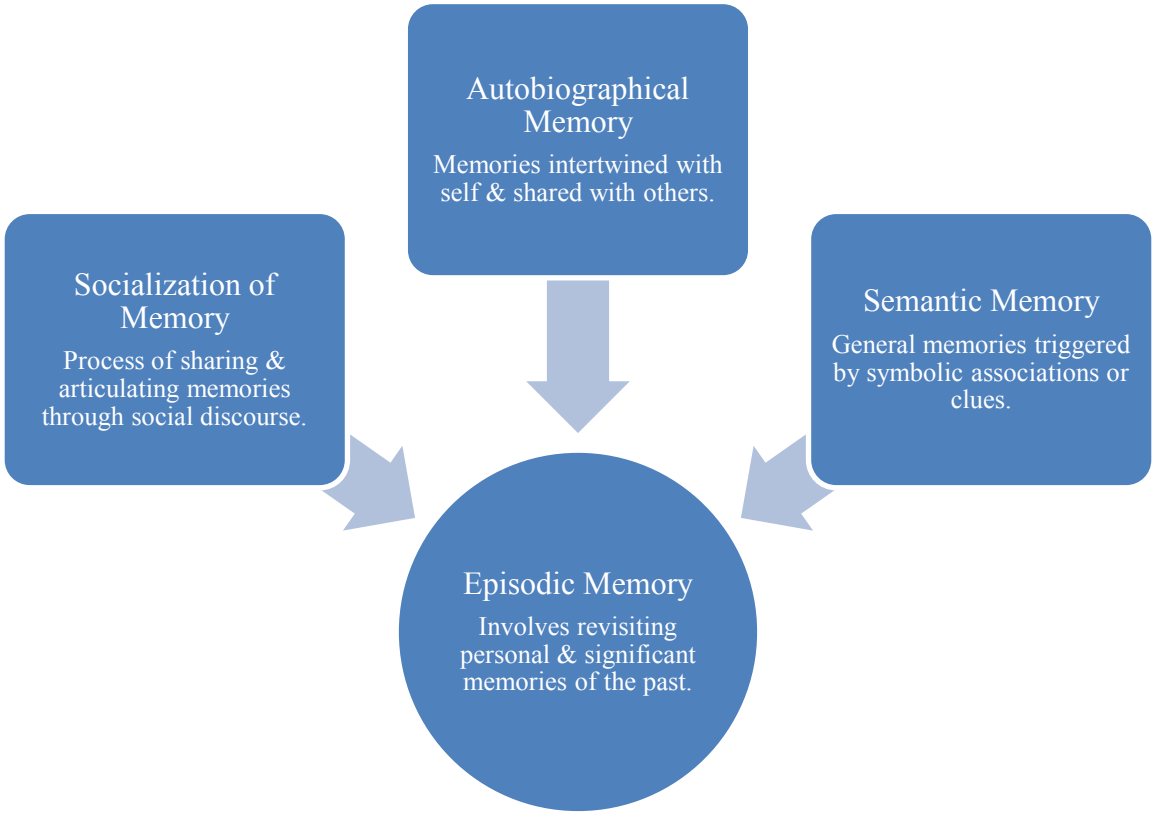


Figure 2.5. An interdependent and systemic model of episodic memory based on interpretations of the literature available on episodic, autobiographical, socialization, and semantic memory.

Within this model, each memory might be better understood as being comprised of many memories, existing simultaneously and overlapping in our consciousness. The model suggests how episodic memory is conceptualized as being interdependently informed by the socialization of memory, autobiographical memory, and semantic memory. Connections between these different forms of memory systems and subsystems weave together without restrictions or with

pre-determined outcomes, as noted below. Because this study revisits the Artpace/ Fox Tech community-based art partnerships by asking participants to share their memories of our time together during the semester programs, it is necessary to understand the complexities of episodic memory.

Episodic Memory

Episodic memory involves revisiting past memories of one or more actors who were involved directly with an event or episodes to learn how these experiences have been conceptualized by the rememberer (Tulving, 1972; 1983). Episodic memories are "not a literal reproduction of the past, but is instead constructed by pulling together pieces of information from different sources" (Schacter & Addis, 2007, p. 27). These memories are personal in nature and thus referred to as "personal memory" and "recollective memory" (Sutton, 2009).

Researchers (Brewer, 1996; Neisser and Libby, 2005; Nelson, 2003; Schacter, 1996) have honed in on various attributes involving episodic memory and have thus customized their own vocabulary associated with this topic. Brewer (1996) explores "recollective episodic memory" and seeks to understand how individuals relive a significant experience from the past in ways that reflect extensive psychological complexity. Neisser & Libby (2005) use the term "targeted episodic memory" to focus attention on a specific past event under current consideration. "Autonoesis" or "experiential awareness" is also utilized to describe episodic memory because a rememberer re-connects with something they actually did in the past; their uniquely phenomenological experiences are active mental events rather than passive recollections (Nelson, 2003; Schacter, 1996). Personal connections are impacted by numerous influences, such as cultural expectations, gender, personality, or other contexts that impact how

the individual now views or chooses to represent their episodic experience and will therefore never be the same (Neisser & Libby, 2005).

Depending on how individuals remember and encode their memories at any given time, meaningful associations to events will vary infinitely. “Encoding can be thought of as a special way of paying attention to ongoing events that has a major impact on subsequent memory” (Schacter, 1996, p. 42). When memories are more about recall, then explicit memory encodes associations on a functional level. However, memories can also be implicit, which means that people are unconsciously influenced in the present by their past memories. Memories can also be revived by semantic triggers, which stimulate a network of associations that make up our general knowledge of the world. Every individual uses their personal memories of past events and experiences to guide their problem solving decisions and justify their thoughts and actions to others and themselves in uniquely individual ways (Robinson, 1986).

For example, when I interviewed former Fox Tech students Jennelle Gomez and later Rosa Leija, they both commented aloud how seeing the images was bringing back a lot of memories for them. Jennelle had forgotten many of the people that she had worked with in her group, and used what she saw in the photos of her sculpture project to add to her verbal descriptions. Rosa was looking at the photographs and commenting on her clothes and jewelry and sharing with me which of the people in the photo she still keeps in contact with, if they are married and have kids or not. For both of them, the photos helped to trigger some memories, but for artist Ethel Shipton, Daniel Guerrero, and former student Eloy McGarity, the photos were not as useful to them. They had very vivid memories about the events that took place without having to refer back to the images. With John, who had still held onto mementos such as the video, books and art he was given by Daniel, as well as keeping a copy of the speech he delivered five

years ago, he also had a strong connection with the visual and verbal memories of the past. Thus how each participant encoded their memories was different.

Socialization of Memory

Memory is social when it is shared. "Memory can be social only if it is capable of being transmitted and to be transmitted a memory must first be articulated" (Fentress & Wickham, 1992, p. 47). Radstone (2005) used this quote to introduce her readers to the idea that memories are complex constructions that when shared, become part of social discourse. In episodic memory, individuals are called upon to re-experience and share personal and compelling memories of the past with others, thus creating a socially interactive framework for communicating ideas beyond the self and into a wider domain (Tendolkar, 2008). Communication that connects past memories with the present requires the use of socially acceptable forms of narrative representation recounting what was seen, heard, or felt by participants (Pillener, Descroches, Ebanks, 1998). When people reshape their memories into narratives to share with others, recounting the event in a social, cultural, and temporal context, memory serves as a means of socialization (Nelson & Fivush, 2005).

Memory is in some way impacted by dominant cultural values, exposure to training, or by other individuals, and is thereby influenced by socialization in various settings and for different purposes (Neisser & Libby, 2005; Nelson & Fivush, 2005; Rubin, 1986, 1995, 1998). Cultural differences might impact how the person uses language to re-organize the events for others to consider or influence the extent of elaboration, delivery, and content of the recounted memories. When people share their memories with others, they may or may not be aware of how their culture's expectations of them can distort the stories they tell (Nelson, 2003). As Nelson

and Fivush (2004) make clear, "memory of self in the past is embedded within a social cultural milieu in which particular forms and contents of experience are valued and shared" (p. 489).

"Our own self-making narratives soon come to reflect what we think others expect us to be like" (Bruner, 2003, p. 211). As researchers, we will not be totally aware of how cultural and social impressions are shaping the information that is selectively shared by participants, yet when memories are articulated, clues about what contexts or influences made a deep impression on the person remembering. This was particularly notable when I interviewed Eloy McGarity. Before I spoke with him, it was actually Gary Sweeney who had revealed to me during our interview that Eloy had shared some personal information with him back when they were working together over six years ago. Gary knew more about Eloy's life as a homeless student than I did. As a result of Gary's information, I made sure to tell Eloy before I interviewed him that anything that he chose to share with me during our interview might be included in this publication. Yet, Eloy chose to openly share his past hardships with me, acknowledging that larger audiences would have access to his personal story, which is addressed in Chapter 4.

Does the socialization of memory become corrupted or altered when a researcher encourages participants to recall particular memories? Does this process of asking exhaustive questions of the participants' past episodic experiences distort the normal memory processes and indirectly assert a false sense of social importance to present exploration of past events? Nelson & Fivush (2005) question the benefits of repeatedly questioning a rememberer until researchers believe they have collected all that is remembered because this is an artificially induced way to approach episodic memory inquiries. Perhaps hindsight bias might also unintentionally encourage social distortions in participants' memories when the researcher implies that the episodic events are critical and worthy of exploration. The research process itself might

potentially influence participants to alter or change previous judgments in a new direction because another person deems the event significant (Mazzoni & Vannucci, 2007).

During research, if the participants are also asked to view new information by the researcher, such as new photographs or documents they have not seen before, this too might alter or erase other existing memories traces (Mazzoni & Vannucci, 2007). Due to the social nature of interactions between the researcher and participants, invariably, there will be a certain degree of unintentional socialization of memory that occurs. However with most of the participants, I felt like we had communicated the purpose of this research clearly and thus they shared with me how they saw our experiences as unfolding in the past, without feeling the need to exaggerate in the present. Referring back to Eloy, I did not pressure him into sharing stories from his past, but rather, asked him to describe how he remembered his life and experiences as a former Fox Tech student. He had the freedom to include or omit information at his discretion, which he did by sharing certain aspects of his past experiences, while maintaining personal boundaries regarding the depth of information he shared with me.

How much influence do teachers and education practices impact the formal structures of the socialization of memory? Social-interaction theory recognizes that children are taught to talk and organize ideas in certain ways for various purposes. Thus this process of learning how to share ideas verbally is a socially navigated process (Nelson, 2003). Teaching children to organize or encode information in clusters of ideas and events into themes does influence how and what information is communicated with others, whether it is recognized or not (Fivush & Haden, 2003; Nelson, 2003). The problem remains in how you ascertain how much of what is recalled is based on the suggestive influence of the ideas of others, versus the more personally

embedded ideas of the rememberer. Boundaries of influence are blurred on our thinking, and from a postmodern perspective, that is a welcomed part of being fully engaged in our world. However, as storytellers in control of telling and revealing how we chose to represent our thoughts to others, requires further exploration on the topic of autobiographical memory.

Autobiographical Memory

Autobiographical memories intertwine self and memory to construct life stories that are shared with others (Burt, 2008; Fivush & Haden, 2003). Autobiographical memories usually fall within one or more of the following structures: "life themes; general events; event-specific episodes, and autobiographical knowledge" (p.124). Emotions, personal goals and interests, also add another level of complexity to the information that is communicated through autobiographical reminiscing and interpretations (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). The process of using interpretations of these past experiences involves "an inescapably subjective dimension as well as a dimension of essential contestability: strictly speaking, interpretations are neither true nor false, but better or worse, more or less valid" (Freeman, 1993, pgs. 5-6). Yet this subjective aspect is in no way a weakness according to Tulving (1983), because scientific research is by nature a social and highly personal and imperfect pursuit, particularly when it comes to the science of memory. During autobiographical remembering, a process of summarizing, re-interpreting, and sifting through experiences takes place to help facilitate making meaning from memory (Schechtman, 1994). Our autobiographical memories make up our personal histories and they constitute a record of our daily lives (Schacter, 1996).

Autobiographical memory is susceptible to distortion, as the person who shares memories with the researcher today, is not necessarily the same person they were in the past, as

innumerable variables have informed their life experiences (Larsen, 1998). There will be many unanticipated influences impacting what is and is not remembered, and what was significant to participants in the past may not hold meaning for them today, and vice versa. Memories fade and as Rubin (1986, 1995) points out, there is no such thing as an exact form of remembering. Limits to memory accuracy and the extent to which participants can connect their past experiences with the present are uncertain. Yet despite the potential for distortion of information, for Tulving (1983), it is critical to connect scientific understandings of memory to real life experiences rather than working within laboratory settings where primarily discrete bits of information can be extracted from studies.

Language, as a form of narrative, plays a critical role in autobiographical memories, but these memories change. If narratives are encoded or organized in particular ways for different audiences, how others make meaning of the experiences will necessarily vary as well (Fivush & Haden, 2003). How and when stories are told also has been found to reveal distortions. According to Robinson and Taylor (1998), there are even differences when people are asked to tell a story the first time from the second time. Omissions are a common occurrence during the second telling, yet the stories are also more elaborate and self-revealing than the first time.

Language connects how people use their recent history associated with public memories with their own personal and autobiographical memories (Brown, Shevell, Rips, 1986). For example, when JFK was assassinated, people's recollections of this public memory are uniquely personalized within different individuals who had specific associations with these past events such as where they were when they heard the news. Consequently, these public memories fuse with autobiographical memories and are encoded within the contexts in which they are remembered, as well as during the time of recall, when the rememberer shares their stories with

others (Brown, Shevell, & Rips, 1986). In fact, memories associated with autobiographical associations are so strong, that when Baddelely and Wilson (1986) questioned individuals who had suffered brain damage about their episodic memories, they were surprised at how vivid and expressive the patients' recollections were. Despite their condition due to their brain injuries, the most intimate memories were the ones that resisted being forgotten shared by these patients. Robinson (1986) believes that this is because each of us has an urge to pass on and what we have learned from the past to help instruct the present and future generations. Memory and narrative of self are intimately intertwined as part of our own cultural and historical self-preservation efforts to help others to learn from our experiences. Semantic memory is yet another consideration as to how our brains fuse and interconnect memories of self and events with images in the world.

Semantic Memory

Semantic memory is memory for facts and the vast network of concepts underlying our general knowledge of the world that are usually triggered through the use of memory traces or other symbolic references (Sutton, 2009). Whether they are called memory traces, symbolic representations, or clues, these verbal or non-verbal triggers help to bring back to consciousness information about facts and ideas of the past. Internal clues may be stimulated by thoughts, emotions, or states of mind, while external clues might result from observable stimuli. However, memories are also known to emerge without having an observable or notable referent (Rubin, 1998).

Responding to external stimuli was clearly evident when I interviewed former student John Contreras at Artpace. We had finished our interview and were walking through the

exhibition spaces at Artpace and it was as if John got a sudden rush of memories come back to him. He remembered when we stepped into a particular room the painting of one particular artist that we had seen there back in 2005. He could describe what they looked like and what the text next to the paintings said. There was even a word triggered that also got John to remember yet another exhibition that we had seen at Artpace. The word is an inappropriate slang word in Spanish called *pendejo*, that artist Cruz Ortiz had used in his work. However the point is that the word trigger a whole set of interconnected memories and associations with it. Both spaces and words were semantic triggers for John Contreras.

Art products can also serve as semantic triggers to memory. Schacter (1996) uses art as a primary example of a symbolic form of communication because associations of general knowledge with the symbolic representations embedded within the work can trigger personal connections. Each time a viewer connects with a work of art, they bring their own narratives into the interpretation process, which can function in creating a seamless transition from general knowledge to more personalized associations.

External and internal traces, also called *memory triggers*, can be seen as working in harmony with each other to stimulate memory which can then be used to further explore the contexts in which these codes have personal meaning for the rememberers (Baddeley, 2009; Gibson, 1979; Sutton, 2009; Tulving & Lepage, 2000; Woozley, 1949). Semantic memory serves as an integral link to further explore personal connections with past events, as is the primary focus of episodic memory. Semantic memory may or may not lead to further mental associations or facilitate re-connections to the past, but it can play an underrepresented role in the research process. The semantic triggers that I tried to use when interviewing the participants like the photographs, copies of written communication, videos, t-shirts, and other tangibles did serve in

being an entry point for engaging in dialogue with the participants. Yet when most of them went on to contextualize how the images held meaning for them, then the memories seemed to come out more effortlessly.

Discussion: How Community-based Contemporary Art Partnerships Relate to Memory Research

As noted earlier, whether it is artists in Austin, Texas using art to remind residents about their historical past (Ulbricht, 2005) or sharing memories and experiences of the homeless in Boston (Miller, 2006), or re-remembering and re-writing the history of the community in Frenchtown (Villeneuve and Sheppard, 2009), memories provide the inspiration for artistic partnerships. There are overlapping relationships between memory, images, and text that serve as inspirations for community-based contemporary art collaborations. Graham (2008) for example, has explored how memory, images, and text integrate fluidly when he worked with secondary students creating graphic novels. During his artistic collaborations on the graphic novels, students naturally reflected on their home, school, and dream-life. Within this capacity, the role of memory played a central role in the meaning-making process during the development and reading of the images. Walker (2009) also believes that when some artists deliberately blur the boundaries between conscious and unconscious thought during the creative process, memory is the reflexive and interdependent component that influences thoughts and actions.

As mentioned earlier, the community-based contemporary art partnerships and creative practices of artists such as Harrell Fletcher and Pepón Osorio intentionally utilize the power of memory to reconstruct stories through art experiences, to expand discourse about issues of relevance to individual communities. In an article by Walker (2009), four other contemporary artists who deliberately pulled from their conscious and unconscious knowledge and embedded

memories to inform the development and interpretation of their work by audiences also drew from various forms of remembering. For example, one artist described by Walker (2009) is Oliver Herring, a former Artpace resident artist, who often gives individuals he collaborates with a series of art tasks to accomplish. Herring asks the participants to pull from their own memories to respond to tasks without giving any suggestive guidelines. The implications of contemporary art practices are that memory, artistic responses, and interpretations are inextricably linked. Contemporary art practices can help to connect members of diverse communities together for common causes, just as our community partnership wanted to give Fox Tech students a customized situated learning experience that would have an impact on how they have come to appreciate contemporary art.

Reflection: Why Memory Research is Relevant to the Semester Programs

Memories were an integral part of our artistic and social partnerships between artists with high school students and me as their teacher. Our memories were resources that helped us to make real-world connection in the present with the past. When each of us shared our memories with each during our interviews, it was as if we were learning about what occurred all over again, because we each had our own particular interpretation of events. For example, when Daniel remembered we put oil-based sealant on our paintings in the classroom and I had not remembered that detail, until reminded of it. Daniel had another whole set of memories with that occasion that I either don't remember because I had said something inappropriate to the female students as Daniel suggested, or else Daniel just recalled the event with a little bit more embellishment and drama than actually occurred. According to Daniel, when the toxic material was opened, I told the students aloud that if they were pregnant that they would need to step

outside. Supposedly a female student commented to me something like, “Gosh, do we have to let everyone know that we’re pregnant?” Again, time has passed, and we remember what we chose to remember, and I certainly don’t ever recall being that disrespectful to my students, but the jury is out.

Memories informed not only the development of the art we created but also how the images were read and interpreted by others, and how the work has come to be conceptualized by individuals with uniquely positioned vantage points and perspectives. Even during the interviews for this study, memories of the past seemed to both scaffold and unfold simultaneously. I would remember one detail that someone else had forgotten and then I would hear them say something and that lead to another memory and so on. Memories were networked and associated in surprising ways as were revealed during the interviews with the artist and student participants.

Conclusions

The purpose of this literature review has been to reveal the interdependent and systemic research contexts informing the development of this study which has explored the community partnership programs between Artpace and Fox Tech High School from 2004 until 2006. Scholarly discourse in the fields of situated learning, creativity, community-based art education, and memory research all have reflected a common appreciation for recognizing learning as taking place without predictable or stationary outcomes. Connecting how each of these theories has been recognized by art educators and others as actually taking place in community-based art collaborative is understood as always being context dependent and varied from one community to the next. Reflections of how these theories have practical applications to the 2004-2006 Artpace/ Fox Tech semester programs are discussed further in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This chapter addresses two main aspects of the research study: 1) the methods and 2) the procedures. Narrative inquiry has informed the design of this qualitative research study exploring a community partnership as remembered and interpreted by artists, former high school students, and their art teacher. Secondly, the research procedures utilized throughout the study, which include understanding the types of data collection tools and interpretive analysis procedures are also discussed to situate the study from my dual role as both teacher involved with this community partnership and as the researcher.

There are two overarching questions guiding this study. First, how was learning facilitated by having one contemporary visual artist interact with high school art students and this teacher/ researcher, once a week for twelve weeks, during each of the four Artpace/ Fox Tech High School semester programs between 2004 and 2006? Secondly, how was visual and verbal creative expression for the students, each artist, and this teacher/researcher supported or inhibited by having participants interact and share ideas during our community partnership?

Rebalancing how art education is researched and understood for pedagogical considerations are of primary importance to researchers such as Sandall (2009) and Desai (2002). They believe it is necessary to look more inclusively and systemically at the relationships between forms, themes, and contexts when creating and understanding visual images in today's world and I agree. Researching how visual images are decoded or interpreted, as well as how they are encoded or created, have the potential to better reflect the interdependent relationships informing art education pedagogy (Sandall, 2009). Desai (2002) recognizes the need for

researchers to look at "the specific relationships between the narrated experiences of the people we interview, our interpretations of their stories and the ways we choose to represent their experiences through arts as always historically contingent" (p. 321). Systemic relationships involving the creation and reading of art and the interactions that these creative process facilitate, invite new research strategies to address these relationships. Therefore, this study seeks to understand the systemic interactions and contexts impacting learning through visual and verbal creative expression as remembered by participants over time, using my own customized form of narrative inquiry.

In an attempt to add transparency to this research study by recognizing my role as both researcher and former Fox Tech art teacher, it is my choice to begin by revealing my researcher biases and assumptions to contextualize my interests in exploring this particular community partnership. Furthermore, revealing my biases will help to frame how epistemologically I have been influenced to see the educational possibilities that utilizing contemporary art can have on art education both in and out of the classroom.

Researcher Bias and Assumptions

If as Richardson (1990) claims that "knowledge is always partial, limited, and contextual" (p. 28), then subjectivity helps us to make meaningful connections between our everyday lives and experiences in personally relevant ways. The process of learning is not objective. It is subjective. While it has been said that people knowingly or unknowingly distort what they see and hear and filter everything that they communicate through their personal biases (Bandura, 1977), I chose to see subjectivity as a strength to the research process because it clarifies how people have internalized memories and experiences. While it is debated whether

researchers should come "clean" about any or all biases and subjectivity influencing their reporting of the research (Guba, 1990; Phillips, 1990; Roman & Apple, 1990), I have chosen to come clean to reveal my epistemological positioning and how my prior experiences working with the individuals from Artpace continues to impact my thoughts, whether consciously or subconsciously.

I adore contemporary art, and find immeasurable value in the issues and ideas that are explored by the artists through their work. Contemporary art is a great initiation point to explore our world through the eyes of others, and share, debate, and negotiate new meanings by looking at the work with others. I've never tried hiding my enthusiasm for this form of art with my former high school students, and in fact made regular fieldtrips to Artpace a part of our classroom routine. Whenever there was an art opening or event at Artpace, I'd let my students know about it. The physical proximity of my former classroom at Fox Tech High School to the front entrance of Artpace, took only a few minutes by foot. Over the years, camaraderie began to strengthen between the personnel working at Artpace, my students, and me. This comfortable relationship allowed us to interact rather informally for most of our time spent together. Only periodically would my students and I formally address potential donors to Artpace at their request, so that we could encourage continued financial support of our educational partnerships.

As a former art teacher working within the largest school district in the city of San Antonio, sometimes I wanted to quit my job because there was little financial, academic, or emotional support for advancing the types of educational opportunities that I thought would best serve my students' needs. As mentioned previously for example, through my ten years at Fox Tech, the average annual budget for my classroom was one hundred dollars for all supplies. Consequently, much of my time was spent writing grants, and contacting local suppliers for

material donations of matte boards, and similar consumable supplies. Educationally, I did my best to coordinate student art exhibits with local businesses, but sometimes the art media we had to utilize was so low-budget or cumbersome to transport, that viewers often had to look beyond the materials to appreciate the content of the work.

Educationally, I did collaborate with teachers from other countries like Korea and Japan to work with my students in the classroom setting, but found it more difficult to work with my own colleagues at my campus. Had it not been for my supportive friends at Artpace, I would not have remained at Fox Tech for ten years. Artpace personnel always extended a helping hand, and are still willing to share their personal and professional assistance with me and my students whenever possible. As a result, of our ongoing interactions, my students and I were able to view regular exhibitions of contemporary artists from all over the world and participated in various workshops and exhibitions at Artpace on a regular basis. In fact, it was the indirect inspiration of working with so many intelligent and well-informed individuals from Artpace that I decided to further extend my own professional development by seeking out an advanced degree in art education.

Personally and professionally, I have also been biased in this study in that I have always had a vested interest in seeing our community partnership as a series of successful endeavors. However, in hopes of counterbalancing my perspectives on these critical events of the past without presenting only a one-sided vantage point, I made every effort to gain the insights of others who shared this experience with me. This deliberate research strategy helps me to understand and appreciate how the artists and student have also come to make meaning from our partnership, recognizing their insights, when they commented on the valuable aspects of the programs, as well as the educational challenges.

At the onset of this study, there were some underlying assumptions that I made. First, I assumed that learning interactions involve processes that are dynamic, unpredictable, and involve the social participation of individuals from a wide range of communities, coming together for a common cause We were a team of individuals of different ages and interests, and thus sometimes there were fractures in the relationships between the artists and students; primarily due to students who were less than interested in the topics being addressed. Indeed, my assumptions were confirmed by collecting stories from the participants.

A second assumption that I had was that creativity or creative expression in art cannot and should not be viewed by looking at the art products generated alone, when exploring individuals from a community partnership that have a wide range of previous art and life experiences For example, many of my students had little or no previous art experiences before working with these artists, so judging their ability to express themselves creatively by examining their art products alone, would have been a biased reflection of their contributions to our community partnership.Instead, by considering both visual and verbal forms of expression as both being significant reflections of thinking, my goal in asking participants about both aspects of their experiences was to broaden rather than limit conceptualizations of creativity.

Additionally, creative expression does not take place in a vacuum; therefore, looking solely at the art products as separate from the art processes would not have been an accurate gauge of creative expression in all participants as supported by Lave (1988) and Rogoff and Lave (1984). I did not and still do not view creative expression as the exclusive right or property of any one individual; instead, we were all part of the process of exploring and sharing ideas during our time together. Together we influenced our ways of understanding and communicating with each other through art and dialogue. Our interactions served in fostering new insights as to

what constitutes art and how meaningful associations can be interpreted differently by audiences when engaging in artistic practices. Visual and verbal expression were intertwined learning processes that were shown to be relective of creative expression. To understand how each artist student and I saw creativity as either being supported or inhibited , it is important to understand which participant's perspectives were selected for this study and why.

The Participants

This study would not have been possible without the assistance of former participants directly involved in our community partnerships. Every attempt was made to interview one artist and at least one student from each semester program, but this goal was not completely realized as indicated in Table 3.1. Ultimately, convenience sampling, or using people that were able and willing to participate in this study, were selected (Creswell, 2007; Glesne, 2006).

Table 3.1

Artist, Student, and Teacher/ Researcher Participants Involved with Each of the Four Artpace/ Fox Tech Semester Programs from 2004-2006

SEMESTER PROGRAM DATES	ARTIST PARTICIPANTS	STUDENT PARTICIPANTS	TEACHER/ RESEARCHER PARTICIPANT
Spring Semester 2004	Gary Sweeney	Eloy McGarity & Rosa Leija	Maria Leake
Spring Semester 2005	Daniel Guerrero	John Contreras	Maria Leake
Fall Semester 2005	David Jurist-N/A (Due to unforeseen circumstances, David was not able to fully participate.)	Jennelle Gomez	Maria Leake
Spring Semester 2006	Ethel Shipton	Jennelle Gomez	Maria Leake

Both Creswell (2007) and Glesne (2006) agree that convenience sampling is one of the weakest strategies to select research participants, but I had to make the best decisions based on the pool of participants that were contacted and agreed to let me interview them. However, I was very pleased with the range of insights that I was able to collect from the participants. In regards to the artists included in this study, I got all of them to agree to participate in the study, while one artist, David Jurist, was unable to follow through due to unforeseen circumstances. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this study was finding former students which only occurred when I reluctantly began joining social networking sites specifically for this purpose. This social networking enterprise did prove to be a successful research tool in helping me to contact all four former students included in this study. I was particularly excited that using social networking allowed me to engage with my students on a personal level once again in the present, particularly because Fox Tech student files were no longer accessible to me. Below are the names of the individuals who agreed to participate in this study.

The spring 2004 semester program is represented by artist Gary Sweeney and former Fox Tech art students Eloy McGarity and Rosa Leija. Initially, I contacted Rosa and she agreed to share her memories with me, but her memories were a little rusty after six years had passed. Therefore, when Eloy McGarity accepted my online friend request, I used this as an opportunity to see if he would also be willing to participate in the study, and he agreed to meet for an interview. The spring 2005 semester is represented by artist Daniel Guerrero and student John Contreras. Daniel of course was selected due to his role as artist, and John was identified because he was the student selected by the class to speak at our unveiling ceremony with members of the San Antonio community. The fall 2005 semester program was initially going to be represented by artist David Jurist, who agreed to participate in the study but was unable to be interviewed

due to unforeseen circumstances. Former student Jennelle Gomez was extremely generous in representing the student perspective for both the fall 2005 and spring 2006 semester programs because she was involved with two artists over the 2005-2006 academic school year. Artist Ethel Shipton was selected to represent the spring 2006 semester program which was our fourth and final community-based contemporary artist collaborator. There was going to be a fourth female student participant who was very active during the 2005-2006 academic school year, but after repeated requests to interview her went unanswered, I decided to move forward with the data already collected. In chapter 4, which is devoted solely to learning more about the participants, we will learn more about the motivations and interests of each person who participated in this research study of the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership programs.

Narrative Inquiry: Finding My Voice as a Researcher

Trying to understand the qualities of the participants' learning experiences that held meaning for them is the purpose of this qualitative study. The process of interpretation plays a major role in uncovering the multi-layered meanings and associations when understood in relationship to the contexts (Stokrocki, 1997). When Eisner and Peshkin (1990) discussed debatable issues within qualitative research studies, they pointed out that some researchers believe the questions of the research should drive the methodology and it is up to the researcher to decide what strategies will best focus critical attention on these issues. In effect, researchers are encouraged to become bricoleurs, who customize research strategies to deal individually with their research interests (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Shulman, 1997). I agree with this perspective and thus have customized my narrative inquiry to reflect perspectives of the artists, students, and me. A qualitative study was selected as the most appropriate and

inclusive research methodology to support our subjective and personal interpretations of our experiences during the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership programs.

The foundation of this research design is narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiries help to share pertinent information with readers using more personalized stories, as exemplified in the work of Richardson (1990, 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2008), and utilize unique perspectives and stories to ground the information within a particular context. However, I did also combine aspects of visual anthropology (Collier & Collier, 1986; Prosser, 1998) to this study by using photographs, films, or other visual texts to revisit events of the past to elicit more narrative responses from those individuals who may have needed something visual to trigger their memories. Through the reconstruction of the participant's stories, meaningful interpretations can be explored and considered from each of our varied vantage points.

This research study is a deliberate attempt to move beyond a static model of inquiry, in order to examine aspects on education that have individual and group implications (Roman & Apple, 1990). Torrance & Meyers (1970) stated, "it is difficult to dismiss, forget, or discredit experience- a truly personal encounter with a fact or idea" (p. 6) and by understanding individual stories of experience using narrative inquiry, broader learning opportunities are yet unknown. With this inspiration in mind, it is time to refer to the aspects of narrative inquiry and visual anthropology that have influenced the design of this study.

Narrative Inquiry

> A narrative is the semiotic representation of a series of events meaningfully connected in a temporal and causal way. Films, plays, comic strips, novels, newsreels, diaries, chronicles and treatises of geological history are all narratives in this wider sense. Narratives can therefore be constructed using an ample variety of semiotic media: written or spoken language, visual images, gestures and acting, as well as a combination of these.

> Any semiotic construct, anything made of signs, can be said to be a text. (Onega & Garcia Landa, 1996, p. 3)

This narrative inquiry relies on the individual stories of the multiple participants and the shared collaborative process of making meaning from our past experiences during our involvement with the Semester Programs. As Creswell (2007) has said, ultimately "the narrative study tells the story of individuals unfolding in a chronology of their experiences, set within their personal, social, and historical context, and including the important themes in those lived experiences" (p. 57). Narrative writing should contribute to our understanding of social life, invite critical and interpretive responses from readers, show good judgment in reflecting situated points of view, impact the reader intellectually and emotionally, and demonstrate a credible presentation of lived experiences (Richardson, 2000). It has been my goal to keep these recommendations at play throughout this study by including numerous direct quotes from the participants to honor their voices and perspectives. These quotes were then interwoven into a thematic structure of my design, called a narrative sketch and are included in Chapter 5. By revealing both the excerpts of the original participants' responses in addition to this researcher's interpretations, readers can participate in their own data analysis to see if they agree with the patterns and themes noted in the study.

Sharing stories is a critical component of narrative inquiry. Sharing memoirs and personal histories allows us to be self-reflective and introspective. Collectively, multiple meanings result from these interactions. This shared process of exchanging ideas has allowed us to bring insights, motivations, and experiences to the academic table to learn not only from our own direct experiences, but to learn from the experiences of others (Barone & Eisner, 1997; Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005; Wilson, 2005). This

narrative inquiry specifically tries to balance the experiences of participants, recognizing memories as experiential artifacts made transparent and necessarily situated from each of our own individual outlooks (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998).

Our firsthand experiences which are shared with others are not unlike the narrative traditions used in autoethnography, or inquiries of the self (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005; Denzin, 2006; Glesne, 2006; Richardson 1990, 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2008). For example, autoethnography involves describing the firsthand experiences of the researcher, and the personal experiences of others, set within a sociocultural context which can sometimes become significantly insightful to larger populations (Glesne, 2006). Yet, at this stage, it is impossible to know if others might also find relevance or connections with our past community partnership experiences. Denzin (2006) refers to analytic autoethnography as "déjà vu all over again" because in the process of reconstructing stories of the past, participants re-experience and make new meaning from them (p. 419). This process of making new meaning by sharing stories happened repeatedly during this study. Some participants would remember certain aspects of our learning experiences while others remembered other aspects of the programs. Sometimes, we triggered memories and associations in each other that we thought we had forgotten. As a result, understanding how our narratives have intertwined to allow for new meanings to arise, is an attribute of autoethnography and memory research that has been welcomed in this study. By revisiting our personal memories of the our past, we co-constructed more holistic recollections of past community partnership experiences for others to consider.

Narrative Inspirations from the Field of Visual Ethnography

> Research with photography is a journey that begins in the field, continues into laboratory analysis, and ends with conclusions and the communication of those summations. In the

> field we must decide what is to be recorded with the camera and then record it: in analysis we must discover what those records may tell us. In the communication of findings we must attempt to define what it all means in a form that can be understood by our colleagues and the public. A successful research design should help lead us through these different steps in a manner that makes full use of the potential of visual recording in research. (Collier & Collier, 1986, p. 167)

Photographs serve as records from the field, physical evidence of material culture, giving viewers insights into the total environment under study, yet it is recognized that images are only a partial representation of the full history of meanings that can be explored (Hodder, 1998). The field of visual anthropology searches for cultural patterns that images record. When the researcher acts as both a participant and observer when taking the photos, the images allow new meanings about the world around us to become revealed and experienced once again (Collier & Collier, 1986). The images serve as historical records and primary sources of data of past events. In this study, photos were used during the interviews with participants (see Appendix B) and are included in the narrative sketches in Chapter 5. Different individuals, such as the Artpace archivist, me, fellow teacher Joe Kethan, and former unidentified students generated the images referenced in this study. The source of each photo in this study is identified beneath each image. If no source is credited for the image, then it was taken by me or one of my former unidentified students. Often I would just pass off my camera to students and ask them to randomly take photos.

The inherent value of using multiple photographs as tools in this research study has been to spur or trigger memories of the social interactions that took place between artists, students, and me during our former community-art collaborations. Unfortunately, there remains a great inconsistency in the number of photos used to represent each community partnership. Primarily this is due to the fact that I had no idea that one day I would use these experiences as subject matter for a formal study. Despite the inconsistency in the number of images captured, the

photographs have served as visual records of the dynamics of our interactions during formal and informal engagements that we explored during the interviews. The photographs helped in addressing the contexts such as physical settings or environments that may or may not have been remembered otherwise.

