ART FOR ALL: A STUDY ON THE ART EDUCATOR'S ROLE IN
INCLUSIVE ART PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
WITHIN MUSEUMS AND COMMUNITY ART INSTITUTIONS

by

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As members of the Master's Committee, we certify that we have read the thesis prepared by Marica Whittemore, titled *Art for All: A Study on the Art Educator's Role in Inclusive Art Programs for People with Disabilities within Museums and Community Art Institutions* and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirement for the Master's Degree.

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List of Images and Descriptive Text

All three pictures are black and white. Image 1 has the words "Ever Since I can Remember" handwritten. The second picture features a hand-drawn illustration of a crowd standing in front of the Mona Lisa painting, which is a painting of a woman sitting down. The crowd in front of the painting is large, about 15 people and many of them are holding their phones above their head to take a photo. The third photo is a hand-drawn image of a person's perspective while driving. Two hands grip the steering wheel and we see other features of the interior of the car.

Image 4 shows the interior of the museum, which has a large installation made of wood that is covered in a black and white striped pattern. The wooden installation looks tall enough to walk into and has screens on the walls with videos and headphones connected. Image 5 shows a wall with vinyl records displayed on a shelf, with headphones underneath each album to listen to the music.

This image shows a complicated computer screen, with multiple colored illustrations of soundwaves, charts and buttons.

This image shows a young boy seated at a table working on an art piece. He is using watercolor paint and a straw to blow colorful paint across a canvas.

Image 8 shows a square picture frame in the center, which is filled with a shiny metal paper. On top of the paper is a cut paper illustration of the anatomical model of the eyeball. It is thinly cut out of translucent paper and there is hand-sewn string in the middle of the paper in the shape of the eye.

Image 9 shows a rectangular picture frame filled with shiny metal paper. On top of the paper is a cut paper illustration of an anatomical model of the ear.

Image 10 shows a close of up the anatomical eye paper cut, which is held to the paper with thin T shaped pins.

Image 11 shows a close-up of the anatomical ear paper cut, which is held to the paper by thin T shaped pins. There is string hanging from the end of the pins on the right side of the image.

This image shows a pop-up screen on the computer, which reads "WAVE: web accessibility evaluation tool". There are many lines of text on the pop-up, which read "7 Errors, 17 Alerts, 21 Features, 48 Structural Elements, 39 HTML5 and ARIA, and 11 Contrast Errors".

This image shows a small paper card, which has text and illustrations on it. The text includes "CONSIDER" and "FIND".

This image is a hand-drawn comic illustration. The page has many pictures drawn inside of square boxes and has text near the images, including "I'm work TMA help with me learn ASL. Thank you!!!" [sic]

This image shows an open book, which is rectangular in shape. The pages of the book are different: on the left the page shows a painting of a tree in a field of grass, on the right page there is an illustration of a leaf which has been stitched using string. The braille text "TREE" is on the bottom of the right page.

Image 17 shows an open white page of a book, which has stamped

drawings of hands on it. The hands show how to sign "house" in ASL

using your hands.

Image 18 shows an open page of a book. The pages are different: on the

left page there is a painting of a man in a jacket. On the right page, there

are two hands cut out and glued to the page. One hand is pointing to the

other hand's wrist. This is part of the ASL symbol for "hands".

This image shows a map of a long room with boxes to indicate the location

of artworks. Clockwise after entering the room are a lounge area, sticky

note wall, wall projection, table with ASL books, and anatomical paper

cuts.

Abstract

Traditionally, museums and community art institutions can be uncomfortable, restrictive places for people with disabilities. With increased legislation and scholarship looking toward art education as a site for inclusive educational practices for people with disabilities, art institutions are tasked with creating accessible programs. However, often a lack of staff, institutional support, or knowledge can make these programs lacking and leave participants disappointed.

This case study presents three art programs I have created or participated in: an after-school art program at a school for hearing and visually impaired youth, a museum internship program and accessible programming for adults, and a day-program art studio serving adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The three sites and programs are described in detail using autoethnography, then evaluated for instructive themes and suggestions based on personal experience. This research study aims to promote inclusive art programs while offering a guide for other art educators.

Site description and supplemental theory is complemented by arts-based research incorporating theory, practice, and artistic inquiry into the research process. In this study, I reflect on two years of teaching experiences within museum and community art programs with a focus on working with people with disabilities. Using these experiences, existing scholarship, and arts-based research, I illustrate how art educators can be more inclusive of people with disabilities within their museums and community art programs.

Ch 1: Introduction

Think back to your first experience with art. If it was like mine, it was likely in preschool or kindergarten, in between naps and story time, with your teacher bringing out large bottles of water-based paint that you were able to smear with abandon across a cheaply made canvas. Paintbrushes were optional. Like most of your clothes at the time, they'd end up dirty at the end of the day.

I remember my early art experiences clearly and with fondness. I was raised in a creative household where anything could be an art supply. I made art non-stop and developed an appetite for the activity, which would become one of my favorite hobbies and eventually, a career. The act of making art in my life was supplemented with other art experiences, like visiting museums, taking art classes, borrowing my mom's camera, or helping my dad organize his painting supplies.

It's not hard to believe, then, that I have always felt comfortable in art institutions. Class field trips to museums were the highlight of my academic year and into my adulthood, I would continue to visit museums whenever possible. I decided to take classes about art and even though I stopped taking technical art classes, I continued to create and admire it all. Even with art that made me uncomfortable or with pieces I didn't understand, I have always been filled with a sense of wonder and awe.

It wasn't until I began to work as an art educator that I began to realize that my experiences with art weren't universal. While working at a contemporary art museum, I noticed people looking around in disgust and leaving after 5

minutes, instead of spending time trying to puzzle out the meaning of the piece. Students in local elementary schools had never visited a museum and believed they were not welcome. Some people had never picked up a paintbrush and adults shied away from them because they thought they couldn't create anything worthwhile.

I began to look critically at my own teaching practice and the institutions I worked with to see what was happening to make people believe they were not welcome, not talented enough, or not able to enjoy art. After a while, I was able to start making change.

People everywhere, from youth to seniors, feel uneasy in art institutions like museums, community art programs, or even art class. While many of the reasons are internalized and individualized, there is a general belief that art can be elitist and exclusive. As time has passed, people have begun to feel ostracized from art. Furthermore, art experiences can be even more restrictive to people with disabilities. In a 2012 survey, the National Endowment for the found that adults with disabilities comprised less than seven percent of all adults attending performance events or visiting art museums or galleries (summarized in Bienvenu, 2015). Although 21 percent of all adults visited an art museum or gallery in 2012, only 11 percent of adults with disabilities made such a visit (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). In the classroom, there are often half-hearted modifications to the art lesson plans for students with disabilities and in art institutions various accommodations leave visitors with disabilities feeling isolated and underwhelmed.

People with disabilities comprise 56.7 million or 18.7% of the civilian population in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) and are included in the millions of students, museum visitors, and community art participants every year. Yet, art experiences for people with disabilities are often unfavorable and disappointing. Art educators in the classroom, museums, and community art programs have begun to make efforts to make their art experiences more inclusive for people with disabilities, but still have far to go.

I was able to explore disabilities studies within art education during my coursework at the University of Arizona and professionally. While working at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson, I developed and executed a 12 week after-school arts program at the Arizona State School for the Deaf and the Blind. During a year-long Graduate Assistant placement at the Tucson Museum of Art, I conducted an accessibility assessment of the museum while working on accessible tools utilizing American Sign Language. Finally, during an internship at ArtWorks, a day-program art studio managed by the University of Arizona department of Family & Community Medicine, I was able to observe and participate in collaborative learning among adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These experiences, coupled with extensive research on past and recent literature on the topics, led me to develop this research study. This research study seeks to explore the topic of accessibility within museum and community art settings. Reflecting on my experiences within the field, this qualitative research study will look at three case study experiences through an autoethnographic lens to offer suggestions, critiques, and further inquiries about

accessible and inclusive programming within museum and community art environments from the art educator's perspective. As educators, we can encourage or close off pathways to students to construct art identities and futures (Atkison, 1998) and such power dynamics must be evaluated when working with any people, including people with disabilities.

Statement of Problem

Museums and community art institutions have a history of excluding minority groups such as people with disabilities. While arts have the potential to enrich the human experience through creative expression (Johnson, 2018), this experience is not limited to people without disabilities. Art institutions have an obligation to offer accessible and inclusive arts programming for people with disabilities but to date, lack the knowledge, staff, funding, and institutional support to develop these programs. In addition to art programs within schools, informal learning environments such as museums and community art programs can offer opportunities for lifelong learning for individuals with disabilities (Blandy, 1991).

Purpose of Study

This research seeks to examine three case study experiences working with people with disabilities, ranging from students to adults in a variety of environments. Analyzing these experiences from my own point of view for comments, suggestions, and critiques provides examples of how museum educators can create functional art programs for people with disabilities, while also using theoretical frameworks such as disability studies. As an

autoethnography, the study uses "wide-awakeness" (Greene, 1977) to remain alert as an educator to learn from experiences with artists. Furthermore, using arts-based research provides a means for exploration of the ideas and questions that arose during the research process.

Research Question

My interest in this field of research grew during my professional and academic experience during my graduate program. Having worked in museums for a few years before entering graduate school, I was interested in how people experience museums, and more generally, art. The unique experience of visitors with disabilities led me to consider the relationship between disability studies and art education. Pondering the museum experience for a typical visitor and the experience of a visitor with disabilities, I began to think about the role of an art educator on creating inclusive art experiences.

Main Research Question:

How do art educators respond to increasing demands of equity and inclusion of people with disabilities within museums and community art programs?

Demonstrated by legal rules and an increase in research and publications, awareness of accessibility is on the rise. Within art education, there has been more research, accommodations, and thoughtful discussion on how to create a more inclusive classroom, museum, or other art institution. This study presents three examples based on my own experience as an art educator of inclusive programming in different settings, including an art museum, an after-school program at a K-8 school, and a day-program art studio for adults.

Sub Questions:

How is disability defined within art education and what is currently being discussed concerning it?

How do art educators interact with people with disabilities within art institutions like museums, schools, and community art settings?

Do inclusive practices change within different art settings (museum, schools, community art)?

Through these questions, I consider what inclusion looks like in art education by examining research surrounding disability studies. Using my experiences in the various settings, this study will explore my role as an art educator.

Utilizing qualitative research allows for a critical analysis of the world while respecting the humanity of the participants. It studies social phenomena and usually draws upon multiple methods of inquiry. (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). This case study research project is informed by autoethnography, providing the opportunity for interpretation based on experience grounded by the method of a case (Pfelier-Wunder, 2013). Taking the perspective of an art educator in the field, autoethnography allows an immersive reflection from the teaching perspective working with people with disabilities. It offers a connection from the personal to the cultural, focusing on social and cultural aspects of the personal experience and looking inward (Patton, 2002). Arts-based research provides a further reflective practice to synthesize the theory and field research into critical

awareness as an educator, contributing to my practice and providing guidance for other educators.

Significance to Field

This research offers insight into three locations using art while working with people with disabilities. As art educators, it is not uncommon to have students, visitors, or community participants who have a disability that might affect their experience. Instead of operating under ableist presumptions and offering superficial accommodations, this research looks at three site-specific programs and institutions to provide critique, examples, and suggestions for inclusive art education based on my personal experiences.

While people with disabilities are a minority population in the United States, it is important to adjust our teaching practice to benefit as many people as possible. Utilizing the Universal Design response, making the changes suggested in this study will benefit the entire population. Furthermore, synthesizing current research with practical field experience will provide further information on how to incorporate inclusive educational practices for art educators.

Personal Significance

Working in museums and community art institutions has been a passion of mine and I have always been fascinated by the intimate experience a person can have with a work of art. After discovering Falk and Dierking's contextual model of learning (Falk & Dierking, 2012) and beginning to look at the ways in which museum visitors learn and experience the museum, I began to pay more

attention to how museums and art institutions appeal to different audiences and the different ways of engagement they use. Notably, when looking at these inclusive efforts, many institutions are lacking and can be exclusive to minority groups, such as people with disabilities. In my personal practice as an art educator, I began to evaluate ways I could make the experience open to all people and I began to educate myself on disability studies and accessibility. What resulted was two years of work in museums and community art programs with the intention of creating inclusive arts programming. This immersive teaching experience is the data studied within this research. Since art educators are often in control of the interactive experiences for visitors and students within art institutions, this study looks at the ways I was able to encourage inclusive learning experiences for all participants with disabilities.

My work seeks to encourage inclusion in all art spaces.

Arts Based Research

Images 1-3: Captures from "Ever Since I Can Remember", an arts-based research animation project by Marica Whittemore, 2019

Arts Based Research will be described in Chapter Three in depth. To briefly introduce this concept, I have included art within this thesis to help me process experiences, thoughts, and the research I have conducted.

I have for a long time been interested in the belief that art requires sight to be experienced. Being a visual learner myself, I often enjoyed most the pictures in my readings and as a child believed myself to have a photographic memory. While I have forgotten many anecdotes from my childhood, I have many images that remain in my memory. In fact, many of the activities I participated in a child required sight, such as playing the clarinet, learning art history, and being on the basketball team.

However, all these activities would not require sight as much as I initially thought. In fact, they are accomplished by people with vision impairments every

day. I've been able to witness this firsthand while volunteering at the Special

Olympics in high school and working with the students at the Arizona State

School for the Deaf and Blind. Yet, within art institutions the stigma remains that

people with visual impairments cannot enjoy art. This preconception of the visitor

often results in a limited experience or exclusion altogether. Instead, many

people with visual impairments think of art as an essential aspect of life, sources

of information, and as a typical experience (De Coster & Loots, 2004). Some art

institutions have started to utilize a more inclusive practice to encourage people

with visual disabilities to participate in the experience.

This animation project came from a daydream I have had for many years

now. In this daydream, humans "reverse blink". The inverse of what typically

occurs, we would live with our eyes shut, occasionally needing to open our eyes

to "blink". Most of our time would be spent in darkness, scattered with occasional

flashes of vision. The project explores how our lives would be different if this

were the case, often putting the reader in a humorous or dangerous situation, like

blinking to see the Mona Lisa for one second, or trying to operate a vehicle. The

complete animation video (1:12 minutes total) can be viewed online at

https://vimeo.com/380339482.

Through this project, I began to examine the ableist constructs that we

operate in as a society. Things like watching television or operating a vehicle are

commonplace situations for a person living today in 2019. Few accommodations

have been made for these experiences, like television programs offering closed

captions or occasional verbal descriptions. Yet overall, we live in a society that

favors the able-bodied (Griffin et al, 2007). Even within the museum context illustrated in the animation, I try to point out the fact that the experience of seeing the Mona Lisa is believed to be a very visual experience, with the other spectators taking photos and clamoring to see the painting. However, there is much more to the art experience than sight or other disabilities, which I explore in this research study.

Layout of the Chapters

Chapter Two of this paper discusses literature relating to disability studies in art education, legislation, and the changes happening in art education. Relevant literature and the impacts upon the field are discussed at the end of this chapter. Chapter Three outlines the research question and methodologies used within this study. In Chapter Four, the research is presented through autoethnography and arts-based research in reflections and through themes generated during reflection. Chapter Five focuses on findings and conclusions from the study.

