THE ARTIST-RUN GALLERY:
EXAMINING THE ARTIST-CURATOR’S PERSPECTIVE IN
CURATING EXHIBITIONS IN UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE GALLERIES

by

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SIGNED: Charles Dodoo
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DEDICATION

Most sincerely, I dedicate this dissertation to my family, mentors, as well as to those that contributed, and supported me in every way possible to ensure the success of this project. Most importantly, this work is dedicated to individuals interested in curation and gallery management.
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ABSTRACT

Through this research study I aimed to critically examine the perspectives and experiences of five artist-curators who curate exhibitions at university and college galleries in southwestern US cities. Specifically, I explored how their arts background and their dual roles of artist and curator influenced both their curation and artmaking practices. Two research methods were employed to collect data: case study and arts-based research. These methods resulted in data collected in oral, written and visual documentation formats. As a participant in this study, my individual art and curation practices were documented in part through arts-based research.

The findings indicated that (a) all five artist-curators use their curation practice as a teaching tool and that their individual artistic perspectives are reflected in their curation practice; (b) all of the artist-curators use the gallery as an educational tool in conjunction with the mission of their respective institutions; (c) the artist-curators are cognizant of the complex interrelationships that affect their dual roles as artist-curators and educators; (d) reflection on professional curatorial practice plays a significant role in creating and curating artwork as well as in the education process. These findings are consonant with Dewey’s theory of experience and, in particular, continuity of experience where artist-curators reflect on past curation experience to gain a better understanding of their current curation practices, which they then “transfer” to viewers through their acts of creating artwork and curating exhibitions. Additionally, I found (e) a correlation exists between the artist-curators’ curation and artmaking practices that suggests that the artists reflected
upon their artmaking when curating and vice-versa, which to some extent benefitted both practices; and (f) artists bring fresh perspectives to gallery work.

The findings from this study may serve as a springboard for thoughtful conversations concerning the diverse experiences of artist-curators and their perspectives when they curate in university/college galleries. For those individuals interested in pursuing a career in curation, this study will illuminate the experiences of the artist-curator and show how a background in curation not only influences one’s artmaking, but is a valuable tool for educating the community and raising artistic awareness.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This study is about the perspectives and ideas that artist-curators bring to their curatorial work. My passion to curate exhibitions as an artist started while earning my undergraduate degree in Fine Arts (BFA) in Ghana. It was a transformative experience for me to learn about the importance of visual aesthetics in curation especially through lectures and by curating my own shows as part of the course requirements. Not only was my background as an artist influential in allowing me to understand specific curatorial practices better, but it gave me further insight about how arrangements of artworks can affect visitors’ ways of appreciation.

At the University of Idaho, while earning my Masters’ of Fine Arts (MFA) degree, I was the curator and manager of the student-run Ridenbaugh Art Gallery. In my position, I had the opportunity to curate numerous shows as well as enroll in an interior design course at the University. This was a rewarding endeavor for me as an artist and curator because I challenged myself in many aspects of gallery management, including experimenting with unconventional exhibition layouts in my final thesis show and other shows I curated. For example, I curated a show for students in the MFA program at nearby Washington State University aimed towards building a community between the MFA students from both campuses. I experimented with different exhibition layouts to accommodate the various types of works that were in the show, including sculptures and paintings, taking into consideration the importance of bringing together all the individual pieces thematically and visually. This exhibition not only created a space for learning, but
an environment where visitors and artists engaged in conversations that enhanced community building on campus.

As the current curator of the University of Arizona Union Gallery (Union Gallery), I have gained more knowledge through my practice as an artist and curator. It is intriguing as an artist to channel my perspectives into curation. Like the creation of a painting, not all exhibitions that I have curated have been satisfactory to me, but the practice of curating has become an important part of my life. For example, sometimes when I create paintings for upcoming exhibitions, I think about how the colors I use will contrast with the interior wall colors of the exhibition space so that my work stands out.

By sharing and giving insight into the narratives of artist-curators in university and college galleries, I posit that their voices can offer further perspectives to the culture of curation.

**Rationale**

Art theorist, philosopher and curator Boris Groys wrote an essay in 2006 titled “Art Power: Multiple Authorship” in which he describes how curatorship and artistry gradually merged during the period of installation art. Installation art surfaced in the 1960s, and consists of enormous, spatial artworks, incorporating various media (sound, live motion) and varied disciplines such as performance art. Installation art is an artistic genre of three-dimensional works that often are site-specific and designed to transform the perception of a space. The artist can be positioned as the primary curator of exhibitions. Groy (2008) further adds that, “The artist is primarily the curator of himself,
because he selects himself. And he also selects others: other objects, other artists” (pp. 93-94).

Ever since the sixties, there have been tensions between the artists and curators, “a tension between the long history of the arts, and curatorship, whose history is yet to be written” (Vandevelde, n.d, p. 2.). The tensions occur as a result of a shift in the power positions between the curator and the artist. This means that the curator is not the sole mediator between the artists and the public, “but can also instrumentalise the artists’ work in demonstrating her or his own curatorial concept” (Vandevelde, n.d., p. 2.).

After the 1960s, the word “curator” has had a shift in its meaning in terms of the role curators play. Harald Szeemann is one of the pioneers of curation in the visual arts. He was an artist (painter) and actor, as well as a stage designer and curator. Furthermore, he was educated in art history, journalism, and archaeology. He stated that the curator plays multiple roles such as “an administrator, an amateur, an author of introductions, a librarian, a manager and book-keeper, a conservator, a financier and a diplomat” (Obrist, 2013). This hybrid position of the artist-curatorial allows him/her to become a multidisciplinary subject within the contemporary artworld. There is the possibility that the artist-curatorial practice allows the artist-curatorial to shift the gallery’s structure in ways that might be overlooked. Rothe (2009) attests that, “I work as an artist and curator and sometimes I combine the two roles. This results in a hybrid which is often disregarded, particularly when mistaken as the one or the other” (n.p.). This study is an in-depth analysis of artistic, and potentially overlooked, procedures that artist-curators undertake.
in their professions in the university and college galleries in Southwestern cities in America. This further includes the influence of the artist’s curatorial work on his/ her art.

Positioning the artist-curatore specifically within the university and college galleries creates a platform to study how the hybrid structure of the artist-curatore is navigated within such institutions. The artist-curatore in an educational institution will likely need to meet the expectations of the university and college missions. With regard to educating the community through community engagement, artist-curators could be in a position to utilize the institution’s resources and further adapt their curation practices to encourage learning and community engagement as part of the gallery’s or institution’s mission or vision. Community engagement in galleries includes art workshops, public lectures, and many more opportunities for public appreciation of art. As a community-based space, the gallery can serve as a bridge in fostering education between the artist-curatore and the community. Community-based spaces or organizations can be defined as private or public nonprofit organizations that aim to address the economic and social needs of individuals, as well as groups, in a specific geographical location (Jones, 1992).

The process of curation involves the initiatives and procedures the curator brings, such as gathering of works of art to display. I focused specifically on the perspectives that university and college artist-curators bring to their curatorial work. As an artist and art educator managing and curating art shows at the Union Gallery, my study created a platform to gain insights about the perspectives that artists curating exhibitions bring to this work. I anticipated that critically studying the management and curatorial process of
other artist-curators, as well as my own practices, would contribute to understanding this relationship more deeply.

**Research Questions**

The main research questions I undertook were: What background, perspectives and practices do artists bring to the curation process when curating for university and college galleries? How does participating in the curation process affect the artist-curators’ artmaking practices? What practices do artist-curators engage in to educate college and community audiences?

No sub-questions pertain to the first and second main questions; the sub-questions for the third main question are:

1) How do artist-curators adapt their perceptions of gallery management for a university and college exhibition?

2) How do artist-curators foster community engagement and what do they hope visitors will take away from their experiences?

3) Given that university or college galleries reside within educational institutions, what strategies do artist-curators use to create educational programs?

4) What interdisciplinary learning strategies do artist-curators bring to their curation?

**Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this research and for clarity, the following definitions have been provided to offer further understanding of relevant terminologies.

*Artist*

According to UNESCO (1980), an *artist* is:
“taken to mean any person who creates or gives creative expression to, or re-creates works of art, who considers his artistic creation to be an essential part of his life, who contributes in this way to the development of art and culture and who is or asks to be recognized as an artist, whether or not he is bound by any relations of employment or association.” (n. p)

*Artist-curato*

For this study, an artist-curato is defined as a practicing, professional artist (Doubtfire & Ranchetti 2015) who has exhibited work within the past year and who is also currently working as a curator of the work of other artists. I was specifically interested in artist-curators working in university or college institutions.

*Curation*

*Curation* is defined as the creation of exhibitions within the context of university and college galleries. The process of curation involves the initiatives and procedures the curator brings, such as gathering of works of art to display (Vandevelde, n.d.). It also involves the programming and ways to reach out to the communities served by the gallery.

*Gallery*

As an institution of higher education, the gallery is an exhibition space reserved for the display of and learning about artworks and artifacts. The university and college galleries are the site specific locations for this study’s focus.
**Educator**

Within the context of the university and college galleries, the educator seeks to disseminate knowledge of art through the lens of critical pedagogy, dialogue, and critical inquiry (Freire, 1970). It includes professors, instructors such as adjuncts and teaching assistants and curators, etc.

**Community Engagement**

*Community engagement*, according to The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, refers to community engagement in higher education as partnerships, communication media, sustainable networks and activities that occur between higher education institutions and the local, national, regional and international communities (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2015).

**Significance/ Relevance of the Study**

The premise of this study was that the artist might bring valuable perspectives to managing, curating, and directing a university gallery. Just as an artist sets a canvas to create a new painting, the university and college gallery metaphorically is a canvas that can be utilized to educate and engage the community through exhibitions and related programming. Basbaum (2002) observed that, “when artists curate, they cannot avoid mixing their artistic investigations with the proposed curatorial project: for me, this is the strength and singularity they bring to curating” (n.p.). Because the artist-curator might understand the process of making art, he /she is likely to incorporate the experiential, visual, conceptual perspectives and perhaps emotive basis into curation.

According to Filipovic (2015), there are no comprehensive studies that survey exhibitions by artist-curators. While this study did not address this need, it adds to the
literature on artist-curators. Furthermore, because of the relevance of galleries on university and college campuses in fostering education, in undertaking this study, I have created the platform to investigate the sometimes unpredictable practices of artist-curators. As education is not the only outcome of any art exhibition, it was through this study that I hoped to present a better understanding of the artist-curators’ perspectives in curation and further contribute to the limited existing literature. In addition to noting the lack of any comprehensive studies of artist-curated exhibitions, Filipovic also notes that there has been no “serious attempt to theorize the specificity of these exhibitions. Moreover, artist-curated exhibitions often get left out of larger art histories that still frequently favor discussions of autonomous objects” (n.p.).

In “When Exhibitions Become Form: On the History of the Artist as Curator,” Filipovic (2015) references the lack of depth in studies of artist-curated exhibitions when they are positioned within a broader exhibition context. For example, Brian O’Doherty’s Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space and Bruce Altshuler’s The Avant Garde in Exhibition: New Art in the Twentieth Century give relevant attention to artist-curated exhibitions, but are limited in many ways, including detailed exhibition roles that the artist-curator has played.

It is of great relevance to understand how artworks are used in university and college galleries to serve as educational tools because there is the probability that images being displayed can create a dialogue with the university, college, and community at large, reinforcing a community-engaged atmosphere. Therefore the curator plays an important role in presenting what is seen, interpreted, and understood. The images on
display in exhibitions can become a powerful tool for reflection and critical thinking.

Blandy and Congdon (1993) posit:

If we understand art as cultural expression and communication, we can approach it in a way that helps to recognize, celebrate, and expand on the positive aspects of our communities. In turn, art can promote community reconstruction as people find new ways to relate to each other. (p. 89)

To understand how the artist-curatorial uses artworks as a tool in fostering education and creating community engagement in the gallery spaces, it was important to critically analyze the procedures he/ she undertook. The data collected through this study allowed for re-assessing effective and non-effective educational approaches that the artist-curatorial implements in the gallery.

The findings in this study can serve to inform artist-curators about their profession. The findings can assist students and individuals interested in learning about gallery organizational processes and curatorship, and contribute to their preparation to work in galleries within university and college settings.

**Expected Outcomes and Limitations**

By undertaking this research, I hope to find and explore new opportunities in my role as gallery manager and curator. Furthermore, I hope to establish a dialogue among the university and college artist-curators in my study to learn from each other. The data from the study will be shared with research participants and with the community of curators. It is my hope that curators, and artist-curators in particular, will learn about different perspectives and practices in running university and college galleries and that
this exchange will enhance artist-curators’ ideas for and excitement about their work as curators. The community may also learn about the role of artist-curators in creating dynamic exhibitions and educational programming in university and college settings through the proposed exhibition of my artworks made as reflection on my work as a curator. Beyond these outcomes, I anticipate using the research as the basis of conference presentations and journal publications.

In this research, I did not study curation by non-artists. Furthermore, I did not do a survey or case studies with a large number of people. Because I had a set population of five artist-curators (including myself), I avoided generalizations and assumptions deriving from my findings. Further, since I worked with artist-curators at university and college institutions, the data I collected did not represent all artist-curators, but rather represented the selected participants in their respective institutions.

My arts background and personal artistic journey began in Ghana where art is influenced by both the Ghanaian and western traditions. In my formal art classes, I learned about Ghanaian artists as well as western artists and was influenced by both traditions. I thus view my background as a melding of the two traditions which is reflected in my art as well as in my curatorial practice and I want to acknowledge this as well as my bias in favor of two-dimensional artwork such as painting and drawing. As a practicing artist who works primarily on two-dimensional surfaces and whose formal training emphasized 2D media, I believe I relate best to two-dimensional art. Most artists that I admire—such as Wiz Kudowor (Ghanaian painter), Jackson Pollock (American painter), and Van Gogh (Dutch Impressionist painter)—have worked on flat surfaces. I
analyzed the collected data in a manner that is reflective of these values that I bring to curation.

Lastly, my study is limited to university and college artist-curated galleries, not commercial galleries or other types of non-profit galleries. Museum curation was also outside the scope of this study.

**Overview of Methodologies**

I used qualitative methodologies in my research because they allow for the unravelling of complex phenomena, as suggested by Denzin & Lincoln (2004):

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena, in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 34)

The use of qualitative research created a platform to inquire about artist-curators at university and college galleries by documenting their practices, which included carrying out interviews and observations. The data I collected from artist-curators ultimately allowed for understanding the ways they curate exhibitions. The data collected from the artist-curators were analyzed, coded, and interpreted to offer insights about their practices. In designing this study, I posited that qualitative methodologies would allow for understanding not just the practices but the nuances of artist-curators’ concepts.

I used interviews, images of artist-curators’ artwork, audio recordings, observations and the images of artist-curators’ exhibitions in data collection. Two case studies allowed me to observe and document the curation process of two artist-curators,
one of whom was myself. Two selected galleries functioned as site-specific locations for the study. Furthermore, three additional artist-curators were interviewed.

Two southwestern cities were selected in part because they are typical American cities: they are home to university as well as community and other private colleges. The arts are supported by a local arts council, a regional art museum, university museums, college galleries, and private galleries. These profiles make them not unique but fitting the profile of other cities. The cities were also selected based on the researcher’s location, thus providing the probability of being able to hold in-person interviews with potential artist-curators and of studying in depth another artist-curator. Pseudonyms were used for two of the artist-curators, while the other two artist-curators preferred having their real names used in the study. The study, however, was not about place: it was about understanding artist-curators’ practices as curators.

**Theoretical Framework**

John Dewey’s concept of *experience* (Dewey, 1934) is applied to this study to understand the artist-curator’s ways of curation and possible connections associated with having multiple identities as an artist and a curator. According to Dewey, experience is the existence that occurs in an environment, which is “whatever conditions interact with personal needs, desires, purposes, and capacities to create the experience which is had” (Dewey, 1938, p. 42). Furthermore, he asserts that “the career and destiny of a living being are bound up with interchanges with its environment, not externally, but in the most intimate way which relates to direct experience” (Dewey, 1934, p. 13). Experiences do vary from person to person. By plugging in Dewey’s theory into this study, emergent
and ongoing data will be analyzed, coded and interpreted to further put the theory into play, and to possibly assess any overlaps in the different artist-curators’ experiences. This means that the theory applied to this study could yield overlooked processes and nuances among the artist-curators in their respective galleries. Dewey touched on the key points of the principle of interaction, habit, continuity, growth, and reflection.

The principle of interaction refers to the experience that occurs between the learner and the desirable learning outcomes; this could yield positive or negative impacts (Dewey, 1938). The characteristics of habit, according to Dewey (1934), can come about once an experience occurs; the one who is responsible for transferring the experience to others cannot control the experience. The principle of continuity explained that the principle of experience can lead to changes in a person’s habit.

According to Dewey (1934), the principle of continuity refers to the changes in experiences that exists in different environments. This means that future events have to be taken into consideration during the experience. Dewey also referred to the principle of continuity as the “experiential continuum” (Dewey, 1938, p. 24).

Dewey (1938) asserted that the principle of growth is an ongoing process of experience; a continuous endeavor. He described reflection as the defining quality of a creative and fruitful mind; it is the meaning-making process that allows and creates the connection of one experience to the next with a deeper understanding.

**Structure of the Study**

The five remaining chapters are organized as follows:

- **Chapter 2: Literature Review.** A review of writing on the field of art curation.
• **Chapter 3: Methodology:** This chapter describes in-depth the methodology employed in this study, which includes the data collection methods and how the data was analyzed for each of the methodologies of the study.

• **Chapter 4: Findings:** This section describes the findings from the study.

• **Chapter 5: Analysis of Findings:** In this chapter, I will provide analysis of the findings, organized around the research questions.

• **Chapter 6: Discussion and Implications:** In this chapter, I discuss the findings and their implications for artist-curators, as well as for the field of gallery curation and management.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to effectively study the perspectives of artist-curators in the university and college galleries, I conducted a review of relevant literature. My goal here is not to argue for or against the dual role of the artist-curator, but to discuss the position it occupies within the institution that creates the art world. In this review of literature, I explore and discuss curators, institutional critique, artists, artist-curators, university and college galleries, and the theory of experience by John Dewey, who elaborated on the key points of the principles of interaction, habit, continuity, growth, and reflection.

The focus of this study is on university and college galleries; however, literature in museum studies reveals that universities and museums share a common educational purpose and therefore the cooperation between these two institutions is of benefit to both (Bonner, 1985; Burcaw, 1997; Handley, 2001). For the purpose of this literature review, and due to limited literature on university and college gallery studies, I will share insights from the field of museum studies due to their similarities, in certain aspects, to university and college galleries.

The Curator and Artist

The meaning of curating is deeply rooted in the avant-garde movements that took place in the beginning of the 20th century. The avant-garde movements introduced new ways of creating art and presenting art. The word “curating” is derived from the Latin word “curare,” which means “to take care of.” A curator describes someone who takes care of something or someone (Vandevelde, n.d.). According to “Professional Practices for Artists” (n.d.) the primary role of a curator is to:
assemble or select collections of works of art, or art projects, grouped around an idea or theme. Many artists are also curators, and often a curatorial project is launched in response to events or concerns in the artist’s community or with regards to the ideas investigated in the artist’s practice. (n.p.)

Due to the complexities in defining the word curator, “many curators seem to consciously keep their interpretation vague in order to allow for a wide range of professional possibilities” (Vandevelde, n.d., p. 3). For example, Florian Malzecher, as a freelance dramaturge and curator, wrote a text on curatorship titled, “About a job with an unclear profile, aim and future” (2011) to share insight about the curator’s role, as many curators believe their position is indefinable and flexible. The meaning of curator from the sixties onwards shifted and this allowed for the reinterpretation of the word. Museums were no longer viewed as sites for preservation of important objects, but became places where art could be presented on a project-to-project basis.

Practicing independent curation became popular in the 1980s. This means that curators did not necessarily hold fixed positions in institutions where they found themselves, but rather they were hired based on the individual projects they curated, making them flexible and nomadic (Vandevelde, n.d.). According to Vandevelde, some artists do not accept their status as curators because, he believes, artists always find themselves in a web with other actors, including curators with differing backgrounds. Furthermore, he posits that curating is not just motivated by caring for the artist, but it comes from a care for potential dialogue. Vandevelde suggests that it is through the care
of dialogue that engagement and issues are highlighted for the artist, and through this dialogue that ideas become manifested (p. 5).

A lot of artists curate exhibitions as a way of gathering different artistic voices together to “create new meaning or to create/extend a context for their own work” (Professional Practices for Artists, n.d., n.p.). Curating creates a platform to make connections with other artists and professionals in the art field, to further expand ideas about art, to encourage dialogue within the community, or to share ideas about public space. Furthermore, curating can offer artists exposure and experience which may lead to a newly defined community, a job, or new work (Professional Practices for Artists, n.d., n.p.). Bourcheix-Laporte (2013) asserts that, “the curatorial process is inherently one of negotiation: with the artists, with the institution, between the works, with the public and…between one’s curatorial vision and one’s responsibility towards the exhibited artists” (n.p).

Siedell (2016), in addition, posits that contemporary images in art museums focus on the creativity of the curator, his/ her focus to interpret art works, “discern movements, assemble and re-assemble them in new ways” (n.p.). She believes that the traditional art museum curator’s role is not creative, but custodial. Comparing the traditional and contemporary curatorial process, Siedell posits:

Both approaches to curatorial practice reveal something important and often overlooked: Works of art are fragile artifacts that need help. Traditional approaches preserve their physical integrity and contemporary approaches give
them new context—room to breath [sic], as it were—allowing them to speak in new and different ways to new and different audiences. (n.p.)

Supporting Siedell’s view, Hoffmann (2006) notes that curators have begun to “emancipate themselves from the role of custodians of museum collections or the administrative organizers of exhibitions” (p. 234).

In the 1830s, French artists were engaged in curatorial practices in independent galleries such as the “Salons de Refusés,” which was created by artists who were not accepted by the Paris Salon, the official exhibition of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the 19th and 20th centuries, artists such as Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Édouard Manet displayed their work in artist-run institutions such as the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts and the Société des Artistes Français (Nevin 2012). Artists like Marcel Duchamp planned to break away from the norm when his work “Nude Descending a Staircase No.2” was highlighted in the First Armory Show in New York in 1913 (Pierce, 2011). The works of these artists allowed them to lead successful curatorial practices that challenged art institutions and further created a venue for artists to control how their works were displayed. Such types of displays meant that artists aimed at moving away from conventional boundaries of frames or walls and created the groundings for future curatorial projects (Nevin 2012).

According to Bourcheix-Laporte (2013), “being a ‘hyphenated’ artist is prevalent in the world of contemporary art” (n.p.), as artists tend to engage in other roles, including administrative, educational, and curatorial roles. Furthermore, Bourcheix-Laporte believes that the artist can contribute to cultural administration and offer insight about
material and creative processes that “underscore critical texts written by artists, and about the innovative pedagogical approaches that the artist-educator brings to the classroom” (n.p.). She further asserts that,

following this logic, we may infer that the position of artist-curator, which constitutes a particularly strong wave in the wake of artistic professionalization, is not an outcome of logistical necessity. The persistence with which artists take on curatorial positions may also be explained by the fact that the curatorial standpoint affords artists expanded possibilities for artistic research and, reciprocally, to the fact that artists have the ability to contribute a fresh perspective to curatorial practice. (n.p.)

This quote suggests the significance of part of my research premise, that artists are influenced in what they make by their work as curators. The suggestion that artist-curators can offer a new perspective in curating exhibitions prompts me to ask, what perspectives do artist-curators bring to curating?

With the possibility of a crossover found between being an artist and curator, there is the effective translation of artistic and curatorial work, creating a blurred distinction between the two (Bourcheix-Laporte, 2013). Is the artist-curator’s process of curating affected by their artworks? Does curation affect the artist’s ways of creating artworks? How does the artist-curator offer his or her perspectives in the gallery? These are questions that can be directly linked to how the artist-curator helps bridge the communication gap between works of art and their audiences. According to Bourcheix-Laporte (2013), the artworks that artist-curators create can be influenced by their
curation. It is important to find out the nature of these influences and their association with the type of artworks they curate. This might create a platform to better understand some of the artists’ perspectives in curation.

The artist-curator’s blurred role as an artist and curator can be a great opportunity for him/her to utilize the gallery space as a research site. As an artist-curator of The Taxi Gallery, Kristen Lavers emphasizes that the role of artist and curator are sometimes not clearly distinguished. She adds that, “Whilst retaining core features my role shifts in response to the particular needs and personality of the artist involved in each exhibiting project” (Shaw, 2004, n.p.). Lavers argues that various factors influence an exhibition, including the artist and how he/she works. Being an artist, Lavers tries to find the best way of communicating and sharing the artist’s work with a wider audience. Lavers further stresses the relevance of understanding the distinctions between artists and curators and how these roles could be blurred. Curators’ roles could involve how they use the exhibition space as a research site, just as an artist might experiment with a painting process. There is the chance that when artist-curators channel their artistic research in exhibitions, they might be in a position to offer insights to visitors because of their engagement and experience. With this experience, they can share their research with a wider audience. Artist-curator Jens Rothe also supports this perception. He writes, “I also had to find modes of production that would combine artistic research with exhibition making, collective thinking and writing” (2009, n.p.). As indicated by Lavers and Rothe, the artist-curator’s processes are relevant in the field of curation. These processes, involving the modes of initiating and carrying out exhibitions, provide understanding of
the curator’s perspective on what he or she does. The curation process might differ, and might be dependent on factors such as the gallery space, the institution where the gallery is located, and the artist-curatorial as an individual. Let us not forget that artist-curators are not all the same and that institutions and galleries do not all have the same missions. As indicated before, in this study, data from practicing artist-curators will be collected, coded, and analyzed to better understand at least some of the nuances in their curating.

The curation process by artists in galleries may also raise questions concerning cultural norms, such as is sometimes done through institutional critique. Some art (including installations and performances) is made to help viewers critically analyze how the museum functions and how museums shape knowledge, culture, and our understanding of what art is and what it means. Artists, through constructive measures, use interventions such as curating art shows in galleries and museums, in order to lead viewers to question cultural and societal systems. Mark Dion’s “The Marvelous Museum” project (Emcee, 2015, n.p.) at the Oakland Museum of California, started on September 11th, 2010, allowed visitors to reexamine the manner in which dominant ideologies and public institutions shape our understanding of knowledge, history, and the world. For the exhibition, Dion selected objects he termed “orphans” (Emcee, n.p.) from the museum’s permanent collections that were viewed unworthy to be exhibited. He then exhibited them within the gallery space in a way that highlighted the connections between history, science, and art. By juxtaposing the orphaned objects with the ongoing larger exhibitions, his display format helped visitors focus on the practices of curation. His selection of artifacts was based on both aesthetics and cultural connections between
the works on display. In an interview on the topic of what an artist can offer to museum curation, Dion stated that he is not the only one who has interest in intervening in conventional exhibition strategies in a museum, but because of his artistic background, he is able to have some freedom of expression in his work. He notes that the museum’s curators “don’t have the same freedom though. In fact that’s why they invite someone like me: I can do things they’d like to but can’t” (Emcee, 2015, n.p.). Dion’s curation not only served as an exhibition to educate the community, but it allowed him to freely experiment with different exhibition layouts from those commonly used at the time. In the eyes of other curators, his exhibition was different, yet it fulfilled its purpose. As an artist-curator Dion was successful in using this exhibition to extend and challenge the perspectives of the ideologies in the museum. By employing this series of artistic interventions at the museum, he posited that the museum is a dynamic site, filled with historical artifacts that are of great importance to investigate.

An earlier example of an institutional critique is “Raid the Icebox” at the Rhode Island Museum in 1970. In it, artist Andy Warhol acted as an artist-curator and exhibited objects in the museum’s collection that visitors did not generally get to see because they were not considered the best examples in their genre (The Warhol, 2013). Like Dion, he utilized an unconventional style of display. Paintings, for example, were displayed on the floor and leaned against the wall. Shoes were exhibited in a large closet accessible to the viewers. Historically, most western art museums, like the Cabinets of Curiosities from the 16th century, have focused on exhibiting art or artifacts of the highest quality or rarity. Warhol was interested in highlighting objects in the museum’s storage that were of less
significance. He hung and exhibited the lesser quality Windsor chairs in the museum in a format that master paintings would have been displayed to viewers. As an institutional critique, his exhibition broke institutional rules about how objects are to be displayed in the museum and the value of specific objects over others. Furthermore, his exhibition in the museum suggested to viewers how curatorial practices are standardized by societal norms of given eras. As an artist, he used this exhibition to challenge the ideologies governing the museum’s criteria for object selection to show that there are other perspectives that curators, including artist-curators like himself, can offer in galleries and museums. The show also allowed previously overlooked objects in the museum’s collections to become the highlight of discussion.