Semi-structured interview questions used in conjunction with the photographs allowed for open-ended exchanges to take place during my interviews with the artist and student participants. These more open-ended load bearing questions were intended to go beyond descriptive recollections and encourage deep reflection (Cousin, 2005; Glesne, 2006). Just as Lave and Wenger (1991) have reminded us, learning can be more clearly understood by looking at various points of interactions and by understanding the contexts that inform those learning experiences; photographs help to facilitate this process.

However, despite the usefulness of the photographs as a tool, the images themselves were only useful to a degree; rather, it was the interpretations of people directly familiar with the images that were crucial to the meaning making process (Collier & Collier, 1986; Harper, 1998a, 1998b; Hodder, 1998; Prosser, 1998; Prosser & Schwartz, 1998). The photographs served primarily as an introduction to exploring the intangible relationships embedded within the images. Ultimately, the images helped to facilitate a starting point for recollecting the stories that took place in the past; the photographs transcended the past with the present (Cronin, 1998; Harper, 1998a, 1998b). The process of re-examining photographic images of the past has helped to facilitate new understandings of the experiences in relation to persons' previous experiences (Stokrocki, 2007). However, not everyone I interviewed used the photographs the same way. For example, they were not even looked at by Ethel Shipton, and barely scanned by Gary Sweeney, and only studied closely by Daniel Guerrero at the end of our interview. Rosa,

Jennelle, and John did however spend some time looking at the images before they answered questions, but Eloy McGarity was ready to start sharing memories without looking at them.

Clandinin and Connelly (1998) and Prosser (1998) have made compelling arguments in favor of using photographs to trigger memories in participants and help them to contextualize and add meaning to what is on the surface of the image, to uncover and reveal the more complex interconnections that are embedded within the image and the actors in the image. Photos and verbal elaboration helped participants reveal information regarding proxemics, emotions, power relations, social interactions and limitless other associations. "The more we know about the photograph came into existence, the more we can judge its validity" is a statement made by Harper (1998, p. 136), that is relevant to this exploration of the 2004-2006 community partnerships.

As noted earlier, when I first started picking up my camera to take still images of the interactions taking place during the programs, I had no idea that I would use them in the future for research purposes. As a result, I was not consistent in my documentation practices. Sometimes I felt like pulling out my camera and taking random shots, and sometimes I'd hand my camera to my students to click images at random. However, I never pulled out my camera except for a single instance during the very first semester program with artist Gary Sweeney. Similarly, when the Artpace archivist would take images during various stages of the programs, they also were unaware that these images might be utilized for research purposes. However disproportionate these photographic records may be, they have helped trigger memories during our interviews that perhaps would otherwise have been forgotten.

Contexts surrounding the reading of the photos has shifted and changed over time. Photographs as historical artifacts of material culture were interpreted by viewers with shifting

memory associations between the past and present, and between the various forms of expression found within the material culture (Hodder, 1998). For example, the artifacts of material culture may have had sign systems that resembled what they were meant to stand for in the past, but they might also have possessed an arbitrary relationship to the object or idea it represented then versus now (Stankiewicz, 2002; Warbarton, 1998). I experienced this quite specifically with Gary Sweeney during our interview. We were both looking at the exact same photo and specifically talking about a detail in the image, the numbers written on the chalkboard, and we each had totally different recollections of what those numbers represented. We each "read" the image differently. Re-reading the photos gave us two totally different set of memories from the same source.

There were also multi-media images used to initiate dialogue during the interviews. For example, we used a Fox News segment, generated by a local television station, to revisit our public dedication of *Yo Soy El Futuro* with the San Antonio community. Ethel Shipton's video component to the spring 2006 program was also shown to Jennelle in addition to bringing one of our original t-shirts to the interviews. Collectively, each of these alternate memory triggers were used to remind participants of the sociocultural milieus that were present at the time our original experiences were taking place.

Arts related visual images in research are whole-heartedly supported by Weber (2008). Images area recognized as helping viewers to look again and to pay attention to information and details that may not have been initially realized. Images are constantly being mentally reconstructed and associations made, that lead to continuous reinterpretations. Images can be read for denotative meaning, which is the literal and descriptive evidence in the document. In addition, connotative meaning can be derived when social, historical, and other influences are

viewed as influencing the multi-layered reading of images. Weber (2008) provides a useful list of ten recommendations for why arts-related visual images should be incorporated into research. Using images during the collection of data, as well as during the reporting of the research findings, has been shown to help to communicate and synthesize information for readers to consider. Understanding the significant role that visual information has served in conveying information is supported in research, and thus it was my choice to include numerous photographic images within this study; particularly as part of the narrative sketches in Chapter 5. In this study, the purpose of combining the narrative sketches using a combination of images and words has been to help re-tell the stories of participants in a narrative format that helps contextualize responses for new audiences to consider.

Research Design Exploring a Community Partnership

A challenge of this study was how to design a study that allowed for meaningful interpretations to be extracted, appreciated, and understood by myself and others. As a teacher and researcher who was a full participant-observer of the Artpace/ Fox Tech semester programs, I support the ideas of Roman and Apple (1990). They suggest that subjectivity and objectivity have a necessarily binary and reciprocal relationship of balance that can be useful in jointly finding meanings between researchers and the participants in the study. As a result of my role as full participant and observer, I did not attempt to be culturally neutral. Instead, I followed the recommendations of Hicks (1989) who said a study should serve in reflecting who we were then and how we have come to conceptualize our past experiences and interactions in our present. Alluding to objectivity has no place in this study, because as Phillips (1990) has made clear, even

our best attempts to be objective will fail because findings will not be true or credible for all people in all places.

This study acknowledges that the students, artists, and I have shared our unique and necessarily subjective insights on the interactions that shaped our learning experiences during our Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnerships. The subjectivity of the claims made during this study are intended to help the readers decide for themselves whether the evidence and arguments made are understandable in relation to the how the participants responded to the interview questions, and consequently how this researcher interpreted those responses. According to Polkinghorne (2007), if the readers feel the claims made by participants are plausible, credible or trustworthy, then being open about subjectivity is a necessary step in the research process.

The design of this study has drawn inspiration primarily from research traditions from narrative inquiry with a little inspiration from the field of visual ethnography. The goal has been to collect stories from multiple participants using photos as memory triggers to contextualize events and recollections of the past. Through this process of reflective inquiry, this study has attempted to represent the ideas of the participants, while recognizing that stories shared will always remain incomplete. This process involves a polyphonic interviewing technique which means that the researcher collected multiple perspectives from the participants, and did not attempt to collapse all of their ideas into one report free of inconsistencies. Instead, polyphonic interviewing places responsibility on the researcher to report on both differences and problems found by gathering the perspectives from more than one source (Fontana & Frey, 1998). Indeed, I did try and keep each of the participant's voices separate and attempted to respectfully re-construct their stories of experience in Chapter 5, while looking for common threads in their stories in Chapter 6.

Research Procedures

The selection of data collection tools, data analysis, member checks, validity issues, and protection of participants, have all shaped how this study was designed and executed. Each item will be addressed individually.

Collecting Data

The process of collecting data in this qualitative inquiry has primarily relied on the collection of stories of participants using interviews, visual aids, and referencing documents generated from our previous engagements, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Outline of Data Collection Tools, Purposes, and Sources of the Data

TOOLS	PURPOSE	SOURCE OF DATA
INTERVIEWS * Structured *Semi-Structured	To understand how participants have made meaning from their learning experiences involving visual and verbal creative expression during the semester programs.	PRIMARY SOURCES *All interviews were conducted between participants and me. SECONDARY SOURCES *Interviews conducted by other writers
VISUAL AIDS/ PROMPTS *Photographs *T-shirt *Art Video *News Video	Used to trigger memories and elicit deep responses from participants.	PRIMARY SOURCES *All photos , the t-shirt and video generated by participants. SECONDARY SOURCE *Fox News story
DOCUMENTS *E-mails *Speeches *Newspaper / Internet Articles	Used to establish and inform the social, historical, and contextual aspects of the study referenced by this researcher.	PRIMARY SOURCES *E-mails and in-house generated speeches remain primary sources. SECONDARY SOURCE *Newspaper and internet articles.

The purpose of using primarily interviews as a data source was to honor the stories of participants through narrative inquiry. The in-depth stories are what help researchers to

understand the complex array of personal emotions and contexts informing the participant's responses (Creswell, 2007). Interviews served in allowing the experiences of the participants to be re-understood by exploring who, what, where, how, and whys of the critical events. Because this study has sought to understand how systemic relationships have emerged between the four individual semester programs over time, interviews were a necessary and appropriate data collection tool.

Data Collection Tools

Collecting data from the participants was not as easy as I thought it would be. Initially, I had planned to have the participants engage in two interviews, one via electronic mail and one conducted face-to-face. The first electronic interview was designed to have the participants respond to questions about their recollections of the community partnership without any face-to-face interference from me, a strategy recommended by Reighart and Loadman (1984) and Webster and Mertova (2007). Their logic supported using this initial interview technique to be able to cluster responses before meeting face to face to see if any patterns and themes emerge from the first responses. Then when conducting more extensive interviews, researchers can further tease our patterns and themes based on another set of data. However, only some of the participants felt comfortable with this form of electronic communication. I can't complain however, because I too have an intense fear of communicating on the phone. This fear has been with me since childhood so I, too, had to work within my own aversion to communicating by phone.

As a result of getting back only a few responses electronically and through the mail by other participants, there were some interviews that I did face to face that included questions from

both interview one and two. If I had to do this over again, I would only use the face-to-face interviews. The responses collected from the participants were much more vivid when we met in person. The times, dates, and locations of the interviews are noted in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Times, Dates, and Locations of Face-to-Face Interviews with Participants

PARTCIPANTS	DATE OF MEETING	LOCATION OF MEETING
Daniel Guerrero	12/21/2009	Artpace- Founder's Room
Jennelle Gomez	12/21/2009	Artpace- Founder's Room
John Contreras	12/22/2009	Artpace- Founder's Room
Gary Sweeney	12/22/2009	Artpace- Founder's Room
Ethel Shipton	12/23/2009	McNay Museum of Art- Ethel's Preparator Workshop
Rosa Leija	4/9/2010	Doubletree Hotel-Lobby
Eloy McGarity	5/31/2010	North Star Mall- Restaurant

The second set of interview questions were stylistically semi-structured to allow for more casual conversational exchanges to take place by using visual aids, such as photographs as recommended by Clandinin and Connelly (1998), Collier and Collier (1986), Cronin (1998), Harper (1998a, 1998b), Hodder (1998), Prosser (1998), Prosser and Schwartz (1998) and Stokrocki (2007) and informally asking questions. However, there were not an equal number of photographs used to represent each semester program, as I did not realize in 2004, 2005, nor 2006, that I would be using these photographs for a research study of critical events in 2010.

During the interviews, language was used as a tool to extract stories of experience from the participants past and make meaning of it in the present (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Vygotsky, 1997). Language allowed us to once again socially negotiate meanings during our

conversations through the process of sharing and finding out what was relevant to each of us (Bruner, 1987; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott & Synder, 2002; Vygotsky, 1997). Language was a tool that helped us to unite the stories of the artists, students, and the teacher, for further critical reflection (Meban, 2009). Language brought our stories together once again.

The final set of data tools used to inform and balance information and perspectives for this study were the documents such as old e-mails, newspaper articles, and speeches that the participants and I have saved over the years regarding the Artpace/ Fox Tech partnerships. These artifacts have helped me to self-reflect on my role as participant-observer wearing two hats: teacher and researcher. I found an old communication between Daniel Guerrero and Kate Green that was forwarded to me that gave me insight into the challenges and intentions that Daniel was feeling at the time that he was taking on his new role as guest artist/ teacher in the high school classroom. His personal stories helped to reiterate the ideas he shared during our interview. John Contreras also shared his original speech that he gave at the dedication back in 2005, which still had his handwritten last minute corrections written on them. I also found a holiday card that Gary Sweeney and his wife had sent me, as well as an invitation to his art opening at the Southwest School of Arts and Crafts. When Ethel Shipton knew that she was going to participate in this study, she also shared with me a recent interview she was featured in regarding her guest curatorial role and art on exhibit at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center in San Antonio. Additionally, there have been so many recent communications via e-mail that have helped me to keep track of our conversations and concerns that ultimately impacted the information that has been shared and explored in this study.

Data Analysis Overview

Table 3.4

Three Forms of Interpretive Data Analysis used in this Study

DATA REDUCTION	NARRATIVE SKETCHES	REFLECTIONS
*Data reduction is a process of selecting, focusing, abstracting and re-presenting data from various sources to address central issues in the research study. *Patterns and themes are extracted from participants' stories. *Common threads are highlighted, while uniquely personal experiences are noted for further consideration.	*A narrative format that includes photos and excerpts from our interviews has been included to re-present the participant's stories from their unique perspective as either an artist or student. *Contextualize how each artist, student, and I have made meaning from their experiences over time. *Narrative sketches have allowed this researcher to reorganize the multiple stories in a format that contextualizes stories for readers to consider.	*Each narrative sketch has been concluded with reflective comments of this teacher/ researcher, to allow readers to understand how I have made meaning from our shared experiences. * Reflections on the results and findings of the data at the conclusion of this section have served in making clear how I have connected situated learning theory, creativity theory, community art education, and memory research to the shared stories of the participants.

Data Analysis: Making Meaning from Data

The challenge of this study has been to find effective strategies to constitute meaning from the data, particularly when each participant has their own uniquely positioned outlook on the events and ideas that surrounded our community partnerships. Table 3.4 has addressed this concern by utilizing various forms of interpretive analysis to make meaning from the narratives, or storied texts, collected during interviews.

> The general purpose of an interpretive analysis of storied texts is to deepen the reader's understanding of the meaning conveyed in a story. An interpretation is not simply a summary or précis of a storied text. It is a commentary that uncovers and clarifies the meaning of the text. It draws out implications in the text for understanding other texts and for revealing the impact of social and cultural setting on people's lives. In some cases, narrative interpretation focuses on the relationships internal to a storied text by drawing out its themes and identifying the type of plot the story exemplifies; in other cases it focuses on social and cultural environment that shaped the story's life events and the meanings attached to them. (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 483)

Eisner (1997) supports the use of alternative forms of data representation with the goal of conveying stories and displaying relationships that help readers to empathize with the experiences of others. Eisner (1997) makes clear that it is up to the researcher to decide how they can best illustrate and convey the personal information collected for public audiences to consider. Researchers are encouraged to explore different ways to represent data (Barone, 2006; Barone and Eisner, 1988; Glesne, 2006). The ideas of Richardson (2000), regarding *creative analytic practice*, support this methodology. Creative analytic practices empower the researcher to decide how to represent their inquiries in a way that informs readers not only of the analytical data, but notably reflects the personal and emotional aspects of the study (Agar, 1995; Richardson, 2000; Rose, 1993). Eisner (1997) supports innovations in sharing research because it is important for readers to empathize with the participants' stories, understand the specifics of the case, realize the complex contexts at work, and ask questions about the educational implications embedded within the study. Eisner (1997) believes that researchers should have the flexibility to report their findings in a manner and format that can best get across the stories and meanings to larger audiences. With these recommendations in mind, three forms of interpretive data analysis were used in this study (see Table 3.4).

Narrative sketches are an example of an interpretive data analysis tool that allows researchers to interweave and organize social cultural meanings that are embedded in the stories shared by participants (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999) and it is the first form of data analysis that is used in Chapter 5. Narrative sketches search for "patterns, narrative threads, tensions, and themes that constitutes the inquiry that shapes field texts into research texts" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 171). According to a number of researchers (Agar, 1995; Barone, 2006; Barone & Eisner, 1988; Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Eisner, 1997; Eisner &

Peshkin, 1990; Glesne, 2006; Hendry, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1984, 1994; Nyman, 2002; Polkinghorne, 2007; Reighart & Loadman, 1984; Richardson, 2000; Rose, 1993), it is up to the researchers to design how their interpretive analysis will best serve the purposes of the study. Using a narrative format that included photographs was how I felt comfortable in re-telling our stories. Through the process of re-organizing our multiple stories in a narrative format supported by photographic images taken from these community partnerships of the past, readers should be able to feel like they were there, vicariously re-living our experiences through time.

I tried to use a dialogic process to provide an interpretation of our experiences as suggested by Rosaldo (1989), but as Benedict (2000) points out, all research is an imperfect science. If researchers can try and make every attempt to provide well-informed interpretations of the data collected, then we are coming as close as we can come to socially reconstruct events from the past (Benedict, 2000; Geertz, 1973). This is why I have deliberately attempted to collect multiple stories to represent a more layered and informed interpretation of past critical events. Additionally, I understand that through the process of telling stories about particular individuals set within a particular time and place, generalizations must be avoided (Abu-Lughod, 1996) and this has been my intention. Art and life have been bi-directionally intertwined in this study, and the point was not to depict how life actually was, but how it was "interpreted and reinterpreted, told and retold," as Bruner (2004) suggested was an effective approach to understanding and making meaning from narrative inquiries (p. 708).

A second form of data analysis used in this study is data reduction. Miles and Huberman (1984, 1994) recommend engaging in data reduction to generate usable knowledge from both primary and secondary sources to organize themes, patterns, and ideas found recurring in

participant's stories. Data reduction involves selecting, focusing, and abstracting raw data from various sources to communicate central issues of the study to readers (Fontana & Frey, 1998). For my purposes, I used data reduction to look for patterns and themes that seemed to connect each of the semester programs together, as well as highlight notable distinctions between them. Through the process of deconstructing and reconstructing the stories during data analysis, the multiple networks influencing contexts and relationships became more apparent through representations that this researcher felt best conveyed the findings to readers (Hendry, 2007). I will use data reduction in Chapter 6 to situate how I have come to see patterns and themes emerge from the narrative responses of the artist and student participants, as well as having inserted my own conclusions.

The third form of data analysis procedures were my teacher/ researcher reflections. My reflections have addressed gaps that I felt needed further elaboration or clarification; a process recommended by Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, and Schulman (2005). I played a substantial role in helping to facilitate and mediate the learning experiences between the artists and the Fox Tech students, as well as mediating between Artpace and my school district administration and personnel. My voice as both the teacher and researcher in this narrative inquiry have been intended to show how I, along with the perspectives of the other participants have found significance in our art education partnership.

Member Checks/ Protection of Participants

The voices and insights of the participants of this study were respected using a series of member checks to make sure they felt comfortable with sharing their stories and images in this document. First, participants were asked if they were willing to participate in this research study.

Additionally, they were given the option of having their identity revealed by using their name and photographic image included in the study or given the option to use a pseudonym. All participants signed an Informed Consent Form and agreed to have their name and images included in the study. Students who were not directly contacted by me as part of this study, but were participants in our community partnerships and did have their images captured on film, were referred to as Fox Tech students.

The main sources of images used in this study were taken by Artpace's archivist, and these images are referenced as being "photos courtesy of Artpace" as they requested. Artpace gave me written permission to use all of these images and to openly disclose the name of their institution. These letters signed by the current Artpace Executive Director Matthew Drutt, and Artpace archivist Kimberly Aubuchon, are being kept as part of my personal research records. I selectively chose not to include any images of students that I took during our community partnership since I did not save my photographic release forms from the past.

If the participant's made any special requests for revisions, additions or deletions to the interview transcripts, their recommendations were respected and modified. Additionally, all text and images included in the data analysis chapters were sent to participants for their review and comments. Again, if they wanted to further clarify any thoughts explored in the data analysis, this was their option; however, none chose to do so. I did also voluntarily remove personal information from forms included in Appendix A and C, such as signatures and addresses to protect this personal information from being shared electronically.

Mary Cantu agreed to serve as my expert reviewer, as she has worked at Artpace for many years in their education department and is intimately familiar with our community partnership programs. One reason that Mary Cantu was my first choice was to follow the

recommendation of Hodder (1998), who insists that informal or formal peer reviews or member checks are necessary to reach an intersubjective agreement on the ability of the researcher to reflect the ideas of individuals who have different perspectives. I communicated with Mary on the telephone and through e-mail to see if she had any constructive suggestions regarding my findings before publication. However, she did agree with my findings and no adjustments were made. Therefore, getting multiple eyes to review this study has given each of us a chance to review our thoughts one last time collectively before sharing it with a larger community. Blank copies of the member check forms sent out to Mary Cantu and the other artist and student participants are included in Appendix C.

Validity Issues

Barone and Eisner (1997) assert that research that contributes to the advancement of education is the ultimate measure of validity; I agree. Wolcott (1990) believes the term *validity* can also be used interchangeably with *reliability* or better yet, *understanding*; Again, I agree. As researchers come to gain a deep understanding of the contexts and circumstantial conditions framing any case under examination, degrees of validity become more apparent and useful to the research process, while noting that all inquiries will necessarily remain incomplete (Polkinghorne, 2007). It is important to listen, record the thoughts of participants, write drafts early and continuously, use mainly primary data, be candid about the subjective strengths of reporting personal points of view, get feedback on the correctness and completeness of the manuscript, and try to balance points of view (Wolcott, 1990). Each of these recommendations was applied to this study.

Validity in this study has also revolved around the believability of knowledge claims or

statements made by participants throughout the study; if a community accepts the knowledge claim, then it is considered valid (Polkinghorne, 2007). Each participant's story was considered individually and then across cases. Balancing data analysis processes meant data was both reduced and expanded upon to identify patterns and themes. This study has attempted to serve as a respectful and reflective study that incorporates a democratic form of representation of viewpoints of the artist, student, and the teacher/ researcher over a sustained period of time (Hendry, 2007). It is my hope that in telling stories of our experiences, other people might be able to appreciate the contexts and conditions that were present during our community partnerships, and be able to find aspects of our interactions that might ring true with their own experiences.

CHAPTER 4

THE PARTICIPANTS

Gary Sweeney: 2004 Spring Semester Program Visiting Artist

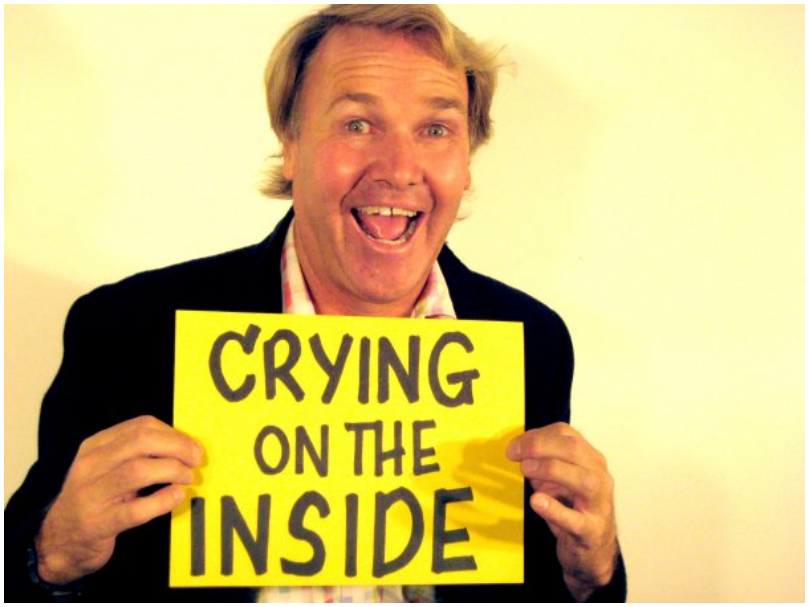


Figure 4.1. Photo of artist Gary Sweeney/ 2004 spring semester program participant. (Photo courtesy of the Gary Sweeney.)

Beginning in spring 2004, artist Gary Sweeney came into my small, windowless classroom at Fox Tech High School. Selecting Gary Sweeney to come and work during the initial Artpace/ Fox Tech Semester Program in 2004 was made by the education coordinator at Artpace, Kate Green. In fact, Gary Sweeney was Kate's first choice. "Gary is a fantastic artist, but I also thought he would be a good role model," Green said. "He's always trying to engage people, usually with humor, but it always comes back to interesting issues. His work is visually compelling and funny, but he also makes you think" (Goddard, 2004, p. 4).

The Parchman Stremmel Gallery, which represents Gary in San Antonio, Texas, shared his official biography with me.

> Gary Sweeney's work is based in a nostalgic era. He uses pop culture-both vintage camp craft and up-to-date digital photography- to look back over the country's recent past and see the good, and the not so good. Wordplay is a constant, including his series based on found signs that he has installed in multiple languages and countries, including England, France, and Japan. Literature, old movies and quotes of sages inform his work. He draws on observations of life from them and from his own history. Social commentary is poignant, sometimes stinging, but buffered with wit. The medium is always in keeping with the concept and is part of the fun.
>
> Growing up in Southern California, Sweeney attended the University of California Irvine where he encountered artists in the classroom like John Baldessari, John Mason, John Paul Jones, Ed Moses, James Turrell and Robert Irwin. His work sometimes draws on these influences- like Baldessari's use of found imagery- and sometimes pushes off from them to go in the other direction, particularly against the stripped down aesthetic of minimalism. Living and working in Texas has honed Sweeney's unique way of seeing things, everything from tourist spots, historical figures like Davy Crockett, and a body of work that explores border issues.
>
> Sweeney's public art enlivens several cities besides San Antonio, including Charlotte, NC (1999), Memphis, TN (1998), Denver, CO (1993-2), and Manhattan Beach, CA (1992). In addition to his exhibitions at the Parchman Stremmel Galleries, Sweeney has had solo exhibitions at the Southwest School of Arts and Craft, San Antonio; Lawndale Art Center, Houston; Columbus College of Art and Design, Columbus, OH; and the University of Florence, Italy. His work is in numerous corporate museum and government collections, including the San Antonio Spurs AT&T Center, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art and the City of Denver. (personal communication, unpublished promotional materials provided by Parchman Stremmel Gallery, July 24, 2009)

The work that resulted from our community partnership with Gary (see Figure 4.2) was revealed to the public during our year-end fine arts festival at the high school in May 11, 2005. In the *neocontemporary 04.1*, which is an in-house publication of Artpace, this is how they described our community-based contemporary art collaboration.

> The final piece, unveiled on May 11, is a rebus- a message spelled out through a system of pictures and symbols developed by the students. Maria Leake, Fox Tech instructor and Fine Arts Department Chair, is excited about the interactions her students have had with Sweeney. "The kids were challenged by working with Gary. They identified with him as an artist and a mentor." Through Sweeney's guidance, Fox Tech students are making a lasting mark. And their message…is an uplifting one: "Here at Fox Tech, we think that we can change the world." …This partnership supplements existing art courses with

curriculum-linked programs that result in works of art displayed at both the high school and Artpace. (*neocontemporary 04.1*, 2005, p. 4)

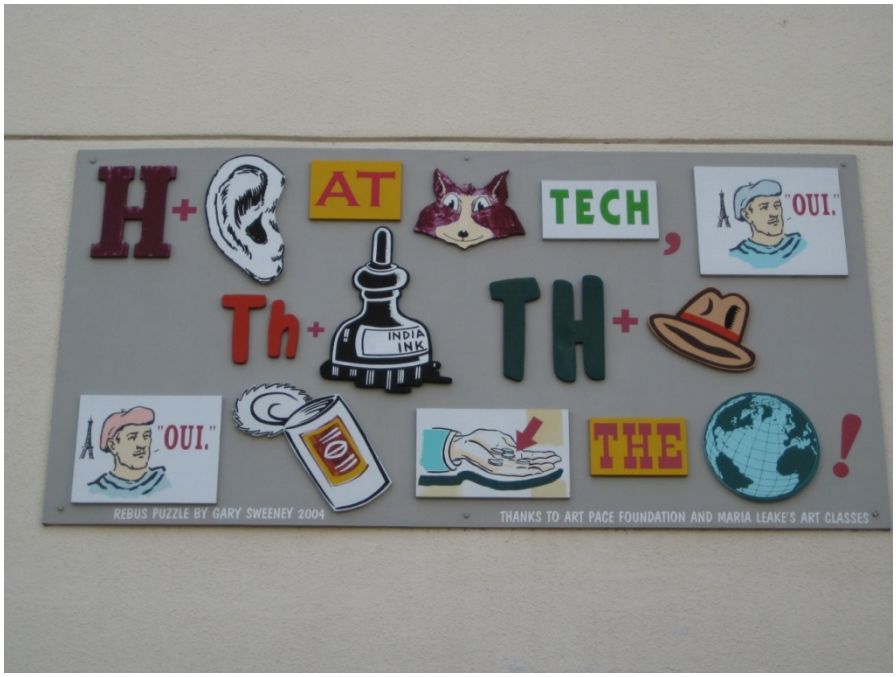


Figure 4.2. Here at Fox Tech We Think That We Can Change the World, 2004 semester program public art product.

Figure 4.3. Gary Sweeney's 2004 WindowWorks Project at Artpace San Antonio. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

When Gary Sweeney created yet another rebus puzzle project for a WindowWorks display at Artpace in 2004 (see Figure 4.3). A WindowWorks project is this is a special invitation/ commission project where Artpace invites an artist to create a temporary site specific art installation on their front windows facing Main Avenue. This is how Gary's WindowWorks project was described on their website.

> Sweeney's message invests the viewer with a sense of competence, and suggests a that the art experience is a requisite for the development of a "thinking person." The puzzle itself activates nontraditional methods of problem-solving, emphasizing the importance of imagery in the activation of cognition. (Artpace San Antonio, May 2004)

In Goddard's (2004) article for the *San Antonio Express News*, he describes the artist as "funnier than Al Franken and a lot subtler than Michael Moore, Gary Sweeney has mastered the art of expressing controversial opinions with just the right amount of humor"(p. 1). In an interview with Paula Owen, the director of the Southwest School of Arts and Crafts in San Antonio, she shared her thoughts of Gary's talents. '"I like the way he combines serious cultural observations with an unmistakable sense of humor," Owen said. "And he makes the viewer work at it; mixing text and images forces you to think" (Goddard, 2004, p. 2).

Gary, who is both an artist and baggage handler for Continental Airlines, moved to San Antonio from Denver when the airline shut down their hub in the 1990s. Gary described how he came to work for the airlines during an interview with Ford (2002).

> "After college, I became yet another starving artist waiting to be discovered," he explains. "A surfing buddy of mine asked me if I wanted a job as a baggage handler, and I needed a job, so of course I said yes. It sustained me during those lean years, and as I became more successful as an artist, I kept it as part-time work (insurance, travel benefits), and I have what to me is a perfect balance of artwork and physical labor." (Ford, 2002, p. 2)

Figure 4.4. Photo of artist Gary Sweeney/2004 spring semester program participant. (Photo courtesy of Gary Sweeney.)

Gary enjoys the job of "slinging bags" as a diversion from making art and he always shared that enthusiasm with the Fox Tech students (see Figure 4.4). Gary told Goddard (2004) that "crawling into the belly of a plane and doing manual labor gets me away from the phone and all the headaches of putting a project together" (p. 3).

According to Otis Parchman, who owns the gallery representing Gary, "a lot of people enjoy Gary's wit. His work is a lot more sophisticated than it looks on the surface" (Goddard, 2004, p.2). Indeed, even the artist himself concurs. '"I'm not afraid to make a fool of myself," Sweeney said. "I usually come off as this kind of dumb, dopey, naïve guy who is trying to make sense of the culture. I actually like doing artwork that makes me look stupid" (Goddard, 2004, p. 4). '"He's one of the artists I have enjoyed working with the most," said Jennifer Murphy, a

public art consultant based in Charlotte, N.C., who oversaw Sweeney on the Denver airport project. “He never gets upset, he’s a team player, he’s on time and he’s an all-around fun guy-not your stereotypical artist” (Goddard, 2004, p.3).

The complexity of Gary Sweeney’s work is not missed by audiences including artist and writer Joey Fauerso (2009) who describes his work as smart and funny, while also functioning on multiple levels at once. “Sweeney orchestrates an ongoing negotiation of meaning between the viewer, the artist and the artwork based on the underlying premise that as a system of signification, language is infinitely reliant on context and interpretation” (Fauerso, 2009, p. 1). Similarly, “Gary Sweeney draws relationships between incongruous ideas and fragments of popular culture, using unusual materials and a large dose of humor” (Absolute Arts, 2004).

In 2008, Gary’s work for the San Antonio International Airport called *South Texas Souvenirs* also had local writers add their own description of his style (Justin, October 2008). Gary was credited as saying that he was amazed that the city “approved an artwork that pokes gentle fun at the city. I’ve never done a public art piece that passed any city panel that used the city as a topic of humor. I’m very proud that San Antonio is secure and progressive enough that something like this can be realized” (Goddard, November 2008). “Gary Sweeney’s humor, insight, and gentle criticism of popular culture have made him one of San Antonio’s favorite contemporary artists and have won him several public art commissions throughout the country”(San Antonio International Airport, 2006).

During our December 22, 2009 interview, I (ML) asked Gary Sweeney (GS) if he had been involved in any other community partnerships like the one we were involved with together.

> GS: No. Although, I haven’t done anymore of the community partnerships like the semester program, I actually kind of miss it. Oh, I’ve spoken at Texas State like, two weeks ago. I still talk at colleges, on the college level, and I’m real active at UTSA (The University of Texas at San Antonio) during Ken Little’s critiques

and things like that… so I really like the academic community. I did some things with Alex Rubio and his students down at the Blue Star. (The Blue Star Arts Complex is located in the King William District in downtown San Antonio, where there are gallery and studio spaces, restaurants, and lofts. They have a special art opening the first Friday of each month.) I put together some put-in cup art pieces on consecutive First Friday's. (*Put-in-cups* are professional grade colored plastic pieces that are designed to fit securely into already existing fences.) I donated a set and gave them cups. They (Alex's students) came up with a drawing and I helped them put together this mosaic thing. So that's I guess along the same lines, but as far as the classroom and completely interacting with students, I haven't been able to do that. But actually the ones- like Alex has these students from different high schools, but they're all career types and they're all very focused and serious about it. So, it's nice working with them because you don't have to try to get them on board.

ML: I don't think any of the students that we had in our class had any previous art experience at all?

GS: But there were a few that had… that were engaged in it and the rewarding part was that even though they probably didn't have any art anywhere in their lives, it was nice to see some spark of excitement in some of them when I was doing those optical illusion pieces and things like that. So, that was clearly something maybe that triggered something- one could only hope. But, I wish… It's an important program and I if you don't have it in your home, you need to have it in your school. If your parents aren't going to tell you about art or you're not going to have a family member (share art with you) in your home or in your community, then I think school is the best place to get an art experience.

ML: What about connections with Artpace. Have you had a lot of different partnerships or other types of interactions with Artpace since then? Has your relationship with them changed any?

GS: Well, I've done window displays and I've been in a couple of exhibits with them and, of course, I go to their openings and Taco Fridays and stuff like that. And on Family Day, I did a put-in cup fence piece that's at Artpace. I am very active at Chalk It Up every year. (Chalk It Up is an outdoor public event sponsored by Artpace that is held in downtown San Antonio every year. Artists of all ages come together to create sideway art for this day long event.) This year I was a judge, but before, I was a participating artist and a featured artist. They do a great thing for the community and even though I'm not directly paired up with a group of kids, just that Chalk It Up thing alone, with me judging it this year and stuff, gave me a chance to chat with the high school students. Actually, this year I was able to see some of the same students that I saw last year as a judge, so they recognized me and they really put an enormous amount of effort and time and energy into their projects. The standard was really high at this last Chalk It Up. It was really amazing what some high school students were doing.

Personally, seeing Gary again and having him hand me one of his infamous holiday cards as soon as we exchanged greetings was a throwback to our previous times working together. Similarly, at the conclusion of our interview, he showed me a host of online videos he has been involved with, of course involving some crazy antics, like playing Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit* on a children's drum set in front of a live audience, while using naked Barbie dolls as his modified drumsticks. In his video he continually replaces the bleach blonde dolls throughout the performance as soon as their heads broke off to keep the beat to the song. He explained this was his performance tribute to Courtney Love, who wrote most of the hit songs of Nirvana, but usually gets none of the credit publicly. Indeed, it was as if no time at all had passed since our last meeting. Wish I could have been there in Boulder, Colorado on June 12, 2010 to see the opening of his new show called *Humor and Pathos*, but it was great to read about what visitors to the exhibition thought about it via Facebook.

Eloy McGarity: 2004 Spring Semester Program Student Participant

Figure 4.5. Photo of former Fox Tech student Eloy McGarity/ 2004 spring semester program participant. (Photo courtesy of Eloy McGarity.)

The stars aligned for me when I headed to San Antonio for my niece's wedding during the last weekend of May and I got an online friend request message from Eloy McGarity, one of my former Fox Tech art students. Eloy agreed to let me interview him after his shift ended at the restaurant he was working at on Sunday, May 30, 2010 (see Figure 4.5). The stars fizzled out, however, just a little bit when I realized the microphone was turned to the "off" position throughout the interview. Luckily, I was able to transcribe from memory what Eloy had shared with me during our conversation and I sent him these transcriptions for his review and amendments. Together, we re-constructed his recollections during the spring 2004 semester program with artist Gary Sweeney.