Definitions

Disability - A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. (ADA, 1990)

Accessibility – The degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is usable by people with disabilities. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019)

Inclusion - Including people with disabilities in everyday activities and encouraging them to have roles similar to their peers who do not have a disability. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019)

Medical model of disability - Disability is the result of a physiological difference, that the individual is the problem, in need of intervention or a cure (Swain, French, & Cameron, 2003).

Social model of disability - disability as a product of design; environments are designed to disable or exclude people with impairments (Shakespeare, 2010).

Universal Design - A universally-designed experience is usable by all people to the greatest extent possible, without the need for individual adjustments. Identifying and removing barriers to access proactively may result in enhanced participation and engagement for all and minimize the need for individual accommodations.

Ch 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Within the United States, one person out of every five has a disability, with over 56.7 million people documented in the 2010 U.S. Census survey. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This population increases daily as the general population ages. As the largest minority group in the country, there has been an increase in awareness of accommodations and access issues across many facets of everyday life, from transportation to architecture, education to leisure. Specifically, within the education sector, school systems have incorporated new measures to provide equal access to education to all students. Public businesses such as museums have been legally mandated to provide architectural access for people with physical disabilities and job opportunities have been created for people with disabilities within many workplaces. Nationwide, businesses are working to become more accessible to people with disabilities, including classrooms, museums, and community art institutions.

This literature review looks at the emergence of disability studies in history, the development of national legislation about disability, and the impacts on art education to date. The review discusses prominent theories involving disability studies and art education as well as discussing practicing theorists and art educators. Since disabilities studies is an interdisciplinary endeavor, the research spans the fields of art education, psychology, and medicine.

Disability – What is It?

Throughout time, there have been many definitions of what disability is. This elusive definition might contribute to the general confusion that businesses and art institutions face when considering their relationship with disability. Current thought describes disability as a physical or mental impairment that limits life activities (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990), which is often interpreted as a medical condition. This definition, which is the legal definition of disability, creates the ideology that disability is a deficiency or a departure from what is considered normal. As a medical condition, it is problematic and in need of a solution or cure (Goodley, 2014).

This pathologizing of disability is unfortunately still practiced today. In fact, the disability studies community is critical of the medical profession for this practice (Anderson & O'Sullivan, 2010) and within the art education field, practitioners look at society as the cause for disability. The current definition's stipulation that an impairment affects a person's life (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990) leaves room for interpretation on whether it is a medical disability or caused by society.

Medical + Social Models of Disability

The medical model of disability examines disability as a physical illness to be cured, often through surgeries, medicine, and psychiatric treatment. The medical model uses pathological labels to position people with disabilities as being outside of what is normal (Wexler & Derby, 2015). This traditional model of disability is formed on the assumption that disability is the result of a physical

disfunction that must be treated and ideally, cured (Hughes & Patterson, 1997).

The problem is isolated to the individual, looking at the problem and treatment as

a personal issue. This model frames disability as a personal defect and differs

greatly from the social model of disability, which instead looks at disability as

socio-political problem. The social model of disability looks to address disability

as emphasized by interactions with obstacles that a person with disabilities may

encounter instead of looking at disability within an individual (Oliver, 1992). It

looks at external factors such as environment or social preconceptions as the

main factors causing disability and emphasizes making changes within those

areas to improve the quality of life for all people. See Table 1 for a comparison

between the medical and social models of disability.

	Medical Model	Social/Socio-political model
Definition	Disability is a deficiency or abnormality	Disability is a difference
Perception	Being disabled is negative	Being disabled is neutral
Cause	Disability resides in the individual	Disability derives from interaction between the individual and society
Remedy	The remedy for disability-related problems is cure or normalization of the individual	The remedy for disability related problems is a change in the interaction between the individual and society
Agent of change	The agent of change is the professional assigned to normalize the individual	The agent of change can be the individual, an advocate, or anyone who effects change between the individual and society

Table 1: Comparing the medical and socio-political model (Gill, 2007)

Disability studies arose in the 1970s as a response to the medical model

of disability. Looking at society instead of physiological problems, it posits that

society can restrict access by not providing appropriate services or fulfilling the needs of people with disabilities (Altman, 2001; Oliver, 1992). Looking at societal barriers and stereotypes, the social model of disability identifies a problem within culture and strives to create equality through attitudes, support, information, physical improvements, and flexible work schedules. Disability studies recognizes people with disabilities as a social or cultural category (Goodley & Rapley, 2002) with minority status (Siebers, 2008) that shares a lived experience in a world with disabling barriers. This concept of disability is defined by the dominant group that considers itself normal (Wexler, 2016). This social definition of disability differs greatly from the previous medical concepts of disabilities.

Legislation

As disability studies grew, there was a movement in legislation to support equal access for people with disabilities. Within education, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 stipulated that it was a constitutional right for all children, including children with disabilities, to have access to education. (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965). The law was reauthorized as the Improving America's Schools Act (1994), No Child Left Behind Act (2001) emphasizing standardized testing regulations, and finally in 2015 it was renamed to the Every Student Succeeds Act. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 created a federal fund to enable and promote education for children with disabilities in schools, stating that all children have a right to a "free and appropriate education" (Education for All Handicapped Children Act, 1975). The law was later reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Act in 1990 and

mandated individualized education plans for each student to create "appropriate measurable postsecondary goals" (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004). In 2004 the law was reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act which specified accessible classroom conditions and teaching standards.

Within the public sphere, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 granted basic civil rights to people with disabilities and prohibited discrimination based on disability. This included accommodations for within the classroom and outside of it. One of the most impactful laws to be enacted is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in 1990. The ADA prevents discrimination in all areas of public life, with specific regulations on employment, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990). This law has greatly impacted museums and other public art spaces with their relationship to people with disabilities. Since the enactment of the ADA, museums have begun to make their services more accessible through eliminating physical barriers to their facilities such as stairs, designing accessible exhibitions, and providing communication about accessibility provisions within the museum. Legal mandates for physical accessible accommodations can result in fines if a business is found to be in fault. (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990).

Disability Studies and Art Education

The relationship between art education and disability studies has been recognized by many practitioners as beneficial (Blandy, 1994; Derby, 2011; Wexler, 2011), with art offering a site for creative expression and meaning

making. Art education has a longstanding history of social justice theory and advocacy yet struggles with representing disability studies fully. Thus, the interdisciplinary scholarship of disability studies and art education has been embraced and promoted within general education in classrooms and community settings. School districts have begun to adopt school-wide approaches to teaching to support needs of diverse learners (AAIDD SECP, 2017) and documented effective programs have led to new learning opportunities within K-12 school systems.

As disability studies activism and national legislation have grown, museums and art institutions have become a site for change. However, there are no clear boundaries or strategies for accommodation (Wexler & Derby, 2015) which can cause lackluster attempts and low institutional buy-in. Efforts within museums involve accommodations like audio guides and braille but are viewed as add-ons and people with disabilities continue to feel alienated and unwelcome. There are two responses to disability: accommodation and universal design (UA Disability Resources, 2007). See Table 2 for a comparison of these responses to disability, looking specifically at the source of the problem, time of action, and whether the act is sustainable over time.

Accommodation Response	Universal Design Response
Access is a problem for the individual to address	Access is an overall problem that needs to be addressed by the institution
Access is achieved by accommodations and retrofitting requirements	The experience is designed to be usable for all people
Access is retroactive	Access is proactive
Access is provided in a separate location or special treatment	Access is inclusive
Access is consumable – must be reconsidered for each person	Access is sustainable

Table 2: Responses to disability (UA Disability Resources, 2007)

The most common response by art institutions is to implement elements of Universal Design. This model helps guide institutions toward inclusion using seven principles, including: equitable use, flexibility of use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and size and space for approach and use (NC State University, 1997). Universal Design helps shift the physical environments and experiences within a site to a more equitable, accessible form that can help all visitors. While certainly helping people with disabilities, the principles of universal design help create an environment that everyone can experience equally. Instead of incorporating accessible measures specifically for people with disabilities, the Universal Design model includes people with disabilities into the general population (McGinnis, 2007). While the Universal Design model is highly regarded as positively impacting the experience of a person with a disability, it must be used for learning and not for access in

order to be achieved fully (Rappolt-Schlichtmann & Daley, 2013). For the purposes of this study, Universal Design is a good step toward an equitable art institution.

When art institutions use the accommodation response, they often think of people with disabilities as a homogenous group, offering one size fits all accommodations and programming. Like all participants, people with disabilities come from all social classes, cultural, racial, religious, and educational backgrounds (Candlin, 2003). The reasons for visiting a museum or participating in an art program are the same of people without disabilities, but institutions often make assumptions and generalizations about a person with disabilities. Like with all people, arts can be for entertainment, recreation, social interaction, education, and a form of therapy (Lord, 1981).

While federal legislation is generally supportive of disability studies, public reception of the laws has not been entirely positive. Alice Wexler, quoting Blandy (1989), suggests that federal law promotes stereotypes of people with disabilities and utilizes the medical model (Wexler, 2016). Within classrooms, Alexandra Allen criticizes IDEA's association of art education with a therapeutic approach (Allen, 2019), simplifying art to heal people with disabilities. While the federal laws promote equity and access for people with disabilities, it does not promote a better understanding of disability within our society and instead promotes stereotypes and superficial accommodations. Art is a necessary activity to negotiate and integrate with our world (Wexler, 2016) and must be open for all people to experience.

Within museum studies discourse, trends in accessibility and inclusion have been on the rise, with organizations like the National Endowment for the Arts creating accessibility handbooks, research journals, online forums, and more. The National Art Education Association has a task force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to evaluate the organization's diversity and inclusion within the professional community of art educators. In a survey of 25 museums throughout the United States, Wendy Sbarra (2012) found that 36% of the museums offered an audio tour, 16% had adapted maps, 48% offered a touch tour, 16% had tactile objects, 40% offered large print or Braille transcripts, and 8% offered hands-on workshops and programs. In gallery tools and accommodations can lead to people with disabilities having a deeper interaction with the artworks, leading to general observations and understanding the artwork (Burnham & Kai Key 2011).

Beyond accommodations, many museums have begun looking at their exhibition design and programs for accessibility. Utilizing Universal Design can lead to greater engagement for people with disabilities and can benefit the general population. It can be a useful tool to create accessible environments for older generations and creates methods for health and wellness, social participation, and human performance (Steinfeld 2012).

While museums and community art programs are beginning to become invested in creating a more accessible environment for their visitors and participants, it is often left to the educator to identify, create, and implement the accommodations and changes that must take place. This can be particularly

stressful when compounded by a lack of funding, training, or time available to the educator.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Layout of the Sections

Chapter Three explains the research methodologies used in this study and how they contribute to the findings of the research. The first section explains the theoretical framework for the study regarding why the research is important and how it was evaluated. Next, section two discusses the methodology of case study informed by autoethnography used in the study and explains the theoretical and historical background of the technique. The third section discusses arts-based research as a methodology, the theoretical and historical background of the research method, and how it applies to this study. The fourth section discusses the strengths and limitations of the study and analyzes the reliability and validity of the data.

Theoretical Framework

There are two subjects framed in theory within this research study: why it is important and how it is was done. In addition to later explaining the methodology of this research, it is important to identify the theoretical foundations that the research was built upon.

In discussing why this research study is important, there are obvious implications explained in the previous literature review describing the importance of equity for people with disabilities within art education. While legally mandated and socially encouraged, the inclusive efforts within the past 30 years within art

institutions has sought to include people with disabilities to varying levels of success. However, it is also important to explain why art institutions should be inclusive sites for all people.

Contextual Model of Learning

John Falk and Lynn Dierking have studied museum visitors extensively to determine the motivations and experiences that come from interacting with art institutions. To analyze the visitors, they created the contextual model of learning, which describes three contexts that the visitor interacts with the museum: the personal context, sociocultural context, and physical context (Falk & Dierking, 2012). Utilizing the framework of the contextual model of learning allows for analysis of an individual's experience in greater detail.

Falk and Dierking's personal context refers to the participant's previous experiences and knowledge that they bring to the museum. It can include the personal reasons for the visit or participating in the art experience, along with their developmental level and preferred ways of learning. The sociocultural context describes both the person's relationship to the institution, other visitors, and society and the social interactions that may occur at the site. These factors can represent the individual's values and beliefs and the interactions between the participant and the art institution staff, volunteers, or other participants. The physical context explains the relationship between the visitor and the physical setting. This can evaluate the architecture, objects, and ways that the participant interacts with the environment during their visit.

It is important to utilize the contextual model of learning to understand the complex interactions between the participants and the art institution, whether it is a museum or community art site. Understanding that the model is constantly changing and is unique to each person is important. When looking at the research sites presented in this study, these three contexts are evaluated but have varying levels of importance on the overall educational experience. However, using the contextual models as a framework for the participant experience allows reflection on the different aspects of the programs and their success.

Wide-Awakeness and Critical Consciousness

This study is also influenced by the work of Maxine Greene and Paolo Freire, who look at the educator to become self-aware within their teaching practice to pose questions and enact change. Greene's concept of "wide-awakeness" looks for actors to respond to the happenings around them and make deliberate choices to impact the world (Greene, 1977). Greene developed her theory based on the concepts of Henry David Thoreau, who sought to move others through his writing toward conscious endeavor to live deliberately (Thoreau, 1963). Wide-awakeness also was described by theorist Alfred Schultz as:

> By the term "wide-awakeness" we want to denote a plane of
> consciousness of highest tension originating in an attitude of full attention
> to life and its requirements. Only the performing and especially the
> working self is fully interested in life and, hence, wide-awake. It lives within

its acts and its attention is exclusively directed to carrying its project into effect, to executing its plan. This attention is an active, not a passive one. Passive attention is the opposite to full awareness. (Schultz, 1967)

This research study models wide-awakeness as an important factor in art education teaching practice through the in-depth reflection of my experiences. While I was actively "awake" at each site, the process continues through the detailed analysis of these experiences and execution of action afterward.

Another influence for this research study is Freire's concept of critical consciousness, or conscientization, coming from his 1970 work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. This theory focuses on the educator developing an in-depth understanding of the world, specifically looking at social justice issues and oppression. Developing a critical consciousness can lead to transformative action, both within yourself and other people. This research study utilizes the concept of critical consciousness by reflecting upon lived experiences to understand the world in reference to disability studies within art education. Through personal reflection, I can understand systems of oppression within art education for people with disability studies and identify ways to change these systems.

Freire suggests that critical consciousness can be achieved by evaluating experiences for generative themes, which are developed through critical reflection of the human-world relationship and on the relationships between people within the world (Freire, 1970). These themes are iterated at the end of each section of the research presented in this study.

Case Study

"Studies focusing on society and culture as a group, a program, or an organization typically use some form of case study as a strategy. This entails immersion in the setting and rests on both the researcher's and the participants worldviews." (Marshall & Rossman, 2006)

Utilizing case study as a methodology, this research explains three research sites that relate to the research question. Beginning with the problem being studied, the context and issues are examined using rich description and concludes with the lesson learned. (Pfeiler-Wunder, 2013). This research study utilizes the evaluative case-study model, which involves description, explanation, and then judgement (Merriam, 1998). To collect data, I utilized autoethnography and arts-based research as tools to reflect, interpret my experiences, and draw conclusions from the three sites examined.

Utilizing case study as a methodology allows me to frame the reflection around myself, while looking at lived experiences. Focusing on reflection and critique fits into the objectives of the study, as well as offers an honest look at the practice I promote within the research study for other art educators to employ.