Mark Dion’s “The Marvelous Museum” and Andy Warhol’s “Raid the Icebox” are examples that give account of how artist-curators can break boundaries yet offer new insight in their unconventional display of artworks. Adding to the notion of “boundary-breaking” in exhibition formats, Doubtfire and Ranchetti (2015) posit that “The artist as curator breaks the boundaries that the professional curator has to work within and instead highlights the oddities in the collection in order to provoke a new situation for art object and viewer” (n.p.). While some artist-curators highlight “oddities,” I hope to find other perspectives that they bring to their curatorial work. Doubtfire and Ranchetti (2015) attest:

With the difficulty, not impossibility, of dichotomising that which the artist makes, from that which the artist curates, we begin to comprehend the exhibition as medium…When exhibition becomes medium, employed as a material through
which to think, and through which to speak, it is often discussed as something that overshadows the artworks it encompasses. The curator, or in this case the artist-curator, in the process of bringing works together, creates new narratives through and with existing narratives,[sic] present within the work composed by the work’s maker. (n.p.)

Doubtfire and Ranchetti suggest that curators present “new narratives” and “existing narratives” to the public when they curate, presumably through the show’s theme and educational programming. The question one might ask is, “What kinds of narratives do they bring to their roles as artist-curators?”

In the next section, I will elaborate on the importance of the arts as an educational tool in facilitating community engagement especially in museums and university and college galleries. I will further discuss how the artist’s role, the use of their art works, as well as the educational programs created by the institutions play a major role in fostering community engagement.

The Arts and Community Engagement in Museum and Gallery Education

Institutions of higher education, including colleges and universities, view the importance of their role as facilitators to resolve societal issues at local, state, national, and global levels. These institutions have made efforts to link community engagement practices to the identity of the university or college. The issue at stake is the type of societal issues that need to be addressed. The increase in poverty rates and urban decline of the 1980s prompted some campus-based community services to address these societal needs. In 1985, Georgetown, Stanford, and Brown Universities came together to create
the Campus Compact, which united the universities and college presidents in advocating and prioritizing community engagements at their respective institutions (Reardon, 2006).

The use of the arts in community engagement is not a new concept. Private and public institutions over the years have tried to find creative ways to employ the arts as a way of improving and strengthening communities. This has created interest among institutions in determining how the arts impact communities. Guetzkow (2002) argues that “arts advocates and researchers have made a variety of ambitious claims about how the arts impact communities” (p. 2). Guetzkow’s argument is that the claims made about the way the arts impact different communities are problematic because of the complex nature in studying the arts. For example, the statement “The arts impact communities” does not give a clear picture of what the word “arts” is referring to because it can refer to participation by individuals or community arts groups. Furthermore, the word “impact” could refer to social or cultural impacts, which are still generalized; on those levels, we do have classifications such as direct community-level effects that might include organizational or individual effects. “Communities” could also mean cities, regions, or institutions such as schools. There is no specific, valid answer to defining the terms because they are dependent on the type of research question as well as the particulars of the implementation.

The arts have been used to revitalize neighborhoods as well as promote the prosperity of the economy (Stanziola, 1999). Engaging in the arts is argued to improve the psychological as well as the physical well-being of individuals (Ball and Keating 2002). The arts can enhance the creation of social capital and the achievement of relevant
community objectives. The arts can be used, according to Remer (1990), to improve academic performance of students regardless of their discipline. With regards to literature, the impact of arts can be attributed to the “direct involvement in the arts organizations, especially that which entails personal engagement in some form of creative activity” (Guetzkow, 2002. p. 2). This entails community arts programs and the incorporation of arts in education.

One last attribute is the impact of arts organizations on the community. An artwork can be used by an artist to enhance community engagement. It is important to understand who professional artists are, and how their roles can affect individuals in society. To define the role of the professional artist in the community, Hanna (1981) writes:

Such trained people contribute by serving as models of human potential for everyone. They provide self-actualization opportunities for individuals to work through life situations and possibly thereby modify thinking and feeling for improved adaptation to their environment. Artists help build a sense of community by bringing people together for common purposes. (p. 60)

Kenyon (1979) posits that it is by working with the community that the artist will be able to understand how individuals not involved with dance can understand the messages of emotions translated through dance. Because the artist understands which audience to target, she or he will be in a better position to create artistic interventions for the audiences to, most likely, understand and appreciate.
Owen Kelly is a working artist working in South London. Kelly (1984) defines community arts as:

a general term for a group of cultural activities which the practitioners recognize as having common features but whose precise boundaries remain undrawn. The activities referred to usually include mural painting, community photography, printing, community festivals, newsletters, drama, video projects and the like. (p. 1)

She further states that, “I am concerned here with the ideas and motivations of community artists, and with the working methods we have evolved to bring these ideas into practice” (p. 5). She argues that it is problematic when community artists do not have a set objective for engaging with the community. She advocates that community artists should clearly have relevant and tangible purposes, so that the communities can benefit from their actions. This could suggest that going into a community without a goal of engagement is flawed, and that one could have a goal and still implement a process that encourages the community’s input.

**Museum and Gallery Programming**

Museums and galleries are institutions that engage the community in diverse ways through their exhibitions and programs. The use of the arts is a strategic way that museums and galleries to engage the public. Gablik (1991) observes that art “can actually create a sense of community” (p. 157). Community engagement in museums and galleries includes group tours, art workshops, public lectures, and many more opportunities for public appreciation of art.
Historically, museums have been described as educational spaces by their partnership with educational groups. These partnerships allow community building to be enhanced. On their website, The Philadelphia Museum of Art (n.d.) states:

The Philadelphia Museum of Art strives to build and maintain partnerships with community organizations, schools, and social service agencies, offering programs and educational opportunities that connect diverse communities with the Museum’s rich collections and resources. Using the arts to support and strengthen community-based initiatives in youth development and arts education, the Museum reaches out to communities around the region to enhance and expand its mission of making art accessible to everyone. (n. p.)

It is becoming of great relevance for museums to define their role as institutions that encourage community engagement. Recognition of the differences in visitor narratives within the museum has prompted community engagement in which visitors share their stories about the community (Sheetz, 2014). Anderson (2012) views the importance of community engagement as one of the socially valuable actions that museums should partake in the 21st century so as to create a healthy environment with their respective communities. Putnam (2000) further asserts that the institution can derive power by connecting with their community. Anderson (2012) and Putnam (2000) posit that it is beneficial for museums to be involved with their communities for the well-being of society.

In the latter part of the 19th century, John Cotton Dana was instrumental in opening up the museum to a wider audience (Dana, 1917). As the director of the Newark
Museum in the early 1900s, he stated in “The Gloom of the Museum” that museums initially offered opportunities for people to study technique, fashion, and taste. Cotton viewed museums’ importance in society as their service to a broader audience. Low (2012) asserts that the “purpose and the only purpose of museums is education in all its varied aspects from the most scholarly research to the simple arousing curiosity” (p. 39) He stresses that, “it seems only logical that museums should turn from passive institutions used only by the scholars and the initiated into active institutions serving the total population of their respective communities” (p. 46). He argues that museums should look beyond what they are noted for. In his article “From Being About Something to Being For Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum,” Weil (1999) states that, “If museums are meant to ask support from their community, then museums better offer something of worth to their constituents, otherwise what is the point in existing?” (p. 232). Weil argues that museums should assist the community by working together and not working for them. This idea reiterates the importance of community partnership and its relevance in fostering educational growth in society. Carr (2003) views the museum as a space for visitors to derive cultural experience. Therefore, they should be obligated to build healthy relationships with their communities.

The American Association of Museums (AAM) report in 2002, titled “Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums,” emphasized the need for museums nationwide to be involved with their communities. AAM has, over the years, worked with museums in communities (Archibald, 2002, p. 1). The biggest challenge to museums, Archibald asserted, was how museums could engage with their communities (p. 6). Scott
(2003) posits that it is problematic to assess the impacts of museum programs on community participants and audiences because it is a new field in museum evaluation.

Galleries offer artists a venue to showcase their artworks. The major difference between museums and galleries is the fact that museums do not aim to sell their artworks, but some galleries do (Lieberman, 2002). Within different types of galleries—including commercial venues, galleries within museums, and university and college-based exhibition centers—exhibition of contemporary artworks is a key function. Lieberman further noted that galleries recognize the need to encourage and support artists. Parham (1953) asserts that, “The gallery recognizes the importance of a broad educational program, in its concern with the campus community and the general public—that art should be presented in a normal context of human activities” (p.254). Lieberman (2002) observes that due to technological advancement and in spite of a larger audience they reach, galleries are changing with time. She stated that, “the most easily accessible space to exhibit currently is the internet…The engagement of the experience for the audience is one limit and another is population that cannot access this technology” (p. 27). Finding exhibition spaces can be problematic for artists who then begin to search for alternative spaces. “It’s no accident that many of LA’s strong galleries have come out of people’s houses, apartments, garages or have started as a way to get one’s friends together and do a show” (Miles, 2000, p. 13).

There are three strategies for visitor engagement in art galleries (Kothe, 2012). The first strategy is participatory practice, which emphasizes interaction, collaborative practice, and acknowledgment of context (Falk, 2009; O’Donoghue, 2010). The second
strategy is the use of contemporary art for visitors’ understanding (Gude, 2004). The final strategy is associated with the culture of experimentation. This strategy aims to engage visitors (Simon, 2010). Bourriaud (2002) asserts that site-specific artworks not only engage visitors with the artworks, but illustrate the power of the artworks in encouraging visitor interaction, critique, and reflection.

As the mediator for the transmission of knowledge to the community, for example, the artist-curator brings together different works of art for display; the relationship between the varied artworks spark the framework for dialogue to occur. Within this dialogue, the outcome of curation is created (Vandevelde, n.d., p. 2). Could this art dialogue serve as an educational tool for inquiry? Could these artworks be used for educational programs to encourage dialogue among visitors and to promote interdisciplinary learning? Interdisciplinary learning could be the outcome of using the gallery space as a medium and practice of creating artworks. Irwin & O’Donoghue (2012) assert:

During the past decade, many artists, curators and cultural theorists have turned their attention to the potential and possibilities of education as a medium and practice of artmaking. Committed to developing alternative models of learning and spaces of pedagogy, artists and curators have initiated pedagogical projects and staged educational events as artworks of varying size, visibility, discernibility and degree of actualization. (p. 222)

There is the likelihood that exhibitions and educational programs in the galleries can enhance the learning endeavors that such institutions aim to achieve. These activities
suggest the art gallery as a community-engaged site for learning (that also fulfills the mission of the institution or gallery), as Brenson (1998) suggests:

As much as any artist, critic, or museum director, the new curator understands, and is able to articulate, the ability of art to touch and mobilize people and encourage debates about spirituality, creativity, identity, and the nation. The texture and tone of the curator’s voice, the voices it welcomes or excludes, and the shape of the conversation it sets in motion are essential to the texture and perception of contemporary art. (p. 16)

The importance of the hybrid role that the artist-curator plays in creating a conducive learning environment in the gallery is supported by Shaw (2004), who emphasizes the importance of the curator in presenting artwork to audiences.

As the person who has some control over what represents art of the highest quality, the curator is an arbiter of taste, appearing to have the authority to represent a society’s values. The curator is in the intersection between artist and audience, a go-between looking to ensure the audience is given the best possible opportunity to engage with an artist’s work, and that the artist has the best possible chance of communicating to an audience.

**John Dewey and Experience**

In *Art as Experience* and *Experience and Education*, John Dewey was explicit about the key concepts of the principles of interaction, habit, continuity, growth, and reflection. Because of the interconnectedness of these concepts, in the subsequent paragraphs, I will expand further on Dewey’s concepts.
The type of experience Dewey elaborated on is determined by the “essential conditions of life” (Dewey, 1934, p. 13). He asserted that for survival, humans do not live in isolation, but interact with the world around them. Dewey (1934) wrote that, “Experience is the result, the sign, and the reward of that interaction of organism and environment which, when it is carried to the full, is a transformation of interaction into participation and communication” (p. 22).

According to Dewey, experience is the existence that occurs in an environment. Due to interaction, all living creatures have bodily structures and features which help them to function and defend themselves. He referred to the environment as, “whatever conditions interact with personal needs, desires, purposes, and capacities to create the experience which is had” (1938, p. 42). Furthermore, he asserted that, “the career and destiny of a living being are bound up with interchanges with its environment, not externally, but in the most intimate way which relates to direct experience (1934, p. 13).

With regards to direct experience, Dewey (1934) posited:

Direct experience comes from nature and man [sic] interacting with each other. In this interaction, human energy gathers, is released, dammed up, frustrated and victorious. There are rhythmic beats of want and fulfillment, pulses of doing and being withheld from doing. (p.16)

As a delimitation, Dewey recognized that, “Since sense-organs with their connected motor apparatus are the means of this participation, any and every derogation of them, whether practical or theoretical, is at once effect and cause of a narrowed and dulled life-
experience (Dewey, 1934, p. 22). In other words, the senses are critical to a full experience.

Interaction, according to Dewey, expresses the “principle for interpreting an experience in its educational function and force” (1938, p. 38). Interaction, which could yield positive or negative impacts, is what occurs between the learner and desirable learning outcomes. Every baby needs to be fed, taken care of, and made sure they are comfortable. However, a parent or other caregiver will not be in the position to always attend to or feed the baby when he or she cries. Dewey explained that a wise woman will learn from past experiences of professionals as well as her own to help her in the growth and development of her baby. Interaction creates the internal conditions for the baby so that a particular kind of interaction can occur. Furthermore, the notion of interaction creates equal rights to two factors inherent in experience, which are the object and internal experiences. Dewey asserted that, “any normal experience is an interplay of these two sets of conditions. During interaction, they form what is referred to as a situation” (1938, p. 39). Dewey further argued that the issue with traditional education was not that it did not focus on the external conditions that controlled experiences, but that it did not focus on the internal situations affecting experience. According to Dewey, this was a violation of the principle of interaction. Drawing back on the illustration of the mother and baby, Dewey asserted first, that the mother is responsible for organizing the conditions necessary for the baby to develop and secondly, it is the mother’s responsibility to rely on her past experiences with caregiving. This includes confiding in the advice of professionals who have researched child growth and development. Dewey
challenged us to question how restrictions on freedom of the mother, with knowledge from past experiences and from professionals, could regulate the objective conditions of the mother nurturing her baby. With this in mind, it is important to realize that restrictions on freedom can occur when certain measures are taken. An example in this case is advice given to the mother on various ways of nurturing. There could be positive and negative consequences of freedom. There is restriction of freedom that not only affects the mother, but the baby. The restrictive nature of the freedom will be limited based on personal judgment. With regards to the objective conditions, the baby, for example, might be limited because he or she does not have maximum movement in the crib for play, which exemplifies a negative consequence. The mother, on the other hand, experiences restrictions when she grabs the baby as he or she is about to fall into water. In this case, a positive experience is created because the mother is within range to see and save the baby. Dewey stressed the point that situations and interactions are inseparable and that an experience occurs because of the transaction that takes place between a person, his/ her environment, and others that might be involved within that environment. He further stated that experiences intercept and unite and therefore the principle of continuity allows for experience to be transferred from the past to the present and future.

Continuity and interaction in experiences can enhance education and its value (Dewey, 1938). However, the principle of interaction further elaborates that failure to adapt materials to the needs of individuals can create a non-educative experience, which can also occur when a person fails to adapt to the material (Dewey, 1938). So again, the educator is responsible for understanding how the materials the student is using will best
fit their continuous learning objective and it is also the student’s responsibility to learn how to adapt to the materials so as to effectively derive a productive learning experience.

Dewey further exemplified the notion of interaction in art and posited that through art, interventions are manifested. To define art, Dewey (1934) stated:

Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the plane of meaning, the union of sense, need, impulse and action characteristic of the live creature. The intervention of consciousness adds regulation, power of selection, and redisposition. Thus it varies the arts in ways without end. But its intervention also leads in time to the idea of art as a conscious idea—the greatest intellectual achievement in the history of humanity. (p. 25)

Dewey believed that works of art are products that exist physically and externally. Yet for the viewer, it is his or her experience that is the outcome of the work, and Dewey notes that this outcome of the work might not be “favorable to understanding” (1934, p. 3). In addition, the perfection of some of the artworks created, and the prestige they possess, because of “a long history of unquestioned admiration, creates conventions that get in the way of fresh insights” (1934, p. 3). He made it clear that once the artwork gains classical status, it is isolated from the human conditions that brought it to life (Dewey, 1934).

Dewey referred to the concept of habit as continuity and described it as “the experiential continuum” (1938, p. 24). He explained that the principle of experience can lead to changes in a person’s habit (1938). The characteristics of habit come about once an experience occurs. The one who is responsible for the act transfers this experience to
others, and this transferred experience cannot be controlled by the one who initiated the action. This leads to the creation of attitudes in a person. Attitudes refer to the emotions and intellectual qualities one exhibits when influenced by the conditions one encounters in life. Emotion is “the esthetic quality that rounds out an experience into completeness” (Dewey, 1934, p. 41). Emotional desires and set objectives can allow a person to function in an unknown environment in the future, allowing continuity to be exhibited in a different way. Every experience can be associated with a force in motion, however, the value of the experience is subjective. Experience reiterates this notion because as one grows, experience is also likely to mature. According to Dewey (1938), it is the responsibility of the educator in this case to use his experience to teach his students. Furthermore, it is important for the educator to know the direction of the experience. When the teacher fails to analyze how his or her experience is impacting students, the effect of his or her experience will not be rewarding to the students, which can further stimulate a change in the students’ experience. This places the teacher in an unqualified position. At this point, he or she does not have the right not to share with students what he or she knows from personal experience. On the other hand, the educator has to be critical to understand how attitudes and habits are formed by his or her students and to know which direction to choose, but he or she must also be willing to predict the attitude in students that stimulates continued growth. Dewey (1934) further noted that emotions are linked to events and objects a person experiences. He noted that, “it belongs to the self that is concerned in the movement of events toward an issue that is desired or disliked” (1934, p. 42). He further emphasized that a connection has to be made within
the interactive nature of emotions: “the blush becomes the emotion of shame when a person connects, in thought, an action he has performed with an unfavorable reaction to himself or some other person” (1934, p. 42).

Dewey argued that, “every genuine experience has an active side which changes in some degree the objective conditions under which experiences are had” (1938, p. 34). He elaborated his argument by saying that if we destroyed all conditions of modern experience that we engage in, we would find ourselves in an uncivilized world. He asserted that there are evidently external sources that create experience among us, and that experience is not just operational in the mind and body. It is important to take into consideration a student’s background in education because of economic, cultural, and ethnic differences that we sometimes overlook as educators. Knowing the background of individual students and applying their experiences to learning ultimately creates a rewarding experience for both the teacher and student. However, Dewey warned that while it is a good thing to apply the child’s experience to education, the notion of control should be avoided.

The principle of experience (continuity) relates to past experiences that ultimately affect the quality of those that are yet to come (Dewey, 1938, p. 27). Dewey argued that since the principle of continuity is applicable in different situations, its application is influenced by the quality of the present experience. Citing a case for the concept of habit, Dewey (1938) stated that, if I am referred to as a spoiled child, I have created an environment around myself and expect to be given everything I want. Because I expect to be pleased every time, this becomes a continuous act that creates a kind of attitude in me.
This is an experience that continues into the future. The challenge with this kind of experience is that I will find it very difficult to function in an environment that does not support my requests. Dewey makes us aware that the principle of continuity of experience may interrupt or stop development, therefore limiting the potential to grow (1938, p. 31).

Because experience occurs in different situations, different types of continuity lead to changes within the experience. To be educated is a continuous endeavor from childhood until death, which emphasizes the continuous routine of learning. The notion of growing, or growth as an ongoing process, is not just affiliated with the physical or moral aspect of life and education, but focuses on experience as a continuous process. It means that growth can take on different narratives. For example, if a man makes thievery a career, in time that man becomes an expert thief through experience. Growth in this case is specific to its set objective. However, it might prove a challenge to decipher the set objectives. This is because the thief, having been stealing for a while, develops a habit which might create the platform for him to become a corrupt businessman. However, there is the difficulty of assessing who the man will become in the future because of the unpredictable nature of the direction of growth. Dewey (1938) asked, “Does this condition create conditions for further growth, or does it set up conditions that shut off the person who has grown in this particular direction from the occasions, stimuli, and opportunities for continuing growth in new directions?” (p. 29). He questioned how the specific direction of growth could affect the attitudes and habits of the development of other kinds of growth that could cause it to move in other directions. He further stated
that it is only when the development of growth in a particular direction allows for growth to be continuous does it become the reason to define education as growth. However, the rationale behind the principle is that growth must offer a universal application to a person’s understanding. This means that the person should be able to relate educational growth to other types of learning endeavors.

Continuity as an experience can be used to elaborate the changes in experiences that are either educative or non-educative. Continuity exists in different environments because every experience can affect attitudes either in a good or bad way, which can determine the quality of other experiences. This is done through the criteria of setting up choices. The concept of choices provides a difficult or easy act for the growth of experience. Due to the nature of experience, it ultimately influences, to some extent, the conditions for other experiences to occur. Dewey elaborated this concept with a child who is learning to talk. The act of learning to talk does not occur in a vacuum. That child who endeavors to communicate with the rest of the world will have a new and external environment in which future learning will occur. Similarly, when someone understands how to read, there is a new form of environment being created. If I decide to become a lawyer, I will focus on educational programs that will help me become that lawyer. Because I have set a boundary for myself for whom I want to become in life, I have created an environment that will cause me to ignore other career objectives.

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experience that we engage in, we would find ourselves in an uncivilized world. He asserted that there are evidently external sources that create experiences among us, and that experience is not just operational in the mind and body. It is important to take into consideration a student’s background in education because of economic, cultural, and ethnic differences we sometimes overlook as educators. Knowing the background of students and applying their experiences to learning can ultimately create a rewarding experience for both the teacher and student. However, Dewey warned that it is a good thing to apply the child’s experience to education but the notion of control should be avoided. Educators do not just have to consider the principles that shape actual experiences, but also look into external sources like the environment, and where such experiences can lead to continuous growth. It is the environment that the educator sets which plays a role in defining the type of experiences that are useful in creating other meaningful experiences.

The use of art can nurture thoughtful reflection, which is relevant for a transformative experience. Understanding art becomes functional as viewers reflect and find relationships with artworks and with their own lives. This occurs, for example, as they view paintings, which allows for emotional connections and questions (Dewey, 1934). “The phase of reflection in the rhythm of esthetic appreciation is criticism in germ and the most elaborate and conscious criticism is but its reasoned expansion” (p. 146). (“Esthetic” refers to “perception and enjoyment, the absence of a term designating the two processes taken together is unfortunate” [Dewey, 1934, p. 46].) Furthermore, “Many tangled problems, multifarious ambiguities, and historic controversies are involved in the
question of the subjective and objective in art” (1934, p. 146). To refer to a work of art as artistic refers to the act of production. This describes the processes that the art work goes through as it is created. Furthermore, the different processes each artwork goes through in its creation are dependent on the artist and his or her experiences, which can affect the creation process.

Dewey argued that if the form in an artwork emerges as a result of the choice of raw materials being selectively arranged to create “an experience unified in movement to its intrinsic fulfillment, then surely objective conditions are controlling forces in the production of a work of art” (1934, p. 146). He observed that objects that are identified without reflective entity “exhibit an integral union of sense quality and meaning in a single firm texture” (1934, p. 259). He further asserted that:

In all objects perceived for what they are without need for reflective inquiry, the quality is what it means, namely, the object to which it belongs. Art has the faculty of enhancing and concentrating this union of quality and meaning in a way which vivifies both. Instead of cancelling a separation between sense and meaning (asserted to be psychologically normal), it exemplifies in an accentuated and perfected manner the union characteristic of many other experiences, through finding the exact quality media that fuse most completely with what is to be expressed. (p. 259)

In order to understand artist-curators’ practices, or theorize how artist-curators can offer insight in university or college galleries, research efforts must value and seek out artist-curators’ perspectives. Overall, Dewey’s ideas about experience demonstrate
how opportunities for artist-curators could emerge through interaction, experience and engagement with universities and colleges. Furthermore, Dewey’s concepts of interaction, habit, continuity, growth, and emotional desires are important to understanding how such experiences affect not just the individual, but others, so as to yield a more productive life and learning experience.

**Summary**

In summary, I have reviewed literature on curators, artists, artist-curators, museums, and university and college galleries. Furthermore, I explored John Dewey’s concepts of experience: interaction, habit, continuity, growth, and reflection. Through this review of literature I have created a platform to understand what constitutes curation and who a curator is, and the relationship between artist and curator to better understand artist-curators’ perspectives in curating exhibitions at university and college galleries.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the two methodologies used in my research, case study and arts-based research. I will further elaborate on how these methodologies and their theoretical base allow for data gathering, analyzing, and research presentation.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction to Methodologies

In this chapter, I will focus and examine two methodologies I used in the gathering of data, case study and arts-based research. Furthermore, I will explore how these two methodologies have been defined and used in the field of art education research as well as in education. I will then elaborate on the specific elements of each methodology and how I incorporated them in my study. I will also share and elaborate on how certain educational discourses affect specific use of each of these methodologies and especially the blurred lines and distinctions found within them.

Within the dynamics of the blurred lines and divisions of the methodologies, I believe the following methodologies can create a platform for researchers to understand, refine and adapt methodologies in ways that create the understanding of specific phenomena from different perspectives, and also to address the perspective of the dual role of artist-curators. Employing the various research methodologies in this study provides a better understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

Using Qualitative Methodologies

According to Silverman (2000), qualitative inquiry is noted for its holistic treatment of phenomena and has shifted from traditional approaches to research, which emphasize cause and effect explanations (Stake, 2010). Qualitative research allows for the understanding of specific situations and settings, as well as complex relationships which are difficult to comprehend through quantitative measures. Hence, meaning that is buried in nature can be understood and interpreted by individuals. A benefit of using
Qualitative research is how the researcher participates in the study, which not only allows for the unearthing of rich and important information, but provides an enhanced contextual framework for the study. Denzin and Lincoln (2004) posit:

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena, in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials… that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. (p. 2)

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) argue that it is not a good idea to use qualitative research if one aims to derive quick results and answers because qualitative research involves the researcher’s enthusiasm and determination in order to search and understand a situation or process which oftentimes requires a lot of time and more inquiry to better comprehend.

Peshkin (1993) asserts that qualitative research serves the following purposes: (a) description, (b) interpretation, (c) verification, and (d) evaluation. According to Peshkin, descriptive qualitative research allows for the revelation of a situation, setting, or process. The interpretative allows one to gain new insights or concepts and discover issues that exist in a specific situation. The third purpose, verification, helps in probing certain assumptions, while evaluation provides the platform to judge how effective the particular
practices, processes, or innovations were. This means that the four purposes of qualitative research are suited for holistic inquiry, especially in understanding lived experiences.

In this study as I’ve indicated above, I will use two qualitative methodologies: case study and arts-based research. In what follows, I will lay out the premises of each and describe how it will be utilized in my study.

The Case Study

The case study is one genre of qualitative research employed in the present study. Its aim is to reveal the features of a specific entity under study by means of an in-depth description. It is associated with lived experience and the use of multiple data collection points (Njie & Asimran, 2014). The case study has also been described as a possible mode of study one can employ to better understand a specific unit, program, or institution which would not have been possible through other means (Njie & Asimran, 2014). Stake (2000, 2005) describes the case study as a common framework used in conducting qualitative research studies and emphasizes the primacy of the researcher’s role when he notes that in order to unravel the human attribute associated with case studies, the researcher’s skill and zeal are required. Yin (2003) states that the case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomena in real life situations, particularly when there is no clear distinction between the phenomenon/a and the context. It is a “how” or “why” question regarding a contemporary set of events that the researcher has little or no control over. Hartley (2004) describes the case study as a detailed investigation regarding a phenomenon that allows data to be collected over a period of time within a specific contextual framework and where the data is utilized to
illuminate the theoretical issues being researched. According to Merriam (1998) and Geerts (1973), a case study’s purpose is to derive detailed accounts of events, a person, or a process. The use of “thick description” can provide a comprehensive explanation of the case. Willig (2008) defines a case study by what it is not: “it is not characterized by the methods used to collect and analyze data, but rather its focus [is] on a particular unit of analysis: a case” (p.74). A case study focuses on the experiential knowledge of a case and examines the confluence of the unique, social, political and contextual influences impinging on the entity under study (Njie & Asimiran, 2014). Thus, case study is the appropriate appellation for this part of the research where the author studies the practices of individual artist-curators in their respective galleries.