ML: Eloy, what grade were you in during our semester program?

EM: I was in the tenth grade, my sophomore year.

ML: Had you taken any art before entering my art class? If so, when and what kind of engagements?

EM: Yes, I had taken years of art in elementary school and middle school. In fact, I took perhaps more elective classes than I should have in high school because I always wanted to enroll in art classes so I worked with the counselors to drop whatever classes I needed to take more art classes. They told me that I couldn't graduate with just electives credit but I didn't care. I was already failing most of my regular classes and I really didn't care much about going to school except to go to your class. It was the only class that I was passing and I wanted to be there. You have no idea how many classes I added and dropped just to be in your class.

Also, I don't know if you remember, but I was really involved with graffiti art and that was part of the reason I was always getting into trouble because what I did wasn't always legal. But then I started working with a tagging group of graffiti artists who worked in conjunction with business to do mural paintings on the sides of their businesses. We had to bring our own materials to do the work and we would find out about these events when someone would put out a call to local graffiti artists to participate- and that's how I got involved with them. I made lots of murals working with this organization that are still all over San Antonio.

During your class, I remember that we had gone on fieldtrip to the Southwest School of Arts and Crafts, and I remember I decided to pay to take a class there after I had to leave Fox Tech. I also took as many free classes as I could at other

places around town, like when people would have special free workshops building sculptures using wire mesh and paper maché projects. I got to work with a wide-range of art supplies and materials by going to these programs. And I still make my own art, mainly in sketchbooks, but I don't have as much free time, now that I have to work and I've got kids. I still have some of the art projects that I made when I was with you, but I'd have to look for them and find them, since I've moved around.

I was with you in your art class for about a year and a half before I got kicked out of school and was sent to an alternative school- Alamo Achievement Academy- and I actually graduated from there. You are not supposed to graduate from there, but I did. The good thing about that school was that luckily they also had an art program there, so I got really involved with that as well.

Finally, when I wanted to go to St. Phillip's college, they wouldn't let me in at first because they didn't recognize my degree from Alamo Achievement so I had to take the GED test and everything, but I did it and got in. I took an art history course that was pretty cool and I was there for about a year, but the eligibility requirements for the FAFSA or financial aid were difficult for me to meet at the time, so I just had to pay for college tuition out of my own pocket and that was a lot of money for me then. The second year I enrolled in the courses, the tuition went up again and again the eligibility requirements for financial aid were problematic again and I couldn't get any financial assistance. Finally, the costs were too much and I had to stop attending, only because I couldn't afford it, but I really wanted to be there. I don't know if they realize how many people become discouraged and have to drop out of college even though they really, really want to be there due to their rigid guidelines.

ML: What do you remember about our involvement with Artpace? Did you go there on your own either before or after our semester program with Gary Sweeney? Have you been back since 2004? Why or why not?

EM: You know, I actually went to Artpace even before I took your class. I had stopped by and thought I'd like to work here, but at the time, they said they were fully staffed. I remember I went there a lot. There were things on display there that you just can't see anywhere else here in San Antonio. There are still some events that I go to in San Antonio like the *First Friday* events at the Blue Star Complex, but those are really different events than the ones Artpace puts on. Artpace is about structuring exhibitions that encourage artists to create work and give them the creative and financial support to create the type of art that they want to make and share with visitors to the exhibitions. It's all about the artists and their work and getting their message and ideas out there. It is a great place to see art of people making art now from all over the world.

I remember that we used to go there on fieldtrips during our class, but I also went there after school and would pop in and see if the galleries were open and see the

show. I did that for many years, and I still do that whenever I have the chance because I'm in the neighborhood. Even when I was still in your class, I would take friends down there and show them around because I knew that I didn't take them there and show them some of the ideas the artists were exploring that they probably wouldn't ever get exposure to these kinds of ideas anywhere else. (I told Eloy that I didn't know if he realized it or not, but that he actually went to more art openings than I did in the 2003-2004 academic school year. This information surprised him. Eloy went on to describe in great detail many of the exhibitions that he remembered that he saw at Artpace over the years.)

ML: How would you describe yourself back then versus now? (I told Eloy that the information that he chose to share with me was going to be shared with people who read the dissertation, but Eloy went on to describe his very personal and touching portrait of the types of real-world issues and concerns that he was facing as a sophomore in high school at Fox Tech.)

EM: Well, that was the year my mother went to prison. I didn't really have a home to go to, so I would crash at different friends' houses, when they would let me. Sometimes I had to find other places to crash and take showers. It was pretty tough on me, but I didn't complain. However, sometimes I didn't make the best choices and found myself getting into fights or getting into other kinds of trouble. (Eloy whispered to me that he was sorry, but I reassured him that I felt for him and that he was just trying to do the best he could under the circumstances. Indeed Eloy was one of the sweetest students in my class, living with a difficult set of circumstances that were beyond his control. Perhaps this is why to this day, his resilience and passion for life and art still inspires me.)

Now, I still make art when I can, I'm working here (referring to the restaurant I met him at for the interview) and I have two amazing kids and a beautiful girlfriend. I also try to help out my other friends who are artists. Sometimes they show me their work and I ask them questions about it. I always want to know how they plan on exhibiting the work and I'm usually surprised when they haven't really thought through the process. I mean you need to contextualize the art for other audiences to consider, and most people my age don't think about that before putting it out there in public, but I make sure that they do think about it and it works. Also, sometimes I'll also help out with community art projects involving murals for children to participate in. I want the little ones to learn about the process of making art with others and putting their ideas out there for others to see. If you drive around San Antonio, like even across from the Guadalupe Cultural Arts District, there is some of my work there. People still approach me sometimes asking for me to work with them or to let them show a piece of my work.

Meeting up with Eloy was a real joy for me. I could tell he was still working so hard to make art and making sure he was giving his own children a wonderful life.

Rosie Leija: 2004 Spring Semester Program Student Participant

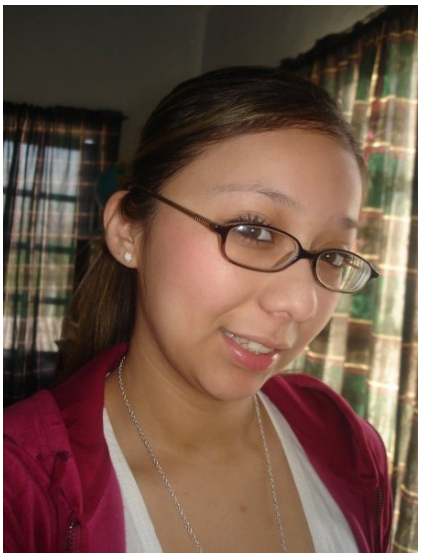


Figure 4.6. Photo of former Fox Tech student Rosa Leija/ 2004 semester program participant. (Photo courtesy of Rosa Leija.)

On April 9, 2010 I got to meet up with Rosa during a trip to San Antonio for my nephew's wedding. Thanks to substantial social networking, Rosa and I had the chance to meet face-to-face in the lobby of the Doubletree Hotel (see Figure 4.6). We caught up and talked about her newly found enthusiasm for motorcycles and we got to play with her precious little girl for a while. Rosa warned me that her memories from back in 2004 were a little rusty, but she gave me a lot of information about her recollections of the events surrounding our art education programs during that school year, while not all of her memories were directly related to working with artist Gary Sweeney. Rosa also provided a student's perspective as to the other school climate activities that that were influencing her overall education at Fox Tech High School.

ML: What grade were you in when you worked with Gary Sweeney in 2004?

RL: That was my sophomore, no my junior year.

ML: Had you ever taken any art classes before our time together?

RL: No.

ML: What about Artpace, have you been back?

RL: I drive by there every day, but I haven't been inside.

I ask Rosa to tell me a little about what she remembers about our regular classroom activities during the 2004-2005 school year, to contextualize her memories about the events surrounding our time with Gary and other forms of art we were exposed to that school year.

RL: I remember we saw a movie there [at Artpace] that was on three different screens. It was hard keeping your eyes focused on one.

ML: Yes, that was a film by Isaac Julien called *Paradise Omeros*.

RL: And the other one was kind of crazy that someone didn't want you to go in there. They wanted to keep it secret. But I didn't go into it, because I'm claustrophobic. I just saw the hole you go through, but I didn't go through it. But I do remember going to Artpace. I remember there was one room where there was a little hidden passageway where the artist would crawl into a little hole to get in there because he didn't want anyone to see it. Then he would work in there all day and would crawl out the hole. Well I didn't get it, but they said it was a woman's body, a woman's body parts all over the wall, but I never understood it. It was stuff out of the walls, and I remember other things hanging from the ceiling, but it may have been other places. Maybe it was Finesilver or the Southwest School of Arts and Crafts? I'm not sure because we went to a lot of different places.

ML: Did you ever take any art classes besides ours?

RL: Well, I used to like drawing but I never took any art classes. But, I just loved it [referring to our class]. Then I took one other class after that. (She took her second year of art with another teacher colleague of mine at Fox Tech for her senior year.)

ML: What do you remember about the types of activities and learning that took place in during our time together?

RL: I know we did a black and white piece, well my piece was black and white, and we made the art and the flyers for the show. All types of people came there and we had our art for sale. I think it was at a Deli. It was a really small and crowded place. I think we had to do opposites for this project, like I had the sun and moon and I think I might still have a flyer for it at home. And I remember Charles [her friend in the military, who was also in the class with us and was instrumental in re-connecting Rosa and I together for this interview] had his black and white image with black and white shapes painted on it, actually on the flyer for the show. I remember everyone had to make an art piece for a contest or something

> and you took them for display. I have mine still. It's at my mother-in-laws. It was a painting I did of my niece and she was in a white-blue dress and it was like an image-shot where she was standing next to some white thing. I don't know if you remember.

Rosa told me she had a photo of it posted on her My Space page. She pulled it up for me as we talked and allowed me to use it here (see Figure 4.7). She had a caption on her work that said *My Masterpiece!!!* I thought it was really touching that Rosa had made such a strong emotional and positive personal association with a work of art that she helped to bring about during our time working together at Fox Tech and now chooses to share with her MySpace and Facebook friends.

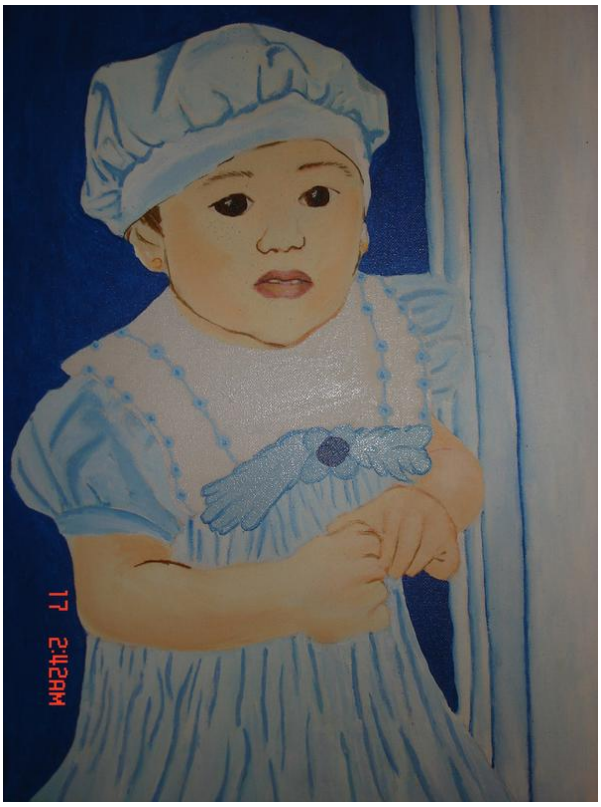


Figure 4.7. Art project created by Rosa Leija/ 2004 spring semester program participant called *My Masterpiece!!!* (Photo courtesy of Rosa Leija.)

Rosa continued:

> Also I remember we had some ladies from Japan come to our room and they brought

> kimonos and they let us try them on, well I know I tried them on and I remember that there were so many pieces to put on. [Actually, they were Korean.]

Rosa was really trying hard to remember the events surrounding our time spent with Gary during our interview, but she is certain that he only came to work with us on one day. She also told me that she and the other students from our class were not present at the dedication ceremony when the final work was revealed. I do believe that Rosa made an accurate recollection these events. Because this was the first time we had embarked on the semester program, Gary really did not work with one particular class, or have a regular routine schedule. I had hundreds of students that school year, and the classes met on different days of the week, so Gary may just have met with only some classes once, while working with others perhaps two or three times at most. Despite the limited access that students like Rosa had to working regularly with Gary, the memories she did have of our one day together were pretty vivid. These recollections will be explored further during the data analysis. It was surprising that even after six years has passed, Rosa was still the model student. She possesses a tremendous work ethic, being involved in a broad range of personal and professional interests, and doing it all with a sweet smile and attitude.

Daniel Guerrero: 2005 Spring Semester Program Visiting Artist

The next artist who came to Fox Tech was artist and judge Daniel Guerrero in spring 2005 (see Figure 4.8). Daniel's love of politics and interest in uncovering the under-representation of Hispanics in officially adopted history textbooks, set the stage for students to challenge authoritarian perspectives and look locally for everyday heroes. Daniel was a character, and would do things like come to our campus and park in the principal's parking spot. He also told me when one or two of our students would show up in his courtroom. Daniel shared

his passion about law, justice, and politics with students in ways in which they made everyday applications understandable and approachable.

Figure 4.8. Photo of 2005 semester program participants Daniel Guerrero (left) and John Contreras (right).

On the unveiling day of *Yo Soy El Futuro* (see Figure 4.9), themes of Hispanic cultural heritage and identity united individuals from diverse areas of the San Antonio community, for a common artistic and educational purpose. The President of the University of Texas, and former Fox Tech alum, Dr. Ricardo Romo served as our keynote speaker for our dedication ceremony on Main Avenue. In the audience were the political movers and shakers in our city including Felix Padron, the Director of Arts and Cultural Affairs for the city of San Antonio, Congressman Charlie Gonzalez, family members of social activist Emma Tenayuca, and the family of Justice Carlos Cadena. It was great to have support from our San Antonio Independent School District Superintendent and countless others. The event was so crowded, we had to block off two lanes of traffic in front of our school to accommodate the onlookers. My impression was that many of us

felt that we were a part of re-writing and re-presenting the unsaid histories of local Hispanic Americans through our community-based art partnership.

Figure 4.9. Yo Soy el Futuro, 2005 semester program public art product (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Daniel Guerrero wrote an e-mail message to Kate Green, former Artpace Education Coordinator on April 2005, which provided key insights into his developmental thoughts about the project. In this message, Daniel also shares insights into what working in the classroom with Fox Tech high school students was like for him. Luckily, I saved a copy of their communication.

> The project is going to be ten poster size panels that will be placed to the left of the Gary Sweeney piece facing Main. Each poster will be styled so as to look like the propaganda posters of the 20th Century. Each poster will have the image of a person that has made a significant difference in the world and can inspire as a role model. This will include Willie Velazquez, Emma Tenayuca, Henry B. Gonzalez, Hector Garcia, Flaco Jimenez among others. The idea is that these people share the language, culture and have backgrounds not unlike most of the students at Fox Tech. Each poster will have a caption that reads "I AM" or "YO SOY" at the top and a descriptive word, such as: Courage, Peace, Justice, Innovation, Hero, Voice, Leader, etc. at the bottom. There will also be a place either above or below all of the posters, i.e. a separate panel where the slogan, "I am the future" will appear.
>
> In anticipation of creating the project, so far, we have through different media, overhead projections, internet research, and actual art work, explored the ideas that will ultimately form the body of this project. We spent time exploring and discussing art and propaganda and the students have researched the individual people that will be the subjects of the works. Many of the students had not heard of these people or only vaguely knew about them.

We have discussed language. The work of Cruz Ortiz was especially helpful in exposing the students to art that uses language and expression that they know and use. I believe, for example that they were really surprised to look at some of Cruz's early work that included Coridos about Cantinas on Guadalupe Street or big sculptural elements that spell out the word "necio." [See Figure 4.10.]

Figure 4.10. but still I'd leap in front of a flyin' bullet for you, Cruz Ortiz 2005. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

As I mentioned, the kids also made art work where they used their own expressions and language to talk about their experiences. One student, for example, made a simple "Cruzesque" poster where she drew a half moon and some stars that recalled a children's story book. She wrote the expression "I wish it was night time." The rest of the class thought it was less than inspiring until she shared with them that she is often tired or sleeping in class because she has to work to help out her family. I think it also suggested a time when life was easier for her, i.e. when she was too young to work. These works were made quickly and crudely but were then turned into large paper banners that will be displayed. I really enjoyed being able to tell the kids about Cruz having had his work shown at the Louvre. Most of them had never heard of that museum, but they know about it now.

What I have tried to do with the time I have had with the students is to introduce them to the idea that their culture and language and experiences are as valid and as trustworthy as subjects of art as anyone else's and that they often are the subject of great art and literature. I have also tried to expand their ideas of what art is. I think that for many of them, art is a framed painting on a wall. We explored local artists whose work have been published such as Luis Valderas, Luis Guerrero, Joe Lopez, Carmen Lomas Garza and other artists at Gallista, a gallery literally up the street from their school. I showed them published photos in books of paintings of *abuelitas* making tortillas, of *tias* sewing or

children eating *palletas*. Often, works were made here in their neighborhood about their neighbors.

We have also explored the art process in terms of simple drawing techniques; exploring basic ideas like depth and light and mass. I have tried to stress to them that art is more than making a representation, stressing to them through feedback on work they created that the process of making art is also about seeing the artist's hand or the process in the finished product or about how it communicates or informs.

I hope that what we have been able to do is in keeping with what the program was designed to do. I have a new appreciation and understanding for what it is to be a teacher and the importance of a "lesson plan." (D. Guerrero, personal communication, April 27, 2005)

On December 21, 2009, I (ML) had a chance to interview Daniel Guerrero (DG) again and catch up with him after many years.

ML: Is you career now the same as it was back then? Are you still a judge?

DG: I'm still on the bench. It will be my tenth year on the bench at the municipal court. I'm still also making art and being represented by the Joan Grona Gallery. And not a lot has changed since then.

ML: What about your connection or relationship with Artpace, has that changed since our semester program partnership?

DG: It continues in the sense that I still think it's one of the best venues in town for seeing art and exploring art. I love going to their functions. I had a chance to show my work there [see Figure 4.11] as part of a show called *Spanglish* that was curated by Kate Green, also dealing with bi-cultural issues and that was a great experience, and I was glad to be a part of that. I'm a continuous supporter of them. I think they are an invaluable asset in this city and I will continue to support them and visit them as often as I can.

ML: Which was your piece in *Spanglish*?

DG: It was a big, nine piece grid that was like a Brady Bunch grid…

ML: Oh Yes! Yes! Yes! And it has a little mouse on there…

DG: It was me in the middle and it was Speedy Gonzalez and Mickey Mouse on either side of me, again a reference to being bicultural having mice from two countries. On the top it had the Aztec god, Quetzalcoatl, and on the bottom it had Jesus. Both are gods from different cultures and also for obvious reasons share a lot of similarities. Hernan Cortes, the conqueror who conquered the Aztecs and

ultimately gave way to what was to become the Mexican culture and his partner, Malinche, sort of the Adam and Eve of Mexican American culture because they are the parents of the first Mestizos. On the bottom we have Marilyn Monroe and the Virgin Mary. Sort of two iconic women represented by their two cultures. Mary being the patron saint of Mexico and the mother of god and Marilyn Monroe being representative of a sort of feminine beauty in the twentieth century, and an American icon.

Figure 4.11. Here' A Story...by artist Daniel Guerrero, 2005. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

For me, it was great getting that phone call on the day of the interview with Daniel. He was ready at the drop of a hat to share his stories with me and he did so with great enthusiasm and clarity of thought. It was impressive for me to listen to him share his great passion for our local Mexican-American heroes as strongly and personally as he did with our student five years ago.

John Contreras: 2005 Semester Program Student Participant

Figure 4.12. Photo of student John Contreras/ 2005 semester program participant. (Photo Courtesy of John Contreras.)

Perhaps the most notable and compassionate expressions that were given during the dedication ceremony for *Yo Soy El Futuro* were by my former art student John Contreras (see Figure 4.12). John expressed his surprise and anger at what he came to recognize as subtle political injustices all around him, resulting from what is said and unsaid in state adopted history books. John articulated how working with an artist like Daniel gave him a whole new perspective about how we promote and conversely dismiss our own identity and cultural heritage by what we chose to remember and forget.

Reconnecting with John Contreras, who used to refer to himself as "Taco Lover" in high school, was achieved using online social networking. It was apparent when searching John's home page and talking with him, he is a huge fan of Ford Mustangs, and in fact has a propensity for driving fast, as he pointed out with his recently acquired speeding ticket. John, who works full time and just graduated from in 2009 from St. Phillips Community College, was generous in sharing his time, recollections, and even his memorabilia from the 2005 semester program with me. In fact, John had managed to buy a copy of a news segment from a San Antonio business, had saved a copy of the speech he gave during the dedication of *Yo Soy El Futuro*, and also shared a pile of photographs that he had taken from our time together during 2005.

On Tuesday, December 22, 2009, I (ML) had a chance to sit down and interview John Contreras (JC) in the Founder's Room at Artpace.

ML: What year were you in when you participated in the semester program?

JC: I was a junior then.

ML: At that time, did you have a job while you were going to school?

JC: Well, at that time I was working with youth programs, but that was mostly just during the summers. But most of the time I just focused in mainly on school.

ML: What have you been doing since high school?

JC: Well, I've been working part-time in a warehouse…and I've been going to college. In fact, I just graduated from college. I just graduated last week and I'm considering going back for a masters degree in automotives. I've still got that under consideration. Yeah, they've got a pretty good program over there at St. Phillip's College.

ML: Before you took this class with me and participated in the semester program, had you ever taken any art classes before?

JC: In middle school I did, but that was about it. Yeah, it wasn't really that comprehensive or anything, but I had Mr. Nakayama and he was a really cool guy. We did stuff like sketching. He was a really nice guy. I don't remember anything about the art course, but I remember him pushing stuff on us. There

wasn't anything really mind blowing about the class, it was just that he was a really nice guy.

ML: So to clarify, you had two years of art in middle school, but then in high school, this was the only art class you took?

JC: Yes, yes.

ML: Have you been to Artpace since our past time here together?

JC: No….well? Yes, one time. I'm trying to remember when I was walking down towards the bus….I was walking by (points to the front of the Artpace building) and someone I had met here before came out and said…."Hey, would you like to come inside and look around?" And I was like…okay. There was an art show that had a maze in it (the Hills Synder exhibition- *Book of the Dead*). I thought it was really cool, going through the maze with that room at the end.

It was wonderful getting to meet John again after so many years had passed. We actually had a chance to meet before the study began and reminiscence about old times when I was passing through San Antonio as part of a weekend seminar on Asian studies. He remembered so much about working with Daniel as if they were still in the same room together back at Fox Tech. It is still amazing to me how vivid certain memories of his were about their side conversations, the art that they shared with each other, how other students in the class responded to the program and his memories of so many aspects of our time together.

Jennelle Gomez: Fall 2005 and Spring 2006
Semester Program Student Participant

Jennelle Gomez (see Figure 4.13) was one student who was consistently involved in the dialogues, research, and art projects involving our community partnerships with David Jurist and Ethel Shipton. Jennelle had a unique role as a student in the classroom, because she was friendly with many different students, and always seemed to have an accurate pulse on reading how students were responding to working with the artist, and how students felt about working

together in groups. Jennelle also served as one of the two dedication speakers on the final day of the 2005-2006 Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership celebration (as seen delivering her speech in Figure 4.14).

Figure 4.13. Photo of student Jennelle Gomez, fall 2005 and spring 2006 semester program participant. (Photo courtesy of Jennelle Gomez.)

Online social networking reconnected me with Jennelle. Jennelle, a self-described shy girl, revealed to me that since our time together during our collaborations, she has gone back to school to be a paralegal at San Antonio College, with one more year until graduation. Jennelle is also working retail.

Figure 4.14. Photo of Jennelle Gomez delivering her speech during our dedication ceremony in the Fox Tech library. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

During our December 21, 2009 interview meeting, I (ML) asked Jennelle Gomez (JG) about her previous art experiences.

ML: Had you ever taken any art classes before you came to my classroom at Fox Tech?

JG: No. The only art I had had was in the regular elementary classroom.

ML: Curiosity, how did you feel about the contemporary art we saw together?

JG: It seemed weird at first because before then, I thought art was just things that were on the wall. But to go in there (the library) and see the neon sign and *Remember This Time* (on the outside of the music building) helped to show me that there are other forms of art.

ML: Have you gone to Artpace since that time?

JG: No, that was pretty much it.

ML: Did you used to pay attention to Artpace when you walked by the building after school?

JG: To be honest with you, I used to walk by all the time when I was a junior and I'd be like…oh, whatever… but when I was a senior and I would go by and say, "Hey, I've been there and I got to work with the artists." It meant a different things and it was cool. But now it has meant even more to me because I knew some of the people from there.

ML: Had you ever worked with a professional artist before?

JG: No. But it's cool because you can actually look back and be like, "I actually worked on that."

Jennelle was a real life saver for me during this study. She was the only student I was able to locate and was willing to be interviewed regarding her involvement with our community partnerships. She did try and help me locate another former student who was also a guest speaker at our dedication, but he changed addresses and jobs. Jennelle really came through for me.

David Jurist: 2005 Fall Semester Program Visiting Artist

Figure 4.15. Photo of artist David Jurist, fall 2005 semester program participant (Photo Courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

In fall 2005, artist and professional contractor David Jurist (see Figure 4.15) came to Fox Tech, at a time when many of my students were in their senior year, thinking about graduation and the future. David showed us many of his past site-specific installation pieces which invited participant viewers to enter spaces he created and reflect on the interplay of the man-made with nature. Through his words and stories, we came to gain insight into what art meant to him and gained an appreciation of his particular sensibilities that fuse environment with art.

David Jurist also gave students insights into the politics of presenting yourself as an artist for potential donors when he gave them the assignment to create a diorama of a site specific work of art to be funded by Artpace, and installed somewhere on the campus. Working as teams, students had to learn to master the process of not only conceptualizing and constructing art, but also presenting their proposals to members of the Artpace staff in their boardroom. In particular, I remember a group of Hispanic boys who created a soccer stadium sculpture for our school, with a politically incorrect "men's club" attached to their sculpture. What did a "men's club" mean to these students, who if I recall correctly, were almost all Mexican nationals. Did the term

have the same seedy connotation associated with the numerous "gentlemen's clubs" in San Antonio, or did it have a more light-hearted significance referring to a casual place for men to meet? The associations and contexts for understanding and translating concepts of place, space, and cultural semiotics took on personal relevance when navigating ideas that were either shared or distinct between individuals with different experiential and cultural backgrounds. Thankfully, the boys tamed down their marketing of the club during their formal presentation of their work in the Artpace boardroom.

A couple of weeks before the final unveiling of *Remember this Time* (see Figure 4.16), David installed the work on the exterior of our new music building. On May 5, 2006 my students and I went outside periodically throughout the day to capture images of the light shining through this sun-dial inspired image. This date, Cinco de Mayo, which has its own historical and cultural associations of Mexico's struggle for independence with the United States, helped so many of us to facilitate our own connections with this site-specific work. Like many of the other examples of David's work that he shared with us, I believe the poignancy of the words instilled in this particular work sparked a sense of nostalgia in the minds of older viewers, while graduating students had a whole host of other associations in mind. For me personally and professionally, the message also had deep significance. This was to be my last year at Fox Tech High School and thus mark the end of my formal community partnership which brought me and my students such overwhelmingly stimulating art education experiences; it was also to be the last time I would interact with Linda Pace, the founder of Artpace, before her passing.

When asked to describe the project for a newspaper interview with Goddard (2006), David described his connection to the work in this way. "I thought about my time in high school and what it meant to make that transition from a young person to an adult," he said. "It is a time

we all remember. The piece almost works like a sundial, and I like the way it fades in and out on a cloudy day" (Goddard, 2006).

Figure 4.16. Remember This Time, fall 2005 semester program public art product. as photographed on May 5, 2006, shortly after its installation.

Before David came to work with us at Fox Tech as part of our community partnership, he already had a close connection with individuals from Artpace. In 2004, David was chosen to select three films for the On Screen at Artpace film series. This free public event held at Artpace highlights films with a central theme of relevance to the artist organizer. David chose to focus upon how architectural spaces define human relationships.

> Titled "Deuces Wild," the series of screenings and talks is being presented by David Jurist, an artist who studied film at the University of California at San Diego and landscape architecture at Berkeley and earns his living as a building contractor, seems well-placed to curate a series about how films construct couples through their set construction and use of space. (Kellman, 2004, p. 12)

While David had initially agreed to participate in the study, and did sign the informed consent form he was unable to participate due to unforeseen circumstances.

Ethel Shipton: 2006 Spring Semester Program Visiting Artist

Figure 4.17. Photo of spring 2006 program with Ethel Shipton (right) in 2005. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

In the spring of 2006, we welcomed artist and chief preparator at the McNay Museum of Art, Ethel Shipton (see Figure 4.17), to Fox Tech. I had seen Ethel's work before our partnership and thought the students would really relate to her modified renditions of padded skateboards, skater ramps, and basketball hoops at the Finesilver Gallery in 2003 (see Figure 4.18). In fact, in previous years, my other art classes did visit one of her major exhibitions at Finesilver, and indeed, the students absolutely connected with her work. As I expected, Ethel's personality also resonated instantly with the students, with her easy going demeanor and quick wit.

Figure 4.18. Art by artist Ethel Shipton/ spring 2006 semester program participant. (Photo courtesy of Ethel Shipton.)

In January 2010, Ethel Shipton was interviewed for the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center blog, in San Antonio, Texas, where she curated her second exhibition. When Ethel was asked if her choice of common materials seems to echo the concepts in her work and whether this is an intentional or practical choice, Ethel gave the following response.

> It's a bit of both, I do find myself attracted to materials so that becomes intentional in order to feed that need to explore the materials and move through the material with its meaning. Example: the use of vinyl- understanding that the material comes with its own language and meaning. Referencing car upholstery and the trade of upholstery work and knowing that when working with this material you are taken along the materials vocabulary, combining it with what you are trying to express as an artist. At times it becomes a practical choice due to time and money. But I think the overall driving force for me is the use of hand in the work and the understanding that if the choice is being made intentionally or for practical reasons that the concept and the materials are in a conversation. (Patty, January 2010)

Ethel, who was born in Laredo, Texas and has lived in Austin as well as Mexico City before moving to San Antonio, challenged students to think about art as being connected to everyday life in ways that they had not really considered in the past. For example, the concept of home, when addressed by Ethel Shipton, embodies a life history of stories of people, places, and spaces from a personal vantage point. When asked to describe her work *Home Again, Home Again…* for the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center blog, she described her inspiration for creating snapshot images of highways on the wall, and "vinyl home shapes" on the floor.

> I had started to notice the paths my dog had started to form in the yard- a path from the back door to the water bowl, a path to the front gate, a path to the back of the yard. Then I remembered those paths I saw in my childhood on the ranch- the cow paths that would define the movement of the herd. I began thinking about our every day movement and why we move from place to place-job, food, family, friendships, entertainment, culture, school and commerce. With a little research I found that many of our highways in San Antonio and other cities where cattle trails formed were from the cattle industry moving cattle from one part of the country to another. I was excited by the fact that here we are in 2010 and we are still moving on some of the same paths formed so long ago, formed for much of the same reasons. I liked the simple beauty and forms of the highways, the curves, the long straight sections, the feel of the road and the quiet that comes from driving alone. Then I began watching how these where being constructed around the city. These structures started to look like mesas in the horizon. They were constructed with

> many hands and fewer machines than one might think. My obsession with the highway grew and I drew highways for a year and made paintings and sculptures. With all this traveling, it started me thinking about place, the comforts of place and the places that give me comfort-HOME that was it-neighborhood, community, these things that give us a place to sit still and give us a place to grow and live. So, these two elements seem to have to be together, to express ideas of movement and place. One doesn't really work without the other. (Patty, January 2010)

Ethel's gift of exploring everyday issues in great depth through shared discourse with the students allowed for multiple perspectives and insights to be explored on a regular basis. Ethel had the gift of getting students to see the world and our connections with it in uniquely situated and personally relevant ways.

During the time of our community partnership with Ethel, she was also working on her own individual piece for the June, 2006 WindowWorks exhibition at Artpace, dealing with the question "where are we going?" (see Figure 4.19). In Ethel's WindowWorks project, she continued her exploration of pathways, or "highwayscapes." "I call them highwayscapes, because they are landscapes in themselves, even though there's nothing organic about them" (Wolff, June 2006). In yet another article in 2008, Ethel describes her highways scenes as "paths of desire" which take us to places that are essential to our existence such as the grocery store, malls, vacations, etc. (Goddard, 2008, p. 8H). In 2008, local coverage of Ethel's exhibition at a local community college also provided insights into her artistic practices at home.

> Local husband-wife artists Nate Cassie and Ethel Shipton tap into the community for their first joint show, currently on display at Palo Alto College's new Gallery 100. The inspiration for *What Are You Doing?* says Cassie, is place and community. As for the offbeat title, it refers to the couple's separate workplaces, office spaces, and studio spaces. Since neither Shipton nor Cassie knows what the other was doing work-wise, this title was fitting for their artistic life. (Herrera, February 2008)

Figure 4.19. Two installation views of Ethel Shipton's 2006 *Where are we going?* Installations located at Artpace San Antonio (top photo) and downtown on Houston Street at the Stuarts building. (Photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

With Ethel's guidance and vision, the art process during our community partnership became a means for exploring our consumer driven society. Together Ethel helped us to explore cultural forms of communication that transcend language barriers through the use of symbolic and graphic images. At the conclusion of our partnership, indeed we were the producers of the "¿…?" t-shirts which are still on sale at Artpace (see Figure 4.20), with the proceeds still benefiting their K-12 educational outreach programming. During our community partnership, Ethel introduced us to the process of creating and producing a collaborative video. Additionally, Ethel helped us to understand what the process of selecting someone to manufacture and

reproduce your image entails, from a practical and aesthetic point of view. We explored this process by selecting a printing company to manufacture our t-shirts as well as become familiar with the process of finding someone to fabricate our red neon sign, , which is still on display in the Fox Tech Library.

When asked to elaborate on what the experience meant to the artist and the students for a local newspaper article, here is how Ethel described our product.

> "By using punctuation instead of language, we thought it would be more universal," Shipton said. "Then we created a DVD with the kids taking a virtual trip around the world. Really, we used a blue screen and put them in front of scenes from cities around the world. But the project is designed to get the students thinking about where they want to go in life. (Goddard, 2006)

Figure 4.20. ¿...? Spring 2006 semester program public art product. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

One of our art students who worked with Ethel on the t-shirts said he has been wearing his shirt and has already been asked questions about it. "I've been wearing it to restaurants and when I go out, and everybody is asking me what it means," he said. "It's unusual and it makes people want to ask questions" (Goddard, 2006).

Ethel Shipton chose to keep much of her private life and background out of the discourse in the classroom. During our interview, I asked Ethel why she chose to keep information about her job at the McNay Museum of Art and her former experiences working as photographer for the House of Representatives in Austin private. She explained that it didn't seem pertinent to the

project. This sort of information would not have meant anything to the students. Ethel explained it would not have connected her any closer to them. Instead, Ethel chose to talk about things that would relate to the students. However, for the purpose of better understanding her role at the McNay then and now, I (ML) asked Ethel Shipton (ES) to describe her responsibilities at the museum during our December 23, 2009 interview.

ES: What I do, I like to call it my insurance job. I am the chief preparator for the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, which is an older word used in museums too. You kind of run the exhibits department. You put up all the shows. You light them and label them. You're one component of the larger team and you work with the curator and the exhibition coordinator and make the shows go up and down. You handle the art firsthand, literally. You're responsible for getting it to the right place, getting it safely, getting it packed and getting it gone. Also, getting outside sculpture put in. All those kinds of things. That's what I do.

ML: I was hoping you could share some of the connections you've had with Artpace since our time working together during the semester program?

ES: Oh sure. Artpace is of course a major part of the community and one of the driving forces for the contemporary art scene in San Antonio. I too am a part of that all the time. Chalk It Up is one of the programs that they do once a year. I think it's in the spring, where they take over Houston street downtown and have artists draw on the sidewalk and it's a big family day. There's food and there's activities and the kids can draw on the sidewalk and they appoint artists spaces. They do whatever they want and do art on the sidewalk, so it's public art.

ML: You've been pretty involved with that?

ES: I did that a couple of years ago, yeah.

ML: As an artist or judge?

ES: No, as an artist. That's fun.

ML: You did a WindowWorks too?

ES: I did do a WindowWorks. I forgot about that one, yeah. After the Fox Tech program, I did a WindowWorks. They (Artpace) offer four large windows there that are about seven feet wide, ten feet high and it's a shallow space so you can do an installation. You can do anything you want and I chose to do a large drawing on the windows with vinyl, sign vinyl, and cut out vinyl.