Autoethnography

"Autoethnography is a method of research that involves describing and analyzing personal experiences in order to understand cultural experiences. The method challenges canonical ways of doing research and recognizes how personal experience influences the research process. Autoethnography acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity,

emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research." (Adams,

Holman, & Ellis, 2014).

This research intends to guide art educators working within museum and

community art settings and is informed by my experience within the field. The

use of autoethnography allows me to work with a group of people through long-

term immersion in the setting, using participant observation to evaluate the

patterns, interactions, and products created. However, this study does not focus

directly on the participants, but instead focuses on myself as the art educator by

collecting data from naturally occurring environments while participating as an

educator. Supplemental information about the participants and artworks created

help to inform the reflection on the art education practice.

Using a critical lens, this ethnographic study looks at the oppressive

structure of society that maintains the oppression of marginalized groups

(Marshall & Rossman, 2006). While there have been strides to create a more

accessible art experience within classrooms and public places, education

systemically puts people with disabilities at a disadvantage. Working as an art

educator within museums and community art settings, it is important for myself to

reflect upon my practice in order to stay critically aware of these systems.

Providing a personal viewpoint within educational systems working with people

with disabilities provides a counternarrative that challenges the predominant

narrative of the social world (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

This study does not attempt to characterize the experience of people with

disabilities, but instead focuses on my experiences in the role of an art educator

in museum and community settings and the feasibility of creating accessible and inclusive programming. Data is collected using a field journal and analyzing created texts (photos, artworks, etc.). The data collected contains my private and personal thoughts pertaining to the research process, interactions within the educational settings, and reflective thoughts after the experience.

This study uses autoethnography to illustrate the practice of an art educator working with people with disabilities in the field. It uses social scientific inquiry to analyze the role of the art educator and describe situations that arise when working with people with disabilities and in art institutions and allows me to examine the systems in place surrounding disability studies and art education. By creating an autoethnographic research study, teachers can transform during the process (Chang, 2016). This transformative process during the research study represents the self-reflective daily praxis model (Nieto & Bode, 2004) and contributes to becoming a better educator and participant in society. As an autoethnography, it presents the research in an easily understood way that should be approachable for art educators working in the field to read and find connections with the research to their teaching practice.

Arts-Based Research

"Arts based research is a process of inquiry whereby the researcher, alone or with others, engages the making of art as a primary mode of inquiry. It is the artistic process of inquiry that can be used to explore art, as well as the totality of human experience." (Leavy, 2017)

Working within an ever-evolving field of education, it is important to develop a methodology that suits the type of research being conducted. As a result of this, definitive answers may not be available, and it is important that the research reflects that. Since my research is already very self-reflective in nature, I decided to also include arts-based research techniques within this study. Utilizing arts-based research provided a medium within this research study to reflect on the experiences I had during two years of immersive teaching experiences, process my thoughts, and ask questions about what occurred. Arts-based research throughout the research process provides a way to ask questions that may not have definitive answers.

"Arts-based researchers consciously place creative and critical processes at the core of research process so as to fully investigate the contexts that shape complex human thoughts and actions" (Sullivan, 2010). Through arts-based research, we can look at how arts play a role in how people make sense of their world (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Living in an increasingly visual world, it is important to look at how art around us shapes how we think, developing a public consciousness and shaping what is societally acceptable. Art becomes interwoven with our lives, such that it becomes a medium for expressing ourselves and responding to the world. Art making that is situated within our practice and relationships help illustrated connections and has the power to influence public consciousness. Activism and social change can be enacted through the dissemination of art made through research. Sullivan's idea of arts-based research views arts-based research as interwoven with the research

process and informing one another, incorporating artistic processes or pieces into the development, data collection, and analysis of the project. (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). They can also represent the findings, which is evident in many of the pieces I created as a part of this research study. The artworks created during and after the case-study data at each site show some of the questions and answers I encountered during the research.

The questions brought about by arts-based research situate themselves within the social research of ethnography. By bringing to light new questions or thoughts, it destabilizes the social norm. Through enhancing and featuring alternative meanings about social phenomena, arts-based research can undercut the authority of the master narrative (Barone & Eisner, 2012). In reference to disability studies, art can challenge public thought and be used as a form of social justice practice, allowing people to make connections about diverse identities (Penketh, 2014).

Notably, using arts-based research combines the idea of knowing (theoria), doing (Praxis), and making (poesis) (Irwin and Springgay, 2008). Using arts-based research for this study allows art education and disability studies theory to be synthesized with my experiences teaching in the field, resulting in art-making as a way of critical reflection and internal discussion. Using art-making to promote inquiry in readers allows me to use a familiar medium to communicate my thinking patterns and relate to the material in a different way. Using arts-based research as social justice work, it attempts to draw attention to systems of inequality and injustice (Dewhurst, 2010).

Arts-based research looks at asking questions instead of finding definitive answers. It seeks to open conversations and relationships instead of reporting what has been learned (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008). The inquiry-driven nature of arts-based research makes it a good fit for this research study because the observations and critiques found within cannot solve a problem but offer suggestions for improvements. The art making process provides a way to represent the ideas that arise during the research process, which can broaden our conception of the ways in which we come to know (Barone & Eisner, 2012). This understanding of our epistemology allows us to gain understanding through different ways of representing ideas and concepts.

Another element of arts-based research that suits this study is its interdisciplinary nature. Art pervades all areas of life, including what we interact with daily. To combine disability studies with art provides a platform for communicating ideas and knowledge in an accessible way to a larger audience. Many disability studies scholars have used arts-based research to challenge stereotypes, discrimination, and stigma to disabilities (Eisenhauer, 2007) and representations of disabilities within museums can change how society views people with disabilities.

The open-ended inquiry model of arts-based research appeals me while conducting this research study because it creates what Behar describes as epistemological humility, forming relationships through sharing and listening instead of telling (Behar, 2008). As much of this research comes from my perspective, I like this form of research because it presents my findings as

information to process and discuss, instead of determining authoritative knowledge of the subject. Arts-based research encourages the creation of more questions instead of seeking to answer the initial one, which provides avenues for new voices and perspectives to be discovered and promoted.

Analysis of the study

Process and Structure

This study includes data collected for two years during immersive involvement at each research site. During each section, I took notes, made observations, and reflected on the experiences. For the creation of this thesis, I collected my notes, documents, and photographs from each site and synthesized it with theory and scholarship from my educational experience. The art-based research pieces were created during this research process.

At each site at the end of the day, I took field notes on my computer and in notebooks devoted to self-reflections. The notes reflected on observations I had made that day, thoughts on successes or failures during the lesson or experience, and notes to myself. The field notes had implicit emotions, passions, and biases which are interpreted as research tools (Copp, 2008). Creating these notes allowed for later reflection with vivid details.

The field notes contained non-biased observations and personal opinions. While the personal opinions may weaken the formality of such observations, they were noted systematically and recorded in the social setting (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). As is the nature of this research, all the observations were my own, yet the importance of these observations is demonstrated in the themes

generated by the complex interactions within the settings (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). As the research focuses on the role of the art educator working in these art environments, it is imperative to include the real experiences of myself as data to evaluate.

After reading the field notes for the purpose of this research study, the experiences were then evaluated for generative themes. This process helped draw attention to the social phenomena being studied (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).). Reading through the field notes, looking over photographs taken or artworks created during the program (when applicable), and reflecting on conversations led to the creation of categories noting patterns in the experiences. For example, after evaluating the field notes from the Tucson Museum of Art placement and reviewing the accessibility assessment created along with the intern's artworks and finished products, the themes of job and internship opportunities, evaluation, and institutional support were determined and explained.

After the themes were developed, I then created interpretations on what was significant about the theme. This interpretation brings meaning and coherence to the site-specific example, theory, and practical teaching experiences. This interpretation attaches significance to what was found, makes sense of the findings, offers explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order" (Patton, 2002).

Strengths/Limitations

This study offers an extensive analysis of my experience as an art educator working with people with disabilities. The nature of the data collected is inherently biased but offers a true depiction of practical experience in the field from my perspective.

The data provided in this study contains personal reflections, field notes, and observations I conducted while at three art education sites: an after-school art program located at a school for people with disabilities, a local museum, and an arts-based day program for adults with developmental disabilities. The data provided can be used to demonstrate these specific programs but can also be applied to the larger practice of art education. All opinions within this study are my own.

Reliability and Validity

This study represents my own experiences working with people with disabilities and does not represent their experiences or thoughts. The data provided is not intended to represent the experience of someone with a disability participating in an art program, but instead offers insight on the art educator's experience. Generalizations and insights from this research can be made to art education practice in schools, museums, and other art institutions.

Chapter Four: Research

This chapter describes three research sites. Each site has its own subsection, which includes: a description of the setting, background of the program, program details, themes, and an arts-based research project (when

applicable). The three sites are the Arizona State School for the Deaf and the Blind, the Tucson Museum of Art, and ArtWorks.

Arizona State School for the Deaf and the Blind

This section describes the 12-week program I developed for an after-school arts program at the Arizona State School for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB) Tucson on behalf of my employer, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Tucson. First, the setting and background of the organization will be explained, then the project will be described, and then relevant themes will be presented.

Description of Setting

Arizona State School for the Deaf and Blind was created by the first Arizona state legislature in 1912. The organization serves over 2,000 children from birth to age 22 who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, multisensory disabled, or deafblind. They have two schools for the deaf, one school for the blind, and a statewide program for children from birth to age three for early childhood and family education programs, with five regional cooperatives statewide. (Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind, n.d.)

The Tucson campus has a day school for students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deafblind. Compared to the Phoenix campus, the Tucson campus provides live-in residence halls for students with specialized support services. The campus features 68 acres of grounds with residence halls, recreation areas, athletic fields, and numerous school buildings.

At the time of this study, the school had 550 enrolled students, with about 40 students living in the on-site residence halls. Many of the students participated in after school sports.

Background of Program

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Tucson received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for the 2019 year. The grants "support local economies and preserves American heritage while embracing new forms of creative expression." (National Endowment for the Arts, 2019). Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA support art learning through federally funded grants. MOCA was granted a $10,000 Challenge America grant to support a series of performance and sound workshops at ASDB. The Challenge America grants seek to extend the reach of arts programs to underserved populations "whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability" (National Endowment for the Arts, 2019).

After receiving the grant, I began to develop a curriculum and strategy for the program. Since MOCA is a contemporary art museum, I wanted to move beyond visual arts and embrace other ways of creating art. Contemporary art museums seek to reevaluate the definitions of art, looking beyond visual arts into performance, conceptual, and process-based art. In response to modern art, it destabilizes the definitions of art museums as collecting institutions and instead focuses on experimental and experiential pieces (Bishop, 2013). Modeling this experimental ideology, I wanted the program at ASDB to look beyond visual arts

and was encouraged by working with visual and hearing-impaired students to think about what that meant.

The current exhibition at MOCA during this program was *Dazzled: OMD, Memphis Design, and Beyond* [1] which discussed the influence of dazzle camouflage throughout art using music, video, and traditional visual arts. Inspired by the multiple forms of representation in the exhibition, I decided to mold the curriculum into three different mediums of art: sound, movement, and video. Each medium featured a teaching artist with experience in the field and I acted as supervising educator and facilitated most of the art-making experiences in each class.

Program Details

The ASDB program met weekly on the ASDB campus on Thursdays from 3-5pm and ran for 12 weeks. The program culminated with a public showcase and performance on May 21, 2019. Participation varied week-to-week dependent on the student's other after-school extracurriculars but ranged from 21 to 40 students with ages ranging from 7 years old to 17 years old. 6 of the students had visual impairments and the remaining students had hearing impairments. One student, aged 14, was deafblind.

Teaching staff was composed of myself as supervising educator/art educator, a teaching assistant, and the teaching artist for that section. As a MOCA staff member, my salary was paid partially through the grant funding,

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[1] *DAZZLED: OMD, Memphis Design, and Beyond* was curated by Ginger Shulick Porcella and designed by Marina Grize and was on display at MOCA Tucson January 19 - April 13, 2019.

while the other teaching artists were paid fully by the grant funding. Along with the students, 5-8 ASDB staff and volunteers were on site, plus 2 American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters.

Week	Date	Class Description	Art Making activities
1	February 28	Field trip to museum	Name signs
2	March 7	Sound – Introduction	Painting to music
3	March 14	Sound – Beat Making	Balloon activity
4	March 21 - Spring Break (no class)		
5	March 28	Sound – Beat Making	Watercolor waves
6	April 4	Movement – Introduction	Charcoal figure drawing
7	April 11	Movement – Choreography	Clay sculptures
8	April 18	Movement – Choreography	Movement painting
9	April 21	Art – making day	Masks
10	May 2	Video - Introduction	Intro videos
11	May 9	Video – Storytelling	Story telling videos
	May 9	Board Presentation	
12	May 16	Video – Poetry stories	Poetry videos
	May 21	Showcase	

Table 3: ASDB schedule

Each section of the class took place over three weeks. The first week consisted of an introduction to the medium and in weeks two and three the students used the medium to create artwork. Along with the different types of art, the students created visual art projects that complemented the lesson, which were collected and later displayed at the Board presentation on May 9th and the

Showcase on May 21st. See Table 3 for a detailed class schedule with dates, subjects, and activities completed.

Section one looked at sound and beat making[2]. Since much of the class was hearing impaired, we worked to create music using other methods, such as body movements, vibrations, and using visuals. Students were first introduced to the instructor and the materials we would be using in the class. Using MIDI keyboards and beat pads, the manually entered beats would be converted into music by using the program Ableton. We recorded the beats made in each class and then created 4 songs from them, which were then used in later portions of the program. Each class also incorporated a visual art project: in week 2, students created movement paintings using acrylic paint while listening to music, in week 3 students sketched while listening to and watching different musical genres, and in week 4 the students created watercolor soundwave artworks inspired by the Ableton technology. The watercolor soundwave project will be discussed later in this chapter.

Section two of the program involved movement and dance performance. Students were encouraged to use dance during the introductory class during week 6, with games and movement challenges to get them engaged and moving. The 7th and 8th week saw the students learning a choreographed dance developed by the teaching artist and coming up with their own choreography in small groups. The choreographed dance was created using the four elements: earth,

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[2] Beat making is a form of song writing usually created using a computer or beat machine (sampling keyboard or drum pad). It differs from a typical song because it does not use instruments, chords, or melody.

wind, water, and fire. In the dance, the students acted out the elements using their bodies and one of the songs created during the sound portion of the program was used for the final dance performance. During this portion of the program, students explored charcoal figure drawing, clay, and movement painting to represent what they had learned. They used the charcoal to study how the body looks in different poses, used clay to represent the four elements, and physically used their bodies as paintbrushes during a movement painting activity.

The final section of the program looked at video and poetry. Students observed videos and film to learn about different storytelling techniques in week 10, and then in week 11 and 12 the students used handheld cameras in small groups to tell stories about themselves and their surroundings. They worked on storyboards, storytelling techniques like beginning, middle, and end, and each took roles within the groups to create their videos. Within each group, there was one director, one producer, and a few actors. Week 12 also featured a special lesson from a local poet and the students created poetry and video work inspired by their lives. The students were able to explore video making using the cameras, do live video editing using the computer, and see their final products on screen.