**Types of Case Study**

Different categories of case studies are proposed by researchers and generally include three to six types of classifications; however, most of the classifications are related in nature, drawing upon similarities within the different typologies. Social science casework, according to White (1992) can be categorized by three purposes: a case study for identity, explanation, or control. Stake (1995) categorized the case study into three types: (a) intrinsic, (b) instrumental, and (c) multiple case study. With regard to an intrinsic case study, this specific type of case is focused on one unit: a person or institution. This case study is used when one wants to gain a clearer understanding of a specific case of interest. The researcher focuses on the entities under investigation, taking into consideration that other forms of curiosities are irrelevant in the study. Stake described the purpose of an instrumental case as one that is examined to provide insight
about an issue or to redraw a generalized concept. A case study is referred to as “multiple” when a specific number of cases are studied together to understand a phenomenon, person, institution, population, or entity.

**Why Use a Case Study?**

Stake (1994) argues that a case study is not a methodological choice; it occurs when a specific object is chosen for study. Therefore a case study is created when an object selected is bounded. The case study allows for a holistic inquiry by investigating the process or practice, the interaction within the process, and the meaning derived through interaction for a better understanding of the case. Yin (2003) adds that, “the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (p.2).

Yin further asserts that the case, which focuses on a unit, has distinct characteristics, an advantage when one approaches the study with openness and acceptance. He states that:

The case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (2003, pp. 13-14)

**Case Binding**

The case study creates the platform to concentrate intrinsically on a case of interest. Therefore, the issue of binding the case is relevant because it sets boundaries
around the case, which allows the study to be focused and to further illuminate the issues in the case. Most importantly, binding the case sets the stage to avoid the ambiguity as well as the difficulty of focusing and analyzing large volumes and areas in the study. Baxter and Jack (2008) have suggested how the binding of cases can be achieved especially through spatial, contextual, or time binding. They recommend that it is important to bind a case so that the research scope is not too broad.

The three overarching ways to bind a study suggested by Baxter and Jack (2008) are spatial, contextual, and time binding and were anticipated by earlier researchers. Creswell (2003) utilized time and place as a dual binding platform whereas Stake (1995) emphasized the time and specific type of activity involved. Miles and Huberman (1994), on the other hand, emphasized boundaries and contextual binding.

**Data Collection and Qualitative Sampling Process**

Collecting data in a case study is one of the most significant processes in the study because through the data the depth and richness of the case will be known. The data collection method(s) reveal details about the case. In a case study, six major sources of data have been identified by researchers (Yin, 1994; Stake, 1995; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005): direct observation, interview, documents, archival records, physical artifacts, and participant observation. Depending on the nature of the case, one or more of the different sources could be used (Njie & Asimiran, 2014).

Sampling in qualitative studies is determined by the kind of information the researcher wishes to search for. However, the size of the sample is not of great relevance as compared to quantitative research because qualitative studies are focused on the
richness of data collected in illuminating clearer views on a situation or process, rather than on numbers (Schreiber & Asner-Self, 2011). Schreiber and Asner emphasized that participants can also be randomly selected as in quantitative research, however, qualitative sampling is geared towards achieving the best and the most in-depth information that the researcher is searching for. On the other hand, Kruger (1988) and Morse (1994) proposed that while a single individual can be used in the case study, a greater number of people in the study could yield more in-depth and thorough information. Generalization of the outcomes of a case study is not made, due to the boundedness and the specific context of the study.

**Case Study Bounding**

A case study encompasses details about the subject matter being studied. It is relevant to set boundaries, often referred to as “boundedness.” Clearly defining the boundaries allows “necessary attention and the collection of all the minutiae needed to arrive at interpretations and conclusions rich in details reflective of the case” (Njie & Asimiran, 2014, p. 38). There are three activities to consider, once the boundaries of the case have been set: (a) the process, (b) the interaction or practice, and (c) the interpretation and meaning. The process or practice, according to Njie and Asimiran, will ensure that the “the case undergoes the rigor of digging deep to unravel rich results” (p. 38). It is relevant for process or practice to be explored, and “The process or practice in the case is the defining activity, the core so to speak around which all other emergent activities are derived” (Njie & Asimiran, p. 38).
The next significant activity is the interaction within the process or practice. “This defines all the important behaviors in regards to the activity. The reactions, acceptance, resistance, perceptions, and the consequences of all these are embedded within the interaction of the process or practice” (Njie & Asimiran, 2014, p. 38). By understanding the interaction, the intensity as well as the times are significant in the case study because they represent the action levels within the case. Furthermore, understanding the case in its natural setting depends on the interaction and “how well it is dug and understood by the researcher” (p. 38).

The last activity is the interpretation and meaning of the case study which Njie and Asimiran describe as the activity that is backed by evidence, logical flow, and acceptable patterns that emerge from the case. “This requires a great deal of thoroughness and enthusiasm from the researcher and the process also heavily relies on the richness of the information gathered on the process and the interaction” (2014, p. 38). Njie and Asimiran also posit that meaning building in a case study can be exemplified through a picture for others to see and understand. Njie and Asimiran suggest that usually the use of simple language allows for a better understanding by readers.

**Strengths and Limitations of the Case Study**

There are strengths and limitations inherent in the case study methodology as in any research method. One strength of the case methodology is that the data is examined in situ, i.e., in the environment where the activity occurs (Yin, 1984.) A second advantage inherent in the case study methodology is that variations in instrumental, collective and intrinsic approaches permit the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data (Block,
An additional advantage of this methodology is that the detailed nature of qualitative accounts yielded by case studies describe real life situations that may be verified through experimental research.

One major limitation of the case study methodology is the lack of rigor used by some researchers. Yin (1984) posits that in some instances “the case study investigator has been sloppy and has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions “(p.21.). An additional limitation is that case studies provide scant opportunity for scientific generalization because they focus on a small number of subjects or a single subject (Yin, p. 21). Case studies are also often lengthy and difficult to carry out and the data resulting can be excessive (Yin, 1984).

The Use of the Case Study in My Study

Potential interviewees in southwestern US cities were asked via email of their willingness to participate in the study. As mentioned in chapter one, southwestern cities were selected because they are thought of as typical American cities in the following respects: they are home to a university as well as a community college and other private college(s); they host a regional art museum, university museum, and college gallery and are supported by a local arts council. This profile doesn’t distinguish them, but rather fits with other American cities. An additional criterion in the selection of the cities was the proximity to the researcher’s location, making it possible to hold in-person interviews with the artist-curators and to study another artist-curator’s practices in-depth. The study’s aim was to focus on artist-curators’ practices in university and college galleries
and therefore the researcher believed that the backgrounds of the artist-curators would shed significant light on their ultimate curation practices.

Artist-curators who indicated a willingness to participate received a consent form as an email attachment and a copy of the questionnaire before the interview began. They were given an opportunity to ask questions ahead of time by phone, email, or in person prior to consenting. Consent was documented through a written form.

Four artist-curators were orally interviewed in a mutually convenient location. Two preferred to be identified by pseudonyms: they will be referred to as Mr. Austin Brown and Ms. Bridget Riley and the respective galleries where they work are fictitiously named the Cabin Gallery and the Awake Gallery. The other two artist-curators are identified by their real names: Mr. David Andres and Ms. Linda Chappel. Andres curates the galleries at Pima Community College West in Tucson and Chappel curates the gallery at Tucson Art Institute.

Specific interview questions were formulated in advance and asked sequentially (see Appendix A). Audio recorded oral interviews formed part of the procedure as well as written documentation that included my drawings and notes taken during the interviews. In addition, all the audio recordings and notes were transcribed, and all data collected was systematically coded and analyzed. The participants shared their experiences in curating exhibitions and explained how their background as artist-curators could be influential in their curation practice. Interviews lasted approximately two hours and the participants were subsequently asked follow-up questions. The participants had the opportunity to
review the final transcript of their interview and request removal of specific content that they did not want made public.

Two artist-curators (one of whom was the researcher and one of whom is mentioned above as Ms. Bridget Riley) responded to the same initial list of questions as the other interviewees but were also asked additional questions. Further, the in-depth study involved several sets of interviews. In them, I asked questions that pertained to the artist-curators’ methods of curation in their respective galleries as well as artmaking in their studios (Appendix B). Although I couldn’t orally interview myself, I wrote out my responses to the same set of questions. I also used images, observations, audio recordings, and written journal entries. I documented the other artist-curators’ practices and kept a journal that contained our separate ideas, processes, and influences relating to curating our art as well as how effective curation can serve to educate the viewer. These various forms of data collection allowed me to investigate how the different environments, concepts, and backgrounds of the artist-curators informed the specific exhibition formats to be curated. Due to privacy concerns surrounding one pseudonymous artist-curator and the location of her studio, I was not granted permission to visit her studio. However, digital images of the studio were shared by the artist. I visited an exhibition of each artist’s works that was on display in a gallery to gather more data on their experiences in exhibiting their own artworks.

The data collected could reveal unknown correlations with the types of exhibitions curated and the approach taken by the artist-curators. For example, there could be instances where the artist-curator draws inspiration from other artists or
curators. Therefore, documenting the different environments the artist-curator engaged in was beneficial in this study. The images I took involved photographs of the two artist-curators’ exhibition practices in curation. This included images of the exhibition spaces, what type of artworks were selected for exhibitions, and procedures taken during the gathering and selection of the artworks for display. The photos were taken within the site specific gallery locations (Union and Awake Galleries). By having access to both galleries in this study, and using images of the other artist’s studio, I was able to analyze visual exhibition formats that pertained to the type of exhibitions held. The images gathered were digitally stored on a computer and formed part of my journal entries. Images of the artist-curators’ artworks and their studios served as visual data for understanding the artist-curators’ concepts with regard to their practice as artists and as artist-curators working in the galleries. Audio recordings and written documentations also occurred during the interviews.

I asked the same set of interview questions for both artist-curators but was open to unpredictable questions that occurred during the interviews. This means that questions that were added to those outlined in Appendix B were included in an updated questionnaire form (Appendix C). Ideas shared by both artist-curators were recorded by an audio recorder. I took a series of audio recordings during each visit to the artist curator’s gallery. The recordings were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. The transcriptions were shared with the artist-curator for review and approval. Furthermore, I wrote and sketched concepts that related to the artist-curator’s perceptions in my journal. The sketches complemented the audio recordings and images. For example, an idea
sketched out in a journal allowed a better understanding of specific concepts that the artist-curatorial shared with the researcher. Because the sketches, pictures, and audio recordings functioned as different forms of data collection, the sketches enhanced the theoretical and practical aspects of curation in the gallery.

By undertaking this research, I represented myself as an insider researcher. An insider researcher refers to conducting a study with a population in which the researcher also doubles as a member (Kanuha, 2000). Being a member of this population means that the researcher is in a position to share his/her identity, language, and experiences with the study participants (Asselin, 2003), creating some level of acceptance between the researcher and participants. As a participant in the study, my insight was valuable because of my depth of knowledge in the field of curation. As a professional artist-curatorial, I am in a position to understand a range of perspectives within the contemporary artworld and curation.

A case study can be an interesting approach for a researcher who is motivated to spend an extended period of time on a case, in order to investigate “how and “why” questions. As discussed, it can be a challenging and tedious process as a lot of patience, energy, and time are required to unravel complex issues and to explain such issues in a convincing manner. A case study can be an excellent opportunity to gain tremendous insight into a specific case. Furthermore, it can also allow the researcher to gather data from a variety of sources and to converge the data to illuminate the specific case being studied. In the next section of this chapter, I will discuss the next methodology I employed in my study, arts-based research.
Arts-based Research

Introduction

Arts-based researchers employ aesthetic qualities to unearth educational experiences through the use of the arts (Eisner, 2008). Arts-based research (ABR) provides scholars the ability to contribute particular insights about their work that can lead them to better understand the phenomenon/a they are studying (O’Donoghue, 2009). The term subsumes arts-based education research, arts-informed research, and a/r/tography (Rolling, 2013). Arts-based education research is an overarching category wherein the researcher may use his or her artistic processes as an integral part of the inquiry and/or to communicate the outcomes of the research (O’ Donoghue, 2009). Arts-informed research, on the other hand, is an approach that is “influenced by, but not based in the arts” (Gillis, 2012). I will focus on a/r/tography in this study because I believe it best encapsulates my multiple roles as artist, teacher and researcher.

Arts-based research subsumes the following lines of inquiry: visual arts, lyric inquiry, music, and heuristic inquiry. I will also elaborate on the seven features of arts-based research: the creation of a virtual reality; the presence of ambiguity, the use of expressive language, the use of contextualized and vernacular language, the promotion of empathy, personal signature of the researcher/writer, and the presence of aesthetic form.

Defining Arts-based Research

Knowles and Cole (2008) defined arts-based research as an “unfolding and expanding orientation to qualitative social science that draws inspiration, concepts, processes, and representation from the arts, broadly defined” (p. xi). Arts-based research
uses artistic practices and processes in research inquiries and in communicating research outcomes. It can offer insight and understanding of phenomena of interest to education researchers. O’Donoghue (2009) posits:

Thinking about and mapping an artist’s practice in and through this theory [ABR] is useful for several reasons. It gives structure for making visible and articulating how and why artists operate as they do. And, it provides opportunities for identifying and advancing alternative rationales for engaging in research in art. (p. 354)

**Background of Arts-based Research**

Art-based education inquiry subsumes narrative writing, theatre, autobiography, dance and movement, multi-media, hypertext, visual arts, photography, music, poetry, and creative non-fiction (Sinner et al., 2006). Arts-based researchers in education believe that creating in the arts can be a mode of inquiry to provide “significant perspectives for making decisions regarding pedagogical theory, policy, and practice” (Sinner et al., 2006, pp. 1226-1227). Although arts-based research has developed significantly in the past decade and is being adopted into many fields of study across the academy, including medicine (Lazarus & Rosslyn, 2003), commerce (Gibb, 2004), science (Scott, 2006), and engineering (Penny, 2000), there are aspects that demand attention. There are still tensions in the academy with regard to arts-based inquiry: for example, what constitutes artful expression and how expert one must be in an art medium to render research through the arts (Piirto, 2002).

**Ways Arts-based Inquiry Has Been Used In Research**
In this section, I will briefly examine arts-based research as it is used in visual arts, lyric inquiry, music, and heuristic inquiry.

**Visual Arts.** The use of arts-based research can enhance imagination, as well as meaning making between researchers and audiences. Leavy (2009) described how visual arts-based methods can allow the use of existing art:

- that exists independent of the research in order to study something that it articulates or questions it poses about social life; having research participants create art in order to express or get at some aspect of their lives that would otherwise remain untapped; creating visual models in order to assist data analysis and interpretation; and creating art as a part of the representation of data. (p. 218)

Leavy (2009) described Susan Finley’s arts-based research of gender identity, which allowed teachers to better understand how they transmitted media-defined gender roles to their students. Finley analyzed the media images of females through traditional qualitative means and later created categories of the images that could be associated with their visual representations. Collages were created to encourage discussions among teachers on how media influenced gender roles. By employing arts-based research, Finley manipulated the images in order to exemplify the type of messages that were communicated. According to Leavy, the manipulated images allowed the audience to derive personal connections with the phenomena. Further, she argued that by employing arts-based studies the participants and researcher can both create data in the form of visual art.
**Lyric Inquiry.** Arts-based research can take the form of lyric inquiry, also known as poetry. Neilson (2008) asserts that lyric inquiry brings about the “possibility of a resonant, ethical, and engaged relationship between the knower and the known” (p. 94). Just like other types of arts-based research, she makes it clear that lyric inquiry allows for the strengthening of the author’s as well as the reader’s ability to relate to others. Lyric inquiry uses the idea that less text transfers more meaning to the reader, encouraging the reader to think about what relates to him or herself. A unique quality of lyric inquiry, as compared to other types of arts-based research, is that the poets collecting data will have to be present and pay close attention to the subtle details so as to capture the essence of a phenomenon being studied (Leavy, 2009; Leggo, 2008; Neilson, 2008; Sullivan, 2000).

Lyric inquirers use documentation in the form of abstracted, concrete, and written language. They use poetry as a means of expression in order to present and analyze their personal interpretations. For example, Richardson (as cited in Leavy, 2009) shows the differences between lyric poetry and narrative poetry. The major difference is that narrative poetry allows interview data to be transformed into poetry as a reflective and creative interpretation. Leavy (2009) has emphasized that some researchers use “poetic transcription” as way of collecting and analyzing interview data. She used poetic transcription to study the relationship between body image and sexual identity. She transcribed the interviews that she held with 18 participants. She then coded them, by selecting emerging themes that included family, body image, and dating. She then used the traditional formats of collecting and analyzing qualitative interview data and employed poetry to portray the essence of what the participants said. The outcome of the
poem was a personal and emotional way of relating interview data, seen through the lens
of the researcher’s artistic interpretation. This type of poetic transcription shows how the
participants’ real words were merged with the narrator’s speech patterns as a “third
voice” (Glesne, as cited in Leavy, 2009, p. 75).

A particular characteristics of lyric inquiry, known as aesthetic vision, can be
applied to visual forms of arts-based research. Researchers have described the essence of
engagement and how it can address the nature of attention (Leavy, 2009; Leggo, 2008;
Neilson, 2008; Sullivan, 2000). Describing aesthetic vision, Sullivan (2000) stated that is
a “high level of consciousness of what one sees” (p. 37). She continued by addressing
aesthetic vision as a sensitivity to patterns, details, nuances, form, and suggestion.

**Music.** According to Bresler (2008), the classroom structure can be seen through
the lens of music, where the classroom structure references the lessons being introduced,
developed, and completed. Expanding on Bresler’s concept, Leavy (2009) has elaborated
on how Bresler’s notion of melody, dynamics, polyphony, and timbre relates to
qualitative research methodologies. She described how the musical definitions acted as
metaphors similar to the listening techniques used in data collection, organization, coding
of notes, and the presentation of the findings. Citing these examples creates a platform to
show how each person constructs ways of knowing through personal interaction with the
arts. These examples also help researchers, as well as their audiences, to access and
create new forms of metaphorical understanding of phenomena (Barone & Eisner, 2012;
Bresler, 2008; Eisner, 2002; Leavy, 2009; Rolling, 2010).
**Heuristic Inquiry.** The term “heuristic” is derived from the Greek word *heuriskein* that is defined as a means to discover and find. Shaun Mc Niff’s (2005) text *Art-Based Research* defines heuristic inquiry as a method to discover new knowledge through personal experience and stories. As a form of arts-based research, the personal experiences derived by the investigator’s inquiry, through personal participation, creates the overlap between the personal experiences and heuristic arts-based explorations which I will use in my own study.

As I research the act of painting, I will no doubt realize that personal ideas, memories, themes…continue to emerge on the canvas. Art-based research involves reflection on the interplay between mental motivations and physical ones that appear through contact with the medium. (McNiff, 1998, p. 56)

Because heuristic inquiry takes account of personal experience in the artistic process, my studio art will constitute a vital part of the analysis. As an active participant, I position myself in specific places: the studio and the gallery, around which the research is being conducted.

**The Features of Arts-based Research**

The seven features of arts-based inquiry, according to Eisner and Barone (1997) include: (a) the creation of a virtual reality, (b) the presence of ambiguity, (c) the use of expressive language, (d) the use of contextualized and vernacular language, (e) the promotion of empathy, (f) the personal signature of the researcher/writer, and (g) the presence of aesthetic form. In the succeeding paragraphs, a brief description of each of the key features will be elaborated for clarification purposes. These selections were made,
according to Barone and Eisner, because “we recognize that most arts-based educational inquirers have, at least up to this time, employed words as their medium of expression” (p. 73). In what follows, I will explain each of these qualities.

**The Creation of Virtual Reality.** Barone and Eisner (1997) argued that virtual reality provides meaning to this feature of arts-based inquiry. This isn’t a new idea, although their application of it to arts-based inquiry is. Langer, in 1957, wrote that the artist creates a new world through the art object used (where the reality is replaced by the work of art created by the artist), and in literature verisimilitude (the revealing of truth or evidence of reality) is accepted as the truth because the reader or audience recognizes part of themselves in the storytelling (Bruner, 1987). Stories, then, can enhance the reader’s heuristic discovery. McNiff’s (1998) definition of heuristic inquiry asserts that new knowledge is discovered through personal experience and personal stories. This means that the use of virtual reality can be used to encourage this concept.

**The Presence of Ambiguity.** Ambiguity in arts-based literature is created by several methods, allowing the reader to contribute his or her own judgment or meaning to what he or she reads or sees (Barone & Eisner, 1997). Iser (1974) believed that offering the inclusion of blanks and gaps in the text creates an opportunity for readers to make personal connection. Iser referred to these gaps as the “unwritten part of the text” (p. 58), adding that gaps have to filled by the active reader who creates personal meaning drawn from their own experience outside the text. Furthermore, readers cannot just critically analyze a text to gain meaning, but must “create additional material by a further imaginative act” (Maitre, 1983, p. 38). Maitre used the word “indeterminacy” to allow
readers to contribute by imagination. Bahktin (1981) described “noveless” to mean that inspiration is drawn from reader dialogue with writing, which creates more interpretations. Not all texts invite reader interpretation. “Epic” texts, for example, which are used in educational storytelling, for example (Berliner, 1992), provide a concrete meaning for the reader. They are closed and declarative. The purpose of arts-based educational inquiry is different from epic text (Belsey, 1980). Barone and Eisner (1997) used literary techniques to showcase the presence of ambiguity, which creates an inclusive quality that is lacking in epic storytelling. I believe inviting readers to engage in arts-based inquiry through the use of ambiguity in art works can promote personal discovery.

The Use of Expressive Language. Expressive language used in literature enhances meaning-making to awaken the imagination of the reader. Expressive or evocative language often involves metaphors and other rhetorical devices to appeal to the reader’s sensibilities. Metaphors allow the re-creation of experiences.

Metaphors encourage an individual interpretation of a literary figure or event by not signifying a closed, literal meaning but helping the reader to experience what the author expresses (Eisner, 1991). To exemplify this metaphoric language use, Barone and Eisner (1997) point to Barone’s (1983) case study of an at-risk teen in Appalachia. Specific details of the environment, including the landscape, surroundings, and way of life of a given population are made evident in the text before the teacher is introduced in the story. From this background, the reader is put in an environment to transfer the expressions in the teacher’s surroundings to how the teacher teaches the student, and the
effect it has on the students. The metaphoric use of the Appalachian environment thus enriched and illuminated the overall context in which the teacher and students interacted.

Barone and Eisner (1997) stated that expressive language encourages the reader to fill in the gaps in the text with personal meaning whereas Dewey (1934) contrasted “stated” meaning with “expressive” meaning as follows:

A statement sets forth the conditions under which experience of an object or situation may be had. It is a good, that is, effective, statement in the degree in which these conditions are stated in such a way that they can be used as directions by which one may arrive at an experience. (p. 84)

**The Use of Contextual and Vernacular Language.** The use of arts-based research allows for the contextualization of language in literature, which is “thick” in its descriptive nature. The author describes complicated, intricate, and unique settings, things, and people. Novelists, art critics, and biographers employ this type of language in their texts (Barone & Eisner, 1997). To put text into the proper context, the storyteller portrays intricate, complex, and unique descriptions of settings, characters or events. Vernacular language is the art-based tool used to express everyday language in literature. Writers employ the vernacular in conjunction with thick description for the reader to experience the story in a way that simulates reality as much as possible. Indeed, Jaeger (1997) stated these writings include “everyday, vernacular forms of speech that are more directly associated with lived experiences” (p. 76).

Thus language in its various forms serves as an effective medium in which to present data whether through expressive language, vernacular or thick description.
Employing these literary tools can enhance more unique, interesting, and personal research studies that are accessible to a greater population.

**The Promotion of Empathy.** Expressive, contextualized, and vernacular language contributes to arts-based research because these forms of language facilitate empathic understanding. Barone and Eisner (1997) asserted that:

> Within the arts and humanities, empathic understanding is the result of an inquirer’s achievement of intersubjectivity. The inquirer’s use of contextualized, expressive, and vernacular language motivates the readers to reconstruct the subjects’ perspective with themselves. . . . empathic understanding is the inquirer’s ability to promote the reconstruction of that perspective within her or his readers. (p. 77).

Rorty (1989) stressed that literature can create powerful descriptions of perspectives held by people who may be very different from the reader, and thus difficult for the reader to relate to. It is a personal connection that is enhanced through the use of language that bridges this gap and is similar to the virtual reality described earlier. These two features help the reader to understand and empathize with the character in the text. This personal connection may also aid the reader in gaining new perspectives.

**Personal Signature of the Researcher/Writer.** Authors of arts-based research create work that is personalized and specific to what they are studying. By employing stories, characters, and selected elements, the writer develops a unique text (Barone & Eisner, 1997) with flexibility and enhancement that is exemplified in the next feature (the presence of aesthetic form) that I will describe in the subsequent paragraph.
The Presence of Aesthetic Form. Barone and Eisner (1997) asserted that the presence of aesthetic form in arts-based studies can provide the ultimate goal of the inquiry. Barone and Eisner (1997) articulated three phases of storytelling: (a) the dilemma, (b) the middle phase, and (c) the resolution. Even though arts-based studies are not standardized, the phases mentioned can be found in the arts-based research form of writing stories. Barone and Eisner suggested that the main character’s dilemma relates to the researcher’s focal interest in the study, and pulls the reader into the text. The middle phase usually involves some sort of existential struggle for the character to resolve while the resolution becomes evident when the character has evolved to meet the challenge.

Why and How I Wish to Utilize Arts-based Research in this Study

As indicated earlier in this chapter, a/r/tography is the specific approach I use in this study. Below I will explain what it is, why I have chosen to use this approach, and how I use it.

A/r/tography

A/r/tography refers to the ongoing inquiry an artist undertakes throughout the course of his/ her artmaking, teaching, and research work. The roles of researcher, artist, and teacher are interconnected in ways that allow for deeper, enhanced meanings in the study, as exemplified by the term itself, “a/r/tography,” literally meaning the writing of the interactions between artist/ researcher/ teacher. Springgay, Irwin and Kind (2008) relate a/r/tography to Bourriaud’s concept of relational aesthetics, a term describing the situational relationship between viewers and the artworks they view. The relationship created between the viewer and the artwork is more relevant than the art itself, according
to Bourriaud (2004). Compared to other types of arts-based research, a/r/tography purposely creates blurred lines between the participant and researcher. Springgay et al. argue that a/r/tographers commit to an “enactive space of living inquiry in and through singular time and space” (p. 84).

Eisner (2006) argued that, “the arts provide access to forms of experiences that are either un-securable or much more difficult to secure through other representational forms” (p. 11). As a form of heuristic inquiry, arts-based research allows the researcher to be involved in a study through personal participation, and to understand a phenomena of interest. My heuristic inquiry flows from my dual roles as artist and curator and will include studio art production as a major component to uniquely inform my discovery process, and my participation as one of the five artist-curators reflecting on a set of questions about the influence of the two roles on each other. McNiff (1998) describes the artist-researcher as one who initiates artistic expression and art production for personal introspection, a process that generates empirical data for review. He believes art-based research expands heuristic inquiry, because materials of artistic expression are an integral part of the research process. According to Bailey and Desai (2005), the use of the visual arts plays a vital role in how diverse human experiences are understood. They also argue that artistic practices can address history and culture as a site of investigation, and offer a method for which pedagogical practices can be investigated. Participating in studio art activities illuminates my curation process as well as that of other artists.

I have created a series of artworks for the express purpose of analyzing my data from multiple perspectives/lenses. Employing arts-based research in this study provides
an opportunity to examine my processes, especially in the creation of my artworks in the studio, and how such creations translate into the curation process and vice-versa. Participating in this creative art inquiry is an integral part of the personal aspects of this investigation. Using arts-based research will support the notion of self-study while taking into consideration how personal participation, as a researcher, can yield meaningful processes to discover new knowledge. This methodological approach will best illuminate the data that the arts-based study revealed.

**Direct Experience as Validation for the Study.**

McNiff encourages experimentations in artmaking because he considers the empirical study of the creation process integral to arts-based research. “The simple act of showing and contemplating what is made and experienced, so basic to the visual arts, can be viewed as a fundamental element of art-based research” (McNiff, 1998, p. 92). As a participant in the research, I will be part of the experimentation process itself where my impressions and judgments will be integral and relevant components of the artistic study. As an artist, I want the broadest possible experience in both art and curation to be able to critically analyze my work from the perspective of the many facets of arts-based research.