Ethel Shipton was the only female artist who participated in our Artpace/ Fox Tech semester programs from 2004-2006. While she was an ethnic minority in our classroom of Hispanic students, Ethel's experiences growing up in South Texas and living in Mexico City, her fluid use of the Spanish language, and her genuine connection with the students, did not paint her as an outsider to me or any of my students, even though this was a term she used to describe herself during our interview. She really went out of her way to squeeze me in to her tight work schedule at the McNay Museum of Art right at the peak of the holiday season, and she went the extra, extra mile of bringing me lunch for our meeting. I'm still reaping rewards personally and professionally from our community partnership.

Maria Leake: 2004-2006 Semester Program Teacher/ Researcher

Figure 4.21. Photo at dedication ceremony with Maria Leake (far right). (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.

As a public school art teacher, I've worked with every grade level during the past seventeen years. For ten years, from August 1995 until June 2006, Louis W. Fox Tech Academic

and Technical High School was my home (see Figure 4.21). I just loved the downtown location of the campus, next to so many art institutions within walking distance of our campus. I could literally walk from my classroom with my students to either the Southwest School of Arts and Crafts, the San Antonio Public Library with their own art gallery, the Finesilver Gallery, or Artpace, in minutes. Fox Tech was my second teaching assignment within the San Antonio Independent School District, where I had initially began as a middle school art teacher on the East side of the city. Each campus had it's unique challenges, but also each campus had unique attributes, due in large part to the population of the student body.

When I was an undergraduate art student enrolled at the University of Texas, my primary interest was in painting. My initial interest in art began when I was walking through the galleries at the Prado museum in Madrid, and saw the Black Paintings of Goya. The images ignited a fascinating and vigorous debate between my visiting professor and I about the significane of beauty in art. After taking a series of drawing and painting courses at the university level, an advisor suggested that if I took a few more classes, I could also become certified as an art teacher, and thus began my entry into the teaching profession. These series of events were happy occurences leading to my choice to become an art educator.

Fox Tech, also lovingly called "La Techla" by current and former students, was rich in traditions that even I was unfamiliar with as a Hispanic female. It is still strange to me that even though I grew up in San Antonio, I never was exposed to the types of traditions that were shared by most of the student body at Fox Tech. For example, when our school would have dances, the students went crazy dancing to cumbia and salsa music with not only their friends, but also with their parents. Mariachi music was also a mainstay of our school events and programming. There was mariachi music morning, noon, and night. I felt a great sense of community connection to

the Latin roots of our student body as an adult, that I never experienced in my youth. It was also the first time I had ever worked with students who spoke limited English, and many of the students were going back and forth to Mexico on a regular basis. I'm not sure how this worked, but many of our students were actually Mexican nationals.

Being a high school teacher in an inner city school did also have some challenging real world situations to contend with. There was and still remains a huge issue regarding pregnant teens in San Antonio, and other related problems of abuse, that were very much a concern of school's programming. During the 2005 and 2006, in addition to working with Artpace, I also partnered with the daycare center next door to our campus, and agreed to have my students' create art that would help to promote reading and parenting skills on the walls of the daycare's outdoor playground area. Figure 4.22 shows the May 4, 2006 dedication ceremony we had for our daycare mural unveiling.

Figure 4.22. Photo of Maria Leake (left) with SAISD Daycare Director Stephanie Free (right) during our May 4, 2006 dedication ceremony. (Photo courtesy of Joe Kethan.)

Many of the students that I had in my art classes did in fact have their own children in this facility while they were at school, so this was a project that they knew would be of benefit to them personally. All of my art students and I worked on this project at the same time we were working with Ethel Shipton and David Jurist during our 2005-2006 Semester Programs. That was a really busy year for collaborative partnerships.

For me, it was delightful working with the students in this setting, up until the final year, when administration shifted yet again. Unfortunately, my life was threatened by a student in the classroom, and the new administration did nothing to help ensure my safety. This was my cue that it was time to leave Fox Tech, and I did so with a heavy heart after ten years spent working with local art institutions and wonderful friends on the staff. Rather than looking at this as a closed door, I used this as an opportunity to move to North Texas, as a doctoral student, and began working with pre-K through fifth grade students. It was a good move for me, but I still am in contact with some of my former colleagues at Fox Tech online, and of course, go to Artpace for exhibitions and openings whenever I visit San Antonio.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS: PART 1

Spring 2004 *Here at Fox Tech We Think That We Can Change The World*

Spring 2005 *Yo Soy El Futuro*

Fall 2005 *Remember This Time*

Spring 2006 *¿...?*

Figure 5.1. Images of public art generated during the 2004-2006 semester programs. (Photos of spring 2005 and spring 2006 courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Triangulation/ Crystallization in Data Analysis

Triangulation, a term widely used in research vernacular to highlight how researchers use different procedures and protocol to appropriately collect and analyze data for their study, recognizes that variances in researcher styles will necessarily impact how different meanings are extracted from the study. Richardson (1998) however, prefers the term and concept of crystallization rather than triangulation to describe well informed research practices for the following reasons. Crystals combine symmetry and substance in their ability to undergo changes and growth. They reveal multi-dimensionalities of angles and approaches, and allow for different refractions that create different patterns and colors that vary in directions, depending on our viewing positions. Crystallization is a more postmodern term describing how mixed genre research methodologies and approaches allow readers to gain multiple insights which are complex, yet partial understandings of the topic (Richardson, 1998).

This study has deliberately attempted to incorporate triangulation/crystallization as part of the data analysis procedures and protocols to explore the learning interactions and creative expressions that took place surrounding the various community partnerships between Artpace and Fox Tech High School from 2004-2006. Figure 5.1 provides visual examples of the art generated during each of these community partnership collaborations. The study has tried to provide a multi-perspectival reflection of our past learning experiences through various lenses; artists, students, and my own perspective as the teacher. Together we have re-constructed our stories for other audiences to consider. With triangulation/ crystallization in mind, I initially sought out the four former artists involved with each semester program and four former students, one student per partnership who worked directly with these artists as research participants. As has been noted earlier, there were limitations to this process, and consequently only three artists,

four students, and I were able to fully participate in this research study, for a total of eight participants.

Data Analysis Overview

Understanding how participants have made meaning from their experiences and interactions that took place during the 2004-2006 Artpace/Fox Tech community-based art partnerships has involved looking back at the participants' outlooks individually as well as looking across and between their stories. Numerous researchers agree that it is up to researchers to design how their interpretive analysis will best serve the purposes of the study and explore different ways to present data (Agar, 1995; Barone, 2006; Barone & Eisner, 1988; Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Eisner, 1997; Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Glesne, 2006; Hendry, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1984, 1994; Nyman, 2002; Polkinghorne, 2007; Reighart & Loadman, 1984; Richardson, 2000; Rose, 1993; Schulman, 1997). Empowered by this recommendation, I have designed my own style of data analysis that weaves together three forms of interpretive data analysis: narrative sketches; data reduction; and reflections of this teacher/ researcher (see Table 5.1).

Narrative sketches are an example of an interpretive data analysis tool that allows researchers to interweave and organize themes embedded in the stories shared by participants and inform readers of the contexts informing these experiences (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999). Narrative sketches search for "patterns, narrative threads, tensions, and themes that constitutes the inquiry that shapes field texts into research texts" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 171). In my narrative sketches, I organized the stories of the participants chronologically, based on the time of the original semester program. Based on their responses to interview questions, I

organized excerpts from their statements that address three central themes relating to the research questions.

Table 5.1

Three Forms of Interpretive Data Analysis used in this Study

DATA REDUCTION	NARRATIVE SKETCHES	REFLECTIONS
*Data reduction is a process of selecting, focusing, abstracting and re-presenting data from various sources to address central issues in the research study. *Patterns and themes are visually clustered to provide graphic organizers reflecting general data findings. *Common threads are highlighted, while uniquely personal experiences are noted for further consideration.	*A narrative format that includes photographs and excerpts from our interviews has been included to re-present stories from the artist, student, or teacher perspective. *Contextualize how participants have made meaning from their experiences over time. *Narrative sketches allow the researcher to reorganize the multiple stories in a format that effectively shares information with audiences.	*Each narrative sketch has been concluded with reflective comments of this teacher/ researcher, to allow readers to understand how I have made meaning from our shared experiences. * Reflections served in articulating how I have connected situated learning theory, creativity theory, community art education, and memory research to the shared stories of the participants.

These themes address thoughts on learning within a community partnership, supporting or inhibiting creative expression, and how the participants see the community partnerships as being educationally beneficial. The narrative sketches only include select excerpts from the full interview transcripts that address the research themes. Narrative sketches allow the researcher to create their own strategy for sharing stories of past experiences. Consequently, I have utilized this data analysis technique to expand on the stories of the participants directly connected with each individual semester program, while I have chosen to incorporate data reduction to look for patterns and themes that run throughout the stories, as well as point out notable distinctions in their responses.

Data reduction is a process whereby information is selected, focused upon, and abstracted into raw data from various sources to communicate central issues of the study to readers (Fontana & Frey, 1998). Because I chose to expand on thematic issues individually in the narrative sketches, I have looked across and between the semester programs to reduce patterns and themes that I see have run through their stories, as well as describe where I saw notable distinctions. Between narrative sketches and data reduction, the data is being continually expanded and contracted by reading and re-reading stories for alternate readings, which is what Stake (1997) encourages researchers to do.

The third and final interpretative data analysis tool used in this study is the teacher/ researcher reflection. These reflections reveal how I have come to recognize learning and creative expression as having taken place during the 2004-2006 Artpace/Fox Tech community-based art partnerships and are interwoven into both the narrative sketches and the data reduction processes. My reflections have helped to situate my vantage point on our community partnership experiences as the teacher who was actively involved in each of the semester programs, as well as in my current role as researcher looking analytically at the stories collected and interpreting how they address the research questions and the corresponding themes driving this study.

Overview of Narrative Sketches

The purpose of this study has been to explore learning interactions and creative expressions that took place during our 2004-2006 Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnerships. By sharing our stories of experience, the intention is to understand the multiplicity of influences that were the foundation of our communities of practice (Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). While this study could have chosen to focus solely on the influence of Artpace on

each of our semester programs, as the teacher/ researcher, I felt it was more appropriate and informative as an educator to focus on our smaller artist, student, and teacher learning community. As key members of the Artpace/ Fox Tech community of practice, our stories are the focus of this study. Sharing excerpts of the participants' recollections regarding these community partnership experiences necessitated a presentation format that might help readers to conceptually connect their interview responses to the research questions.

Table 5.2

Connections between Research Questions and Narrative Sketches

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	THEMATIC CLUSTERING OF NARRATIVE SKETCHES FOR EACH SEMESTER PROGRAM
*How was learning facilitated by having one contemporary visual artist interact with high school art students and this teacher/ researcher, once a week for twelve weeks, during each of the four Artpace/ Fox Tech High School community –based art partnerships from 2004-2006? *How was visual and verbal creative expression for the students, each artist, and this teacher/ researcher supported or inhibited by having participants interact and share ideas during each of the four semester programs occurring between 2004 and 2006?	Theme #1: Learning within a Community Partnership *Examples of teaching and learning experiences *Teaching and learning styles *Experiences of unanticipated learning *Learning by sharing art with a larger community Theme #2: Supporting or Inhibiting Creative Expression *Creative freedom? Theme #3: How Participants' Recognize Educational Benefits of Artpace/ Fox Tech Semester Programs *Educational challenges/ limitations

My adaptation of this form of interpretative analysis uses a process of combining photographs with selected and re-organized interview responses that are driven by three overarching themes relevant to the research questions. Primarily, the themes attempt to understand: 1) what kinds of learning interactions were taking place during our community partnership; 2) how visual and verbal creative expression were either supported or inhibited during our interactions; and 3) what educational benefits have resulted from the 2004-2006 community partnerships between Artpace and Fox Tech High School as interpreted by the participants (see Table 5.2). As the narrative sketches require the researcher to re-organize

information to make the stories more readable and user-friendly, certain liberties were taken regarding the structure and relevant interview content to be shared in this data analysis section.

At the beginning of each narrative sketch, graphic organizers connect the participants' recollections with the two overarching research questions. Next, select responses of the participants have been re-organized into narrative sketches built around the three central themes and include visual images from our past interactions. The conclusion of this chapter reflects this teacher/ researcher's perceptions of the significance of this community partnership between Artpace San Antonio and Louis W. Fox Technical and Academic High School from 2004 until 2006.

Exploring the Semester Programs through Narrative Sketches: Our Community of Practice in Action

Before commencing on the narrative sketches, I want to briefly revisit the connections between communities of practice and the semester programs; they are one in the same. Wenger, McDermott, and Synder (2002), have explained that communities of practice view learning as a social interaction between experts and novices, each being recognized for possessing unique skills and abilities. Together, the participants learn from each other by tackling the real-world issues and concerns that provide a source of motivation and inspiration for continuing to collaborate with each other over time. There will necessarily be trial and error encounters, mistakes made, but learning will occur, whether intended or not, and there may be unintentional consequences resulting from these interactions. Each community of practice has a "set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories, and documents that the community members share" (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 29). Consequently, the narrative sketches have attempted to articulate the specific contexts and connections that our

communities of practice experienced and have decided to share with others. We will begin by looking at the first community partnership program between Artpace and Fox Tech High School that took place in the spring of 2004.

Spring 2004 Narrative Sketch

Figure 5.2. Photo of spring 2004 program participants. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

In the spring of 2004, artist Gary Sweeney came to Fox Tech High School as the first contemporary artist selected by Artpace, to begin our community partnership programs (see Figure 5.2). On Tuesday, December 22, 2009, I had the pleasure of interviewing artist Gary Sweeney in the Founder's Room at Artpace. On April 9, 2010 I also got to interview my former Fox Tech art student Rosa Leija as well as interviewing former art student Eloy McGarity on May 30, 2010. Comments following the participants' names in block quotes were selectively extracted from their interview responses. Tables 5.3 and 5.4 serve in highlighting participants'

perspectives addressing research questions, which are followed by contextualized narrative sketches.

Table 5.3

Interpretive Analysis Overview regarding Learning during the Spring 2004 Semester Program

SPRING 2004 SEMESTER PROGRAM **How was learning impacted through our community partnership?**
ARTIST PERSPECTIVE (Gary Sweeney): Gary learned firsthand some of the challenges of being a teacher and he openly admitted that teaching was an exhausting endeavor. Gary learned about the student's interests and concerns and was surprised when students were rude to him by expressing their indifference to his lessons. Gary saw these learning interactions with the students as opportunities to get them to think outside the box. STUDENT PERSPECTIVES (Eloy McGarity): Eloy felt that having Gary come into the classroom gave him an opportunity to get an artist's perspective on his own art, and someone to talk to about the art being made by other artists. Eloy saw Gary as a resource that supplemented the other art engagements that were taking place with me during the school year. (Rosa Leija): Rosa felt challenged to search for hidden messages in art when working with Gary and appreciated that he made her and the students laugh by making art activities fun and game-like. TEACHER PERSPECTIVE (Maria Leake): Gary was a living role model to the students by representing an artist who loves making art, but also understands the practical aspects of also having a regular full-time job. He was challenging students to think critically about art and life, in a way that neither I or the students had heard before.

Table 5.4

Interpretive Analysis Overview regarding Creative Expression during the Spring 2004 Semester Program

SPRING 2004 SEMESTER PROGRAM **How was creative expression impacted by our community partnership?**
ARTIST PERSPECTIVE (Gary Sweeney): Gary encouraged creative expression by having students participate in conversations and guessing games about double meanings in art. Creative expression was inhibited by students who students who thought his teaching activities were boring , and by the time schedule that had him working all day long, and never really getting to work long-term with one class. STUDENT PERSPECTIVE S (Eloy McGarity): Eloy felt he was finally able to communicate directly with an artist ideas about how art can be found everywhere around us. No one else except for Gary and I were seen as being able to understand Eloy's feelings about art, according to his recollections. (Rosa Leija): Rosas said she was introduced to new ways to communicate using images and words in non-traditional combinations by working with Gary and she also was able to express herself with me and her classmates, by making art for exhibitions and visiting other local galleries. Expressing ourselves during the semester program was inhibited primarily due to our limited time spent working together for various reasons. TEACHER PERSPECTIVE (Maria Leake): Gary taught the students and I a new way to communicate using word and picture combinations.

Theme 1: Learning within a Community Partnership

Within this community of practice, which partnered artist Gary Sweeney with over one hundred and twenty-five students over a twelve week period, Gary introduced students to his own style of incorporating words, images, and levity to his art projects using non-traditional mixed media and inspirations from literature, master sign painters, and popular culture. To contextualize some of the interactions that took place between the artist, students, and myself over this time period, I consider what aspects of our experience have stood out in our memories.

Examples of Teaching and Learning Experiences

What I remember about Gary's curriculum, was that he had us engage in a lot of group discussions where we might have to decode an image that he brought in and find alternate images embedded within it, depending on how you saw it. He also showed us past examples of his own work, like the American flag project he made for the SBC Center (now called the AT&T Center) in San Antonio, made entirely out of basketballs painted red, white and blue in tribute to our country and our basketball team, the San Antonio Spurs. Each time Gary shared an activity with us, he wanted us to be active participants in learning. While I remember the large group discussions, former Fox Tech student Eloy McGarity remembered more of the one-on-one interactions he shared with Gary:

> I remember that he [Gary] was one of the only people, besides you, that really seemed to understand me. You know, not many people could understand what I was trying to say when I saw art in everyday objects all around me. Like I remember one day, I was looking at the folds created by the fabric of the jacket lying near my desk and Gary came over and asked me what I was looking at. I told him that the folds and the shapes created by the jacket were mountain-like, and they also reminded me of the curves of a body, and Gary got it. He wasn't like other people who might say, "Oh yeah" and they are just trying to shrug off your ideas, Gary really got it. He would join in and say "Yeah, I see it. There is the …… and then over here, pointing to another section of the fabric, it

> continues to give this impression. Or, if you look at it from this angle, you can see…" He actually got it.
>
> I also remember that he used to come over and look at my art and ask me questions about it and we would talk. Those were the kinds of conversations that I remember.

Rosa, like me, remembered the large-group activities that we shared and how Gary got us to use the hidden messages in his own work and the work of others, as inspirations for us to create our own art products:

> He brought signs to school. Different signs that had hidden messages in it, like the FedEx sign that has the arrows and others that I don't remember. I think he had a hotel sign, the Google sign that had something in there. We were always trying to guess what the hidden messages were in the images. I remember we would create some pictures of our own words, but …. I know he would have other pictures, but I just don't remember what they would say.

Gary presented students with a range of short-term activities to work on as part of the large group and also individually at their tables. This balance between large group and small group interactions gave him an opportunity to also go around and talk individually with students. Gary had this to say:

> Well, I remember the classes very well and I remember showing them the optical illusions and having them get things and see things. Remember the pictures that I showed them that had things like… there was a dog hidden in it, and there were arrows going up one way? It showed them about negative space and it seemed to me that that was something. They looked at a Salvador Dali picture and they were excited about that. I think that was probably something they hadn't seen before and I remember that very vividly.
>
> And then we were going over the rebus puzzle- they were pretty engaged in that. There was a lot of participation in that. They seemed to be interested in the idea that words and symbols and letters combined with symbols can make words. You know, it wasn't 100% participation, but I think this was probably like a foreign language to some of these kids.
>
> There were people (students) that came up to me after class and talked to me and asked questions. Or there were kids when we were doing the rebus puzzle, you could tell they took some time and thought on their work and maybe just the fact that there was somebody there that was making a living being an artist was enough to show them, "Look, it actually is possible!"

Examples of Teaching and Learning Styles

Gary used a high percentage of his time working with the students engaging in discussions with them about real-world situations, that didn't necessarily connect with art or the life of an artist, in a traditional sense. For example, he told us about the pay incentives that his company allotted for employees who didn't miss work or how they might win a fully-loaded Ford Explorer if they hit specific attendance targets or got other financial incentives for being efficient employees. Gary used his time and curricular focus to share and engage with students about decisions that have informed his own development as a professional artist and his personal choice to remain working as a baggage handler with the airlines. Gary often shared the perks of being able to travel anywhere around the world with his wife for free because of his job with the airlines, and still make art. Gary tried to light a fire about how important a good education is for students if they want to earn a decent salary in the future. Because Gary's candid conversations with students was such an integral component his curriculum during the 2004 semester program, I asked him why he felt it was so important for him to keep sharing these kinds of stories with the students as part of his teaching style. He replied:

> Well, I think that they need to hear it. They're going to graduate from high school probably with at least one strike against them anyway (referring again to our depressed economy). The workforce now is a lot bleaker than it was. It's going to be the ones that are disciplined and mature and responsible that are going to do better. But that doesn't even guarantee you success these days. It just guarantees you that you're going to get your foot in the door. To tell you the truth, I think that they just need to learn that in the real world, you don't get to make an excuse for not coming to work. You don't get to turn in your papers late, because your boss isn't going to go for that. You're not going to be able to bullshit your way out of situations that you're in because the real world doesn't treat you like that. They don't give you the freebies and second chances and stuff. I think one of the things you have to learn in high school is a sense of responsibility. That might be like the most important thing you can learn in life. If you are in a situation where your bad behavior is coddled, nobody's doing you any favors because you're going to repeat that pattern as an adult and the consequences are going to be a lot greater. You know what I mean?

I think Gary was right on the mark. Most of the students needed guidance and another lens through which to make better decisions about their lives. As Gary told me himself, this was his first experience working with high school students in the classroom setting and he did find the experience rewarding, but also really challenging mentally, trying to relate to the students, and physically, being exhausted. I do know however that there was a mutual respect between both the artist and student that emerged during their time working together as was evident when Gary and then Eloy shared their memories with me. First, Gary's recollection:

> I vividly remember one fascinating kid [Eloy] who was very engaged and answered questions and seemed really smart and really captivated with learning and man… I thought this kid was going to be like…I was going to end up mentoring him, because he seemed like he really was interested in the subject matter. You might not remember him but he broke a kid's eye socket. He got into a big fight and he was out of class after about three of four weeks. I think they sent him to another school or they sent him to jail or something like that. You told me that he did a report on North Korea, and it was a well-researched report on North Korea's mountain regions. He was kind of angry at times, but then one day he was gone.

Eloy also recognized the unique learning opportunity that was made possible by putting an artist in the public school setting. Eloy did recall the kinds of large group interactions that took place in the classroom on days when Gary was there with us, but it was the side conversations that meant the most to him:

> Well, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to talk and interact with him like I did if he wasn't there. I got to hear his perspectives on a wide range of topics that otherwise I might not have gotten from anyone else. Gary and I shared a lot of similar interests and ideas. I thought of myself as ahead of the other students at the time and I thought Gary was a genius. We were on the same wavelength. Yes, it was a valuable opportunity to have us working together and those kinds of interactions should be encouraged to take place more often in schools. Students need exposure to people from outside the establishment, because you never know who is going to make a lasting impression on you.

Indeed, we never knew what we might learn next or what was significant to one person or the other. Again, I had no idea of the scope or range of topics and social issues that Gary and the

students were engaging in until I interviewed them for this study. I don't even remember the incident for example of Eloy hitting another student, but perhaps this is because so many students at our campus were getting into trouble periodically. We did have two full-time police officers on our campus throughout my entire time working there, lock-downs were not uncommon, our in-school suspension classroom was always full, and the assistant principals routinely came into my classroom to pull out a student for any number of reasons. It was never a dull moment on our campus.

Unanticipated Learning Experiences

Gary learned a lot about our student population during his time on our campus by listening to the student's perspective on situational questions, talking with them about their own plans after high school, and engaging them in activities that challenged their ways of communicating using a combination of images and words. Each of these experiences created a complex network of associations that allowed Gary to learn as much about us as we learned about him and his thoughts and work. Here were some of the memories Gary had about what he learned working with us.

> I don't know if you knew this, but I was four weeks into the program when I realized that Fox Tech wasn't a continuation school. I actually told people it was a continuation school. Meaning once you get thrown out of high school-it was a last chance school. When you have the biggest room in the school as the daycare center, I realized that I went to a really lily-white high school in the middle of white bread America. Yeah, I was a little flabbergasted at that.
>
> I tell this story a lot, but I only went there in your class only one day a week, but I did seven classes, and I would go home and lay on my couch and just… (pause) I was completely drained. I absolutely had no strength at all to get up and make myself dinner. I said, "How could Maria do this five days a week? How could anybody do this five days a week?" I've been a baggage handler for thirty years and I've worked twenty-hour days that weren't anywhere near this exhausting. I remember towards the end of the day, the

> last two classes of yours were really touch-and-go. They were the kids who were a little bit rougher around the edges than the rest of them.

Gary's response made me laugh at first, but when I heard Daniel and Ethel express similar responses about how demanding being a teacher was back then, I had to stop and think. Sometimes I do forget how hard and demanding our job is until I get a little distance from the day to day expectations of teaching, such as during summer breaks. We are trying to connect with students, parents, curriculum, assessment tests, discipline problems, and a whole other range of social problems that are part of working with others in a public school setting, that are extremely demanding on us. It was nice having the artists like Gary, Daniel, and Ethel, express their gratitude for my role as the art teacher involved in these partnership programs. Even when I interviewed Rosa, she too reminded me of all of the different types of learning engagements that the students and I took on that school year including visiting different museums and galleries, and making and sharing our art with public venues. Rosa was also grateful for the experiences we shared together in the past and her comments also reminded me that the students do sometimes remember when teachers go the extra mile.

Rosa said that she came to appreciate that art is all around us by not only the experiences that I shared with her and the other students, but also as a result of working with Gary. Rosa remembered that he used old signs and re-cycled them for his work by re-combining them and making new signs. All of these unexpected learning engagements have given Rosa an appreciation for the concepts behind contemporary art practices, as well as within the work itself.

Eloy hadn't expected to find someone to talk to about the art, including the work he was seeing on his own free time, so this was an exciting learning opportunity for Eloy.

> I remember that he made some really interesting art and I remember that he didn't mind talking with me about other artists that I found really interesting like when I would go down to Artpace. In fact, there was one artist there, I forgot his name, but he made a

> treasure map of a real treasure using lemon juice, but the only way you could see it was to burn it and you would only have a moment to read the message before the paper disintegrated. It was great to hear how Gary also appreciated the work from his perspective as an artist. It gave me a chance to kick around some ideas about the messages and meanings of the work with someone who really knows what they're talking about.

Learning by Sharing Art with the San Antonio Community

What did it mean to the artist, students, and me to share the work that resulted from our community partnership with larger audiences? The dedication ceremony was a closing event to each of the 2004-2006 semester programs (see Figure 5.3). It was our way of sharing concepts and ideas that we had explored in the classroom setting with larger public audiences from our local community, including local school officials, fellow teachers, students, and Artpace staff.

Figure 5.3. Photo of dedication ceremony for spring 2004 semester program. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

This was by far our smallest audience for an unveiling event, which only grew larger and larger

as the years went on. Later, we used press releases to invite even wider communities to attend our dedication events. I wanted to know what Rosa, Gary, and Eloy remembered about that day.

Rosa said, "Was I out there? I don't think so. I see the band out there [in the photo], but I really don't think I was there." Rosa was probably correct. The people working with Artpace and I had thought that coordinating our art dedication event to align with the year-end Fox Tech fine arts fair that began after school ended would be a good idea, but it wasn't. There were so many events like musical venues, exhibitions, dance and theater performances taking place simultaneously that this carnival-like atmosphere wasn't conducive to focusing attention on any one event. As a result, many students like Rosa, were probably off in the dunking booth, getting their face painted, or something else instead of walking around to the front of the school for our dedication. We learned from this experience to schedule dedication ceremonies at times that were more conducive to focusing solely on the visual arts. Every art dedication from then on took place around nine o'clock in the morning, to allow city officials, and other guests to find parking, be outside when it wasn't hot, and allow teachers to bring down their classes as well.

Gary said:

> I remember the band. I remember I played the drums for the band. There were mariachi, but there was also a drum line, and I remember I played and then we opened it up. I just drove past it… [the installed artwork facing Main Avenue] and it's aging very well. Linda Pace was there and you know, she was the figurehead of the arts community here. The fact that she was a very busy important woman, the fact that she took time out, and the fact that she signed onto this program, while I don't know if she directly or indirectly came up with the program but she certainly planted the seeds for all the community outreach that Artpace is practicing, so because she was there- that was kind of thrilling. Kate Green of course was the one who was the liaison. She was the one that called me to start this whole thing. So… the three of you were pretty much the "three amigos" that I had. [Later, Gary remembered that Kathryn Kanjo, the former Executive Director was there as well.] Yeah, she [Kathryn] was really excited about it [the 2004 semester program unveiling] and it had the bonus of being the first project.

Yes, I have to agree with Gary, it was great to see the people from Artpace come out and share this event with us. Together we got to share the fruits of our first community partnership with others, even if it was a small audience, it was special.

Eloy said:

> Well, if you mean on this particular project, I have to admit that I was in ISS (in-school suspension) on the day it was unveiled. I had someone, I forgot who, ask me about the work and the dedication event, but I couldn't tell them anything specific since I wasn't allowed to go.

I know from having listened to Eloy's interest in art then and now that he has a history of sharing art with the community, whether it was in graffiti art of the past, working with local and legal community groups to make murals on the sides of public housing buildings, or making smaller-scale art for exhibitions at local art venues. Therefore, I wanted to find out what Eloy's feelings are in general about making art for the public to see. He replied, "I think it's really important to communicate ideas with other people, get your message out there, and be a part of the art community. Art is life. It's what it's all about."

Theme 2: Supporting or Inhibiting Creative Expression

Conceptions of creativity waiver depending on social and cultural values and beliefs held by individuals, but I wanted to know how the participants viewed their own creative expression as being either supported or inhibited by being involved in our community partnership. First, I wanted to know if and how they thought visual expression was either supported or inhibited during our time together. Eloy McGarity said:

> Well, I don't remember exactly what I made in response to working with Gary, but I remember that working under your guidance, I was exposed to a lot of different projects and ideas that I wouldn't have necessarily done on my own. I remember for example you made us do a self-portrait, and I really didn't want to do one, but you insisted, so that was a new experience for me. I also remember we had to do an architecture project and I saw

> kids doing weird things like painting cotton balls green to represent trees in the model. So we were all doing unusual things like that in the classroom. We also got to go and see a lot of other people's work together at different locations around our school, and that gave us opportunities to talk and share ideas with each other in that sense as well.

Eloy's response gives the impression that while he may not have liked or remembered a lot of the specific projects he was given to do during our class, he felt challenged to push himself to try out ideas that perhaps he would not have explored otherwise. Eloy told me during our interview that I really scolded him in the past for using thick, black outlines on his work, which I had to laugh at, because nobody loves thick, black lines in art more than me and French artist Georges Rouault. On some levels, this could be interpreted as supporting his creative expression, but it could also have been interpreted by a more timid student as an inhibitor to learning.

> How did Gary view creative expression as being either supported or inhibited?
>
> I wanted something fun. I wanted something that forced you to think and maybe look at things in a different way-look at the symbols. My whole art ideology revolves around images and words, text and words, and so that dovetails nicely with that. And so… it's clearly a puzzle. You see it immediately and go "Oh, okay. What's this?" And if you have any sort of curiosity at all then you'll try to figure it out and it's clever. It's a positive statement and if you manage to figure it out, it gives you this positive reinforcement like, "Look I figured this out" and you think you're clever. So there are all sorts of nice positive things going on.
>
> It's called a rebus puzzle and a rebus puzzle uses images instead of words. And it's kind of a puzzle that you solve, a combination of words and images. If you can remember the old television program *Concentration* where they had to remove these panels and by guessing how these match up. Once they get to put together the parts of the panel, this picture would be revealed and the person who guessed what the message said, won the game. So- this [Gary points to the final art product of the Semester Program; see Figures 5.4 and 5.5] is on about a four by eight-foot piece of board. For an example, the first word is an "H," the capital letter "H" plus a picture of an "ear." So it's "H" plus "ear." So the word that you have is "here."

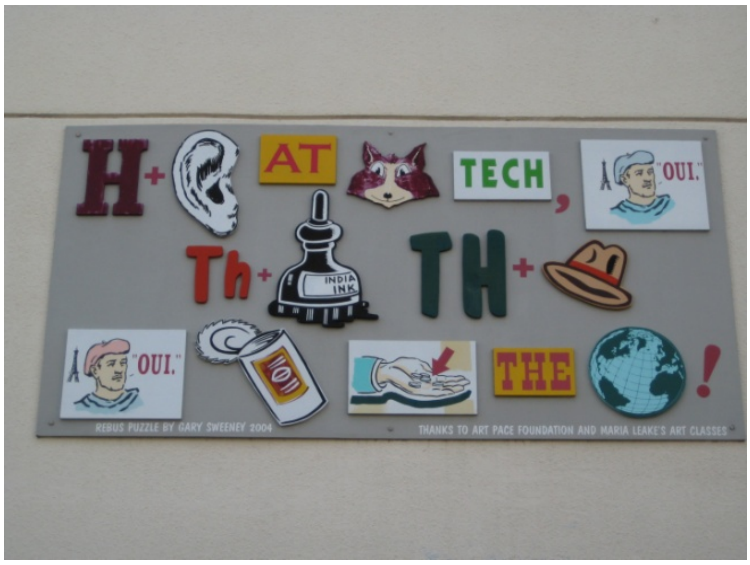


Figure 5.4. 2004 semester program art product called *Here at Fox Tech We Think That We Can Change The World*.

Figure 5.5. Details of *Here at Fox Tech We Think That We Can Change The World.*

Rosa found the exploratory activity of trying her hand at making picture word puzzles a creative act.

> Just saying something with words can be boring, but when you actually have to figure it out, it becomes kind of fun looking at pictures. And I guess it's just his way of saying stuff. It can have two different meanings, like "sin cuenta" or "cinquenta" (referring to Gary's work in the *Spanglish* show). It's just the way one person sees it. It could have different meanings, like someone is dyslexic and they can't really read because they see things mixed up, maybe this would be easier for them to read this with pictures.

Exploring the symbols and words with Gary was in Rosa's view a creative act. Our activities gave us a new way to communicate.

Interpretations of Creative Freedom

Being able to express yourself freely has been recognized as being linked to creative expression dating back to the end of the eighteenth century (Albert & Runco, 1999). Even back then, it did not matter if you were considered a genius or talented, if society's rules and norms did not allow for creative expression to manifest itself, it could not survive. Thus, I wanted to understand if Eloy, Gary, and Rosa ever felt like they were ever impaired from being able to express their ideas and thoughts with each other openly during our community partnership.

Eloy McGarity said:

> Well, I had freedom to express myself to the extent that I had to follow the SAISD (San Antonio Independent School District's) policies and procedures when I was working with you in the classroom. I used to really like to draw naked bodies and transform and overlay some of the imagery, but of course, I couldn't do any of those types of images when I was at school. I had to wait to do those kinds of drawings outside of school. But other than those basic guidelines, yeah, I had freedom to express my thoughts and ideas.

I do remember Eloy sharing his sketches with the students, even though it was officially not condoned by the school, as long as the work wasn't offensive. I didn't mind him sharing his work with others because the other students obviously recognized Eloy's gift at exploring ideas through art. I was happy to be a part of helping Eloy any positive recognition he could get.

Did Gary see his ability to express himself as being inhibited or did he feel that he had creative freedom?

> I think that yeah, I was given complete freedom. I never felt any restraint at all. I never felt any boundaries. I would show pictures. I would ask questions. I would say, "For $30,000, for $10,000, would you not take a bath for a month?" They were situational questions. The kids really liked them. It was like a little five minute break I would give them. But there was one that was very disturbing response I got from the students. "For a million dollars would you play Russian roulette" or something like that. And a couple of kids raised their hand. But amazingly enough… for $10,000 …there wasn't one single student in any of your classes who would stop bathing.
>
> You never tried to micromanage me in any sense of the word. Whatever momentum I was getting towards anything, you were moving up right along. Like I said, I'm able to

> share my imagination with the kids. I'm able to let them figure things out so it's not just one sided. It's not a statement that I'm giving them. They're sort of finding out for themselves that they can change the world.

I know that Gary wished he would have had the students more involved in actually being involved in the generation of the final work, but again, we were doing the best we knew how at the time:

> They were submitting the pictures for this (the final art product) and some of them had some pretty good ones, but then I think… looking back in the end… I probably could have made it into a pure collaboration if the pictures had been all theirs, but they weren't.

I do agree as the teacher however, more prolonged engagements with the students, having them work together to develop a project and share in the experience from beginning to end would have fostered a closer bond between the artist, student, and me, and it would more than likely have invested all of us more closely with the final product. Both Rosa and Eloy had actually forgotten about the final product, and both had to work at decoding it again when we met. So I agree with Gary, giving students more of a hand in making the final product probably would have supported more creative and personalized learning engagements for the students and I, but time spent together was the greatest inhibitor to our shared experiences.