The program concluded with a public showcase on site at ASDB. The students displayed their artworks created during the class, played their video and music pieces, and performed the choreographed dance. Parents of the students

attended, as well as MOCA staff and board members. At the end of the dance performance, students were able to take all their artworks home for the summer.

Themes

Accessible museum experiences

"Museums and galleries may flaunt their access credentials (especially in funding applications) but access is often tokenistic and tends to remain low on the list of institutional priorities. Blind people are constituted as a marginal group not because their blindness makes them so, but because the ocularcentricity of museums and galleries ensures that non-visual engagement with art and artefacts remains virtually inconceivable in all but the most innovative of institutions" (Candlin, 2003).

Since much of the program was inspired by the exhibition on view at MOCA and because of my experience doing museum tours, I wanted to begin the program by having the students visit the museum. ASDB staff requested transportation from the campus to the museum and I contacted a local organization for ASL translation services. Since the program was off-site for ASDB, they did not provide interpreters for the field trip. I contacted the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf (COPD), a local organization that provides interpreting services as well as other services for Deaf community members in Tucson. Most communities have organizations like COPD, which offer translation services for a nominal fee. It is important to know how many students will need translating services and whether there are any deafblind students, who require a different kind of interpretation.

I conducted the tour using audio description and encouraging the students to explore on their own. After asking questions or providing information about the art, the ASL interpreter would then translate for the students. Using audio description provides further accessibility for visitors with visual impairments. While touch can provide firsthand learning about art objects, it is difficult to do with 2-dimensional works so description is essential (Candlin, 2003). Along with audio description, the exhibition featured many video and music components with individual headphones, which the students were able to use or share.
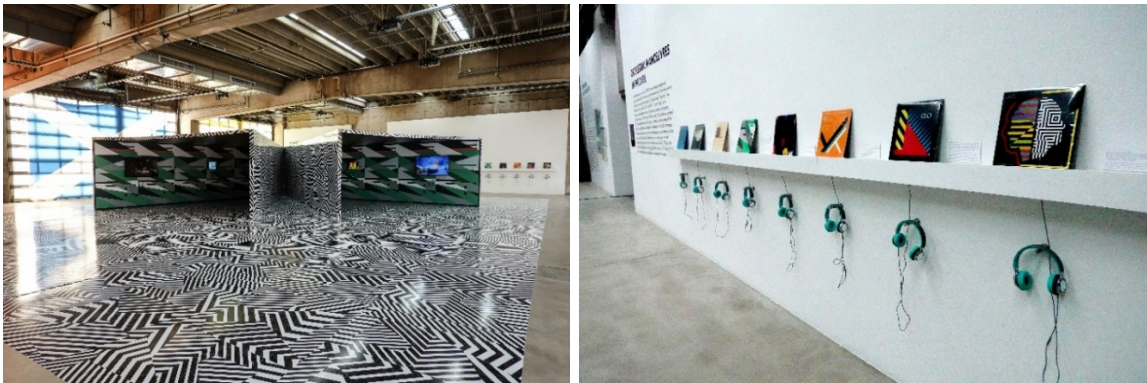
Images 4-5:"DAZZLED" exhibition at MOCA Tucson, photos by Lisa Tchakmakian

The exhibition featured many multisensory experiences, such as the videos pictured above. Visitors to the museum would walk into the tunnels to watch videos on iPads and TV monitors, which had music streaming into headphones. Other areas, such as the Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark area (picture two), streamed the complete albums by the band onto personal headsets with adjustable volume levels. Other areas of the exhibition featured sculptures, furniture, paper works, and murals.

Overall, the visit was enriching to the program because the students were able to witness and experience different types of art within a museum context. Many people with disabilities feel that museums are exclusive institutions that are not welcome (Verrent et al, 2010) so this opportunity showed the students that there are different ways to experience art. "Individuals in every audience want equal opportunity to choose how in-depth their dialogue and experience with a work of art will be, and they should be able to access art in as many ways as possible." (Art Beyond Sight, n.d.). In order to create an environment for dialogue, museums must create varied experiences to appeal to diverse types of people, including those with visual impairments. Dialogic learning within a museum leads to an ongoing process of engagement and leads to an aesthetic experience between the visitor and the objects. As an educator, it is important to deconstruct the misconception that museums are exclusive institutions for people with disabilities and provide different ways for people to interact with art. Suggestions for conducting museum tours for people with visual and hearing disabilities:

1. Learn verbal description techniques

    Verbal description is a tool that provides learning experiences for people with and without disabilities and can use non-visual language to convey the visual world. A verbal tour can include navigating someone through the museum, explaining a work of art, or describe the visual elements of an event. Explaining the artwork to a group of people with visual impairment can help them to understand what you are discussing.

2. Ensure a good ratio of staff to students

   For the tour I conducted, I was leading the tour to 21 students and 5 ASDB staff members. This was not an ideal ratio, I would encourage small groups of 1 art educator to 10 students with support staff.

3. Incorporate multisensory experiences if applicable

   Using the other senses (smell, sound, touch) helps evoke memories and relative life experiences for museum visitors.

4. Don't plan to discuss every piece of art on display, instead choose a few

   This helps with museum fatigue, attention spans, and keeps things interesting.

5. Allow for exploration and small group inquiry

   Providing time for self-guided exploration of the artwork allows time for individuals to process the artwork at their own rate (i.e.: a student using a monocle to see the artwork) and allows them to discover things that appeal to them.

6. Contact local interpretation companies or seek trained volunteers and staff to facilitate ASL tours

   Working with deaf or hearing-impaired museum visitors necessitates ASL interpretation and should be handled by a trained professional. During this tour with the 20 students, translation was imperative to the tour.

Confronting Stereotypes

One of the biggest challenges during this program was confronting stereotypes within ourselves, the students, and the staff involved. Convincing all

involved parties that teaching sound to deaf students and visual arts to visually impaired students is valuable was a hurdle from the beginning of the project. Utilizing Keifer-Body's call for disability justice, there must be a "collective search for democratic models of arts education in which students and individuals with disabilities are afforded equity and agency rather than the traditional practices of categorization and normalization" (Keifer-Boyd et al, 2018). Allowing the students room for exploration of different media allow them to defy stereotypes and preconceived ideas of what the arts can offer students with disabilities. Students who are involved in visual and creative arts develop thinking skills and become their own best advocates (Wexler, 2002). Finding different ways to communicate and grow allows the students to feel more confident and courageous. After encouraging student and staff participation in the classes, it was easy to see that the students would develop and learn skills even when initially hesitant.

I worked with each teaching artist to ensure we were thinking about the planned curriculum from many different angles. Starting with sound, we pondered ways to think about music from a non-auditory way. While challenging, it was fruitful to see the students interact with the sound and beat-making in ways we couldn't expect. Using a subwoofer for heavy bass sounds, touching the speakers, and using balloons to feel the sound vibrations were some of the physical modifications we employed during this section of the program. Additionally, we considered visual elements, utilizing Ableton, a music making program that converts the music into a visual beat timeline and color graphics. Thinking about sound led into an exploration of the scientific principles of sound

waves, resulting in a watercolor project to replicate the colorful waves displayed on Ableton.

Image 6: Screenshot of Ableton Live (from Robert Henke), Image 7: Example of watercolor sound wave project from ASDB program

Art opportunities also lead individuals to understand the visual culture of the world, which allows them to participate in their communities. (Axel & Levent, 2001). In the movement section of the program, students thought about representations of the four elements: fire, earth, wind, and water. Representing them through clay sculpture, figure drawings, and a collaborate dance piece, the students expressed their thoughts through alternative forms. Exploring connections through different senses and media provided the students opportunities to make connections to their everyday experiences and each other. Creating an atmosphere and curricula to support this exploration in the students is integral to teaching students in general, as well as students with disabilities.

Another challenge during this program was working with ASDB staff who were not enthusiastic about our unconventional artmaking approach. Before the first in-class meeting, staff members were loudly disapproving of the planned

curricula. Specifically, the staff members were not anticipating the sound portion to be successful given most of the students were hearing impaired. However, approaching the instruction from different angles provided students different ways to access the experience and by the end of the three weeks, they were excited to hear and experience their song. One ASDB staff member suggested that we use balloons in the class to allow the students to feel the vibrations of the soundwaves, and when we used this technique in the next class the students were able to experience the music differently and in a way they understood. This experience with the ASDB staff shows that even in positions working toward equity and access, there are unintended stereotypes and barriers created within the educational system against people with disabilities. Changing the ways in which we encounter disability within education can change the social systems in place and will allow for deeper learning and growth within the art classroom. Furthermore, disability awareness and inclusion can be integrated across curricula and can be interdisciplinary (Matthews, 2010). By promoting different learning styles and media within the art program, it may encourage exploration in the other areas of the student's academic and extracurricular life. Once achieved, students will "experience education inclusively, as active participants, without the constraints of preconceived expectations, free to achieve their fullest potentials" (Malley & Silverstein, 2014).

Creating Flexible Curricula

During the 12-week program, many alterations occurred to the planned curricula. Some of the students participated in other after-school activities and

attended our class when they could. The translation staff changed weekly, and we were sometimes joined by a large group of ASDB staff, other times a smaller group. While the teaching staff were set for their three-week programs, some of the other teaching artists would join class to meet the students or observe. There were many changes in staffing throughout the weeks.

After my first meeting with ASDB staff, we were anticipating 40 students and had begun to plan to split the class into two groups for a more manageable group to instruct. However, closer to the start of the program we were told there would be 15 participants. As a result, I was able to structure the curriculum into one class of 15 students, who would go through 3 weeks with each teaching artist to learn different ways of making art.

Of course, this is not how the class occurred. Within the first few minutes of the initial class, I was told that 6 additional students would be joining us, making it 21 students total. 20 students per teacher with a teaching assistant and other support staff is a perfectly manageable group, however in the upcoming weeks we would see as many as 40 students at a time in class. These unexpected changes in the number of students made it difficult to predict how much one-on-one teaching could occur, but fortunately there were plenty of adults in the room to manage the students.

More applicable were the changes to the planned curricula. At the beginning of the project, it was important to me to sit down with each teaching artist and develop a plan for each class that would involve their subject matter, active participation, and art-making opportunities. Having experience teaching art

programs and my educational background, I created some basic learning objectives and goals for the program. A planned curriculum was also required in order to receive the NEA grant. During the meetings with the teaching artists, we discussed their general plans for the class sessions, including projects and end-goals. From there, the teaching artists created a more detailed plan for each class on our shared Google Drive.

The initial class for each section provided insight on how the students were reacting to the planned curriculum and offered an opportunity to reassess and evaluate alterations. For example, on the first day of the sound section, we discussed ways to make experiencing the music more accessible to the students with hearing impairments. During the movement portion, we started the section with an extensive introductory class to make the students more comfortable with moving their bodies and learning different techniques. After the introductory section, we were able to change the following classes from an open-ended student led choreographed dance to more structured instruction with step-by-step choreography.

These changes to the curricula were important but unplanned. It is integral as an educator to evaluate but doing this process during the educational process allowed us to create a more interesting curriculum tailored to the students. Utilizing improv skills can help educators connect better to their program participants and helps with communication (Oleniczak, 2016). Accommodating for varying class sizes, rooms, and students can make for interesting planning as a teacher but also teaches you to think on your feet for unexpected changes. In

addition, it is unreasonable to think that all students will interpret your planned curricula as expected and making changes can often lead to a more interesting class for the students. This flexibility and teacher improv skills can help with multitasking, validating the participant's opinions and interests, and allows for the educator to remain present in the teaching situation. Without being flexible and improvising to the teaching environment, teachers and art programs risk disconnecting from their communities (Oleniczak, 2016).
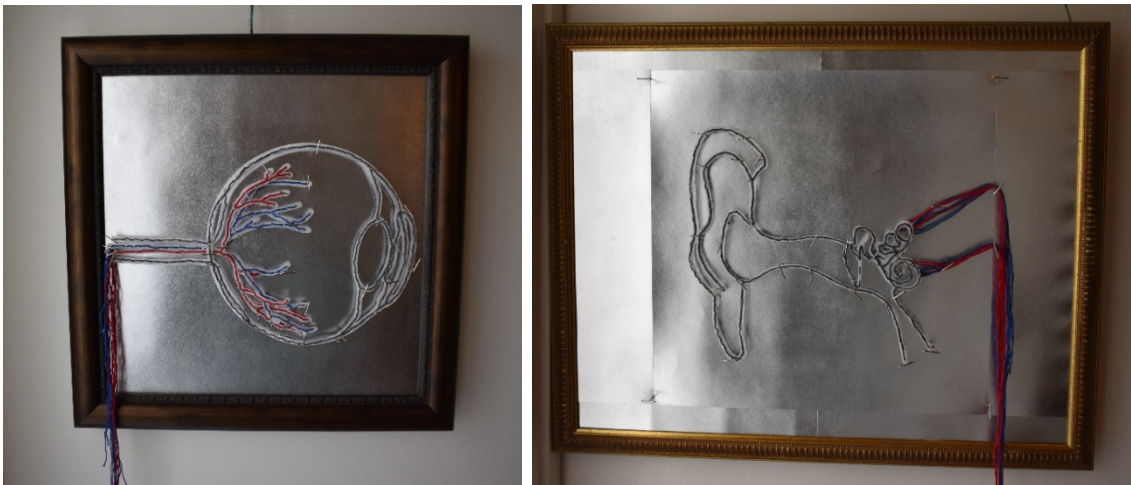
ASDB Arts-Based Research

Image 8-9: Pictures of anatomical paper cuts, Whittemore 2019

My experience at ASDB was my first time directly working with a group with disabilities in which I had complete control over the program. It was a humbling experience to have this opportunity to learn by working directly with a group of people with disabilities and bonding over the shared experience. It also gave me my first opportunity to reflect and synthesize my research with my teaching practice.

One of the main worries I had going into the experience was how I would interact with students with disabilities. It is easy to settle into your way of living

life without realizing it is different than someone else's. For example, when touring MOCA I was worried that my experience of an artwork, piece or music, or video would be different than how a person with a disability would experience it. However, after working with the students I realized that although our experiences of things are different, each person provides an interesting insight on things. Learning from the difference instead of restricting it is important regardless of disability.

As I pondered my initial worries, I also realized that my knowledge of disabilities was limited. The ASDB staff gave me a list of the initial 21 participating students and denoted whether the student had a hearing impairment or a visual impairment, with one student marked "deafblind", meaning they were both hearing and visually impaired. However, no further information was provided by ASDB about the student's disabilities, nor if they were multiply disabled. Having limited information about the student's disabilities also led to initially having a limited view on what those disabilities meant. Simplifying a hearing disability to being deaf, for example, eliminates a huge population of people who have limited hearing abilities, can hear specific tones, or other versions of the disability. Similarly, not all people who have a visual impairment are completely blind, with many people having light sensitivity, glaucoma, and other variations. On day one of the program I realized how naïve I had been about the seemingly straightforward categories of disability the students had been labeled as.

Though I was not privy to the student's medical records, I created this program concurrently with a class in my graduate program discussing teaching

techniques for the visually impaired. In the class, we discussed different medical

conditions causing visual impairment, plus techniques on evaluation and

teaching for these students. Early pages of our class textbook depicted models of

the eye and discussed different physical and neurological issues that can lead to

vision impairment. Thinking about the physiology of the eye, nerves, and brain

made me think back to my time during my undergraduate degree as an Anatomy

and Physiology major. Each of the students at ASDB has a folder with

information illustrating their disability from a physiological perspective – charts,

numbers, and diagrams are used to explain how each person lives their life.