**Personal Bias.** McNiff (1998) suggests that the best route to address personal bias in a research discovery is to acknowledge and include the bias of the researcher as a part of the study. Personal bias, then, becomes a condition in the research and leads to better understanding of how it affects the researcher’s practice. As an artist-curator, I will provide personal background information to further acknowledge my personal bias; the reader also will be informed of any bias documented in the art-based research portions of
study. McNiff asserts that personal viewpoints are relevant to showcase personal perspective and bias toward a topic. Because heuristic study is personal, it can lead to a one-sided study, which favors the researcher. To avoid such circumstances, arts-based research expands the research process by including the biases of, for example, the artist(s). By thoroughly documenting my experimentation process, I hope to exchange my empirical data of self-examination with that of co-participants. By documenting observations and experimentations, I hope to create an interplay of the empirical data between self-examination of the researcher and the co-participants. In summary, arts-based research encourages the exploration of unconventional ways of thinking, encouraging researchers to consider new perspectives. Furthermore, arts-based research questions allow one to know how one’s artworks and practices act as invitations to understand the context of a phenomenon. These questions open up a space to think of arts-based research as:

A process (coming to know), and as a product (representation of knowing and providing opportunities for others to come to know). Both conceptualizations present different opportunities for engagement, and different possibilities for meaning making. They also demand different criteria for evaluation. (O’Donoghue, 2009, p. 357)

In the process of exploring different domains of arts-based research (visual art, lyric inquiry, music, and heuristic inquiry), seven features of arts-based research, and a/r/tography, I have gained significant insight into the multitude of creative processes and ways of thinking that manifest in a diverse array of artmaking and curation practices. The
use of the full spectrum of research strategies, including the methodological, theoretical, and practical characteristics of each has encouraged me to find creative and imaginative ways of applying such research strategies in my artmaking and curation practices.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have explored how case study and arts-based research are defined and used in education and art education research. Furthermore, I have elaborated on how the use of qualitative research allows for the creation of knowledge in diverse ways that help us understand a phenomenon more deeply. I have also elaborated on the use of case study, and arts-based research specific to this study. I believe that the intersections and divisions of the methodologies elaborated in this chapter will elucidate the artmaking and curation practices of the five artist-curators under study in this research.

The succeeding chapter will focus on the case studies that inform the artmaking and curating practices of the participating artist-curators. The author’s use of arts-based methodology to study his curation practices will also be presented.
CHAPTER FOUR: CASE STUDIES

In this chapter, I will focus on four artist-curators that were orally interviewed for this study. I will present the data from the interviews as well as data for the case studies for two of the artist-curators. First, I will present the data from the interviews, and then I will present the data from the case studies of two of the artist-curators, the aforementioned Bridget Riley and Charles Dodoo (the author), who responded to the same list of questions as well as additional questions. I will also describe their background as artists, an exhibition they participated in, and a curation project. In the succeeding sections, I will describe the data from the interviews in correlation to the research questions formulated in the study.

Due to privacy and confidentiality concerns regarding the identity of two of the artist-curators as well as their curation sites, pseudonyms were employed as to both their identity and current sites of curation. These two artist-curators will be referred to as Austin Brown and Bridget Riley and their galleries will be referred to as the Cabin Gallery and the Awake Gallery respectively. I acknowledge that every effort has been made to protect the anonymity of these two artist-curators. However, readers who know these individuals may be able to identify them. Both individuals have given permission to use the data included in this study. The other two artist-curators who were interviewed preferred to use their real names. They are Linda Chappel, who curates the gallery at Tucson Art Institute, and David Andres, who curates the galleries at Pima Community College West in Tucson. The same interview questions were asked of Andres, Riley, Brown, and Chappel that the author responded to himself.
Research Questions

As outlined in earlier chapters, the main research questions of this study are the following: What background, perspectives, and practices do artists bring to the curation process when curating for university and college galleries? How does participating in the curation process affect the artist-curator’s artmaking practices? What practices do artist-curators engage in to educate college and community audiences? The following sub-questions relate to this last main question:

1) How do artist-curators adapt his or her perceptions of gallery management for a university and college exhibition?

2) How do artist-curators foster community engagement and what do they hope visitors will take away from their experiences?

3) Given that university or college galleries reside within educational institutions, what strategies do artist-curators use to create educational programs?

4) What interdisciplinary learning strategies do artist-curators bring to their curation?

I will now present the data from the artist-curator interviews.

David Andres

As the current director of the Pima Community College West Campus Art Galleries in Tucson, Mr. Andres also teaches gallery and museum practices, design, and printmaking. He has exhibited in numerous art galleries locally, regionally, and internationally from New York City to Vancouver, Canada. David’s paintings and prints can be found in the collections of the University of Arizona Museum of Art, the Tucson Museum of Art, and the Tampa Museum of Art (Pima Community College, 2015, n. p.).
He exhibits his work as often as he can, and most of his shows are in-state. As of this writing, he had an exhibition at a community space at the Tucson International Airport.

David obtained his Bachelor of Arts in Painting and Sculpture from Emporia State University in Kansas, and his Master of Fine Arts from Wichita State University in Painting and Printmaking, where he managed the printing studios as a graduate assistant. He subsequently enrolled at the University of Arizona where he obtained a Master of Arts degree and a certificate in Museum Studies from the Department of Anthropology. He was the first director of the Joseph Gross Gallery that is hosted by that department, a position he held while obtaining his certificate.

Currently, Andres oversees two galleries: namely, the Louis Carlos Bernal Gallery (LCBG) and the Student Visual Arts Gallery (SVAG). The two galleries are located at the Pima Community West Campus (PCWC) on the west side of Tucson. The LCBG gallery is named after Bernal, a prominent photographer and faculty member at Pima Community College West. Andres has managed the galleries for about eleven years now and stated, “I enjoy working with the diverse students in my classes and the professional artists who exhibit at the Bernal Gallery. Both bring a passion for art and learning” (D. Andres, personal communication, October 8th, 2015). The LCBG is the venue for the exhibition of professional works by artists while the students exhibit their works at the SVAG. College funds are allocated to a gallery account that supports the two galleries. According to David, the LCBG is the only professional gallery among the six Pima Community College campuses in Tucson.
Mr. Andres was recognized as an Outstanding Adjunct Faculty in 2010 by Pima Community College and was awarded a “Lumie” award from the Tucson Pima Arts Council in 2012 as an Outstanding Art Educator. He is deeply committed to community outreach and currently serves as a board member of the Contemporary Art Society for the Tucson Museum of Art and of the Central Tucson Gallery Association. He believes that his engagement with the community allows him to introduce more people to the gallery experience.

Mr. Andres spends as much time in his studio to make art as his job demands as an instructor and a gallery director allow. He sometimes spends a whole day in the studio, particularly when there is less activity in the gallery. He has two studios where he makes his art: one studio is dedicated to printmaking and the other to painting.

**The Artist as Curator**

David reflected that curating exhibitions allows an artist-curator to draw upon their artistic background as a wellspring. For example, a few years ago, he held an exhibition based on the theme “Then and Now.” He believes that it is a common title for curated exhibitions because of the confluence of history and art, both of which are required for artists with academic backgrounds. Indeed, his artistic background has contributed substantially to his curatorial practices. In addition, his role as an educator has helped him to understand the importance of exhibiting works by artists that work with the principles of fundamental design. These statements will be supported by data presented in the following sections.
As an artist-curateur, Mr. Andres’ major focus is to get to know the artists living in the community. He seeks out artists because of his interest in their art and exhibits their work if he believes it would benefit the college. He believes that artists are willing to exhibit their work based on the trust they have in him to organize successful shows that will be relevant to viewers. He solves issues that arise during his curation, such as installing sculptures, through theoretical application of his knowledge of balance. The gallery functions as a full-service space with the implication that the artist is not involved in the curation process unless he or she chooses to be. While Andres has worked with artists in the curation process, participation in curation depends on the willingness of the artist to participate.

He believes that it is important to “unite” the different works he curates in the gallery. He understands artmaking as contributing to an understanding of how and why an artwork is completed. He also believes that while knowledge of the artmaking process creates a mental platform to better understand how an artwork was made, this knowledge contributes significantly to the overall meaning an observer can derive from a gallery experience.

The Curator As Artist

David’s curation practice is linked with his artmaking process so one consideration for him in making art is how the work is presented to viewers. He views this connection as particularly relevant as he believes that one’s artwork needs to look professional with respect to framing as well as the other concepts that influence an artist’s work such as design layout. Understanding the design layout of the works of art that he
curates has allowed him to appropriate these designs for his own art as well as visualize how his art would mesh with the other works and thus how the viewer would perceive them.

**The Artist-Curator as Educator**

In curating, Mr. Andres believes his mission is to educate students that typically do not have a lot of experience in going to museums and galleries. An inherent benefit of curating at the college gallery, according to Mr. Andres, is the liberty to express novel and unconventional ideas, where the gallery serves as a stage to showcase artistic endeavor while simultaneously educating students about art.

Mr. Andres works with the community regularly. For example, he has exhibited faculty members’ work from the School of Art at the University of Arizona. He also visits many open studios and has had artists invite him to their studios, which allows him to network with the artists and create the connections needed for future exhibitions. He also critiques some of the work during his visits. He believes that being involved in the community affords him the opportunity to work with artists with whom he might not have previously been aware. His vision is to facilitate education in the college which aligns with the mission of the gallery and to assist the college and the faculty in fostering community engagement. As a board member of the Tucson Museum of Art, he further extends his community outreach.

Mr. Andres holds receptions as well as lectures in the galleries. In a recent faculty reception that he held in the aforementioned LCGB, he received over four hundred visitors. He also mentioned that the galleries hold performance events, including poetry
readings and that he asks faculty members to bring their students to the gallery on occasion to view the artworks. All these events are efforts conceived to bring people together in the gallery and to encourage learning.

The galleries’ mailing list of over four thousand names helps Andres to invite people from the college and community to events in the gallery. He also participates in many organizations in order to create connections to learn about artists and invite a variety of audiences to the galleries. For example, as a board member of the Tucson Museum of Art, he has exhibited the works of art museum members in the gallery. He also lectures outside the galleries and views all these efforts as a form of community outreach.

Andres has used the galleries to create interactions with the Dance Department, the Music Department, and other departments on the college campus to make learning in the gallery an interdisciplinary experience. For example, he invited the students in the Literature Department to critique works that were on display in the gallery. He finds that these interdisciplinary interactions involve a significant amount of planning, but are valuable, particularly in contributing to a community that fosters learning.

One specific aspect of note in Andres’ work is that he often invites artists from Mexico to exhibit and discuss the artistic, social, and cultural environment there, which often leads to far-ranging discussions on Mexico-U.S. relations and related social commentary. He views Mexico-U.S. relations as a timely topic, because it is a theme in many writing classes as well as in sociology, Mexican American studies, and political science classes at the college. On one such occasion, he curated an exhibition on the Sea
of Cortez (Gulf of California) to highlight the unique environment there to liaise with the biology department’s field trip to the Center for the Study of Deserts and Oceans (CEDO). CEDO aims to protect the natural resources and cultures of the Sonoran Desert and the Sea of Cortez and enlists the local fishers there in this mission. David stated that there is a great deal of concern for the sustainability of the Sea of Cortez ecosystem, and one manifestation of this is that the smallest dolphin in the world is endangered because of gill netting and trawling. He mentioned that CEDO has a marine biology school which is connected to the University of Arizona, the Desert Museum, and the college. CEDO’s marine biology school offers educational programs on environmental issues for everyone in the community, including fishermen. Several faculty members from the biology department at the college and Andres regularly take students to visit CEDO.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Andres organized a panel discussion with people in the community to raise awareness about the school and the critical environmental issues facing the Sea of Cortez ecosystem. To assess the impact of the presentation on the audience, Andres employed post-presentation feedback surveys. He asked each student to write an essay about an artwork they believed best exemplified the current status of the Sea of Cortex ecosystem and to incorporate the formal qualities of the art, the media used by the artist, and any pertinent social commentary. His educational outreach thus spanned the domains of environmental science, art and writing.

**Linda Chappel**

Linda Chappel is currently a full-time instructor and gallery manager at the Art Institute of Tucson where she teaches courses in art and gallery management. In her
fourteen years as a full-time instructor, Ms. Chappell has curated exhibitions part-time. She spends about ten hours a week in her studio focusing primarily on painting and sculpture and believes that this balance between studio time and teaching is very satisfying. Her personal goal is to exhibit her work as often as she can. As a practicing artist, she periodically exhibits her work throughout the southwest (Casadesueno Studio, 2015, n.p.) She had an exhibition in the spring of 2016 and periodically holds group shows and exhibits in tours of open artist studios.

Her formal studies in art began at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where she obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1986, having studied sculpture under Don Reitz, George Cramer, and Truman Lowe. After graduation, she worked in various fields, including as a fine artist in Santa Fe and Seattle where she showed in a number of galleries such as the OK Hotel in Seattle. On deciding to further her education, Linda enrolled at the University of Arizona where she was awarded a Master of Arts degree in Art History in 1992, specializing in Mexican art history.

**The Artist as Curator**

Linda coordinates her gallery practices with the Art Institute’s mission in mind, which is to create a link between the gallery’s art exhibitions and the commercial art programs that the Institute offers. Her process of curation to support both the mission of the Art Institute as well as the gallery involves the creation of thematic concepts that will engage students conceptually. She seeks out artists whose work conforms to a theme and thus serves the educational mission of the Institute as well as that of the gallery.
Ms. Chappel believes that it is important that she understands an artist’s objectives and concerns because this fosters empathy when curating their work. For example, in a show that she curated for a visiting artist where the artist expressed concerns about inadequate space in the gallery to display his work, Chappel was able to group the works according to their sizes so that the walls did not seem “too busy.” She views curation as the interaction of space with the artworks on display. Moreover, she views the exhibition as an installation where elements within the gallery space, such as the lighting, are relevant to how the art work is projected to the audience. Therefore, her interest in the design layout of the space is of primary importance. Citing an exhibition with the artist Bob Shelton, Ms. Chappel described how she was able to select different art forms, such as posters and photographs, in curating that would be meaningful to the observer.

Linda views curation as akin to storytelling and focuses on the spatial layout of the gallery and how viewers navigate an exhibition to create a narrative. This metaphorical visual story creation is analogous to story creation in literature with its well-known phases of beginning, middle, and ending. She creates her narrative through the familiar literary elements of characterization (the artworks) and a plot that viewers piece together as they navigate the galley space and ultimately reach a resolution (their takeaway.) She maintains that viewers derive maximum benefit from an exhibition when they metaphorically position themselves within it, just as engrossed readers metaphorically position themselves within a great book. In order to avoid what she terms “missed opportunities” in which viewers fail to derive significant meaning or fail to
comprehend the sequence of an exhibit, she purposefully weaves her narrative in such a way that the works don’t have to be “read” in a certain way or in a particular sequence. Her exhibition (narrative) is thus more accessible to all viewers (readers).

Linda believes that the gallery can sometimes serve as a problem-solving space, because the artist has to be able to figure out how to mount a work and show it to the public. She has come up with solutions such as displaying the artworks in categories as she has done in student group exhibitions as well as other exhibitions so that the viewer can appreciate and better understand the exhibition as a whole. For example, one category consists of works in black and white that are displayed in one section of the gallery, an arrangement based solely on how the works look together and not on other factors such as the content or theme of the work. Another category, however, involves groupings of works with similar themes. Her organizing principle is aesthetic appeal, that is, how she views the layout of the design space in unifying the works presented by the artists.

Linda views the exhibition as a design space and is keenly aware of the visual impact it can have on gallery visitors. She stated that when she sets up, she visualizes the space and what the visitors will see first, particularly where the eye travels in the exhibition. She thinks about the visual movement of the show and whether “its got rhythm. So I really think about the show itself as a cohesive design. I will try to separate any biases that I might have for certain concepts or certain techniques” (L. Chappel, Personal Communication, July 14th, 2016). She curates exhibitions with students in mind rather than imposing her personal design preferences in display layouts, an approach she
sees as serving to foster design creativity in students. The educational component is her second focus, and her personal focus is third. She believes that her approach facilitates the college’s mission of educating students.

The Curator as Artist

Ms. Chappel stated that curation has not really affected her artistic concepts. However, what drives her art is her craftsmanship. She thinks about the visual display of the artwork and its effectiveness. For example, because she creates a lot of relief sculptures, she thinks about the display format for relief sculptures.

The Artist-Curator as Educator

Linda asserts that the college gallery is primarily geared towards education and is not a space devoted to community or commercial enterprise. Thus, students are her main focus and specifically how they learn through the arts, as opposed to trying to please a wider audience. She notes that experience and interaction are key to fostering education in the gallery space and she utilizes various means such as artist talks, teaching demos, and special projects to pursue this goal. On one occasion, she held a student exhibition entitled “Food, Shelter, Clothing, and Art” in which artists sought to answer the question: what do humans need to survive? She noted that one normally thinks of food, shelter, and clothing as the main ingredients of life. However, she wanted the students to apply their art to this theme to make them think critically beyond what they already knew. She believes that community is necessary for survival and therefore wanted the students to think about the role of art in the community. She hoped that student artists from many disciplines across the college, including the culinary school, would take part in the
exhibition. With this form of interdisciplinary learning, it turned out to be an enjoyable experience for her as the students exhibited photographs and diverse design elements that they thought addressed the question. According to her, the responses from some of the students were that they were challenged conceptually, which made them think about how the selection of the materials could emphasize the ideas in the project. Some of the students created collages with images of food, shelter, and clothes and explained their conceptual connections between their selections of images. The students arranged their own work for the exhibition, emphasizing their priorities.

On another occasion, she had a “Teacher’s Show” to exhibit the work of high school and grade school teachers to engage the town community. It was designed as a way to engage the high school faculty with the campus. The exhibition was juried, and Linda’s primarily aim was her interest in the range of media and techniques to showcase the wide talents of the artists. For her “Old Tucson Studios” exhibition, she brought in out-of-state artists who gave talks to explain how they employed various techniques and processes specific to their craft. They also shared their background as artists and how that influenced their works, which created the platform for the students and guests to critique their works. This exhibition brought in different disciplines from the Institute, as well as members of the community. There have been times when Linda approached artists to invite them to exhibit. One such example is an exhibition she curated along with a fellow artist based on costume design. She especially enjoys exhibiting artwork that portrays the technique of the artist. Linda strives to create interdisciplinary connections in the arts by structuring class projects to promote interdisciplinary learning. For example, she created
a project where students in the English Department visited the gallery and wrote a critique of an ongoing exhibition.

Thus, artist talks, teaching demos, projects, and interdisciplinary collaboration are some of the methodologies Ms. Chappel uses to educate and engage audiences within and outside the campus who attend her curated exhibitions. Importantly, she stated that she enjoys the liberty to exhibit work at the Art Institute that would likely not have been shown to the public if the gallery were commercial. She also stated that student helpers gain valuable experience by assisting in the installation and de-construction of exhibits as this provides valuable hands-on experience in the curation process.

**Austin Brown**

Mr. Brown has been an artist-curator for forty years at Rowley College. In addition to being a full-time instructor at the college, he manages the college’s Cabin Gallery for which he periodically curates exhibitions and artist talks. Brown has studied abroad and during his time there, he showed his work in community galleries, museums, and wherever he had an opportunity to exhibit. His online portfolio, website, and curriculum vita showcase his artwork, revealing a keen interest in mixed media. His current work includes portraits in acrylic on carved wood panels. He also creates surreal environments with wildlife and fauna intermixed with domestic animals.

As a practicing artist, he tries to create an artwork every day in his studio. Currently a part-time instructor at the college, he still curates exhibitions at the gallery. He works in his studio between six to seven hours a day. He believes that his job demands are minimal and this means that working in the studio is necessary to “bring
something to the classroom” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016). He currently has exhibitions on display at galleries in the U.S. southwest.

**The Artist as Curator**

Austin describes his curation as a means by which he offers students a platform to appreciate and critique artworks. He states that the exhibition will not only expose students to works that they are not familiar with, which includes the artists’ use of media and technique, but that will also “open them up to different ideas” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016). He adds that, “I’m thinking about the students and….how I can help them see better” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016.).

As an artist-curator, Mr. Brown wants to present artists with an opportunity to exhibit their work in the gallery. He curates a new exhibition every four or five weeks. Sometimes he curates in ways that transform the space although he believes that not everyone will consciously notice. For example, he curated a show where he brought together different types of artworks, including sculptures and paintings, to emphasize the importance of scale in gallery curation. He believes scale is important because having a variety of works can allow students and viewers to appreciate the wide range of works from different artistic perspectives.

**The Curator as Artist**

Mr. Brown believes that his curation practice influences his artmaking, but does not think about it. As an artist working in the studio, he believes that his artwork helps him to “appreciate somebody else’s work that I hadn’t appreciated before because I see
things differently…… working in the studio helps perception and then I am more open to things visually” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016.). While creating his works, he thinks about how his works would mesh with other artists’ works in the gallery if he were to participate in group exhibitions. His awareness of other artists’ work and how his own work will “fit in” with that of the other artists emphasizes his design concept which he adheres to in his curation practice. For example in his own work, having a well-wired work with a frame attached to the work would indicate that the work was completed, or having a painting that could possibly fit into any themed exhibition exemplifies professionalism. His curation at the college gallery has made him aware of how important it is to create works that will stimulate conversations among viewers as in his mixed media works. Not only does he believe that critically analyzing a work of art is important in fostering learning in the gallery, but he also believes that it is important to present the whole exhibition as a single entity rather than focus on individual works.

Creativity is a highly important attribute of Austin’s artwork. He does not like to evaluate an artwork as being good or bad, or a show as good or bad: “To me it is very destructive to what is creative . . . and separate from it” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016). He continued, “it is like trying to sell the value of an image. It is like talking to an empty room, even if people are there. And then I am reading a script. It is not in the moment. It is like reading a script” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016).
He believes that other artists’ work influences him to some extent, but an artist’s perspective and attachment to his or her own work can be highly personal. “So it has influenced me to try to be more open about visual information and not to be so attached to it. All visual information is art, not just what I want to call art” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016).

The Artist-Curator as Educator

Through the dual roles of artist and educator, Mr. Brown believes he is introducing a different lens through which the audience can perceive the world around them, which stands in contrast to being an artist alone. “As an educator, I try to pick things that are instructive to have to reinforce what we are teaching. If I showed art that feeds me, I think I’d really get a lot of resistance from the institution. Then I’d have to explain why it is important” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016).

Austin stated that the gallery’s purpose as an educational tool is to reinforce what he is teaching and that students “need to see things that are reinforcing what they are learning rather than reinforcing what is already in the community” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016). He tries to help students see how artists, especially those who employ value and contrast, use certain colors in their work. He added that the use of value and contrast can help an artist to create a variety of works based on a range of themes and compositions. He believes that once students understand value and contrast, they can apply it to their own work. The act of demonstrating what an artist does is crucial, according to Austin, as it underscores his concept of “seeing.” Visuals such as paintings facilitate teaching about the exhibitions and the concepts of the
artists. He ultimately uses the exhibitions as a learning tool. Another focal point in his curation is that of scale relationships, which are part of his design theory curriculum. For an exhibition so themed, he selects art for the gallery that exemplifies theoretical information on design. He believes that students need to be knowledgeable about design theory and its application in real world situations, and that the gallery is a great avenue to showcase works that exemplify design theory. Further, he believes that students will be more appreciative of and understand the artist’s works and underlying concepts better when he assigns students tasks in the gallery and asks them to incorporate what they learned in design class. By having his students apply his design theory to real world projects, he creates a platform for the students to think critically about their art.

Mr. Brown invites guest speakers from different departments across the college to give artist talks in the gallery and thereby encourages interdisciplinary learning in the gallery space. For example, he interacts with the English Department, whose students visit the gallery and then write essays about their art encounters. This is another way in which he tries to engage a wider audience.

Mr. Brown also sometimes collaborates with elementary schools to create art projects that he then showcases in the gallery. However, he noted a preference for engaging with the community as an educator over as a curator. On one occasion, elementary students worked collaboratively to cut out horses that were displayed in the auditorium of the elementary school. This collaborative process taught the students the concept of team-building and the display of the finished artwork created a sense of community in the school because the staff, students, and the community commented on
the works. This was an exercise of community engagement mediated by art. Austin believes that students should extend their learning outside the classroom and share their experience with others as the arts are a great medium to engage members of the community as well as to raise awareness of visual literacy in education.

On another occasion, Austin invited a photographer to the gallery to exhibit his abstract work. During his presentation, the photographer discussed his work with students from different disciplines, and Brown assigned them specific tasks that related to his work. For example, the students were to take photographs of anything of interest, inside and outside the gallery, with their phones and then explain the images they captured. Austin believes that a student should be able to articulate reasons for making specific choices regarding his work. His aim in this exercise was to use the students’ photographs to explain how artists (including himself) develop ideas through personal choices in their art. Metaphorically, Brown was educating students regarding the importance personal choices play in all realms of life. In inviting a photographer to work with the students, Brown believes he was using the gallery to enhance interdisciplinary learning, as it encouraged students to learn about different artistic perspectives.

Austin asserted that when curating, “I pick artists whose work shows something about the curriculum… I want to get things that would kind of lift them [students] to a different level of perception that reinforces what we are teaching in the classroom” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016). He also exhibits artists who are engaged in artmaking that showcases their personal vocation. For example, he exhibited his dentist’s paintings because he believes the paintings might offer viewers a chance to
experience art from a different perspective, i.e., that of a professional who engages in art on occasion and sees his subject through a unique lens. This would also provide a platform for the dentist to display his work to a new audience and reinforces his concept of exhibiting works that exemplify an artist’s techniques. He believes that viewers develop a critical eye when viewing works unfamiliar to them, and this prompts questions and inspiration for their own artistic endeavors. He likes to exhibit work that creates interest among the audience rather than work that is completely outside their experience. He explained that some of the students may never visit an art gallery or museum and that his gallery might be the only artistic space they have seen.

Austin once invited a poet into the gallery who talked about the creative process that is used in writing stories. The poet asked the students to select a painting in the gallery to create a short story. The students’ personal interpretations of the painting prompted construction of new meaning which was manifested in the characters’ narration. The stories incorporated some visual elements in the paintings as well, such as landscapes and animals. As a form of interdisciplinary learning, the poet was successful in merging the two disciplines, art and creative writing, to foster learning in the gallery. In addition, he used the paintings as a challenge to encourage critical thinking among the students who had little or no artistic background. The students shared their stories in the form of a critique with the poet and their peers and began to view art as a “living” form of creative expression. The paintings came to be seen as a form of language because they required interpretation to be understood. The poet also expounded on the meaning he derived from some of the paintings that were of great interest to him, such as the way the
artist used brushstrokes in his work and how it addressed certain themes. Austin added that, “I guess it is always about interdisciplinarity, trying to engage; it’s about education and expanding the lens that people are thinking about [in] their environment, and it is not about art for art’s sake. It is about education more than anything” (A. Brown, Personal Communication, September 5th, 2016).

**Bridget Riley**

Ms. Riley curates full time at a university gallery and also teaches a gallery management class and another on art. She has a BFA in computer animation and a Masters of Fine Arts in intermedia. Her focus is on studio practices such as painting, printmaking, and mixed media, and she currently incorporates some aspects of digital art in her work. Street art was influential, and intermixed, in her life while she was growing up. At present, Ms. Riley enjoys painting, especially on wood panels that she believes is preferential to canvas because of the smooth surface of the panel. She finds that the texture of the canvas does not work well for her. She uses mostly acrylic house paint and spray paint. She also draws and uses ink and markers, and occasionally she does video work. In her own work, Ms. Riley is influenced by other artists; she named Mark Mulroney, Barry McGee, and Maya Hayuk, all contemporary artists who pull from the pop culture canon and adapt it for their own voices. She draws inspiration from their techniques, concepts, and how their work is presented. “Mark also likes to explore in his artwork creations and he also pulls from things like comic books and cartoons and has this humor about it that to me is very desirable” (B. Riley, Personal Communication, July 14th, 2016). Hayuk uses patterns and abstracts the idea of the environment, creating
spontaneity in her work. McGee uses abstracted backgrounds of drips, patterns, and color fields in a form of graffiti art, qualities that Ms. Riley admires in his work.

Riley was a research assistant during her years in graduate school. At that time, she was not a curator, but was engaged in installation of artworks and assisted in fabricating designs for the gallery spaces. Her background in curation can be attributed to this experience. Currently a curator at the Awake Gallery on campus, she has been curating for almost nine years.

Ms. Riley’s passion for the arts began in elementary school when she participated in drawing competitions with her fellow students. Her original inspiration can be traced back to the first time she observed graffiti art in a canal. The art works in the canal that depicted animals’ emotional states and the expressive use of color all added to her curiosity about the animals and she eventually became obsessed with the animals’ faces. Having been surrounded by people who were engaged in aspects of pop culture such as graphic art and film when she was growing up, she developed a keen interest in, as well as knowledge of, art. Her passion for art and knowledge were sustained throughout her college years.

Bridget exhibits regularly. She had solo and group exhibitions in the past year and a half. Prior to that, she had exhibitions in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. Her current exhibition focuses on women in positions of power, primarily political power. She also exhibits in the department’s biannual faculty exhibition.