Theme 3: How Participants Recognized Educational Benefits of Community Partnership

Our community partnership initially grew out of a shared vision between Artpace and Fox Tech to provide enriching and educational art experiences for my high school art students. It was hoped that everyone involved in the program would benefit educationally from the collaboration, and become as excited about our partnership as we were, so I wanted to understand how they felt about its educational significance.

Eloy McGarity had this to say:

> It meant everything to have someone else come into the school that really represented the art world. You can't substitute that kind of relationship with any textbook or standardized guidelines. It was real-world stuff that we were talking about and we got to directly share and exchange ideas with each other. I learned a lot from you as the teacher, but I gained another level of appreciation for art by working with Gary, a real-life artist.

Gary Sweeney said:

> I don't know what their [Artpace's] intention was, but it was a perfect match to bring a living, breathing artist into a high school. To humanize them and show them that you can work hard and you can study hard and draw and practice and become professional artists. Just the role model aspect alone… I would hate to think that…I'll bet that many of them have never met an artist before. So, it was a brilliant idea for Artpace to demystify the whole art thing. I think it was invaluable to them.

> I hope those people [referring to administration from the San Antonio Independent School District] realize that number one-they've gotten exposure to artwork between here [Artpace] and the Southwest School of Arts and Crafts. They [students in the district] have access to a treasure trove of art, a wide variety of art styles and substance that other people in major cities don't have the advantage of. They've got these venues here that care about them, and they're getting quite a good art collection over there [at Fox Tech].

Eloy, Rosa and I agree that working directly with a living breathing artist made connections to the art world more real than can be experienced by looking only at their art. Meeting and working with the artist in addition to viewing their work gave us opportunities to ask more questions, and get more personal points of view. It was an invaluable pairing of members from the community. As the teacher, I gained a whole new level of appreciation for the rebus puzzle and how Gary was inspired by game shows of the past to advance his current interests. I also got a kick out of going to the local San Antonio Museum of Art and seeing some of his other works using appropriated signs to spell out quotes from writers of the past. When I had special visitors come to spend time with me in San Antonio, I took them to see Gary's art because I became a fan of his art after I got to know him and the ideas behind his work. Gary's work has captured my attention ever since our first encounters, and now I'm proud to be the owner of a Gary Sweeney piece of art.

Educational Challenges/ Limitations

When partnering individuals from different communities, you never are sure what kinds of dynamics are going to emerge from these shared learning experiences. Indeed, within each of our community partnerships there were educational challenges that became apparent and are perhaps a little easier to reflect upon, now that these critical events have passed (Webster & Mertova, 2007). I wanted to get the artist and student's perspective on the educational challenges or limitations that they experienced as the first artist involved in the semester programs. For Eloy, the Fox Tech high school students were the greatest inhibitors to learning:

> Well, you are not going to get everyone on board in learning. Probably there were students, who weren't too engaged with what was going on, and not that interested in art, but it all worked out. We were all in it together, and we were all getting exposure to working with someone new.

Exposure to working with new people was an idea that Gary reinforced. For Gary, there were some tensions that have made a deep and lasting negative impression on him, as is evident in his recollection:

> I haven't had a lot of exposure to high schoolers on the lower economic scale and they try to be tough all the time. That took some getting used to. There were parts of me that wanted to sympathize with them, and parts of me that wanted to strangle them. There was one girl who was outright rude to me when one time… you when weren't there. I was kind of flabbergasted. We were going over [ideas]… We were trying to come up with a rebus puzzle, we were going through some exercises and this one little, small, butchy Hispanic girl goes, "Are we going to be doing this all day?" Let me get the wording right… "Are we going to go over the puzzle again?" And I said, "Well, yeah. We have to preserve…." and the girl said, "Because they're really kind of boring." Well… you weren't there. I'm sure she wouldn't have said that if you were there and I know that she apologized to me later on. And then I think of like a million things I should have said afterwards, but I just kind of shrugged it off. I didn't want to get in trouble in a little pissing match. It stuck with me… obviously. Here I go to colleges and they're like [Gary switches to a high pitched voice]… "Oh, Mr. Sweeney, I *really* like your work. Would you sign my postcard please?" And then with this student I hear [Gary uses a whiney voice]… "Will we be doing this much longer? You're *really* boring us."
>
> I totally empathize with Gary's experiences. Really, it was never a dull moment on our

campus. The students had such an incredible array of experiences and resources available to them, that I don't know if they ever really stopped to think about what they were exposed to. For example, I'm not a huge basketball fan or anything, but one particular day, we had all these NBA basketball players like Jason Kidd and others coming to our campus, talking with kids. I never even heard any student express any excitement about this opportunity to see these famous players at our school, but I was excited. I went home and shared what I had seen with my husband. On other occasions, we even had big Tejano musical performers coming to our school, which in San Antonio is a very popular musical genre, and again, it was no big deal to the kids. Actually, the only stimulus that I can honestly say got the students excited was anything having to do with our homecoming game, lovingly referred to as the Chili Bowl. Besides the Chili Bowl and prom it was pretty tough getting the kids excited or invested with anything else. Actually, I was the senior class sponsor once, and even then, it was like pulling teeth trying to get the class officers to show up for meetings and take part in the planning and organization of the prom. Even my co-sponsor bailed out on me. How sad.

Teacher/ Researcher Reflections of Spring 2004 Semester Program

It seems like a million years ago that I was the teacher working in the inner-city classroom with students coming in and out of jail, and having their own children in the district's daycare next door. Yes, it is true that there were many students who were disinterested in school in general, but Gary had a style in his approach to working with the students that got us thinking about developing art concepts and associations that went beyond anything that had ever been presented or shared with us in any art textbook or district approved resource materials. Learning was not only fun, but thought-provoking.

Like Gary's teaching style, I too believed in pushing the envelope about the range of topics and ideas that could and should be explored with students. Art education should be relevant to the needs of the student and I think Gary very much incorporated this philosophy with me and the students in the classroom, just as I did and continue to do. Our particular community of students needed exposure to news ways to think and communicate using art and together, Gary and I made this opportunity possible. We shared this educational opportunity together, made mistakes together, and ultimately learned from our experiences. Gary mentioned that he thought one of the benefits of the program was that it humanized the artist, and I agree, but I also think this experience also humanized the teacher and students for Gary as well. Learning wasn't ever one-way, we were partners.

Spring 2005 Narrative Sketch

On Monday, December 21, 2009, I met artist and Judge Daniel Guerrero at Artpace's Founder's Room to conduct our interview. The following day, I met former Fox Tech student John Contreras at the same location (see Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6. Photo of Daniel Guerrero (left) & John Contreras (right).

The following narrative sketch reflects the comments that each of them shared with me about how they felt learning and creative expressions were facilitated by our community partnership interactions. Tables 5.5 and 5.6 outline the major perspectives that each of us shared regarding how we felt our learning experiences and opportunities for creative expression were understood.

Table 5.5

Interpretive Analysis Overview of Learning during the Spring 2005 Semester Program

SPRING 2005 SEMESTER PROGRAM **How was learning impacted by our community partnership?**
ARTIST PERSPECTIVE (Daniel Guerrero): Daniel gained a sense of empathy for what students encounter in their everyday lives as well as gaining an appreciation for the role of teaching students. Daniel explored issues like propaganda and communication though art to challenge students to respond critically to images and texts in our world. STUDENT PERSPECTIVE (John Contreras): John recognized that there are social injustices in how Hispanics are under-represented in textbooks, and that we should and did make an effort to correct this. John came to form a deep appreciation for working closely with Daniel to tease out ideas and concepts related to art and our Hispanic culture. This learning project gave John a voice to share his passion with other members of the community who share his concerns. TEACHER PERSPECTIVE (Maria Leake): Local histories, politics, art, our city's Hispanic culture and traditions came alive through discussions and art making. Daniel pushed the boundaries to allow students to look for art and hidden agendas in advertising in a manner that was understandable and accessible for the students to relate to.

Table 5.6

Interpretive Analysis Overview of Creative Expression during the Spring 2005 Semester Program

SPRING 2005 SEMESTER PROGRAM **How was creative expression impacted by our community partnership?**
ARTIST PERSPECTIVE (Daniel Guerrero): Daniel had students explore ideas regarding public art that teases viewers to want to know and understand more about it, similar to his work making movie poster images. He asked for student input into how to modify his original plans for the project and thus the project became a reflection of the group aesthetic and concerns. The greatest inhibitor to getting students to participate was either their basic human needs for sleep, food, or getting them interested in the conversation.

(table continues)

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE (John Contreras): John enjoyed making and sharing art with Daniel, having conversations with him, sharing his thoughts and ideas with the larger San Antonio community, and learning more about his own cultural heroes and meeting their living relatives. John felt his ability to creative express himself was when he got nervous before making his public speech at the dedication in front of the cameras.

TEACHER PERSPECTIIVE (Maria Leake): Daniel made critique of popular culture imagery accessible to the students, by re-introducing them to images they were already familiar with in popular advertising, but having them look again for alternate readings. Daniel had a vision for how the project would evolve, but instead, he found that it was many of his own ideas that had to evolve to become more streamlined to better fit with the student's own interests and aesthetic preferences. Social negotiation of ideas allowed the students and me to become invested participants in the style of art and communication that Daniel allowed us to share with him.

Theme 1: Learning within a Community Partnership

During our second community partnership, artist and Judge Daniel Guerrero came to Fox Tech with his own custom-designed curriculum focusing on propaganda. Not only was Daniel interested in teaching what makes an effective composition, but he also challenged students to question the messages behind many images used in popular culture advertising. In order to help teens decode visual imagery, Daniel used a vast array of common images and art historical references to drive his message home.

Examples of Teaching and Learning Experiences

Like Gary Sweeney, compelling conversations with the students were a major part of Daniel's interactions with the students. Everything that Daniel addressed during his time with the students centered around conversations reflecting real-wold issues and ideas, like subtle messages in advertising, hidden agendas in the school textbooks, and our role as informed individuals to challenge the status quo. I'll let Daniel's own words elaborate on the kind of

diverse everyday contexts that were interwoven into our teaching and learning experiences during our community partnership:

> I remember talking with them about propaganda. I remember right as we were having our big discussion on propaganda, we were interrupted by someone speaking on a megaphone outside in the parking lot. It turned out to be the coast guard recruiting at Fox Tech. Then we went out there it was a big boat with a big banner and a truck painted with all sorts of wonderful images that made being in the coast guard look very romantic and very dramatic. It was just a perfect example of the kind of propaganda we were trying to learn about.

> I took it upon myself to bring in a lot of overhead projector slides. I don't know if you recall, I would go, like on a daily basis, go to Kinko's and make photocopies of different pieces of art, different pieces of propaganda, posters and showed them on overhead projectors and then was able to get opinions from them. Sometimes their opinions were- you'd ask them, "Well, tell me what you see," or "Tell me what you think of this," and they were just brutally honest. They would say, "Well, you can tell me this or that but this is what I see." A lot of times it was sort of stripping away of all the pretense of art and they would just be into the moment and that way I think they were really smart and really clever and just would sort of call things for what they were.

John's recollections of the events and discussions also recalled a particular item from popular visual culture, the Che Guevara t-shirt, a common sight on t-shirts in our city, and pretty much everywhere else around the world. There is a sense of romanticism captured in this up-close graphic representation that Daniel got students to think about more in-depth than perhaps they had done in the past. There are so many images floating around that many of us, including me, have come to readily accept without challenging. Daniel didn't let us get away with that easily. John recollected, "I remember we talked about a student wearing a Che Guevara t-shirt from a poster image, and I remember seeing images in the books Daniel brought over." Daniel had a real grasp of how to share a wide range of symbols used in art that have both long and short-term appeal to audiences.

Examples of Teaching and Learning Styles

There were assumptions that Daniel had about teaching and working with students that he

had not anticipated before our community partnership began. For example, simple concepts like working in teams and collaborating were issues that had to be taught or re-taught for effective participation of all participants:

> There was, and something that I seemed to realize when we were in the thick of the project was that obviously, they are high school art students and they are not going to have the same experiences that an artist or that a teacher does. It required you to teach the students not only to collaborate with each other but to teach them how to collaborate and teaching them how to be artists. So you want to do this without crushing their spirits or making them feel like it's just you… doing your art and they are just being assistants. So in that sense it was a challenge, but at the same time, you have to make sure that their work is up to speed and that they are going to put something up on the wall forever…

Even Jennelle Gomez, who worked with artist Ethel Shipton in fall 2005 also brought up the fact that she had no prior experience collaborating with her peers for a sustained period of time, but that she felt it was an incredibly necessary and useful learning tool, that she uses now often as part of her college life. Daniel, definitely felt that getting students to work collaboratively was an important part of their overall education, and I think the students realized that. Even John Contreras, who seems to harbor a little bit of resentment to other students who were not as engaged as he was with Daniel, recognized that our community of partnership had to at least attempt to include all students into the teaching and learning process.

Unanticipated Learning Experiences

Daniel Guerrero expressed often during our conversations, that he gained a whole new level of appreciation for the teaching profession as a result of entering the classroom in his new role as teacher and artist:

> I didn't have any sense of what it's like for teachers, just having to be prepared to talk with them (students) for an hour every day. It seemed like something you could wing or no big deal and then like after the first session you realize how much preparation has to actually go in. I don't know if you recall there was one young man who, on more than one occasion, would, during the lecture…and he wasn't disruptive or anything… would

> very quietly pull out a box of cereal, a bowl, and some milk and pour himself some milk and eat. Yeah, he was very clever young man. I don't know if you recall he was the one who when I asked them who had come up with the term "Hispanic," he just- blew. He yelled out in between bites of cereal, "Nixon!" I think you initially thought it was a joke, but he did turn out to be correct. I don't recall how he had learned that, but he was a very smart young man. But, the last thing I would have expected somebody to be doing in class was be eating cereal and you were very sensitive. You explained to me a lot of times they're not eating at home because of their socio-economic situation. School was the only time they got a full warm meal and sometimes they came late because they didn't have cars or a ride. Sometimes it was a challenge to figure those things out. Again, I had no idea what a monumental and difficult task it was to relate to kids that age and so I think that often memories that I have is always being reminded what an amazing thing it is that someone teaches. I since joke with people that I used to be one of those people who had opinions about what teachers should do and how they should do it and whether or not they were getting paid the right amount, and since this experience… I don't have that opinion. Whatever it is… it's not enough. They're doing God's work and it's an amazingly challenging and rewarding experience.

In addition to Daniel's openness about the challenges of working in the classroom, during our time together, he also addressed the teaching deficiencies present in our state-adopted curriculum, particularly in our history books:

> One thing that stuck with me was that John came up to me and said he had not been able to find any books that dealt with specifically Mexican-American history. And so I ended up giving him some of the books I had. He was very appreciative of that. I was talking with him about the books later, so I know he had read them.

John Contreras had this to say about Daniel's approach:

> Daniel was always there for us. I remember that I was becoming aware of how Hispanic contributions were not even being mentioned in school history books. Without this process, I probably would not have known who these people were and what they did. That added the personal touch to the learning experience.

As the teacher involved in this partnership, it was surprising to me to hear about these exchanges of books because I had no idea these side conversations were taking place at the time, but of course, I'm delighted to know they were. Daniel and John were engaging in spontaneous conversations that held deep, personal meaning to them both. Thus, for me, this too was another example of an unanticipated learning experience that occurred in the past, that they have both

cherished and valued over the years.

Another unanticipated aspect of learning experiences that Daniel shared had to do with making collaborative art. Daniel had to revise his plan of action working with the high school students, who had almost no previous art experience, but did have plenty of opinions. Daniel said:

> You can have an idea for a project and art for me has always been a way to communicate with a larger audience and to express an idea. That's what I choose to do with art. But no matter how good your idea might be, or how good you may think your idea might be, if it doesn't effectively get the message across then ultimately, what you're trying to say is not what the audience gets from it. Then no matter how good the piece is aesthetically, if your communication is not effective, then I think on some level the art is, the piece is not successful.. And so, one thing I learned as an artist is that sometimes you can sacrifice some of the aesthetic idea so that the communication comes through. That means the piece changes…and then I think it's effective. And that's something I think I got from working with the students and from the students themselves because they wanted the piece to be very basic, very plain, and very forthright. They didn't want it to be something an audience had to figure out. I think that was something I learned as an artist.

Daniel's concern to make the art a reflection of the student's involvement with the program proved that he was very willing to modify his curriculum plans as needed; as has often been my experience. Ethel Shipton also wanted the final art product to clearly reflect student ideas, so revisiting and reflecting on student suggestions was a regular part of our interactions when we re-grouped to share ideas during the subsequent classes. As a result of remaining flexible in our roles as students, teachers, artists, and most importantly as partners, we were willing to engage in learning opportunities, however they manifested itself.

Learning by Sharing Art with the San Antonio Community

Community-based art education is about facilitating closer connections with the local community (Adejumo, 2000; Clark & Zimmerman, 2000; Congdon, Blandy, & Bolin, 2001; Ulbricht, 2005; Villeneuve & Sheppard (2009) and the spring 2005 dedication ceremony

certainly met this objective.

Figure 5.7. Photo of Judge Daniel Guerrero giving opening remarks at our dedication ceremony. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Local San Antonio heroes were the inspiration for our collaboration which did facilitate closer connections between not only the artist, students, and me, but with other individuals from other communities who had their own reasons for attending the dedication event. Daniel Guerrero (see Figure 5.7) remembered it this way:

> On that day of the unveiling, we had invited Dr. Ricardo Romo, who is the President of UTSA and has been for about ten years. [See Figure 5.8]. He has made some monumental, some huge changes, and one of the reasons I wanted him to speak was because he has really left his mark on Texas history. As an athlete, I believe he is the first Texan to break the four minute mile, and then later on as an educator. He is also a huge patron of the arts, he is a collector of Chicano art that is unbelievable, unrivaled, and he's also collected extensively through a program with the university. He is very supportive of the arts and he is also a graduate of Fox Tech, so I thought he would be a wonderful person to speak to the students.

Figure 5.8. Photo of Dr. Ricardo Romo, President of the University of Texas at San Antonio and former Fox Tech graduate speaking at our dedication ceremony.

We also invited the living relatives of the people we represented on the walls. Willie Velazquez's family was there. Emma Tenayuca's niece Cheryl Tenayuca was there. Charlie Gonzalez, who is Henry B. Gonzalez's son and who has replaced him in Congress was there [see Figure 5.9], and Carlos Cadena's daughter, who is a lawyer in town, was there. So I thought it was great for the students to see that these people that they were representing and had painted were real people with real families and they showed up to express their gratitude for what the students had done. And so that was a big part of the day in terms of the pictures that I'm looking at here.

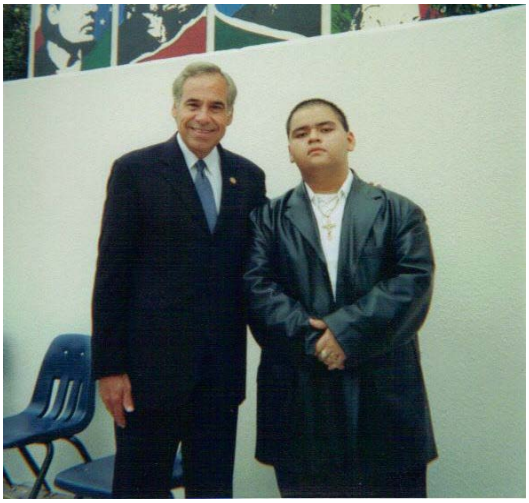


Figure 5.9. Photo of John Contreras (right) with Congressman Charles A.Gonzalez (left).

Figure 5.10. Photo of John Contreras giving his speech at the dedication of *Yo Soy El Futuro.*

John made quite an impression on the day he gave the speech, not only because of the message that he shared, but with the conviction of his delivery. To contextualize John's participation in the day's dedication event (see Figure 5.10), I asked John to read a copy of his

speech that John still had saved after all these years. His re-reading of the speech still conveyed a strong sense of connection to how his involvement has left a lasting impression on him:

> Hello and Bienvenidios sean a todos ustedes!
>
> My name is John Contreras. I am an eleventh grade student here at Fox Tech High School. I am grateful to have been a part of this art project with Daniel Guerrero that allowed students like myself to publicly recognize the accomplishments and contributions of Mexican Americans to San Antonio. As a student, I was shocked to see that only three pages in our United States history textbook dealt with Mexican-American history. This is why this project is of such significance to me as a proud Mexican-American. The fact that I have helped to create a piece of public art that is for the benefit of all of San Antonio is overwhelming to me.
>
> On behalf of my classmates, I would like to thank Artpace for making this project possible. I also want to thank the people here today at this ceremony for their support of this project.
>
> Thank you and Gracias a todos. Recuerdo que "YO SOY EL FUTURO!" [Speech is dated May 23, 2005, 8:30 am]

As the teacher then and as a researcher now, re-visiting the content of the speech shared with me by John re-affirms to me why this educational partnership merits being viewed as a critical event. Together, the artist, students, and I were engaged in something that was more significant than ourselves. We were reaching out to people within our communities past and present, by cutting across social and cultural themes to unite us together. To further understand how this event held meaning John and Daniel, I asked how the community also reached out to them because Bailey and Desai (2005) believe that ultimately communities grow when dialogues are shared between individuals. I believe that we were using our dedication event as a means to make meaning of our world through shared communication and expressions of thoughts. John said:

> People responded better than I thought. I was grateful that I had a chance to do it. Some of the other students were slackers and didn't work on the art physically as much as I did… they were like "whatever" …but I think they realized it was positive. I think…if you remember, some of the people [students] weren't really interested… but I remember

> that I was like…."wow"…when I was asked to speak at the dedication event. I was overwhelmed when I was selected to be the speaker.
>
> It was good seeing everything that our class had worked on was coming full circle. It was also very inspiring to hear stories and firsthand accounts of the people that this project was dedicated to. It gave me a sense of pride and joy knowing that we did something to honor them in such a way. I was kind of surprised that the media were there to actually shine a positive light on something we were doing. It was a really good thing for me.
>
> Also, having the actual family members there was really meaningful to me and then having them thank me for giving the speech…you know what I'm saying? That was one of the big things for me as well. For them to inspire young people like me…That is what really matters.

Daniel's words echoed similar experiences and impressions. Both John and Daniel seemed to recognize then as well as now that we were actively a part of shining a light on historical figures that were pursuing issues and ideas that were relevant to all of our lives.

> After the piece was done, I got calls, and notes, and letters and phone calls from family members who were grateful that their loved ones were going to have a little bit more of their legacy preserved in this way. But I've also had other people come up to me and say, "Oh, you did that with some students…" and they want to start talking positively about the art, but ultimately they ask, "So who were these people?" And so it makes you realize that although these people have accomplished all these tremendous, tremendous things on a national level, that they have changed the course of our history in this country single-handedly, a lot of people still don't know who they are. And so that has been really rewarding when people want to know more about who these people are… "Who exactly is Emma Tenayuca?" or "Who exactly is Willie Velazquez?

I also had such tremendously positive responses from fellow teachers who brought their classes to the dedication event. District personnel who came to the event were also very complimentary to the students and me. Even the Director of Arts and Cultural Affairs for San Antonio came up to me afterwards and told me if I ever needed anything, just to call. It was also just wonderful to have my own family there that day. My brother-in-law, Wallace Campbell, took off a day from work to come to the event because he too had come to know Emma Tenayuca back when they both worked in Harlandale ISD. Wallace told me that Emma

Tenayuca used to be a substitute teacher at his school and she kept her own personal history private. He did not really know who she was until many years later. (See Figures 5.11- 5.13.)

But not everyone from my school campus was on board with this project. In fact, the last principal that I worked with at Fox Tech didn't come outside for the event when it was time to come out. I had to go into her office when there were already hundreds of special guests and visitors present and basically beg her to come outside. She did finally show up, but she made it very clear to me that she was giving up her time to come and be a part of this event. Ironically, our school district superintendent was there and he was beaming while he was mingling with the guests. Again, each of us had our own reasons for being there, but those who seemed to recognize the educational benefits of our partnership and wanted to support it were very enthusiastic and complementary to me and the other participants there.

News coverage of the dedication event was also really positive and helped to share our efforts with larger San Antonio audiences. This is what was featured on the *Fox News* segment.

Michael Valdez- News Announcer for Fox News in San Antonio, Texas:

> Well Fox Tech students working with their hands change the face of their school today and honor the past. Students unveiled a new mural honoring civil rights leaders Willie Velasquez, Emma Tenayuca, Carlos Cadena, and Henry B. Gonzalez. Students got help from artist Daniel Guerrero and Artpace, the contemporary art space here in town. Fox Tech and Artpace have been working together for five years improving students' understanding of art and hopefully of each other.

Kathryn Kanjo- the Executive Director of Artpace:

> We hope that we're training these young students not only to possibly become artists, but to become creative thinkers and contributors to this community.

John Contreras- Fox Tech Art Student:

> The fact that I have helped create a piece of public art that is for the benefit of all of San Antonio is overwhelming to me.

Michael Valdez:

> Representative Charlie Gonzalez, the son of Henry B., was there along with UTSA President Dr. Ricardo Romo who's actually a Fox Tech grad.

Figure 5.11. Photos of John Contreras with various family members of individuals celebrated in *Yo Soy El Futuro*.

Figure 5.12. Photos with students (left) and local dignitaries and guests (right).
(All photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Figure 5.13. Photo of John Contreras and Connie McAllister from Artpace San Antonio at dedication. (Photo courtesy of John Contreras.)

It was pretty obvious that having our dedication separate from the fine arts fair was a positive change for our dedication events. We were able to focus on our attentions on our artistic project and give our students, artists, and other supporting systems the recognition they deserved for helping us make our program a success. Yet, how was creative expression viewed during our partnership?

Theme 2: Supporting or Inhibiting Creative Expression

Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) systems model asserts that creativity within an individual is influenced by a person's thoughts, the socio-cultural contexts impacting how a work is read and viewed. With Csikszentmihalyi's conception in mind, I wanted to know how Daniel and John made meaning from reading the artwork *Yo Soy El Futuro* (see Figure 5.14), and how their ideas were influenced by social and cultural contexts.

Figure 5.14. Yo Soy El Futuro.(Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Daniel Guerrero said:

> There are four large panels, 4'x 8' panels that are arranged next to each other. The first two figures are …well, the first figure is Carlos Cadena and then there is Emma Tenayuca, the third one is Willie Velazquez, and Henry B. Gonzalez. And the first two images are facing the middle and the last two images are facing the middle. So in a sense, the four images face each other.
>
> The piece is called *Yo Soy el Futuro* and two of the pieces are in Spanish and one says "Yo soy una voz" which is Willie Velasquez's piece. And the reason his says "una voz" is because as founder of the Southwest Voter Project he…one of his many contributions

was that he got people to go out and vote and the slogan he had coined was, "Tu vota es su voz" which means "Your vote is your voice" and so his piece in Spanish said, "I am a voice."

The Emma Tenayuca piece was in English and it said, "I am change." She had done tremendous things as a civil rights leader and as an activist and she wasn't much older than the students that she had been working with. She did a major part of her work by the time she was nineteen and she accomplished great change. Almost singlehandedly she is responsible for what would turn out to be the minimum wage in Texas.

Carlos Cadena argued a phenomenal case that changed the course of our judicial system in this country in the Pete Hernandez case along with Gus Garcia, with the idea that you couldn't exclude people from juries because of their race. And so that has had a long and lasting change in our judicial system across the country and here were two young men from our city that accomplished that.

Of course the Henry B. Gonzalez's piece says "I am a leader" and he showed great leadership. He is revered in this city for what he has done, serving 34 years in the US Congress and he affected countless people's lives in positive ways, just doing tremendous things.

So two of the panels are in Spanish and two are in English, and that was our way of tipping our hats to the bi-cultural community and being bi-cultural and being bi-lingual. And in the class, people spoke both Spanish and English. The colors that we used… again, tipping our hat to the community… used the colors red, white, blue, and green so it alludes to both the colors of the Mexican and American flag.

John Contreras said:

What it is….it has the images of all the people that we talked about and we combined both the English and Spanish language together in the art. We combined the American and Mexican flags and colors into one medium, to unite our Hispanic heritage in both portions. That's the best way I can describe it… It's just a combination of everything. Hispanics combine ideas and influences from the Mexican and American cultures. And you can also see that with the combination of the American language with the Spanish language. "Yo soy- I am" that's the good thing about it- to combine them both.

I know that we chose these people because they were prominent and came from our local area. I know other names were thrown out there, but these were from our local area. They did most of the work in the San Antonio area. I remember Daniel brought in some books. Daniel taught us about these people and what their accomplishments were. And Daniel gave me a book about famous Hispanic people. Actually, I had forgotten about the book until this week, when I was getting ready for this interview. He (Daniel) would tell us how their actions led to changes in the Civil Rights Acts, and other policies…different things. For me, it really helped to pave the way for people like me to understand their

> struggles, what they went through, and what they accomplished for Hispanics. They kind of paved the way for me and for young people like me. They struggled and they went through so much, so that we wouldn't have to go through it. That's why it means so much to me.

John's comments seem to reinforce the same social and cultural contexts that Daniel had mentioned were significant to him as well. In Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) systems model, he also looked beyond the individual's role in creative expression to look at even broader socially interdependent factors influencing whether or not creative acts would be recognized by culture: the domain, field, and individual. The domain is the shared symbolic knowledge of a culture, and the field includes the gatekeepers to the domain, while the individuals are the people who use symbols of a domain to create new ideas that are accepted by that culture. In our community of practice, the domain could be interpreted as the contemporary art community, represented by Artpace, the artist, the art advocates in the audience or it could be interpreted as individuals who have a personal and historical connection to the individuals reflected in the work. The field could also be viewed as the people who have the power to get public recognition for our art collaborations like the local media, the promotions department at Artpace, Daniel and his networking abilities, or it could also refer to the family members who valued the efforts of the artist and students to realize this project as a tribute to their relatives. Finally, the individuals who worked within the symbolic domain to create the work went beyond the artist, students, Artpace, and me. We have all been socially shaped by our bi-cultural traditions. Creative expression went well beyond the self to reflect our community.

Interpretations of Creative Freedom

Torrance (1977) once said that to encourage creative expression in students, teachers also need to be given the freedom to design lessons that they feel will best serve their student

population. As the teacher, I had the choice to allow a visiting artist come into my classroom for a twelve week period and then to either support or limit the range of topics or approaches that they wanted to share with the Fox Tech students. For me, it was a creative act to navigate and share my own experiences working with the students with the artists, who were grateful for having my one-hundred percent support for their curriculum. It was very natural for me personally to share my role as teacher with the artists. I have had lots of opportunities working with student teachers to find my own comfort zone by allowing other individuals the creative freedom to find their own way to connect with the students, while also making sure the educational and personal needs of the students are always top priority. From my perspective as the teacher overseeing most of the interactions in the classroom during the spring 2005 semester program, I believed then as I do now that creative freedom was encouraged. However, I also I wanted to know how Daniel and John felt about this topic. Daniel said:

> Yes, in fact, maybe it was a little bit more of an opportunity than I had anticipated, because they said, "Go do it! Go and do what you want!" In that sense, Artpace, which is Mrs. Kanjo and Kate Green, were great in the sense that they said you can do whatever you want and they trusted the artist and that we would do something that was productive and positive and would influence these children. They didn't give you much guidance in terms of… this is what you can do and this is what you can't do… and so that is a great opportunity until you have to do it. And it's like gee… I wish they would just tell me what they want me to do! But creative carte blanche was a wonderful thing to have and yet it was a huge responsibility and challenge…so it was kind of a double-edged sword.

John Contreras said:

> I remember a couple of art projects we did. We had to combine words and images together and I did a cross, and I still have a version of it at my house… I made a larger version that I couldn't take to my house and Daniel asked if he could take it and I gave it to him. I also did one that said "Love for us" and it had a picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe on it. I think I expressed myself by putting the ideas out there. We gave our ideas on how we wanted to combine images and words. I'm not going to take all the credit for it, but I remember helping paint it too. Yeah and I remember we had to even put something on top of it to preserve it.
>
> I remember sharing ideas with Daniel about what we wanted to do, and combining our

> ideas and everything. If I remember, in that class, you had a lot of people from Mexico. Well, people who were only Spanish speaking people and so it was important that everything was combined.

John's recollections gave a picture of the type of creative range of activities we engaged in with Daniel that fused many of the ideas that he shared with us about stripping down messages to their essential elements and presenting them simply and directly for audiences to consider and share with others. John's comments also reflected the idea that there was flexibility working with diverse groups of students who did not always speak English. Therefore, there was creative freedom to address our individual and group concerns.

Daniel definitely felt there were inhibitors to creative expression present during our community partnership, primarily the lack of interest shown by students in the classroom for engaging in discussions; ideas also strongly noted by Gary Sweeney. When I listened to both Daniel and Gary talk about how rude and vocal some students were about their disinterest, even quoting the students comments after so many years, their statements reaffirm what Brown, Shevell, & Ripps(1986), Nelson & Fivush(2004), and Schacter(1996) have said. They say that the longest lasting memories are the ones that are encoded as being particularly stressful or emotional and reviewing Daniel's next comment, this seems relevant:

> Something that I hadn't expected, for example, is that students would be talking on their cell phones in the classroom …or that students would have iPods. I remember asking a student with his iPod on to remove the earplugs and kind of join the conversation and he said, "Oh, just move on, I'm not interested." Rather than to just let that go, I turned to the rest of the students and said, "He says he's not interested. Does anybody have anything to say about that?" And then he sort of engaged after that. He did venture an opinion on some of the slides we were looking at. And so it was just sort of bringing him into the conversation that was a challenge. I think it's something that's particular to every school across the country. Students are very different than the time I went to school and they have different things that they bring into the classroom and different experiences and so that was a big learning experience for me is learning to communicate with them. You get to learn a lot from them too, the way they communicate to you. You quickly realize that you can't lie to them. They can see right through you. You've got to be honest. They're a lot smarter than you might imagine.

In fact, throughout this study, Gary, Eloy, Daniel, John, and Jennelle described that there were students that were just disinterested in art and that was the greatest challenge to creative expression. That seems to me to be a very logical conclusion. However, perhaps I only saw what I wanted to see, but I never recognized disinterest in the students. I felt we were always connected, whether or not there was a visiting artist in the classroom, or if we engaged in an art partnership or not. It was a truly rare event for me to ever feel like the students and I could not relate to each other at least on some level, whether it involved art or not. This barrier to creative expression was not something that I experienced, but again, this was only my interpretation of our interactions over time.

Theme 3: How Participants Recognized Educational Benefits of Community Partnership

What did we learn about art and each other by working together during the fall 2005 semester program? Personally, I knew that Daniel was touching on subject matter that would not ever be addressed in the standard curriculum and having him come and work with the students as an artist and judge role model was an incredible learning experience for me and the students. It really brought home the idea that community-based art education is about building the ties of people right here, in our own towns, which if partnered with other individuals for a common cause, can impact change. Just as the figures we represented in the murals impacted change locally and nationally for under-represented citizens, we too were beginning to tread in those courageous waters. Daniel said:

> What I think was very meaningful to me was that I think often when you are a student in high school, you are called upon to attend to things like in the cafeteria, and you're being exposed to things that the educational system deems as being important, so it's a cultural experience where whether you are sitting for a concert, a speaker, or to listen to somebody that is supposed to influence you. And on this particular day, we had those

> types of people, whether it was Charlie Gonzalez, the Congressman, or Dr. Romo, President of the University, and we had students in the audience. But what was sort of an ironic twist was that these people were here not to lecture the students or to teach the students but to praise them and thank them for what they had accomplished. And so the students were in the audience, and they were the guest of honor, and everyone was there to address what they had done and to speak to them about what they had done. So I think it was a unique experience for them in the sense that it wasn't your standard –meet in the cafeteria- it was to celebrate what you have accomplished and I think that was a great twist on the whole experience.

I couldn't agree more with Daniel's perspective. Our students were empowered to become voices in the learning process and express their thoughts through the product as well.

Facilitating this community partnership took the efforts of so many individuals from Artpace to keep this community partnership going year after year. I wanted to know why Daniel and John thought the people at Artpace saw our contemporary art collaboration as meriting these efforts. Daniel said:

> I think on one level they are being good neighbors, I mean Artpace is literally just a few steps down from Fox Tech. And in that sense I think it's a wonderful thing that they are cognizant of their place in the community. They are participating with this school, and that is really special in how they are being good neighbors in that way. In a larger sense, I think they have a huge understanding of funding of the arts, and how the arts are always the first thing to go, and why someone decides that music or visual education has less of an impact on their life than math or chemistry is beyond me. I can tell you I remember every single book I read in high school literature, every piece of music we played in band, but I don't remember my chemistry formulas anymore. So I learned more from the literature that I read in high school than I did from the history I learned in high school. So I don't think you should value one subject more than another and I think Artpace understands that and they are doing a great thing in trying to fill that void and trying to supplement the arts part of the student's education. They are great neighbors. They put their money where their mouth is. They are incredibly generous with their resources, with their time, and with their expertise, and I can't tell you what motivates them but I can tell you that I'm really, really glad that they do it. They are a jewel in this city.