This anatomical look at disability is problematic and harkens back to

Oliver's (1992) medical model of disability. However, I took an interest in trying to

understand different medical problems with the ear and eye during my teaching

this program. Conducting "tests" in the form of art projects and class sessions

provided a nuanced representation of the different forms of visual and hearing

impairments that were in the classroom each day. While my view on how society

defines and limits disabilities has not changed, thinking about it from a

physiological perspective inspired a series of artworks which I will write about

here.

One of my favorite art forms to make is paper cutting. Something about

using an Xacto blade to transform a solid sheet of paper speaks to me in a way

that must be related to my previous aspirations for medical school. To combine

my thoughts about the ASDB program and knowledge of the physiological

contributors to hearing and visual impairments, I created a series inspired by the

scientific illustrations of the human body. Focusing on the eye and ear, I created paper cut models of the organs, which I then hand-stitched with embroidery thread. The resulting artworks are thin, transparent diagrams that look like an apparition, but punctuated by richly colored thread running down the middle of each line.
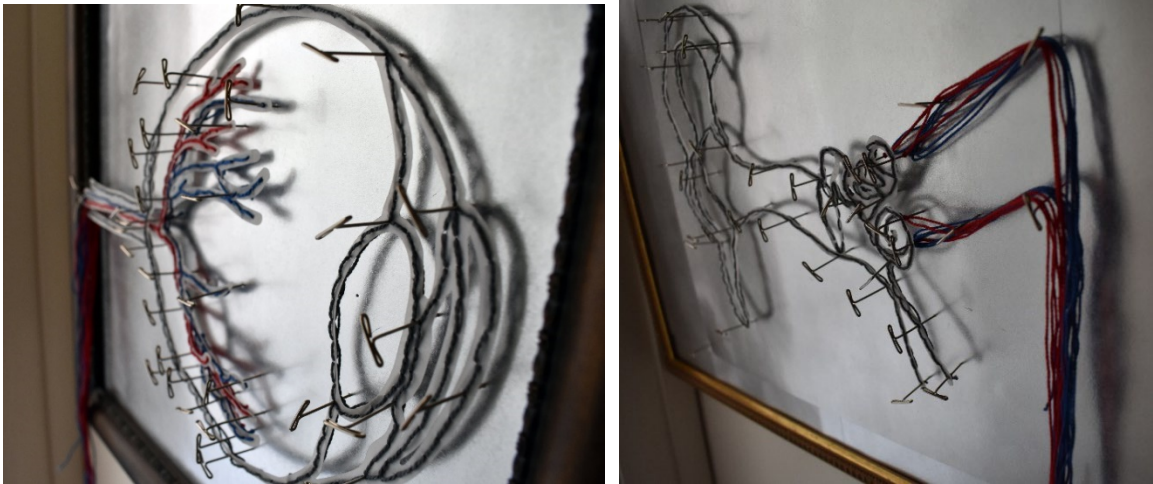
Images 10-11: Detailed images of paper cut art, Whittemore 2019

Creating these paper cuts was a slow, almost surgical process. While making the cuts and creating the stitching, I thought about the many doctor's visits and occasional surgeries that are associated with having a disability and how the societal view of disability had changed since the early 1900s. Initially believed to be a purely medical issue, disabilities were viewed as a physical problem to be solved by medical procedures and science (Swain, French, & Cameron, 2003). While visits to the doctor's office and hospital rooms are still present as a form of treatment, the emphasis is now less on medicine to cure disability, but often makes living with a disability more tolerable from a physical standpoint.

Another thing I returned to while creating these artworks was the changes that medicine, and science can have on the disabled experience. One of the students at ASDB was deaf/blind, being born with no vision and a very limited ability to hear. This was not discovered until the student was 5 and they were given cochlear implants to enhance the limited hearing they had. As a result of the cognitive growth that had happened since the student's birth until the installation of the cochlear implant, their brain could not process the unfamiliar auditory transmissions. Even with advances in medicine and technology that can vastly improve a person's life, there are also limitations to the body's ability to receive these new skills. I thought about this delicate situation even more during the art-making process when I would tragically rip my paper, or tear through a hole with the needle. Our bodies are truly delicate things.

Tucson Museum of Art

This section describes a yearlong immersion into the Education department at the Tucson Museum of Art (TMA). During this placement, I conducted an accessibility assessment of the institution and created accessibility tools and materials while working collaboratively with an intern with deafness.

Description of Setting

The Tucson Museum of Art was established in 1924 and currently comprises a 4-acre city block with 74,000 square feet of exhibition space and a collection of over 8,000 objects. With its immense collection and space, the museum hosts 8-9 exhibitions annually and features an array of events. During the 1990s, the museum featured an art school facilitated by the museum

docents. Education continues to be a goal of the museum with diverse programs, tours, and outreach events.

The museum currently employs 25 staff members, with departments like education, community engagement, marketing, membership, and curation. During my placement at the museum, the education department consisted of 4 staff members: Curator of Education, Assistant Curator of Education, Curator of Community Engagement, and Assistant Curator of Community Engagement. In addition to the staff members, there were 4 interns, me as a Graduate Assistant, and a handful of hired teaching artists to facilitate the educational programs. (Tucson Museum of Art, n.d.)

Background of Program

I was offered this position as part of the Graduate Incentives for Growth Awards (GIGA) in the Art and Visual Culture Department at the University of Arizona. The position is granted to two graduate students annually, with opportunities for immersive learning within museum settings such as the Tucson Museum of Art and University of Arizona Museum of Art (UAMA). One student is placed at the TMA and the other is placed at the UAMA. The museum becomes a place for students to design projects and work in informal learning environments for future thesis and dissertation research. This position serves as a Graduate Assistant position within the University of Arizona and is offered financial compensation and University benefits like tuition reduction and health care.

As an instructional experience, students are encouraged to develop programs and explore areas of the museum that appeal to their interests. As part of the experience, students are given a faculty advisor and must submit a reflection at the end of the placement as well as conduct a presentation for the department.

Prompted by my interests in museum accessibility and the role of art educators, I decided to guide my experience working at the TMA to explore these areas. My time at the Tucson Museum of Art included two major projects: an accessibility assessment of the institution and working on accessibility tools and resources.

Program Details

Accessibility Assessment

As an exploration of what accessibility meant in a museum setting, I conducted an assessment of the TMA as part of my GIGA placement. Most of this assessment was self-created, though some of the evaluation tools were taken from Art Beyond Site website for guidance. Art Beyond Site is non-profit in New York determined to make art, art history, and visual art accessible to people with visual impairments. They offer many online resources such as handbooks, courses, and museum resources for accessibility. The assessment was intended to gauge the success of the TMA in terms of their accessibility in exhibitions, programs, education, and other opportunities. Since the museum had no previous accessibility goals to my knowledge, there was nothing to compare or measure in terms of an evaluation.

For the assessment, I conducted observations of the TMA's accessible programs: Art of Memory, visual impairment tours, and internship program with Project Focus, observed the current tours and gallery tools, and evaluated the museum website. I then presented case studies from around the world of museums working on accessible programs and tours. Finally, I evaluated the current accessible tools used at the museum and offered suggestions on further methods to utilize and improve upon.

The TMA offered two programs explicitly for communities with disabilities: Art of Memory, which served elderly museum visitors with dementia, and tours for visitors with visual impairments. Art of Memory was created in partnership with the Tucson chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and at the time of the evaluation served around 10 visitors and their companions. The program features an abbreviated museum tour and hour-long art making experience. Participants were very favorable of the program, which was evidenced by their continued attendance and participation. The museum also offers tours for visitors with visual impairment, of which there was one request during my year placement. The tour was facilitated by a docent familiar with verbal description and tactile touring methods, however the docent was not formally trained in touring techniques for visual impairment. The observed tour was given to 7 veterans from the Veteran's Association Southwestern Blind Rehabilitation Center and 7 active duty military members stationed at Fort Huachuca. The Veterans and active duty participants enjoyed the tour and its tactile experiences and one-on-one discussions.
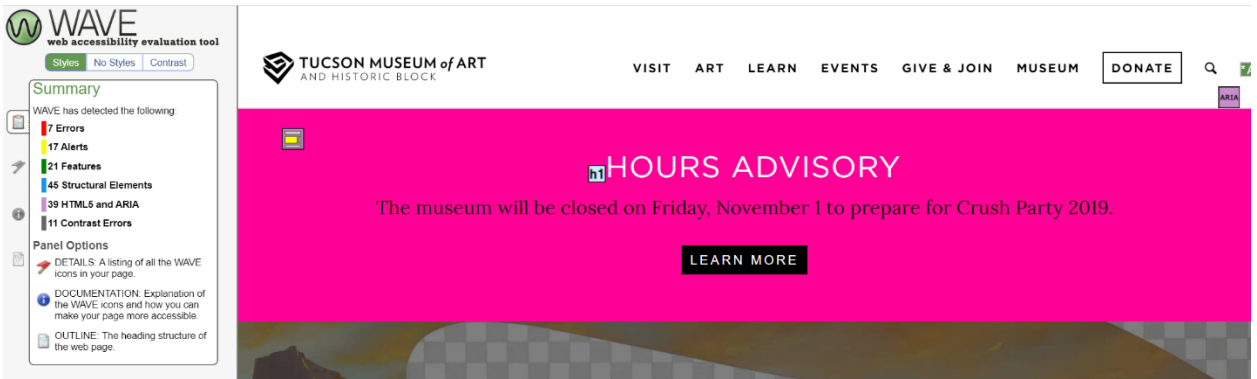
Image 12: Screenshot of WAVE assessment on Tucson Museum of Art website

An assessment of the museum website was conducted using WAVE, a free website accessibility evaluation tool. WAVE looks at website elements like contrast, text labeling, links, picture alternative text descriptions, and other online features. The website lacked alternative text labels, which would be used by a screen reader, but generally was readable and comprehensive. I suggested clear headings, alternative text for all images, and reevaluating the repeating footer on each webpage. The website also included specific accessibility pages discussing the museum's policies, programs, and available tools. A detailed evaluation of the museum website was conducted using the Art Beyond Site website accessibility survey (Art Beyond Site, 2010). Overall, the website was adequately accessible for screen readers, alternative contrast screens, magnification, and other visibility concerns.

The case studies presented in the assessment looked at museums around the world for suggestions on accessible practices. MoMA, one of the leading accessible art museums, offers many programs and gallery tools for museum visitors as well as resources and information on museum accessibility. The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York,

Smithsonian Institute in Washington and Victoria and Albert Museum in London provide examples of successful access programs, museum applications, physical accessibility measures, and more. The museums identified five communities with disabilities to work to serve: people with visual impairments, hearing impairments, developmental or learning disabilities, physical impairments, and the elderly.

Museum improvements for communities with vision impairments include touch or verbal description tours, braille and large print transcriptions, workshops and programs specifically for people with visual impairments, sensory experiences, and audio descriptions on an assistive listening device or mobile application.

Improvements in place for visitors with hearing impairments include the installation of t-coils or induction loops, creating audio guides and using assisted listening devices, providing transcriptions, American Sign Language tours and interpretation during events, and using a mobile application or online videos with captions.

Key improvements put in place for visitors with developmental or learning disabilities include sensory maps both online and onsite, open hours with quiet time and ambient lighting, internships and other opportunities, workshops and programs, and pre-visit materials and training.

Another community that has accessible measures being created is the elderly population. Workshops and artmaking activities for people with dementia are available for visitors and their care partners. In addition to this, many physical

improvements have been made to museums to improve access for people with wheelchairs, canes, or other mobility issues. Large print signage, accessible bathrooms, seating in the galleries, and other temporary assistance is often created for the elderly population of museum visitors. However, these are also tools and resources that can be used by other populations coming to the museum.

Physical improvements to the building as well as educational tools will improve museum accessibility for all museum visitors. In addition, developing workshops, events, and internship or job opportunities allow visitors to engage with the museum on a deeper level.

The final section of the assessment looked at the current accessibility tools and materials available at the museum and offered suggestions for future methods. At the time of the assessment, ARTivity cards were used for self-guided activities for museum visitors. During my placement at the museum, I developed an American Sign Language ARTivity card, front desk guide, and scavenger hunt to be used. Suggestions for further tools and materials included: large print gallery guides and didactics, tactile maps and braille guides, audio tours, ASL tours, a social guide, tactile artworks and/or 3D models, and a mobile application.

From the assessment:

This assessment evaluates the current accessible tools, programs, and events offered by the Tucson Museum of Art. Observations of the current offerings has suggested a baseline to move forward from. Offering a

comparative evaluation of other museum accessibility programs and

suggestions for tools provides a projected future for accessibility

measures to be developed. Ultimately, funding and staffing will dictate the

number of accessible tools, programs, and events that can be developed.

(Whittemore, 2019)

The assessment was submitted to TMA museum staff at the conclusion of my

placement.

Project Focus Internship

The other portion of my placement at the TMA was spent developing

accessible tools and materials in collaboration with an intern with Deafness at the

museum. All names have been excluded for privacy reasons.

The intern had been working at the TMA since Spring 2018 as part of the

University of Arizona's Project Focus program, which provides adults with

disabilities training and life skills from ages 18-22. The participants in Project

Focus work in fields of their interest and develop job preparation skills and

connections during this transition program. With increased opportunities for

academic courses, campus internship experiences, and college life events,

participants in Project Focus gain independence, quality of life, and employability

(Project Focus, n.d.). Every student in Project Focus receives dual-enrollment

credit and enrolls in a minimum of 6 credits per semester for 2 years. They

receive academic support and instructional support with campus life,

employment, and overall self-reliance. When I first encountered the intern, she

was at the end of her involvement with project focus, having completed a year

and half of the program. The intern has Deafness and was interested in learning more about art, so she was placed at the TMA to learn about how museums operate.

At the TMA, the intern worked under the supervision of the Assistant Curator of Education. As part of their collaboration, she assisted in teaching preparations for the Imago Dei after-school arts program, cleaned and organized the materials and storage areas, worked on administrative tasks, and facilitated a comic-book lesson. During the previous summer, she worked as a paid Teaching Assistant for the annual summer camp, working on administrative registration tasks, preparing the classrooms, organizing the supply rooms, and helping facilitate the classes as needed.