The Artist as Curator
Ms. Riley believes that the curatorial position is balanced with that of her studio practice. As a faculty member and curator, she has planned out a schedule with the art department where she works so that she has some time for her studio practice. She tries to create artwork at least one day a week or a few hours a week.

Ms. Riley’s selection of artists is primarily focused on reaching diverse student audiences rather than on her personal taste. She also focuses on the teaching needs of the faculty in the art department and on the university campus as well as on those of the community as a whole. Her goal is to stimulate, inspire, and educate these diverse audiences with the exhibitions.

Riley asserts that while curating in the university gallery, she does not worry about commercial viability. She doesn’t need to sell artwork in order to showcase it. In addition, she has the liberty to experiment by selecting the artists who will exhibit in the gallery. At the time of my interview with her, she was curating an exhibition for an alumni artist from the School of Art and indicated plans to curate an exhibition for another alumni artist. She admires both artists’ work and, in addition, plans to include some of the art department’s visiting artists and scholars in her 2017 gallery schedule. She tries to curate yearly exhibitions to touch on themes that occur in the visiting artists’ and scholars’ lectures. She also plans to co-curate with another artist in 2017/18 on an unspecified project that she is currently working on. When she views an artwork and becomes excited about it, she says that she wants to “eat it.” Such strong feelings about art provide her the impetus to show that type of work.
Riley has a number of assistants that work in the gallery. In the Gallery Management class she teaches, internship credit is given to students who work in the gallery for at least ten hours a week. However, she has not had interns for a while; the current gallery assistants are work-study students. Occasionally, she has some students who volunteer and want to gain some practical experience.

When Ms. Riley started working at the Awake Gallery, she used to put out a call for artists and many applied. Now, however, she has a list of artists that she has developed from reading articles online and she draws from this list. She also shows her friends’ work and this friends’ network extends her pool of artists from which to draw. Additionally, she exhibits artists’ works that are of personal interest to her. She peruses their portfolio or website and seeks out other artists who have collaborated with that artist. Fellow artists and faculty members also share recommendations with her and students ask her about possible exhibitions.

Bridget also draws inspiration from other galleries, particularly aspects of the exhibitions that interest her and work well for certain artists. She has experimented with artwork that was hung similar to a salon style, where works were hung on top of each other. This was an experimentation process in the gallery, which she views as a rewarding endeavor.

She believes her dual skills as an artist and curator allow her to really “read” the gallery space more than somebody who is strictly a curator and she views the gallery as a dynamic space. She believes that everybody has a set of interests that they gravitate towards and therefore, irrespective of background, everyone will inject their personal
views onto work displayed in a gallery exhibition. She also notes design principles that curators use, but still emphasizes that everybody has their own way of thinking conceptually which can affect the experience of an exhibition.

When artists visit the gallery and present a new work in the space, Riley encourages them to experiment with the space. She believes that oftentimes this flexibility can be a springboard for new ideas for the artist. As an artist-curator, she can work through that experimentation process with the artist, minimizing challenges for them. For instance, there was an artist who was interested in projecting a huge image into the corner of the gallery. However, mounting the projector and having it work the way she had intended would not work in the limited gallery space. As an experienced curator, Bridget worked with the artist to find the best possible solution as to how the image could be projected in the context of the exhibition by walking her through it. She views the gallery walls as a blank canvas and relates it to a two dimensional design. This allows her to think about how the surface can be balanced and also create a dynamic presentation. She added that sometimes the idea of shapes, sizes, and colors come into play to create a visually pleasing experience that is a successful exemplar of the artist’s work.

Ms. Riley has had the opportunity to serve as guest curator of several exhibitions in the university museum even though it is not part of her position in the Art Department’s gallery. One of the exhibitions consisted of contemporary artists that were invited to exhibit, and the other contained the museum’s permanent collections. She also curates a biannual Art Department faculty exhibition. These guest-curated exhibitions are understood as opportunities that have extended her outreach to a wider audience.
Additionally, apart from curation, she has juried exhibitions for artists’ organizations and museums.

She makes it clear that labels, lighting, and the mission of the institution factor prominently within the two working exhibition spaces she regularly curates, the museum and the Awake Gallery. The museum’s emphasis is on didactics, i.e., extra information about the art such as the materials the artist uses, what the work means to the artist, and other information to enlighten the viewer. This differs from the artist statements she employs in the gallery which give a general description of the work and the artist’s intentions.

Another important factor in the curation process that Ms. Riley stressed was the lighting. There are differences between the lightning in the museum and the gallery spaces. She stated that the museum lights are from the 1950s whereas the lights in the Awake Gallery are from the 1990s, which significantly affects the framing of the space. She stated that the museum lights were used put in place to preserve the artworks that were part of the permanent collection as compared to the brightly illuminated gallery lights that function to highlight the works on display.

Bridget views the gallery as a space focused on exhibiting non-traditional or contemporary artists, whereas the museum is focused on creating a learning environment. She aims to curate exhibitions to align with the different institutions’ missions.

On one occasion, Ms. Riley worked with Chis Dacre, another artist, to install an exhibition and they had differing opinions regarding the best configuration for the space. The question was how to make the installation fit the artist’s intentions. As this was a
collaborative project, they discussed questions such as: how do artworks present themselves in the space and how do audiences normally walk around the space? These discussions led to mutually agreed upon resolutions. She reflected upon this relative to one of the questions of this study: “So those types of things are things that we can discuss and talk through. I think that happens in every single exhibition. I am bringing those tools that I have in the studio into the curatorial position” (B. Riley, Personal Communication, July 14th, 2016).

She believes there is an inherent connection between her studio work and curation practice. She doesn’t present her own artwork to the artists that are in the gallery space and doesn’t discuss her own studio practice with them as she believes it is unethical. Her steady focus in her job as gallery curator is on the artists’ works and practices as this allows her to create a platform to highlight what is going on in the artists’ worlds.

**The Curator as Artist**

Ms. Riley believes that the curation that influences her artmaking is geared towards installation and how works are read when they are in a space. She thinks about how to present her work in a space and reflects on what worked best in some of the installations she has curated. Reflecting on one of the exhibitions she installed, an exhibition by the artist David Chong Lee, she arranged over 50 pieces of artwork on top of each other to form a wall; she cites this as one of the successful exhibitions she has curated at the gallery. The contiguity idea she explored in Lee’s wall is a recurring theme in her own work as she continues to wrap the sides of the wood panels she uses,
something she has done since graduate school. She also admires the objectivity of Lee’s paintings and has explored this in her own studio work.

**The Artist-Curator as Educator**

Ms. Riley believes that art should be accessible to everyone regardless of their background. For example, an art historian might come into the exhibition space with a wealth of information whereas a custodian, on the other hand, may or may not be knowledgeable in art. In each case, she wants the visitor to appreciate the exhibition from his or her own perspective. She curates the exhibitions with the mindset that the show can inform different audiences as well as serve as extension of the classroom. Oftentimes students do not have any museum experience and the exhibition space allows them to learn about the arts from a different viewpoint, through the lens of the contemporary art in the gallery and the use of space.

The gallery is involved with different programs across campus and the community. As a faculty affiliate with the LGBTQ institute on campus, Ms. Riley has held lectures for the group about some of the art happenings in the gallery. In addition, several faculty members at the university bring their classes to the gallery for artist talks that she on occasion personally delivers. A few years ago, there was a bi-annual themed event for the community that took place in the gallery. Riley used this event as a platform to promote the exhibitions in the gallery. She also brings in classes from different institutions, such as the local community college. Special events are periodically held in the gallery, another of the many ways the area community is exposed to the arts in the Awake Gallery. Importantly, Riley tries to incorporate many of the diverse interests at the
university into her curated exhibits in order to encapsulate some aspect of cultural or social relevance for the widest possible audience. For example, a creative writing professor brought his students into the gallery to critique the artworks and compare the concepts the artists portrayed to those they are writing or reading about in class. The professor used the writings of Shakespeare to critique the artworks in the gallery. Riley cited this as an example of how the gallery is an extension of what the students learn in the classroom and the Art Department as a whole.

Bridget believes in connecting students with professionals early on in their educational careers. This can take the form of a one-on-one encounter for a studio critique or artist installation, artist-student chats, or any other configuration that serves the purpose. She believes acquiring practical experience is paramount for aspiring artists and will serve as the springboard for their future careers. To this end, she emails students about current exhibitions they can attend and events where they can meet professional artists, as well as brings artists to her classes as guest lecturers. The students thus derive valuable benefits beyond mere theoretical classroom discussions and make contacts that may propel their artistic development. She has no way to quantify the value of this educational approach, but receives qualitative feedback on her Gallery Management class every year in which she queries students as to what they believe they learned from the class, what the most valuable aspect of the course was, and what she might do differently next time.

Charles Dodoo
On high school graduation, I enrolled at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and earned a BFA degree in Fine Arts. After coming to the United States, I enrolled in an MFA program at the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho, and earned an MFA in painting and drawing. I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Art and Visual Culture Education program at the University of Arizona. As the gallery manager of the Union Gallery, I curate part-time and work part-time as a graduate instructor, teaching courses in the Art and Visual Culture Education program. I previously managed and curated the Ridenbaugh Art Gallery, a University art gallery in Idaho, where I curated exhibitions on a part-time basis. To date, I have curated for over five years, including my time at the Ridenbaugh Gallery.

I enjoy incorporating mixed media in my paintings, which are usually large-scale abstract landscape pieces based on the theme of night. I became interested in art when I was in high school. Taking art classes made me appreciate how experimenting can lead to discovery as I explored different media in my work. I continue to explore different media at the university. To date, I have exhibited in solo shows as well as group exhibitions. In the spring of 2016, my work was shown as part of a group exhibition at the Union Gallery. I strive to hold at least one exhibition a year.

**The Artist as Curator**

I work ten hours a week at the Union Gallery as the gallery manager and ten hours a week as a graduate instructor in my department. I also dedicate some time to make art on a weekly basis. My studio work is really important to me as it allows me to reflect on my curatorial practices as well as to draw new ideas and inspiration for my artmaking as
well as my curation. There are no conflicts between my studio work and job demands. I always dedicate time for my studio art as well as my job at the university.

I sometimes invite to the gallery artists and individuals whom I believe would benefit from the exhibitions. The Union Gallery is one of three galleries that I manage at the Arizona Student Union. This gallery usually exhibits students’ and contemporary artists’ works. On some occasions, the individuals exhibiting their art are not working artists, but are part of the student body or are members of the community. Their works present a range of contemporary and historic forms that the viewer can learn from. The gallery space is rented out at a fee of $150 for a two-week timeframe. The ultimate decision regarding who will exhibit in the gallery is a decision made by my supervisor and myself. Our primary purpose is to promote shows to the students, members of the university, and the community at large. Very little of my personal taste is included in the selection of artists or exhibitors.

I draw my inspiration from Vincent Van Gogh, Jackson Pollock, Edwin Parker "Cy" Twombly, Paul Klee, and Mark Rothko, as well as from other artists. The exploration and abstractive practices these artists have engaged in inspires me to try experiment with unconventional ways of painting. Cy Twombly’s graffiti-like scribbles and scratches, for example, cause one to ponder the mysterious nature of his images through his use of lines.

I enjoy mixing different media on paper and on canvas. I use ink, acrylics, pencils, colored pencils, and sometimes pastels. The media I use depends on what I am exploring
or working on. I sometimes work on huge paintings that allow me to create bigger strokes with my paint brush and graphite pencil, essentially merging my drawings and paintings.

I have held exhibitions in Ghana, Idaho, and Arizona. In the future, I plan to exhibit in other states so that I can share my work more widely. I plan to exhibit in a solo exhibition in the fall of 2017.

I work collaboratively with the exhibitor or artist that wants to show his or her work in the gallery. For example, I offer suggestions relating to the setup, such as where the display of the works would be best positioned in the gallery and the format in which the works can be hung so that the final outcome is successful. As an artist-curator, I am flexible in my curation practice. For example, I have added works to an ongoing exhibition because the artist had not finished a piece when the exhibition opened but wanted it to be shown. Upon agreeing to hang his work, I readjusted the works on a section of the wall to fit in the new piece. The works were added a week after the show opened.

My curation practice varies depending on the show I am curating. In each instance, the design layout of the show is vitally important to me. I enjoy experimenting with different design layouts because it allows me to come up with an exhibition layout that I think will work well for a particular exhibition. Fundamentally, I make it a practice to discuss my ideas for the display with the artists before installing the artwork. This is important, because sometimes the artists might have very different ideas regarding the optimal display of their works. The design course I took at the University of Idaho has allowed me to view the gallery as a space to organize to “look good.” It is like moving
into a new home in which one has to arrange the space so that it looks aesthetically pleasing. Aesthetics is essential to my art as well as curation. For example, as an artist, I am aware of how different colors look next to each other. This concept of color is also applied in the curation process.

I have curated exhibitions outside the university. In Tucson, I curated a show of my work based on my themed works of “night” at a coffee shop. This afforded me the opportunity to learn about different exhibition layouts because this space was different from the gallery space I was used to. There was not enough wall space in the coffee shop gallery and most of my huge works required hanging. This meant that I had to hang the works next to each other, leaving about an inch of space in between them. While presenting unique challenges, curating outside the university also presented an opportunity to network with other artists and to build a community.

An exhibition that particularly challenged me to think about ways to display the works was one that contained many sculptures and few two-dimensional works. The pedestals in the gallery were inadequate to accommodate the numerous sculptures. My solution was to hang some of the sculptures, with permission from the artist, on the walls, a solution which worked out very well.

I encourage artists who embrace exploration in their work to exhibit in the gallery. My interest in utilizing different media motivates me to seek out artists working in mixed and non-traditional media. For example, I curated the work of an artist who combined acrylic paint with beach sand. The beach sand was used as the background while the acrylic paint was used to depict the figures on the sand. The subject of the painting was
based on the beauty of nature. His works paralleled what I was working on in my studio, which was an exploration of acrylic paint and pieces of wood on canvas.

I draw inspiration to experiment with different exhibition formats through visits to other galleries and museums. I believe experimenting with exhibition formats allows me to appreciate the artwork from diverse vantage points and perspectives and thus to bring something “new” to the gallery for viewers to appreciate. It is also very satisfying to experiment with different exhibition layouts. The non-traditional layout of the Union Gallery, which has a pylon in the middle of the space and walls that are not flat, has expanded the way I think about exhibition design and layout. In an exhibition that I curated for students in the art department, for example, I devised numerous design layouts and selected my favorite, which focused on exhibiting most of the huge paintings on the pylon. My aim was to attract the viewer’s immediate attention as he or she entered the gallery. The huge pieces also served as a focal point for the exhibit. For me, this was critically important because not everyone would walk all the way through the exhibition once they were in the gallery. Thus, stationing artworks on the pylon close to the entrance door allowed viewers to have an impression of the whole exhibition on first glance.

The Curator as Artist

There is a connection between my curation and artmaking practice. In particular, I have introduced some of the painting techniques of other artists in my work. One of these painting techniques includes incorporating the use of an eraser to rub out sections of my paintings once the painting dries. For example, one artist that inspired me to experiment with erasers exhibited in a group exhibition in the gallery. The visual elements in the
watercolor painting by the artist included a landscape with a lake, sky, and clouds. During the opening reception, I asked him about the process in painting the textures and clouds and he stated that he allowed the painting to dry before erasing sections to achieve the desired effects. I then began to experiment with his technique in my own work. I applied it on different painting surfaces to see how the eraser would react. This was important because I sometimes work on canvas, and knowing the effects of the technique on canvas will allow me to utilize it successfully in my future paintings.

**The Artist-Curator as Educator**

Most artists that I work with have a theme that unifies their exhibit; this is especially true with group shows. When I curate themed shows, I encourage participants to submit a variety of works on the chosen theme. I believe exhibiting a wide range of work in the gallery will create an exciting platform for viewers to interpret from multiple perspectives. With different types of work on display, there is also the possibility of drawing more viewers to the gallery.

I believe that art is an important, integral part of life and can be used as a tool to enhance community engagement. While it is true that not everyone may take away something from an exhibition, the potential for the experience to open up the viewer to a new relationship with the world of aesthetics and relate this to his or her life is quite fulfilling. As an artist, my vision is to encourage the viewer to “see the other side of things.” Curating shows that allow multiple viewing perspectives will simultaneously further this goal to enhance the viewer’s ability “to see the other side of things” as well as enhance community engagement.
The Union Gallery holds numerous artist talks throughout the year. This allows members of the university and the larger community to participate in the arts. I invite diverse audiences to the gallery for the talks. This includes not only individuals who have a particular interest in the arts, but individuals who come from different backgrounds across the campus and the community. I also invite students, faculty, and staff of the University to current exhibitions. Invitations are sent through the Union Gallery’s email list serve.

Interdisciplinary learning is an important goal in my curation. For example, every spring the gallery exhibits work by University of Arizona employees and family members in a show titled “On Our Own Time.” The show includes a variety of works ranging from photographs to sculptures. This is a juried exhibition involving children as well as adults, thereby fostering interdisciplinary learning because visitors are exposed to a wide range of art works by individuals from very different backgrounds and at all levels of artistic competence. The opening reception, in particular, draws a broad cross-section of people both from within and outside the university.

In the next section, I will describe the case studies of the two artist curators’ practices.

Case Studies

In this section, I will present the case studies of two of the artist-curators’ practices, those of Bridget Riley and Charles Dodoo (the author). This includes their studio works as well as their exhibition and curation practices. I will focus on an exhibition they curated as well as participated in as artists. Data was collected through the
exhibitions, images of each artist’s work, audio recordings, and observations recorded in a journal. In addition, I will discuss how one of the artist-curators (Mr. Dodoo) employed arts-based research to study his art and curation practices.

**Bridget Riley**

**Studio Artworks**

Ms. Riley paints on surfaces such as wood panels and walls and enjoys using house paints, acrylics, inks, and sharpie pens to create pop art-like images. Her work (Figs. 1, 2 and 3) employs elements of comics, animation, and street art, which suggest that she explores topics such as sexuality and relational communication. “Walking on Glass” (Figs. 1 and 3) is a mixed media painting that portrays a group of women who are situated in positions of power. Through her use of words, a background suggesting a rising sun, and the representation of a mundane office chair and numerous different women’s heads, Riley emphasizes that the power that they wield was achieved through hard work as opposed to lineage or the trappings of power. “In Three Parts” (Fig. 2) is a triptych painting that shows the abstracted comic images that portray the falsehood of superheroes. It also references the idea of unreality, i.e., pinning your hopes on a fantasy or something unattainable.
Fig. 1. Bridget Riley, the making of *Walking on Glass*, 2016.
Exhibition Participation

Ms. Riley’s work “Walking on Glass” is currently on display in a museum. She enjoys participating in solo as well as group exhibitions and believes that the shows allow her to not only share her work with the community, but also to network with other artists. She has curated exhibitions of her artworks and believes that doing so offers her an opportunity to view her curation practice from a different environment and perspective. In addition, other artist-curators have curated her works which has offered her the opportunity to learn about their conceptual design layout which she sometimes adapts in her own practice at the university gallery.
**Fig. 3.** Bridget Riley, *Walking on Glass*, 2016, acrylic, latex and house paint on MDF.

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<td>Acrylic, latex and house and spray paint on MDF</td>
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Courtesy of the artist

Bridget Riley’s visual research considers how collective consumer culture and its by-product become signifiers of memories. She employs elements of street art, comics, and animation to explore topics such as sexuality and relational communication. Her painting here shows a group of women whose influence is of national and international importance and states that there is no place of dismissive informality with these women or others, especially when one holds such a position of power and dominance. Ironically, she points out that the throne in question is actually an executive desk chair and not a throne in the traditional sense. She points to the fact that the real power these women have achieved lies not in lineage or the trappings of power but in hard work and determination.

**Fig. 4.** Bridget Riley, *Walking on Glass* artist statement.

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**Curation: Catherine Mayor’s Exhibition**

I documented the curation process of Ms. Riley in September 2016 over a period of six weeks. In addition, I met with her on three separate occasions to ask follow-up questions. As indicated earlier in this chapter, because the artist-curatorial preferred to be identified by a pseudonym, the gallery where she works will also remain anonymous. In
keeping with this convention, I will also use a pseudonym (Catherine Mayor) for another artist who was part of this study.

The installation of Ms. Mayor’s art exhibition took place on September 9, 2016 at the Awake Gallery. The exhibition was held for a five-week period: September 12th to November 15th. Ms. Riley and Ms. Mayor worked closely together to ensure the success of the curation project. This was achieved through negotiation, flexibility, and an understanding between them which I will describe in the subsequent paragraphs.

The Awake Gallery

The Awake Gallery is focused on emerging contemporary artists as well as experimental artworks. There are about six rotating exhibitions in the gallery every year. Ms. Riley believes that the gallery has sufficient space for exhibitions, but on occasions where there are many works to curate, she adapts them strategically to fit the space. In addition, she meets with the artist(s) to discuss possible design layouts as well as to understand the intentions of the artist(s) as this helps her to meld their ideas into her curation to ensure the success of the exhibition. Prior to her visit to the gallery, Ms. Mayor had mapped out, with the aid of the computer program “Photoshop,” the setup of each piece (Fig. 5) and where each would be installed. The artist and curator (Bridget) met daily to install the works since this was a joint effort. The Photographs of the gallery can be seen in Fig. 6.
During the curation, Ms. Riley sought permission from Ms. Mayor to rearrange certain aspects of the exhibition and permission was granted, because the exhibiting artist knew Ms. Riley had much more experience working with formatting exhibitions. Despite having planned the exhibition setup beforehand, Ms. Mayor seemed unsure about the setup because this was her first time installing the work, and she viewed it as an experimental process. As an alumni of the art department, she had access to the facilities and tools in the woodshop to assemble her works with the help of Ms. Riley and a gallery assistant.
Fig. 6. The gallery before installing Ms. Mayor’s exhibition.

Most of the works Ms. Mayor brought to the gallery were unassembled, with the parts brought in to be installed on site (Figs. 7 and 8).
Fig. 7. Rocks on a dolly, ready for assembly in the installation.
Fig. 8. Artworks brought into the gallery for installation.

The expectation was that Ms. Mayor was responsible for installation with the help of the gallery assistant (Fig. 9).
Fig. 9. Preparing photographs for hanging: Eyelet eye screws are attached to wooden strips.

Ms. Mayor printed samples of the photographs in the art department’s photo lab for the exhibition (Fig. 10). The gallery walls were grey in color and this created the platform for
the artist to decide how the placement of the suspended photographs would create shadows on the walls and floor. Ms. Riley reflected that she usually sets the gallery lights on the works once the exhibition installation is complete, but that this is dependent on the needs of the show she is curating.

Fig. 10. Photographs being cut with a paper cutter.
The final photographs were trimmed with a paper cutter and adjusted accordingly on the wooden strips (Fig. 11). Not only did the artist and curator discuss possible ways of hanging the art to create shadows on the walls and floor, but they also discussed the placement of the lights at different sections of the gallery; the gallery seemed a little dark which was due to the dark grey walls and high ceilings.

Fig. 11. Photographs trimmed and wooden strips attached
The rocks were set at the locations where the photographs were to be suspended from the ceiling (Fig. 12), to be used once the photographs hung. Ms. Mayor’s idea was to use the rocks as a support for the suspended photographs. She planned to exhibit the photographs in groups of two, which would create two shadows simultaneously. One challenge described by Ms. Riley was the gallery’s high ceiling and how some sections of the ceiling did not have hooks to attach the fishing line used to hang the photographs.

Fig. 12. Rocks set at locations for the suspension of photographs.
With the help of Ms. Mayor and the gallery assistant, fishing lines were attached to the eyelet eye screws and the photographs were suspended from different sections of the gallery. Some of the photographs were hung in pairs and rocks were set at vantage points below the images to reinforce the suspension and to set the images at the predetermined height. The fishing lines were then wrapped around the rocks to act as a bottom anchor (Figs. 13 and 14).

Fig. 13. Suspension of the photographs with the aid of rocks and fishing lines.
Fig. 14. Suspension of the photographs with the aid of rocks and fishing lines.

Not all the rocks that were brought into the gallery were used. Some of them were spread around the gallery. Thus they functioned not only as a support base for the fishing lines and photographs, but formed part of the overall composition of the installation. In addition, there was a challenge in suspending the photographs so that they aligned
properly with the viewers’ line of sight. The line needed a day to stretch and settle before this could be determined (Fig. 15).

Fig. 15. Installation of photographs, fishing lines and rocks.

With the high ceiling and scant permanent hooks on the beams to suspend the fishing lines, Ms. Riley instructed Ms. Mayor to wrap some of the lines around the beams (Fig 16). Ms. Riley’s approach to curation is that she believes in team work and expects
diligence among the parties involved. She attests that curation becomes much more successful when ideas are shared and reflected upon.

Fig. 16. Highlights of the fishing lines, rocks and photographs installed.

The overall presentation of the installation was reviewed continuously during the curation process by both artist and curator. They would occasionally meet while installation was in progress to advise each other on the setup and reflect on the placement of the objects.
(Fig 17). They discussed what was working well and any changes that could improve the structure and look of the show.

Next, pedestals and a projector were brought into the gallery as part of Ms. Mayor’s installation. Ms. Riley asked the gallery assistant to paint some of the pedestals because they had markings on them that would distract from the artwork (Fig. 18).
The smaller photographs were set on pedestals and placed near the walls of the gallery (Fig 19). Others leaned against the wall which offered further support to the images. One of the pedestals was used for Ms. Mayor’s artist statement.
Fig. 19. One of the pedestals was used to display Ms. Mayor’s work.

Due to the greater than expected distance of the projection of the image from the wall, the issue of space emerged. This was partly due to a change in Ms. Mayor’s initial plan to project the image a few feet away from the wall that would have located the projector in the way of other works on display. One key adjustment both artist and curator agreed upon and initiated was to increase the throw distance of the projector to fifteen feet away from the wall. To solve the issue of space, works of art that were on pedestals, and initially positioned near the projector, were relocated in the gallery. Another issue that arose was that Ms. Mayor was not pleased with the grey color and texture of the wall: she preferred white. Ms. Riley informed her that painting the walls white would still reveal some of the dents in the walls and that the fifteen inches of throw distance between the projector and the wall was adequate to hide the dents from viewers. Yet another issue was the display format of Ms. Mayor’s video which was in quicktime format. Ideas were exchanged between the artist and curator as to what format was best for the projector. Subsequently, Ms. Riley, with the help of the assistant who had an
external dvd burner, was able to transfer the quicktime format of the file on her flash drive to a dvd movie format that could function on the gallery’s dvd player (Fig 20). The challenge the projection posed was to adjust the video so that it balanced perfectly on the wall and that the borders around the image were evenly spaced. The projector was set on a pedestal to allow for more leverage. After several attempts to position the pedestal and adjust the projector, the desired projection was achieved. This kind of problem solving is continual in hanging an exhibition.

Fig. 20. The setup for the projection of Ms. Mayor’s video.
Ms. Riley adjusted the brightness of the projected image several times so that it was not only visible to the viewer, but pleasant to the eye as well. This was important because she wanted to make sure that the viewers’ eyes were not affected by the bright rays emitted from the projector. This could also destabilize the quality of the image projected because she believed the grey walls absorbed some amount of the light from the projector (Fig. 21).

Fig. 21. The image from the projector was adjusted several times to achieve the best image.
A poster with the title of the exhibition was installed on the wall with the aid of a long ladder. Next, Ms. Riley installed and positioned the gallery lights on the works. Once illuminated, the lights provided a well-lit space for the artworks. Excess lights on the tracks were removed to the gallery’s storage room. Each light emitted seventy-five watts, which in a typical gallery setting and was adequate to create the shadows that Ms. Mayor wanted (Fig.22).

Fig. 22. The lights were installed and repositioned on the tracks.
After installing the lights, the artist and curator walked through the installation and repositioned some of the rocks and pedestals. Ms. Riley wanted to create some “breathing space” in the gallery so that it did not seem too cluttered. This idea aligned with Ms. Mayor’s desire to create a “welcoming environment” (Fig. 23).

Fig. 23. Repositioning some of the rocks.
Following the installation of the show, daily adjustments were made to the photographs and rocks because the fishing lines continued to stretch, making the photographs tilt (Fig 24). To counter this problem, the artist and the gallery assistant tightened the lines on the rocks. Ms. Riley expressed concern about the fishing lines overstretching. A few days after the opening of the show, the fishing lines stopped stretching and stabilized for the duration of the show.

In the next section, I will describe my personal artwork, an exhibition I participated in, and my curation process for the Bachelor of Fine Arts exhibition at the Union Gallery. I will also describe my artmaking and curation practices through the use of arts-based research methodology.