John had this to say:

> I'm thinking maybe Artpace wanted to give this opportunity to high school students- just to explore art. Because art is one thing you don't hear discussed in school very much anymore… you know? And maybe they wanted to get the art name out there, not particularly Artpace, but you know, get students exposed to art and see what they can accomplish.

I agree that Artpace probably looked to pair artist and Judge Daniel Guerrero with my Fox Tech art students because they were aware that Daniel's interest in politics, Hispanic history and culture locally and nationally would resonate and inform students beyond traditional art resources and curriculum. Daniel offered an interdisciplinary approach to our contemporary art practices that hopefully continues to inspire learning about Hispanic leaders in our own backyards. Daniel recognized that our local San Antonio community has a vast array of historic role models with the same ethnic backgrounds as most of our students. It was a brilliant decision on Daniel's part to take advantage of our community partnership to shine a light on our local heroes and encourage students to be a part of shaping educational discourse.

Educational Challenges/ Limitations

Indeed there were educational challenges present, especially when you have a classroom full of students who don't all speak the same language, and who aren't particularly interested in the topics at hand, as discussed previously. I wanted to know what else might have inhibited learning or creative expression during our interactions from the artist and student perspectives. Daniel said:

> The kids in the beginning, believe it or not, were a little intimidating. I expected to walk into a high school like the one I had left, you know, a hundred years ago… (laughs) and it wasn't that experience. They were very mature and sophisticated in ways that I didn't know or expect them to be, so you immediately fall back into the role you had in high school. I was never one of the cool kids, so I found it intimidating initially, but I think they came around.

John had this to say about inhibitions: " Probably just pretty much when I had to speak in front of other people and that was it. It was worth the risk."

Looking back, the educational challenges we faced in the classroom dealt with students who were dis-interested in being enrolled in the class to begin with. This lack of personal investment into what our partnership was about was probably our greatest obstacle. Other than that however, we knew our collaboration had a purpose and it was of relevance to the majority of people within our classroom as well as the San Antonio community. It was really great to have such overwhelming support from various members of the community. Each of us gained educationally and personally from our participation with the semester program.

Teacher/ Researcher Reflections on Spring 2005 Semester Program

It was so endearing to hear both Daniel and John refer to their former experiences with such deep respect for each other's involvement in the project. Their sentiments were sincere and reflected informal types of educational exchanges that took place naturally in primarily unstructured encounters in the classroom between participants in a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Similarly, creative expression was not about the ideas of one over the other, rather it was inclusive of one other. Ideas were discussed, transformed, and socially negotiated. Together we worked with members of the greater San Antonio community and organizations that could both benefit and appreciate the efforts of our collaboration. We helped in honoring our local Hispanic leaders, and pushing the envelope regarding the subject matter and learning interactions that were custom designed for our Fox Tech, San Antonio, South Texas, and local art communities.

Memory interplays between Daniel Guerrero, John Contreras, and I was an interesting and cyclical process. There were details that each of us remembered separately, but when I shared one person's memory with the others, triggers and associations set off recollections that

each of us had either not remembered or had totally forgotten. For example, John was talking about us actually painting the panels of *Yo Soy El Futuro* in the classroom. I had not remembered that incident taking place at all, nor did I recall the conversation Daniel referred to when I asked the pregnant girls to step outside when we were using toxic materials. However, after listening to their stories, I began remembering Daniel parking his white vehicle close to my classroom door and having students bring up the panels to room, up the tall flight of steps. I also remembered, but had previously forgotten the Coast Guard propaganda campaign, which was impressive. Similarly, John remembered going to Artpace and seeing the work of Cruz Ortiz and Daniel Joseph Martinez only after his memory was stimulated by both walking through the Artpace facilities together after our interview and when I referenced some of the colorful language that was included in Cruz Ortiz's installation. Language helped each of us to socially re-visit our memories of the past which did go through notable changes as we interacted with each other.

Between the spring of 2004 until the end of spring 2005, my students and I had had the opportunity to work with Gary Sweeney and then Daniel Guerrero with primarily two-dimensional media. During the following school year however, we began to explore the possibilities of other art media, beginning in the fall of 2005.

Fall 2005 Narrative Sketch

Table 5.7

Interpretive Analysis Overview of Learning during Fall 2005 Semester Program

FALL 2005 SEMESTER PROGRAM **How was learning impacted by our community partnership?**
ARTIST PERSPECTIVE (David Jurist): Unfortunately, David Jurist, who was the only sculpture artist involved in the semester programs, was not able to share his perspectives with me regarding the fall 2005 semester program due to unforeseen circumstances.

(table continues)

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE (Jennelle Gomez): Jennelle enjoyed making art that was relevant to her high school experiences dealing with Chili Bowl, an annual football tradition. She reinforced her ability to work in teams to realize her artistic visions. She enjoyed learning about David and what he was wearing, as much as she enjoyed working on the projects.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVE (Maria Leake): Students were working as teams to design site-sculpture proposals that connected various locations on our campus with locally relevant issues of the student's choice.

Table 5.8

Interpretive Analysis Overview of Creative Expression during Fall 2005 Semester Program

FALL 2005 SEMESTER PROGRAM **How was creative expression impacted by our community partnership?**
ARTIST PERSPECTIVE (David Jurist): none STUDENT PERSPECTIVE (Jennelle Gomez): Jennelle felt that she was able to express herself creatively when she shared her team's Chili Bowl sculpture in the boardroom at Artpace, but that this was also challenging due to fears of public speaking. She recognized that process of initially brainstorming ideas and working through the process of creating a diorama lead her and her team towards the completion of their group project. Jennelle overcame her initial hesitancy to speak once again at our dedication ceremony, thus not allowing fear to inhibit her ability to express herself. TEACHER PERSPECTIVE (Maria Leake): David got students to connect their art with environment as well as address topics or themes that held meaning for them. He supported creative expression in students by having them design and create a proto-type for a sculpture, while also verbally elaborating on it with a public audience. He thus united the processes, products, and interpretations of art into part of his curriculum, which are creative acts that involve active engagement of the artist, students, and me as the teacher.

Figure 5.15. Photo of David Jurist helping students create dioramas during fall 2005 semester program. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Theme 1: Learning within a Community Partnership

There was a very natural transition that took place between the artists who came to work with my same group of students during the 2005-2006 school year. We began with David Jurist in the fall of 2005, and concluded by working with Ethel Shipton in spring 2006; it was an action packed year for community partnerships because my classes were also working with our daycare next door, and working with neighborhood businesses to display art. The range of ideas that we explored through all of our collaborations made for great exchanges of thought and socially dynamic interactions. Artpace highlighted the events surrounding the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership in the *neocontemporary 06.2*.

> **Art on campus: Jurist, Shipton collaborate with Fox Tech students**
> As the 2005-2006 school year came to a close, Artpace and neighboring Louis W. Fox Technical High School celebrated the installation of two new sculptures created as part of ArtElements Semester Program. The collaborative projects by students and San Antonio-based artists **David Jurist** and **Ethel Shipton,** were publicly dedicated on May 16. Jurist and Shipton, along with participating students and Fox Tech educators, were joined by Felix Padron, the Director of the Office of Cultural Affairs, and James LeFlore from the city's Design Enhancement Program. Preceded by sounds of the student choir, speakers included LeFlore, the artists, and Artpace Executive Director Kathryn Kanjo.
>
> In the fall 2005 semester Jurist led twenty-five students through the design and production process of public art: dividing into teams, selecting a site, photographing and analyzing it, and coming to consensus on an appropriate sculpture. Each group presented a multi-media diorama, complete with mock-budget and design-team credentials, culminating in the realization of an artwork by Jurist on the façade of the new music building. The permanent piece features a projecting aluminum sculpture that casts a shadow reading *Remember This Time*, a comment on both the potential of youth and its quick passing.
>
> For the spring semester Ethel Shipton worked with thirty art and media students and created a project composed of a t-shirt, video, and neon sculpture. Under Shipton's leadership students proposed various designs and, as a class, ultimately chose *¿…?,* a universal icon to suggest the importance of continually questioning who you are, where you are going, and the world around you. The symbol was translated into a neon light piece installed at the school's library. Art and media classes also collaborated to create a promotional video, featuring the students wearing the pan-linguistic t-shirts across the globe, reiterating the cross-cultural significance of their project. (p. 4)

Examples of Teaching and Learning Experiences

During the fall 2005 semester, artist and professional contractor David Jurist came to Fox Tech as the visiting artist. Partially because I was unable to interview David to get his own first-hand comments on the teaching and learning experiences we shared, I am including yet an earlier version of the neocontemporary *05.3* s look at our community partnership. This article provides background information about the artists' professional training and sculptural interests that David shared with Artpace staffers.

> **Students Present Mock Public Art Proposals for Campus**
> As part of Artpace's Semester Programs, San Antonio artist David Jurist worked with twenty-five Louis W. Fox Technical High School art students over several months on proposals for a site-specific outdoor sculpture on the campus. Jurist led the student teams through the process of selecting a site, photographing and analyzing it, and coming to consensus on an appropriate sculpture for it. Each group ultimately presented a multi-media diorama, complete with mock-budget and design-team credentials. The project culminated in the realization of a permanent artwork by Jurist, whose ideas for a sundial were triggered by the students he worked with each Thursday from October through December 2005.
>
> David Jurist's installations reflect on human interactions with natural and man-made environments. Jurist has taught film at University of California, San Diego and had solo exhibitions at Blue Star Contemporary Art Center (San Antonio, TX) and the Gallery of Contemporary Art at Lewis and Clark College (Portland, OR). (*neocontemporary 05.3*, p. 5)

David gave students opportunities to engage in learning experiences that connected the concerns of real-life scultptural aritsts with the types of decisions that they have to consider when making and presenting public art proposals. His style of working with the students was to introduce them to aspects of his own sculptural work, and then explained to students what he expected for them to accomplish as teams, working in the classroom. He told us about dioramas and explained how he was going to arm us with cameras, to locate and photograph a particular site on our campus, to create a sculptural design proposal to present to our pretend donors. After students were nearing completion of the projects, I remember we were all asked to bring our

proposals to the actual site and ask ourselves critical questions about other concerns that we hadn't considered and if modifications were called for. David gave students a concrete assignment, with specific criteria that they needed to meet and develop and present as teams. I wanted to know what Jennelle remembered about our interactions. She said:

> We had to decide something that was special that we could make that would be made for the school. I remember these boys had created a model of a soccer stadium and the men's club. I also remember that David didn't know what Chili Bowl was…and I remember that he came in with a Lanier shirt on [our school's rival team]…[we both laugh]…and I remember thinking why is he wearing that?

Figure 5.16. Students working on dioramas during fall 2005 semester program. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

I think David knew darn well what Chili Bowl meant to our student body and went out of his way to find and purchase this shirt, just so that he could push the student's button and get a rise out of them. It obviously worked. Jennelle still remembers that shirt he wore to this day. For those who may be unfamiliar with football addiction in San Antonio, the Chili Bowl was only the biggest football event of the year to everyone from Fox Tech and our rival team at Lanier High School. It is a sports rivalry traditon that goes back for probably close to one hundred years. Much to the chagrin of Fox Tech alumni, 2010 was the last year for this event. When I

was at Fox Tech, it didn't ever seem to matter how awful our team was, our school pride was inextricably linked with Chili Bowl. When David was working with the students, he continually challenged them to think about Chili Bowl as symbolizing something greater than chili and a bowl, but I think that breaking the tradition of literal images was a little too radical for most of the students in that class.

Examples of Teaching and Learning Styles

I remember David coming in to our classroom and sharing slides of his installation work that he created on a college campus. The work looked to have a very tranquil setting constructed in harmony with the natural elements. The students seemed to connect with his sensibility that art and architecture should not try and overpower the natural environment, but work in harmony with it. Thus began our collaboration with David Jurist.

David took us on group walks throughout our campus to see what types of areas we had to work with, and openly discuss concerns, such as vandalism, safety, cost, subject matter, and other consideration regarding creating art for any given site. Later, David had the students go out with cameras to record their proposal site and begin construction of the dioramas.

Figure 5.17. Photos of students at work on constructing dioramas in fall 2005. (Photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Unanticipated Learning Experiences

All of the artists, except for Gary, were very private about their non-artistic lives and David was no exception. Perhaps my own greatest surprise was when I found out David was married to Kathryn Kanjo, who served as the first Executive Director of Artpace San Antonio for six and a half years before taking on a new role as Director of the University Art Museum on the campus of the University of California, Santa Barbara (K. Kanjo, personal communication, August 1, 1006). I'm not even sure how or when I happened to connect the dots on that piece of information, but that was certainly an unanticipated piece of information that I stumbled upon .

Academically, neither Jennelle nor I remember anything that was an unanticipated learning experience that occurred during our time together, except that creating the dioramas was really time-consuming and required so much time to create a type of art that none of us, besides David, had really ever tried working with before. I had to have the students work on this project for many class sessions in addition to the times that David was physically in the classroom with us.

I don't remember a lot of dialogue taking place within this particular community partnership in large groups. I suppose this could be viewed as both an educational challenge and an unanticipated learning experience. Most of the artists that I worked with were very vocal and facilitated conversations, but David had a quiter disposition. I actually don't remember any personal or professional conversations that took place between us outside of our classroom interactions with the students. Again, I can only speak for myself, but this was simply a differrence in our style of communication but in no way a limitation to learning experiences that transpired between us.

Learning by Sharing Art with the San Antonio Community

During our dedication ceremony, it was a great experience to have so many parts of our community partnership come together. In fact, we had our dedication event celebrating our collaboration with Ethel Shipton on the same day as our collaboration with David Jurist on May 16, 2006. Just as during previous dedications, we shared what the experience meant to each of us from differing vantage points, student, teacher, artist, and arts organization. The photos in Figures 5.18 and 5.19 highlight three of the speakers at the dedication of *Remember This Time,* which took place outside our new multi-million dollar music building, that will no longer be used for music due to restructuring of our campus.

Figure 5.18. Speakers at the May 16, 2006 dedication including Maria Leake (left), David Jurist (center), and Kathryn Kanjo (right) speaking on behalf of the fall 2005 project *Remember This Time*. (Photos courtesy of Joe Kethan.)

Figure 5.19. The Fox Tech drum line and choir provide music for the dedication festivities. [Photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Building communities within the Fox Tech arts program was evident in the willing support of the choir members and drumline to help us in celebrating our dedication events. Music lead us from one venue outside the music building to unveil our fall 2005 project with David Jurist and then lead us to the library, for our dedication surrounding the spring 2006 program with Ethel Shipton. Unlike the first fine arts fair, where each of the arts program were in competition with each other to gain the attention of audiences, during subsequent unveilings, we were working together as a team.

Theme 2: Supporting or Inhibiting Creative Expression

I remember that David used to tell us that some of his best memories were from high school. Perhaps this nostalgic message was his own reminder of his own past high school experiences or perhaps it had a totally different connotation for him? What did this message mean to my seniors who were in their final year of high school, or for me on my last major art event at Fox Tech before leaving the school and San Antonio indefinitely? Well, of course, I can only speak for myself. The message was simple, but its implications remain far reaching because we each embedded the message with our own personal associations. In this sense, the work calls upon each of us to engage in the creative act of interpretation, depending on our own contextual reading.

For me, the message was more meaningful than the beautifully understated aluminum structure that projects this message for people passing by to view differently depending on the time and light present at any given moment. The message meant leaving my home away from home, La Techla, and my friends and contacts at Artpace. However, I have continued to correspond often with the archivist Kimberly Aubuchon and former education consultant Mary

Canut via e-mail and we see each other occasionally at events. My great friend and supporter Kate Green also left Artpace shortly after our 2006 partnership to further her own educational pursuits as well. Sadly, in July 2007, Linda Pace herself—my hero—passed away. Those days were so precious to me, the associations that I have with the message *Remember This Time* are truly personal and precious to me.

Figure 5.20. Photo of *Remember This Time*, created in fall 2005.

I can still see the wonderful faces of my friends at Artpace when they took me out for a celebratory meal on the San Antonio Riverwalk to celebrate my acceptance to the doctoral program at UNT. Once again, being together and supporting each other as members of a community of practice, we were supporting our various career explorations in ways that were personally meaningful to us. This was the supportive perspective that I saw as the teacher working outside of the organization, but I cannot speak to other relationships that took place that I was not directly involved in. My handful of memories have never faded working as part of a larger artistic community, and these acts of engagement for me were creative acts fueling my desires to seek out further collaborations.

Interpretations of Creative Freedom

Students who worked with David knew they had to create a diorama, they knew they had to take the photographs and work collaboratively to create their proposal, and write up mock budget, but there were other numerous freedoms given to the students. Some groups for example were only made of two people working on a smaller scale, while other groups ranged from anywhere between three to six people. Again, how students chose to connect their sculpture with the environment was up to the individual groups. David encouraged the groups to work with their own interests, because then their concept would likely resonate with other audiences.

David required the students to present their proposals in the boardroom at Artpace, so it could be debated whether or not the students had the freedom to express themselves or if they were forced to rise to the occasion. David prepared us for our speaking engagement by meeting with and interacting with Artpace Studio Director Riley Robinson. Riley shared his own experience of making a major public presentation for his own public art piece that was designed for a local city agency. By partnering with yet another artist role model like Riley, David helped students to connect the upcoming presentations students were going to have to engage in, with work that many public artists accept as part of their artistic practices.

On the day of our boardroom presentations, David showed the students his own proposal for his sundial inspired project on the facade of the athletic building. However, later he changed his mind and decided the music building would be a more suitable site for the permanent work. Looking back on the faces of the students giving their first formal proposals in the boardroom, you can see they are a little nervous and stiff, but they did great (see Figures 5.21 and 5.22). It was a skill the students would have to draw from once again when working with artist Ethel Shipton, later that same school year.

Figure 5.21. Photos of fall 2005 presentations in boardroom at Artpace San Antonio. (Photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Neither Jennelle or I felt we were ever inhibited to express ourselves creatively during our time working with artist David Jurist. As mentioned previously, David was pretty quiet and reserved when he came to our classroom, so verbal conversations were not as prevalent as they had been in past semester programs. As a result, there were more individualized conversations with students taking place while students were working on their projects. David's teaching style

was different than mine, but I think we complemented each other and gave the Fox Tech students two teachers to work with and communicate with, according to the student's own preferences.

Figure 5.22. Photos of students sharing proposals in the boardroom at Artpace.San Antonio. (Photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Theme 3: How Participants Recognized Educational Benefits of Community Partnership

It was wonderful to work with an artist who enjoys working with sculpture, especially since this is not an area of expertise for me. I was learning as much as the students were about site-specific installations. David's final decision to include a nostalgic message in his work

Remember This Time, was also an ironic one. There were other semester programs that took place after I left the campus, but the school district made the decision to shut down all electives including mariachi, band, visual arts, and even all athletic sports. All extra-curricular activities terminated at the end of the 2009- 2010 school year, including the beloved Chili Bowl. No longer will this campus be called Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School, it will now be the Fox Tech Medical Professions and Law Magnet High School. The new educational design plan is rumored to save the district a tremendous amount of money by not having to fund electives at the campus. However, my concern is the real cost of this decision to limit the students' exposure to the arts as a vital form of communication and critical inquiry.

While I certainly saw our community partnership as educational, I wanted to know what kind of impact working with David Jurist and Ethel Shipton had on Jennelle. Jennelle said:

> Having other people come in and helping us out besides teacher was something that I looked forward to…I really did. That is something that a lot of other people don't get a chance to do. How many other people can look back and say, "Look, I helped to make a difference at that school."

Figure 5.23. Students pose with *Remember This Time*.(Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Educational Challenges/ Limitations

Learning about site-specific art with budget constraints, location considerations, proposal considerations, as well as working collaboratively with a team to see the project through was new area of exploration for me and the Fox Tech art students. I can't remember if a fixed dollar amount was designated from the beginning, but I believe it was. However, some students didn't really seem to have a grasp for following a budget. Certainly David must not have given us any more than ten thousand dollars for each proposal design, I'm guessing it was substantially less, yet there were students constructing huge soccer fields with structures attached, or huge multi-storied sculpture proposals that were made of marbel and could move on a hydraulic system mechanism. The sky was the limit to many of the students and money as an abstract concept that they had difficulty grasping.

The communication style preferences between David Jurist and I could be seen as an educational challenge, but it was not problematic. However, it was a variable and should be noted as influencing the degree of interactions that took place between the artist, me, and the students. We did communicate about the art project but our conversations did not go far beyond that, as far as I can recall. Our concerns were to address the temporality of our lived experiences as being specifically impacted by our own high school experiences. The art proposals we created could not have been any more situated and site-specific than what the students did create with David's guidance and my support.

Teacher/ Researcher Reflection on Fall 2005 Semester Program

Situated learning theory recognizes that learning will take unexpected directions when informal learning between those with more experience work with those with less, but when these

journeys are valued by participants, they have a lasting impression. Looking back on my last group of students that I worked with before leaving Fox Tech who I worked with in fall 2005 and spring 2006, It's amazing to think of the once in a lifetime opportunities that my students and I had. Our community partnership allowed us to work with such incredibly talented artists during their regular school day. It was a stroke of good luck for this particular group of students to have art class in the morning, which worked well with the schedule of artists, including David Jurist and Ethel Shipton.

Visual and verbal creative expression also took unexpected paths during our interactions, but that was what made our community partnerships interesting and dynamic. You just never knew what kind of surprises might emerge during our conversations between the artists, students, and teacher. Whether it was intentional provocations, like David walking in with his Lanier Voks T-shirt, it was never a dull moment. Creatively, I know that David's piece inspired someone else from our district to create new signs for the other side of our music building that "appropriated" many ideas from *Remember this Time*. While David kept his manufacturing of his piece a surprise until it was installed, just as the students shared their evolution of ideas with each other. The students helped to create a time-lapse slideshow of the sun casting shadows through the sign at various points throughout the school day on Cinco de Mayo or May 5th (see Figure 5.24). Again, the act of building upon and expanding the ideas of the final product continued to be a springboard for other creative forms of visual and verbal expression.

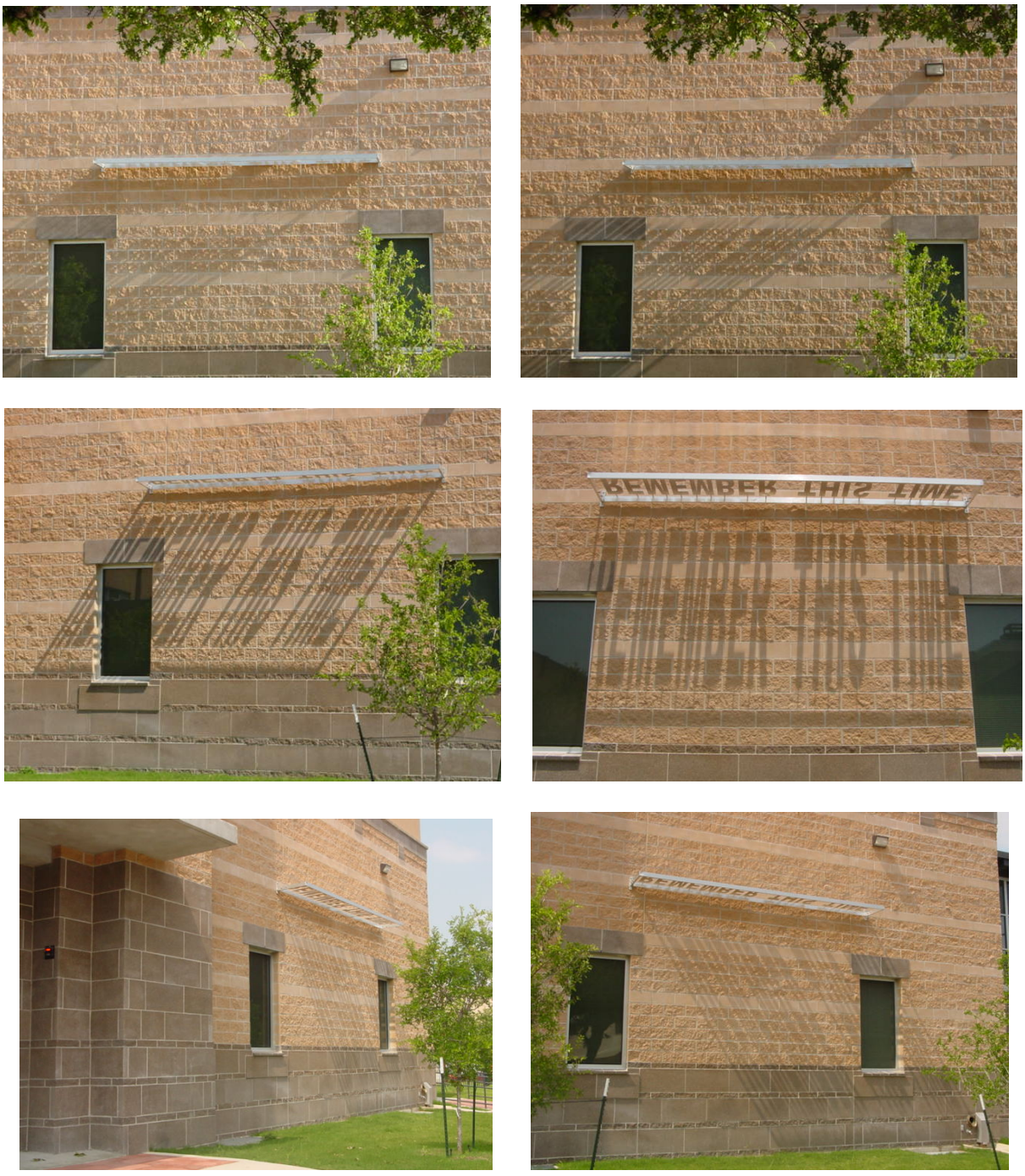


Figure 5.24. Time-lapse photos of *Remember This Time* captured by students on May 5, 2006.

Spring 2006 Narrative Sketch

On Wednesday, December 23, 2009 the last day before the McNay Museum of Art was going to shut down for the Christmas holidays and on the day Ethel Shipton was handliing a major donation of items given to the museum, she sat down with me in her high tech, security reinforced work space in the museum's new contemporary art wing. (I've never seen such amazing security protection devices in my life.) Jennelle Gomez's interview about working with artist Ethel Shipton and David Jurist took place on Monday, December 21, 2009. This was the last community partnership that took place during my time at Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School, and for me, it was a wonderful conclusion to my teaching experiences in San Antonio, Texas.

Figure 5.25. Ethel Shipton (blue shirt) working with students duriing spring 2006 semester program. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Table 5.9

Interpretive Analysis Overview of Learning during the Spring 2006 Semester Program

SPRING 2006 SEMESTER PROGRAM **How was learning impacted by our community partnership?**
ARTIST PERSPECTIVE (Ethel Shipton): Learning was about working as a team, designing public art, and collaborating on ideas, similar to the strategies of an entrepreneur. Students learned to move away from fractured cliques to work towards a common goal and market their ideas to a much wider audience using multi-media art as a venue for communication. STUDENT PERSPECTIVE (Jennelle Gomez): Jennelle valued learning to work interdependently with her peers to generate ideas, plan , organize, and present projects in formal and informal settings. It was a skill that she has had to rely on often as a college student, but had not had experiences with before our community partnership. TEACHER PERSPECTIVE (Maria Leake): Learning was bi-directional between the students and the artists. We touched upon communication via public art and learned to collaborate with other teachers and departments on our campus and beyond. Symbolism through words and images were approached as opportunities for student and teacher engagements.

Table 5.10

Interpretive Analysis Overview of Creative Expression during the Spring 2006 Semester Program

SPRING 2006 SEMESTER PROGRAM **How was creative expression impacted during our community partnership?**
ARTIST PERSPECTIVE (Ethel Shipton): Ethel had the students generate the ideas for the t-shirt image that was to become the focal point of our art project. Ethel guided and worked with the students to learn how to take their concepts and transform them into manufactured and marketable items. She invited a social negotiation of ideas throughout our partnership. STUDENT PERSPECTIVE (Jennelle Gomez): Jennelle knew that she and the other students owned the ideas, and shared this process of developing and presenting their work and ideas with Ethel's guidance. This was Jennelle's first experience working with multimedia such as videos, t-shirts, and the neon sign. Yet, these were novel experiences for her that were fun. TEACHER PERSPECTIVE (Maria Leake): Ethel made the opportunities for creative expression seem very natural for both me and the students. She was very organized and forthright in her ideas, expectations, and visions for what public art can be. She showed us that anyone can make art, but it takes a lot of planning to communicate concepts effectively with larger audiences using public art.

Theme 1: Learning within a Community Partnership

Teamwork was a concept that was vital to the curriculum approach that Ethel used to get everyone thinking and involved with our contemporary art project. Like Daniel mentioned,

teamwork was a skill that had to be taught, since many of the students were unaware of how to actually work as teams. Fortunately, the same group of students that worked with Ethel in the spring of 2006 had also been introduced to teamwork and presentations working with David in fall 2005. Ethel continued to show students how to share, interact, and exchange ideas with other student groups, or "posses" as Ethel like to refer to them. Ethel's approach like Gary, Daniel, and David, reinforced the concepts of social learning theory, which recognizes the educational potential of pairing and engaging groups in mutual relationships. These on-going engagements encourage individuals working as teams to participate in real-world activities that influence how others make meaning from the process. Together, producers and audiences play off each other and learn socially (Wenger, 1998).

When Ethel first came to work with us, she told me that she felt like an outsider, the new kid on the block, just as Gary and Daniel had also expressed. However by engaging with the students and me over time, getting to collaborate on art through discussions and activities, those outsider conceptions faded. In Ethel's case, she said it disappeared quite quickly:

> I'm an outsider, and so to be able to form a team so quickly and let them understand that that's how you can do it, you can get three people you want to work with and come up with an idea and become your own person, your own independent, living person. So I thought that was great. I think that the program is fantastic. I love that it's connected with Artpace, which links the school with an art institution. I think that to think outside the box is really, really important in the learning environment. You get to push outside the box of what you usually do in school. Public art's really, really important because it gives you a basis in something to strive for… or something you can be good at that's different from somebody else.

Learning through collaboration between the artists, me, and the students helped us to grow, and channel our efforts to engage in artistic practices that did have an impact on larger audiences. Our community partnerships had ripple effects that extended learning opportunities to not only

our small posse, but also reached out to students and teachers from other classrooms like the computer lab, and business people from outside the traditional Fox Tech/ Artpace community.

Examples of Teaching and Learning Styles

What I remember from working with Ethel is that she designed our classroom engagements to parallel the kinds of interactions that you might see in a marketing and design business office. Her curricular approach was to connect the experiences she was bringing to the classroom, to real job opportunities that the students could initiate on their own, if they wanted to pursue this particular approach to public art. I wanted to know how Ethel and Jennelle viewed the teaching and learning engagements we shared together. Ethel said:

> I presented the idea of public art, including t-shirts as public art. The idea of work you put on as a t-shirt and what you walk around with and what it says is not only a personal message because you're wearing it, but is also public art because it's out in the public. So we started talking about fonts and different ideas of fonts and symbols, punctuation and what all those things might convey. As we entered this project we designed our t-shirts, we decided to have the idea of us moving around the world, presenting our t-shirts, wearing our t-shirts everywhere, and being part of public art all over the world. So, we did a virtual tour of the world and some are fantasy places, some are not.
>
> We went to Artpace and that was when we started to talk about Artpace being our client. So we packaged the shirts to the client- with a brown piece of paper and everybody's name was on the tag and we showed our video. And the kids did the presentation and we also had a component where it was a part of the installation of the image that was on the t-shirt, I had made in neon sign, so that it could stay on the school campus as a permanent art piece. So the kids took turns to kind and split it up between a few kids. They were able to- anybody could interject in they wanted to- and they had to present it. We kind of talked about how that would work, but they really just ran with it.

Jennelle felt that through this shared process of learning that Ethel was modeling for her and the other students, something valuable that she otherwise would not have had as part of her high school education:

> A lot of times when you are in school, you don't usually do that. We learned that we can do that, and we can make a difference, and that's really important. We were getting

different views and teamwork was really helpful. I had to tell the people about our experience working on the project. Just that sharing my thoughts, and having to share my ideas with people that I've never, ever met before in my life….was significant. .Everyone was involved. Everyone was helping each other out.

Figure 5.26. Pre and post-production images of photo shoot for video. (All photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Examples of Teaching and Learning Experiences

When Miller (2006) and Staikidis (2006) spoke of dialogue and the process of creating works of art as mutually interdependent learning vehicles, these ideas were definitively reflected in the type of engagements that Ethel brought to our community partnership. Yet, Ethel was not the only artist in our community partnerships that used dialogue and making art as means for

learning, every single artist incorporated these interactions in their own uniquely tailored way. I wanted Ethel to describe how she saw the teaching and learning experiences as unfolding.

> It was interesting with your help as a teacher, to help it move along [the project], because I was only there once a week for a semester. So we would meet… I think every Monday is what I remember, but I'm not absolutely sure. You know, they were reserved and quiet and when we started talking about them coming up with slogans and ideas. Some of their own personalities came out of what their concerns and interests were. There were these groups of people who kind of cliqued together and had their own kind of posse. Then it was interesting because the shirt that did come out- we took votes on it. [See Figure 5.27.] We all voted on shirts and everyone looked at it democratically and really thought about design because we talked about it quite a bit.

Figure 5.27. Photo of T-shirt design inspired by Fox Tech Student (right). (Photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

> It was presented by one girl…maybe somebody who was more of an outcast, and she had a kind of had a posse. But they were always kind of fractured guys collected together from time to time. When it came to be [referring to the project design], one student ended up coming up with the idea pretty much on her own. And it was the strongest one out of all the other kids. She was really talented.. When I saw her drawings and different things that she was thinking about, I think she really listened when we talked about how public art works and civil works, and how we talked about being bilingual and what that's about, where we live, and how that becomes a language in itself. And so she really ran with that and came up with the two question marks that you have in Spanish, one upside down and one right side up, and that was it, and the dot, dot, dot thing which implies continuance or etc.

> It [our partnership] was like putting together a team, an advertising team, and so that was kind of the start. So that you could kind of learn how to walk away with this understanding of what we try to do, and how cost and marketing is involved in it. The idea was that these guys had to come together. They were kind of shattered or fractured in their own kind of community, their small, like I say posse, and as they came through and picked the shirts and picked the colors and picked how it was going to look and everybody agreed. They really came together as a group because now we were like in a

> virtual video that brought everybody closer. It really was this kind of this travel where we had to come together and act together and become one.

Jennelle's recollections of the teaching and learning experiences were similar to those of Ethel's. Jennelle recognized the significance of balancing individuals efforts with the ideas reflective of the group. Creative expression was being promoted as being informed by multiple particicipants during our time together, and Jennelle enjoyed this process. Jennelle said:

> I remember we pulled out a sheet of paper and we had to decide what we wanted, because we each had our own individual style. We all worked in groups but we also had our own input into the project- we also had the opportunity to work individually. So we could show off our own little creative part… You get to work with people and you get to see what you can do. And this is something that people do, like artists do. And for them to come in on their own time and to come into a high school and to help us out, it's really good because you actually get to do something. You actually get to see stuff. And also, just to know that people actually do want to come in, they actually do want to help out students and suddenly it makes you also want to give back and do something like that.

Figure 5.28. Photo of final dedication day for 2005-2006 semester programs with Fox Tech student (left), Linda Pace (top center), Ethel Shipton, Maria Leake (far right), and Fox Tech student (bottom center). (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Figure 5.29. Photos of boardroom presentations at Artpace during spring 2006 semester program. (Photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Unanticipated Learning Experiences

When our project with Ethel was nearing completion and our t-shirt and video images were being produced, Ethel let the people at Artpace know that she still hadn't spent all of the money they alloted her for the program, but that we had used all that we needed. She was surprised when they told her to go out and spend it- spend it all- so she did. Ethel used the remaining funds to have a neon sign custom crafted to mimic the same symbolic messages portrayed on our t-shirts and in the video. It's been my experience with the people at Artpace as well, that when you think that they have already done so much for you personally and professionally, they want to help facilitate any other endeavors that they can help you to realize.

That kind of unconditional support is something that I find to be so rare, but it has always been my experience when dealing with the individuals from this particular contemporary art foundation. I also wanted to know how Jennelle saw her own learning experiences as being influenced unintentionally by her participation in our community partnership.

> A lot of times when you are in school, you don't usually do that (help become part of a learning collaboration). We learned that we can do that, and we can make a difference, and that's really important. We were getting different views and teamwork was really helpful. I mean, everyone was different in our class. Everyone was different. And this experience really helped us to learn how to work together…especially since I was in my senior year, and now in college, you have to work with different people, just like in a job. So that really helped out learning how to work with other people- that really helped out getting to know people you don't know.