In the beginning of Fall 2018, I began to collaborate with the intern on projects. Given her experience with a disability and my interest in making the museum more accommodating, we began to work together on some accessibility tools and materials for the museum. Working in the galleries, I began to learn American Sign Language (ASL) from the intern as she identified objects within the artworks. This began a collaboration developing ASL materials including an ARTivity gallery guide, docent and front desk training guide, scavenger hunt, classroom posters, and other projects. The intern provided all the illustrations and ASL knowledge for the projects, while I guided us on what to create and helped organize the layout and text. By the end of the semester, we had created many ASL tools for the museum to use and had drafted up the official ARTivity card layout, which was later put into print over the summer.
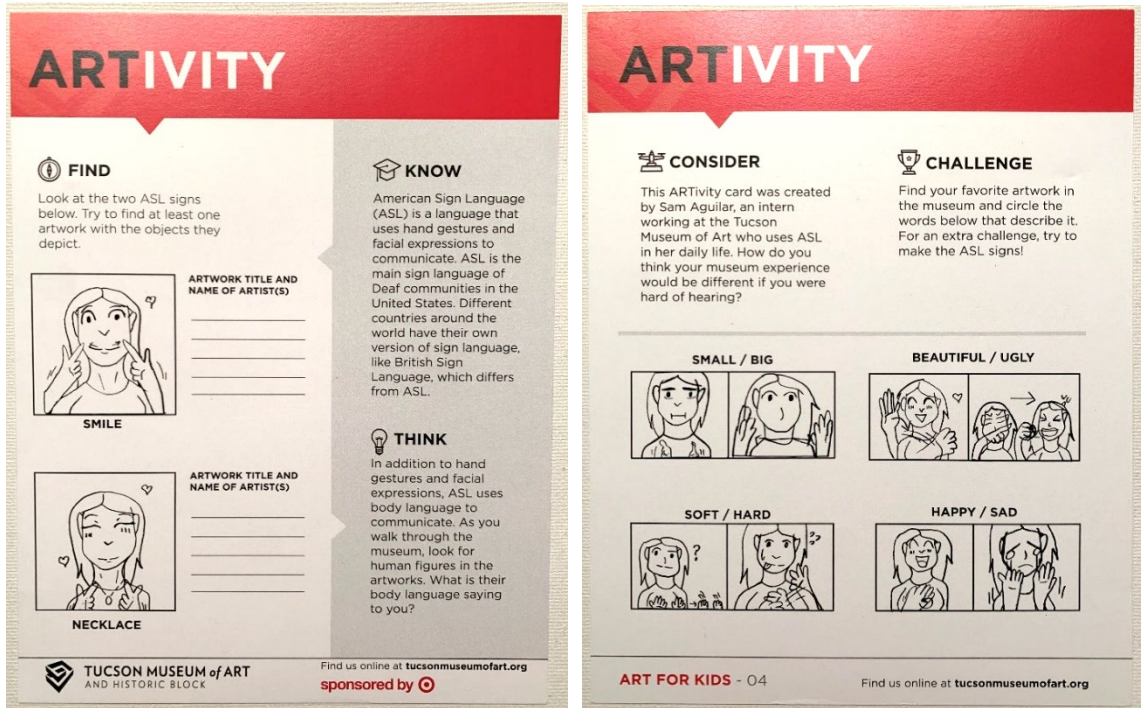
Images 13-14: ARTivity card developed for the Tucson Museum of Art

While working with the intern, I took extensive field notes about my experience working as an art educator alongside her. I created the reflections at the end of each day working a 9-hour day with her and discussed the projects we worked on, problems we encountered, and my general feelings from the experience.

The following is an excerpt from the first day of collaborating, which introduces my anxiety about communication and how I attempted to work around our communication barriers.

[The assistant curator of education] was very busy with other commitments today, so I spent a lot of time alone with [the intern]. Initially I was very nervous about this. However, I thought it would be a good way to break the ice if we drew comics to introduce ourselves. I started mine and [the intern] got to work right away. She spent a lot of time making perfect

squares and was looking things up in her ASL dictionary. I was almost done with my comic when she got up and retrieved her phone, snack, and iPad and took a break. I was a little surprised when she did this, but realized she probably was tired of drawing and wasn't sure how to communicate with me that she wanted a break. After she finished, I motioned to her "finished?" and pointed to her comic. She said no, so I showed her mine and we went through it.

After that, she was renewed into working on her comic. Looking at them afterward, I realize that she hadn't quite understood what we were doing. Her initial panels were using the ASL signs, reading "hello" "my name is" but after seeing mine, she switched to larger panels of text about herself and things she liked. (personal notes)

This excerpt represents the beginning of our working relationship well. Initially, I was not sure how to communicate things to her, given my lack of ASL fluency. Gestures and repeating words worked in some situations, but not in others. Our common interest in drawing and comics allowed us to express ourselves through art. Using comics instead of words to communicate, we used a multimodal literacy that worked better than written text.
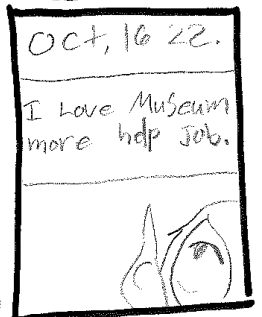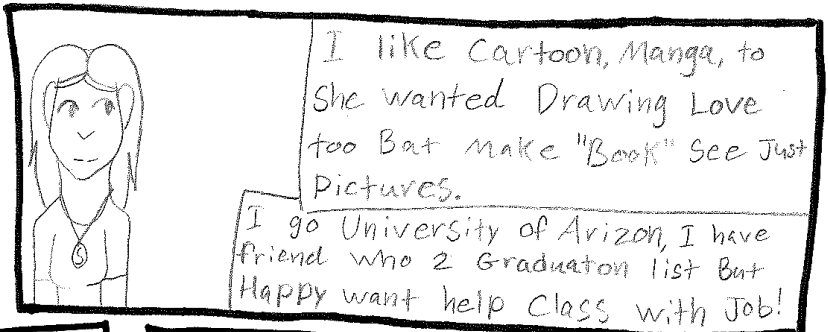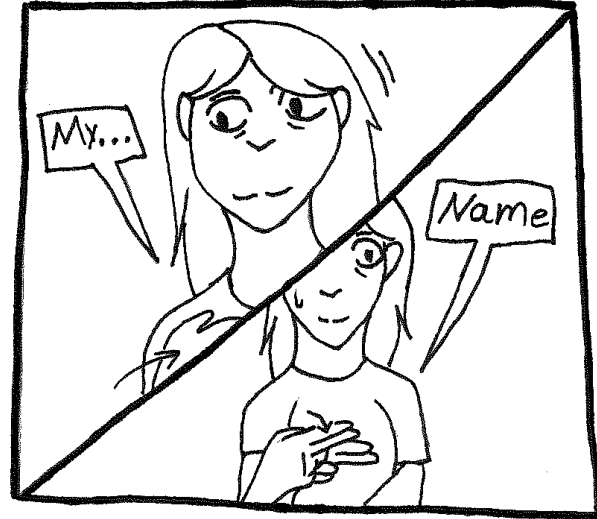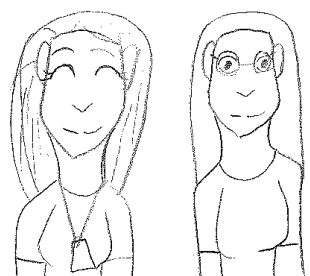
Image 15: Introduction Comic by the Project Focus intern

Working with the intern in this capacity was not unlike working with a student in a classroom. Making sure the student understands the instructions and has the skills suitable for the assignment are necessary steps in the process. Finding suitable mediums for communication from both people allowed us to work better together and achieve our goals. A later note discussed a new technique for communication:

> We went into the museum to see the new exhibits and get some new words for the scavenger hunt. I had tried to explain that we would find new examples for the words we already have, but she didn't seem to get that, so I enjoyed just walking through the exhibit with her and seeing what she liked. I have been communicating a lot with her via my notebook. (personal notes)

Another important moment during this collaboration was a midway evaluation of the projects we had worked on. Since our methods of communication were different, it was often hard to understand if the intern was enjoying the project, or merely tolerating it. About halfway through our last semester, we put together a list of the projects we had worked on together and used a scale to determine how much she enjoyed the project.

Themes

Thinking about disability within the museum goes beyond physical accessibility and design. Exploring the collections, employed staff, and inclusive (not targeted) programming provides a better view on what accessibility can mean within a museum (Nightingale & Mahal, 2012).

One of the most influential aspects of this project was observing an institution that supported job and internship opportunities for people with disabilities. According to the National Organization on Disability, only 32% of people with disabilities of working age are employed. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). A lack of access within employing agencies leads to discrimination from stereotyping as much as they are from a lack of accessible resources (Donoghue, 2003). Changing the hiring process by providing inclusive job and internship opportunities within a museum can greatly change the social atmosphere and break down barriers of access for people with disabilities.

Legally, these job and internship opportunities are required because of the Rehabilitation Act and ADA Act of 1994. The Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination based on disability within any federally funded business or program (Rehabilitation Act, 1975). The ADA applies the concept to all private, state, or local employers (American s with Disabilities Act, 1990). These non-discrimination laws provide people with disabilities the civil rights to employment based on their qualifications.

Opportunities with inclusive hiring practices offer a collaboration with people with disabilities. Instead of attempting to understand the lived experience of someone with a disability, it is more beneficial to involve them in the planning process. Exchanging information, ideas, and resources can provide a system of mutual respect and support, as well as collaborative learning opportunities. Working collaboratively alongside people with disabilities promotes inclusion,

which goes beyond access and availability for all people, but also the involvement of all people and reflective of all audiences. (McGinnis, 2007). The more involvement there is, the more pride and ownership occurs with the participants. In addition, using multivocality within the museum allows for authority and expertise to be shared, which can challenge traditional power roles within the museum. (Pegno & Farrar, 2017).

The Smithsonian Institute offers a good example of a successful internship program for people with disabilities. Founded in 2013, Project SEARCH Smithsonian creates unpaid internship opportunities for people with disabilities to gain job skills and knowledge that can lead to paid employment. The program is a 10-week immersive experience for young adults. Project SEARCH began in 1996 at the Cincinnati Children's Medical Center. According to the Smithsonian website, 70% of the interns who participated in Project SEARCH Smithsonian were hired into part- or full-time positions with competitive wages and benefits (Smithsonian Project Search, n.d.).

The collaboration with the Tucson Museum of Art and Project Focus illustrates a productive example of such collaborations. However, it is important to note that these collaborations take a substantial amount of time, effort, and funding for the institution and involved participants. Issues with time management, communication, and financial constraints may cause stress on the museum staff and hired employees or interns. Starting with a pilot program can help to understand the process of collaboration better and continued evaluation and improvements will help the program grow each year. In addition, working

with other community groups can provide insight and knowledge that is useful for the collaboration.

Evaluating the Institution

With a legal obligation to serve communities with disabilities, in the past 30 years since the ADA was passed, museums have moved forward with accessibility and inclusion efforts. Along with an increase in programs serving people with disabilities, diverse educational programs and gallery materials as well as gallery design, museum hours, and other accommodations have helped make museums a more inclusive environment for all visitors, including those with disabilities.

While these efforts are commendable, no change can be determined successful without evaluation. Section 504 of the ADA stipulates that cultural organizations must conduct a self-evaluation to identify barriers to accessibility (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990). In addition to the legal requirements, it is always necessary to examine your educational practice and make changes as needed. During my placement at the TMA, I sought to assess the institution, its programs, and website based on my background studying accessibility and disability studies. To date, there is no standard for accessibility in museums and it is widely interpreted nationwide. While there is a variety of resources online, there is no standard accessibility evaluation which can lead to differing levels and techniques for accessibility within museums.

Starting the assessment with case study research on other museum's accessibility practices yielded a comparative baseline to evaluate the TMA upon.

MoMA, for example, is highly regarded in the United States as one of the first museums to fully embrace accessible practices. With a team of employees devoted to accessibility, they offer programs, interpretation, and events exclusively for visitors with disabilities, but also think about the museum experience in general. They are a leader in professional development resources for accessibility, with resources for K-12 touring and training materials available online. MoMA also has developed a variety of accessible programs, including classes for IDD, visual impairment, and dementia.

Using other museums as a comparison demonstrates what successful museum programs look like, but it is important to evaluate the community you work within. Locally in Tucson, the TMA identified the Alzheimer's Association as a formidable partnership, possibly because Tucson's senior population (ages 65+) is 15.2% (Census) of half a million citizens. This partnership led to a 5-year program that has served many of Tucson's elderly population. Many individuals with disabilities do not perceive an art museum as a place where they can feel comfortable. Developing inclusive programs and implementing accessible practices will help these communities feel more welcome within the space and transform that ideology. Utilizing concepts like Universal Design allow museums to create flexible programs that appeal to all types of learners (McGinnis, 2007) and could be modeled by the TMA to create programs that serve broader groups.

Within Arizona, Tucson has the highest percentage of residents with disabilities compared to the other major cities, with 16.1% of the population claiming some form of disability (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Looking at other

community groups that serve communities with disabilities would lead to other meaningful programs and would make the museum a more inclusive place for 16% of the Tucson population.

Institutional Support

Another important aspect of this experience was acknowledging the amount of effort and support that is required for a museum to work toward accessibility and inclusion. Setting the scene for success depends first on establishing an institutional commitment and culture within the museum and museum community that supports inclusiveness. This requires a sustained investment on the part of museums in terms of staff time, funding, imagination, and other resources. (McGinnis, 2007).

At the time of my placement at the TMA, there were four educators on staff with two part-time employees and two full-time employees. In addition to thinking about accessibility and inclusion, they had often twice daily tour groups of 70 K-12 students, evening programming, docent trainings, exhibition planning, and more. The role of an educator in the museum often has many duties. Even with four staff members, it can be difficult to make time to work on accessibility.

However, cultivating accessibility and inclusion doesn't necessitate creating new programs. Often, evaluating the current programs, tours, and exhibitions can lead to small changes that can impact a visitor's experience. An example of this could be having an ASL interpreter at a community event or placing chairs throughout the museum during an exhibition opening.

Internship and job opportunities for people with disabilities requires a commitment from the institution to make time to develop a useful experience for the intern or employee. At the TMA, one educator worked with the intern on the days she came to the museum. In this case, one employee had to devote at least 5 hours on those days to work with the intern, come up with projects, or supervise the intern while they worked. The larger these internship programs or job opportunities are, the more the institution needs to commit to making a worthwhile experience.

In addition to time, there always needs to be money for these programs. Whether it is a grant or in the museum budget, money must be allocated for accessibility improvements. If a paid internship or job opportunity is created, there must be funding to support the positions and a commitment to providing this opportunity in the future. Accessibility programs cannot be a one-time thing, institutions need to devote themselves to the process.

Arts Based Research

One thing that really impacted me during my work with the intern was stepping out of my experience and learning about another person's experience in a museum. For most of my life, I have felt comfortable in museums. As a child, my family frequently would visit museums and cultural sites around Arizona or while traveling. Even when I didn't understand something, I have always enjoyed looking at things. As I have grown in my education, I've also enjoyed talking about this experience. Trying to figure out an artwork or talking about the piece with someone has become one of my favorite things about working in museums

and ultimately, I think, is what led me to work with contemporary art. The

transformation from confusion to understanding, or even just realizing what the

piece means to you, is my favorite part of contemporary art. As an educator, I

love the fast-paced conversations and dialogue that occur in the museum, often

using dialogic conversation (Burnham and Kai-Kee, 2007)

Reflecting on my experience at the TMA, I was able to witness many great

exhibitions come through the museum. Notably, the traveling exhibition *30

Americans*[3] was on view during my first semester at the museum and I found

myself drawn to the galleries to discover more about the artworks on display.

The exhibition, along with the subsequent exhibition, *Entelechy*[4], were perfect

subjects for gallery exploration. I was able to privately experience the artworks,

observe curious tour groups, participate with the senior programs, and partake in

public openings.