Charles Dodoo (author)

Studio Artworks
I am currently exploring works based on the theme of “night” (Fig. 25a). I experiment with ink, acrylic (Figs. 25b and 26) and other media such as graphite, colored pencils, and pastels. My choice of media is dependent on what I am working on. Even though I work predominantly on night-themed works, I also create other kinds of works such as portraits. I enjoy the process of mixing different media to produce a work, because of the unpredictable outcome that results. This creates a sense of excitement: it is like the feeling I get when I open a wrapped gift.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Life is filled with curiosity, mystery and anxiety; this is what I seek to reflect in my work.

Everybody experiences day and night but for me the night becomes that moment of reflection on the day. I believe we encounter a more peaceful environment during the night. While others see night as something dark and frightful, the night is serene, subtle and aesthetically pleasing. What is vivid during the day becomes undefined at night and encourages a critical look. Since images are less clearly defined, this deeper gaze reveals an essence of an abstracted mode of rendering. In my work, the play of light and dark in ink with overlays in graphite further reflects the overwhelming peace I experience at night. This peace escapes me during the day but reappears at night like happiness after anger.

Reality and images are always in conflict and through my expressive use of mixed media, including ink, watercolor, graphite and lime with rusted nails, I try to depict that endless battle. I find there is joy that comes with conflict and the antithesis of conflict that can be rewarding.

My works form part of that exploratory process-based way of experiencing the night.

Charles Dodoo

Fig. 25a. Charles Dodoo, artist statement.
Fig. 25b. Charles Dodoo, *Mixing Matters*, mixed media on canvas, 16in. by 20in., 2015.

Fig. 26. Charles Dodoo, *Wide Awake*, mixed media on canvas, 16in. by 20in., 2015.

**Exhibition Participation**
One recent exhibition that I participated in was the University of Arizona National Art Education Association Student Chapter (NAEA)-sponsored student art show at the Union Gallery (Figs. 27 and 28). The artworks were on display from February 17-29, 2016. The theme for the show was the creative intersection among the roles of artist, researcher, and teacher. The show had elements such as how one interacted with art, how one used his or her creativity, and how one learned and taught others through the use of art.

Fig. 27. Participation in the NAEA exhibition at the Union Gallery, 2016.
Union Gallery

The University of Arizona Union Gallery is one of three galleries collectively called the Union Galleries, which have been in existence since 1973. The Union Gallery exhibits a variety of artworks annually including works by students, faculty, staff, and
regional and national artists. The galleries seek to create awareness of both current and ongoing issues in the contemporary arts. The gallery offers internships to students to work directly with the galleries’ curator (me) to learn about gallery management.

**Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) Curation**

I documented my curation process for the spring 2016 BFA show in the Union Gallery in which the works of graduating art majors from the University of Arizona School of Art were displayed. The works displayed in the gallery were developed from a range of media and approached during the students’ course of study. The exhibition offered participating students the opportunity to see their work outside the classroom and in a professional gallery setting. Every spring, the BFA exhibition is held in the Union Gallery.

I worked with the School of Art in curating the exhibition. Having been extended the liberty to set up the exhibition, I proceeded to make sure the previous exhibition was deconstructed and prepared the space for the BFA show installation. This entailed patching and sanding down holes in the walls, filling them with spackle, and painting them with the help of three gallery assistants. The pedestals were moved with a dolly to the storage room to create more room in the gallery, allowing me to comfortably and visually design the show. In addition, all the chairs and tables in the gallery were relocated to a storage room outside the Union Gallery. The Gallery is a dynamic space that serves as an art gallery, a study lounge, and extra seating for a restaurant next door.

Prior to the installation of the works, the coordinator for the School of Art and I agreed on the dates for the exhibition. These included the event date, drop-off and pick-
up dates for the students’ work, and the opening reception date (Fig. 29.). The coordinator and I met on several occasions at the Union Gallery as well as communicated via email with regard to the exhibition.

Fig. 29. Meeting notes.

On installation day (March 31, 2016), the students dropped off their work between 8am and noon. This timeframe assured that all the works would be submitted in
a timely manner. I made sure all the participants signed their names on the drop-off form which was given to me by the coordinator. The student artists affixed notes behind their works if they had special hanging instructions. The drop-off form also contained the contacts information for participating artists and the type of works submitted. The coordinator made a few suggestions about the arrangement of the work and gave me the liberty to curate the show.

With regard to my curation, I sometimes group works according to themes or medium. In this case, however, I did not want to create a structured layout. Another reason for the flexibility in arrangement was that the exhibition was comprised of different media and by not grouping similar works together, my vision was to highlight how the different forms of art in the exhibition were a metaphor for the various programs the School of Art offers. I believe grouping similar works together sometimes detracts from the aesthetics of the show. However, each exhibition is different and therefore I assess each situation independently to find the best layouts.

The next step was to set out all the works in the gallery in no particular arrangement. This allowed me to visually critique the sizes of the works, the medium, and take into account the number of works (Fig. 30).
Drafting different arrangements in my sketchbook served as a springboard for ideas of possible design layouts that I could experiment with (Fig. 31). Choosing the best
design (Fig. 32) was based on factors such as how well the works were lit in the gallery and how they were displayed with the other works.

Fig. 31. Sketches of exhibition layouts, 2016
Once I decided the best design layout that aligned with my vision, I rearranged the works in the gallery with the help of assistants. Hanging instructions from the students were also taken into consideration. As a curator, knowledge of the different types of works is important because it gives me insight into possible display formats. Knowledge of the floor plan of the gallery (Fig. 33) was helpful in allowing me to view the gallery from multiple perspectives.
There are various hanging styles that galleries incorporate as part of their exhibition layouts. These include the salon hanging style, the grid format, and the traditional hanging style. The salon hanging style involves lateral as well as vertical grouping of works so that there are a few inches of space between them. The grid style of hanging is typically used for collections that have similar content, or a series of works by the same artist. Symmetry and repetition used in the arrangement of the works allows the viewer to see the individual pieces as a whole. The traditional hanging style implies works are displayed with respect to a uniform look among the works. For the average line of sight, the center of the work is placed between fifty-six and fifty-eight inches from the floor. In this show, I used fifty-eight inches as the center line of the works. An exception to centering of the works was necessary because there were a few large works to be hung. With a larger work, it is best to decide the optimal height of the work that would work.
well with the others. This called for the lowering of the center median for easier viewing (Fig. 34).

![Fig. 34. Hanging of large artwork.](image)

A challenge in trying to fit all the works in the space was that some of the wall surfaces were curved and had pillars in front of them (Fig. 35). I viewed this obstacle as a positive challenge. I hung smaller and bigger works side-by-side on the walls so as to create balance in the design format. This also allowed the background walls to be “shadowed” so that the viewer was not too aware of the shape of the walls. This visual arrangement “tricks” the eye into believing the surfaces look the same. I also refocused the gallery lights on the works so that the space around the works was a bit darker and the black background walls were blurred out, making the curved walls unnoticeable. The pillars in the gallery also created divisions in the walls, which created partitions in the flow of works. I think this added an interesting dynamic to the presentation.
The next step was to bring in the pedestals and set the sculpture pieces on them (Fig. 36). Given the varying heights of the pedestals, it was important to select a pedestal that was high enough for the average visitor to be able to view details. The sculptures that
required pedestals were set on them. It was sometimes difficult to get the height of the pedestals to correspond to the height of the sculptures: if a pedestal is too high, for example, a child might have difficulty viewing the art. As a curator, I think about all of these aspects during my practice, because viewers who visit the gallery are of varied statures and everyone needs good access to the works in order to fully appreciate them.

The poster advertising the event was printed on vinyl paper. I believe displaying the title of the show (Fig.37) closer to the entrance also created awareness of this gallery show.

Fig. 36. Setting works on the pedestals
Once all the works were installed, labels were placed two inches from the right side of each work with double-sided tape. Pedestals that displayed works also had tape placed next to them (Fig. 38).
The lights on the tracks were then readjusted with the aid of a ladder so that all the works were well lit. Seventy-five watts of light provided adequate lighting on each artwork (Fig. 39). Some bulbs on the track lights were non-functioning so I installed new ones. This was in line with my working principle that no matter the type of show, each work in a gallery space should be well lit because the light enhances the work in some respect.
After the installation (Fig. 40), I met with the coordinator to critique the exhibition. She was pleased with the overall setup and offered me a few suggestions regarding the lights. She preferred some of those on the sculptures to be a bit brighter and so I switched out
the bulbs to spotlights. After the exhibition, which lasted three weeks, the students picked up their works.

Fig. 40. The final setup, 2016

Artworks to Study Curation Practice Using Arts-Based Research
To further understand how I curate exhibitions, I created artworks to study my curation practice. I purposely created a diversity of work (Figs. 41-51) to approximate the conditions that I usually have when I curate in the gallery, and to be challenged with the design aspect of curation. I acknowledge the use and curation of my own artworks as a limitation because it was not representative of the variety of media, sizes, and thematic content in the artworks that I often curate. However, I used my own works in this study on the premise that, in every exhibition, the approaches to curation vary and that curation is dependent on the types of artworks presented by the artist. For this exhibition, the intimacy I had with my works was also a factor. Using my own artworks proved useful because it could afford me a better understanding of my curation practice, as well as the opportunity to learn about myself in relationship to other artist-curators. Also, the situation presented the possibility that new experiential connections and patterns of thought could be formed through particular kinds of expressiveness and reflectivity. The uncertainty and ambiguity of the process of using my works could further unravel new experiences.

I created eleven works in all, seven of which were abstract paintings. The remaining four works were semi-abstract paintings. Watercolor paper and canvas served as the surfaces I worked on. The different media I employed for the paintings included acrylic, watercolor, ink, graphite, and colored pencils. For the large painting (Fig. 41), I used two bristle brushes: for bigger strokes I used a “Purdy bristle brush” and for fine details such as lines I used a “No. 6 bristle brush.”
Fig. 41. Charles Dodoo, *Another*, Mixed media, 86 in. by 42 in., 2016

Fig. 42. *Define 1*, Mixed media, 9 in. by 12 in., 2016
Fig. 43. *Define 2*, Mixed media, 9 in. by 12 in. 2016

Fig. 44. *Define 3*, Mixed media, 9 in. by 12 in., 2016
Fig. 45. Define 4, Mixed media, 9 in. by 12 in., 2016

Fig. 46. Pause, Mixed media, 16 in. by 20 in., 2016
Fig. 47. *Way Away*, Mixed media, 16 in. by 20 in., 2016

Fig. 48. *Ontop*, Mixed media, 16 in. by 20 in., 2016
Fig. 49. *Look*, Mixed media, 9 in. by 12 in., 2016

Fig. 50. *Search*, Mixed media, 16 in. by 20 in., 2016
As indicated elsewhere, I view the gallery as an empty design space as well as a puzzle. With this in mind, I explored and incorporated ideas about creative design styles to “solve the puzzle.” Some of these creative styles merged the three usual styles of hanging two-dimension work: the traditional hanging style with fifty-eight inches as a center line for the pieces, the salon style, and the grid format style. The works were displayed in my studio, which I set up as gallery. In addition, I experimented with different design layouts by sketching out a series of concepts within my artworks.

To implement the design, I hung the huge mixed media painting Another with push pins and designed the other works around it. Next, I lowered the center line of the large piece to fifty-five inches, which was three inches lower than the recommended
fifty-eight inches for average eye level. The lowering of Another was done to create a balance with the other works as was done with the BFA exhibition described earlier.

Once the work was hung, I used a level to make sure it was even. This was achieved by placing the level on the bottom and side of the work. I then worked with the other pieces that were of varied sizes. After each layout, the lights were then adjusted as this is an important factor in any exhibition installation. In some of the design layouts, I organized sections of the installation in groups. For example, the works in Figs. 52 and 54 were hung in a linear format. In Fig. 52, however, the themed pieces on “night” were hung on one side of Awake using fifty-eight inches as a center line. This allowed a visual separation from the other themed works. Aesthetically, I thought that this would allow the viewer to visually group the paintings as well as be pleasing to the eye as one moved from one section of the wall to the other.

Figs. 53 and 55 represent a hybrid between the two styles: traditional linear hanging and the salon style of hanging. In Fig. 55, I lowered one of the smaller pieces, Pause, to contemplate a show that might be curated for children whose eye level is generally lower than that of adults.

Figs. 56 and 57 illustrate different design styles that I could curate in a gallery setting. In Fig. 56, the bigger artwork is placed near the ceiling with two smaller pieces that cover sections of it on both sides. Additionally, the smaller works are positioned below the larger piece to reiterate the flexibility that I have in my curations. In my experience as a curator, I have not positioned a huge artwork near the ceiling in a gallery, with smaller works below. To me, this creates a sort of imbalance in the overall
compositional structure of the exhibition. It was interesting to view my works from that perspective, because the composition made me question what the viewer would be thinking when they saw this layout. Another question that I asked myself was, “how will the viewer appreciate my works and curation?” I believe this type of curation, where a part of an artist’s work is covered by portions of another work, might not be familiar to some viewers. “Will this type of arrangement of the objects cause viewers, out of curiosity, to draw in closer to view the works?” In Fig. 57, I tilted the bigger artwork, Another, and also rotated to a 90 degree angle two of the smaller works, seen on the top left side of the design. In addition, I positioned four of the smaller pieces below Another.

Fig. 52. Design layout 1, 2016
Fig. 53. Design layout 2, 2016

Fig. 54. Design layout 3, 2016
In all of these design curations, my background in art formed part of my decision-making process in creating the design compositions because I was aware of how the arrangement of the works could emphasize balance or imbalance. This means that I was in a position to fully apply what I knew from my past experiences as an artist and curator in this arts-based research endeavor. Further, I learnt that viewing the gallery as a space in which objects can be manipulated allows for the flexibility that I have in my curations. The use of my artworks offered me the opportunity to see the gallery from multiple perspectives. One question I kept asking myself during the process was: how will the way I arrange my works affect how the viewer navigates through the show? When properly installed, the works themselves should serve as a navigation tool. What might draw a viewer to a specific work might not be related to the type of work installed, but rather the...
design of the show and the way the light illuminates each piece. I view the creation of a painting as a sort of design in itself because I make decisions such as how to arrange the elements of objects in my painting and the media to use, all of which are finalized as a design composition. Reflection was an integral part of the curation process as I drew upon my past experience as a curator and artist. Although I had no viewer input to my experimentations in laying out this exhibition, I still learnt through the process that I can use my design layouts to control how the viewer experiences work in a gallery setting. For example, in Fig. 56 showing a highly experimental overlapping of some works and off-setting of others, I realized a new approach to hanging an exhibition that may encourage visitors to view the hidden sections of a painting. To create an interactive art exhibition, as a future endeavor, this type of layout would work well with a didactic that instructs viewers on the procedures in viewing the pieces. This can also offer them an opportunity to be more critical in their appreciation of art. A question to ask, however, is, “will the artist appreciate this type of exhibition design?” Because for these layouts I was using my own work, I was at liberty to experiment; however this might not translate well when working with other artists because of their beliefs of how artworks should be presented in a typical gallery setting or their idea about how they want viewers to experience the work.

**Chapter Summary**

In this section of the dissertation, I presented the profiles of the five artist-curators and described their practices. I also focused on two artist-curators and described their artworks, an exhibition they participated in, and a curation project for each. The data
from this section will be analyzed in the next chapter of this dissertation. I will describe the ways in which I organized the data from this chapter with regard to a series of categories (Creswell, 2009). I will then present the findings from this study in relation to the research questions and sub-questions.
CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS

In the two previous chapters, I provided profiles of each of the participants and a description of their curation practices. In this chapter, I will present the ways in which I organized and analyzed the data according to a series of categories (Creswell, 2009). I will then present the findings from the study in relation to the three main research questions. The findings are supported by data that were determined to be valuable and representative of the participants’ contributions because the same ideas were repeated by the different interviewees within the study (Whitehead & McNiff, 2010). The process of systematically reviewing the data yielded themes that emerged in conjunction with my research questions. In this chapter, I will present and analyze the themes that were common among all five interviewees as well as interviewee-specific themes of each of the five artist-curators.

Research Questions

As laid out previously, the main research questions that guided this study are the following:

1) What background, perspectives, and practices do artists bring to the curation process when curating for university and college galleries?

2) How does participating in the curation process affect the artist-curator’s artmaking practices?

3) What practices do artist-curators engage in to educate college and community audiences?
No sub-questions pertain to the first and second main questions: the sub-questions for the third main question are:

1) How does an artist-curator adapt his/her perceptions of gallery management for a university and college exhibition?

2) How do artist-curators foster community engagement and what do they hope visitors will take away from their experiences?

3) Given that university or college galleries reside within educational institutions, what strategies do artist-curators use to create educational programs?

4) What interdisciplinary learning strategies do artist-curators bring to their curation?

I will now discuss analysis of and the findings in this study.

Data Display

The written, oral, and visual data collected for this study were sorted and organized into three data summary charts, one chart for each of the main research questions. These comprehensive completed data charts can be found in Appendix D, Appendix E, and Appendix F. In the section that follows, I have chosen to include the three data summary charts without data in order to illustrate how the data were categorized. Each chart represents data that was associated with one of the three main research questions. The structure of these charts provides space for an orderly collection of rich and complex qualitative data (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In each chart, the research question is posed in the upper left corner. At the top of each of the columns, the names for the different categories of data (oral, written, and visual) are listed with their corresponding collection methods (e.g. artist statements, electronic communication, etc.).
Research Findings

The subsequent sections of this chapter present the key findings that emerged from my analysis of the data. The findings comprise selected descriptions that include the voices of all of the participants. It should be noted that when I use the word “participants,” I am referring to the five artist-curators in this study. In order to include my participation, I have chosen to write in the first person.

What the Artist Brings to the Curation Process

The first research question posed was: “What background, perspectives, and practices do artists bring to the curation process when curating for university and college galleries?” Data Chart One (see Fig. 58) illustrates how the data were organized (again, see Appendix D for completed data chart one.) Three themes emerged from the data, which I will describe in the succeeding paragraphs following an analysis of the artist-curators’ gallery practices relative to their respective institutional and gallery missions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What background, perspectives, and practices do artists bring to the curation process when curating for university and college galleries?</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Written</th>
<th>Visual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Audio recordings of artist-curators)</td>
<td>(Audio transcriptions, electronic correspondence, artist statements, artist website, artist biography, journal entries)</td>
<td>Visual journal entries, works of art; website images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| David |  |  |  |
| Linda |  |  |  |
| Austin |  |  |  |
| Bridget |  |  |  |
Curatorial Decision-making. All five artist-curators selected artists based on the mission of their respective institutions. Andres stated that he searches for artists that he believes would benefit the students and artists that work with the principles of fundamental design. Chappel curates her exhibitions with the Art Institute’s mission in mind, which is to create a link between the gallery’s art exhibitions and the commercial programs the Art Institute offers. She utilizes thematic concepts in her exhibitions that will engage the students intellectually and she seeks out artists whose work conforms to a given theme, thereby serving the mission of the Institute and the gallery simultaneously.

Brown selects artists that he believes would benefit the students and, in particular, artists whose use of media and techniques is unfamiliar to the students so that students can learn from the diverse range of artistic works. Riley selects artists in exhibitions at the Awake Gallery in order to reach diverse student audiences. She also focuses on the teaching needs of the faculty in the art department and the university campus as well as the community at large. In my case, the ultimate decision regarding who will exhibit at the Union Gallery is a decision made by my supervisor and myself.

While all five artist-curators focus on the mission of their respective institutions, David, Bridget, and I indicated that we sometimes select artists based on our personal interests. For example, David visits artists’ studios to network with them and to identify artists that would be helpful for students to see for one reason or another. Bridget said that when she views an artwork and becomes excited about it, her strong feelings about
the artwork provide the impetus to exhibit it. In addition, she peruses the artist’s portfolio or website and seeks out other artists who have collaborated with that artist. She maintains a list of artists that she has developed from reading articles online and draws from this list. She also shows her friends’ work and this friends’ network extends her pool of artists from which to draw. Apart from her personal taste, she sometimes selects artists based on the teaching needs of the faculty in the art department and the university campus as well as the community as a whole.

All five artist-curators previously stated they aligned their curation with the mission of their respective institutions. Of the artist-curators in this study, Bridget and I seemed to go a step beyond in terms of expending creative energy vis-à-vis the curation of artists’ works that we are passionate about. This creative energy translates into the types of works we create as artists. Bridget, for her part, selects artists that are working non-traditionally, which is evident in the types of works she curates in her gallery. Akin to Bridget, I encourage artists who embrace exploration in their work, especially in using mixed media to convey complex concepts, to exhibit in the gallery. My interest in utilizing different media motivates me to seek out like-minded artists working in mixed and non-traditional media.

All five artist-curators described their reliance on their previous curation experience in curating exhibitions at their respective institutions. They had similar curation objectives that were aligned with educational exposure in mind. Thus, the premise unifying the collective curation practices of all five artist-curators is to use the
gallery as a place for artistic and creative expression as well as a teaching tool serving students, the faculty, and the community.

**How the Participants’ Background Benefits Curation.** All five artist-curators stated that their background in art was beneficial to their curation practices. David, Austin, Linda, Bridget, and I all emphasized our use of design as part of our curation. David said that his background as an artist and educator has taught him the importance of exhibiting artists that work with the principles of fundamental design. He stated that he solves issues that arise during his curation, such as installing sculptures, through the theoretical application of design principles. He believes that it is important to “unite” the different works in the gallery during curation, just as unity is important in the composition of an individual work of art. He maintained that knowledge of art and history is fundamental in his curation.

Brown’s design concept emphasizes scale. He believes exhibiting a variety of works of different sizes will allow viewers to appreciate a wide range of works from different perspectives. He describes his curation as a means by which he offers students a platform to appreciate and critique artworks, such as how artists use certain colors in their work. Moreover, he exhibits artists who are engaged in artmaking that reinforces his own artistic practice.

I enjoy experimenting with different design layouts because this process enables me to arrive at an exhibition layout that I think will work well for a particular exhibition. The design course I took at the University of Idaho and my art background have taught me to view the gallery as a space to reorganize to “look good.” From my perspective, it is
like moving into a new home in which you have to arrange the space so that it looks visually or aesthetically pleasing through the use of principles of design.

In my arts-based research study, I emphasized design concepts in my experimental curation process. Design in curation entails taking many things into account such as the type of artwork brought to the gallery and the available gallery space. A curator often creates sketches of possible design layouts and experiments with the arrangement in the gallery, as I did for the arts-based part of this study.

Much of my curation practice involves making decisions on the overall appearance of an exhibition to ensure cohesiveness among the pieces of artwork, as I consider cohesiveness to be an important element of design. Other considerations include making sure the displayed works are at eye level so that viewers of various ages can have access to the works. My arts-based research process creates a platform to question traditional curatorial practices where works of art are displayed in isolation and to experiment with non-traditional curation and mixed media. This process has strengthened my confidence in designing a successful exhibition and liberated me to pursue my penchant for experimental, exploratory curatorial design.

Linda stressed that her interest in the design layout of the space is of primary importance as well as how the arrangement of the art visually tells stories in the gallery. She views the gallery as a problem-solving space, because the curator has to know how to mount the works so that they are cohesive in nature, which emphasizes her design concept. She views the exhibition as a design space and is keenly aware of the visual impact it can have on gallery visitors. When she sets up an exhibition, she visualizes the
space and what the visitors will see first, particularly where the eye travels in the exhibition. She strives to initiate some “control” over how visitors navigate in the gallery and the liberty to experiment with exhibition design concepts allows her to arrange the works in a manner that creates multiple interactions with the viewer. Linda’s metaphorical visual story creation in the gallery is analogous to story creation in literature. She creates her narrative through characterization (the artwork), a plot that viewers piece together as they navigate the gallery space, and what she hopes is a resolution for viewers (that is their takeaway.) To facilitate her storytelling, she often displays works in categories. For instance, black and white works might comprise one part of the gallery whereas themed works might comprise another part. The suggestion is that the arrangement of the themed works metaphorically represents a story while the black and white works represent the suspense inherent in the plot. The gallery then becomes metaphorically transformed into a story and Linda, as author, can critically assess her narrative’s impact on her “readers” (the viewers.)

Continuing with a literary metaphor, Riley offered that her background as an artist has allowed her to “read” the gallery space more than somebody who is strictly a curator, and she views the gallery as a dynamic space. She also noted design principles that curators use, but emphasized that everybody has their own way of thinking conceptually, which will affect their experience of an exhibition. In her curation of Catherine Mayor’s exhibition, Riley’s curation process was evident: she and Catherine worked in conjunction to curate the exhibition. The works were suspended by fishing line and anchored to the floor by fishing line tied to rocks; lone, additional rocks were also placed
on the floor. This arrangement raised the possibility that viewers might infer connections between the photographs and the rocks, resulting in any number of interpretations. This example underscores the idea that curation by its very nature is a cognitive activity that promotes critical thinking and reflection on the part of all participants.

All five artist-curators mentioned that their art background was channeled into their curation, which they viewed as vital when constructing their exhibitions, because this afforded them the advantage of bringing keener insight and enhanced perspective to their understanding of the curation process. Some of the artist-curators curated works that reinforced their own artistic practice.

**How the Artist-Curators Work with Artists.** Another recurring theme arising from the interviews that links the curators’ concurrent role as artists is how they work with other artists in developing exhibitions. David mentioned that the gallery functions as a full-service space with the implication that the artist is not involved in the curation process unless he chooses to be. He has worked with other artists in the curation process; however, participation in curation depends on the willingness of the artist to participate. Linda believes it is important that she understands the artist’s objectives and concerns because this allows her to have more empathy when curating their work. For example, in an exhibition that she curated for a visiting artist where the artist expressed concerns about inadequate space in the gallery to display his work, she was able to group the works according to size so that the walls did not seem “too busy.” As part of her interest in the professional display of artworks, she encourages artists that she works with during the curation process to pay particular attention, for example, to the wiring of their work.
Because Austin likes to exhibit artists that engage in artmaking that reinforces his own practices, he tries to work with them to implement his design concept of scale. Bridget encourages artists to experiment with the gallery space and believes this experimentation can be a springboard for new design display ideas and ways for the artist to think about his or her work. As an artist-curator, she walks the artist through the space to familiarize him or her with it to set the experimentation process in motion and thus minimize any challenges that may arise. She encourages the artist to be part of her curation if he or she chooses to be. I encourage and work with artists who embrace exploration in their work to exhibit in the gallery. For many exhibitions, the Union Gallery is not a “full-service” gallery, meaning that the artist hangs their own work. My practice for these and all exhibitions is to work collaboratively with the exhibitor or artist that wants to show their work as I am interested in exploratory art and space.

The artist-curator, when working in an environment through curation, is integrally involved in negotiation. Bourcheix-Laporte (2013) asserted that “the curatorial process is inherently one of negotiation: with the artist, with the institution, between the works, with the public and…between ones’ curatorial vision and one’s responsibility towards the exhibited artists” (n.p). This clearly highlights that negotiations form part of artist-curators’ daily decision-making practice. With regard to negotiating with the artist, they have to decide what type of works they want to exhibit, and how those might align with the institution’s mission. In addition, the artist-curator has to interact with the artist to determine the number of works they can exhibit within a specific time frame. Sometimes, it is in meeting with the artist that the artist-curator can better understand the meaning
behind their works and thus better translate those meanings into their curation. The acts of meeting with the artist, discussing, and reaching an agreement on the works that the artist will exhibit are based upon negotiation, which can sometimes be a difficult task. The question invariably arises: What happens when the two meet and fail to reach an agreement with regard to the display format of the artist’s work in the gallery? The act of negotiation will not be fruitful if both parties do not come to an agreement. Another factor to note is that the “curatorial vision” of the artist-curatorial might not be implemented due to external factors such as a conflict between the institution’s mission and personal desires in curation. For example, an artist-curatorial whose concepts do not align with the institution’s mission might not be allowed to include specific types of works submitted by the artist. In some cases, on the other hand, the artist-curatorial has total control of the curation process and is at liberty to choose the works he or she desires as long as they align with the institution’s mission. The ideal situation, however, is to curate works in a way that meets both their personal desires and also satisfies the institution’s mission. This involves negotiating with the institution as well as with the artists. For example, Bridget mentioned that she likes to exhibit works that she has a passion for. In her case, she can still choose to invite those artists she admires to exhibit in the gallery. The act of discussing the artist’s intentions with regard to the exhibition layout and reaching an agreement as to how both parties’ input can be effectively utilized is done through negotiation. Sometimes, an artist might be satisfied with an exhibition initially and later decide that they did not like how their works were displayed. How the artist-curatorial solves such a situation is through interacting with the artist: that is, through conversation,
sharing ideas and trying to reach an understanding. If they do reach an understanding, the curator will implement the artist’s suggestions and incorporate them into the exhibition.