It's interesting to hear both John and Jennelle speak so openly about how different the students in our class were- commenting particularly that the greatest distinction was between the Spanish speaking students and the English speaking students. What strikes me as odd now is that this never seemed to be an issue through my eyes, nor did Eloy or Rosa bring up this topic. As a Hispanic and bi-lingual San Antonian myself, who has always interacted with other Hispanic and bi-lingual students, I never found communication an issue during our classroom engagements. It was strange to me that both John and Jennelle pointed out communication between languages as significant to our classroom experience, perhaps because as the teacher, I had students translate information that I myself was unable to convey. Although language barriers were not problematic from my recollection, I recognize that students saw this differently. From my teacher perspective, we were all part of a learning community that reflected the larger bi-cultural San Antonio community.

Learning by Sharing Art with the San Antonio Community

How did our efforts resonate with the community when we shared it at our dedication event? For me, I felt like we did exhibit aspects of Congdon, Blandy, and Bolin's (2001) conception of commununity being made of the *place* where people came together to share and exchange ideas, expanding the *learning groups* impacted by uniting formal and informal institutions, and celebrating the *ethnic and family groups* that informed our aesthetic preferences. These conceptions of communitiy applies equally to each of the semester programs. Throughout each community-based contemporary art journey that we embarked upon, we brought communities together very clearly particularly when we shared the public art pieces with larger audiences on the dedication days. What did Ethel think about reaching out to the community through art?

> Oh, I think it was- I think it was pretty positive. I thought it was great. And the kids seemed even prouder that they were going to be part of this public presentation, and…. I was proud of them. I thought, "Oh my God, they got dressed up" and everybody wore their cute t-shirts and took part in it. It was really moving.

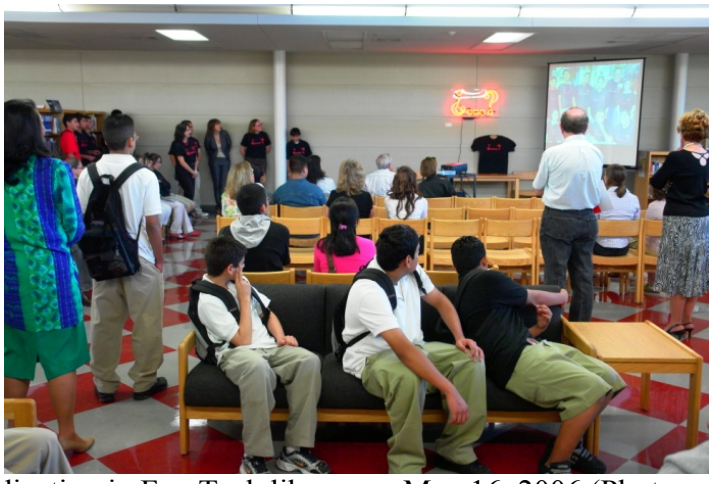


Figure 5.30. Photo of dedication in Fox Tech library on May 16, 2006.(Photo courtesy of Joe Kethan.)

Jennelle, who gave opening remarks at this event shared her own recollections of how the audience responded to the work created during the spring 2006 semester program.

> They actually loved it, seeing the video (and how the project all worked together). I think I discussed how each of us had our input on the project and explaining what everything meant. In the end, we wanted to share what the t-shirt and the video meant. The students and others gave me input (about what to address in the speech) but ultimately, I made the decision of what I was going to say. It was my own decision.

Figure 5.31. Photo of students in front of the green screen during spring 2006. (Photos courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Theme 2: Supporting or Inhibiting Creative Expression

Creative processes are interdependent and systemically informed by the products, contexts, primary source influences, and shifting and influences, according to Gruber and Wallace's (2001) evolving systems approach to creativity. During our time working with Ethel Shipton, we too were working with shifting and contextual influences that informed our overall choices about our project development. There was a definitely interplay between us as the producers of the work, and the audiences that we invited to share this journey with us. I wanted to know how Jennelle and Ethel saw our creative collaboration as reflecting broad concerns. Jennelle said:

> Basically it is a shirt that has questions, and it means that as you go through life, you have questions. In the video we had questions about where we were going and what we were seeing. (For someone watching the video for the first time), they would probably have questions, just like we do in the video, and that's what it's all about.

Ethel said:

> I thought it was a great! I liked the fact that we had almost three components to this package. We had the t-shirt, we had the permanent art piece, and then we had a virtual art piece. So, it was tactile because you could wear something that you could touch. Then the permanent art piece is something that is on view all the time (referring to the neon sign). And virtually (referring to the video) this idea of movement and experience, is more of an emotional kind of connection, even when you listen to music and stuff, you can kind of see that. So that's really nice- these three components.

Interpretations of Creative Freedom

During creative exchanges, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) says that producers and audiences play off each other, and reveal complex connections, but these relationships cannot grow or evolve if there is no freedom to take risks during the learning process. How did Ethel and Jennelle see their ability to take risks and learn? Ethel said:

> It was complete freedom. There were no restrictions on me at all. When we did the virtual (video travel imagery), we were all really shy when we started. But those barriers kind of broke down and the kids said "Hey, I want a picture with you, Miss"… I thought, "Oh I won. I've won them over." So that was nice. And the fact that they walk away with their projects and take them home and give them away. There were never any restrictions. Individually I came up with the project, right? So that was my piece, and then everybody made it, they took charge.

Jennelle's comments help to make clear that the students were given parameters to guide their efforts in the classroom, but this challenge got students excited because they understood their role in the process, and understood that their contributions would be validated publicly.

> I think we were the ones who were really involved with it, because we discussed it, and they helped us to come up with ideas for it, but they helped us out by giving us ideas, but at the end of the day… it was what we really decided. I think we had more say (about decision making) working with Ethel. With Ethel, she came in and explained everything that we were going to have to do up front- like you're going to have to design a shirt, you're going to have to give a presentation and that was really good.
>
> We got to express a little bit about ourselves. In the video we got to help out and we talked about what we were going to do… and that was fun. We had students who spoke nothing but English, and we also had those who spoke nothing but Spanish. And it was

kind of like both of us coming together. And wherever you go, they also have a question. So we are all asking questions.

Figure 5.32. Art products generated during spring 2006 semester program.

Theme 3: How Participants Recognized Educational Benefits of Community Partnership

Our combined efforts during the 2005-2006 school year were tremendously helpful to giving the students exposure to educational opportunities and personal instruction from artists that reflected a wide range of interests. Bringing together a group to form a community partnership obviously took a tremendous amount of effort from many individuals, including people from Artpace, so I asked Ethel to tell me a little about how she saw their efforts as valuable.

> I believe that without Artpace and their amazing programming, their commitment to the artist community and the ability to have the funder for this program and finding the right school to partner with, is what makes it happen.
>
> I think that was one of the things that Artpace came up with, in part, because of the location of the school to Artpace… They're neighbors, right? So I think that that maybe had something to do with it. And I think that Artpace kind of grew out of this through Linda Pace herself… who really understands that the art world in San Antonio. At least in my impression, it has always been kind of grassroots artists that make things happen. And she was definitely a woman and an artist who made things happen. I think she

always thought those kinds of buildings with art… art in the community… could start a new level (of commitment). Personally…I think that Artpace plays a role in this… that there's a service in the community as artists to continue to have a creative community. So I think that that was part of the catalyst for this.

Jennelle's thoughts on the topic of why our community partnership was educationally beneficial seemed to support the ideas shared by Ethel.

Obviously it helps out the students to get more involved with art. Honestly, when most people take art in high school, it's like a blow off class (she makes a gesture of indifference). But when you have people coming in and helping you out, then it's more…you get to learn more…you get to learn more about yourself. Other people may be like, who cares, but this actually got us more involved with art. It got us more excited to see different stuff. I think it was to get us more involved.

Figure 5.33. Ethel takes questions during Artpace presentations in spring 2006. (Photo courtesy of Artpace San Antonio.)

Educational Challenges/ Limitations

While Ethel had told me that she never felt stressed or uncomfortable during our time together, other than first day jitters coming to a new place with new faces, other than that, she did not see any challenges to our the learning that was encountered . Ethel had noted that there were posses in the classroom, but she used this as a point of strength to get students to work as teams, support each other's ideas within the groups, but then to also work and come to an agreement within the larger group about identifying the strongest work democratically. Additionally, Ethel did not interpret the bilingual backgrounds of the students as a point of weakness, but rather chose to see this as an opportunity to unite us through a universal language of symbols. Ethel chose to see what others might see as challenges into learning opportunities.

Jennelle also only had minor feelings of discomfort, primarily from having to speak in front of a large audience. However, other than nerves, Jennelle was invested in this project from the very beginning. Jennelle did see a strong difference between her and other students who only spoke Spanish in the classroom, many of whom were Mexican nationals, but I don't think that was really a challenge for Jennelle educationally. Our San Antonio community and in particular the San Antonio Independent School district has a high percentage of Mexican nationals who are part of our student population. Personally, during my ten years on campus, I never saw any tension or hostility between students depending on their nationality, but that does not mean they were not there. The only time I ever really saw outright hostility between student populations during the 2005-2006 school year was when we had a small, but vocal group of African-American students come to our campus, resulting from Hurricane Katrina evacuations. This transition was very uncomfortable for many students and there were numerous incidents of

name-calling and fights that occurred during this time period. However, this type of tension never took place within my classroom setting.

Being an outsider is never an easy transition, but while Ethel described herself this way initially, I don't think the students or I ever saw her that way. Personally, perhaps because she was the only female artist I got to work with as part of the semester program, or because of her easy-going attitude, or I had already had experience by this point working with other artists, working with Ethel seemed effortless. We both saw the learning engagements between artist, student, and teacher as interdependent and mutually beneficial.

Teacher/ Researcher Reflections on Spring 2006 Semester Program

Ethel brought the ideas of public art, marketing, teamwork, and collaboration using multi-media venues into our classroom environment that involved students with a wide diversity of thoughts and interests. I admired that Ethel looked to our bicultural influences as strengths from which to approach our marketing of our products for universal audiences to consider. I was also happy to hear that Jennelle now recognizes how special our ability to work together was as part of our overall educational partnership. As a teacher, I always hope that I can be a part of something that will help to inspire learning that has meaning and relevance to other people's lives, and I feel that our team initiative served that need.

I benefited from working with Ethel just as much as the students did. Again, I had been involved in art fundraisers where I had designed a proto-type of custom- made tiles that the students helped to produce, but that project was very much teacher-centered and not student-centered. I learned from watching Ethel call upon the students to come up with their own ideas and come to consensus about the strongest ideas, and how those ideas could be refined further

for wider appeal. This lesson has helped me over and over again to get students more actively involved in problem-solving as groups, and working as teams to come to a consensus.

Conclusions

The stories that participants shared and allowed me to re-present in these narrative sketches, were culled from our memories and associations working together as part of the community partnership made possible by pairing Artpace- as the art institution with Fox Tech-as the public high school. Our shared vision to promote learning opportunities for students resulted in bringing together people with different live experiences, interests, and ages, to engage in artistic explorations inspired by real-world issues and concerns. Our efforts to become partners in education in our community did support learning and creative expression.

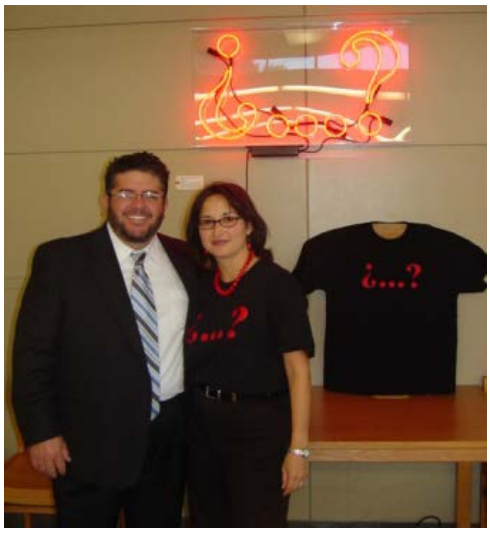


Figure 5.34. Photo of Daniel Guerrero & Maria Leake at fall 2005 and spring 2006 dedication event on May 16, 2006. (Photo courtesy of Joe Kethan.)

Together we shaped and navigated the learning process. We learned about art, life, history, politics, propaganda, culture, public speaking, and a host of other real-world issues that allowed each of us to engage in the learning process, regardless of our previous experiences. We

embraced our local resources and knowledge from our own community as a springboard for artistic exploration and collaboration. We formed our own localized community of practice, working towards a common goal of making art and using it as a form of communication. We took what we came to learn and share within our own community, and opened it up for our larger San Antonio community to explore as well. Our community partnerships could not have been addressed by me alone as the art educator in the public high school classroom; it truly took the efforts many people from various communities to make our community-based art collaborations a reality. From not only my vantage point, but from the point of view of the artists and students, we were all learning from each other and I agree with Ethel when she told me, "I loved this program. It was good for me and I think for all-student, teacher, artist, Fox Tech, Artpace, and San Antonio."

CHAPTER 6

DATA ANALYSIS: PART II

Overview of Data Reduction Process

What are the common threads and notable distinctions that emerge when considering the insights and perspectives shared with me by the participants? This chapter seeks to reveal how I have interpreted the data by looking across, between, and through the stories of experience to recognize similarities and differences that emerged. The data reduction process puts the critical role of identifying common threads in the hands of the researcher, but I have chosen to counterbalance my interpretations by having Mary Cantu, the former educational programs coordinator at Artpace, serve as my expert reviewer and critic. Because Mary played an integral part in facilitating the interactions between the artists and me during the 2004-2006 semester programs, as well as being fully acquainted with the objectives of our art education collaboration, her critique helped to shape the presentation of the research findings.

Table 6.1

Common Threads in Responses Addressing the First Research Question regarding Learning during the Artpace/Fox Tech Community Partnership

HOW WAS LEARNING IMPACTED BY HAVING ONE CONTEMPORARY ARTIST INTERACT WITH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THEIR TEACHER DURING EACH OF THE 2004-2006 SEMESTER PROGRAMS?
ARTIST RESPONSES: Artists viewed collaborative learning as dynamic, unpredictable, sometimes problematic, but also rewarding experiences. Each artist recognized that it did take participation from various members of the community (Artpace, local contemporary artists, Fox Tech, San Antonio ISD, and San Antonio) to realize the successful outcomes of our partnerships.
STUDENT RESPONSES: Students seemed to value working with individuals from outside the school setting who encouraged the students to actively share and communicate their thoughts and ideas with others. Students learned new ways to communicate ideas through art that they had not experienced before.
TEACHER RESPONSE: Learning was not only about art, but about sustaining human-to-human interactions that allowed us to address social issues and concerns through dialogue and the creation of public art. Art and life experiences were reflective of each other. Learning was socially influenced by the participation and support of overlapping communities.

Table 6.2

Common Threads in Addressing the Second Research Question regarding Creative Expression during the Artpace/Fox Tech Community Partnership

HOW WAS VISUAL AND VERBAL CREATIVE EXPRESSION EITHER SUPPORTED OR INHIBITED DURING EACH OF THE 2004-2006 SEMESTER PROGRAMS**?**
ARTIST RESPONSES: Dialogue was the preferred tool used by all artists to support creative exploration of issues and ideas within and beyond the classroom. Creative expression was not just about making art, it was also evident in during creative acts such as exploring how our work takes on new meanings when it is contextualized for viewers to understand. The greatest inhibitor to creativity involved behavioral problems such as being disinterested, rude, or physical or emotional problems such as hunger, pregnancy, sleep deprivation, etc. STUDENT RESPONSES: Students interviewed enjoyed being part of a team working with the artists and being able to directly interact with them. Students described how they contributed to creative expressions that took place during our partnership when they made, shared, and contextualized their art for others to understand. Not a single student interviewed expressed that they felt limited or restricted by their lack of previous art experiences when it came to expressing themselves creatively. However, students did acknowledge that there were students who were not interested in participating and that sometimes caused distractions in class. TEACHER RESPONSE: The process of working through ideas for art conceptually was far more important to creative expression than were the art products that students developed individually or as teams. Dialogue was the critical component linking the artists to the students and me. Creative expression reflected real-world interests, and the ideas explored were of relevance to communities beyond our campus

This study has sought to address two primary research concerns involving learning interactions and whether creative expression was supported or inhibited during our time together. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 reveal the similarities noted in the responses of the artist, student, and me from all four semester programs. These common threads are reflective of the ideas shared previously in the narrative sketches but also are informed by the entire breadth of information shared with me by participants during our face-to-face interviews. While Tables 6.1 and 6.2 have reduced the findings into charts to highlight common threads addressing the two central research questions, it is also necessary to consider the contextual considerations surrounding the interactions that took place between the artists, students, and me during the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnerships.

Contextual Background of the 2004-2006
Artpace/ Fox Tech Semester Programs

Learning during each of the four community partnerships had a variety of influences impacting our overall experiences from 2004-2006. Similarly, our vantage points today may or may not be the same as they were at the time the events initially took place. For example, there were never an identical set of contexts surrounding the artists' background, media preferences, topics of discussion or meeting sites (see Table 6.3). Clearly the experiences that Gary Sweeney had in 2004 working with several large classes in a single day, were substantially different than Daniel, David, or Ethel's experiences working with smaller groups of students for only once weekly for 45 minutes over a 12-week period.

Table 6.3

Various Contexts Influencing the Artpace/ Fox Tech Community Partnership Experiences

DATE/ ARTISTS' NAME/ & ETHNICITY	TOPICS OF DISCUSSION	MEETING SITES	NUMBER OF STUDENTS / ETHNICITY/ & SCHEDULE
Spring 2004 Gary Sweeney/ Anglo	Rebus Images	Classroom	Approximately 125 Hispanic students/ irregular schedule
Spring 2005 Daniel Guerrero/ Hispanic	Propaganda	Classroom , Library & Artpace	Approximately 25 Hispanic students/ regular schedule
Fall 2005 David Jurist/ Anglo	Site-Specific Sculpture	Classroom, and outdoor areas of Fox Tech Campus& Artpace	Approximately 25 Hispanic students/ regular schedule
Spring 2006 Ethel Shipton/ Anglo	Public Art	Classroom, Green Screen Room & Artpace	Approximately 30 Hispanic students/ regular schedule

Another current context is that we have all been distanced from the time and events that initially impacted our community partnership and therefore our memories will always remain incomplete.

However, there were contexts that were brought up during the interviews that impacted learning, as noted by the artists and students.

For example, the number of people each artist worked with was an important context. Gary Sweeney said he had a grueling schedule and was absolutely exhausted at the end of each teaching day working with around 125 students and me. This schedule was therefore modified the following year to allow one artist to only work with one class of students on a regular basis. Daniel Guerrero, David Jurist, and Ethel Shipton each had a regular introductory class of about 25 to 30 students that they worked with once a week for 12 weeks.

Where the interactions took place was another context. All activities between Gary and the students took place within the classroom setting during the spring of 2004. Daniel chose to use the classroom as the primary site for interactions, but was also willing to spontaneously go outside when the coast guard recruiters came to our campus, or take the students to the library to conduct research, and take them to Artpace to view Cruz Ortiz's work, and the other exhibitions on display. David utilized all the common space areas of our campus to facilitate discussions about creating site-specific sculptures as well as taking the students to Artpace. Ethel felt at ease working with the students in the classroom, and facilitating collaborations with our computer/ technology teacher Joe Kethan. As a result, we spent quite a bit of time down in the green screen room preparing for our video production project, and also requiring students to give a formal presentation of their work in the board room at Artpace.

Perhaps another significant context is that there was one class of students who got to work with two artists in one year, and that was a unique experience from my perspective as a teacher. I don't however know if the students really ever realized just how fortunate they were. I know students in my other classes were always asking me why they didn't get to work with an

artist, but that was just the reality of trying to accommodate the artist's schedule with the school's bell schedule of classes.

Another context influencing the types of engagements that took place between us stems from the media preferences of each artist, the interests of the students, as well as each person's willingness to share their ideas. Whether it was obvious or not, every context impacted the learning that took place. If for example, students were tired, hungry, anxious, or had something else on their mind, that would impact their behavior and thoughts. It would be impossible to identify the infinite number of contexts impacting the overall learning experiences that took place, but the contexts outlined in Table 6.3 did play a significant role within our community partnerships. Each of these contexts directly and indirectly influenced the types of learning that took place. Understanding that there were contexts that made each semester program unique, data reduction will now try and identify patterns and themes that seemed to resonate within all of the community partnership programs from 2004 until 2006. Additionally, when there were notable areas of differences in responses, those variations were also noted.

Patterns and Themes

Table 6.4

Patterns and Themes Found in All Artpace/ Fox Tech Semester Programs

PATTERNS AND THEMES REGARDING LEARNING AND CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF THE ARTPACE/ FOX TECH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS
Learning and creative expression went beyond the individual
Networks of support and communication were available to all participants
Challenges to learning and creative expression were acknowledged
Empathy between participants was an unintentional outcome
Working together as a community of practice facilitated personal interactions and connections
Learning and creative expression went beyond the traditional curriculum
Educational benefits were realized by all participants

Learning and Creative Expression Went Beyond the Individual

Both situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff & Lave, 1984; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Synder, 2002) and systemic views of creativity (Bruner, 1962; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Gruber & Wallace, 2001) recognize that individuals are influenced constantly by social engagements, historical, social, and cultural contexts. Whatever stories of experiences we share with others, they are informed by a host of contexts, some that are identifiable while others may not be as evident. During our community partnership experiences partnering artists with students and their teacher, our stories of experience were no exception. Each of us identified influences on our thoughts and actions that indicated that learning and creative expression went beyond the individual during our Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership.

For example, what occurred between the artists, students and I did not just occur spontaneously, it required a lot of planning and investment of time from individuals who were not physically present with us, but helped to facilitate our interactions. The donors who invested in our program for example helped to pay for the artist's time, expertise, and materials necessary to make them available to Fox Tech for a twelve week commitment. The Artpace staff supported all of the logistical and staffing aspects of the program such as selecting the artist, working out a schedule for them, and coordinating with my needs so that we were all comfortable with our schedules. The administration and staff at Fox Tech also had to be willing to allow an outside visitor come and interact with our student body during the regular school day, grant permission for photographs to be taken, and agree to let us display our art somewhere on the campus. Similarly, without the media coverage of our events, and dignitaries willing to come and support our programming, our efforts would not have been able to reach such a wide audience. Thus

creative expression of our thoughts and ideas were shared with so many individuals that went beyond any singular individual.

Networks of Support and Communication were Available to All Participants

Within a successful community of practice, there needs to be a network of support so that information and ideas can be exchanged between individuals (Wenger, McDermott, & Synder, 2002). Learning and creative expression often require people to take risks, particularly when they are thinking outside the box, as our community partnership encouraged. If participants cannot feel safe in sharing ideas and relying on the help and support of others, learning and creative expression cannot survive (Albert & Runco, 1999; Wenger, McDermott, & Synder, 2002).

When Gary was talking with Eloy for example, there was a sense of trust and mutual respect between them that supported their exchange of ideas and concerns. As I mentioned before, Eloy had not chosen to inform me of his personal life, because if he had, I would have taken deliberate steps to help him find a stable shelter, but this was not how Eloy saw our relationship. However, Gary was well aware of this aspect of Eloy's life along with many others. They were supporting each other during their time together. They both connected on a personal and artistic level. Similarly, with John and Daniel, I had no idea that they were exchanging books and art with each other and supporting their inquiries. Nor was I aware that Ethel was particularly interested in the talents of one student. According to Ethel, they had communicated about art, communication, and other issues they were mutually concerned about without my knowledge. They too were demonstrating the strength of a network of support that can emerge when community partnerships are successfully enacted.

I know that the artists were grateful to me for supporting their vision for engaging the students in art, but I also had their support and that of the people that I worked with so closely at Artpace. We all had each other's best interests in mind. We wanted these programs to be successful, so that was a critically important aspect to continuing to work as hard as we did. The artists told me as well how much support they also got from people like Kate Green, Kathryn Kanjo, Linda Pace, and me. We all realized that we all had something valuable to contribute to the semester programs, so we formed our own networks of support.

Networks of support and communication are particularly relevant to the entire reason for establishing a community art education program. Our partnership in particular, which brought together various individuals from the community that were different ages, had different interests and life experiences, relied on open communication between each of us to share our perspectives from different vantage points (Menand, 2001). We were using dialogue that was sometimes formally organized such as during the times we presented our work to larger audiences at dedication ceremonies, or when we were sharing our proposals with Artpace personnel in their boardroom, but most communication was less formally structured. While my classroom was formal in the sense that it was a public school environment and there were policies and procedures in place established by the school district, it was an informal setting where ideas were openly exchanged. Sometimes we expressed our thoughts and ideas with words, sometimes with images, and sometimes communication involved both forms of expression. Through our shared dialogues, we were helping each other to make meaning from our world, an idea supported by Bailey and Desai (2005).

Together, we were socially engaged in fusing locally inspired art and dialogue as mutually interdependent learning vehicles to facilitate closer connections between individuals

from the community who share an interest in making an impact locally (Adejumo, 2000; Clark & Zimmerman, 2000; Congdon, Blandy, & Bolin, 2001; Miller, 2006; Staikidis, 2006; Ulbricht, 2005, Villeneuve & Sheppard, 2009). By partnering with others, we were able to develop, modify, and present our aesthetic values and preferences with larger audiences (Congdon, Blandy, & Bolin, 2001). With the help and support of the artists and me, the Fox Tech students were able to share their voice and ideas with the San Antonio community in a way that positively reinforced their efforts, which is a goal that Miller (2006) and I believe is critical to the education process.

Challenges to Learning and Creative Expression were Acknowledged

There were many common threads as to which aspects of our community partnership that we found challenging. Perhaps the most often expressed concern between our responses was how nervous each of us was when we first came to work with each other and then when we were expected to speak publicly about our project to larger audiences through formal presentations. Another challenge was that not all of the students spoke English, but most of the artists used this as a point of strength to bring out our bi-cultural identity as part of our social and cultural inspiration for creating art that addresses our perspective as members of this community. Some of the students acknowledged that there were differences in the communication preferences of the students, but they did not identify this as problematic.

However, there were very real problematic issues that did have more of a direct impact on the types of learning interactions that did take place. Disinterest by some students was the greatest challenge to our community partnership. Not all of the students who were enrolled in my classes were interested in art, nor were they particularly interested in the topics being discussed

by the artists, and there were impolite exchanges that resulted. There was only so much we were able to do to engage these students, but that is simply a reality of dealing with people. You cannot expect to get everyone on board when they did not have an initial choice about whether or not they wanted to be a part of the art class, let alone being part of a community partnership.

Empathy between Participants was an Unintentional Outcome

Some of the problems that the artists noted about the student's behavior were also a source of empathy. For example, when students were sleeping or eating food during class, artist Daniel Guerrero inquired as to why this was occurring. He found out that many of the students work really late and get very little sleep, but they are dependent on these jobs to provide income for their families. The artists vocalized that this was a very different experience than what they had encountered when they were in high school. I concur that I too never had to deal with issues of working while going to school, but the service industry is a huge part of the San Antonio economy, and when I do bump into former Fox Tech students even today, many of them are still employed in tourist related occupations. Yet, most of the student participants in this study are or have also attended or graduated from college.

Providing meals to our students was an important part of our campuses responsibility to our students because all of our students qualified for free breakfast and lunch due to low socio-economic demographics of the families. Often, the breakfast and lunch that the students got at school were the only meals they ate for the day. In fact, for many years at Fox Tech, the cafeteria was also open during the summer months, regardless if there were classes taking place, so that youth from our area had a place to get food. Again, this was an issue that had not been understood by the artists before coming to work with the students directly in the classroom.

Less problematic but more shocking to the artists was the high percentage of students at our high school campus that were either going to have a baby or were already parents. More than once the fact that we have a daycare adjacent to our main campus came up during our interviews. Artists expressed to me that they had not realized how difficult it must be for the students to not only deal with the stress of being a teenager but also to have to deal with something as challenging as a pregnancy was really eye-opening for them. The artists saw the students' current situations and issues as different from their own high school experiences.

As mentioned earlier, there were students who were less than interested in what was taking place during our learning interactions. The sometimes rude comments that students shared with the artists, like telling them that what they were doing was boring sparked a very emotional response from one artist. Gary said that sometimes he just wanted to strangle the students when they were being outright rude to him. I can't blame him because I've experienced what it's like when you pour your heart and soul into a lesson that you think the students will really connect with and enjoy, and then the magic fizzles when they just don't seem to care. I could empathize with that emotion of frustration, while to a lesser degree.

The students on the other hand told me that this experience of working directly with the artist gave them an understanding and appreciation for issues facing artists that they would never have understood, had we not been partnered together. Learning how each of these artists has balanced their love of art with their careers was something that I too had never had an experience to come to understand before this experience. Before the community partnerships, the only artists that I had really come to interact with were artists that were pursuing art as their full-time job, so working with local artists who have found their own balance was a truly insightful experience for me. I have since been able to tell my students who want to be artists, that they can and should

pursue their interests in art, but that they can also have another income producing career as well, just as these four artists did.

Working Together as a Community of Practice Facilitated Personal Interactions and Connections

Working together over a twelve week period meant that there were numerous opportunities to engage in personal interactions and make connections. It seemed to me that indeed the most memorable experiences of interactions were the ones that were emotionally charged and personal and are the most difficult memories to forget, as Baddelely and Wilson (1986) stated. For example, both Daniel and Gary gave me very specific quotes and actions that they recalled about specific events and encounters with students and me. Daniel was intrigued by this gesture not only because the student was eating, but also because he was curious how the student came to know the answer to such an unusual detail from American history. Some of the memories may not have seemed that educationally relevant to me as the teacher or researcher, like what someone was wearing, but to others like Jennelle and Rosa, articles of clothing triggered particular associations from that period of time we were together. Those were the kinds of unpredictable outcomes that resulted when we were putting individuals together during our community partnership programs. The emotional connections made these face to face interactions so valuable to the artists, students, and me in different ways.

Ethel Shipton credited our face to face interactions when we were building ideas together as being one of the reasons we made such a good team. Gary also mentioned that by coming together, the students got to see a humanized version of the artist and perhaps that might have taken the romance out of what students and others would have expected to encounter, but that this was a constructive pursuit. Our ongoing interactions allowed all of us to keep learning from

each other. Jennelle Gomez made clear for example that both David and Ethel showed them how to work together and that has meant something to her. Without personal interaction surrounding an issue and idea that was relevant to both students like Jennelle and the artists, then I don't think the concept of teamwork would have had the impact that it did. Just as the students had very specific memories that they associated with the artists, the artists also had vivid recollections of the students as well.

Learning and Creative Expression went Beyond the Traditional Curriculum

Part of the educational benefit of having worked with local artists and addressing locally relevant issues was to expand the range of topics, ideas, and opportunities for visual and verbal expression by pulling people together from the community. The result of this intersection of local talent is curriculum that is about what interests us here and now and the social aspect of a community partnership encourages us to navigate our experiences together. Through various forms of interactions, we learn from each other and we are able to express ourselves on a multitude of levels. For example, when Daniel asked students to think about the representation of Hispanics locally, one of the first places my students looked for information was our state-adopted textbook, which revealed an educational gap in our curriculum. Rather than push that aside, Daniel encouraged the students to look at this as a critical point of reflection and inspired us to look further on our own for further discrepancies in Hispanic under-representation. Our searches and inquiries empowered us to do what we could locally to correct these distortions. In this instance, the learning and creative expression began in the classroom but extended out to our local community. We made learning more than about creating an art product. It was reflective of our journey to better understand what was left unsaid in our curriculum.

In my opinion, standardized curriculum serves a function in making sure that there is a somewhat level playing field in regards to topics and themes to be addressed, but people and localities do not come in a one size fits all prototype. The aspect of our community partnership that made the experience meaningful for most of us, was that curriculum was flexible to accommodate local needs and concerns. For example, one of Gary's artistic interests is the dynamic relationship words and images can have when they are combined together and are manipulated to reveal multiple interpretations. During our community partnership, Gary did not have to put aside his own personal interests, instead, the curriculum he shared with the students embraced his artistic practice and he gave the students opportunities to create and decode images he favored for themselves. A creative aspect of this teaching process is that the artist was supporting me and the students by trying our hands at engaging in artistic expressions unlike others we had experienced before.

Working as teams was mentioned numerous times during the interviews as being an educational asset that helped to promote the interests of many, while encouraging individual contributions leading towards a shared goal. Teamwork within our community partnership was especially noted in participants' responses as being the essential ingredient necessary to build a stronger community. Teamwork allowed us to bounce ideas off each other and triggering memories that helped us to contextualize what we were experiencing in the present in relation to the past. Teamwork allowed for unpredictable exchanges to take place that once again allowed us to socially navigate our own learning experiences and go beyond any standardized curriculum.

Educational Benefits were Realized by All Participants

Without a doubt, every participant interviewed for this study recognized our community

partnership between Artpace and Fox Tech as an educationally valuable experience. We never knew what to expect to learn when we all came together for as part of our art education partnership and began sharing stories of experience with each other. Our face-to-face and socially situated interactions were successful, when we were invested in working towards a common cause. However, if there were students who did not want to participate, that did make the learning atmosphere more uncomfortable for all of us. Yet, despite minor challenges such as these, we were all learning from each other.

Conclusions of the Teacher/ Researcher

Data reduction is an interpretive form of analysis and making meaning from the data can be understood differently depending on who is reviewing and writing up the research. I have owned up to the fact that I was the teacher involved in each of these semester programs and was personally and professionally invested in doing what it took to make our community partnership programs a success and now I am reflecting back on these critical events as a researcher. I also acknowledge that while I was a key participant in our community partnership, my voice as the teacher was only one out of a much larger community of practice. However, with those disclaimers made, I have to say that after collecting and analyzing the data, I have reified my belief that what we experienced were critical events in art education.

This study also challenged me to see if I could find any connections between our stories of experience and scholarly discourse. Indeed, I did find parallels, including how important memory research was when collecting and reviewing data. For example, I had to draw upon what Fentress and Wickham (1992) have called the social aspects of memory, because we were sharing stories. Sometimes our stories explored more of the autobiographical aspects of our

memories that were personally and historically revealing, like the stories shared by Eloy. Sometimes our memories were so embedded in deep emotional associations, and sometimes our memories just needed a trigger such as a photograph, a word, or being in a particular room, to generate a flood of memories. While all of these ideas were useful to collecting data, I also had to be aware that memories could have been unknowingly influenced or distorted the types of responses shared with me by the participants depending on how they thought I wanted them to answer the questions, and perhaps what they did and did not reveal during our interviews. This comes to mind particularly when everyone else in the study mentioned there were challenges to being involved in the community partnership, except for artist Ethel Shipton. The question in my mind is why? Was it because she really did not see any challenges, or perhaps she was trying to be politically correct, or was it because I was interviewing her during her lunch break before the museum she worked at closed for the holiday season and time limited her responses? Thus, aspects of memory research did inform my interpretations of our community partnership.

Additionally, as the former teacher involved in these semester programs, and now as researcher, community-art education discourse encouraged me to look at how our experiences were locally grounded and inspired. The challenge for me as the researcher was to see how our contemporary art practices were a reflection of our real-world issues and concerns. We were not making carbon-copy art devoid of context, we were thinking critically about different aspects of art and life. Every story reaffirmed these very real and personal connections that emerged as a result of working with others to make and share public art.

Furthermore, creativity theories and situated learning discourse never were far from my mind when looking for common threads, and clustering data. These theories put a critical lens on how a confluence of contexts have impacted how we came to make meaning from our

experiences and how we communicated those ideas with each other. We were all a part of a systemic landscape that changed constantly. Creativity theories and situated learning discourse also influenced my perspective on how I have come to interpret creative acts, or examples of creative expression. Both theories recognize the critical role of social and cultural contexts on real-world experiences. Again, these ideas were an integral part of this study's theoretical foundation for exploring learning interactions and creative expressions that took place between the artists, students, and me. As a postmodern researcher, I remain willing to acknowledge that there will continue to be multiple readings possible when reviewing the data analysis I have presented. It was my responsibility and choice to re-tell our stories of experience from the perspective of those of us who were involved directly with the Artpace/ Fox Tech semester programs, but ultimately there were so many layers to our stories, that hopefully I have succeeded in presenting one way of recognizing the educational value of our community partnership for others to consider for their own educational purposes.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this concluding chapter is to highlight the significance of this study by reflecting on the learning interactions and examples of creative expression that took place between artists, students, and me as the teacher, from 2004 until 2006 and how these experiences might have relevance to individuals wanting to initiate their own community partnership to extend learning beyond the walls of our classroom. The collected stories of the participants directly involved with the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership programs have helped me to extract key concepts from contemporary art practices, community art education, and issues of creativity in art education that might be useful considerations for future programs. As the teacher and researcher reflecting on the implications of our community of practice, I will begin by revisiting the purpose and questions guiding this study.