What affected me most during this experience wasn't the crowds of people

reacting to Gary Simmons's *Duck, Duck, Noose*[5], but a much quieter experience

in the galleries working with the intern. We often went through the galleries to see

the art or work on our ASL guides. Our conversations in the galleries were

unique to any I've had before, not just because she has Deafness, but because

of how different our interpretations of the artworks were. While we walked

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[3] *30 Americans* was on display at the Tucson Museum of Art from October 2018 – January 2019. The exhibition is part of the Rubell Family Collection, which was originally exhibited in 2008 and continues to travel around the United States through 2022.
[4] Entelechy by Carlos Estevez was on display at the Tucson Museum of Art from January – May 2019
[5] *Duck, Duck, Noose* by Gary Simmons is an installation that has 8 wooden stools placed in a circle with pointed white hoods on top of the stool. An empty noose hangs from the ceiling inside the circle of stools.

through the exhibitions, we would point out different things in the artworks and she would teach me the ASL signs.

Our experiences in the galleries make me think about Falk and Dierking's contextual models of learning. Both my experience and the intern's experience of the museum and its artworks differed greatly, due to our personal contexts. (Falk & Dierking, 2012). As a frequent museum attendee and lover of contemporary art, I have knowledge of the artworks on display that make me see them differently than she did. This led her to draw attention to things that I had overlooked. In Yinka Shonibare's pieces *Cowboy Angels I, II, III, IV, and V*, she taught me the sign for horse, drawing attention to the fact that the cowboys were all riding horses two of the artworks. However, when I experienced the works, I had overlooked the horse and was drawn to the fabric used in the piece, looking for clues within the patterns.

Image 16: Handmade book about trees, Whittemore 2019

I was inspired by these in-gallery ASL lessons to make an artwork of my own. Creating an arts-based experience allows more nuanced understanding and empathy (Rhodes et al, 2015). Pulling from my collection of art books, I began to create book pages featuring random artworks. Like the process of working together at the TMA on ASL signs in the galleries, I then looked at the images for something that stood out to me. After coming up with these things, I illustrated them in ASL.

Images 17-18: Detail shots of ASL handmade books, Marica Whittemore 2019

Part of my art-making experience during this project has been exploring new mediums, so I decided to make Styrofoam stamps using my ASL illustrations and stamp them on vellum to include in my books. Book binding was also a new art form and in making the homemade books I started to reflect on my process of making these pieces. I started by taking artworks from art books curated to show the "master works" of artists through history. Most of the artists in these books are European and now deceased, yet still considered to be the best artists of our time.

Unlike a museum, I stripped these artworks from the names of their artists, making them instead anonymous works linked instead by my interpretations of

them. I created a book about trees, using artworks by Rousseau, Signac, and Van Gogh while splicing them with my embossed pages and prints. The books become emblems of my interpretations and experiences with the artworks, like a scrapbook of my conversations with the pieces. Through multimodal ways of learning, we think about the artworks as linked by words, hand gestures, touch, and our own personal contexts.

ArtWorks

Description of Setting

ArtWorks is an arts-based outreach program that is part of the University of Arizona Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities. The program is located on the North side of the University campus in 3 repurposed adobe homes, which have been converted into studios. Typically, there are around 20-25 artists who visit ArtWorks each day, with activities starting at 9am and running until 2pm. The artists participate in open-studio crafting, music, movement, and other creative art activities. Each studio is staffed by a trained teaching artist and assisting student workers. At the time of my placement at ArtWorks, there were 6 staff members and 5 student staff workers.

The artists who visit ArtWorks range from ages 24-78 years with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) defines an intellectual or developmental disability as characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical daily living skills. This disability originates before the age of

18. Intellectual functioning refers to mental capacity such as learning, reasoning, and problem solving. Adaptive behavior are everyday life skills such as conceptual, social, and practical skills. (AAIDD, n.d.). The artists at ArtWorks all have IDD. The studio does not function as a clinical day-program, but offers community-based services like self-help, socialization, and independent living skills.

In addition to the studios, ArtWorks also has the Mary T. Paulin gallery which displays artwork by the ArtWorks community, invited community artists, and occasional staff shows. The gallery is open to the public on weekdays and is free to enter. The gallery is managed by 10 of the ArtWorks artists, developing the professional skills required of gallery maintenance. The workers are guided by an ArtWorks staff member to install the shows, develop labels, create marketing materials, and other gallery related tasks.

Background of Program

I am currently spending four months at ArtWorks as a graduate intern. I had previously visited ArtWorks in my art education classes and decided that it would be a good place to further explore disability studies within an art education context. Since my previous experience was museum based, I wanted to see how community art programs implemented accessible art education practices. ArtWorks provided a prime example of such a place, plus provided an opportunity to work directly with the communities that these programs serve.

After meeting with the Director of ArtWorks, I was offered an internship for the Fall 2019 semester. Based on my previous experience and interests, my

main projects were to develop resources for the IDD community about professional development. I visit the program two days a week and work in the different studios on a variety of projects while interacting with the artists and teaching staff.

Program Details

While working at ArtWorks, I have not implemented my own arts program. However, I experience one-on-one interactions with the artists while working in the studios and am developing a collaborative video project with the gallery workers. From these experiences I can reflect on the role of an art educator within a community arts program.

Each day at ArtWorks I sign in at the main office and find a studio to work in. Unlike the other staff members and student workers, I am not assigned to a specific studio. This provides me the opportunity to observe the different studios and see their unique features. The ArtWorks campus features 4 different adobe houses, connected by a courtyard. The house interiors have been painted different colors and are referred to as their colors: Pink, Green, and Red Studios, plus the Office. The artists typically work in the same studio each day, so they are accustomed to the staff member and layout of the house.

Generally, the studios operate using choice-based art education where artists are free to pursue their own creative agendas (Douglas & Jaquinth, 2009). The artists follow a daily schedule, which includes multiple studio hours, lunch, and group activities. During the studio hours, the artists create artwork but also were able to explore other activities like puzzles and cartoons. My time at

Artworks is during the last hour of studio and overlaps with the artists being picked up by the Sun Van paratransit service.

At the time of writing this thesis, the artists are working on an upcoming art exhibition at the University of Arizona Recreation Center Oasis Lounge and Art Gallery, opening in December 2019. The gallery is located within the campus recreation center and offers opportunities for the UA community to display their work. The theme of the upcoming exhibition, outdoor recreation, was determined by ArtWorks staff, gallery workers, and the Recreation Center and was incorporated into the ArtWorks artists' studio projects.

The teaching staff at ArtWorks use an 80/20 model to guide the artists during art-making. This allows the teachers to demonstrate a skill or sketch a drawing but provides the artists the opportunity to explore the techniques and create the artworks independently. The artists create at least 80% of the artwork, with 20% accredited to the teacher's assistance. The teachers use guiding questions to encourage the artists to think about the theme or how to create the artwork. While in the studios, I often participate in helping the artists think about their art pieces.

Aside from the art-making, I am collaborating with the artists on a video project documenting the gallery process. The video was meant to be a tool to show others what happens at ArtWorks, but also provided an opportunity for the artists to learn new skills and create their own narratives. I met with the gallery supervisor to get an overview of the process and then worked with the gallery artists for six weeks to write the script, act it out, and film the material. Once

completed, the video will be put online as a resource for other art educators, studios, or artists with IDD.

Themes

ArtWorks is a great example of a functional art program that serves communities with disabilities. While it is housed by the University, it provides insight on how community arts programs can implement accessible arts education into their curriculum and how to collaborate with communities with disabilities.

Therapeutic Art

When thinking about people with disabilities and art, we often think about art therapy. Radicalized in the 20th century into mainstream psychology, art therapy is thought to be rooted in 18th century institutionalized art. It was formally studied in 1942 and is currently practiced today by licensed professionals. The process emphasizes making art as a therapeutic experience, allowing the artist to symbolically express themselves. The art therapy model is associated with the medical model of disability. Development of physical and social skills can be considered a therapeutic rehabilitation process. Many art studios consider the process to be separate from the medical model, eliminating the healing part from the experience (Sandahl and Auslander 2005).

It is easy to assume that ArtWorks uses an art therapy model, but it is important to note that art making is therapeutic only when connected to urgent issues (Wexler, 2016). Using art to express emotions, experiences, and thoughts allow the artist to convey things that they can often not convey with words.

During the daily studio hours, the artists create art based on their thoughts, dreams, and things they see on TV. I observed the artists making drawings of a magic show, Disney Channel stars, and comic strips, among other things. However, the exhibitions are more indicative of the art therapy process. The guided questions and prompted art making sessions, activated by the teaching artists, allow the students to reflect on their lives and feelings. This externalization of their inner thoughts demonstrates the process of turning issues into aesthetic form, fixed in time and space (Henley, 1992). Instead of the clinical art therapy, ArtWorks operates under the expression, thought process, and reflective process of therapeutic arts (Carrigan, 1994).

Thinking back to the previous sections discussing the school program at ASDB and the museum programs at the TMA, we can see elements of the therapeutic arts at work. While not directly referring to psychology or medicine, participating in these art programs provides opportunities for people with disabilities to work on life skills, communication, and understanding of themselves and the world around them. The Art of Memory program at the TMA provided elderly people with dementia an outlet for expressing themselves, learning new things, and making connections with others. Similarly, the after-school art program at ASDB provided students with learning opportunities to work on adaptive skills, recreational activities, and self-expression. These three programs demonstrate the value of arts-based experiences for people with disabilities within formal and informal educational settings.

Creating Community + Promoting Advocacy

ArtWorks also demonstrates the importance of independence and advocacy for people with disabilities. As artists, they choose to create artwork based on their own interests and goals. Within the gallery, the artists have control over decisions like the exhibition design, framing, and information included on the labels. This provides the artists control over what is presented to others, sharing the value of their work with the general public, who becomes more knowledgeable about people with disabilities (Wexler & Derby, 2015). This transformation of traditional power roles can change the stereotyping of artists with disabilities as outsiders and demonstrates common thoughts and experiences that people with disabilities and people without disabilities share.

This transformation is pivotal for all art institutions, including museums and community art programs. Creating inclusive programming and experiences is a major step in creating more access but allowing the voice of people with disabilities to be heard, acknowledged, and understood is just as important. "Nothing about us, without us" (Brueggemann et al, 2012) provides that while disabilities studies is often discussed in academic and institutional circles, people with disabilities are rarely given the authority to speak for themselves. Museums have taken to forming advisory groups to include the voices of minority visitors to make their voices heard.

Conclusion

This research study has presented three museum and community art programs to evaluate for inclusive teaching practices when working with people

with disabilities. The three programs were uniquely different experiences and were analyzed through evaluating the field notes, finished products or artworks created during the program (when applicable), and creating arts-based research projects.

Research Questions

Once again, we return to the main research question for this study: How do art educators respond to increasing demands of equity and inclusion of people with disabilities within museums and community art programs?

Within my own teaching practice, I have experienced three unique ways to respond to equity and inclusion within art programs. The highly structured, curriculum-based program at the Arizona School for the Deaf and the Blind offered a skill based, school friendly arts program that looked beyond disability and found interesting new ways to teach students with disabilities. However, working with the students presented new problems with confronting my own stereotypes of how the students would learn and illustrated issues with working with trained professionals while not having the medical experience of working with people with disabilities. Yet, the program highlighted the unique experience of experimentation with lesson plans, materials, and enjoying the multiple interpretations that can occur between people within the same lesson.

At the Tucson Museum of Art, I observed an institution's response to inclusion and equity through the specific access programs created at the museum. The programs provided opportunities for people with disabilities to interact with the museum in new ways, breaking down social barriers that

previously may have prevented participation. Through one-on-one collaborations with an intern with Deafness, I was able to learn about the Deaf experience within the museum and work toward making it a more inclusive space for all visitors.

Finally, I was able to learn from a choice-based art studio for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. ArtWorks provides a tremendous example of a successful arts program that creates equity in the work space, not only providing choice within the art making experiences but providing authority to people with disabilities though mutual learning experiences.

Before, during, and after these experiences I explored the definition of disability within art education. While each organization interprets disability differently, the three sites offer unique ways that art educators create a more accessible and equitable teaching practice.

Findings

As educators trying to learn about our students, participants, or visitors it is important to acknowledge their differences. Falk and Dierking's contextual model makes us consider the personal, sociocultural, and physical contexts that can affect their experience.

Considering the personal context within the three sites presented in this research makes it evident that each person interacting with an art lesson, museum, or other experience brings their own experiences, knowledge, assumptions, and bias. This is equally as true when working with people with disabilities. In addition to their knowledge and experiences, each person has

preferred ways of learning, making, or may not be interested in making art. While this may be seen by teaching staff as extra work or difficult to accomplish successfully, like at the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind, these unique individuals can elevate the experience, create surprising outcomes, and allow for mutual learning, as demonstrated by the ArtWorks program and collaborative internships at the Tucson Museum of Art.

Thinking about the sociocultural context within art experiences for people with disabilities points toward the social model of disability. As our understanding of the constructs that create disability grow, art institutions can evaluate their relationship within those constructs. The accessibility assessment of the Tucson Museum of Art provided an opportunity for analyzing these conceptions within an art institution. Partnerships between art organizations like ArtWorks and the University of Arizona Recreation Center provide opportunities for artists with disabilities to present their work to the public and reclaim their narrative. Within the organizations, we can consider the community created by the artists at ArtWorks, or the tenuous relationship between art educators and artists with disabilities in settings like schools or museum art programs. Through observing the sociocultural context, we can understand further our position as art educators and how we can enact change for equitable art education for people with disabilities.

Finally, evaluating the physical context can create a more inclusive environment for learning for people with disabilities. Instead of creating accommodations, utilizing universal design for inclusive learning can increase the

success of teaching all participants, including those with disabilities. Modifying current architecture, literature, or other teaching materials can work toward accessibility within education but thinking about overall inclusion can cause the greatest impact. Utilizing Universal Design while creating the exhibition, educational materials, and visitor experience can positively impact the accessibility at organizations.

These findings are nothing without action. Becoming aware of the inequities in our teaching practices is one thing, but making change is what can lead to inclusive teaching practices. Practicing Greene's "wide-awakeness" and Freire's conscientization means that educators must be alert during their teaching practice to make deliberate choices to impact their students, participants, or visitors. Through transformative action we can create a more equitable learning environment for people with disabilities and change the oppressive systems that affect their experiences at art institutions.

Arts-based Research

The University of Arizona has a building with galleries for graduate students to utilize during their studies. The studios are predominantly used by studio art graduate students, with a handful of studios awarded to Art Education and Art History graduate students. In addition to individual studio rooms, there is a woodshop, gallery, and other amenities available for the students to use. While finishing my thesis during my final semester, applications went live for the graduate gallery space for any degree seeking student to utilize. Never having

exhibited my work before but emboldened by my art practice, I decided to explore the idea of holding an exhibition of my work created for my thesis.
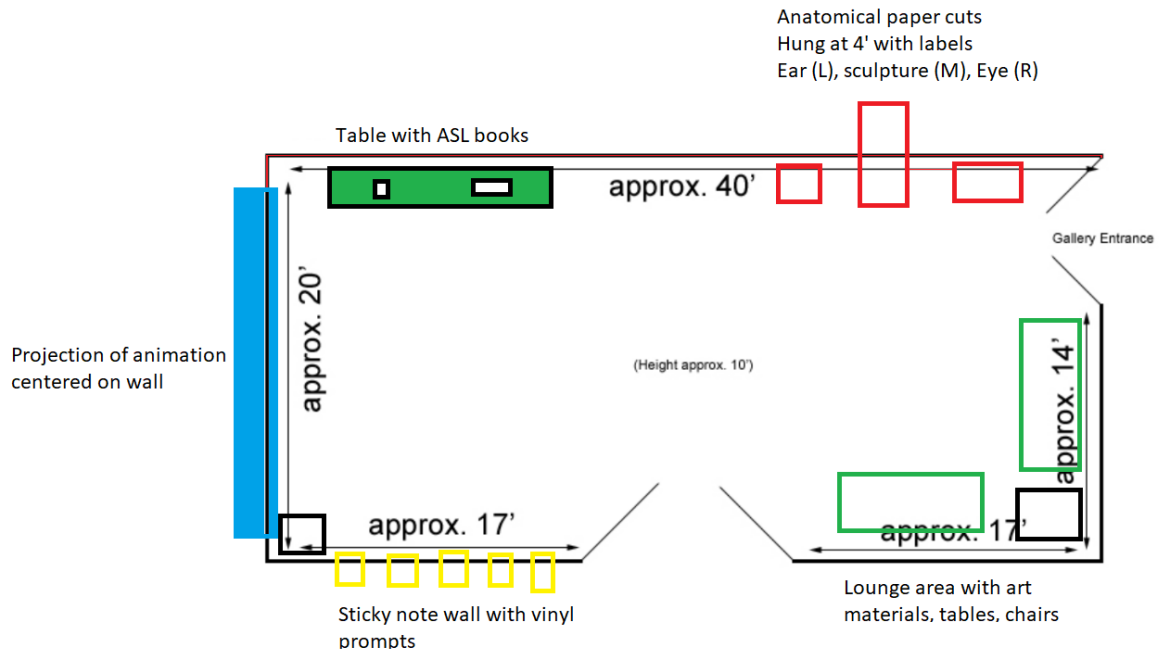

Image 19: Proposed exhibition layout for graduate gallery

Inspired by my research, I hope to create an inclusive and accessible exhibition for all people to experience. To do this, I considered alternative ways of experiencing the artwork, ways to stimulate conversations, and thoughtful considerations to the physical layout of the exhibition. The animation project, a visual heavy art piece, is projected onto the wall at a large scale and complimented by audio narration with verbal description and transcriptions available on the table next to the projection. The paper cut anatomical models are hung at 4 feet, which is below the standard placement but enables people in wheelchairs to view the pieces with ease. The tactile paper sculpture to accompany the anatomical paper cuts incorporates a multisensory experience. Art making is encouraged in the lounge portion of the exhibition and reflective

feedback is encouraged through the "notes" area with prompts like "what is your favorite memory" and "describe your favorite art piece without saying the title or artist name". The prompts and art making motivate visitors to the exhibition to reflect on their lives, create art, and think about the content of the exhibition.

In addition to exploring the accessibility of the exhibition, it was important to emphasize the educational components. As an Art and Visual Culture Education major, it was often difficult to iterate the importance of art-making for our teaching practice to others within our department. However, the arts-based research component of my research study provided opportunities for me to explore my teaching experiences, reflect internally, and create aesthetic pieces for others to interpret and experience. This exhibition would physically represent the research presented in this study, demonstrate the importance of art-making for interpreting the world around us, and prompt conversations about disability studies within art education. It would offer an inclusive safe-space for people to explore what art means to them and how they experience the world.

Summary

As we consider accessible and inclusive programming at our art institutions, it is important to not operate under disability metaphors (Derby, 2011) and create programming alongside people with disabilities. The three programs illustrated in this research study show different ways of collaborating with and serving populations with disabilities.

The program at the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (Tucson) illustrated a highly structured arts program for youth ages 7-17 with visual and

hearing impairments. With considerations to museum accessibility through touring techniques and accommodations, this program looked at issues with flexible curricula and stereotypes. During this program, I learned the value of improv teaching skills, collaborating with other staff members, and allowing for personal growth through these art interactions.

Conducting an accessibility assessment at the Tucson Museum of Art showed formative ways to evaluate art institutions, their collections, programming, and more. The Project Focus internship showed the value in creating job and internship positions within the institution to further inclusion of people with disabilities. Working with the intern allowed me to further explore my expectations for accessibility within museums while collaboratively learning in the galleries and appreciating diverse visitor experiences.

Finally, the art studio and gallery ArtWorks offers a model of programming for people with disabilities in a community art setting. The studio shows the value in choice-based art making activities, creating community, and encouraging self-determination and advocacy.

Though each art institution offers unique opportunities and challenges, many of the solutions can be applied in a variety of situations. Art educators can learn from situations in museums, classrooms, and community art institutions alike without practicing in those areas. Stopping to evaluate the success of your educational offerings, lessons, and experiences can lead to formative growth while working with communities with disabilities and can lead to more inclusive teaching practices, as well as opportunities for people with disabilities to

participate at the art institution. By taking time to reflect, you can witness your evolution as an educator through the experiences and interactions you have. Within my own practice, I noticed a change from heavily structured, learning objective based instruction toward a more flexible, non-hierarchical way of teaching in art institutions . In addition to conducting these reflections and evaluations, it is integral to evaluate your goals as an educator and within the institution toward accessibility for people with disabilities. When approaching projects involving collaboration, it is important to clearly state your goals to balance the expectations of all parties involved.

Based on these experiences, it is my hope that this study can provide guidance, information, and examples for other art educators to create inclusive art programs for people with disabilities. As demonstrated by the Universal Design concept, these programs can benefit the general population and prove to be learning experiences for the participants and educators alike.
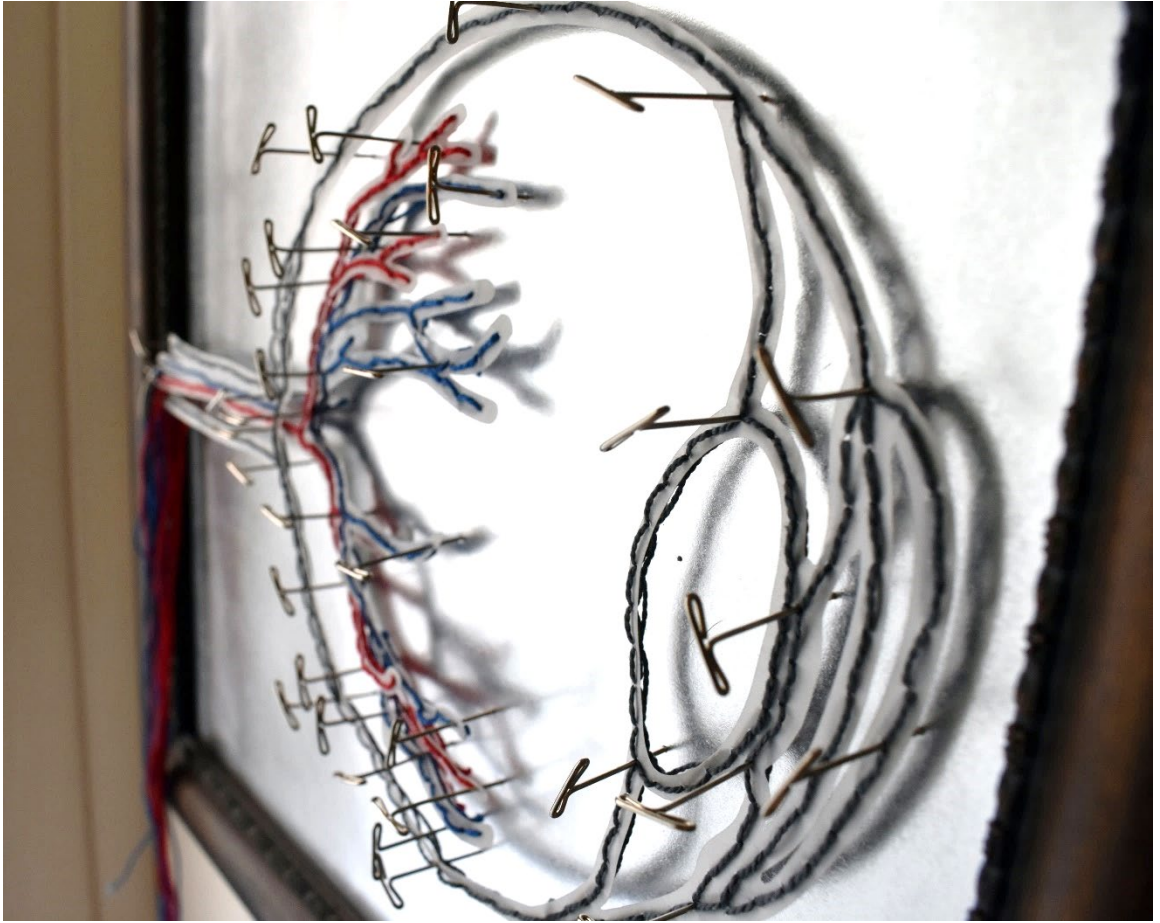
Appendix A: Arts-Based Research Images
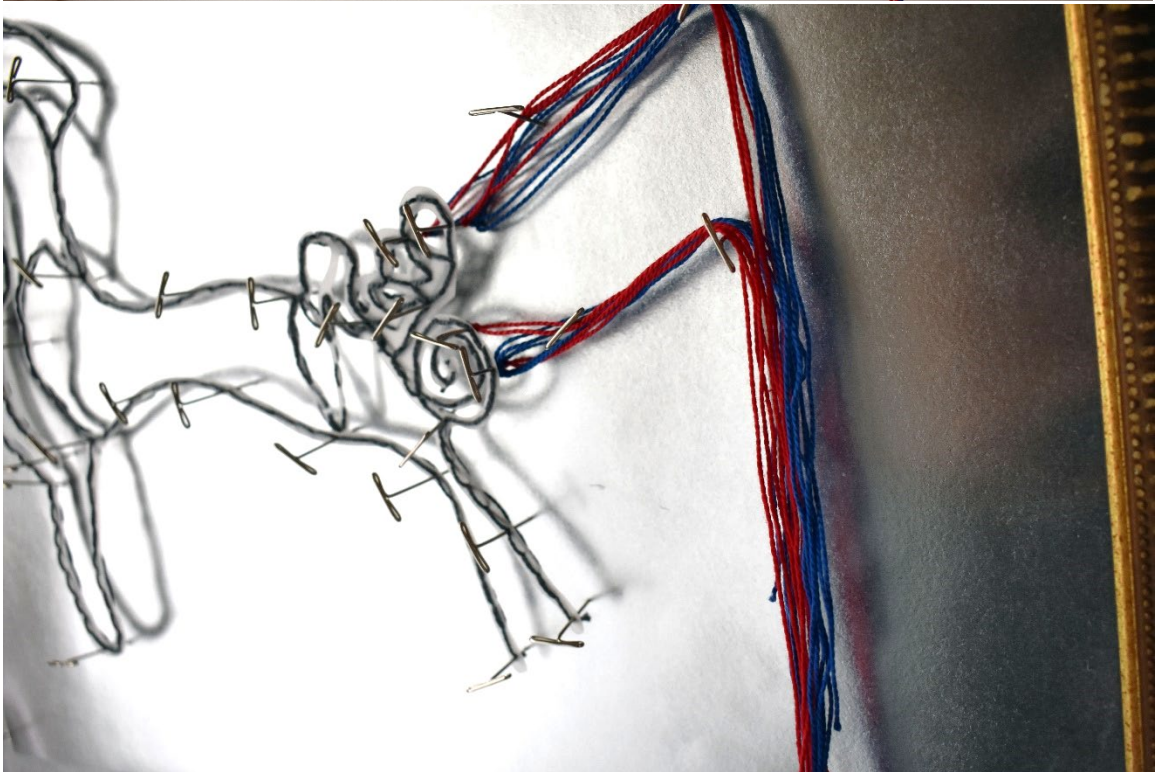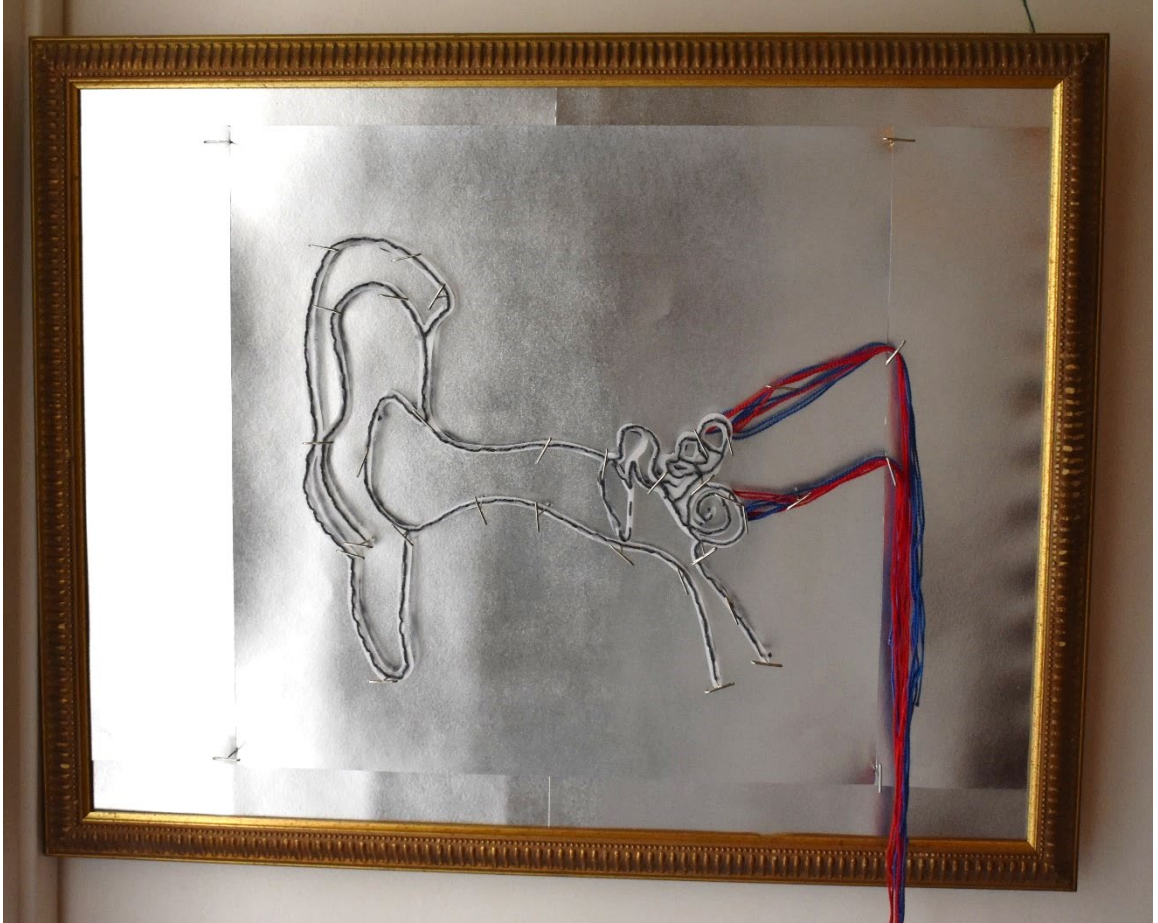### Animation Stills from "Ever Since I Can Remember"
Full animated video can be found at https://vimeo.com/380339482

Anatomical Paper Cuts

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