The selection of artists by the artist-curators positions the artists as the primary curator of exhibitions as Groy (2008) asserted in chapter one: “the artist is primarily the curator of himself, because he selects himself. And he also selects others: other objects, other artists” (pp. 93-94). In making selections, the artist, “doubling” as a curator, creates an environment for himself and interacts within this environment (gallery) with other artists and artworks. He or she is responsible for selecting works that will ensure a successful exhibition as well as meet the institution’s mission and the needs and interests of viewers. Tensions can arise between the artist-curatorial and the artist, because the artist-curatorial cannot predict how his or her curation will be viewed by either the artist or the audience. Tension between the artist-curatorial and the selected artists implies that there is a constant struggle to ensure the selected artists meet the curator’s objectives, whether they are aligned with the mission of the institution, the curator’s personal desires, or both. In each instance, it is by interacting with the artist that the artist-curatorial can gauge if the artist’s work will conform to his or her curation goals. This interaction creates a platform to assess, question, and reflect upon the artist’s work and to predict how beneficial the works will be when curated. All these facets of artist-curatorial interaction enable the artist-curatorial to better understand him or herself, not only as an artist who can empathize with other artists, but also as a curator who makes meaning from the works and shares art with audiences.
Another example of an unpredictable tension between the artist-curator and artist arises when the artist-curators’ curation is not appreciated by an artist who did not participate in the curation process. The implication is that since the artist-curator did not meet with the artist to discuss concepts of display, he or she failed to create the necessary environment to predict how the exhibition would be critiqued by the artist whose work. Referring back to Groy’s statement about the artist being the primary curator of both his or her own work and, as curator of others’ work, I found that this does not always apply. In my curatorial works, I was not the primary curator because as mentioned earlier, the selection of artworks to be curated was a joint effort between my supervisor and myself and I therefore did not have complete liberty to interact and select artists or curate in ways that would satisfy my desires.

This analysis of the findings for research question one summarizes the similarities and differences among the artist-curators vis-à-vis their curation practices in university and college galleries. The next set of findings will consider research question two.

**How Curating Affects the Artist-Curators’ Artmaking Practices**

The second research question posed was: “How does participating in the curation process affect the artist-curators’ artmaking practices?” Data Chart Two (Fig. 59) illustrates how the data was organized in relation to this research question. (See Appendix E for the completed data chart two.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How does participating in the curation process affect the artist-curator’s artmaking practices?</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Written</th>
<th>Visual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Audio recordings of artist-curators)</td>
<td>(Audio transcriptions, electronic correspondence, artist statements, artist)</td>
<td>(Visual journal entries, works of art; website images)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Discussions about the artist-curators’ curation practices and the influence of these practices on artists’ artmaking led to considerable reflection on the part of the participants. It turned out that for all five research participants, curation has affected their artmaking in the sense that they actively consider or have in the back of their minds how their own work is going to be displayed. David claims his curation is an integral part of his artmaking process and thinks first and foremost about how he is going to present his art to viewers. He is very devoted to the idea of the professional presentation of his work, something he might have learned through curating. Although Austin initially stated that he does not think about the curation process at all when making art, later in the interview he showed evidence that curation indeed has affected his art in his statement that he not only thinks about how his work will be displayed, but also about how it will “fit” with the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>website, artist biography, journal entries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
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</table>

Fig. 59. Data Chart Two
other artists’ works or any themed exhibition. This statement emphasizes his design
ccept of professional presentation that he adheres to in his curation practice. In
addition, he mentioned that having a well-wired work and a frame would indicate that the
work was completed, an indication of curation influencing his art. Linda agreed with the
premise of professional presentation, but she believes that her curation has not affected
her art. However, she emphasized her interest in craftsmanship, i.e., of wiring her
artwork and her appreciation for a well-wired artwork. As with David, she always
contemplates how professional her works appear to the viewer. She curates a lot of relief
sculptures and thus focuses on the display format of her own sculptures. From these
statements, I concluded that both David’s and Linda’s art has been affected by their
curation practices as they think through those ideas while they create their art.

Bridget believes in some respects that curation influences her artmaking in that
curating is linked with how works are “read” in the space. She also contemplates
installation when creating. When she creates her work in the studio, she thinks about how
she will present it and reflects on what worked best in past exhibitions she has curated.
On reflecting on the salon style used to exhibit David Chong Lee’s work, she indicated an
adaptation of this arrangement to curating her own work. Curating Lee’s work also gave
Bridget a more intimate experience with the objectivity in his work, which, in turn, has
provided inspiration for her own work. Bridget’s penchant for experimental design is
“energized” when working with other artists who share this artistic predilection and is
another manifestation of her curation in her art.
There is a strong connection between my curation and artmaking practices. For example, I have introduced into my own artwork some of the painting techniques of artists for whom I have curated (in chapter four, I gave the example of inspiration from an artist who erases parts of his work). I am also constantly mindful of how I can adapt my works to “fit” a show to enhance the coherence of the exhibition.

These findings illustrate how the five participating artist-curators’ gallery practices influence their artwork and align with Bourcheix-Laporte’s idea (2013), as reported in chapter two, that:

The persistence with which artists take on curatorial positions may also be explained by the fact that the curatorial standpoint affords artists expanded possibilities for artistic research and, reciprocally, to the fact that artists have the ability to contribute a fresh perspective to curatorial practice. (n.p.)

Bourcheix-Laporte’s quote underscores the significance of my research finding that artists are indeed influenced in their artmaking by their work as curators. However, they might not be aware of it, as can be seen particularly with Austin.

In summary, curation helps the artist-curators that were interviewed think about how they prepare an artwork for display or how it will fit with other artwork in the exhibition. The influence of a particular artist’s work on their own art, arising primarily from the intimacy with the work that curation provides, was also indicated by two of the artist-curators. When incorporating these findings with the question that addressed how their background as artists influences their curation, a clear dual directionality was
suggested in their work: namely, that their curation influences their artmaking practices and vice-versa.

This question did not elicit the kind of responses from the participating artist-curators that I had hoped it would. Perhaps this is because curatorial practice is not highly influential on each artist-curator’s artwork, beyond its professional display. Or it could be that the influences are much more subtle than my interview questions prompted. I believe this to be a weakness of the study findings.

This section addressed findings aligned with research question two. The next section will focus on research question three.

**The Artist-Curator as Educator**

The third research question posed was: “What practices do artist-curators engage in to educate college and community audiences?” Data Chart Three (see Fig. 60) illustrates how the data was organized in relation to this research question (see Appendix F for completed data chart three).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What practices do artist-curators engage in to educate university/college and community audiences?</th>
<th>Oral (Audio recordings of artist-curators)</th>
<th>Written (Audio transcriptions, electronic correspondence, artist statements, artist website, artist biography, journal entries)</th>
<th>Visual (Visual journal entries, works of art; website images)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
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</table>
David Andres curates exhibitions at Pima Community College. The mission statement of the College is to “provide affordable access to educational opportunities that support student success and meet the diverse needs of our students and community” (Pima Community College, 2015, n.p.). He oversees two galleries: namely, the Louis Carlos Bernal Gallery and the Student Visual Arts Gallery. The mission of both galleries is to use the arts to foster learning by exhibiting emerging and professional artists’ works (D. Andres, personal communication, October 8th, 2015). The galleries’ mission aligns with the college’s mission that focuses on educating students and the building of community.

Linda Chappel curates at the Art Institute of Tucson (TAITG) art gallery. The gallery’s aim is to inspire students and the community about artistic media, which ties into the Institute’s main mission of education. Linda interprets the mission statement of the TAITG as follows in her personal communication:

The Art Institute of Tucson Gallery serves as a non-commercial exhibition space for professionals, faculty, students, and alumni. The goals of the Gallery are: to inspire students through a selection of a variety of artistic concepts and media; to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Austin</th>
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<td>Bridget</td>
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<td>Charles</td>
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Fig. 60. Data Chart Three
enrich the learning community at The Art Institute of Tucson through exhibitions that demonstrate excellence and cultural significance in the arts; to increase public awareness of The Art Institute of Tucson; to contribute to the Tucson arts community through providing a venue for local and national artists. (L. Chappel, personal communication, October 5th, 2015)

The gallery’s mission aligns with the college’s mission, which emphasizes the relevance of educating students through art and to ultimately enrich and build a sense of community at the Institute. The mission statement of the Art Institute of Tucson is:

- to provide quality education that will prepare students for an entry-level position in their chosen field of study. The college offers a stimulating learning environment where committed and talented students, led by dedicated and professional faculty, can develop their creativity and increase their knowledge. The Art Institute of Tucson strives to be a leader in design and culinary arts education. (L. Chappel, personal communication, October 1st, 2015)

The mission of Rowley College where Austin Brown curates exhibitions is focused on student learning and how students can apply their skills in the real world. The mission of the college’s Cabin Gallery is to use the art in the gallery as a tool for student learning and to highlight artists’ works that will challenge students conceptually. The missions of the Cabin Gallery and Rowley College both emphasize the primacy of student learning in their mission statement, and how students apply what they learn to the real world (A. Brown, personal communication, October 8th, 2016).
Bridget Riley curates at a university whose mission includes research, creativity, and community-building through learning. The mission of the university’s Awake Gallery is to foster interdisciplinary learning through the arts with exhibitions of contemporary art. This suggests that the gallery’s mission aligns with the university’s mission, because learning and community engagement constitute the primary focus in both instances.

I curate exhibitions at the University of Arizona whose stated mission is to: “improve the prospects and enrich the lives of the people of Arizona and the world through education, research, creative expression, and community and business partnerships” (C. Dodoo, personal communication, June 1st, 2016). The mission of the Union Galleries is stated as:

The Union Galleries have served the community since 1973 by exposing students, employees of the University of Arizona, and off campus visitors to original art by regionally and nationally prominent artists. The galleries heighten awareness of both current and ongoing issues as well as creative processes, which encourage open dialogue and personal introspection. (C. Dodoo, personal communication, June 1st, 2016).

The gallery’s mission aligns with the university’s mission as both make education and community engagement a central focus. Both missions emphasize broadening the horizons of students and the community by exposure to creative expression.

As indicated earlier in this chapter in discussing what the artist brings to the curation process, the data regarding how the artist-curators educate college/university and
community audiences revealed that the artist-curators aligned their activities with the stated missions of the gallery and institutions where they curate. The educational mission of universities and colleges is paramount to what the artist-curators do, as defined in their charters, and with this comes enormous responsibility to all their stakeholders, including faculty, students, and the public. Public institutions receive funding from the state so they are held to a very high standard.

Artist-curators importantly serve as interpreters between students, instructors, and the community. An instructor assesses students’ learning needs through formal evaluation and informal interaction and communicates those needs to the curator/interpreter who can then design a program to address those expressed needs or incorporate them into how or what they present in an exhibition. For the community, curators interpret information usually of local interest to the public through exhibitions and in venues such as public receptions. Often the information they interpret is feedback from conversations and public interactions. Artist-curators, as interpreters of art for various audiences are cognizant of this significant aspect of their role in which they mediate and interact with people across society.

David, Austin, Bridget, and I—who work at state-funded institutions—focus on students and the larger community as part of our practice to educate people both within and beyond our respective institutions. The activities that we organize, such as artist talks, align with the missions of both the galleries and institutions that are dually-focused on education and community-building. On the other hand, Linda’s activities are more student-focused in keeping with the mission of her gallery and private university. In what
follows, I will address findings relative to each sub-question for these educational activities.

How Artist-curators Adapt their Perception of Gallery Management when Curating for a University/college Gallery

As indicated above, the artist-curators adapt their perception of gallery management to their respective institutions’ missions. They share similar and varied approaches in doing so. David and Austin curate exhibitions expressly with students in mind. As indicated earlier, David believes students typically do not have a lot of experience going to museums or galleries, and Austin believes that the students should know about the arts that they are unaware of and, therefore, curates his shows with artists and works that will broaden students’ experience with the arts. Thus, they both see their mission as fostering art education in the college. Bridget and I take a more global view with respect to our audiences. She believes everyone should have access to art and strives to make every exhibition accessible to all. I share this belief that art should be universally accessible and invite students, faculty, and staff of the University to current exhibitions.

How Artist-curators Foster Community Engagement and What They Hope Visitors Will Take Away from Their Experiences. In addition to being student-focused, David, Austin, Bridget, and I work with the university/college and local communities regularly and use the gallery as an educational tool. Each of us periodically holds receptions, artist talks, and lectures to invite the community to engage in the arts. Bridget’s lecture as a guest speaker outside the gallery point to how some artist-curators extend their understanding of and passion for the arts beyond the gallery. David’s
interdisciplinary work with CEDO is an example of an artist-curator working beyond the
gallery to help students understand connections between art and science. Based on all
artist-curators’ interviews for this study, we view outreach as an opportunity to bring
different people from all walks of life to the gallery to expand their horizons. This
includes not only individuals who have a particular interest in the arts, but also
individuals who have varied interests across the campus. The hope is that these
experiences will help students and community members learn “something from what they
see and experience” and that a “window” will be opened onto a more vivid and
aesthetically-enhanced world that will enrich their lives.

Strategies Artist-curators Use to Create Educational Programs. As part of the
academic communities themselves, the four artist-curators at public institutions
emphasized the importance of aligning the educational programs that they create with the
institutions’ mission. For example, they strove to ensure that the lectures that they
organized had educational components that all the various constituencies, i.e., students,
faculty, and members of the university, could benefit from. This suggests that the artist-
curators were cognizant of their university platform when creating and promoting
educational programs to be presented on their campuses. Another aspect of the artist-
curators’ strategic approach in creating educational programs is the conscious creation of
links between what the students are learning in class to a gallery exhibition because
connectivity of ideas is an integral part of many educational programs and processes. For
example, Bridget puts students in contact with a professional through such events as
artist-talks or one-on-one curatorial projects so that the students gain practical and first-
hand experience directly from the artist. Moreover, by facilitating such programs, she is also creating connections between the students and the professional artworld. This will enable the students to expand their knowledge beyond the confines of the classroom.

**Interdisciplinary Learning Strategies Used in Curation.** Interdisciplinary learning is another key focus of the work each of us at public institutions carries out. We use the gallery space to foster interdisciplinary learning among students as well as members of the community. For example, David has used the galleries to create interactions with the dance department, the music department, and other departments on the college campus through art exhibitions. Austin, Bridget, and I invite classes to our respective galleries from the institutions where we curate exhibitions as well as from different institutions in the area. These classes have included creative writing, the sciences, and poetry.

All the participants in this study indicated education is the primary factor they consider in their goal to engage the college/university and town communities. This is not surprising in light of their association with educational institutions. Aware of the missions of gallery and institution, they carry out these ends through how they manage and curate in their respective galleries, in how they foster community engagement, and in developing educational programs and interdisciplinary learning strategies.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I have analyzed the data from the different themes in the study in terms of my research questions. In chapter six, I will discuss the findings and
implications in accordance to the research questions and draw conclusions based on Dewey’s theory of experience.
CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND REFLECTIONS

In the previous chapter, I analyzed the data from this study based on the themes that emerged from interviews with five artist-curators and that correlated with the research questions. In this chapter, I will discuss these findings and their implications with regard to the research questions and draw conclusions based on Dewey’s theory of experience as elaborated in his *Art as Experience* and *Experience and Education* texts and from the literature review in chapters one and two. This discussion will focus on how the findings aligned with the research questions, and my interpretations of the study’s findings. I will also discuss specific questions that emerged during the analysis of the data, new possibilities and directions for future research, and my personal reflections and insights regarding my own experience as a participant in this study. The individuals for whom the findings in this study are most likely to be relevant include curators, artist-curators, prospective artist-curators, and art educators interested in galleries and museums such as myself. Thus, through the succeeding discussions, it is hoped that members of each of these groups will gain valuable insight into how they might personally be influenced by the findings as they pursue and progress in their respective career paths in the arts. The context for the discussion is the curation, artmaking, and education practices of the respective artist-curators under study.

Before proceeding, however, it is important to acknowledge a limitation of the analysis and discussion of the findings. As mentioned in chapter one, as an artist-curator and participant in this study, my position and biases have affected my findings and I want to acknowledge this. In addition, I analyzed the collected data in a manner that reflects
the values that I bring to my curation practice. These values are not representative of all artist-curators that curate in university or college galleries. My arts background and personal artistic journey began in Ghana where art is influenced by both the Ghanaian and western traditions. In my formal art classes, I learned about Ghanaian artists as well as western artists and was influenced by both traditions. I thus view my background as a melding of the two traditions which is reflected in my art as well as in my curatorial practice. I also want to acknowledge my bias in favor of two-dimensional artwork such as painting and drawing. As a practicing artist who works primarily on two-dimensional surfaces and whose formal training emphasized 2D media, I believe I relate best to two-dimensional art. I no doubt analyzed the collected data in a manner that is reflective of these values that I bring to curation.

In the next section, I will describe the findings through the lens of the theory of experience posited by John Dewey, an eminent psychologist and educational reformer who, among other interests, explored the confluence of art and psychology and expounded on the principles of interaction, habit, continuity, growth, and reflection and how they contribute to “experience.” I will then discuss some of his ideas that overlap with the context of the research questions and the data that emerged in this study.

**Understanding Artist-Curators through the Lens of Experience**

**What Artists Bring to Curation in Terms of Experience**

As indicated in chapter five, the findings from research question one revealed that all five artist-curators incorporate their perspectives as artists into their curation practices. However, the methods by which each artist-curatorial practice. I also want to acknowledge my bias in favor of two-dimensional artwork such as painting and drawing. As a practicing artist who works primarily on two-dimensional surfaces and whose formal training emphasized 2D media, I believe I relate best to two-dimensional art. I no doubt analyzed the collected data in a manner that is reflective of these values that I bring to curation.

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experiences as artists and curators on their curation practices differed in part based on the respective missions of their institutions and galleries. By adhering to the mission of their respective institutions, it is evident that each artist-curatorial strove to select artists that they believed would fulfill both the institution’s mission and the gallery’s mission which were usually aligned. Some of the artist-curators made selections of artwork to exhibit based on their individual interests as well.

Dewey’s conception of experience as the culmination of an interaction of an organism and its environment, which transforms the interaction and results in something meaningful, is relevant and manifest in the process of curation in this study. Artistic knowledge is experiential, complex, and content-specific (Eraut, 1994), and the practice of art is, in part, experiential and embraces looking, questioning, making, reflecting, and acts of meaning-making. All five artist-curators felt the need to “satisfy” the mission of their institution, which they accomplished in various ways, such as how they selected artists, collaborated with them, and coordinated their skills to benefit the curation process. As artist-curators, satisfying the institution’s mission entailed creating an environment in which we collaborated (created interactions) with other artists and employed our background as artists to ensure the success of an exhibition. Furthermore, all five artist curators used design concepts in their curations, which created an environment for the expression of specific, explicit artistic forms and patterns to enhance their curation. David, Bridget, and I also affirmed that we sometimes select artists based on our personal interests, which delimits our selection process. As explained in chapter two, Dewey referred to the environment as “whatever conditions interact with personal
needs, desires, purposes, and capacities to create the experience which is had” (1938, p. 42). Thus, Dewey’s concept of environment is an expansive one that allows for a range of emotions and goals and can help us consider how the background of an artist-curador contributes to his or her work.

By creating this environment in the aforementioned ways, the artist-curador transforms the interactions between him or herself and participating artists as well as between the viewer and the exhibition into an experience. In Dewey’s framework, “artmaking combines an artist’s response to their interaction with their environment, shaping and reshaping their works until it [is] good” (1934, p. 49). I would argue that the artist-curador does something similar in curating, that is, he or she transfers values from his or her experiences to gallery visitors through the exhibition.

Interactions are integral to Dewey’s framework of experience and may be viewed as a sort of commerce between ourselves and the environment: we act on the world and the world acts on us. An interaction can be considered to form the “lateral axis” of experience whereas continuity forms the “longitudinal axis.” Both axes act in concert to constitute an experience. Dewey (1938) referred to a “situation” as one’s current experience and considered a situation and an interaction as inseparable. Individuals bring their knowledge, needs, interests, and residues from past experience, and their readiness to respond among other factors to a situation. The negotiations that artist-curators make with artists are a type of situation. A clear example is Riley’s work with Catherine Mayor in installing her exhibition of photographs hung by fishing wire and rocks and the positioning within the exhibition of a video. Both Riley and Mayor worked together to
design and solve a series of challenges to display the work. As educators, each of the artist-curators in this study use the gallery as a platform for creating interactions that result in their growth as artists and as curators. Shared experiences between the artist-curator and the artist, such as collaboratively deciding on the design concepts, can create opportunities for growth on the part of each participant. The artist-curator who works with an artist that shares the same design principles, for example, tends to reinforce them in his or her curation; applying these principles continuously leads to improvement over time. The artist him or herself may eventually become an expert in designing exhibits and the curator may modify or expand his or her ideas of exhibition design. This is what Dewey conceived of as growth. However, his conception of growth is very nuanced as a means to discriminate among one’s experiences: growth in and of itself is not sufficient. Growth must be in a positive direction and have broad application. Specifically, he asserted that growth is an ongoing process of experience, a continuous endeavor that can take on different narratives (Dewey, 1938).

As indicated above, Dewey’s theoretical framework includes the principle of continuity, which is the “longitudinal axis” of experience, as opposed to interaction, that is the “latitudinal axis.” Continuity is the part of experience that allows experience from the past to be transferred to the present and into the future: that is, the experience may be viewed as an arc over time. He referred to the principle of continuity as “the experiential continuum” (Dewey, 1934, p. 24) and argued that it is applicable in different situations and, therefore, the quality of each current experience will influence a variety of future thoughts and actions. In this context, the artist-curators’ continuous endeavor to apply
artistic knowledge to create connections and channel them into their curations exemplifies Dewey’s principle of continuity. This experiential continuum enhances the artist-curators’ perspectives in their curation practice. It is clear that the principle of continuity figures prominently in the curation practices of each of the artist-curators in this study in spite of their varied approaches. For example, all five artist-curators continuously apply their knowledge of design in their curation practice, which allows them to make connections to past experiences in their curation.

Apart from artist-curators bringing their perspectives to the curation process, it is important to understand that they selectively create boundaries in the process of curation when they choose certain artists and not others; this will result in either a positive or negative experience for the viewer (as well as the artist him or herself) which, in turn, can create other types of experience. Dewey (1934) referred to “transferred experience” as the “ability to transfer . . . values from one field of experience to another, to attach them to the objects of our common life and by imaginative insight make these objects poignant and momentous” (p. 148). He made it clear that transferred experience cannot be controlled by the one who initiated the interaction. In other words, interactions result that the curator can neither predict nor control, making uncertainty part and parcel of the transferred experience. If we were influenced by someone in our past that left a lasting impression, that person cannot actively control our current experience, but may continue to influence what we do. In terms of curation practice, this experience will be viewed as positive if it enhances the viewer’s or the curator’s experience, but it will be deemed
negative if it interferes with, for example, future experiences in art or in the curator’s curation.

Dewey postulated that the formation of a habit is a composite of a person’s attitude and predispositions, and the prior meanings by which the world is encountered. In the curation practices of the participants in this study, for example, if we select artists based on our personal desires or interests in every instance, this practice will tend to perpetuate itself and it soon becomes a habit. In Dewey’s view, habits can be positive or negative, but are always a reaction to the environment. All five artist-curators said that their backgrounds were beneficial to their curation practices and that they made connections between their past curation experiences and their artmaking, suggesting that the habits of their curation inform the habits of their artmaking. This process that all the artist-curators shared can be summarized as a continuous endeavor to apply artistic knowledge to create connections and channel them into their curations. A limitation of the findings is also evident here in that experiences that affect the artists’ curation cannot be solely a product of their past experiences with art or curation, but rather of many types of life experience. This, however, was not part of the data collected.

The artist-curator’s practice allows him or her to shift the gallery’s structure in ways that may not be consciously perceived by visitors. For example, Linda often displays artworks in the gallery in a manner that tells stories. The viewer might not be aware that their interaction with the works is not based solely on viewing each individually, but also on how he or she is navigated within the gallery space by the arrangement of the works. Having prior knowledge through continuity, the artist-curato
makes decisions based on an understanding of artistic and curatorial processes. Understanding the nature of their complex roles and channeling their art background into their practice allows the artist-curators to achieve their specific objectives. The findings indicate that the artist-curators have a firm understanding of the complex interrelationships that affect their dual roles as artist-curators and educators. This complex interrelationship is an amalgam of their roles as artist, curator, and educator, a web of overlapping roles.

**How Experiences in the Curation Process Affect the Artist-Curators’ Artmaking Practices**

The findings as presented in Chapter Five suggest a correlation between the curation practices of the five artist-curators and their artmaking. Bourcheix-Laporte (2013) described how the art that artist-curators create can be influenced by their curation, and argued for the importance of knowing what those influences are and how they affect the types of art the artist-curators exhibit in their roles as gallery curators. Although he doesn’t connect these influences specifically to Dewey’s ideas about experience, they can be seen through this lens.

The artist-curators indicated various ways that their role as curator has affected their artmaking. Apart from the similarities that emerged among all five participants, there were also differences based on their individual interests and experiences. David mentioned that he thinks first and foremost about how he is going to present his art to viewers through professional presentation, learned in part through his curation. Austin said that when he creates his paintings, he is not only thinking of how his work will be displayed, but how it will “fit” with other artists’ works or within any themed show,
which reinforces his design concept of professional presentation, a practice that he adheres to in his curation. Linda also contemplates how professional her work will appear to the viewer, particularly with respect to wiring hanging pieces and displaying sculptures. Bridget also considers how her work will be professionally displayed while in the process of creating and reflects on what worked best in past exhibitions that she has curated. As with Austin, my thought process involves how my work can be made to “fit” a show to enhance the coherence of the exhibition. This is a concept that I believe was influenced by my experiences with curation. In the process of creating artwork, the artist-curators think back to past curations and what worked successfully there, suggesting Dewey’s concept of continuity of experience or the experiential continuum in which “every experience takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way what comes after” (1938, p. 35).

The artist-curators pondering how their work will be staged while making their art, as well as the life of the artwork once it is presented publicly, are illustrative of the inextricable connection between the artist and their art. As Dewey stated:

A painter must consciously undergo the effect of his every brush stroke or he will not be aware of what he is doing and where his work is going. Moreover, he has to see each particular connection of doing and undergoing in relation to the whole that he desires to produce. To apprehend such relations is to think, and is one of the most exacting modes of thought. (1932, p. 45)

The artist-curators in this study make connections in curatorial experiences to improve their art. All five stated that curation affects their artmaking practice, because during their
artmaking process, they reflect on and create connections to curated exhibitions. These connections are derived from their past interactions with artists and curation practices. Reflection is an integral part of Dewey’s view of art. “The artist does his thinking in the very qualitative media he works in, and the terms lie so close to the object that he is producing that they merge directly into it” (Dewey, 1934, p. 16). From the findings of this study, I would argue that the artist-curators think through their curatorial experiences to make their art.

The artist’s situation is the present interaction in creating art that will form part of the experiential continuum or longitudinal axis of experience. As the artists continuously strive to make connections among their experiences of curation, education, and art making, the quality of each current experience, i.e. situation, will influence a variety of future thoughts and actions. Similarly, the artist-curators’ continuous endeavor to apply artistic knowledge from past experiences to their current works can yield fruitful results. Dewey (1938) recognized that an artist’s past experiences can materialize in their current practice. This implies that the connections the artist-curators make play a decisive role in what they are mostly likely to create. These connections can allow the artists to further use their curation for artistic research during the process of curating. Basbaum (2002) observed that, “when artists curate, they cannot avoid mixing their artistic investigations with the proposed curatorial project: for me, this is the strength and singularity they bring to curation” (n.p). Dewey argued that experiences are “moving force[s]” whose “value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into” (1938, p. 38) and that certain individuals (adults and educators) are in a position to evaluate which of the
forces are most valuable. I would argue that some of the choices made by the participating artist-curators in this study were directed at creating these moving forces in their own work as well as for the visitors to the exhibitions they curate. A good example is Bridget Riley inviting artists who experiment in their works to exhibit in the gallery. In her own works, it was evident that she also experiments. In doing so, she has also learnt from them through interaction, and applied concepts that she views as relevant in her own works. For her, the gallery, serves as an experimental research site to study her practice, draw inspiration, and apply this knowledge into future exhibitions as well as to her art work.

The five artist-curators stated that they reflected on their past experiences in curation as part of their artmaking pursuits and thus linked their past experiences to their artmaking process. Dewey (1934), however, took the position that connections alone are not sufficient; they have to be meaningful to yield a productive endeavor. There is no point in channeling curation practices into one’s artmaking if it doesn’t yield a beneficial result. The findings from this study indicate that all five artist-curators’ participation in the curation process affected their artmaking in ways that reflect their trajectory on the experiential continuum.