Revisiting the Purpose and Questions of this Qualitative Inquiry

The purpose of this study has been to explore how learning and creative expression have come to be recognized by participants in a community partnership between Artpace San Antonio and Fox Tech High School between 2004 and 2006. The two overarching research questions are concerned with how learning was facilitated by having one contemporary visual artist interact with high school art students and this teacher/ researcher, once a week for twelve weeks, during each of the four Artpace/ Fox Tech High School semester programs. Secondly, how have participants come to recognize visual and verbal creative expression as either having been

supported or inhibited by having artists paired with high school art students and their teacher during this community-based art partnership?

Based on my interpretation of the data collected, I will now try and explain what the artists, students, and I have considered either personally or educationally significant regarding our learning interactions and opportunities for creative expression during the 2004-2006 semester programs in relationship to contemporary art practices, community art education, and creativity discourse in art education. Each of these areas have revealed ways in which individual needs, group needs, and community needs can come together to promote learning that goes beyond the art classroom walls.

Educational Implications of Contemporary Art Practices

When artists Harrell Fletcher and Pepón Osorio were engaging with individuals from their communities to address sometimes difficult issues, they used communication and social interactions to allow learning experiences to unfold between individuals who might not otherwise have an opportunity to work together to publicly address these concerns (Blatherwick , 1997; Burton, 2007; Connors, 1996; Davis, 2007; Fallon, 2007; Gonzalez, 1996; Kim, 1999; Lopez,1995; Mesa-Bains, 2007: Perez & LaSalle, 1995; Rodenbeck 2008). Their contemporary art practices put a critical focus on the processes facilitating human to human interactions. The art products generated by members of the community during their collaboration took a back seat to the learning engagements and real-world contexts that informed the discourse and social negotiations of meaning. These contemporary art practices were also very prominent during our Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnerships and I believe are a vital aspect of any successful

community partnership. Our learning interactions were based on authentic areas of interest for the artist, student, and me.

For example, when artist Daniel Guerrero got students thinking and talking about how it wasn't long ago that Hispanics couldn't serve as jury members, own land, sit in certain sections of the movie theater, or even expect to get paid in money rather than another form of payment preferred by their employers, it got students talking about why these changes have come about and who made them happen. These very personal conversations lead the way to engaging in dialogue that lead to the development of *Yo Soy El Futuro*. Similarly, when artist Ethel Shipton had students work as teams to come up with design plans that could communicate messages to individuals from our bi-cultural community, this too sparked a wide range of issues and ideas about our physical, social, and cultural relationships between San Antonio, Texas or "Tejas" and Mexico. During the development of our art product *¿...?*, we were able to reconceptualize our role as artists marketing communication about ourselves and how we question our place in the world to larger audiences. With Ethel Shipton's guidance, our conversations brought art and real-world issues and concerns to the forefront of our learning interactions and served as inspiration for creative expression. Our human to human interactions were not separate from real-world issues, they were explorations of those issues.

Just as Fletcher and Osorio each designed and socially navigated their own approach to working with individuals from their own communities, our artists also experimented with and often adjusted their own approaches to working with the students. In fact, every artist and student participant said this was the first time any of them had ever been formally partnered together in a school setting for twelve weeks and they were grateful to have me present to help keep the momentum going by having me interact with them and bounce ideas off each other. At times,

artists Gary Sweeney and Daniel Guerrero felt like they weren't making a connection with the students during conversations, but then were surprised when they would suddenly participate and demonstrated in their responses that they had definitely processed and internalized the themes and ideas and even added their own new spin on the topic. I never doubted their dedication to the learning engagements and I think this is also part of the reason the partnerships were a success, from all of our vantage points. The artists, I, and most of the students were on the same page.

There was a flexibility to the interactions that took place between the students, artists, and me that allowed us to socially navigate the learning process together. As a result, our roles during the community partnership often shifted. For example, I was the teacher in the classroom supporting and mediating the ongoing engagements between the artist and the students, but I was also a student learning from everyone around me when we put our heads together to teach one another way to address or consider the issue. We all had a say as to what we thought would either add to or detract from the art products and why. We artistically expressed these thoughts in tangible form. When students gave their presentations of their work in the boardroom, they too took on an unfamiliar role as speakers on behalf of their team art projects. While none of us came into this community collaboration with the exact same set of previous art experiences to build upon, we all have been influenced by other social and cultural contexts that helped us to find common ground to interact and exchange ideas with one another through dialogue.

Art as a social process puts critical value on processes of engagement over the creation of art products (Rodenbeck, 2008). As an art educator, working with students who come to my classroom with a wide range of previous artistic skills and interests, I support the educational significance of this perspective. However, this was not the vantage point of the artists and students interviewed during this study. All of the participants felt that the art process and art

products are equally valuable to our overall learning experiences. The students and artists agreed that the product and process are inseparable and one aspect cannot be considered without the other. For example, when Daniel described one art piece made by a female student that the other students felt was less than interesting, he said the work took on new associations and became more interesting to the students when she contextualized the work as relating to her life experience. In this instance as in many others, the product and process were inextricably linked. However, Daniel also mentioned that he had to make himself sensitive to the fact that many of the students did not have the same range of skills to express themselves and thus had to be sure that he did not do or say anything that might crush their spirits. What I find to be particularly significant in this instance, is that the reading or interpretation of the art product was more important that the actual quality or aesthetic aspects of the art created by the students. Through verbal contextualization of the work, the novice art students were able to communicate their ideas that were then better understood by larger audiences. So while the product and process were valued equally on a theoretical level, the actual quality of the work generated by novices took a back seat to the overall learning and conceptualizations that the students were able to engage with. We were learning by doing and sharing our thoughts with others through a social process, an aspect of contemporary art practices that can be of relevance to so many types of community partnerships.

Educational Implications of Community Art Education

When Ulbricht (2005) wrote of Texas artists making a difference in their local communities, he described programs that set out to address specific needs of the people who live and work in those places. The art created in these instances was not set apart from the

community, rather they were about them. During our community partnership, there was also no mistaking that our learning experiences were locally inspired. Our community art collaborations were meant to pair Fox Tech High School art students, who came from lower socio-economic backgrounds with an arts organization that the students walked by everyday on their way home from school. Before our community partnership officially began, I had heard stories about the damage our Fox Tech students used to do to the large glass picture windows in the front of Artpace that cost thousands of dollars to replace. Additionally, I had heard about the graffiti the students might periodically put on their building, or the cars that our students keyed. With the exception of one act of vandalism that took place and was addressed under my watch, there were no other acts of vandalism that I was made aware of that took place from 2004-2006 during our collaborations.

Before our partnership began, I would have to agree that most of my students had no personal connection to Artpace so it was just another building to them. In fact, one former student who was not involved in this study confessed to me many years ago that he used to be one of those kids who would purposely damage the cars in the Artpace parking lot, just because it was something to do. He told me this with a sense of regret after he realized how the people from Artpace were reaching out to us on our campus and it was staffed by people that were friendly to him. Another Fox Tech student, that I did not know personally because he was not one of my students, was actually caught tagging on the Artpace building before our community partnership began. When the police caught up with him, they handcuffed him and put the student in the back of the police car temporarily, but the student kicked out the glass window and ran off still in handcuffs. Whether or not these incidences lead Artpace to want to initiate our community partnership or not are still unknown possibilities. What is known however is that

they knew our student population, they knew me as a contemporary art enthusiast and willing participant, and they knew how to begin facilitating our collaborations, which resulted in beginning our ongoing interactions. Each of these contexts did play a role in how our partnership originated and how our pulling together would try and connect us more personally and directly towards a common cause of improving art education opportunities and fostering community interactions with positive and productive outcomes. The critical aspect that I think emerges as significant from partnering with people from your own community is that you really don't have that much to lose, but the possibility of so much to gain.

When Gude (1989) shared her own experiences organizing a community partnership with people from the neighborhood, she used her experiences as both an artist and educator to bring people together for a common cause. She wanted her community partnership model to involve the people of the community to invest their time, sweat, and brainpower to transform their ideas into a final art product and it worked. During our partnership, we also worked together to have students work as teams to come up with specific artistic proposals for public art and then exhibited them at the school in the library, and in other public spaces where others could see how the student's art projects were reflecting our shared themes. We also had to invest our energies in learning how to organize and present the final art product to our larger San Antonio community during our dedication ceremonies. Sharing art with the community also required the planning and support of other individuals who had not been part of actually creating and developing the work, but were now helping us to prepare our school campus for outside visitors and news media to attend. Once again, this endeavor had us looking for support from even wider communities of practice, including building and maintenance personnel, police officers, school administration, working with public relations specialists and media outlets. There

were many individuals from our local community who helped us each our collective goal of making and sharing art with larger audiences in San Antonio by empowering individuals who might not otherwise be involved in community-based art collaboration. We helped to support one another the best ways in which we knew how.

Similarly, when Miller (2006) wrote about how the homeless in her community were empowered to share their stories through photographs and bring together people that might not otherwise have had the chance to interact and exchange ideas with each other, this too resonated with the stories of the Artpace/ Fox Tech semester program experiences. When former Fox Tech student Eloy McGarity told me he was homeless during much of his time at Fox Tech and that he only felt comfortable tagging as a form of artistic expression, I knew that this was an experience that many of the youth in our city also share. However, Eloy knew that he was taking risks every time he engaged socially with his illegal tagging groups and as a result, tried to find more appropriate venues for sharing and communicating his artistic visions with others. When Eloy met artist Gary Sweeney, there was a mutual connection between the two individuals. Gary told me that he felt that he was going to end up mentoring this brilliant student and Eloy told me that he had never met another person who could see the world as he did. Unfortunately, Eloy was removed from our campus before this relationship could formalize. What is evident from their stories is that close human to human experiences and interactions allowed students like Eloy to have a voice and an opportunity to share ideas with an artist that probably would not have occurred under different circumstances. As Daniel noted, no longer were the students put into a passive role of having people from the community speaking only to them, but now it was a turning of the tables because the students were speaking out to the community and getting

positive reinforcement for their efforts. Each of us shared responsibilities to make our partnership an authentic collaboration, where we could all take ownership of the final outcomes.

Our community art education partnership would not have taken place had it not been for the personal and financial support of the individuals from Artpace, so one finding from this study did surprise me. While both the artists and students openly expressed gratitude for the art partnership that Artpace helped to make possible, only the artists and I have kept up our relationship with this foundation over time. During our interviews, I had asked each person to please tell me if they have ever come back to Artpace since our time together and only the artists consistently said they had, while the student responses were less consistent (see Table 7.1). Of course, this table does not count the date when I asked John Contreras and Jennelle Gomez to meet with me in December 2009, specifically to conduct the interviews at Artpace.

Table 7.1

Participants who have Continued to Return to Artpace San Antonio since our Community Partnerships have Concluded

PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE CONTINUED TO RETURN TO ARTPACE SINCE THE 2004-2006 SEMESTER PROGRAMS		
ARTISTS	**TEACHER**	**STUDENTS**
Gary Sweeney- YES	Maria Leake- YES	Eloy McGarity-Only a FEW TIMES when time has allowed. Rosa Leija- NO, even though she drives by there every day to work.
Daniel Guerrero- YES		John Contreras- Only ONCE immediately after our semester program.
Ethel Shipton- YES		Jennelle Gomez- NO. She only walked by the outside of the building and saw Ethel's WindowWorks project.

My interpretation of this is that for the artists and me, going to Artpace is both a personal and professional rewarding experience. Both the artist and I have each benefitted from our

relationship with this institution in various ways. However, the former Fox Tech students that I interviewed gave me the impression that this was only a brief part of their overall high school educational experiences. Our community partnership ended in the eyes of the students, when the semester was over, although they still see the educational relevance of such programming and highly support continuation of these kinds of community initiatives. Despite this difference, the artists, students, and I have continued to view art partnerships as a means to strengthen bonds within the community.

Educational Implications of Postmodern Perspectives of Creativity in Art Education

In today's data driven times, it's refreshing to use an inclusive lens to re-consider creativity in educational practices. Understanding that creativity can be interpreted as taking place between everyday people who are socially and culturally negotiating how we can make meaning from our world by re-working ideas is a postmodern inspired conceptual framework. It is also the perspective I have adopted and recommend to other art educators for viewing various forms of creative acts. In fact, there have been numerous manifestations of creativity that have been referenced during this study. For example, I have described teaching as being a creative act where the instructor has to make a connection between the student's needs, the curriculum available, and find a way to engage the students so that they expand their knowledge on the subject in a way that becomes personally relevant to them. Engaging various members of a community of practice to interact socially to work through artistic processes and generate artistic products is also an example of creativity. During these ongoing and situated engagements, ideas are being exchanged and learning becomes a dynamic interplay between persons navigating the learning process together, which are yet another type of creative act. Furthermore, when various

members of the community come together to exchange ideas and dialogue, this is yet another manifestation of creativity. Even the development of this research study has been a creative act. All of the thoughts and ideas shared within this research text certainly did not come from me alone, I co-constructed this document with the help of my research participants, my doctoral committee, individuals from Artpace that shared many of these journeys with me. Likewise, the many researchers who are referenced in this study were also deeply impacted by a range of social, historical, and cultural issues that informed their own thinking on what constitutes creativity. Thus, postmodern concerns regarding creativity in art education is an inclusive lens through which to consider alternate readings of creativity when working with K-12 students in a community partnership.

Through socially driven creative engagements, we can re-work thoughts, ideas, and materials that already exist in the world and communicate our shared perspectives and insights with others through dialogue and artistic expression like bricoleurs. Art reflects life and life reflects art. Our involvement with exploring and creating art with others can invite a confluence of perspectives to emerge, if we as teachers can promote a curiosity in our students to keep them asking questions and challenging perspectives. These processes should hopefully give students skills that they might apply to other aspects of their lives.

Creativity during our community partnership has been viewed as being systemically and interdependently informed by multiple influences and participants, just as Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 1996, 1999) , and Gruber and Wallace (1999, 2001) have asserted. People's lives were inextricably connected to our South Texas roots, our connections with the Hispanic community, as well as the fact that we were working together on a high school campus, that did influence our thoughts and associations as Soja (Blake,2002) a nd Lippard (1997) said is a necessary

consideration when looking at influences on human associations. In fact, if our community partnership was to be repeated with the same artists in a different city, I can only assume that the impact would be completely different due to the unique connections that paired our own local artists with students from a very specific high school in San Antonio. In fact, even if these same artists were to be paired with a more affluent school within the same city, once again, the social and cultural contexts of those experiences would be completely different for the artists, the students, and for me. Our creative engagements were informed by a confluence of different factors and contexts at play at any given time. Therefore, it is up to teachers own creativity to find an educational partnership that will be meaningful to students and inspire multiple forms of creative expressions.

Educational Implications of the K-12 Teacher's Role in Supporting a Successful Community Partnership

As an art teacher working in a public school setting, I often had opportunities during the Artpace/ Fox Tech High School semester programs to call upon the support of people that I had come to know well over a long period of time. However, having moved to a different city, I no longer work at a campus where my classes can walk to cultural institutions from our classroom doorsteps. So the challenge now is how I can incorporate lessons learned working with the semester programs with future community partnership programs I hope to develop with the existing resources on my campus. This concern would be applicable to other art educators who might also be considering how to utilize current local resources for educational partnerships. As has been made clear when considering community-based art partnerships, they are about using local knowledge and resources, and what could be more local than turning to people who send their children to our school and looking to them as guest teachers, and working with other

educators on campus who are also excited about collaborating on projects that will help support educational learning opportunities for our students by pulling together and working towards a common goal. But, building a strong partnership requires the support of the teacher, the school, and members of the community who are personally motivated and invested to participate. If there are fractures that begin to occur, this can be an opportunity to reflect back on the common purpose and goals of the partnership and be flexible to make necessary adjustments, just as we found necessary to do.

A really valued aspect of this community partnership that emerged was the power of human to human interaction. The artists, students, and I recognized that together we were able to create a mutually rewarding learning experience that went beyond our classroom. During this study, the artists, students, and I also placed a tremendous sense of value on the discussions that took place between all participants. Conversations were open-ended and sparked multiple perspectives regarding the theme or topic being explored. The artist came into the classroom with an idea of what kind of art they wanted to share and have students engage with, but discourse allowed the novices to feel like they were able to contribute ideas verbally, even if they were unable to produce high quality works of art. When the students were given multiple opportunities to express their ideas visually through art and through discussions, they were learning and making real-world connections with the topics and themes being addressed. Thus, as a K-12 teacher, facilitating constructive dialogues is a necessary and vital component to a successful art education partnership.

Another critical aspect to supporting a successful community partnership that the participants valued was the process of sharing art with the larger community. At the conclusion of our twelve week program, we shared the art we created with the San Antonio community

through a formal dedication ceremony, but it is up to the creative imagination of each art educator to decide what is best for their campus' needs. Sharing art with the community could be in the form of a festival, parent/ teacher association meeting, or some other form of assembly or dedication event. Each community partnership will have a whole range of contexts informing choices about what is an appropriate venue for sharing art within each community. Contexts might include considering the ages and number of the students involved in the program, as well as the media and installation site of the final art project, and the learning styles of that particular group. Sharing art with the community and inviting discourse was one of the most rewarding experiences reflected upon by all of the participants in this study, and I believe that this should be a key component of any future community art partnerships.

As an integral member of a community of practice, the role of the educator is critical in realizing how to organize and facilitate interactions that will benefit the students, the parents, our campus, art education, and our local community. Together we can help our local culture to grow and appreciate the educational significance of pulling together the talents within our own communities.

Recommendations for Future Research

Every participant in this study had a different vantage point from which to consider our past experiences together, but it would have interesting to see what other perspectives might have been gained by locating more students who were directly involved with this program. Also, there were so many people from Artpace that helped me to navigate through these community partnership programs that I did not interview for this study, whose perspectives and insights as to why this program was initiated and how they have seen the relationships between Fox Tech and

Artpace as having shifted over time could be another point of inquiry. For example, after I left Fox Tech, new administration came in that made it difficult for the people at Artpace to find other teachers on our campus to work with, thus creating an instant kink in the community partnership connections between this art institution and the San Antonio Independent School District. In fact, Artpace had to really work hard to finally get the principal's reluctant approval, which I do believe ultimately lead to Artpace seeking out other campuses to partner with that were more willing to collaborate with them. There are many other areas that could be researched in regards to the Artpace/ Fox Tech community partnership programs, but the topic of community partnerships in art education open up so many other research possibilities.

What would it take to start up a grassroots community art education program at your own campus? Are there local resources and knowledge that you can draw inspiration from to start up your own community partnership without having a financial benefactor? Are there people within your own community that would be willing to invest their time, energy and passion for art with groups of students for a sustained period of time? These are the types of research inquiries that I believe can help to further art education possibilities for our students over the long-term. If we as teachers and researchers can continue to explore how local community partnerships either support or inhibit learning and creative expression within participants, then I think art education can benefit from these inquiries.

Closing Thoughts

In the beginning of Chapter 1, I included a quote by Kathryn Kanjo, the former Executive Director of Artpace that I interacted with for ten years, and her message that contemporary art is the language of our times. She said that contemporary art is an educational venue whereby each

of us can come to learn by exploring its themes, materials, and messages. Throughout this study, Kanjo's outlook has resonated throughout the stories that were shared by each of the participants involved in this study. Her voice represented the philosophy of the art institution, while I have represented my dual voice as both the former public school art teacher involved in these educational partnerships, and also as a researcher. Together, the artists, students and I re-constructed our stories to help each of us to understand how learning and creative expression were both supported and inhibited during our community-based art partnership programs. This study could not have been possible without the help and support of the students and the artists. As a result of their tremendous contribution to this study, I would like to close by including some of their final thoughts about how they have come to value the art education opportunities that were made possible by our community partnership between Louis W. Fox Academic High School and Artpace San Antonio.

> Having an artist come in and explain his life and job is important, but also having him expose the students to new ideas and concepts is critical to the creative development of students.
>
> *G. Sweeney/ Artist*

> To anyone else who might be thinking about doing another community partnership like this one, I say, "bring it on." We need to have more experiences like this for our students. We need to give them chances to engage in activities like this and get them off the streets and out of harm's way.
>
> *E. McGarity/ Student*

> You don't have to be a certain type of artist, you can do different stuff. Be who you are. After high school, you don't have to follow everyone else; you can go your own way.
>
> *R. Leija/ Student*

> I think it's incredibly forward thinking of Fox Tech to participate with Artpace and to rely upon the kind of expression shared by the students…to let their ideas be a big part of the school and public art. It was a wonderful experience to be able to work with kids and to learn from the kids.
>
> *D. Guerrero/ Artist*

This project has made me realize that so many people paved the way for me to better my life. Artpace was really good to our class. I'm glad they supported this project and my glad they supported me as well.

J. Contreras/ Student

We learned that …we can make a difference, and that's really important.

J. Gomez/ Student

It was one of those great, fantastic experiences I always think about… you're able to give more to the students, and you're able to give more to the community, and the whole thing's a great community builder.

E.Shipton / Artist

APPENDIX A

INITIAL PROPOSAL FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

(Letter has been slightly modified to protect private information)

[Artpace]

July 31, 2003
Maria Leake
(Home address deleted)
Art Teacher

Dear Maria,

It was a pleasure meeting with you to discuss ways of expanding the partnership between Fox Tech and Artpace. Artpace has been benefiting for the years that have been bringing in your classes to view the exhibitions. Based on your interest to incorporate more contemporary art into your curriculum, we believe the proximity of our campuses in an urban environment will prove to be a vital link- allowing for increased interaction between Fox Tech students, the exhibitions, and Artpace staff. We are excited about continuing and building Artpace's relationship with Fox Tech, and I have set on paper the goals that we discussed. Please sign and return a copy to me at your earliest convenience. The programming ideas that we developed are the following:

1. **Artist Talks:** Twice a year, an Artpace resident artist will meet with Fox Tech students and discuss prior works as well as the project they plan to create at Artpace. This will give a broader context for the artist's work when students return to view the completed exhibitions. As you have six classes, the artist would speak to one class and be videotaped, with the recording shown to subsequent classes. When possible, the primary focus will be the international artists, so that ideas about geography and culture may be built into lesson plans.

2. **Contemporary Art Overview:** To further develop an understanding of contemporary art and the process of creating exhibitions, Artpace's program coordinator will meet with Fox Tech art classes each semester to discuss the history of Artpace and present slide overviews of work that has been made and exhibited at Artpace.

3. **Artpace site visits:** Fox Tech will continue field trips to Artpace and assignments relating to these visits will be an ongoing part of the curriculum.

4. **Student Workshops:** Artpace staff will lead student workshops demonstrating the practical aspects of putting together exhibitions and re-configuring gallery spaces.

5. **Community Artist Partnership:** Fox Tech students will work with an artist from the community to create temporary or permanent installations on school grounds. Artpace would facilitate the project and involve its past resident artists-local artists such as: Alex de Leon, Connie Lowe, Juan Miguel Ramos, and Angel Rodriguez-Diaz. Exhibitions of these works could be held during the two open houses hosted at Fox Tech each year. These temporary installations could utilize spaces like the open mall area, the billboard wall space on Main Avenue, and the school's fence. Additionally, you mentioned that you are responsible for a beautification project at Fox Tech, which may incorporate more permanent student artworks.

6. **Community Service:** Fox Tech students will be offered community service credit and the opportunity to volunteer, as time allows and needs arise.

We are looking forward to working with you and Fox Tech to realize these programs and other future collaborations. We feel this partnership is a benefit to both organizations-I am sure it will be a success!

With best regards,

(Signature deleted)
Jennifer Jankauskas
Program Coordinator

(Signature deleted)
Maria Leake — 7/31/03
Louis W. Fox Tech High School — Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND TRANSCRIPTS

Working Title of Study: Exploring a Community Partnership: A Qualitative Inquiry into Learning Interactions and Creative Expressions of the 2004-2006 Semester Programs between Artpace San Antonio and Fox Tech High School

Principal Investigator: Maria Leake

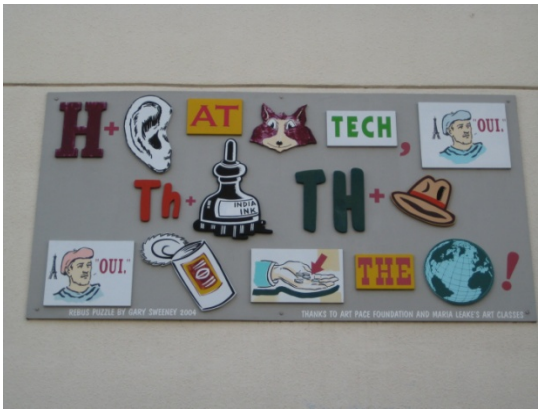
Artist and Student Participants:
Spring 2004- Gary Sweeney, Eloy McGarity, and Rosa Leija.
Spring 2005-Daniel Guerrero and John Contreras.
Fall 2005- Jennelle Gomez.
Spring 2006- Ethel Shipton and Jennelle Gomez

(It should take you approximately between thirty minutes to two hours to respond to these questions, depending on the length of your responses. There are a couple of photos attached to help remind you of our time together.)

Interview # 1

1. Think of one of your favorite memories you have from your time during the semester program. Tell me about it.
2. What do you remember about the types of activities that took place between the artist, the students, and the art teacher?
3. Describe the various settings and locations where you and the others individuals involved with the Artpace/ Fox Tech semester program would meet and interact.
4. How were you given an opportunity to express your ideas verbally during your interactions with others?
5. How were you given opportunities to express your ideas visually during and after your interactions with others?
6. Describe one memorable interaction or activity that took place during the program. What made that event special to you?
7. Do you remember a particularly stressful period during our interactions with each other? If so, please describe.
8. How would you say your involvement with the semester program has influenced you?
9. What role did other individuals from Artpace play in the semester program? Please describe some memorable experiences or interactions you remember.
10. What educational benefits do you think were achieved by having a contemporary artist, work with students and their teacher, once a week, for twelve weeks?
11. How would the learning experience have been different had you not been able to regularly interact with other participants face-to-face?
12. Is there anything you'd like to add?

SPRING 2004 INTERVIEW #1 PHOTOS



SPRING 2005 INTERVIEW #1 PHOTOS

FALL 2005 INTERVIEW #1 PHOTOS

SPRING 2006 INTERVIEW #1 PHOTOS

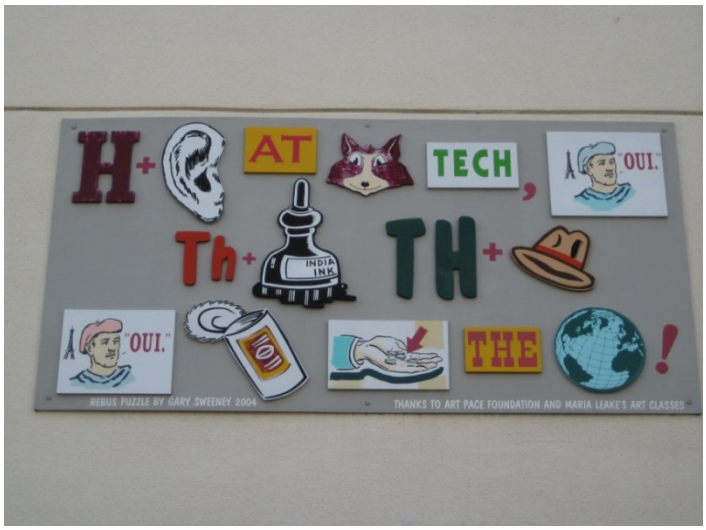
SPRING 2004- INTERVIEW #2

(Interview participants Gary Sweeney/ artist, Eloy McGarity/ student, and Rosa Leija/ student)
(Please feel free to write on the photographs and make any notations on this paper.)

1. What can you tell me about the location of this photo?
2. Please tell me anything you remember about any of these people you see in the photograph?
3. Tell me what you remember about the day this photo was taken? Do you remember any discussions or specific activities you were doing on this day?

4. Tell me what you remember about the day this photo was taken?
5. What was significant to you about this day?
6. Are there any people that played any special role in making this event meaningful to you? If so, who and why?

7. How would you describe the artwork created as part of the semester program to someone who can't see it?
8. What were/are the major themes and ideas explored in the art?
9. Were any of these themes or ideas also explored in the classroom via discussions or the creation of art? If so, how?
10. What does this artwork mean to you?
11. What was the media used to create the art? Had you already had experience working with this media before? Was there something special to you about the media and location of this work?
12. How did people respond to the work at the dedication event?
13. What connection, if any, do you see between the art product and the processes leading to its development?
14. Do you think learning was and is still being facilitated by exploring the product, the process, or both? If so, how?



15. In general, how you were able to express yourself visually during the program?
16. How were you able to express your ideas verbally during the program?
17. Do you feel like you were given an opportunity to be creative individually during the semester program? If so, how?
18. Do you feel like you were given an opportunity to be creative collaboratively during the semester program? If so, how?

19. Why do you think Artpace felt it was important to partner high school students and a teacher with an artist? What do you think was the intention of this community partnership?
20. Were there things that you learned that perhaps you would not have learned if you had not had the opportunity to work collaboratively in a high school setting?
21. Did you ever feel nervous or uncomfortable being involved with the program? Why or why not?
22. Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share about your experience working in the semester program?
23. Is there anything you'd like to add?

SPRING 2005- INTERVIEW #2

(Interview participants Daniel Guerrero/ artist and John Contreras/ student)

(Please feel free to write on the photographs and make any notations on this paper.)

1. What can you tell me about the location of this photo?
2. Please tell me anything you remember about any of these people you see in the photographs?
3. Tell me what you remember about the day these photos were taken? Do you remember any discussions or specific activities you were doing on this day?

4. What do you remember about what is happening in these photos?
5. What significance, if any, did this day have for you (personally, professionally, or both)?
6. Are there any people that played any special role in making this event meaningful to you? If so, who and why?

7. How would you describe the artwork created as part of the semester program to someone who can't see it?
8. What were/are the major themes and ideas explored in the art?
9. Were any of these themes or ideas also explored in the classroom via discussions or the creation of art? If so, how?
10. What does this artwork mean to you?
11. What was the media used to create the art? Had you already had experience working with this media before? Was/ is there something special to you about the media and location of the work?
12. How did people respond to the work at the dedication event?
13. What connection, if any, do you see between the art product and the processes leading to its development?
14. Do you think learning was and is still being facilitated by exploring the product, the process, or both? If so, how?

15. In general, how you were able to express yourself visually during the program?
16. How were you able to express your ideas verbally during the program?
17. Do you feel like you were given an opportunity to be creative individually during the semester program? If so, how?
18. Do you feel like you were given an opportunity to be creative collaboratively during the semester program? If so, how?
19. Why do you think Artpace felt it was important to partner high school students and a teacher with an artist? What do you think was the intention of this community partnership?
20. Were there things that you learned that perhaps you would not have learned if you had not had the opportunity to work collaboratively in a high school setting?
21. Did you ever feel nervous or uncomfortable being involved with the program? Why or why not?
22. Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share about your experience working in the semester program?
23. Is there anything you'd like to add?

FALL 2005-INTERVIEW #2

(Interview participant Jennelle Gomez / student)

(Please feel free to write on the photographs and make any notations on this paper.)

1. What can you tell me about the location of these photos?
2. Please tell me anything you remember about any of these people you see in the photographs?
3. Tell me what you remember about the day these photos were taken? Do you remember any discussions or specific activities you were doing on this day?

4. Tell me what you remember about the day these photos were taken?
5. What was significant to you about this day?
6. Are there any people that played any special role in making this event meaningful to you? If so, who and why?

7. How would you describe the artwork created as part of the semester program to someone who can't see it?
8. What were/are the major themes and ideas explored in the art?
9. Were any of these themes or ideas also explored in the classroom via discussions or the creation of art? If so, how?
10. What does this artwork mean to you?
11. What was the media used to create the art? Had you already had experience working with this media before? Was there something special to you about the media and location of the work?
12. How did people respond to the work at the dedication event?
13. What connection, if any, do you see between the art product and the processes leading to its development?
14. Do you think learning was and is still being facilitated by exploring the product, the process, or both? If so, how?

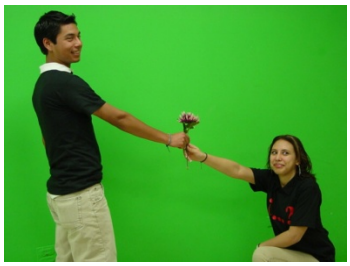
15. In general, how you were able to express yourself visually during the program?
16. How were you able to express your ideas verbally during the program?
17. Do you feel like you were given an opportunity to be creative individually during the semester program? If so, how?
18. Do you feel like you were given an opportunity to be creative collaboratively during the semester program? If so, how?
19. Why do you think Artpace felt it was important to partner high school students and a teacher with an artist? What do you think was the intention of this community partnership?
20. Were there things that you learned that perhaps you would not have learned if you had not had the opportunity to work collaboratively in a high school setting?
21. Did you ever feel nervous or uncomfortable being involved with the program? Why or why not?
22. Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share about your experience working in the semester program?
23. Is there anything you'd like to add?

SPRING 2006-INTERVIEW #2

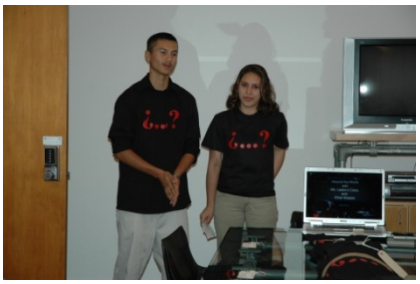
(Interview participants Ethel Shipton/ artist and Jennelle Gomez/ student)

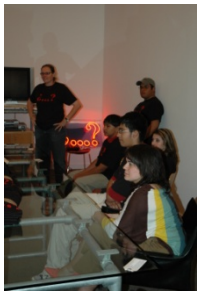
(Please feel free to write on the photographs and make any notations on this paper.)

8. What can you tell me about the location of these photos?
9. Please tell me anything you remember about any of these people you see in the photographs?
10. Tell me what you remember about the day these photos were taken? Do you remember any discussions or specific activities you were doing on these days?



11. Tell me what you remember about the day this photo was taken?
12. What was significant to you about this day?
13. Are there any people that played any special role in making this event meaningful to you? If so, who and why?





14. How would you describe the artwork created as part of the semester program to someone who can't see it?
15. What were/are the major themes and ideas explored in the art?
16. Were any of these themes or ideas also explored in the classroom via discussions or the creation of art? If so, how?
17. What does this artwork mean to you?
18. What was the media used to create the art? Had you already had experience working with this media before? Was there something special to you about the media and location of the work?
19. How did people respond to the work at the dedication event?
20. What connection, if any, do you see between the art product and the processes leading to its development?
21. Do you think learning was and is still being facilitated by exploring the product, the process, or both? If so, how?

22. In general, how you were able to express yourself visually during the program?

23. How were you able to express your ideas verbally during the program?

24. Do you feel like you were given an opportunity to be creative individually during the semester program? If so, how?

25. Do you feel like you were given an opportunity to be creative collaboratively during the semester program? If so, how?

26. Why do you think Artpace felt it was important to partner high school students and a teacher with an artist? What do you think was the intention of this community partnership?

27. Were there things that you learned that perhaps you would not have learned if you had not had the opportunity to work collaboratively in a high school setting?

28. Did you ever feel nervous or uncomfortable being involved with the program? Why or why not?

29. Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share about your experience working in the semester program?

30. Is there anything you'd like to add?

APPENDIX C

MEMBER CHECK FORMS

(Sample for expert reviewer)

I, (*name of expert reviewer),* have been provided with an electronic copy of the dissertation called Exploring a community partnership: A qualitative inquiry into learning interactions and creative expressions of the 2004-2006 semester programs between Artpace San Antonio and Fox Tech High School for my review.

After reviewing the interpretive data analysis of this study in Chapters 5 and 6, I would like to make the following suggestions/ comments before the final copy is submitted for publication. (Please feel free to attach your comments on a separate page(s).)

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(Printed name of participant) *(Signed name of participant)*

_____
(Date)

(Sample for artist and student participants)

I, *(name of artist or student participant),* have been provided with an electronic copy of the dissertation called Exploring a community partnership: A qualitative inquiry into learning interactions and creative expressions of the 2004-2006 semester programs between Artpace San Antonio and Fox Tech High School for my review.

After reviewing Chapter 4, which presents a profile of me as a participant, and Chapters 5 and 6, which include quotes taken from my interviews with Maria Leake, I would like to make the following suggestions/ comments for revisions before the final copy is submitted for publication. (Please feel free to attach your comments below or separately.

_____

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I have also been provided with an electronic copy of my interview transcripts. I would like to make the following additions or deletions to the transcripts, in the event they are referenced again for a future publication, as noted below. (Please feel free to list or address any problems or concerns you may have with the content of these transcripts. The complete transcripts will not be published in the dissertation, only excerpts.)

_____

_____

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_____

With your permission, I would like to give Artpace a copy for their archives records in the event this information might be cited in a future research study. Please write either "YES" or "NO" to give your preference.

_____

"YES" or "NO"

_____ _____

(Printed name of participant) *(Signed name of participant)*

_____

(Date)

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