**Educational Practices that Artist-Curators Engage to Affect Positive Experiences**

The practices that artist-curators engage in to educate their university/college and community audiences are associated with the interactions that they facilitate such as artist talks, receptions, and interdisciplinary learning. The connections and interactions that create these experiences establish a platform to enhance education among students and
the community-at-large. For student and artist visitors to the gallery, for example, an exhibiting artist’s work might inspire them to incorporate concepts employed by that artist in their own artwork. This exemplifies Dewey’s concept of transfer of experience, because the artist-curator creates the necessary conditions and situations through which the students and artists can connect. In addition, the educational programs the artist-curator creates for the galleries can enhance learning. Such activities suggest that the art gallery serves as a community-engaged site where interactions are created between the viewer, visitors, and the works. As Brenson (1998) notes,

As much as any artist, critic, or museum director, the new curator understands, and is able to articulate, the ability of art to touch and mobilize people and encourage debates about spirituality, creativity, identity, and the nation. The texture and tone of the curator’s voice, the voices it welcomes or excludes, and the shape of the conversation it sets in motion are essential to the texture and perception of contemporary art. (p. 16)

As an interpreter for community audiences, the artist-curator understands how the viewer’s interaction with the works can enhance meaning making. The curator as interpreter fulfills this function by drawing connections to his or her own knowledge of and experience in curation and highlighting those experiences that are beneficial in enhancing the curation. For example, he or she might select artists whose work focuses on educating the viewer with respect to the use of varied approaches to art media. This process entails identifying artists and interacting with those he or she thinks will benefit the students, the community, and simultaneously satisfy the institution’s mission. During
the opening reception that the artist-curato r facilitates, the interactions that occur between
the viewers and the artworks and among the viewers can result in a comprehensive
experience, because the viewers may learn not only from viewing the artworks, but also
by participating in dialogue with other viewers and, as detailed earlier, by the design of
the exhibition. One aspect of the artist-curator’s role is to assess various ways his or her
curation can enhance dialogue among viewers. In addition, the artist-curato r, acting as an
intermediary between the artist and the audience, is entrusted with the responsibility to
ensure that the audience is given the optimal opportunity to engage with the works so
they can take away something meaningful. This hybrid role that the artist-curato r plays in
creating a learning environment is underscored by Shaw (2004) who noted the relevance
of the curator’s role in presenting artworks to viewers.

Interdisciplinary learning is a primary focus that all of the artist-curators
emphasize in their role as artist-curators and educators. We use the gallery as a space to
create interdisciplinary learning among the students and community-at-large. Dewey’s
concept of interaction subsumes the “principle for interpreting an experience in its
educational function and force” (1938, p. 38). When artist-curators use the gallery as an
educational tool, they apply their cumulative past experience working with other artists,
exhibitions, and teachers to promote students’ education. This interaction creates the
environment for a particular kind of experience to take place, namely, educating students
and the community. For example, David invites Mexican artists to the gallery to exhibit
and that this often culminates in far-ranging discussions with students on their artistic,
social, and cultural environment, providing the students with new perspectives and
understandings. In curating an exhibition based on the Sea of Cortez in the gallery and subsequently organizing a panel discussion, members of the community with diverse backgrounds were invited to learn about the issues facing this unique ecosystem. The art thus served as a medium for community interactions involving students from many disciplines including the sciences, arts, and social studies. In bringing these disciplines together, science students interacted with the arts and the social implications wrought by changes in the ecosystem, social science and art students looked at art through the lens of science, and so on. In the process of curation, David interpreted the works for the community and therefore had to critically assess how effective his curation had been in enhancing learning in the gallery. He had to contemplate what the students might have taken away from their experience as he reflected on display formats from past exhibitions that were successful and draws from those experiences. These reflective acts create for the curator movement in a positive direction along the experiential continuum known in Dewey’s framework as “growth” that manifests in future exhibitions benefitting the community through continuous learning in the gallery.

As educators, all five artist-curators are responsible for planning how the artwork in the gallery and activities such as artist talks will best meet the needs of the students and the community’s continuous learning objectives. It is important for the artist-curato to understand how the structure and design of the gallery exhibitions can affect learning in the gallery and, in particular, the experiences that viewers derive. Will an exhibition structure or design enhance learning or community engagement in the gallery?
At the same time, curators are cognizant of and take into consideration that not all viewers will understand all works. Dewey emphasized this when he described works of art as “products that exist physically and externally,” but that the “actual work of art is what the product does with and in experience,” making the outcome of the work not “favorable to understanding” (1934, p. 3). Dewey understood works of art to have an external existence apart from the artist and that it is the viewer’s subjective experience of an artwork that creates understanding (Dewey, 1938). He believed it is important to consider the educational background or experiences of students because educators often overlook economic, cultural, and ethnic differences in their students that serve as lenses through which they filter their experiences. It is external factors such as these that contribute to differences in meaning making among students and community members. The artist-curator’s knowledge of viewers’ backgrounds will foster more positive learning experiences for both parties, especially in aligning activities that they facilitate to bridge viewers’ backgrounds or interests to the exhibited artwork. One of the challenges is to become knowledgeable about the general interests or background of students and the community. Even being armed with such knowledge, Dewey issued the caveat that the educator should not exercise control. While educators create space for students and community members to learn by presenting artist talks, teaching demonstrations, and the like, we must not try to exert explicit control over viewers’ experiences with artworks. Imposing too much control restricts opportunities for growth in the students. In addition to not exercising control over learning, it is the responsibility of the educator to constantly evaluate the experiences offered in the gallery and assess
their impact on students and the community to determine whether they are rewarding or not. According to Dewey (1938), if the experience turns out to be unrewarding, the educator is unqualified. Moreover, the educator does not have the right not to share with the students or community what he or she knows from personal experience. For example, if the artist-curator knows that the interdisciplinary learning activities that he or she facilitates will foster learning in the gallery and beyond and does not take the initiative to make these occur, then he or she is restricting students’ growth.

All five artist-curators participating in this study use their curation as a teaching tool and are committed to fostering education through art. Their distinct perspectives seem to emerge from their practices as both artists and curators. All of the artist-curators use the gallery space as an educational tool to further the stated mission of their respective institutions. The act of reflection on our professional practice plays a significant role in creating and curating artwork as well as in the educational process. This finding is noteworthy because, as mentioned earlier, it accords with Dewey’s theory of continuity, i.e., the experiential continuum where artist-curators refer back to their past experience to better understand their current practices and to use these to enhance the experiences of students and other visitors to their galleries.

**Implications of the Research Study**

The following are some implications that can be drawn from this research study in relation to artist-curators, curators, and prospective artist-curators as well as for art and visual culture educators.

**Conversation About the Self and the Other**
An implication from this study is that the interviewed artist-curators are committed educators and the appellation “education” characterizes their work as curators. This appellation does not necessarily characterize all artist-curators. Rather, it describes curators working in educational galleries who focus on their given constituency of students and the community. The artist-curator functions as an interpreter of the educational needs of students and the community, an important role that has implications for interdisciplinary learning and community outreach. Moreover, these artist curators are not constrained to showcase art for commercial consumption, but rather are able in certain situations to display works that are experimental in nature or meet the needs and interests of their student and faculty clientele. An artist-curator at a university gallery may choose works that are more experimental, which are aligned with what students at the university are learning. Bridget’s curation, for example, was geared towards experimentation for art students whereas my curation was geared towards exploratory art primarily for the non-art student population. Two artist-curators (Austin and Linda) who teach at community colleges selected works for exhibitions that did not seem to be experimental in nature, perhaps given the nature of the colleges where they work. Some college galleries also afford artist-curators the opportunity to pursue personal preferences in their curation, which they do with an eye towards the education outcomes of such choices.

**Artist-Curators as Educators**

The findings from this study may serve as a catalyst for thoughtful conversations vis-à-vis the diverse experiences of artist-curators and their perspectives when curating in
university/college galleries. Macintyre Latta (2013) underscores the relevance for educators to familiarize themselves with how one engages in the space between the self and the other. She believes that understanding how space is used to create engagement among viewers is dependent on the structure put in place by the educator. She explains that space can contribute to undetermined possibilities as well as new perspectives. Applying this concept to the gallery, the structure could be the way the works are arranged to stimulate interaction with the viewer or how the types of works exhibited could foster understanding of the art among viewers. It can also serve to help artist-curators to consider how gallery visitors make meaning from their personal experiences. As artist-curators, a comprehensive understanding of how our roles facilitate and enhance learning, particularly among students and individuals in the community, is vital. Our role as educators in facilitating programming around exhibitions creates a platform for members of the community to learn and have new experiences.

**Opportunities for Art and Visual Culture Educators**

The implications of this study suggest a range of opportunities for students in the field of art and visual culture education as well as studio art, and for their teachers as the gallery is a place to expand artistic and educational boundaries. Investigating how artist-curators use the gallery space and art to project ideas, concepts, processes, and techniques has the potential to extend opportunities for students from a range of disciplines to deepen their understanding of art and its role in learning.

**Possibilities For Future Research**
The findings and implications of this study open the door to new areas of inquiry for future research. Having drawn inspiration and passion from the artist-curators participating in this study, I would like to follow up by considering future research, questions such as: How do artist-curators use curation in their teaching? What are some of the ways that teaching influences artist-curators’ curation and their art? What artists’ experiences are most inspirational for art students? How do framing and the selection of artwork for gallery display affect what the viewer takes away? How do the background experiences of viewers specifically affect their appreciation of or interaction with artwork in a gallery? I would like to conduct research on these questions by case study as this methodology is appropriate for the emergent nature of discovery. Future research could also involve developing ways to embed art, art history, and art and visual education courses into the gallery’s activities to foster interdisciplinary learning.
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ASKED OF ALL ARTIST-CURATORS

Background Information:

How long have you been an artist-curateur? Is this a full-time position?

Tell me about your background as an artist.

Do you have an online portfolio and curriculum vita? (I’ll ask for the link)

Are you currently making art? How often are you able to devote time to studio work? How do you integrate this with your job demands? When was the last time you had an exhibition of your artworks?

Questions about being an artist-curateur:

What are some of your processes in curating shows? How do you perceive these to be different from other curators (such as historians or anthropologists)?

What are benefits of being an artist-curateur?

Please describe a curating project where your background as an artist was especially important.

How has your background as an artist helped you solve some of the problems that you encounter as a curator?

Please reflect on how curation influences your artmaking. Please give an example or specific experience.

How does your artmaking influence your curation? Again, please provide one or more examples.

Questions about education and community:
What are the benefits of curating shows at the university gallery (vs. other types of galleries)?

How might your vision or understanding as an artist influence the ways you try to enhance community engagement in the gallery?

Given the presence of university galleries within educational institutions, what strategies do you use to create educational situations?

What strategies do you use to enhance the engagement of the university and town communities?

Specifically, what interdisciplinary learning strategies do you bring to your curation?
APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS INITIALLY ASKED OF ARTIST-CURATORS IN THE CASE STUDIES

Background Information:

How long have you been an artist-curator at this gallery, and in general? Is this a full-time position?
Tell me about your background as an artist.
Do you have an online portfolio and curriculum vita? (I’ll ask for the link)
Are you currently making art? How often are you able to devote time to studio work? How do you integrate this with your job demands? When was the last time you had an exhibition of your artworks?
Do you draw inspiration from other artists in your artworks? If yes, can you mention a few artists?
What type of media do you enjoy working in most?
How often do you exhibit your own artworks? (currently; in the past)

Questions about being an artist-curator:

What are some of your processes in curating shows? How do you perceive these to be different from other curators (such as historians or anthropologists)—or are they different?
Have you curated exhibitions outside the university galleries before? Can you cite similarities and differences that you witnessed with the different gallery spaces?
Do you find any benefits of being an artist-curator?
Please describe a curating project where your background as an artist was especially important.

How has your background as an artist helped you solve some of the problems as a curator?

Please reflect on how curation influences your artmaking, if it does. Do you have an example or specific experience?

How does your artmaking influence your curation—or does it? Again, could you provide one or more examples?

What are some of your current exhibitions you are working on?

How do you select themes for exhibitions in the gallery?

How do you select artworks for upcoming exhibitions in this gallery?

Does the gallery have enough space to accommodate exhibitions you curate? If not, how do you curate exhibitions to accommodate the artworks?

What other role(s) do you play apart from being an artist-curator in this gallery?

Do you have assistants for the gallery? If yes, how do they offer their assistance to you?

How are artists selected to exhibit their artworks in the gallery? Is there a “call for artist”? What are your selection criteria?

How many exhibitions do you usually curate in a year? Do you draw inspiration to experiment with different exhibition formats by visiting other galleries? If so, please give an example.

Questions about education and community:
What are the benefits of curating shows at the university gallery (vs. other types of galleries)?

Does your vision or understanding as an artist influence the ways you try to enhance community engagement in the gallery? If so, how?

Given the presence of university galleries within educational institutions, what strategies do you use to create educational situations?

What strategies do you use to enhance the engagement of the university and town communities?

Specifically, what interdisciplinary learning strategies do you bring to your curation?
APPENDIX C: UPDATED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ASKED OF ARTIST-CURATORS IN THE CASE STUDIES

Background Information:

How long have you been an artist-curato at this gallery, and in general? Is this a full-time position?

Tell me about your background as an artist.

When did you realize you were an artist?

Do you have an online portfolio and curriculum vita? (I’ll ask for the link)

Are you currently making art?

How often are you able to devote time to studio work?

How do you integrate this with your job demands?

Do you choose exhibitions based on personal taste?

When was the last time you had an exhibition of your artworks?

Do you draw inspiration from other artists in your artworks? If yes, can you mention a few artists?

What type of media do you enjoy working in most?

What surfaces do you enjoy working on most?

How often do you exhibit your own artworks? (currently; in the past)

Questions about being an artist-curato:

What are some of your processes in curating shows?

How do you perceive these to be different from other curators (such as historians or anthropologists)—or are they different?
Have you curated exhibitions outside the university galleries before?

Can you cite similarities and differences that you witnessed with the different gallery spaces?

Apart from the museum can you compare it to any other galleries outside the university that you have curated?

Do you find any benefits of being an artist-curator?

Please describe a curating project where your background as an artist was especially important.

How has your background as an artist helped you solve some of the problems as a curator?

Please reflect on how curation influences your artmaking, if it does. Do you have an example or specific experience?

How does your artmaking influence your curation—or does it? Again, could you provide one or more examples?

What are some of your current exhibitions you are working on?

How do you select themes for exhibitions in the gallery? How do you select artworks for upcoming exhibitions in this gallery?

Does the gallery have enough space to accommodate exhibitions you curate? If not, how do you curate exhibitions to accommodate the artworks?

When was this show put up?

Within that time frame there will be no show in there?

What other role (s) do you play apart from being an artist-curator in this gallery?
Do you have assistants for the gallery? If yes, how do they offer their assistance to you?

How are artists selected to exhibit their artworks in the gallery? Is there a “call for artist”? What are your selection criteria?

How many exhibitions do you usually curate in a year?

Do you draw inspiration to experiment with different exhibition formats by visiting other galleries? If so, please give an example.

Questions about education and community:

What are the benefits of curating shows at the university gallery (vs. other types of galleries)?

Does your vision or understanding as an artist influence the ways you try to enhance community engagement in the gallery? If so, how?

Given the presence of university galleries within educational institutions, what strategies do you use to create educational situations?

What strategies do you use to enhance the engagement of the university and town communities?

Specifically, what interdisciplinary learning strategies do you bring to your curation?
APPENDIX D: COMPLETED DATA CHART ONE

This question that guided the creation of this first data chart was the research question:

What background, perspectives, and practices do artists bring to the curation process when curating for university and college galleries?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What background, perspectives, and practices do artist-curators bring to the curation process when curating for university and college galleries?</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Written</th>
<th>Visual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Audio recordings of artist-curators)</td>
<td>(Audio transcriptions, electronic correspondence, artist statements, artist website, artist biography, journal entries)</td>
<td>Visual journal entries, works of art; website images)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>David</strong></td>
<td>He seeks out artists because of his interest in their art and exhibits their work if he believes it would benefit the college, and artists that work with the principles of fundamental design. He visits artists’ studios, networks with them and creates connections needed for future exhibitions. His background as an artist and educator as allowed him to understand the importance of exhibiting artists’ that work with the principles of fundamental design. In addition he solves issues that arise during his curation, such as installing sculptures, through theoretical application of his design principles. Participation in his curation, depends on the willingness of the artist</td>
<td>He uses elements and principles of design in his curation. He believes it is important to “unit” the different works in the gallery during curation. He believes knowledge in art and history is important in his curation. The gallery functions as a full-service space with the implication that the artist is not involved in the curation process unless he or she chooses to be. He has worked with artists in the curation process, however, participation in curation depends on the willingness of the artist to participate.</td>
<td>Painting, printmaking emphasis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
He reflected that curating most exhibitions allow an artist-curato\textsuperscript{r} to draw upon their artistic background as a wellspring. He believes his artistic background has contributed substantially to his curatorial practice.

He said that his knowledge in art history and artmaking contribute to an understanding of how and why an artwork is completed. Knowledge in art history provides a context, a rich milieu, for the observer to derive meaning from an artwork and thus enhance his appreciation of it while knowledge of the artmaking process creates a mental platform to better understand how an artwork is made. This knowledge contributes significantly to the overall meaning an observer can derive from his gallery experience. He has used his theoretical application of his knowledge of balance to solve issues that arise during his curation, such as installing sculptures.

**Linda**

She curates her exhibitions with the Art Institutes’ mission, which is to create a link between the gallery’s art exhibitions and the commercial art programs the institution offers.

He curation practice is to support both the mission of the institution and the gallery. She also creates thematic concepts that will engage the students conceptually.

She seeks out artists whose work conforms to the theme and thus serves the educational mission of the institute and the gallery.

She believes it is important that she understands the artist’s concerns and objectives because it allows her to curate with the institution’s mission, whose primarily goal is to create a link between the gallery’s art exhibitions and art programs at the college. This means that she seeks out artists whose work reinforce the institution and gallery’s mission.

She views the exhibition as a design space and is keenly aware of the visual impact it can have on gallery visitors.

When she sets up an exhibition, she visualizes the space and what the visitors will see first, particularly where the eye travels in the exhibition.

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She views the exhibition as a design space and is keenly aware of the visual impact it can have on gallery visitors.

When she sets up an exhibition, she visualizes the space and what the visitors will see first, particularly where the eye travels in the exhibition.

**Painting/ sculpture emphasis.**
to have more empathy when curating her work. For example, in an exhibition that she curated for a visiting artist where the artist expressed concerns about inadequate space in the gallery to display his work, Chappel was able to group the works according to their sizes so that the walls did not seem “too busy.”

She views curation as the interaction of space with the artworks on display. She also views the exhibition as an installation where elements within the gallery space such as the lighting are relevant to how the artwork is projected. To the audience. Her interest in the design layout of the space is primarily important, and how the arrangement of the works of art visually told stories in the gallery.

She views the gallery as a space that can serve as a problem-solving space, because the artist has to be able to figure out how to mount a work and show it to the public.

She enjoys exhibiting artworks that portray the techniques artists use such as painting styles and types of media, for learning.

Her curation and arrangement of artworks is based on how the works looks together and not on other extraneous factors such as the content of the work or the theme of the work. Her organizing principle is aesthetic appeal, that is, how she views the layout of the design space in unifying the works presented by the artists.

She curates exhibitions with students in mind rather than imposing her personal design preferences in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Display layouts which serves to foster design creativity in students.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She has visited artist studios and personally selected work for exhibition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She allows the artist to decide how the exhibition is set up and this is her primarily focus. She believes her approach facilitates the college’s mission of educating the students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She also focuses on aspects of the exhibition that showcase educational components for students such as design layouts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She allows the artist to dictate how the exhibition is set up, and further adds her personal focus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Austin Brown</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He selects themes inspired by the unfamiliarity of artist’s use of media and techniques to students. His focus is on the students and community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He invites artists who will share insight about their artwork production for artist talks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He curates to emphasize design concepts such as a scale. He believes having a variety of works can allow students and viewers to appreciate the wide range of works from different perspectives that the artist creates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He describes his curation as a means by which he offers students a platform to appreciate and critique artworks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Painting/mixed media emphasis |
He wants to offer artists an opportunity to exhibit their work in the gallery.

He translates scale relationships into his design theory curriculum.

He tries to help students see how artists in the exhibitions use certain colors in their work.

He exhibits artists who are engaged in artmaking that reinforces what he does.

**Bridget**

Her selection of artists is primarily focused on reaching diverse students audiences rather than on her personal taste. She also focuses on the teaching needs of the faculty in the art department and on the university campus, as well as the community as a whole. Her goal is that these diverse audiences gain something out of the exhibitions.

Her exhibitions touches on themes that occur in the visiting artists’ and scholars’ lectures.

When she views an artwork and becomes excited about it, she says that she wants to “eat it” Such strong feelings about art provide her the impetus to show that type of work. This means that she exhibits artists’ works that are of personal interest to her. She peruses their portfolio or website and seeks our other artists who collaborated with that artist. Fellow artists and faculty members also share recommendations with her and students ask her about possible exhibitions.

She encourages artists to experiment with the gallery space. She believes that oftentimes this flexibility can be a springboard for new ideas and ways of curating for the artists. She allows the artists be part of her curation if they choose to.

**Painting/ mixed media emphasis**

Curation Project Awake Gallery: She sometimes collaborates with the artists in curation.
| **Charles** | I sometimes invites individuals to the gallery whom I believe would benefit from the exhibitions. The ultimate decision regarding who will exhibit in the gallery is a decision made by my supervisor and myself. Our primary goal is to promote shows to the students, members of the university, and the community at large. Very little of my personal taste is included in the selection of artists or exhibitors. I encourage artists who embrace exploration in their work to exhibit in the gallery. My interest in utilizing | Painting/ mixed media emphasis |
different media motivates me to seek out artists working in mixed and non-traditional media.

I work collaboratively with the exhibitor or artist that wants to show their work. I am flexible in my curation practice.

I enjoy experimenting with different design layouts because it allows me to come out with an exhibition layout that I think will work well for a particular exhibition. I make it a practice to discuss my ideas for the display with the artists before installing the artwork. This is important because sometimes the artists might have very different ideas regarding the optimal display of their works. The design course I took at the University of Idaho has allowed me to view the gallery as a space to reorganize to “look good.” It is like moving into a new home in which one has to arrange the space so that it looks aesthetically pleasing. Aesthetics is essential in my art as well as my curation. As an artist, I am aware of how different colors look next to each other. This concept is also applied in the curation process.
This question that guided the creation of this data chart was the research question:

How does participating in the curation process affect the artist-curators’ artmaking practices?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How does participating in curation process affect the artist-curators’ artmaking practices?</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Written</th>
<th>Visual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral (Audio recordings of artist-curators)</td>
<td>Written (Audio transcriptions, electronic correspondence, artist statements, artist website, artist biography, journal entries)</td>
<td>Visual (Visual journal entries, works of art; website images)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>His curation is linked to his artmaking practice. He believes that one consideration in making art for him is how the work is presented to viewers. He believes that one’s work needs to look professional with respect to framing as well as concepts that always influence an artist’s works. To him, understanding the design layout of the works of art that he curates has allowed him to appropriate these designs for his own art as well as visualize how art would mesh with the other works and thus how the viewer would perceive them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>Her curation has not really affected her artistic concepts, however what drives her art is her craftmanship such as wiring the artworks and her appreciation of a well-wired work. She thinks about the visual display of the artwork and its effectiveness. For example because she creates a lot of relief sculptures, she thinks about the display format for relief sculptures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Austin</strong></td>
<td>He thinks about how his works will mesh in with other artists’ works emphasizing his design concept of professionalism which he adheres to in his curation practice. He does not think about curation affecting his artworks. For example he mentioned having a well-wired work with a frame attached to the work would indicate that the work was completed, or having a painting that could possibly fit into any themed exhibition exemplifies professionalism.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bridget</strong></td>
<td>She believes curation that influences her artmaking is geared towards installation and how works read in the space. She thinks about how to present her work in a space and reflects on what worked best in some exhibitions she curated. She reflected on an exhibition she installed, by an artist David Chong Lee, where she arranged 50 pieces of artwork on top of each other to form a wall. She cited this as a successful exhibition, and this contiguity idea she explored in Lee’s wall is a recurring theme in her own work as she continues to wrap the sides of wood panels she uses. She also admires the objectivity in Lee’s paintings and has explored this in her own studio work.</td>
<td>She created artworks and exhibited them at a museum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charles</strong></td>
<td>There is a connection between my curation and artmaking practice. I have introduced some of the painting techniques of other artists in my works. This includes incorporating the use of an eraser (technique) to erase sections of my paintings. I also think about how my work will be displayed in a gallery. It is important to have an idea about the display format of a work when making it especially when an artist is part of a group exhibition. In the past, I have made smaller works for a group exhibition because of inadequate wall space in the gallery. So I sometimes create my artworks to adapt to the space.</td>
<td>Arts-based research. I created a series of paintings to study my design patterns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F: COMPLETED DATA CHART THREE

This question that guided the creation of this data chart was the research question:

What practices do artist-curators engage in to educate college and community audiences?

Sub-questions were:

1) How does an artist-curators adapt his or her perceptions of gallery management for a university and college exhibition?  
2) What strategies do artist-curators use to engage the university/ college and local communities?  
3) Given that university or college galleries reside within educational institutions, what strategies do artist-curators use to create educational programs?  
4) What interdisciplinary learning strategies do artist-curators bring to their curation?  
5) How do artist-curators foster community engagement and what do they hope visitors will take away from their experiences?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What practices do artist-curators engage in to educate university/college and community audiences?</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Written</th>
<th>Visual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission is to educate students that typically do not have a lot of experience in going to universities, museums, or galleries.</td>
<td>(Audio recordings of artist-curators)</td>
<td>(Audio transcriptions, electronic correspondence, artist statements, artist website, artist biography, journal entries)</td>
<td>Visual journal entries, works of art; website images</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

David

Reception (faculty exhibition) at the gallery.
He works with the community regularly. He has exhibited members’ work from the School of Art at the University of Arizona.

His vision is to facilitate education in the college, which aligns with the gallery’s mission, and to assist the college and faculty in fostering community engagement.

He holds receptions as well as lectures in the gallery.

The gallery holds performance events, including poetry recitals. He believes these events bring people together to encourage learning.

He participates in many organizations to create connections to learn about artists and invite a variety of audiences to the gallery, such as serving as a board member of the Tucson of Art where he further extends his community outreach by exhibiting works of art museum members in the gallery.

He has used the galleries to create interactions with the dance department, the music department, and other departments on the college campus to make enforce interdisciplinary learning.

**Linda**

She said the gallery is geared towards education and that the students are her main focus and specifically how they learn through the arts.

She believes that experiences and interactions are key to enhancing education in the gallery.

She holds artist talks and teaching demos that serve as opportunities for students to learn about curation and gallery management.

Student exhibition at the gallery.
| **She** | She views the gallery as an interactive space that can provide opportunities for interdisciplinary learning: she curated a show where students in the English department visited the gallery and wrote a critique of an ongoing exhibition.  
She exhibited works of high school and grade school teachers titled “The Teacher’s Show” to foster community engagement.  
She invites members of the community to opening receptions such as the “Old Tucson Studios” exhibition. |
| **Austin** | He invites guest speakers to have artist talks in the gallery from different departments across the college and thereby focuses on interdisciplinary learning.  
He showcased artworks of elementary school students’ artworks as a means of community engagements.  
He engages the community with projects such as having students create murals in assisted living facilities.  
He invites artist for workshops, and to encourage interdisciplinary learning, as it encouraged students to learn about different artistic perspectives.  
He invited poet into the gallery to talk about how poetry related to art and he expanded on the meanings of the paintings.  
He believes in engaging and using the art to expand the lens that people are thinking about their environment. |
| **Bridget** | She believes everyone should have access to art, and tries to make every exhibition accessible to everyone through her exhibitions. |
| | Artist exhibition at the gallery. |
The gallery is involved with different programs across campus and the community, such as the holding lectures for the LGBTQ. She brings in classes from different institutions such as Pima Community College. She tries to incorporate many of the interests at the university into her exhibitions.

Charles

The Union Gallery holds numerous artist talks throughout the year. This allows members of the university and the larger community to participate in the arts. I invite diverse audiences to the gallery for artist talks. This includes not only individuals who have a particular interest in the arts, but individuals who come from different backgrounds across the campus and the community. I also invite students, faculty, and staff of the University/community to current exhibitions.

I encourage different types of works to be displayed in the gallery, as a possibility of drawing more viewers to the gallery, and to allow multiple viewing perspectives. My aim is to foster learning and community engagement.

I exhibit a wide range of works to draw more viewers to the gallery.

I advertise for artist through the Union Gallery’s email system.

Artist exhibition at the gallery.
REFERENCES


http://www.issuelab.org/resource/how_the_arts_impact_communities_an_introduction_to_the_literature_on_arts_impact_studies


http://www.jstor.org/stable/1478420?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents


