BEYOND WORDS: ENGAGING YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN GALLERY EDUCATION AT TATE LIVERPOOL

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Abstract

Beyond Words: Engaging Young Children and Families in gallery education at Tate Liverpool, is a three year ethnographic case study that explores what happens when preschool children, parents and nursery practitioners from a Sure Start Children's Centre, visit Tate to participate in an extended series of gallery visits and workshops with artists. This study explores the potential value and tensions of these creative and cultural experiences, particularly for young children and families, by critically examining different perspectives, discourses and possible constructs of effective creative engagement. A theoretical bricolage is used for presenting various insights into the relationship between exploratory creative processes, children's artistic flow, experiential learning and matters of inclusion. Bringing structuralist theories of learning together with non-representational theories, this study draws on Reggio Emilia, Deweyan and Deleuzian philosophies for thinking about children's learning in art galleries. In doing so, it makes a case for new materialist and posthuman discourses to be considered alongside cognitive, linguistic and social constructivist pedagogies. This PhD study also contributes to debates on involving young children and families from marginalised communities in cultural visits and creative practices by opening up existing discussions on poverty and negative stereotypes. It also argues for a more creative, democratic and process driven education for young children which does not sit comfortably within current structures of formal teacher-led education, and therefore requires a messier, unbounded and rhizomatic way of thinking.

Glossary of Terms

Artists	Artists linked to the development and delivery of a gallery learning programme, often described as 'creative practitioners,' 'artist facilitators,' 'artist educators' or 'artists.'
EAD	Expressive Arts and Design (EAD) is one of the four specific areas of learning in the EYFS (2012) framework. This area sets guidance for children to be provided with opportunities to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials and to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role play activities, design and technology.
EYFS	The Early Years Foundation Stage sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old. All schools and Ofsted registered early years providers must follow the EYFS, including childminders, preschools, nurseries and school reception classes.
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families. The DfES was split up into the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills. The DCSF was later reorganised as the Department for Education in 2010.
DfE	Department for Education. The Department for Education is responsible for children's services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
DfES	Department for Education and Skills. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) was a United Kingdom government department between 2001 and 2007, responsible for the education system (including higher education and adult learning) as well as children's services in England.
Families	Families include partners, siblings, parents, foster parents, aunts, uncles, grand-parents.
Gallery Education	The term gallery education is used to describe the work done in and with the visual arts and galleries to broaden understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts, through projects and programmes that help people of all ages become confident in their understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts and galleries.
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools was created at the same time as The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office and of other public information services of the United Kingdom.
I	I refer to myself in the first person using 'I' to make clear my position as researcher and narrator throughout the Tate Project. I do not, for instance, refer to myself as artist, artist educator or researcher. As a self-reflexive approach to conducting research, I recognise that I come with my own knowledge and experience of being an artist and an educator.
Insider Researcher	Conducting research in my own place of work at Kensington Children's Centre, meant I was already known to some of the children, parents, nursery practitioners and managers.

IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation. The English indices of deprivation measure relative deprivation in small areas in England called lower-layer super output areas.
KCC	Kensington Children's Centre, also known as Kensington Sure Start Children's Centre. Children's centres bring together a range of free services for children from birth to five, and their families. Services vary at each centre according to local community needs but all centres provide child and family health, family support services and a range of parent and toddler activities.
Nursery Practitioners	Nursery practitioners, also known as nursery nurses and childcare workers are key members of the early years' team and responsible for delivering care and learning opportunities for children based on their needs and interests.
Ofsted	The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. Their role is to make sure that organisations providing education, training and care services in England do so to a high standard for children and students
Parents	Mothers, including single mothers, lone mothers, foster mothers, fathers, step-parents and partners. Any adult in the role of parent, biological or non biological.
Participants	Nursery children, parents, families, nursery practitioners, nursery manager, Kensington Children's Centre Coordinator, artist educators, Tate Liverpool's Early Years and Families Learning curators
Poverty	The poverty line in the UK is defined as a household income below 60% of the average. Data based on incomes published in 2016 by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) show that, after housing costs have been taken into consideration, the number of people living in the UK in relative poverty to be 21% of the population.
SES	Socioeconomic status is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation. Examinations of socioeconomic status often reveal inequities in access to resources, plus issues related to privilege, power and control.
Tate Project	The programme of creative activities (2012-2015) designed to introduce young children to art at Tate Liverpool via a series of workshops with artists in partnership with Kensington Children's Centre.

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Chapter One

A Sure Start to Art: Introduction and Context of Research

This chapter introduces the Tate Project as an ethnographic inquiry and outlines the aims and background of the research, including the selection and recruitment of 'hard to reach' research participants and the context of both places of research: Tate Liverpool and Kensington Children's Centre. A review of current literature on children's learning in gallery education is introduced and the 'hard to reach' label is debated as belonging to a negative discourse for families living in poverty.

Chapter Two

A Bricolage Methodology

A detailed data table presents an outline of the research events and activities in chronological order, including data collection methods, observational tools and quantitative participant information. Research bias is acknowledged as part of the bricolage methodology, which is introduced as a creative and experimental research design. A discussion of bricolage argues for a 'messier' approach for presenting arts-based research which is not restricted by methodological boundaries. The bricolage methodology is presented as a reflexive theoretical collage-like research design which includes the use of images, film footage, insights, ongoing analyses and interpretations of phenomenon as an emergent iterative construction.

Chapter Three

Thinking-with-Data-and-with-Theory

This chapter draws on the expressive ethnographic writing of post-structuralist researchers in order to embrace the act of writing as a dynamic process of analysis (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980; Geertz,1989; St.Pierre and Richardson, 2005; Jackson and Mazzei, 2017). Richardson's (2000) concept of crystallisation is explored, which assumes there can be no single or triangulated truth in research and argues instead for many sides or perspectives. This section also considers how literature is used throughout the entire telling of the research to analyse and make sense of moments as an epistemological and interpretative pursuit. This way of thinking-with-data-and-with-theory, is discussed as a new analytic (Jackson and Mezzei, 2017), where research data is analysed during the

ongoing act of writing, rather than as a separate data analysis section or detached review. Thinking with theory is a mode of thinking, researching, and analysing that allows to research differently.

Chapter Four

The Insider Researcher

Throughout this chapter I discuss my own status or positionality as an ethnographer, with a focus on the advantages and disadvantages of being an insider researcher, conducting research between two places of employment. A section on self-reflexivity is included in order to acknowledge my own culture and role in conducting research, and the importance of becoming consciously aware of these factors in order to think through the implications as a critical researcher. This chapter considers how my own knowledge, passions and existing beliefs are woven in throughout the writing as a self-reflexive pursuit. It makes explicit that I, coordinator of visits, artist, artist educator and participant ethnographic researcher, come with my own bias, knowledge and commitments to creative practice and education which also contribute to creating new insights.

Chapter Five

Ethical Considerations and Power

Conducting qualitative research on people's everyday lives inevitably brings up emotions, some of which may be around difficult life experiences. This chapter examines ethical guidelines and the potential of harm to research participants. The discussion calls for reflexivity and sensitivity on ethical dilemmas surrounding issues of poverty, stereotyping, agency, distorted representation of participants, children's consent, anonymity and research integrity. It also considers how developing reciprocal relationships and co-investigating with participants in social research could be a solution to thinking about many ethical dilemmas, and for avoiding potential bias, as this enables discussions to be had on what is being presented.

Chapter Six

The Adventure (Research Activities and Analysis)

This chapter draws on the encounters and experiences of the participants throughout the Tate Project, and includes observations, reflections, photographs, video footage and naturally occurring conversations with children, parents, artists, nursery practitioners and curators. A collection of selected 'wonder' moments or 'sticky' moments are shared in chronological order, as a research story, consisting also of descriptive vignettes which are followed by detailed analyses. Multiple

perspectives connect past and current key literature on young children's creative learning, including the much favoured Reggio Emila philosophy, social-constructivism, artistic flow, new materialist thinking and posthumanism. This chapter uses a bricolage methodology as a postmodernist mixed-genre text to enable a theoretical collage to be presented, including an evaluation of a gallery resource which I designed to be used by young children and families at Tate Liverpool. Using the process of writing as an epistemological pursuit, or as a way of knowing, has also enabled a method for my own process of thinking to unfold as an iterative construction for thinking-with-theory-and-with-data, without the restrictions of linear social science structuralist rules.

Chapter Seven

Dewey's Experiential Learning Theory

Continuing with an ongoing analysis by thinking-with-data-and-with-theory, this chapter draws on Dewey's theories in order to offer a further, more focused analysis of some of the key elements of children's learning which emerged during *The Adventure*, Chapter Six. Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) is presented as one of the most common underpinning themes of the Tate Project, whereby knowledge is created through the processes used by artists and the transformation of experience. Dewey's ideas on progressive, democratic and gallery education are also related to the Tate Project, as a constructivist view of knowledge and learning which emphasise the importance of organising the educational process around the personal experiences of the learner.

Chapter Eight

Cultural Capital and Symbolic Violence

This chapter contributes to the debate on ways of engaging children and families from marginalised communities in cultural visits and creative practices. It also opens up existing discussions on poverty, negative stereotypes and dominant educational discourses in relation to people who are often described as being 'excluded,' 'disadvantaged' or belonging to marginalised communities. Insights from parents are included, which are related to the symbolic violence often felt by parents and children from low socioeconomic communities throughout their education. By doing so, a critical stance is taken on deficit assumptions held on pupils from poorer backgrounds. This section also argues for the importance of effective engagement of children and families in art and creative approaches as a socially empowering tool and considers the importance of community learning for keeping individual dreams alive.

Chapter Nine

End of the Adventure: A Summary of Conclusions

Writing as a process of thinking also became a tool for new connections to emerge between theory, knowledge and personal beliefs. This chapter argues the case for paying attention to the multiple, rhizomatic, (rather than narrow) directions that creative research may take. A summary of conclusions discusses some of the insights or themes which emerged from the research inquiry and is followed by a diagram and a table of results. The thesis concludes with an expressive discussion which makes the case for gallery education to be considered as a 'rhizomatic model of education.'

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A Sure Start to Art: Introduction and Context for Research

This chapter begins by introducing the Tate Project, my positionality and the background of Tate Liverpool and Kensington Children's Centre. The research aims of the Tate Project and methodology are outlined, including the selection and recruitment of young children and family participants. A section on gallery education introduces the ongoing use of literature throughout the study which sets out to explore a range of current and past perspectives on cultural capital, democratic education and creative pedagogies in early years and gallery education. The attainment and vocabulary gap are discussed in relation to lower socioeconomic communities and the 'hard to reach' label is also debated as being an offensive and problematic term which belongs to a popular and negative discourse on poverty.

The Tate Project

Tate Liverpool's Learning Department has for many years been active in the area of educational projects, aiming to reach out to new and wider audiences, particularly schools and community groups. The gallery uses art education as a way of providing access and participation for those familiar with the visual arts yet also considers other ways for new visitors to experience and respond to art. Tate Liverpool offers a range of family drop in activities and events, with a programme of opportunities for young children to engage with what the gallery has to offer, particularly during school holidays. The Early Years and Families Learning Team are responsible for delivering a range of experiences for family visitors, all aimed at developing a deeper understanding, knowledge and engagement with art. The team is made up of managers, curators and freelance artist educators who are responsible for designing a range of free activities for families, including the Clore Learning Space, a dedicated family area for art making. Tate Liverpool's audience development strategy aims to build partnerships and extend networks in order to widen participation amongst young children and families who may be described as belonging to 'difficult to reach' or excluded groups. 'We aim to provide many access points for our diverse public to engage with art...and actively seek to engage those who may be socially, economically, intellectually or physically excluded from the arts' (Tate, 2018).

In July 2012, an Early Years and Families learning curator from Tate Liverpool approached Kensington Children's Centre (KCC) to offer a programme of creative activities for preschool

children, for an initial one year period (this was later extended for a second and third year). The proposal outlined part of Tate's learning strategy which aimed to broaden their Early Years and family audience by consulting with local nursery providers and family groups. The programme of creative activities was designed to introduce young children to art in the gallery via a series of workshops with artists in order to examine and explore the responses and needs of new and non-traditional visitors to the gallery. This thesis traces those visits from the beginning, from here on referred to as the Tate Project.

Positionality

I began work as an artist, mostly with children and families after completing a fine art and design degree in 1997. During my degree I specialised in printmaking and began to produce and exhibit a body of work called Multi-Storey; a series of etchings and metal sculptures based on people living in tower blocks on a housing estate in Liverpool where I grew up. My quite unique position as a university student from a low socioeconomic background and single parent family, provoked me to further explore and delve into societal matters of poverty, disadvantage and exclusion. I developed an interest in social class division and class politics, but mostly for the way people from low income families, or poorer backgrounds, were often portrayed or grouped together as part of a negative discourse (see *Chapter Eight*). Through art, I wanted to readdress such negative stereotypes and represent some of the lives and individual voices of people living in those tower blocks, by collecting and presenting more positive images about their stories, culture, passions and achievements.

I have now worked as a visual artist for more than twenty years, providing art sessions and art projects to people in community settings, including children living in residential care, primary and secondary schools, hospitals and orphanages (in Nepal), older people in day centres and men in prison. I use various mediums with groups, including printmaking, drawing, painting and textile design and I usually work with people who have no experience or little confidence in their own artistic ability. My practice has always involved a process of encouraging ideas and original images to form as a way of encouraging and supporting individual self-expression.

I have taught in higher education for almost ten years on child development, health, social care and Early Years undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes. My knowledge and interests are mostly in how children learn through play or in issues of equality and diversity, particularly relating to matters of educational inclusion and poverty. I have also, for many years, taught international

curriculum models to students on primary teaching programmes, including modules on lesson planning and Assessment for Learning.

In 2005, I began work with young children and families at Kensington Children's Centre (see pages 25-27), delivering and designing parenting programmes, art sessions and projects, mostly for parents. When I began this research in 2012, I was teaching part-time at university and also working part-time at Kensington Children's Centre, facilitating a therapeutic arts programme, Art and Minds for parents of children under five (see page 29-30). An Early Years and Families learning curator from Tate Liverpool approached Kensington Children's Centre (KCC) to offer a programme of creative activities for preschool children, so I agreed to take the role for coordinating the children's visits to Tate and to be present at all of the activities. The parents attending my Arts and Minds group were invited to take part with their children and a group of ten children (aged 3-4) from the Lifebank Day Nursery (attached to the Children's Centre, see pages, 30-31) were also invited to participate. I took responsibility for liaising between both Tate Liverpool and Kensington Children's Centre to travel with and support the children, nursery practitioners and parents to participate in the planned visits and activities. I had just (a year earlier) begun a self funded, part-time PhD study with a desire to examine the potential pedagogical value of arts education with disadvantaged communities, so I sought full ethical approval (see pages, 62-65) to research the Tate Project, as I would be present at all of the activities. I had never worked at Tate Liverpool, or taken groups there, so I was particularly interested in observing how other artists would work with young children in the area of gallery education, and the pedagogical potential of these experiences for young children.

Shortly into the Tate Project I was commissioned by Tate Liverpool to develop an educational resource to be used by young children and families in the gallery (see Rocketpack resource pages 134-145). Hence, the multiple roles I encountered during the Tate Project, as well as my existing knowledge and experience are woven in throughout this study, as shifting and overlapping positions of participatory researcher, coordinator of visits, artist and artist educator. I explore the position of being an insider researcher in more depth in *Chapter Four*. The Tate Project continued for three years, until 2015, and after it had finished I also began to deliver artist workshops for young children in the gallery and in the studio at Tate, influenced by the artists workshops I had observed, with the freedom to use my own art forms and processes. This work has since continued and I have been involved with Tate Liverpool as an artist educator on a number of projects offering gallery education to young children and their families from preschool settings and to fathers in prison and their families. The Family Collective at Tate Liverpool was formed shortly after The Tate Project

ended and I have lead on this by bringing parents together (some of the original members were the parents from this study), for regular workshops with artists to help trial and shape the family programme at Tate Liverpool. I have also, for the past five years (2015-2019) held the position of artist in residence at a local nursery school and have involved them in an ongoing partnership with Tate (Holmes et al., 2019:27-43).

Research Aims

This research study set out with the primary aim to explore how learning opportunities occur as a result of creative engagement with artists during the Tate Project and to identify the potential value and tensions of these experiences, particularly for young children and families living in areas of social deprivation.

This research set out to broadly explore:

1. Children's creative and expressive learning experiences as a result of engagement in activities with artists.

2. Parents' and nursery practitioners' experiences of children's creativity with artists.

3. The processes used by artists to engage children in gallery education and early creativity.

4. The potential value and tensions of these experiences.

For the purpose of this thesis and for exploring the research aims, I have selected particular visits and moments in order to communicate key elements of the research to the reader (a detailed table of artists, activities and research methods are included as part of the methodology in *Chapter Two)*. Drawing on multiple forms of data, including observations, images, video footage, audio recordings and reflections, these activities are retold, often as descriptive vignettes throughout *The Adventure* section of this thesis (*Chapter Six*). *The Adventure* presents a sequential narrative account of how the research unfolded, but also reflects the often non-sequential way in which we experience and think about things. For example, while observing parents and children during an art workshop I might also be thinking about research methodology; while encouraging young children to join in an activity, I might also be thinking about the sorts of labels that are given to people who do not normally visit an art gallery. In addition, I was not only the researcher but the organiser of the visits/ workshops and had a professional role to fulfil. I was therefore frequently 'torn' between note-taking, reflecting, analysing and participating; whilst also supporting families to feel comfortable and enjoy the experience. Furthermore, the nature of artistic endeavours, including engaging with

works of art, is something that is very difficult to describe; some would say that such engagements are actually beyond words, or outside of language. This means that writing about the place of art and artistic activity brings with it further challenges. It was therefore important to create an experimental bricolage research design (see *Chapter Two*), which would not only suit the depth and complexity of the study but would also fit with the elusive, often curious and unpredictable nature of arts encounters, for, 'art lies half-way between scientific knowledge and mythical or magical thought' (Levi-Strauss,1966:11).

This study set out to 'explore,' to 'inquire,' not to measure these experiences, hence, 'the measure of qualitative research is not whether it follows methodological rules precisely, but whether it adds to our knowledge of the world, understanding of ourselves or enhances life' (Relph, 1981:112). Addressing the complexity of this world and exploring the value and challenges of visits with artists for young children, families and nursery practitioners as a broad research inquiry meant crossing disciplines and considering many perspectives.

An Ethnographic Inquiry

As an artist and as part of my doctoral journey I sought to adopt an open-ended ethnographic exploration from the beginning which was not limited by a set of specific research questions or conventional set of pre-specified procedures (Hammersley, 1994). An ethnographic approach has been taken for exploring the meanings that parents, practitioners, artists and children made of their experiences throughout the project. Ethnography has its roots in the discipline of anthropology; historically concerned with describing other cultures. 'Ethnos' means people, place or cultural group and 'graphe' means writing, thus, ethnography literally means 'writing culture' (Draper, 2015). Modern ethnography embraces the role and identity of the researcher as it is now largely concerned with the study of local and near communities. The amount of insider research being conducted has increased in recent years and much of this research is happening within the field of education (ibid).

An interpretative, qualitative approach has been used as a process of inquiry throughout the study for incorporating multiple methods of investigation which takes in my own position as ethnographer, as artist, artist educator and as facilitator and participant in activities. This is typical of qualitative research where a wide range of interconnected methods are deployed to add breadth and depth to the investigation and is grounded in the post positivist ideology of reality being socially constructed, whereby it is acknowledged that researchers and participants both make sense

of phenomenon because of their own experiences, culture, personal history and place in society (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002). I acknowledge my own bias in further detail in Chapter Two, (pages, 39-41). From this perspective, validity or truth cannot be grounded in one objective perspective and research bias is acknowledged by the researcher and framed subjectively. Denzin and Lincoln (ibid) believe that qualitative research involves an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter which is explored through multiple methods of inquiry. Reflexivity is therefore considered to be a central part of conducting ethnographic research, where ethnographers recognise that they are unable to put their own knowledge of the social world to one side in the hope of achieving objectivity (Pellet, 2003). Self-reflexivity is discussed further, see pages (53-55).

This research inquiry is based on notions of emergent design and set in an interpretative, epistemological paradigm in order to explore multiple disciplines including: early years creative pedagogy, cultural capital and gallery education. The approach I have taken is firmly situated within contextualist and sociocultural perspectives, where the emphasis on learning and development is bound up within the context in which they occur. I recognise that social worlds are complex, can change over time, are socially constructed and are always in a process of becoming (Freire, 1970; Vygotsky, 1978; Deleuze,1987; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). I also, throughout this research, act as critical analyst and researcher and concentrate on the exposure of the multiple ways in which power can harm individuals and groups (Bourdieu, 1977), where knowledge is understood as being power dominated and operates 'to privilege the privileged and further marginalise the marginalised' (Kincheloe, 2008:5). Bourdieu calls for an active engagement of the self in questioning perceptions and exposing their contextualised and power driven nature (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). I adopt a social constructivist epistemology throughout the study for recognising how constructs of knowledge, beliefs and cultural power not only shape my reality but those of the participants, particularly the 'marginalised' parents. In doing so, I voice my appreciation of how research is a power inscribed activity and not a quest for some 'naive mode of realism' (ibid). Ethnography, therefore, embraces the researcher's own knowledge, assumptions, beliefs and values as part of the world being studied (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

Visual Ethnography

A filmmaker has worked with me for several years to document the activities and projects I have been involved with and was commissioned to work alongside me to record the process of each event or project. A statement from the filmmaker is included (page 33). Dicks (2005) discusses how ethnography is situated within a world dominated by multimedia technologies where ethnographers

are increasingly using a range of communicative resources in their work, including recorded sound, still and moving images, as well as speech and writing. She refers to 'multi-modal' ethnography as being a new 'multi-semiotic' form in which meaning is produced through the interrelationships between and among different media and modes (2006:77). I have aimed to take a reflexive approach to presenting this research and therefore acknowledge my own subjectivity as central to the conceptualisation and production of the research process. Some of my interpretations, selections and analyses of events are another form of meaning making or sense-making and this idea is set out in further detail in the methodology section (*Chapter Two*). Presenting photographs and links to films, forms part of the bricolage methodology of combining methods as a way of presenting data. The use of visual mediums also offers another analytical framework in order to abandon a purely objective social science perspective, and reject the idea that the written word is essentially a superior medium of ethnographic representation (Pink, 2007).

Pink divides ethnography into two different camps of thought, scientific-realist ethnography which seeks the truth and reflexive ethnography which asserts there is no objective truth. She considers the difference between written and visual knowledge, however, she does not wish to remove writing altogether and views words for 'being good to communicate with' (2007:176). A range of visual images and films are used in this research as another layer of representation, for the audience to see, rather than imagine, and to also offer a better understanding of the ongoing written interpretation and analysis. Including the use of images in this way also supports the validity of analysis of some of the key moments, with visual examples carefully chosen to support the possibilities of interpretation and to also act as a basis, or point of contrast from which new practices may be developed. Pink (2007) follows the thinking of Geertz (1986) and other post-structuralists, see for example; Wolfe,1975, St.Pierre and Richardson, 2000, Narayan, 2007, Jackson and Mazzei 2012, when she draws on the idea of ethnography as being a type of fiction; considering the scientific-realist approach of representing as an outmoded style of thinking. Creative pursuits are often beyond full representation in words, so a visual representation is often necessary.

A Bricolage Methodology

It is hoped that the way in which the research is presented, in chronological order together with vignettes, will help to bring the account to life. Particular visits and moments were selected in order to communicate key elements of the research to the reader and were analysed to meet with the initial aims of the research inquiry. Throughout *The Adventure* (*Chapter Six*), I aim to take the reader to the Tate (and other places), to give some sense of the experience of the workshops in all

their complex, sometimes 'messy' realities. Law (2004:2) argues that when social science tries to describe things that are complex and 'messy,' it tends to make a mess of it. He states that standard methods are extremely good at what they set out to do, but are often not appropriate ways to study the 'elusive, the indefinite, the subjective, and the irregular.'

This research acknowledges my own exploratory position as an interpretative qualitative researcher, reflected in how my research story is conveyed, as a 'bricolage,' where multiple methodologies of qualitative research have been applied and are presented as such (Levi-Strauss, 2004). As part of the bricolage design and approach to recounting ethnographic research I apply Geertz's (1986) use of thick description and Gonzo ethnography (Tedlock in Strecker and Verne, 2013). These expressive forms of academic writing enable research to be presented as provocative stories, with thoughts and feelings included to ensure the authors' presence is felt as the narrating and interpreting voice (see bricolage methodology, pages 41-45). In order to acknowledge my own presence in the analysis of the research I focus on the act of writing as a way of knowing and as a dynamic process of analysis (Deleuze and Guattari,1987; St. Pierre and Richardson, 2005). Richardson's (2000) concept of crystallisation was adopted as a way of analysis, which assumes there can be no single or triangulated truth in research and argues instead for many sides or perspectives to be included as a way of examining or analysing phenomena. *Chapter Four* also considers how literature is used throughout the entire telling of the research in order to analyse and make sense of moments as an ontological, epistemological and interpretative pursuit. This way of thinking-with-data-and-with-theory, is discussed as a new analytic (Jackson and Mazzei, 2017), where research data is analysed during the ongoing act of writing, rather than as a separate data analysis section or detached review. Analysing data as an ongoing iterative construction results in many insights, themes and perspectives emerging which are presented as part of the conclusion. A visual diagram is included in the final chapter to illustrate the conclusions and to represent the broader, rhizomatic findings of such a broad and creative inquiry, (see page 193).

Some critics may argue that the bricolage methodology could be laden with presuppositions and biases, given bricolage largely rests upon the researcher's confidence to interpret, observe and analyse observations, encounters, and practices (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002). I acknowledge my own bias in more detail (pages 39-41) and how this influences and shapes the research. To address this again from an epistemological perspective, new knowledge is complex, experienced and always constructed, mostly as a set of beliefs by the individual. New knowledge does not have to compose of facts, single truths or measured experiences, and can be presented as the many different

constructions and meanings that people place on their experience (Gergen, 1985; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Adopting a bricolage methodology has allowed for freedom to explore the breadth and scope of the Tate Project, whilst encompassing my personal belief from the outset that arts education and creativity cannot be limited to being any one thing for one person and cannot be limited to one given approach. Bricolage, therefore, is an artistic approach to conducting research which is not defined by specific objectives or narrow questions so is suitable for large scale, curious investigations or creative projects.

Gallery Education for Young Children

This study draws on three key areas of research in order to provide a critical and theoretical framework to support the discussion and analyses of the Tate Project. A range of perspectives on literature in gallery education, cultural capital and early years creative pedagogy are included in order to underpin the study and provide insights into the relationship between children's self-expression, experiential learning, gallery education and matters of inclusion. The complexities of supporting early creativity, cultural visits and expressive processes for very young children are examined, as are the challenges of providing effective creative practice and the difficult balance between expressive freedom, safety and risk (Gill, 2010; Füredi, 2019). Close reference is made to how children communicate in many ways. as highlighted by the much favoured Reggio Emilia philosophy (Malaguzzi,1993; Rinaldi, 2006; Vecchi, 2010; Dahlberg and Moss, 2012; Karlsson Häikiö, 2018).

This study also contributes to the debate on ways of engaging children and families from marginalised communities in cultural visits and creative practices by also opening up existing discussions on poverty, negative stereotypes and dominant educational discourses in relation to people who are often described as being 'excluded,' 'disadvantaged' or belonging to marginalised communities. Insights from parents are included and their feelings are related to the 'symbolic violence,' often felt by parents and children throughout their education from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Holt, 1964; Freire, 1970; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Hattie, 2003; Duckworth, 2013; Mckenzie, 2015). Other perspectives also suggest the importance of democratic creative teaching approaches and the effective engagement of children and families in gallery education for experiential learning and as an empowering tool for learning (Dewey, 1902, 1933, 1938).

Almost two decades ago the DfES Museums and Galleries Education Programmes (2002) report highlighted the benefits to teaching and learning in museums and galleries as being 'qualitatively'

different to the approaches used in formal classroom education. The report also raised the issue of museums and galleries being under-utilised as educational resources and considered how the educational potential of museums and galleries could be facilitated. Since then, museums and galleries have significantly expanded the scope and diversity of programmes and exhibitions offered to children, families and schools, and art museums are often regarded as valuable places for learning with rich contexts and experiences for making sense of the world. Such contexts have much in common with those emphasised by educators, such as Dewey (1938) and Reggio Emilia (Malaguzzi, 1993,1996) whose philosophies place similar importance on democratic environments for learning through extended creative interactions between adults and children.

Much research in gallery education has focused on developing thinking via language and interactions with others (Katz and Chard, 2000), such as studies that examine parent-child interactions during visits, with a particular emphasis on developing language through conversations (Crowley and Jacobs, 2002; Haden et al., 2014), or ways of improving early literacy (DCMS, 2010). Siraj-Blatchford (2005) focused on the idea of sustained shared thinking in museums, where language is used to solve problems, understand a concept, develop stories and so forth. Other studies highlight the affordances of informal settings for developing deeper understandings of children's cognitive development (Sobel and Jipson, 2015), whereas some researchers have concentrated on children's movement in museums as intentional 'multimodal' choices of thinking-in-action (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010; MacLure, 2013, Hackett, 2014; McRae, 2015). Other research applied to learning in museums or art galleries has taken a new materialist or posthumanist perspective, with focus placed directly on interactions with objects and materials (Barad, 2003, 2007; Murris, 2016).

The role of adults in young children's learning is central to this research, as is the relationship between children's play and learning and cultural differences associated with the place of play and learning in children's lives (Bernstein et al., 2005; Gaskin, 2008). There are also individual and cultural differences in how adults participate in children's play and learning. Research shows that in children's museums, much adult behaviour is more hands-off than hands-on because there is a tendency in such settings for adults to allow the children to play while the adults provide supervision and discipline (Downey, Krantz and Skidmore, 2010). A smaller number of adults provide instruction by reading information to the children and helping them to name things (Downey, Krantz and Skidmore, 2010; Crowley and Jacobs, 2011; Wolf and Wood, 2012). One study at Tate Britain, 'I would have worried about her being a nuisance,' examined eight workshops

for children aged under three, who attended sessions with their parents (Hancock and Cox, 2002). The project indicated that parents valued the workshops and considered them to be well organised for engaging young children. Some parents believed that the workshops offered a valuable opportunity for learning about art and artists together. They also stated that the workshops had encouraged them to do further learning at home with their child. The Whitworth Gallery in Manchester examined creative workshops for young children from four local Sure Start centres and found the activities to be a 'social and imaginative approach to engaging children in an exploratory and participatory space' (Tims, 2010:60). The study also suggested that the inclusion of preschool children at the gallery influenced a number of changes to organisational practice, contrasting with the traditions of gallery education as being a 'collections led or practitioner led' practice.

The power of teaching in museums and galleries in relation to early learning throughout an extended programme of visits has not been researched in any depth (Hooper-Greenhill,1999). Therefore, there is little literature on young children's learning at Tate Liverpool, or on spending extended lengths of time there. Perhaps this is because, for many years, young children have not been considered a core audience for such institutions. However, In 2016, I was part of another research group when the Cultural Institute at King's College London teamed up with an architect (Wendy James, of Garbers and James) to explore what might happen if children spent most of their school day and up to nearly a term attending school in a museum. The My Primary School is at the Museum project investigated the idea of extended cultural residencies of nursery or primary school children and their teachers in local museums. The project explored three pilot partnerships, located across England and Wales. One of these partnerships took place at Tate Liverpool. This formed the focus of a paper which I co-authored (Dewitt et al., 2018). As part of the programme, Tate Liverpool hosted a week long residency for a group of children from the Lifebank Nursery. I was present for the duration of the residency in the role of artist-educator and found the exploratory and extended nature of the experience reinforced efforts to let children take the lead, strengthened social skills and encouraged language and new vocabulary. The programme of extended visits particularly contributed to learning from social interactions by strengthening relationships with adults and making new friendships with children. The extended residency also inspired many new creative ideas to be put in place in the nursery setting along with new ideas for resources by the nursery practitioners.

Tate Liverpool

The first Tate gallery opened in 1889 on London's Millbank, when Henry Tate, a successful sugar refiner, offered his collection of British art for the creation of a new gallery that would be dedicated to showing British art. Tate Liverpool opened almost a century later in 1988, as another venue for displaying major international exhibitions of modern art, housed in a converted warehouse at the Albert Dock on Liverpool's waterfront. Tate St.Ives followed in 1990 on the Cornwall coast in the south of England and Tate Modern was last of the four sites to open in 1992. Tate Liverpool set out to have 'a distinct identity, dedicated to showing modern art and for encouraging a new and younger audience in active education programmes' (Tate, 2018).

Each gallery was created with unique characteristics, yet the vision across all Tate sites remains to, 'inspire new ways of learning with art, specifically with Tate's collection, to reach a wider audience and promote positive change, dialogue and engagement in contemporary culture and artistic life' (Tate, 2020). Tate has an average of seven million visitors a year across its galleries and Tate Learning provides educational programmes for approximately one and a half million visitors as well as at least one million further learners online. Tate considers their overall approach to be built on the belief that art should be a 'joyful, complex experience that provokes positive social, emotional and intellectual change' (ibid).

Tate Liverpool Artists

Artists are intrinsically linked to the development and delivery of a gallery learning programme, they are often described as 'creative practitioners,' 'artist facilitators,' 'artist educators' or simply 'artists.' These professionals are commissioned as freelancers by Tate to research, plan, develop and deliver a particular aspect of the gallery learning programme, such as a workshop, creative project, resource or installation. Usually they are selected on the basis of their practice, that is, their specialism in relation to a particular material or process and also with regard to previous works produced or exhibited. In addition, artists are selected by a gallery learning curator or programme manager, based on their previous experience of working with a specific participant group. Gallery learning programmes focus on developing key audiences, so the artist's practice must be flexible enough and well suited to working with particular kinds of groups. Artists are relied upon as key players within this development as their practice must be responsive to the way young children explore, observe, construct and produce. Furthermore, within the specific context of gallery learning, the role of the artist is to provide a bridge between exploring, interpreting and

understanding artworks and activating a meaningful, participant led, creative learning experience which is inspired by or responds to the artworks or gallery spaces.

The artist educators responsible for facilitating the Tate Project were freelance, employed by Tate Liverpool on a sessional basis. Each are referred to throughout this study as 'artists,' with varying degrees of specialism for working with young children and families. The artists were responsible for selecting artworks from Tate's collection as starting points for using their own unique skill, artistic practice and knowledge to plan each session (see data table of artist activities pages 34-39). Sessions took place between the gallery or in studio spaces at Tate and were repeated the following week in a large hall with the same group of children in Kensington Children's Centre.

Kensington Sure Start Children's Centre

In 1998, a programme called Sure Start was introduced in some of the most disadvantaged areas throughout the UK, with the aim of giving children the best possible start in life through improvement of childcare, early education, health, family support, outreach and community development. Centres were often attached to primary schools and provided a range of services to all families with children aged under five living in areas of deprivation. The centres, similar to the much older Head Start programme in the United States were created under the New Labour government as a way of developing the early years agenda to improve the life chances of young children living in poverty. More than three thousand Sure Start centres were established across the UK over a ten year period as a huge investment for improving quality early years provision which had long had the reputation for being, 'patchy and fragmented' (HMSO, 2012:15-17). A considerable expansion was seen as necessary for improving services for early intervention in order to support a reduction in the disadvantages experienced by low-income families on school entry (Desforges, 2003; Field, 2010; Allen, 2011; Sylva et al., 2011; Teather, 2012). Kensington Sure Start, later known as Kensington Children's Centre, (when administration was passed from central government to local authorities) opened in 2001 with the core purpose for improving outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on the disadvantaged (DfE, 2015).

Kensington, known locally as 'Kenny,' is located immediately east of the city centre in the inner core area which encircles the City of Liverpool, one of the most 'severely deprived' areas in England (IMD, 2015:52). Liverpool is currently ranked as the fourth most deprived local authority, but for a long time it has been named as England's most deprived area (liv.gov.uk, 2015). Liverpool still has the highest proportion of disadvantaged neighbourhoods in England according to the

English Indices of Deprivation (2015). The Indices provide a set of relative measures for monitoring deprivation in small areas (Lower layer Super Output Areas) across England; based on seven different domains of deprivation. The seven separate domains measure poverty in terms of income, employment, education, skills and training, crime, health and disability, barriers to housing, services and living environment deprivation. Kensington certainly has the challenges and problems of the inner core of many cities, including poor housing, high levels of crime, high unemployment, low educational attainment and problems with alcohol and drug dependency. Adults living in Kensington are more likely (compared to national averages) to remain 'trapped in cycles of poverty, low pay, in work poverty, unemployment and welfare benefits' (Kensington Regeneration.org, 2009).

Kensington Children's Centre (KCC) serves a community with a diverse range of minority ethnic groups, where over three-quarters of these do not speak English as their first language (Ofsted, 2013). The centre aims to meet local and national targets by providing a range of health and educational services to children and families including opportunities for adult learning, professional training and dissemination of its work. KCC, like all children's centres (or family centres), aims to address the educational, social and economic gap that exists between children born in these areas and those born in less deprived areas of the city. The Life Bank Nursery is based within the centre and provides private day care for fifty-two children from birth to five years.

Ofsted's Early Years Annual Report, 'Unsure Start' agrees that high quality early intervention is important in order to focus on the 'poorest children' in society and for improving the 'long tail of underperformance that blights too many of the poorest children (HMCI, 2013:3). The report considers the 'substantial investment' that has been made in extending provision in the early years sector but suggests that there has not been enough focus on narrowing the attainment gap. 'Unsure Start' offers a summary of findings from comparing baseline assessments of poorer children with their more affluent peers. It presents children from low income families (on school admission) as, 'less able to follow instructions, make themselves understood, manage their own basic hygiene or play well together' (ibid).

An Ofsted report (2013:1),'Supporting the 'hard to reach,' describes Kensington Children's Centre as an outstanding centre with an 'impressive range of services and activities for encouraging high rates of participation from the local community and for reaching those most in need of intervention and support.' The report highlights the Arts and Minds (see page, 30) creative arts programme

(following an inspection) at the centre and describes it as being 'beneficial in developing parents' and carers' overall well-being and raising their self-confidence.'

Engaging 'Hard to Reach' Families in Visits to Tate

A growing body of research claims that children of parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are frequently considered as being at risk of not successfully achieving at school, since it is claimed their skills are less developed in their early years (Dearing and McCartney, 2004; Sylva et al., 2004; Allen, 2011). Therefore, it was thought that involving parents in frequent visits to Tate, particularly families described as 'hard to reach' would offer opportunities for parents to get involved in their children's learning and experience enjoyable 'quality' time together. The Tate Project, as stated earlier, was aimed at engaging young children and parents in cultural activities from poorer areas of the city, in order to widen its early years and family audience, so parents living in the area from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were targeted.

Parents using children's centre services are often described as being 'hard to reach,' 'vulnerable,' having 'complex needs,' or, more recently as 'troubled' families (Lambert and Crossley, 2016). The terms 'high' or 'low' socioeconomic status (SES), are often used for ease of grouping people according to different social stratum but are usually used to describe families, (more than any other population). SES is typically concerned with parental occupation, wealth, social recognition, education, family income and privileges (Lamsden and McDawall-Clark, 2016). Before continuing, it is worth discussing these terminologies or labels in more depth, particularly as this research aims to avoid 'othering' or representation of participants that may contribute to negative stereotypes of poverty, class assumptions or parenting ability.

The term 'hard to reach' can be offensive and problematic because communities are often routinely grouped as part of a negative, underprivileged or separatist discourse (Gillies, 2005; Duckworth, 2013; Mackenzie, 2015). It is a term frequently used as a 'shortcut' for referring to whole communities of people who appear to pose difficulties to conventional ways of doing things (Kalathil, 2009:3). For example, in the context of education or services, 'hard to reach' families, particularly mothers, can be 'looked down on' and seen as 'illiterate, chronically uninformed, difficult, unmotivated and regressive' (Freimuth and Mettger, 1990:56). Such pre-conceived assumptions appear to imply a lack of motivation on the parents' part, rather than on the way any involvement is defined or undertaken. The term 'harder' to reach perhaps implies that a greater responsibility should be taken on the part of those providing services rather than on those accessing

them. Begum (2006:23) further supports this opinion and identifies several myths surrounding marginalised communities; many of which are used to justify the 'hard to reach' label. One myth is that parents are 'not interested in participating,' and another is that 'hard to reach' families do not want to spend time with their children. This opens up a broader debate about the advantages and disadvantages of having such labels in the first place, as labelling is also a convenient way for professionals to communicate 'need,' when higher levels of support are necessary, such as in cases where children are deemed as being 'at risk'.

Some of the parents participating in the Tate Project, for example, were referred to Sure Start, then to my Arts and Minds group by health professionals or social services because they had complex needs. For example, one mother had postnatal depression, another mother (an asylum seeker) had post traumatic stress disorder, two had children with disabilities and most were long-term unemployed. Attracting and retaining the most vulnerable parents on parenting programmes is crucial for establishing a relationship and for providing the right support, so the Tate Project was considered (by staff working at KCC and Lifebank) as a positive intervention for parents to participate in creative activities with their children and to share positive experiences together. Our initial thoughts in preliminary meetings focused on positive outcomes and the impact of the project, as measuring and justifying success through impact measures is central to Children's Centres provision. We believed that the group would raise parents' confidence, enhance parenting skills, boost self-esteem, strengthen parent/child/nursery relationships and prepare children for school in many ways.

A number of studies examine the causes of impaired language development in relation to the ways in which parents communicate with their children (Sylva et al., 2004; Hoff and Tian, 2005; Hoff, 2006; Snow, 2013). Contrasts in communications between families (associated with socioeconomic status) are often identified as a key cause of early differences between children in cognitive and language development, intelligence, and school achievement. It is important to add that research on poverty can often be generalised and exaggerated, and from time to time, such research breaks out from the normally restricted sphere of academic circulation, and becomes a part of the popular lexicon (Hayward and Yar, 2006). For example, research (popular in the child care sector) claims that children from a lower socioeconomic background will go to school having heard, thirty-two million fewer words than their middle class peers (Hart and Risley, 1995). These findings were found to be somewhat exaggerated, (mostly because this many words do not exist in the English language), and the research has long since been disputed (Dudley-Marling Miller, 1993; Michaels,

2013). Yet, similar, less disputed research, claims the vocabulary gap does nothing but grow as the years progress between those who are economically disadvantaged and those from more privileged backgrounds, adding to the growing concern about the widening 'vocabulary gap' between children from different socioeconomic groups (Marchman and Weisleder, 2013; Snow 2013; Beimillera, 2010; Quigley, 2018).

Holistic interventions, therefore, such as repeated visits to Tate for children and families fit with approaches for encouraging home learning and for offering informal opportunities for parents to talk in different contexts with their children. At the same time the creative opportunities might also support a relationship to develop between families, educational settings and the wider community which are seen as necessary in narrowing the attainment gap (Goodall et al., 2010; Grayson, 2013). The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) (Sylva et al., 2004:78) report concludes that what parents 'do' is more important than who parents 'are,' that parents may live in disadvantaged circumstances and may not have achieved well educationally, but if they regularly engage in activities which help to 'stretch a child's mind' as part of everyday life at home then they can enhance their child's progress and development.

Cultural outings therefore, such as the scheduled visits to Tate are seen as pivotal opportunities for creating positive family learning experiences, and I understand, through my own experience of working with parents at KCC for over ten years, that some parents rely on the centre for organised trips and subsidised days out. Such activities are frequently requested, especially during school holiday times. They are always over subscribed and valued as opportunities for families to experience outings to places such as national parks, museums, forests, seaside resorts and the countryside. This confirms the interest adults have in enjoying and taking part in cultural outings with their children.

There had not been any organised or group visits to Tate before the Tate Project began. For the first visit to Tate I tried to recruit parents from a weekly drop-in Stay and Play group at KCC. I asked a number of mothers attending the group to come along (who I did not know well) but most were uninterested in participating because they had never heard of the gallery, or they had heard of it and thought the idea of going there was not 'their thing.' One parent, for instance, dismissed the idea, with a sarcastic laugh, saying, 'no you're alright' and some said they didn't like that kind of art, or were not very 'arty' themselves. The general impression was that they enjoyed visiting other local museums with their children, but not art galleries. They had a faint idea of what Tate was about and were simply not interested in visiting.

Arts and Minds

The Arts and Minds group was set up by the Centre Coordinator of Kensington Children's Centre in 2009 in response to the needs of parents, who, for many different reasons, required a high level of emotional support. My role in the group, as 'artist' or 'art teacher,' was to introduce parents to a range of creative processes, including drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, photography and textile design. The group was often co-facilitated by a core member of the team who was a qualified counsellor, and together we aimed to offer a safe, alternative space for parents of children under five, to meet, make art, problem share and participate in creative projects. The Arts and Minds group uses art as a vehicle for providing therapeutic support with vulnerable families from the local area, particularly those who have a distinct lack of confidence or are seeking support to improve their own emotional well being. Most of the parents are referred to the group with a range of complex needs, including depression, post natal depression, isolation, post traumatic stress, loss or domestic violence.

The centre coordinator at Kensington Children's Centre appreciates creative practice and believes in the life affirming pleasures of making art. She shares a strong belief in the power of art education for increasing awareness of self and others through exposure to art and offers this provision along with a creche facility to give parents some therapeutic space. The group meet for two hours each week to work on creative projects individually and collaboratively, working towards an exhibition and achieving a level one accreditation in Art and Design or 'Working as Part of a Team' to further develop their educational achievements. Arts and Minds has been successful in attracting a very diverse group of parents and those parents were invited to participate in the Tate Project. Most of the parents in the group have children attending the Lifebank Nursery (based inside Kensington Children's Centre, see pages 25-26)

The Lifebank Nursery

The Sunflower Room in the Lifebank Nursery accommodates more than thirty children aged three to four years over the course of a week (Monday-Friday). All children in England aged three to four years old could access fifteen hours of free early education or childcare per week for thirty-eight weeks per year (at the time), so most children in Lifebank Nursery attended for two and half days per week, although some parents paid for additional day care or extra sessions. Therefore, some children attended nursery for morning or afternoon sessions only, or for full days.

Most of the initial preparation and practical planning for visits to Tate took place between the children's centre coordinator and the nursery manager, both were responsible for ensuring that as many children as possible could experience the creative sessions. Much consideration was given to the safe supervision of the children, so adequate staffing was a priority, especially as we had agreed to travel with the children to Tate on the local bus. Children who did not have permission to take part in the visits would remain in the Sunflower Room; so sufficient staffing also had to be provided there. We believed that smaller groups of children would benefit more from the experience, so no more than twelve children would attend each visit. It was also thought that priority should be given to the older children who were starting school that year, because we believed (myself, the nursery manager, room leader, children's centre manager) that the experience would be beneficial for preparing the children for entrance into primary school reception class, particularly with their communication, language, social and emotional development. Parental consent (appendix 2) was required for all children attending Tate and separate consent was sought for children and families to take part in the research, (also see ethics, pages 62-65). This ensured that children could take part in the project without taking part in the research.

Creativity in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The programme of regular visits to Tate, combined with follow up visits from artists were seen by nursery practitioners as 'exciting' multi-sensory opportunities for the nursery children. The nursery manager and children's centre manager also agreed that frequent exposure to expressive and creative processes through working with artists would support nursery practitioners to develop their knowledge of creative approaches. This would fulfil the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework (a requirement for all nursery settings in England). The EYFS was first introduced in 2008 as a framework for delivering consistent and high quality experiences for all children from birth to five years (DCSF, 2008). A key document of the EYFS, 'Development Matters' (DfE, 2012) offered statutory guidance to early years settings for meeting the curriculum and is divided into four themes:-Unique child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environment and Learning and Development. These themes are also underpinned with principles and practice guidance, for instance, one of the key principles of the 'Positive Relationships' theme, 'Parents as Partners,' aims to strengthen partnerships between parents and professionals, placing high importance on parental involvement for children's learning and development (Hannon, 2006; Hollingworth, 2009; Whalley, 2017; Nutbrown, 2011). Careful consideration was given to including parents as partners throughout the Tate project, with opportunities for parents to attend and

participate in creative workshops with their children. Being part of an extended creative programme in an art gallery would also meet with the Characteristics of Effective Practice, outlined in Development Matters, stating that children should be supported to 'play and explore,' to participate in 'active learning' and to 'create and think critically' (DfE, 2012).

In 2012 the revised EYFS was introduced following a review by Tickell (2011). Tickell emphasised the important role that parents and carers have in their children's development, recommending that effective parental engagement should be incorporated into all early years practice. Tickell highlighted some of the successes of the EYFS and recommended a number of improvements. Changes were made to improve the framework, including the introduction of Expressive Arts and Design (EAD) as one of the four specific areas for learning and development. The Tate Project, therefore, would offer possible experiences for children to play and explore using a range of materials and media, to fit with the detailed guidance in The Development Matters Framework for EAD, 'to share thoughts, ideas and feelings through the use of art and to experience music, dance, role-play and design technology.' Providing experiences at Tate would fit with the EAD curriculum area; further reinforcing the potential value of the Tate Project.

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Chapter Two

A Bricolage Methodology

This chapter begins by examining the multiple forms of data collected for the purpose of research throughout the Tate Project. A statement from the filmmaker is included, followed by a detailed table of research activities and data collection methods. A section on research bias considers the ability to be self-reflective and to consciously acknowledge one's own bias, assumptions and preconceptions, which can shape the outcome of research in social science. The bricolage methodology is discussed as a theoretical collage, which includes the bricoleur's position in conducting research and for constructing the overall research design. Similarities are also made between artists and bricoleurs given that both avoid having too much of a plan in order to allow for freedom of thought and self-expression.

Data Collection Methods

Over the three year course of this research I observed thirty-two workshops; sixteen sessions at Tate and sixteen at Kensington Children's Centre. For the purpose of this thesis (and for exploring the aims of this research), I have selected particular visits and moments in order to communicate key elements of the research to the reader. Drawing on multiple forms of data (observations, images, video footage, audio recordings, reflections and semi-structured interviews), these activities are retold, often as descriptive vignettes throughout *The Adventure* section of thesis (*Chapter Six*). I have worked closely with the filmmaker for several years, who was present at many of the Tate activities in order for video footage and photographs to be used as part of the analysis. Video footage and voice recordings were examined in order to support the aims of the research and to stimulate critical reflection by a small team consisting of nursery practitioners, artists, parents and learning curators, before being edited to present key moments of the children's experiences as final films. Links to the final edited films are included throughout the research to support observational data and descriptions of phenomena. Jake Ryan, the filmmaker describes how he makes choices on what he captures and edits:

When documenting a session, I look for moments of engagement, concentration, children interacting closely with materials and expressive gestures. I also look to show the relationships between children, artists and practitioners, to show moments of care giving, shared humour, instances of recognition, understanding and a sense of general enjoyment. I exclude pictures of

parents using mobile phones, shots of children's nose picking, underwear and children getting distracted by goofing for the camera. I don't pose shots or have children hold up their artwork as a 'finished' product. Although I record the audio from sessions, I mostly find including it isn't useful for telling the story of the activity (Jake Ryan).

The following data table presents the first two years of research activities in chronological order.

Table of Activities and Research Methods

Visits	Activities (two to three hours duration)	Research Methods
Visit 1 **Vignette 1** (16/08/2012) (see pages, 71-74). Fire over Water workshop in studio at Tate, followed by visit to Turner Monet Twombly private exhibition at Tate. **Artist:** Michiko Fuji **Participants:** Twelve children (10 aged 3-4 years) Two aged 2 years Seven boys, five girls	Trial visit to summer drop-in activity before scheduled programme of activities begin. Painting with long sticks on wall in studio and making long paper sculptures.	Audio recording of whole visit Observation notes Reflection Photographs **Fig.1** (page 73)
Visit 2 (13/09/2012) Turner Monet Twombly Exhibition at Tate, workshop and Duckbus **Vignette 2** (see pages, 81-84) **Artist:** Fiona Smith **Participants**:Ten children (eight aged 3-4) two aged 2 years. Five parents (including two fathers) two nursery practitioners, nursery manager. Six girls, four boys	Drawings on paper with pencils of Monet's water lillies and Twombly's Thermopylae. Artist led workshop in studio with paper, oil pastels, glue, collage acetate strips. Duck Bus on The River Mersey around the Albert Dock.	Photographs **Fig.2** (page 74) Children's artwork examples **Fig.3** (page 82) Audio recording of whole visit. Observation notes Lesson plans created by artists on themes of fire, air, earth and water. Written reflection by Katy (early years curator, page 83). Flip video used by children on Duck Bus to make own film.

Visit 3 (27/09/2012) Follow up visit to Kensington C.C (fortnight later) **Vignette 3** (see pages, 88-91) **Artist:**Fiona Smith. **Participants:** Twelve children (ten from first visit) six parents (one father) two nursery practitioners, nursery manager. Ten aged 3-4 years, two aged 2 years. Six boys, six girls.	Children's pictures from last visit Tate displayed on wall. Pastel drawing and collage on large paper on floor. Clay sculptures using clay, match sticks, pipe cleaners, picture of Thermopylae exhibited and children's drawing of this from gallery visit.	Reflection Observation Photographs **Fig.5 (**page 89) Artwork Audio recording .
Visit 4 (18/10/2012) Half term drop-in activity. Painting to music workshop in studio at Tate and resource trial in gallery (Rocketpacks, pages, 138-150) **Artist**: Tony Hall **Participants:** Fifteen children**,** three staff, eight parents, fifteen children Thirteen children aged 3-4 years. One aged 8, one aged 2 years. Seven boys, seven girls.	Painting to music on large paper covered walls and plastic hangings. Wireless digital headphones. Atmospheric musical, digital sounds and water sounds. Secret mission game/resource trial in gallery (led by me)	Reflection Audio recording Observation notes Observation notes from two nursery practitioners Photographs **Fig.** 37 (page 139) **Fig**. 38,39 (page 140) **Fig.**40,41,42,43,44 (page 141) **Fig. 45, 46** (page 142)
Visit 5 (8/11/2012) Visit to first floor of gallery DLA piper series, 'This is Sculpture' (see pages, 101-105) **Vignette 4** **Artist**: Michiko Fuji **Participants:** Ten children, three nursery staff, two parents (one father, one mother) Nine aged 3-4 years, one aged 2 years. Five boys, five girls	Visit to first floor gallery of gallery. Objects are used around gallery: magic glasses, colourful acetate, torches, blocks, lolly sticks, card, children move using whole bodies to make shapes on floor and around gallery. Studio activities: material over children to create sculptures, rolled up paper with collage strips attached. Painting on floor on layered paper, large brushes and rollers. Acetate projections on material.	Reflection by artist Michiko Fuji page 103 Photographs: **Fig. 4** (page 85) **Fig. 6 (**page 94) **Fig. 18** (page 102) **Fig 19 (**page 103) **Fig 20** (page 104) **Fig 21 (**page 105) **Fig 30** (page 122) Observation Audio recording video film page 104

Visit 6 (22/11/2012) **Vignette 5** **Artist**: Michiko Fuji **Participants:**Twelve children, three nursery staff, five parents Ten aged 3-4 years, two aged 2 years. Six boys, six girls	Visit to second floor of the gallery, mirror cube instillation. Painting and projections. Making and projecting acetate images onto material. Children sliding in paint. Painting on large layered paper on floor, lily pad layers reveal unpainted paper.	Audio recording Photographs Observation notes Reflection from artist Michiko **Fig.** 33,34,35 (page 134)
Visit 7 (10/01/2013) Visit to *Glam* exhibition and workshop in studio (page 107) **Artist:** Jess Jones **Participants:** Twelve children, five parents, two nursery staff Ten aged 3-4 years. Two aged 2 years. Six girls, six boys	Visit to *Glam* exhibition Silver sculpture workshop using tin foil, card and wire. Children watch the Tate documentary footage for exhibition	Reflection Audio recording Observation notes Notes from dialogue in film
Visit 7 (24/01/2013) Follow up visit to KCC **Artist:** Sarah Marsh **Participants**: Twelve children, five parents, two nursery staff Ten aged 3-4 years, two aged 2. Six girls, six boys	Making silver sculptures. Made acetate projections shown on wall.	Audio recording Observation notes Photographs First semi-structured face to face interviews conducted with eight parents (six mothers and two fathers aged 25-35). Face to face at Kensington CC, audio recorded. Sample questions in appendix 4 (page 231)
Visit 8 (07/02/2013) Visit to Tate. Brushbots workshop, visit to DLA piper series first floor (see pages 115-117) **Artist:** Tony Hall **Participants:** Twelve children, five parents, two nursery staff Eleven aged 3-4, one aged 3. Six boys, six girls	Visit to two artworks in gallery looking at sculptures, drawing on wavy card whilst moving. 'Making Brushbots' mechanical drawing robots.	Video film of Brushbots (film link (page 115) photographs **fig.** 26,27,28,29 page 116 **Fig.** 23, 24, 25 page 115 **Fig.**32 (page 130) Observation notes Audio Recording

Visit 9 (21/02/2013) fortnight later, artist visit to Kensington CC **Artist:**Tony Hall **Participants:** Five parents, twelve children, two nursery staff Eleven aged 3-4, one aged 2. Six boys, six girls	Brushbots and wooden blocks set out on large paper. Movement games played with children.	Video film (page 113) Photographs Observation notes
Visit 10 (14/03/13) Visit to Tate **Artist:** Sarah Marsh **Participants:** Twelve children five parents, three nursery staff Eleven aged 3-4 years, one aged 2. Seven boys, five girls	Glass boxes, little plastic people, range of materials; ping pong balls, pipe cleaners, hair rollers, colourful strips. Set out in colour groups; red and orange, black and white, green and yellow.	Audio recording Observation notes Photographs
Visit 11 (28/03/14) artist visit to Kensington CC **Artist**: Sarah Marsh **Participants:** Twelve children, five parents. three nursery staff Eleven aged 3-4 years, one aged 2. Seven boys, five girls.	Glass boxes, little plastic people. Different coloured wire on large white paper on floor, smaller wire used to connect.	Audio recording Photographs Observation notes
Visit 13 (16/05/2013) visit to Tate workshop with artist. **Artist:** Jess Jones **Participants:** Ten children, two parents, three nursery staff Nine aged 3-4 years, one aged 2 Six boys, four girls	Drawing to music (old dancehall jazz). Sticky dots on large paper and drawing pens, joining lines with dots. Drawing to music. Children's faces projected on giant balloons.	Photographs Observation notes Audio Recording
Visit 14 (30/05/2013) Artist visit to Kensington CC **Artist:** Jess Jones **Participants:** Seventeen children, nine parents, three nursery staff Fifteen children aged 3-4 years, three aged 2. Nine boys, eight girls	Photographs of children produced on A3 paper, black and white. Children chop up parts of pictures to make collage and colour. Images of children are projected on wall to music	Photographs Notes Audio Recording

Visit 15 (10/10/2013) Visit to Palle Neilson exhibition **(**page 133) **Artist:** Sarah Marsh. **Participants:** Twelve children**,** five parents, three nursery staff Ten aged 3-4 years, two aged 2. Six boys, six girls	Children watch 70's footage of Palle Neilson *Playground* on gallery wall. Discussion with artist to curate their own exhibition. Tubing, hose, cardboard boxes, tape and material is presented for children to select.	Observation notes Photographs Audio Recordings
Visit 16 (17/10/2013) Visit to Kensington Children's Centre **Artist:** Sarah Marsh. **Participants:** Twelve children, five parents, three nursery staff Ten aged 3-4 years, two aged 2. Six boys, six girls	Children use little plastic people and large perspex boxes to curate their own spaces using a range of colourful and textured materials.	17/10/2013 interview date Second semi-structured face to face interviews conducted with seven parents (see page 170-171) two mothers aged 20-25 three mothers aged 25-30 two fathers aged 25-30
Visit 17 (20/11/2013) in studio at Tate (page 104) **Artist:** Dena Bagi **Participants**: Fifteen children, eight parents, three nursery staff Twelve aged 3-4 years, three aged 2. Eight boys, seven girls	Large blocks of clay are set out in studio with lolly sticks and match sticks. (fig.) Large buckets of slip with rollers and brushes and paper to paint with mud on. Long pieces of black and white material are set out in studio and gallery.	photographs **fig. 7, 8, 9** page 96 **Fig.** 14,15,16,17 page 100 film page104 Observation video film page 104
Visit 18 (4/12/2013) in Kensington Children's Centre **Artist:** Dena Bagi **Participants**: Fifteen children, eight parents four nursery staff Twelve aged 3-4 years, three aged 2. Eight boys, seven girls	Large blocks of clay and shredded paper are set out with bamboo sticks. Large buckets of slip with rollers and brushes and paper to paint with mud on. Long pieces of black and white material are set out.	Observation notes photographs

Visit 19 (6/03/2014) visit to Tate **Vignette Six** Visit to Art Turning Left Exhibition. *11 Toy Surprises* (pages 123-125) **Artist:** Kevin Hunt **Participants**: Twelve children, five parents, three nursery staff Ten aged 3-4 years, two aged 2. Six boys, six girls.	Strips of card, sticky orange and black paper, post it notes, stickers, pots with lids, rice, bells, lentils, range to make shakers with. Shakers are taped to children and they become noisy sculptures, children and adults cover themselves in materials and seek to find an artwork that 'looks like them'	Artist lesson plan Observation Notes Audio recording **Fig.31** page 124
Visit 20 (13/03/2014) Artist visit to Kensington CC. **Artist:** Kevin Hunt **Participants**: Ten children, Five parents, three nursery staff Nine aged 3-4 years, one aged 2. Five boys, five girls.	Silver pie dishes are given with range of stickers, foam, acetate, pipe cleaners and chopsticks. Dishes are taped together onto string and all put together for children to become a giant sculpture.	Photographs Observation notes **Third semi-structured interview:two female and one male nursery practitioners, five parents (three mothers, two fathers, aged 25-35) face to face at Kensington Children's Centre, audio recorded. See questions page 231**
Visit 21 (12/06/2014) 'Our Exhibition.' (page 137) Artist: Tony Hall, Sarah Marsh **Participants:** Thirty-seven parents, three grandparents, twenty-two children, nursery manager, children's centre staff, centre manager and manager of KCC. Six nursery staff. Tate curators and learning team Fifteen children aged 3-4 years, four aged 2 and three aged 0-12 months. Twelve boys, ten girls	An exhibition of children's work displayed for one week at Tate with private view/event held for parents and children. Painting using brushes attached to sticks, playground instillation, brushbots and selection of activities.	photographs **Fig. 36** page 137

Acknowledging Research Bias

Qualitative research has been frequently criticised for lacking scientific rigour with poor justification of the methods adopted, lack of transparency in the analytical procedures and findings

being merely a collection of personal opinions subject to research bias (Rolfe, 2006). Yet qualitative inquiries, particularly ethnographic studies, involve an interpretative methodology with some intensive self-reflection and introspection in order to make sense of, or interpret phenomena (Mohajan, 2018). The basis of conducting qualitative research particularly within the field of social science lies in the interpretative approach of social reality, and in the description of the lived experience of human beings (Atkinson et al., 2001). Part of this interpretative approach is the ability to be self-reflexive, which involves the conscious acknowledgement of one's own bias, assumptions and preconceptions, which can shape the outcome of research in social science. For example, as an artist, I critically argue for a more creative and democratic education because of my belief that arts-based education can be truly life enhancing and transforming if appropriate mechanisms are put in place for creating opportunities for self-expression.

This research is not only influenced by my position as an artist, but by my social background, political persuasions and personal experiences of inequalities throughout my own education. These experiences have certainly shaped my understanding of how people might feel or behave when they feel 'out of place' or disadvantaged in some way, particularly during secondary school education and beyond, or culturally, because of their poorer position in society. In *Chapter Eight,* I discuss this further and interpret one aspect of Bourdieu's (1977) cultural capital as the 'symbolic violence' inflicted on lower class pupils throughout their education. Research indicates that teachers can often view poorer pupils as already belonging to an aggressive culture so are therefore in need of firmer discipline, for example, Raey (2019), suggests that pupils from poorer backgrounds are often subject to much harsher rules in school. She says some academies operate on the principle that working class families are chaotic and children need school to impose control. She found that there was lots more rules imposed in more deprived schools for lining up in silence, repeating mantras and standing to attention when an adult comes into the room. This perspective is further strengthened by literature which suggests that children from poorer areas are not reaching their educational potential because pupils in more working class comprehensives get less money per head, so they get less qualified teachers, higher levels of teacher turnover and more supply teachers (ibid). Raey (2019) found that even if they are in the same schools as middle class children, they are often in lower sets and again they get less experienced teachers. I discuss this in more depth in *Chapter 8* and consider how research into teachers' low expectations of pupils from poorer backgrounds has shown to have an effect on student achievement (Rubie-Davies, Hattie and Hamilton, 2012). This may not be easy reading for a teacher working hard to support pupils from

poorer communities to achieve their potential, and I acknowledge that this research has no scope to include such broader perspectives. Nor are the perspectives of poorer pupils included who may never have felt out of place in school, or the voices of children who feel out of place in school because of many other reasons. This ethnographic case study only has scope to consider and interpret the feelings, behaviour and culture of the participants which arose during this study. I further discuss the advantages and disadvantages of conducting research as an insider within one's own culture and community in more detail in *Chapter Four*.

Drawing on research (in *Chapter Eight*) by other working class academics to analyse and underpin the discussion, for example, Bourdieu (1977), Duckworth (2013), McKenzie (2015), McGarvey (2017), Raey (2019), and may also be seen as research bias. Yet, it is important to critically present these perspectives in order to create further awareness of broader matters of educational inclusion, such as how the voices of working class academics are still largely underrepresented in the research community, because they are still a minority in education (Binns, 2019). Similar inequalities also exist in the creative industries with debates around social class in the arts still drawing on middle and upper class stereotypes of working class life, where the arts world perhaps sees working class people as a problem to be solved, because a disproportionate percentage of people working in the arts are from very privileged backgrounds, so the working class are seen as a minority (Brook et al., 2018). McGarvey (2017:126) further suggests this to be a type of liberal paternalism which is self-serving and patronising for those living in poorer communities, where 'poorer communities are viewed as primitive cultures that need to be modernised, retooled and upskilled.' It is also important to note here that the term working class can broadly be defined as those households with the median average income or less, who are by definition not a minority, it is only in the elite dominated academic world and the Arts where they are seen that way, and prejudice against working class academics threatens the academic integrity of universities (Webster and Atherton, 2016). Furthermore, the term working class has been incrementally emptied of meaning, hence teaching and research into issues of class inequality is now often seen as paranoid and embarrassing (Tyler, 2008). In the last two decades academics from working class backgrounds and those who work within disciplines founded upon research on class, such as media, cultural studies and sociology, experience their own class origins as a dirty secret (ibid) and shameful (Sayer, 2002).

This research, therefore, is not only motivated by a passion for being involved in the visual arts but by a desire to share the value and to better understand some of the barriers to participation in creative practices or cultural opportunities for young children and families from areas of

deprivation. As an artist, I see these opportunities as unique, enjoyable and exciting experiences for children and families who have often never visited Tate, or an art gallery before. Bringing new and younger family audiences along to Tate Liverpool from areas of social deprivation is much more than about creating enjoyable experiences. It is about creating rich educational opportunities for all children because of existing deep rooted meritocratic attitudes and educational inequalities which are not anything to do with children's ability, but more about class divisions, attitudes and societal inequalities.

A Bricolage Methodology: A Theoretical Collage

As a research approach, bricolage has little scholarly literature to draw from, therefore it remains relatively underused and misunderstood as a means of qualitative inquiry (O'Regan, 2017). Yardley (2008:16) presents the case for using bricolage as a multi-layered 'narrative inquiry of ethical activity,' where the 'bricoleur,' is the maker of a 'patchwork,' 'weaver of stories' or the assembler of a 'theoretical montage.' The end result is a bricolage, 'a complex, dense, reflexive collage-like creation that represents the researcher's images, understandings, and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under analysis' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998:3). Adopting a more alternative methodology such as bricolage appeared to fit with the somewhat curious, unpredictable nature of the visual arts world and the way I chose to collect, decipher and connect, 'isolated pieces with other apparently isolated pieces' (O, Regan, 2017:461).

> The bricoleur produces a bricolage, this is, a pieced-together, close-knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation. The solution (bricolage) which is the result of the bricoleur's method is an (emergent) construction, that changes and takes new forms as different tools, methods, and techniques are added to the puzzle (Weinstein and Weinstein 1991:161).

Anthropologist, Lévi-Strauss explores the notion of the bricolage methodology in his book, *The Savage Mind* (2004), as a way of enabling various paradigms to be included in one study and not be restricted by methodological boundaries. Levi-Strauss (1962:16-17) describes a 'bricoleur,' as a, 'Jack of all trades' or 'a kind of professional do-it-yourself; someone who works with their hands and uses devious means, likened to those of a craftsperson.' He often compares the role of a 'bricoleur' to that of an artist, believing both to be adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks. On the other hand, he likens the typical scientific researcher to being more like an engineer; thinking in a linear way. The artist, he believes (unlike the engineer), cannot be so easily defined in terms of a project because there are as many sets of tools, materials or 'instrumental sets', as there

are different kinds of projects (1966:12). Hence, the bricoleur, as artist, uses the 'tools of [her] methodological trade,' deploying whatever methods or approaches to researching as necessary and 'inventing new tools along the way because the research practices are not set in advance' (Becker, 1989:2). Therefore, the bricoleur must read widely to be knowledgeable about the 'many interpretative paradigms (feminism, Marxism, cultural studies, constructivism) that can be brought to any particular problem' (Denzin,1978:3), so the process of inquiry can go between the personal, the professional, self and other, theory and experience (Galani-Moutafi, 2000). Adopting multiple and often competing practices and theories often means that the bricoleur has to seek out and piece together sets of observed practices to make a solution to a puzzle (Kincheloe, 2008).

Bricoleurs must therefore understand the diverse contexts in which any knowledge is produced and employ a range of research methodologies in order to offer various theoretical insights; coming from a deep understanding of critical research theory (ibid). Traditional researchers may 'cling to the guard rail of neutrality (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:264), whereas critical research is characterised by critical topics, critical theories, and critical methodologies. Critical researchers frequently challenge expected norms and strive to produce research which is motivated by the intention to change social realities and promote emancipation (Stahl, 2008). My methodological practices (in the vein of a bricolage approach) take in a variety of perspectives, including social constructivism, ethnography, humanism, posthumanism and new material discourses, case study research and critical research theory.

Rüling and Duymedjian (2014:99) note that bricolage proceeds through 'trial and experimentation,' as an interactive rather than preformulated process, as in the conventions of social scientific research traditions. In my experience, when artists use the word experimentation (particularly in schools), they can be met with suspicion and criticism, and I have been asked many times to set out specific aims and objectives for group learning outcomes. At the beginning of the Tate Project, for instance, I was met with a similar lack of confidence from the nursery practitioners, who were confused about their role in supporting the predominantly unstructured, process-driven, experimental nature of the artists' workshops and wanted more specific guidance. I also understand this from another perspective from my experience and knowledge of teaching an Assessment for Learning module to third year undergraduates on a university primary teaching programme (Black and Wiliam, 2001). For several years I have taught students to use WALT (we are learning to) and WILF (what I am looking for) aims and objectives for planning lessons, where objectives are shared with pupils and small episodes of learning are planned for learning, teaching and assessment to take

place (Clarke et al., 2003; Black and Wiliam, 2009). There are many advantages for adopting such a clear approach for teaching towards a set of objectives and I often thought it would have been much easier to research the artists' workshops at Tate had there been such clear learning objectives and assessment in place. Outcome based teaching, however, may not fit for an artist, nor for process driven creative encounters. Artists are usually free to do things their own way and prefer to position themselves as being different to teachers (Pringle, 2009). Artists tend to focus on materials, freedom, process, individual choice and opportunities for self-expression, rather than a set out of predetermined objectives. For example, I place emphasis on 'process,' 'aesthetics' 'engagement,' 'flow' and 'magical moments' during the delivery of creative workshops, rather than on a finished or end product. These would be difficult to set as 'specific, measurable, achievable, reliable and time bound,' as 'SMART' objectives, as primary teachers are often taught to use for lesson planning in order to meet with the National Curriculum (Locke, 1968). Process, engagement, flow and certainly the strange notion of making 'magic' require a completely different way of thinking.

Denzin and Lincoln (1998), state that a qualitative approach implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are not measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. The artist and the bricoleur, therefore, are far more interested in communicating their interests in insight, discovery and interpretation, rather than an end product or hypothesis. They both collect, seek out and present 'messages', for the reader, rather than truths and these are likely to be different messages for different artists as they would be for different researchers (Levi-Strauss, 1966:20). Many comparisons can be drawn between an artist and a bricoleur and these distinctions help us to understand why the same fieldwork situation might produce multiple interpretations by many authors, each following different stories. Artists and bricoleurs both avoid having too much of a plan, approach or finite idea (as this would not allow for freedom of self-expression) and both resist working towards an end product; a hypothesise or a preconceived solution. Or, as artist Pablo Picasso put it, 'if there were only one truth you couldn't paint a hundred canvases on the same theme' (Jacques, 1965:16).

Similarly, the bricoleur, like the artist, is not without criticism; there is the issue as to whether bricolage can offer a solid, empirically based assessment with validity, reliability and objectivity (O, Regan, 2017). Hammersley (1999) suggests that mixing theoretical and methodological perspectives results in impure and incoherent research. Other critics argue that it could be laden with presuppositions and biases, given bricolage largely rests upon the researcher's confidence to interpret, observe and analyse observations, encounters, and practices (Denzin and Lincoln,1998).

To address this again from an epistemological perspective, new knowledge is complex, experienced and always constructed, mostly as a set of beliefs by the individual. New knowledge does not have to compose of facts, single truths or measured experiences, and can be presented as the many different constructions and meanings that people place on their experience (Gergen,1985; Lincoln and Guba,1985).

A bricolage approach, therefore, offers a flexible multi-methodological research design, which is not a given design but is curious and open-ended enough to explore and capture the unknown, alternative, innovative and diverse nature of arts-based education projects. It is flexible enough to incorporate a process methodology of thinking-with-theory (see pages, 50-51) and to discover new ways of thinking along the way. It is an iterative process for thinking which I have come to trust for creating new knowledge and for coming up with ideas as a practising artist. Bricolage, I believe, is the most suitable research approach as it offers a way of making sense of creative processes through thinking holistically about the unpredictable world of gallery education and artists, organisational cultures and a diverse group of participants. The very discipline of visual arts consists of a dynamic variety of materials, thoughts, methods, concepts and subjects that challenge traditional boundaries and defy easy definition. Therefore, adopting a bricolage methodology allows for freedom to explore the breadth and scope of the Tate Project, encompassing my personal belief from the outset that arts education and creativity cannot be limited to being any one thing for one person and therefore cannot be limited to one given approach. It is an artistic approach to conducting research which is not defined by specific objectives, so is suitable for large scale, curious investigations or creative projects. While not trying to offer, set out or find the final and correct truth (as this would also limit the freedom to create or explore); methodological bricolage can add depth, rigour, and multiplicity to an inquiry, while challenging assumptions, established values and claims to truth.

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Chapter Three

Thinking-with-Data-and-with-Theory

This chapter begins by discussing the use of analysis as an ongoing pursuit and argues for the act of writing as a method of inquiry and as a dynamic process of analysis in postmodern ethnography. Crystallisation is presented as a way of analysis for mixed genre research which argues for many sides or perspectives to be included and assumes there can be no single or triangulated truth. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) ontology is later explored which also takes writing as a form of thinking, rather than a form of representation. The discussion considers how literature is used throughout the entire telling of this research as a way of thinking-with-data-and-with-theory as an emergent, iterative process. Gonzo ethnography is also discussed as an expressive form of academic writing which enables research to be presented as provocative stories, with thoughts and feelings included to ensure the author's presence is felt as the narrating and interpreting voice.

Writing as an Ongoing Analysis

'The more different voices are honoured within our qualitative community-the stronger and more interesting that community will be' (Richardson, 2000:959).

Throughout this research study I use literature to make sense of moments as an epistemological and interpretative pursuit, analysing data during the ongoing act of writing, rather than as a separate or detached review (St. Pierre, 1997; Richardson 2000, Maclure, 2013; Jackson and Mazzei, 2014). Adopting a suitable way of writing has not only allowed for constant data analysis, reflection and the inclusion of literature from different sources, but it has also complimented the way I collected data, in the vein of bricolage, for its potential use and largely that it would always 'come in handy' (Levi-Strauss,1966:18).

I adopted the concept of crystallisation which problematises the traditional notion of 'validity' as a rigid, fixed, two-dimensional triangle, 'in postmodernist mixed-genre texts, we do not triangulate, we crystallise' (Richardson, 2000:934). Using a crystal as a metaphorical description, it assumes that there can be no single or triangulated truth, instead there are many sides or perspectives:

> Like a crystal, bricolage expands, mutates, and alters as possibilities are played
> with, while at the same time reflecting and refracting the 'light' of the social world
> under inquiry (O,Regan, 2017:463).

Crystallisation embodies the many complexities I experienced on my journey, with the objective of rejecting any singular truth, with no perfect outcome or 'right' answer. Such thinking is broad, and may appear 'messy' to some, but that is not to say that common patterns, themes or findings do not emerge from conducting a broad research inquiry through the ongoing analyses of data and I summarise these at the end of the thesis (see *Chapter Nine*).

The concept of telling research as a way of analysis was introduced by Richardson (2000) and developed by Elizabeth St. Pierre (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005), and others, bringing the idea that 'writing is thinking' from the humanities to the social sciences. Richardson felt constrained by qualitative research, finding most of it to be 'boring, under-read' and written in the 'homogenised' voice of science (in Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:960). She suggests that most analysis of data happens during the act of writing, whereby 'knowing and telling' exist side by side, so the meaning is carried throughout the entire text, rather than in the production of a separate data analysis section (2000). Writing in this way enables diverse contents to be included within the context of one study; where the researcher makes explicit what she chooses to present, interpret, analyse or reflect on. Richardson claims that writing in this way is a 'method of inquiry,' or a way of 'finding out things' (Richardson and St. Pierre 2008:962).

> I write because I want to find something out. I write in order to learn something I did not know before I wrote it. I was taught, however . . . not to write until I knew what I wanted to say, until my points were organised and outlined (Richardson in Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 959).

Literary writers have always used writing to help them think about their lives, their work or to bring characters and situations to life. This evocative function of writing however, has seldom been taken advantage of in the area of social science research. Strecker and Verne note in Astonishment+Evocation (The Spell of Culture in Art and Anthropology, 2013), how ethnographers often experience 'astonishment' when doing field research but fail to convey this to their audience because it requires a more liberated form of writing that has yet to be explored in any depth:

> Wonder and astonishment are part and parcel of the encounter with the world in our own and in other cultures, and they produce mental and emotional energy, which leads artists and anthropologists alike to look and examine closely a particular phenomenon that has caught their attention (Stecker and Verne, 2013:1).

In the same book, ethnographer Tedlock refers to 'gonzo' ethnography, a more creative way of documenting life and culture, 'blending observation with participation, fact with fiction and

rationality with altered states of consciousness' (2013:166). She suggests that changes in methodology are necessary to avoid writing tedious 'tourist tales or manners-and-customs ethnographies' (ibid). Gonzo ethnography uses a style of expressive writing told in the first-person, where the author is 'telling it like it is.' This form of writing draws on storytelling techniques of fiction for writing about real events and this has resulted in a flourishing literary movement, often described as 'creative nonfiction' (Narayan, 2007). Writing in this way enables research to be presented as provocative stories, with thoughts and feelings included to ensure the authors' presence is felt as the narrating and interpreting voice. Tedlock (in Stecker and Verne, 2013) eloquently explains:

> In telling my own bicultural evocative story alongside and entangled with the telling of other stories, I have learned that many narrative scraps are mirages, seductively real phenomena that I photograph and measure only to discover they depend upon my imagination for breadth. Other scraps, like rainbow spokes and wheels in the air, evaporate because the shadows we cast, the ones other people will see, are not accurate reflections of who we really are, were, or ever will be. The memories we hide from eventually catch us, overtake us like spiders weaving the dream catchers of our personal history (2013:177).

This style of writing is situated in postmodern ethnography, where authors in the early 1960s and 1970s began to experiment with the form and presentation of ethnographic texts, (for examples, see Wolfe, 1975; Clifford and Marcus 1986). Geertz (1989:72) became widely known for blurring the boundaries between the different academic and literary disciplines of writing; what he described as 'faction'. Geertz popularised literary theory in anthropology by using 'thick description' (1973) to explain human behaviour and the surrounding context as well, so that the behaviour became meaningful to an outsider. Geertz also considers the author's place for selecting evocative or 'moving' moments and presenting them as such:

> The perception of something important in either particular works or in the arts generally moves people to talk (and write) about them incessantly. Something that meaningful to us cannot be left just to sit there bathed in pure significance, and so we describe, analyse, compare, judge, classify; we erect theories about creativity, form, perception; we characterise art as a language, a structure, a system, an act, a symbol, a pattern of feeling; we reach for scientific metaphors, spiritual ones, technological ones, political ones (Geertz,1976:1474)

Many social science researchers no longer assume that language is transparent and can simply mirror or represent reality, rather, they understand that language helps to create reality (Richardson,

2000). Writing or telling research therefore should not be an 'objectifying practice or a mopping-up activity at the end of a research project, but a creative practice used throughout to make sense of lives and culture, to theorise and to produce knowledge' (ibid). Richardson considers traditional ways of writing in the social sciences as being constrained and promotes the idea of moving outside conventional social scientific writing to a 'more desirable method,' of recounting research; she describes this as a 'creative analytical practice' or '(CAP) ethnography' (1999). Combining CAP ethnography together with the more conventional social science method of writing, ensures my research story is told through many lenses, to produce, a 'social science art form; a radically interpretative, form of representation' (Richardson, 2004:958).

In some parts I use descriptive, often creative writing as a way of telling and this offers a way to share knowledge, thoughts and beliefs through a process of simultaneous description and reflection. It feels natural to select this way of writing as a process of analysis, because it is similar to the way artists make sketches and compositional studies to develop thoughts and ideas. An artist can make new meanings form whilst sketching, until eventually some ideas are further developed and formed. Like writing, this is a process of constant thought and analysis. It is widely accepted that it is the artist, or writer who decides what to leave in or take out, for it is the artist, or writer's responsibility to bring characters, places, moments and dialogue to life. This is unlike the typical model of writing seen in social science research, which often tells of real life but is usually devoid of expression or any exploration of ideas (Richardson,1995). Richardson refers to her own academic experience where she was told not to write until her points were organised and outlined. She remembers how those instructions created serious problems for her, for they 'undercut writing as a dynamic creative process (...) and undermined the confidence of new researchers because their experience of research was inconsistent with the writing model' (in Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:959).

Writing has been central to my research journey, it has been a form of inquiry and a powerful tool for thinking, analysing, reflecting and learning. Writing is a way of thinking and theorising, and also a way to show how an artist researcher might go about collecting and presenting research, for, 'creative thinking involves much more than the sorts of logical, linear thinking that dominate the Western view of intelligence and especially education' (Robinson, 2009). Thinking with theory does not follow a particular method; rather, it relies on a willingness to borrow and reconfigure concepts, invent approaches, and create new assemblages that demonstrate a range of analytic practices of thought, creativity, and intervention (Jackson, 2017). This way of writing could be viewed as fragmented or experimental with not enough signposts and it may be difficult to see one straight

line of thought as in structural frameworks. Writing as a process requires a high degree of mutual interest between the thinker and the discipline, as 'it is in writing that I begin to get ideas in my bones, when words and things 'seep into one another,' says Deleuze (1986:33). Deleuze's writing style and technical vocabulary also do not invite any easy understanding, because his interest in variation, change, and in 'multiplicities,' meant that he was far more interested in exploring all the various forks in a line of thought rather than in didactically tracing a thought's borders (Fancy, 2007). Deleuze and Guattari's ontology lies in taking writing as a form of thinking, rather than a form of representation, believing that, 'humanist concepts in qualitative inquiry, such as data, analysis, voice, etc., can be put to 'strange new uses' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987:15). It follows, then, that 'data analysis,' as it is conceived and practiced in post positivism and constructionism also needs to be thought differently to make the 'post qualitative turn' (St. Pierre, 2011). Data and analysis 'have taken hold' and become 'so transparent, natural, and real that we've forgotten they're fictions. We accept them as truth' (St. Pierre, 2011: 623).

Thinking-with-Theory

Positivists and conventional qualitative researchers make simple abstractions that come at the end of processes, whereas thinking-with-theory does not come at the end of anything but is emergent and immanent to that which is becoming (Jackson and Mazzei, 2017). While some post humanist researchers try to distance themselves from conventional meanings, uses of many words such as 'analysis' and 'data' in research still remain as rules for writing up research from humanist history (Jackson, 2016). In qualitative research, thinking-with-theory is a direct challenge to long held traditional forms of qualitative data analysis. Thinking-with-theory is not a method with a script but a 'new analytic' for qualitative inquiry (Jackson and Mazzei, 2017:88). Theory, according to MacLure (2009:278), 'stops us from forgetting that the world is not laid out in plain view before our eyes, or coyly disposed to yield its secrets to our penetrating analyses.' It also keeps alive ones capacity to wonder about the data, 'to allow something other, singular, quick and inevitable to irrupt in the space of analysis' (Maclure in Frankham, 2012:164).

In process philosophy (Whitehead, 1967:72), the reality is the process, 'the actual world is a process.' Hence thinking-with-theory is both a movement as well as its own effect. Describing 'how' to think with theory, or what it is, 'is ruined from the start; thus, we add to the literature of previous critiques and deconstructions in the milieu of research after humanism that attempts to loosen a grip on stable structures and endeavours to shake off exhaustive and exhausting habits of method' (Jackson and **Mazzei**, 2017:88). This means looking for forms of writing that trouble the
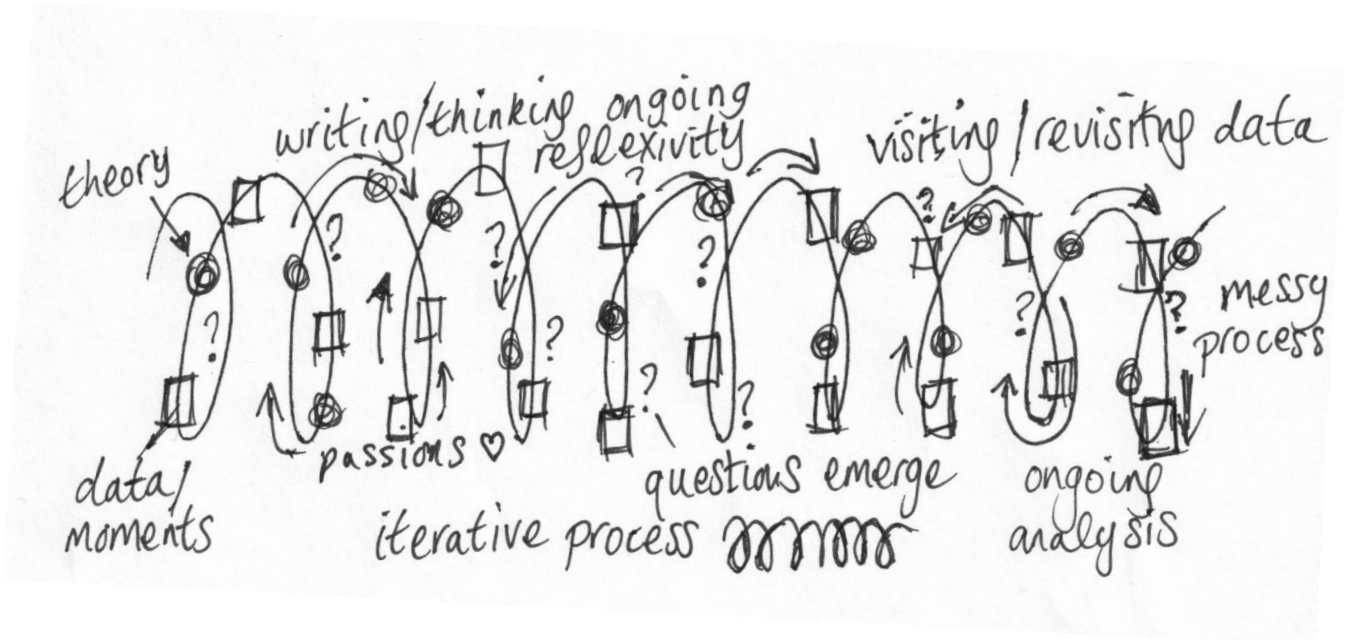
idea of 'completion,' nothing we say will have 'captured' anything in a definitive way and neither of what we set out to understand will 'stand still' nor be complete (Frankham and Smears, 2015:362). Thinking-with-theory not only troubles received practices and ways of knowing but also acts as an 'instrument for multiplication' (Deleuze, 1977: 208).

Defining analysis methods like coding and thematic analysis as 'reductive and simplistic,' Jackson and Mazzei (2013:4) offer an alternative account of data analysis by 'plugging-in' to six poststructural theorists. The authors 'go steady' with six theorists by putting their theories to work in their respective qualitative research projects by providing a methodological approach that nudges qualitative researchers out of habitual patterns of data analysis through entertaining relationships with theory and theorists. Jackson and Mazzei (ibid) explore ways of 'reading-the-data-while-thinking-the-theory,' which they describe 'as a moment of plugging in, of entering the assemblage, of making new connectives.' By doing so they illustrate how work can be shaped by the complexities of thinking and researching with theory as we enter into these 'theoretical relationships.' The use of an amusing speed-dating metaphor explains the encounters, particularly as Jackson and Mazzei introduce methods for keeping the 'spark alive' by their encouragement to think in complex ways about topics through challenging theories. Each of the theorists they include, 'help us think something that we cannot think otherwise, or with anyone else' (Jackson and Mazzei, 2013:15). While the idea of 'thinking with theory' is nothing new, the concept is nonetheless an important and continued commitment to making explicit, transparent, and intentional the theories with which we think. Thinking with theory is a mode of thinking, researching, and analysing that allows to research differently and that is always in motion.

Throughout the writing of this thesis I am guided by qualitative methods of analysis, using an iterative set of processes, where the role of iteration is used (not) as a repetitive mechanical task but as a deeply reflexive process which enables a process of thinking to emerge throughout the writing. This way of writing and thinking-with-data-and-with theory does progressively lead to a more refined focus and understandings. The iterative process, appears visually as a loop-like pattern, with multiple rounds of revisiting data as additional questions emerge and new connections are unearthed (Berkowitz,1997). It is a way of sparking new insights and developing new and different meanings. Thus, reflexive iteration is at the heart of visiting and revisiting data and connecting carefully selected moments with emerging insights (see diagram page 52):

An Iterative Process of Analysis

(created by Denise Wright)

theory

writing/thinking ongoing reflexivity

visiting/revisiting data

messy process

data/ moments

passions ♡

iterative process

questions emerge

ongoing analysis

....

Chapter Four

The Insider Researcher

This Chapter begins by contextualising the self-reflexive pursuit of merging one's existing knowledge, passions and beliefs in qualitative research. It also considers diffractive analysis as an alternative to reflexivity, where the process of thinking-with-theory and becoming-with the data, as researcher, is entirely ontological, so the data itself is understood as a co-constitutive force, working with and upon the researcher, as the researcher is working with the data through the process of writing. It continues on to discuss my shifting positionality as an insider ethnographer, with a focus on the advantages and disadvantages of being an insider researcher, conducting research in my own place of work.

Inner Landscapes

Deleuze found anthropological structuralism as being limiting to thought, and wanted to conceive different arrangements of the world, without limiting structures, finding the relationship between theory and practice to be 'partial and fragmentary' (Deleuze, 1986:38). He went on to write that we can never reflect upon something on our own, to reflect always means to interconnect with something, 'something in the world forces us to think... this something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter' (Deleuze,1994:139). Barad (2007) also believes that an event cannot happen alone, thinking cannot happen alone, nor is it a process which can be measured in space or time, as it cannot happen again, matter and meaning are 'iteratively' reconfigured, she suggests, through each intra-action (I expand on this later, pages 123-126). This indicates that we need thought provoking encounters, interactions with objects or experiences, as Dewey (1934) suggests, in order to learn.

Central to Polanyi's (1967) thinking was the belief that creative acts (especially acts of discovery) have to be charged also with strong personal feelings and commitments. Polanyi's argument was that the informed guesses, hunches and imaginings that are part of exploratory acts are motivated by what he describes as 'passions.' As Polanyi (1967:4) wrote in *The Tacit Dimension*, we should start from the fact that 'we can know more than we can tell.' He termed this pre-logical phase of knowing as 'tacit knowledge' where many bits of tacit knowledge can be brought together to help form a new model or theory. These bits of tacit knowledge are an important part of the iterative process of reflexivity and analysis, otherwise, as Deleuze points out, truly original thoughts remain

rare because most thinking involves going in circles over things already thought, so 'to get an idea is like a party' (Deleuze, in Olsson 2013).

Merging one's existing knowledge, passions and existing beliefs into research as a self-reflexive pursuit, makes explicit that I, the researcher, have my own knowledge, which contributes to creating new insights (Pillow, 2003). This can also be problematic, as Geertz explained (1989:1), 'anthropologists should consider the limitations placed upon them by their own cultural cosmologies when attempting to offer insights into the cultures of other people.' Bourdieu calls for an active engagement of the self in questioning perceptions and exposing their contextualised and power driven nature (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Ethnography, therefore, embraces the researcher's own knowledge, assumptions, beliefs and values as part of the world being studied (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Thus, reflexivity, as Hertz (1997:viii) notes, should focus upon the 'what I know' and 'how I know it,' entailing 'an ongoing conversation about experience while simultaneously living in the moment.'

Reflexivity is often understood as an ongoing act of self-awareness during the research process which aids in making visible the practice and construction of knowledge within research in order to produce more accurate analyses. Chiseri-Strater (1996:130) make the distinction between reflexivity and reflection, 'to be reflective does not demand an 'other,' while to be reflexive demands both an other and some self-conscious awareness of the process of self-scrutiny.' This focus requires the researcher to be critically conscious through personal accounting of how the researcher's identity, across for example, gender, race, class, sexuality, position and beliefs, influence all stages of the research process. Self-reflexivity acknowledges the researcher's role in the construction of the research, the research setting, and research findings, and highlights the importance of researcher becoming consciously aware of these factors and thinking through the implications of these factors on the research. In this way, the problematics of doing fieldwork and representation are no longer viewed as incidental but can become an object of study themselves. Qualitative researchers using critical, feminist, race-based, or poststructural theories all routinely use reflexivity as a methodological tool to better represent, legitimise, or call into question their data (Pillow, 2003). Although most researchers use reflexivity without defining how they are using it, as if it is something we all understand and accept as standard methodological practice for critical qualitative research (ibid). Burr (1995:160) notes, the distinctions between the differing roles of reflexivity are rarely made and while 'reflexivity is a term which is widely used in social constructionist writing...it is not necessarily used in the same way by different writers.'

Whereas reflexivity or reflection invites the illusion of mirroring of essential or fixed positions, diffraction entails the processing of ongoing differences (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). This engagement with the data, or diffractive analysis views diffraction as a way of studying how differences get made in such a process and the effects that differences make; what is excluded and how these differences and exclusions matter (Barad, 2003, 2007; Haraway, 1997). Diffractive analysis also requires us to become with (Haraway, 2008) the data, rather than being separate or apart from it. In the event that emerges, the data itself is understood as a co-constitutive force, working with and upon the researcher, as the researcher is working with the data. Diffractive analysis is an embodied engagement with the materiality of research data: a becoming-with the data as researcher (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). In diffractive analysis, the researcher partakes in a process of knowing-in-being (onto-epistemology), and cannot be understood to perform an analysis from a position ontologically separated and at a distance from the data (Barad, 2007). That is, the process of thinking-with-theory is entirely ontological, 'not a thing but a doing' (Barad, 2007). This is significant because it takes the focus to the 'thinking human' and puts it onto the act of writing and the internal functioning of the text itself (Jackson and Mazzei, 2017).

> Writing, is something that is to come; something that happens, paradoxically, in a moment that has already happened, it is something emergent, unpredictable and always rethinkable and redoable (Jackson and Mazzei, in Denzin and Lincoln, 2017:312).

The Insider Researcher

Anthropologists in the second half of the twentieth century began to study not the strange but the familiar, in terms of their own culture, gender, religion, residential and ethnic backgrounds (Hockey, 1993:201). Therefore, most early ethnographers, would have been considered as outsiders, studying the strange, but this focus has since shifted and the emphasis is no longer on studying other cultures (Greene, 2014). An insider researcher shares a particular characteristic or familiarity with the group being researched, for example, this may be the same gender, class, race, occupation, role, ethnicity and so on (Olsen, 1977; Hockey, 1993; Griffith, 1998; Labaree, 2002). An insider's positionality refers to the 'aspects of an insider researcher's self or identity which is aligned or shared with participants' (Chavez, 2008:475), but it is noted that no clear definition of the term has been developed, due to the difficulties associated with determining what degree of social experience merits this classification. Merton (1972) agrees, suggesting that human beings cannot be so easily categorised within a particular group and may not share the exact same perceptions, so therefore, it is not enough to share, for example being female. Chavez (2008) goes on to note that insider

researchers may be considered to be total insiders, who share multiple identities or profound experiences with the community they are studying, or partial insiders, who share a sole identity with a certain extent of distance or detachment from the community. The insider researcher feels some comfortable familiarity with the context of the study by having privileged access to particular kinds of knowledge (Hockey, 2006), whereas the outsider researcher does not have any intimate knowledge of the group being researched prior to entry to the group (Griffith, 1998).

Dwyer and Buckle (2009) move beyond a strict outsider/insider dichotomy by placing emphasis on the 'dialectical' relationship between researchers and research participants, whereby definitions of insiders and outsiders can only be made in relation to a particular person or context. Olsen (1977) disagrees, believing the insider/outsider perspectives to be two mutually exclusive frames of reference. Mercer (2007:9), suggests that insiderness and outsiderness are better understood in terms of a continuum rather than a dichotomy, suggesting all researchers constantly move back and forth along a number of axes, depending upon time, location, participants and topic. She describes the role of the insider researcher investigating their own place of work as a 'double edged sword' because of the shifting position. Surra and Ridley (1991) also reject the insider/outsider dichotomy proposed by Olson and see the researcher's position as a continuum, with unstable boundaries (Mullings,1999). The insider/outsider position is not an easy one to define, it appears that researchers can shift position depending on the relative nature of their identities and depending on the specific research context (Wallerstein and Duran, 2008).

Advantages and Disadvantages of being an Insider Researcher.

Much has been argued on both the advantages and disadvantages of conducting insider research (Simmel, 2006). Merriam et al., (2010:405) discuss the insider/outsider identity and status and how each of these positions carry with it certain advantages and disadvantages. They suggest insider researchers have a distinct advantage because they come with a degree of intuitive sensitivity or a more empathic understanding, compared with outsiders, who, as non-members may be lacking in these attributes (Merton, 1972). Others believe the insider has an undoubtably better understanding of the social setting because they know the context, including the subtle links between situations and events (Bell, 2005). Insider researchers understand the implications of following particular avenues of enquiry (Griffiths,1985) and also have the advantage of knowing the environment well, such as when and where to meet for interviews and what the power structures are (Hannabus, 2000; Merriam et al., 2010). Mercer (2007) further explores the pros and cons of insiderness in relation to access, intrusiveness, familiarity and rapport, suggesting there are obvious advantages for insider

researchers, such as ease of practical arrangements, travel time and flexibility. It is also said that insider researchers have the ability to ask meaningful questions and read non-verbal cues, as well as to project a more truthful, authentic understanding of the culture under study (Merriam et al., 2001).

There are perceived disadvantages too, however, as insider researchers are often confronted with methodological and ethical issues which are hard to resolve (Breen, 2007). For instance, conducting research into one's own place of work may raise dilemmas or concerns about the damage any misrepresentation may have on reputation. It could also be argued that people will not share information with an insider for fear of being judged (Shah, 2004). It may prove difficult to remain somewhat distanced, an advantage for the outsider, but very hard to do on the inside.

The insider may be so familiar that they become overly influenced by the culture of their group and may not ask questions that they believe they may already know and this may limit the analysis of social and cultural structures and patterns (Aguiler, 1981). Geertz suggests that heightened familiarity is an advantage for any researcher, as it can give more depth and greater insight into social habits and cultures, leading to what he describes as 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973:371). Although, being too familiar with the setting or with participants may cause a number of other problems for the insider researcher, or an increased risk of the researcher making assumptions based on their own prior knowledge or experience (DeLyser, 2001). On this basis, insider research might be considered as skewed from the beginning or have predicted results from the outset as the more familiar researcher is considered to be too close to the culture under study to raise provocative questions (Merriam et al., 2001).

Banks (1998:4) argues that the 'biographical journeys of researchers greatly influence their values, their research questions and the knowledge they construct.' Therefore questions might be designed in order to 'prove' what they set out to discover, so the research might be inherently biased. That is not to say that insider researchers must always fear bias, for the insiders' biases may be a source of insight as well as error (Aguiler, 1981:26). Therefore researching (whether inside/outside or shifting between the two), requires some reflexivity from the beginning in order to understand the impact one's position has on the research, including the influence of one's theoretical and cultural viewpoints and the importance of recognising and acknowledging one's own biases.

Ethnography recognises the influence of the researcher as explicit, rather than trying to erase it (Cruz and Higginbottom, 2013), so the position of the researcher is never neutral. It is a distinct type of research where the knowledge produced depends on the researcher taking part in close

social interaction with informants over extensive periods of time. This comes with various interpretations, some ethnographers intervene and aim to direct the research towards a positive outcome and others try to stand back and observe. It is because of its intensive and long-term character that enables ethnographic research to give important insights into the nature of the researcher's relationship with their informants, which may arise in less obvious ways in other types of research (Christensen and Prout, 2002). Taylor (2011) suggests that there is little in the way of methodological guidance on how one goes about managing differences arising from intimacy and negotiating the ethics of friendship in a social research paradigm.

Recognising the shifting and complex structures of one's own position as a researcher is important, not only for embracing a reflexive approach but in recognising how identity and status could affect relationships with participants and possibly impact on the choice of data collection methods. Viewing power, then, as inherent to research emphasises that research is a practice that is part of social life rather than an external analysis of it. This requires the researcher to pay attention to broader issues of social and cultural life that are, or can be, sensitive to the issue of power. Power is not, as such, nested in positions, such as researcher and participant, 'adult' or 'child,' but rather in the social representations of these that we make, negotiate, work out and work with in social life (Christensen, 2004).

The following section examines some of the advantages I experienced as an insider researcher and how the boundaries between being an insider/outsider researcher can often feel blurred. I also recognise some of the disadvantages or 'pitfalls' for conducting research as an insider researcher (Hockey, 2010:199).

A Shifting Position

Throughout this research study I became increasingly aware of my own position as a researcher in relation to the research participants, including the parents, young children, nursery practitioners, artists, curators and managers. At the very start of the research I began to consider the advantages and disadvantages of my place as an insider researcher at Kensington Children's Centre. I was well-known to most of the nursery practitioners, the nursery manager, the children's centre team and the families in the sense that I had already worked there as an artist for almost ten years before my research began. I had experience of working with families who were using the services of the children's centre, who were often deemed vulnerable or 'hard to reach,' and believe I had come to develop an appreciation of the complexity of the social world I began to study. My role in the Tate

Project was paid for by the Children's Centre, with responsibility to liaise between both organisations and arrange visits to Tate. I was not employed as a researcher, so I had to also seek necessary permissions to conduct research as a self-funded student researcher with a personal interest to conduct a PhD research inquiry as an additional role. By contrast, at Tate Liverpool my research was of a less intimate nature because the participants there, the artists, curators and members of the learning team had not known me before and I was not too familiar with the context of gallery education, nor had I ever been responsible for taking young children or families there. In this respect I considered my place at Tate (particularly at the start of the research) as more of an outsider. At the same time I felt a comfortable familiarity with the Tate, in that I shared some attributes with the art world, particularly as I have a fine arts degree and had worked in the local community delivering various arts education projects for almost twenty years. The relationship with the participants at Tate, the artists, the curators and the rest of the learning team developed and changed over the course of the research as my position changed when, just into my research, I became employed at Tate as a freelance artist educator. Consequently my position slowly shifted from feeling like an outsider to an insider (responsible for developing a gallery resource) as I became much more familiar with the learning team and the gallery.

Reflecting on how I felt as a researcher between both places of employment became a significant part of the research as I attempted to understand the somewhat complex and sensitive place that I occupied at different times. I began to realise that, as a researcher, I could occupy many different spaces within one research project according to my role and the given context. I also considered the advantages of the position. Establishing a relationship with the parents, particularly within the Arts and Minds group was certainly the greatest benefit for engaging and retaining participants in the research and for bringing (often reluctant) parents along to Tate with their children. Aside from the organisational advantages of being an insider researcher, I also identified with some of the parents on a personal level. A researcher's 'insiderness' or position seems to be more centrally about this, about the extent to which the researcher is able to relate to the participants as individuals. The parents were interested to know more about me as the research progressed. They already knew that I was a single parent of three children with a good understanding (and sense of humour) about the challenges and joys of taking young children on outings. I also took my own children along on a couple of occasions with the group. I live and grew up in Liverpool so I was from the same city as some of the participants, although some were from other countries. I found that having good local knowledge and the same accent for easy communication was also an advantage, particularly for

having a good understanding of subtle expressions or local rhetoric. I belong to a working class background as did most of the parents, so the group, as far as I believe, had already accepted me as 'one of them' (for example, see interview page, 167).

Being based at the Children's Centre had many practical advantages, for instance it was easy to organise the fortnightly visits to Tate. I had continuous access to the staff base at the Lifebank Nursery (based inside the Children's Centre) and saw a lot of the parents at the centre on a daily basis, so I could remind them of our visits. I would also see some of the parents and their children at the weekly Arts and Minds group and was familiar enough with the parents to phone, send text messages or group 'WhatsApp' reminders for events and visits to Tate. Access was constantly available for me in my part-time role and time was specifically allocated for the work; to organise and participate in all of the activities for the duration of the project. The parents and nursery practitioners became more involved as the research progressed and most seemed to grasp the importance of supporting the project as co-investigators. Their part in the collaborative research became apparent when they too (parents, artists and nursery practitioners) began to pick out key moments, such as positive conversations with children, or moments of prolonged engagement in the gallery activities. They also began to point out tensions or barriers to their participation, such as practical problems or creative practice that they did not understand. To further illustrate this point, a nursery practitioner or parent is often heard (on my voice recorder) shouting, 'hey Denise have you seen this?' Or, 'are you recording this?' These moments reconfirmed the acceptance of my position as a researcher co-investigating with the participants, where the participants had developed a sense of what I wanted to find out.

The greatest advantage for me of being an insider researcher was the ability to engage in informal discussions and naturally occurring observations whilst being present at all of the activities. I could see, and was often told (especially by the curators at Tate) that I was a useful mediator in being placed between both organisations and was instrumental for driving the project forward (and for bringing people along). I wanted to make the whole experience enjoyable for the participants, I was enthusiastic and felt privileged to be positioned between both organisations and saw it as an opportunity to introduce a new and special creative schedule of arts and cultural activities to the local Sure Start families and community. As I mentioned earlier, I had already formed friendly relationships with some of the parents and nursery practitioners before the project began, and the children, who were usually excited to see me and to take part too. Some of the parents and children were so familiar with me that they referred to me as 'auntie.'

I also began to see how being an insider researcher could effect the reliability of evidence. For instance, some of the parents tried to please me by stating what they thought I wanted to know, one parent, for example, told me in an interview to just write whatever I wanted to say about her. 'Just say we loved it,' she said, 'and the kids loved it and we go there all the time now.' In saying this, she was implying that she wanted the research to work for me, like approval for including my own bias. I was pressed by these kind of statements to further consider my position and rather than feeling pleased or privileged with the comments, I began to feel frustrated and invalid, because I was trying to get deeper insights and this was not what I wanted them to say. I also wanted to share power by including their voices and felt they did not perhaps understand the importance of their opinion or voice. Some parents from other countries spoke English as a second language and had limited vocabulary, so their responses were often brief, positive and always grateful, for example they often remarked that it was 'nice' or 'lovely.'

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Chapter Five

Ethical Considerations and Power Relations

This chapter begins by considering the ethical implications of conducting qualitative research with young children, particularly around the use of photographs, consent and representation. It also examines ethical dilemmas, guidelines, anonymity and the potential of harm to research participants. The discussion goes on to call for an ethics of care when representing participants in community-based research who may be considered to be 'twice marginalised.' It also suggests the importance of developing trusting reciprocal relationships with participants and argues for co-investigation 'with' participants, rather than 'about' participants as a solution to avoiding potential research bias or harm.

Ethical Considerations

It is standard practice that research involving human participants is subject to institutional ethical review and must be approved prior to commencement. For this research I was granted full ethical approval from LJMU to use an ethnographic methodology for the research and to take photographs, audio and video recordings of all of the activities. I also declared an ethical obligation to ensure that a holistic, respectful and reflexive approach was applied throughout the research. Parents were keen to give consent for their children to take part in the scheduled programme of visits with artists, with no obligation to take part in the research, but parents gave full consent for both. The research aims were discussed in an initial meeting with parents, nursery practitioners and a learning curator from Tate, to discuss the project, including the possible value and benefits of the research for the children and for both organisations. Certain requirements underpin informed consent and some research suggests the participant be fully conversant with the exact nature of the research, what will be expected of them, including any possible risks of the research, their right to withdraw at any time and what will happen to the data collected and the possible audience with whom the research is to be shared (MacNaughton, Rolfe and Siraj-Blatchford, 2001). We discussed consent for including photographs and films in the research. Whilst my concerns were around anonymity, ethics and dissemination of images of children, the parents were more concerned about receiving copies of the photographs and films. Parents gave full consent for photographs and films of their children (and themselves if they were taking part) to be used for professional use by the University, the Children's Centre and by Tate. We agreed that the images of children would not be pixilated or distorted to hide their identity.

Nutbrown (2010:3) discusses her growing concerns about the increasing tendency to pixilate or distort images of young children in Arts-Based Educational Research reports or presentations. She suggests that blurring out the images of children remains largely unchallenged as a practice and refers to it as a 'crisis of representation' and an example of 'othering' of young children in research. She raises questions about ever tightening controls over what is researched, who the research participants are and how research is created or told, suggesting Arts-Based Educational Research should pursue a truthful portrayal of young children. I did not consider blurring out the images of children, although I was aware of the need to protect them and take particular care in how images are used and shared. I explained that I would be observing the children and the adults on each visit using video, photographs and audio recordings. Pink discusses research ethics in relation to community based research, especially the rights of research subjects. For Pink (2010:14), the only ethically acceptable ethnography involves informants as active participants in the research. She highlights the importance of ongoing discussions with informants, obtaining their informed consent for research and eventual publication, and of 'giving something back' to the communities who provide the whole context for the research study. I was able to give something back, by firstly offering enjoyable and positive creative experiences for the families, and also by providing lunches, refreshments, artmaking materials (to take home), free entrance to Tate exhibitions and travel expenses. With further reference to the ethics of publication, neither researchers nor informants can control how published materials are used or interpreted (Pink, 2010) and the emphasis should be on the importance of researchers taking care that their work cannot harm informants (Denzin, 1989; Shulz et al.,1997). However, Pink points out that even the most carefully prepared publications can be interpreted in ways that support racist or other untoward attitudes (I specifically did not want to add to any deficit assumptions on poverty). Because of this I felt a continuous responsibility to consider ethical questions of how to care for people in the research and how to share their stories in meaningful and ethical ways (Shulz,et al.,1997).

When I discussed the issue of anonymity with parents they were keen to include their children's real names and for images to be shared appropriately. This raised ethical dilemmas about children's agency, representation and consent, as young children cannot give their own consent for images to be taken and shared at future conferences or in publications, because (at age three), they probably would not fully understand enough about academic research to give consent. Nutbrown (2010:11) discusses the importance of having a good relationship between the researcher, child and parents and she also expresses the need to be self-reflexive, use integrity and be honest. I had already

developed (what I believed) to be good relationships with some of the children and families, so I believed they trusted that I would do no harm. Whilst all the participants wished to be named, there were other matters that I took into consideration on their behalf and made an informed choice to not reveal the identities of the families, particularly as some were asylum seekers or families (described) as living in poverty (Dodson et al., 2007). Because of these ethical dilemmas I chose to replace all of the participants names to protect their identities. These types of ethical decisions may not have clear guidance, so such decisions on representation become ethical decisions, based on whether the research does harm or not to individuals or communities (BECA, 2019). Eventually it was agreed that pseudonyms would be used for the parents and children in any publications as this research was guided by the EECERA Ethical Code for Early Childhood Researchers (Bertram et al., 2015). Ethical considerations therefore include such qualities as trustworthiness and integrity, as well as decision making and regulatory rule following of guidance on ethics.

Edwards and Mauthner (2012:16) focus on feminist discussions surrounding the ethics of care for research participants and believe most ethical considerations are organised around politics rather than ethics. As such, they see the researcher as central to the research process rather than as a 'technical operator,' which is inferred by many professional ethical codes. A feminist perspective on qualitative social research suggests that an explicit theoretical grounding in a feminist ethics of care would enhance many feminist and other discussions of the research process where such discussions are concerned with ethical dilemmas. Feminist writers suggest an emphasis on care and responsibility in research rather than on outcomes, justice or rights (ibid) and view the tendency to see research almost entirely in ethical terms, as if its aim were to achieve ethical goals or to exemplify ethical ideals. Whereas previously, ethical considerations were believed to set boundaries to what researchers could do in pursuit of knowledge, now ethical considerations are treated by some as constituting the very rationale of research (Hammersley, 1999:18).

In community-based research, the variety of stakeholders and the inherent commitment to some degree of power-sharing means there is wide scope for complex ethical issues to arise (Banks, 2012). Some debates raised during my research related to what I should or should not include, what counted as right and wrong conduct, good and bad qualities of character, and what responsibilities I had to care for the participants. In the context of social research, ethics as a subject area covers topics such as the overall harm and benefits of research. While most ethical codes and guidelines for research are concerned with the rights of individual 'human subjects' (to safety, privacy,

freedom of choice to participate or withdraw), conducting research with a familiar community raises the challenge of extending rights to communities or groups (Quigley, 2006).

Qualitative research on people's everyday lives inevitably brings up emotions, some of which may be around difficult life experiences. Ethical guidelines often stresses the potential of harm to research participants, while assuming the invulnerability of researchers and calls for reflexivity and sensitivity on issues of stereotyping and research integrity. The ethical dilemmas raised by representation of others in this account is a complex issue and I was in a constant dilemma about how I represented the participants. Whilst these matters might be common concerns in all social research, developing reciprocal relationships with participants could be a solution to thinking about many ethical dilemmas, as this enables discussions to be had on what is being presented and agreed with the participants.

For my research to be effective and achieve its full potential for community engagement in new creative practices, I took an ethical decision not to focus on the participants lives unless it was key to understanding more about equality issues in education, or offering new insights and democratic ways of thinking. These issues come into sharp focus and have much in common with participatory research, action research, feminist research and social research in general, where research relationships are important for talking about sensitive topics with participants experiencing marginalisation and disadvantage. This means acknowledging that researchers may be embedded in the communities they are researching and are committed not just to preventing harm in the course of research, but also to promoting social justice and developing caring relationships (Banks, 2013). Hence particular attention needs to be paid to building relationships, generating trust and negotiating power. Relationship-based ethics, including the ethics of care (which focuses on responsibilities attached to particular relationships) is as important as principle-based ethics (which focuses on individual rights and duties) in conceptualising and understanding the ethical dimensions of the research.

Researching with Young Children

The ethics of involving young children in research often point towards reducing harm and ensuring the safety of children (Einarsdottir, 2007; Christensen and James, 2008) which reflects a particular view of risk in relation to children in society (Füredi, 2006; Gill, 2007; Nutbrown, 2010). Nutbrown (2010) talks about the need to enter into trusting relationships for access and consent for researching with young children and obtaining their informed consent by gaining the trust of their adults or

gatekeepers. I took children's informed consent as their willingness and enthusiasm to participate in the visits. If children did not want to participate then they did not have to (and could have remained in the nursery), but they did enjoy it and wanted to participate. Often the children ran to me excitedly, or took hold of my hand when I went into their nursery and asked if they were coming to the Tate.

In Early Childhood Studies there has been a move away from seeing children as vulnerable (powerless) and immature (lacking psychological and linguistic competence) into a view of children as competent social beings (Docket and Perry, 2009; Clark and Moss 2011). Moreover, there has been a concern with children's ability to express themselves in ways that are useful to researchers, implying that children are somehow limited in their capacity to report, express and provide accounts of given reality (Moss and Petrie, 2002). Childhood and children have increasingly been seen as worthy of investigation in their own right, and researchers now seek to learn about children's knowledge, perspectives and interest from the children themselves (Christensen and James, 2000). Early years researchers have been concerned with researchers' competence to interview children or to listen to children (Greene and Hill, 2005). This raises ethical issues of agency and consent when considering who decides whether or not children participate in research and how their voices are included. Consequently, researchers in early childhood are now more than ever debating issues around how we do research with children (Alderson and Morrow, 2011).

The theoretical perspectives explored in the preschools of Reggio Emilia are significant for forming an ethical understanding of teacher (or artist) as researcher, engaged in a constant process of constructing knowledge with children, taking seriously the notions of the competent child, the pedagogy of listening and the pedagogy of relationship (Malaguzzi, 1996; Clark and Moss, 2005; Rinaldi, 2006). Malaguzzi (1996), founder of Reggio Emilia preschools based his work around the view of the child as an active and competent learner (Edwards et al., 1998), with a strong emphasis on the teacher acting as a researcher. The pedagogy of listening, including the need for internal listening, self-reflection, multiple listening and visible listening, are held up as vital to Reggio Emilia practice (Rinaldi, 2006). Throughout my research I aimed to use multiple ways of listening to children, but mostly I wanted to observe their perspectives through their responses, interactions and self-expression. The researcher has the power to affect the research process and the way participants are seen and represented. Some participants are more vulnerable to distorted representations of their experiences than others, young children, for instance, may not be aware of their place in research and may not get to check for accuracy or a true representation of their

experiences. With the adults in this study I have used strategies, such as co-investigating and the discussion of analysis to minimise ethical implications, to avoid potential bias and increase the trustworthiness of the data gathered. That way, the moments observed or told and how they are relayed are less likely to be influenced or confused by power, position, knowledge and the experiences of the researcher in relation to the participants.

Rinaldi refers to the process of documentation in the preschools of Reggio Emilia as 'visible listening' through the construction of 'traces.' These traces record the learning process and 'make learning visible' through note taking, photographs, slides and other means. (Katz and Chard, 1996; Malaguzzi, 1996; Giudici, Rinaldi and Krechevsky, 2001). Adopting a Reggio inspired approach to conducting research enables children and researchers to be researchers and learners. 'It's not that we don't recognise your [academic] research, but we want our research, as teachers, to be recognised. And to recognise research as a way of thinking, of approaching life, of negotiating, of documenting' (Rinaldi, 2006:192).

The theoretical perspectives of Reggio schools, particularly through the pedagogy of listening later inspired the 'Mosaic Approach.' Researchers were based in a preschool for three to four year olds involving the interviewing of young children and adults in the design and review of two early childhood environments in England (Clark and Moss, 2011). Twenty-eight children were involved in the study together with parents and practitioners, including a number of children with special physical or behavioural needs and several with speech and language difficulties. The review led to the outdoor environment being chosen as the focus for a second study, 'Spaces to Play' (Clark and Moss, 2005), where young children's perspectives were taken as the starting point for making changes to the physical environment. Listening to children, through projects such as the Mosaic Approach has shown ways of giving agency and voice to young children by enabling multiple ways of listening to take place during research between children and adults. Adopting such participatory approaches for researching with children prevents the tendency of researchers to jump in and out of children's worlds in order to quickly 'collect data' which they quickly analyse by extending quotes from children to illustrate their findings. This may end up caricaturing children more than really offering meaningful insights into their lives (Bluebond-Langner, 2007).

Participatory methods of researching with children also suggest the use of visuals, such as observations and drawings, but sometimes other methods are used, such as interviews and questionnaires that capitalise upon the co-creation of research, yet often belong to more positivist and traditional way of undertaking research (Palaiologou, 2017). Using a range of methods, both

traditional and innovative, can help strike a balance and address some of the ethical and methodological issues of research with children (Punch 2002:337). Consequently, attention has been paid to how and in what ways researchers can empower children in the quest of participatory child-friendly methods designed to be relevant, applicable and address voicelessness in research (Cahill, 2004). Adopting a participatory approach to research involves making research decisions with the community affected by the inquiry. Participatory research might also lead to change for researchers and participants, but that should be derived from the information gathered. It is therefore essential that young children under the age of five can participate and engage in research so that children and researchers are both active researchers and learners in the process (Palaiologou, 2017; Shier, 2019).

Continuing with the perspective of power, my discussion links to the particular issue of children's representation and children's participation in research. The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (Article 12 and 13) establishes the rights of children to be heard, to have a voice and to express themselves. Communicating with young children involves even greater sensitivity to power, as young children may not understand their place or the nature of being represented in research. Many factors contribute to this imbalance, but expectations of young children are one element. Viewing young children as powerless and weak may lead to high expectations of the adults' role in terms of protection and care but low expectations of children in terms of how they can express their perspectives, priorities and interests (MacNaughton, 2001). Adults' expectations of young children also influence how they communicate with children and vice versa, but it is important to recognise that children can have a different perspective from those of adults and this can be more difficult to capture. With all this in mind, I adopted a pedagogy focused on communities of learning and listening to children which meant children's views were always as important as those of the adults, as well as understanding that these views may be communicated by young children in many ways. This was particularly important as the children taking part in the project might be considered to be even more vulnerable because they belonged to a twice-marginalised community, firstly as children, then also as members of a 'hard to reach' community. Taking the view of the child as a competent participant in research means listening to the child, not just verbally, but through the social interactions of child to adult, child to child and adult to adult throughout the research. Therefore, adopting a pedagogy of listening emphasised the need to listen to young children and to observe their participation through naturally occurring play-based experiences.

Positionality, Power and Representation

Researchers often enter communities as outsiders, through affiliation with a university, level of formal education, socioeconomic status, or other characteristics, and many of these characteristics are representative of a more privileged and powerful status, particularly in relation to researching marginalised communities (Kerstetter, 2012). Merriam et al., (2010) suggest that positionally, power and representation are useful constructs for exploring insider/outsider dynamics; where one stands in relation to the participants, environment or context of study and how this may shift throughout the process of conducting research. This is a sensitive and ethical matter requiring a great deal of reflexivity in order for the researcher to explore their own identity and how this impacts on the research process and analysis. Foucault, the french philosopher, sees power as an everyday, socialised and embodied phenomenon, believing that, 'power is everywhere' and 'comes from everywhere,' so in this sense it is neither an agency nor a structure (Foucault, 1998:63). Foucault uses the term 'power/knowledge' to signify that power is constructed through accepted forms of knowledge, scientific understanding and 'truth,' as a 'shifting and changing interactive network of social relations amongst and between individuals, groups, institutions and structures that are political and economic' (1998:63).

Merriam et al., (2001:409) believe that 'during fieldwork the researcher's power is negotiated, via a relationship, not given.' This indicates researchers may need to consider ways of minimising the power differential between themselves and the research participants (DeLyser, 2001; Breen, 2007). However, it may be perhaps duplicitous or unachievable for researchers to attempt to achieve an equalisation of power relations between the researcher and the researched (Cannold, 2001), since the nature of investigations, questions and explanations provided to participants can only be made from a position of power and control (Blaise-Ochsner, 2001). Representation and power are, therefore, intricately linked because the researcher has the power to represent the participants in a multitude of potentially conflicting and reductive ways (Holland, 2002). Methods of representation in research, then, require careful scrutiny in order to shape alternative framings, because of the power a researcher has (Kirsch,1999). This is particularly important when conducting insider research because describing one's own social group or culture requires some introspection to consider one's own cultural values and norms and how this might shape the whole inquiry. With all of this in mind, insider researchers may try to rebalance power dynamics by presenting themselves as co-investigators or advocates (DeLyser, 2001).

Representing a community, or in this case, a group of children, parents, and nursery practitioners involved the exercise of power by (me) the researcher in making decisions about which of the participants' experiences and stories to include and on what basis these choices were made. Being an insider researcher certainly made it easier to position myself as a co-investigator, driving the research forward, aiming to research 'with' rather than 'about' the participants as much as possible (Shier, 2019). So I began the investigation by asking for the support of the participants to take part in the Tate Project and invited them to share their thoughts and opinions along the way. This was an ethical act of valuing the opinion of others and also an attempt to balance power dynamics. I believe that this is important in research as people's willingness to talk to you is often about who they think you are, so the vulnerability of my research rested on bringing people along who wanted to take part. Forming and maintaining reciprocal relationships of openness and trust, was essential for creating a safe environment for sharing experiences and taking part in what might be considered to be a creative and social experiment.

....

The Adventure

Wonder Moments

This chapter focuses on the activities undertaken by artists with a group of children, their parents and nursery practitioners at Tate Liverpool and Kensington Children's Centre. Snapshots of the visits are told through descriptive vignettes (in italics) taken from observation notes and transcribed audio recordings. The vignettes are followed by a more detailed discussion and analysis where I draw on existing literature and my own experience of being an artist educator to make sense of events or key moments. I have selected particular moments from visits that took place over the first two years. Sometimes, these moments seemed significant as they happened, at other times they emerged through close scrutiny and reflection, 'as a curiosity, an intuition, a good or bad feeling, or a moment of wonder'(MacLure, 2013:228). MacLure encourages us to think about 'such moments of wonder, that reside and radiate in data, or rather in the entangled relation of data-and-researcher (ibid)' She considers 'wonder' as being not necessarily a safe, comforting, or uncomplicated positive affect but one that 'shades into curiosity, horror, fascination, disgust, and monstrosity' (MacLure, 2013:229).' MacLure encourages use of intuitive and introspective forms of knowledge emerging from interpretations of a comment in an interview, a fragment of a field note, an anecdote, an object, or a strange facial expression (ibid).' Some of the selected moments often 'stuck out' for me, or others, as they were sometimes referred to as 'magical moments' by the learning curator, artists and parents on occasions in our discussions. Not only did they stand out but were also selected as a way of communicating some of the key moments of learning in order to meet with the aims. I have adopted an interpretative and reflexive stance throughout the gathering and telling of these moments of, 'sticky data' which have often caused me 'to stutter in its resistance to interpretation' (MacLure 2013:663). Such data 'sticks out, sticks to and often gets stuck in our thoughts, feelings, in our throat, on the page, in field notes, camera lens or memory' (McRae et al., 2017:503).

Vignette One

Fire over Water (the first gallery visit)

The first visit to Tate (described below in italics) was a preliminary opportunity, for five children (aged three) attending Lifebank Day Nursery summer holiday club (located inside Kensington Children's Centre), to participate in a creative family drop-in activity in the studio at Tate. They

were accompanied by the nursery manager and two nursery practitioners. Five parents from the Arts and Minds group also took part in the visit with seven children aged between two and five years. A programme of regular visits to Tate began the following month for a larger cohort of children from Lifebank Nursery:

We leave the centre as a group, and we all take two nursery children each, the children wear florescent bibs and safety wrist straps as we head to the bus stop. The bus stop is situated on a busy main road and is reached by a short walk down one of the narrow Victorian terraced streets that typically surround the Children's Centre. We cross a busy main road and gather with the children inside a small bus shelter in front of a derelict looking row of shops. Some buses to the City Centre arrive but we can't all get on together because of restrictions on the amount of prams permitted on buses at any one time, (two of the parents have younger siblings in prams). We eventually get on a crowded bus and I pay the £3.90 adult return fares from the Children's Centre budget, as agreed, and the under fives travel free. The bus journey takes twenty minutes to arrive in the City Centre, just a short walk from where the Tate is situated at the Albert Dock.

It's a hot sunny afternoon in August, so we stop along the way to put sun protection hats on the children. Some of the children frequently stop still when they want to talk, so we walk very slowly, bending down to listen or chat about what the children can see; boats, pirate ships or 'giant' seagulls swooping and gliding above the water. One of the fathers in the group talks at length about the fish he has caught in the River Mersey, other parents and children appear interested and another father begins to talk with him about sea fishing. As we get nearer I point out the converted warehouse where the gallery is housed with its distinctive blue and orange 'Tate' sign. We chat about what is inside and I discover that none of the parents and practitioners have been to the gallery before. Some have not visited the Albert Dock area until now and are quite impressed by the attractive colonnades and statuesque columns reflecting on the water.

We head up to the first floor studio to do the art activity. We walk past a number of artworks from the Tate Collection (DLA Piper Series: This is Sculpture) to reach the studio. The parents and practitioners do not stop to look at any of the artwork and walk swiftly over or around Carl Andre's sculpture; 144 Magnesium Square (1969), arranged as a large flat square on the floor near to the studio entrance. We enter the large studio space. It looks like a busy and inviting environment for children, with bright bundles of art making materials set out attractively on long rows of pale grey tables. An artist moves around the busy room talking enthusiastically to families about the materials

available and what they could make. Posters of William Turner and Claude Monet's paintings are displayed alongside a children's painting wall.

*Some children hurry over to the wall and quickly begin to add their own painterly marks using various shaped rollers attached to long sticks **(see fig.1 below).** One child stands still looking into the studio from the doorway, she stands firmly rooted with her arms wrapped around her father's leg and refuses to look inside. He takes some time encouraging her to participate until they sit at a table and make a long paper sculpture together. After half an hour a boy triggers a natural ending to the group art making when he begins to run around the studio in large circles, soon followed by a couple of other children from the nursery. We gather the children and take them all to the toilet before visiting the Turner Monet Twombly exhibition on the top floor.*

Fig 1. A child makes spontaneous painterly marks using various shaped rollers attached to long sticks (photo: Denise Wright)

Inside the exhibition the nursery practitioners and parents move slowly around holding the children hands whilst looking at the artworks; noting down what the children say about it. A mother places her younger child (a two year old boy) in his pushchair and gives him milk in a (baby) bottle. She lays him down in his pushchair in a reclining position and wheels him into the gallery. At the same time another child takes a step into the exhibition and immediately announces, 'I am bored,' and refuses to move. A Tate Visitor Experience Assistant (V.E) approaches the mother and tells her that drinks cannot be brought into the gallery. The mother firmly explains that the baby 'needs his milk to sleep,' and the V.E repeats that no drinks can be brought into the exhibition. The mum turns

abruptly with the pram and heads back out of the gallery door. Before exiting she breaks the silence of the gallery by shouting to her partner, that she is, 'going.' I follow to find her in the foyer pressing the lift button, agitated.

I return to the rest of the group and support the mother with the 'bored' child to join the rest of the group, who are now moving around the room looking at the artworks. Some children begin to run about and crawl under the low rope partitions (there to protect the artwork), and their parents get annoyed with them. Some nursery practitioners take photographs and are told by gallery staff that they are not allowed to do this and there is an increase in adults' voices reminding children, 'not to touch.' Some adults look at Twombly's paintings and wonder what to make of them, while one father makes a comment 'my children could make better paintings.' He points to a Twombly painting and asks, 'What's that meant to be?' A short conversation

begins between a couple of parents and nursery practitioners about Twombly's art and there is a bit of sniggering about its place in the gallery and some agreement that children could do better. One adult says (to me), 'Sorry I just don't get it.'

Some of the children continue to follow each other, running about and climbing up on the window seats despite their parents efforts to stop them, so I take over and gather everyone as a group and sit by Twombly's, 'Thermopylae' (1991); a large hill-like plaster sculpture with four white plaster-coated cloth flowers sticking out on plastic stems (see fig.2). One child says it looks like an alien, but 'needs eyes,' and she makes up an

***Fig.2** Cy Twombly, Thermopylae, 1991*

alien story as the other children sit, listen and join in by shouting out, repeating parts of it and giggling. The visit lasts approximately fifteen minutes and we stop to do another head count before leaving the gallery. We meet with the Mum (Tina) in the foyer (who stormed out), who is looking more relaxed as she hands out the children's paper sculptures that they made earlier.

The following discussion offers a critical analysis of the first visit (described above). I begin by considering the first gallery experience for the adults, then in the second section I draw on the first gallery experience for the children and the final part considers parents as 'children's first and most enduring educators' who come with their own funds of knowledge.

The First Gallery Experience

In this research I set out to explore the value and tensions (or barriers to participation) for young children and families on visits to Tate and in taking part in creative activities with artists. Before the first visit I had asked a number of parents to attend a meeting so we could discuss the project, including the research aims and ethical considerations. I also asked if they had been to Tate before (which they had not), so I asked them about their preconceptions of gallery visits. Most of the parents had not heard of Tate but those who had, agreed that the gallery was not a place they imagined taking children, especially young children. This was mostly because they thought other visitors would be disturbed by young children because there was nothing for them to touch. This was in contrast to other local museums that they were familiar with. Some parents said that they did not understand 'that type of art' and another thought the Tate had the reputation of 'being posh and expensive.' One parent was worried she was going to be asked to draw and 'I can't draw' she said, laughing, Another stated that she would not want to go there because it looked a bit 'stuffy,' to which a father added that he thought the typical visitor would be 'wearing a tweed coat and a monocle'. One of the nursery practitioners said she would not think about taking young children there because she did not know enough about the art there and therefore would not know what to say to the children about it.

Some challenging moments occurred when adults felt they were 'told off' by gallery Visitor Experience (V.E) assistants for taking photographs, giving milk to a baby in a pram and for not controlling children's behaviour when some started running about and touching artworks. I had not told anybody the rules as I was not sure of them myself but we broke most of them in the first hour, as the children ran around the private gallery space, climbed on window sills and began touching, pulling, swinging on, or going under the rope partitions which are there to protect the art. Other children were moved on by gallery staff because they stepped on or casually sat on the low display plinths, viewing them perhaps as seat-like platforms. During the short (fifteen minute) visit to the Turner Monet Twombly exhibition, I recorded twenty-six instructions from parents and practitioners saying 'don't touch.' Some adults displayed their conceptions of how they were expected to behave in a gallery environment when they told their children to 'shhhh talk quietly,' or to 'behave like they were in a library... or a church.' One child seemed to instantly recognise that the space was not for him and said it was 'boring.' The adults (parents and practitioners) appeared stressed and in later conversations, on the bus back to the Children's Centre, they expressed their concerns that the exhibition space was not really suitable for young children, whose energetic and

curious behaviour, could result in misconduct, 'very expensive' breakages, accidents and disapproval from other visitors and gallery staff. The group felt that they had caused an unwelcome disturbance in the exhibition space but had really enjoyed the art making opportunities in the studio. The adults also thought the cost of the trip would be the main barrier for visiting Tate as a family. Entry fees and the cost of the bus added up to fifteen pounds each and some left the exhibition space after only a few minutes. 'If we'd have paid for that it would have been a waste of money,' a parent said. The gallery space, they thought, was too unlike the familiar child-friendly nursery environment, where children can safely touch, explore and play.

The general anxiety expressed by the adults appeared as pressure to 'control' the children, given that it was not possible to touch any of the artworks. Canella (1997:138) believes that invisible standards have been created whereby 'individuals judge and limit themselves at professional institutions,' reflecting a desire to be 'good.' The Mum who stormed out (Tina) was perhaps trying to be 'good' when she gave milk to her young child in his pram. She knew that it would be difficult to 'control' her two year old in that environment and wanted him to stay calm. I later interpreted her reaction to being 'told off' (as she put it), as an expression of discomfort, a feeling of difference, or an awareness of not belonging and of feeling 'looked down on' in an unfamiliar environment. (see *Chapter Eight)*. Tina felt pressure to control her children, particularly in the Turner Monet Twombly exhibition space where she felt that she was 'being watched.' Another parent commented that it was difficult to tell their children not to touch, commenting that children, 'will touch because some of the artworks could be mistaken for toys,' and looked similar to 'skateboards, toy dogs and tea cups.'

Bourdieu and Darbel (1966) discuss how people naturally self-select as museum goers, with those brought up to feel comfortable with museums choosing to become visitors. Bourdieu argues that cultural capital, usually acquired in early childhood, has significant effects on educational outcomes, believing that children begin school with knowledge, attitudes and values that are determined through class and parental habitus:- a set of attitudes, values or dispositions for learning that are passed on in the home (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Bourdieu's studies on cultural capital suggest that children from the middle and upper classes enter school with advantages given to them by parents, with the belief that parents invest in their children's culture, which is often closer to the culture of the school in terms of children's familiarity with books, art, classical music, museum visits, theatres and art galleries. Bourdieu suggests that those not sharing the same values of what the museum projected would 'frame their lack of interest in terms that protected them from feeling

rejected' (Bourdieu and Darbel 1991:110). He refers to this phenomenon as 'symbolic violence,' the violence exercised on individuals without them even being aware.

The idea of going to an art gallery may be delightful and life affirming for some but for others it can also be confusing, uncomfortable or irrelevant (Deeth, 2012). For the parents and nursery practitioners it appeared both confusing and uncomfortable in the gallery space on the first visit. They had no previous experience of visiting Tate, so spent time critiquing the artists' intentions and struggled to understand what anything was meant to be. They were caught up in asking, 'Why is this art?' For example, a parent and a couple of nursery practitioners appeared unimpressed and dismissed Twombly's large scale graffiti-style scribbly paintings, agreeing with each other that, 'a child could do better,' 'it's a bit weird,' or they didn't 'get it.' Deeth considers the experience of looking at art from the viewer's perspective. Her study, 'Engaging Strangeness in the Art Museum' (2012), arose from her own experience of working as a contemporary gallery director in the US in the early 1990s. She states that she was already aware of people spending very little time engaging with artwork and this applied as much to her peers and colleagues as it did to the general public. In her study, Deeth draws attention to the difficult notion and differences between aesthetic judgements and interpretation in viewing contemporary art. She believes that positive engagement with contemporary art becomes almost impossible for many members of the public and suggests a greater emphasis on discursive approaches, in order for the art museum to be more inclusive for the hesitant or disconnected viewer. Otherwise, apart from negative responses (as observed on the first visit), most artworks were passed by 'with barely a sideways glance' (Deeth, 2012:17) from the nursery practitioners, children and parents.

Twombly's Alien

It was difficult to find the value of the experience for the adults during the first visit. Taking a group of young children into the gallery space appeared stressful to the adults and resulted in them trying to 'control' the children. It was less complicated to observe the value of the experience for the children. For instance, a small group of the nursery children made aesthetic judgements when they found some attraction to flowers and fairies in Monet's paintings and told stories about Twombly's 'alien'. The children's casual way of moving about the gallery implied they knew nothing about the rules, some responded to the space by running, crawling or wriggling about and appeared to enjoy the experience despite being told 'not to touch.' The children brought their own interpretations, particularly during the story making incidents (as illustrated earlier in vignette), and, unlike the adults, they made no attempt to define the purpose of the art, or to understand the artists' intentions.

The children were relaxed enough to spontaneously interpret individual artworks by describing what they thought they could see at the time. When encouraged by the adults, they brought their own interpretations to Twombly's 'alien,' which, in turn, prompted a story using their imagination to make sense of a rather abstract form. The sculpture may not have been accepted as a credible piece of art by the nursery practitioners, or parents, during the first visit, but the children recognised the sculpture as an 'alien' and enjoyed sitting around it and talking about it. The silent and intimate nature of the gallery appeared to amplify the children's voices and the artwork acted as an exciting provocation for talking in a new context. The adults were particularly important to this experience and at this point any negativity directed towards the artworks was replaced with a more positive and playful way of viewing and communicating in the gallery space. This was crucial for engaging children in a more imaginative way of looking and thinking about artworks. It was apparent (to me) on the first visit that the adults' role in the gallery would be significant for encouraging children to interact with artworks in appropriate ways and to have enjoyable experiences. It also appeared that there was something more we needed to do to enhance the experience for the adults in order for them to further develop their understanding of the sensitive role required for accompanying very young children in an art gallery. Jalongo (1999) warns that teachers who are not confident with their own artistic ability may negatively influence their own students' artistic learning, which may apply to parents too.

Involving Parents in Gallery Visits

According to British artist Jake Chapman, (of the Chapman Brothers duo), taking children to art galleries is a 'total waste of time' (The Independent, 2014). Chapman suggests parents are 'arrogant' for thinking children might understand such artists as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. He also has harsh words for anyone comparing the 'simplicity' of Henri Matisse's work to a child's painting, adding that standing a child in front of a Pollock is an 'insult' to the artist. 'It's like saying... it's as moronic as a child. Children are not human yet' (ibid). Chapman is not alone in considering the suitability of the art gallery as a place for young children. In 2014 a photograph went viral on the internet. Art lovers were outraged when parents let their two children climb on a sculpture by American artist Donald Judd at Tate Modern. A gallery owner from New York, posted the picture on Twitter, with the words: 'Holy crap. Horrible kids, horrible parents' (Evening Standard, 2014). The parents had been encouraging their two daughters to play on the sculpture and refused to back down when confronted. The gallery owner said, 'I was shocked, I said to the parents I didn't think their kids should be playing on a £10 million artwork.' I don't know who they are but I just know

you don't put your kid on a sculpture. 'It wasn't just the kids, the parents were encouraging them …
it isn't about monetary value, it is a museum, not a playground.' A spokeswoman for Tate Modern
responded to the incident and said:

> Tate welcomes families to all of its galleries. On Sunday a child lay on the bottom
> part of the Donald Judd sculpture (Untitled 1980). The situation was dealt with
> immediately. Museums and art galleries are vehicles for life long learning and
> they hold resources in trust for everyone. Access is not just a matter of letting
> visitors in, it is about attitudes, information and our sense of belonging. Access to
> museums and galleries is about recognising the many ways in which people learn.
> Addressing what we mean by access is a key issue in building a sustainable
> relationship with audiences. This requires us to debate honestly how we select and
> present artworks and objects, and how we are prepared for people to learn in
> museums and art galleries' (Evening Standard, 2014).

The problem of touching, or not touching, was apparent during the first visit as repeated commands
from adults were heard to 'not touch' in a short space of time. Whilst everyone has the right to
experience art, responsibilities to art should not be overlooked and a child-friendly gallery does not
necessarily equate to touching. Some of the parents did not understand the strict 'no touching' rule
in the gallery and they were surprised that the children could not sit on the plinths. Children find
stimulation from handling materials and show curiosity by their need to touch but when they were
made aware that this was not possible and objects were beyond reach, they generally respected this.
They also, I believe, quickly utilise other kinetic senses. Some children did not understand or
appeared to forget and it became the adults' responsibility to somehow occupy the children in
different ways to prevent them from touching. This meant it was not an easy experience for parents,
as being in the gallery environment required some energetic input to physically, intellectually or
socially engage the children. On the first visit a couple of parents threatened to take their children
home. One parent began to get annoyed and stopped her child from running around the gallery to
ask if he wanted to go home, to which he immediately said 'yes'. The parents had never visited an
art gallery before, so they probably had limited ideas on how to occupy their children in such a
space. Also, if some adults did not enjoy the experience of looking at art then how were they going
to find any motivation to encourage their children to enjoy being there?

On the first visit, I recorded in my field notes (as outlined in the above vignette) that as we were
walking towards the Tate for the first time, the children displayed an interest in listening to a father
as he shared his local knowledge of sea birds and fishing on the River Mersey. One of the themes
within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, 'Positive Relationships' considers

parents as 'children's first and most enduring educators' (DfE, 2017). Since the introduction of the EYFS there has been a growing emphasis for involving parents in their own children's learning, and early educational settings have found a number of ways for building relationships with parents in order to promote learning in the home. Research suggests that supporting parents to improve their learning at home has a major impact on children's outcomes, including 'school readiness,' attainment and achievement (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003; Feinstein et al., 2004). Current emphasis from educational providers is often placed on more formal learning activities that take place in the home environment, such as reading books, and writing, to boost children's early literacy (Evans et al., 2010). However, one study, the 'Provider influence on Early Home Learning Environment' (Hunt, 2010) suggests that parents consider their role in supporting home learning as being a bit different and more wide-ranging than the learning activities provided by preschool settings. Interviews with parents, as part of the study, considered outdoor play, visits to parks, riding bikes and sports as valuable opportunities for home learning. Home learning, therefore, from a parent's perspective may include activities that are supported by adults within the home, or away from the home, including visits to museums.

Spending time with families and getting to know parents on an individual basis can be crucial for building respectful relationships (De Cremer, 2002), and in turn, for getting parents to participate in projects, such as cultural programmes, as part of their children's learning. In order to achieve this, it is important to acknowledge the individual cultures and specialist knowledge that already exists in families and recognise that families have their own 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992; Bronfenbrenner, 1993; Gonzalez et al., 1993) which may often sit outside of the curriculum. Research conducted by González, Moll and Amanti (2005), set out as a critical inquiry into the way that working-poor families are viewed by teachers in schools of Mexican communities in Arizona. Teachers were trained as part of the research to use a participatory ethnographic approach for researching when entering the homes of their pupils, not in order to transmit knowledge, but to discover what knowledge and skills families already possessed. Family histories of resiliency and creativity were uncovered as 'funds of knowledge' which had accumulated through the collective experience of extended families. This approach challenged certain 'culture of poverty' assumptions; that low-income families are dysfunctional in their approach to life and that their children require a deficit-compensation model of education (ibid). In order to view parents as the 'first most enduring educators' then we must also establish democratic communities of learning, where all parents and children are seen as knowledgable and have opportunities to share their own existing knowledge.

This may often sit outside of a curriculum or traditional educational context. Co-creating meaning in a gallery, and away from the nursery setting or home, therefore has the potential to offer a new space and context for families to expand their knowledge and have their existing thoughts, ideas and interpretations valued and respected.

Vignette Two

Watery Windy Worlds

Today is the second visit to Tate, but the first of the planned schedule of activities for a group of children from the Lifebank Nursery. The plan is to visit the 'Turner Monet Twombly' exhibition again, do a drawing activity in the exhibition, participate in an art making activity with **an artist** and go on a boat trip around the Albert Dock on the Yellow Duckmarine (a post war amphibious bus), know as the 'Duckbus.' The artist has sent some planning information to me which aims to connect the 'themes of light and water in the expressionist's paintings.'
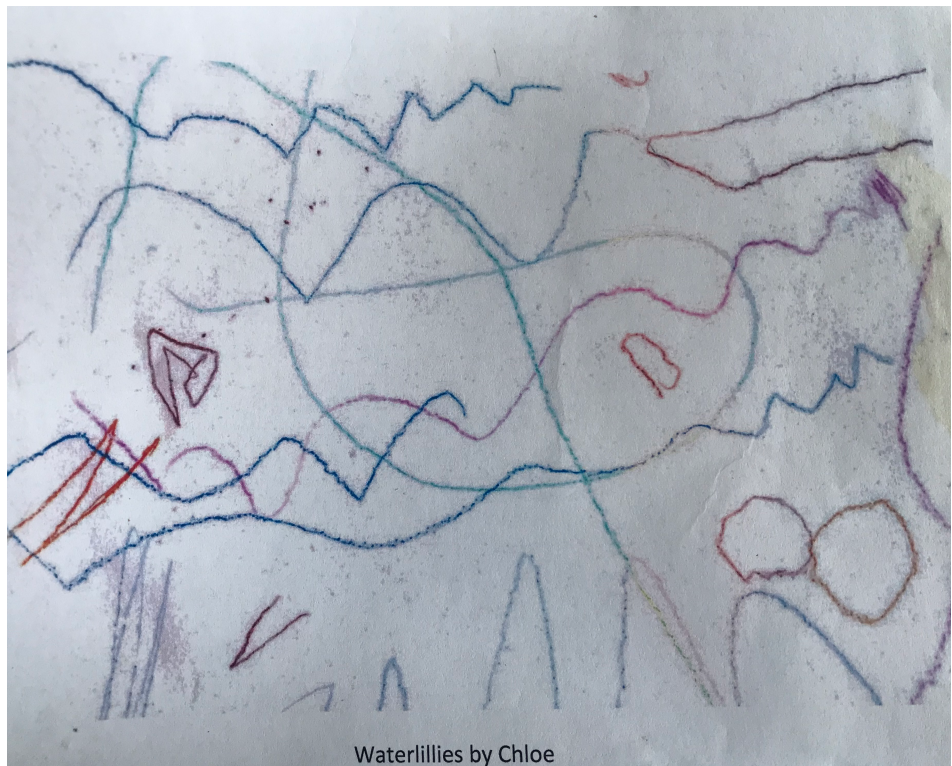
Four parents from the last visit are waiting in the atrium, I hear one of them telling their children excitedly that they are 'going on the Duckbus with Denise' and another saying that they are going to 'see Katy' (the learning curator). I go into the nursery and help the children to get ready. It takes a while for me and three nursery practitioners to organise eight children, put their coats on, find missing shoes and support some to use the toilet and dress in waterproof all-in-ones.

We make our way to the bus stop, in a line, one adult to two children holding hands. We eventually arrive at Tate, where the artist, Fiona has set up art materials for the group in the studio, some children see this, rush over and begin to experiment with textured rubbings, paper ripping, mark-making and sticking. Katy, the early years and families curator, is waiting for everyone to settle and gives a brief talk to the children before we go up to the gallery about 'not touching,' as she playfully asks the children to put their 'wiggly fingers' in the air. We take some children to the toilet, we wipe a few noses, then meet up again as a group in the foyer to head to the top floor exhibition space. A couple of the children are a bit scared in the lift and cry, but they are easily consoled.

We walk into the gallery and Katy creates suspense and mystery by talking to the children in exaggerated whispers. She stops by Twombly's Orpheus (1979) and asks the children what they 'can see.' One child says that she sees a 'drawing,' another says a 'picture' whilst others go on to see a house in Monet's La Cathedrale de Rouen (1983). The group of children and adults quietly follow, walking from painting to painting, pausing by each as adults prompt the children to look at the pictures. The adults in the group seem more confident and positive today and there are less people

in the gallery than the last visit in the school summer holidays. One father goes to look at the Turner paintings again and tells me how he once painted his own Turner 'haystack' painting.

Everyone seems a bit more relaxed and I do not hear as many instructions as last time to 'not touch.'

I find a spot in front of Monet's Nympheus Water Lilies (1907) and give crayons and paper to the children. All of the children sit on the floor, some lay flat on their stomachs and begin to draw their own 'flowery' pictures (see fig.3), except for one boy who begins to

Waterlillies by Chloe

Fig. 3 *(above) A three year old child's drawing of Monet's waterlilies in the Turner, Monet, Twombly exhibition. Photo:Denise Wright*

run around (and looks like) he is enjoying himself by bumping into walls. Another boy (the one who was bored last time), copies and his mother becomes quickly annoyed and immediately says that she will 'take him home.' I intervene and encourage him to join in the drawing activity with the other children and sit with him on the floor. His Mum joins us on the floor and encourages him to draw, she draws on his paper to show him how to draw flowers and he begins to copy. The children do not look up at the painting and are occupied by making marks on the paper. Some children draw their flowers carefully, using circular shapes and straight lines, whilst others cover the paper quickly in fast lines using their favourite colours. The adults try to encourage the children to look up at the painting again, one Mum tells her child she is using the wrong colour. The children draw quietly while the adults sit alongside. A nursery practitioner eagerly asks a child, 'What are you drawing? Is that the water? Are they your flowers? How many flowers can you see?' Katy tries to occupy the boy who is running around by taking him to look out of the window.

I take this moment to record in my field notes:

I love watching children draw, I love the drawings they make and how they draw freely without hesitation or planning... sometimes using actions or words to describe each mark. I like how they lay flat across the floor while drawing, their faces close to the paper, I think this helps in the gallery space with their physical inclination to stretch, crawl and wriggle. Visitors are walking by and they look really pleased to see the children drawing and stop to look.

We all move on to sit in front of Twombly's Thermopylae, as we did last time. One boy lays on his back and moves across the gallery by pushing himself along using both his legs at the same time. The child who came last time remembers our past conversation about the sculpture and confidently says again that, 'It's an alien without eyes.' The other children appear interested and we all sit around it and encourage children to make drawings of it. Some of the drawings really look like it.

We leave the gallery to head to the studio for the art making activity. The artist makes her own rubbings and energetically models various techniques using the rubbing packs she has prepared. All of the children appear absorbed, except for one boy who begins to jump off a sofa onto a beanbag, shortly copied by another who begins jumping with him. Their parents do not respond and it takes some encouragement (from me and the artist) for them to join us and do some rubbings. The atmosphere is pleasant and relaxed and there is a lot of chatting in the room. Some parents sit on the sofa while their children make art with the artist and another mum eagerly helps Katy to make tea and prepare snacks. The children have a snack together on the carpet before heading out for the Duckbus River trip.

Katy, the early years and families learning curator later reflects on the visit:

'I underestimate how long it takes to do everything with a large group of small children. Two boys who were with their Mums wanted to run around the space and the Mums were a bit embarrassed by their behaviour, there was a real expectation of how the children should and should not behave in the space. As gallery professionals we forget what it must be like coming into an art gallery like Tate for the first time. On reflection I think it is a good idea to give parents and children a bit of time to get used to the new space they are in, so having something familiar to do like drawing was useful. These young children can only learn what to do in an art gallery by experiencing it and being taught how to look, so engaging them will take time. The impact of these experiences will take time. The children with the nursery staff were much more focused than the two boys with their Mums, the nursery staff also commented that the boys were different when they were with their

Mums. The visit certainly allowed us to make a real estimation for other visits. We underestimated how long it all physically takes, to take coats off, to settle, walk, use the toilets and have the snack. We had a busy schedule for the morning but it was also flexible and unhurried.'

Upside Down Caterpillars: Wriggling as a Kinetic Language

We all noticed how physically demanding those first visits to Tate were for the children and adults. Going from the children's centre to the Tate on a busy local bus in a large group was often, some children said, the best part, but taking children out of the nursery setting required a lot of energy from the adults to support the children and keep them safe. When I transcribed the audio recordings, I noticed how much the first visits were dominated by the physical responsibilities and care routines for the children: dressing and protecting the children for hot days, dressing in waterproofs for rainy days, hand holding, crossing roads, putting high visibility vests on, taking coats off, toileting, nappy changing, water stops, chasing, head counting, hand washing, snack times, toothbrushing, shoe fixing, comforting, carrying, pram folding, nose wiping etc., etc.

The first visits were not just filled with beautiful or joyous moments, they were also littered with children refusing to walk, enter a gallery space, clinging to parents, saying they were bored, pulling parents about, running, jumping, climbing on window sills, sliding on knees, spinning, crying, touching artworks, pulling on rope partitions, sitting on plinths, laying on the floor and falling asleep (on the bus home). Occupying the children in the gallery space required a lot of physical and intellectual attention from the adults and it certainly felt like a relief for us adults to return to the studio where the children could freely touch and do some art making.

Young children's physical needs have to take priority of course and it was clear that the children were still very much dependent on adults, even more so on those first visits in such an unfamiliar environment. I thought the adults seemed to over protect and 'control' the children more than necessary, with numerous head counts and lots of instructions 'not to touch.' Early years pedagogy often sets out to romanticise the 'delight' and 'privilege' of watching children learn, that all young children somehow have a natural curiosity to learn in a problem free way (Deeth, 2012). Of course children's learning might not always present itself this way. Young children's learning is often interrupted by crying, refusal to participate, throwing, tantrums, tiredness, biting, etc., and children can act really differently when they are with parents, (compared to being in nursery). Working with children of any age can be exhausting and young children's learning can often present itself in endless repeated actions and behaviour or asking continuous 'why' questions. It seems that

everyone theorising about the privilege and delight of watching young children learn must have forgotten what it is like being with twelve three to four year olds all day, as it is often left out of early years literature. I really do think it is a privilege to watch young children learn but I also understand that it is a physically demanding role and the 'magical' creative moments that I am familiar with may not happen if children are hungry, tired, unwell, upset or thirsty and if the adults with them are stressed. I go on to discuss some 'magical' moments at Tate as they gained momentum throughout the repeated visits, but these did not happen until the adults became confident in ways of occupying the children in the gallery, when their attention slowly shifted from focusing on the children's physical needs to more creative interactions with artworks.

I reflected on the way the children played in the gallery by using their whole bodies to jump and slide, to spin and fall, to touch and pull, to run and crawl, to wriggle and wiggle and so on. At this age children display a variety of schemas through repeated actions or patterns of behaviour (Athey 2007; Nutbrown 2011), for example children's 'rotation' schema could be observed by how they ran in large circles or spun about on

Fig.4 *A child moves across the floor on his back* (photo: Jake Ryan)

their backs. Funny processions could quickly form too, with children following each other closely in a line, walking in circles making musical noises and amusing sounds. One child moved across the floor, almost on every visit, on his back (see fig.4) like an upside down caterpillar pushing himself along with both feet at the same time, while other children copied. This is a common and spontaneous physical pattern of behaviour that I continue to observe frequently in my current role as artist-educator at Tate with preschool children. The smooth polished floor lends itself to crawling and full bodied wriggling. Furthermore, the artist educators and curators at Tate never told the children to get up and walk (unless it was interfering with other visitors experience or harmful). So we often enjoyed watching children's responses, including their physical inclination to move about in many spontaneous or unexpected child-like ways.

Studies of family visits to a museum found that children's way of moving and walking around a museum is a powerful modal choice that can be understood as a communicative 'place making'

activity, suggesting that where children go in a gallery has its own meaning and significance as well as where they don't go (Hackett et al., 2018). Hackett (2012) proposes that children in the museum show what they know by how they walk, that they 'walk to know.' In addition, Ingold (2013:27) suggests that 'to think is to be caught up in the dynamic flow; thinking is, by its very nature, kinetic.' Hackett's research (2014:8) focused on the experiences with her own daughter and friends who were already familiar visitors to the museum and with each other, hence she noticed a confident child-led 'zig-zagging' and 'zooming' about the space, to and from artefacts, 'dragging parents or other children along...running, stopping and retracing steps.' Hackett's study explores the meanings that young children and their parents co-constructed in the museum on that day and during a series of visits that followed. In particular, she identified the role of young children's walking and running as a key component of their multimodal communicative practice, which acts as a place-making activity in museums. She suggests these activities are all signs created for others to interpret; they are motivated and intentional. She discusses how children use multi-modal ways of moving freely, often bringing their parents along with them, through different exhibits, varying pace from running through the gallery to spending some time exploring an activity such as a jigsaw or a specific interactive exhibit. Similar to our visits, she noticed that the children, 'moved in and out of contact with each other, sometimes playing together or looking at what others were doing, and sometimes leaving the group and setting off alone across the space' (2014:9).

Hackett describes how the children became more 'free range,' moving about the museum selecting objects to touch or interact with. At the Tate, particularly on the first visits (with no artist-led activity in the gallery), the children did not have this option. For them, the only touchable objects they might have recognised as objects for play were the rope partitions, the window ledges, plinths and the smooth polished gallery floor. They also followed and copied each other's physical movements about the gallery space, as a 'multimodal communication,' largely co-constructed between peers to act as an important way for young children to negotiate social relationships (Flewitt, 2005). These kinds of multimodal communicative practices could be seen through young children's actions and interactions and illustrated the dominance of non-verbal modes of communication (Flewitt, 2005, McRae et al., 2017). How children move, follow and interact in a space can therefore be seen as another language; a kinetic discourse which is shaped by the social and cultural worlds that they find themselves in (Lancaster, 2003).

Children's way of mimicking peers is, for me, always a joy to observe and confirms how children quickly learn from imitating others. I often depend on it when leading creative experiences with

children, knowing they will copy what I do through my actions. This is grounded in socio-constructivist theory where children make sense of their experiences in museums through social interactions, based on prior knowledge and experiences (Piaget, 1962; Vygotsky, 1986; Hein, 1998) and imitation, as suggested by social learning theory (Bandura, 1977; Skinner, 1987). How adults respond to children's actions often depends on how much they understand about children's literacy and how children are literate in many ways (Rinaldi, 2006), not just through language, but through learning to use combinations of different modes, such as gesture, gaze and movement (Flewitt, 2005; Wright 2015). McRae (2017:503) adds that young children in museums:

> Move a lot, they run and dance, they are frequently silent, they are drawn inexplicably to certain objects over others, they make unexpected connections (sometimes weeks later), they can seek repetition, develop rituals, and they rarely use interactives in quite the way the designers envisaged.

At Tate, on some of the first visits the parents and nursery practitioners thought the children were being intentionally 'naughty' and told them they had to walk and 'be good.' The adults had not been to Tate before but held preconceptions about the expected behaviour for visitors; they thought visitors had to walk slowly around the perimeter of the gallery in the same direction as other visitors looking quietly at artworks. The children chose to wriggle about on the floor or to run about in the gallery space and this communicated that they held no such preconceptions of desirable gallery behaviour. Giving attention to what children do as well as what children say and allowing time for children to become familiar with a place, using their preferred way of exploring, i.e crawling, spinning and full floor wriggling, is for them an efficient means of coming to know the gallery and acts as a powerful place-making activity (Christensen, 2004; Davis et al., 2008).

I later draw on Dewey's ideas on experiential learning theory to make further sense of how children visibly show their perceptions of their gallery experiences through their imagination (pages, 154-157) and how deep level learning and concentration can appear as a physical rhythm (McLeod et al., 2017). Lagervall (2018:57) goes on to consider how children simultaneously position themselves and are positioned by meaning-bearing thought patterns, imaginary worlds, and 'action patterns'. She refers to the metaphor of the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, see pages 192-196) to illustrate how children perceive their environment and themselves as changing entities, through an occurrence of unexpected events. This is in the form of an entanglement (rather than a linear mode) of new connections, including how organisations of space and environments promote

identity-creating processes in children. Part of this identity creating process, I believe, is young children's ability to quickly take on new rules and to adapt to new environments.

In gallery education, learning sets out to be child-led (Hooper-Greenhill, 2004; Pringle, 2014), hence a dilemma occurs when young children want to run and slide and jump and touch. Child-centredness does not necessarily mean that children can do as they choose, so looking after children is always a balance of freedom and control. Rushing or wriggling around precious artworks made some of the Visitor Experience staff nervous, who are there to protect the artwork and enhance the experience of the gallery for all visitors (who were mostly delighted to see small children in the gallery). Large groups of young children were also new to the gallery, so we were not sure about what was going to happen when they started moving about a bit fast in all directions. Children quickly seem to learn that the gallery environment has rules. Most environments come with guidelines or rules. Meaningful and rich play has rules, even outdoor play (where children's freedom to touch and explore is widely acknowledged) has rules for what to touch and not touch, i.e, poisonous plants, nettles, fires, outdoor ponds, animals, etc. At home there are rules, things that cannot be touched, and even in nursery, children learn not to touch things, like each other's artwork or food. So the children did not really appear bothered by the 'no touch' rule and quickly learned not to touch, to stop at lines on the floor in front of artworks and to remain behind the rope partitions. As the visits continued the children were mostly occupied by artist-led activities in the gallery, where the artist educators and curators ensured that more physical encounters were planned to enhance the experience of looking by placing materials near artworks that *could* be touched and explored, or by involving the children in physical games. As the group became more familiar with the space, I began to notice the activities were not so dominated by physical care routines or interruptions. Children's physical inclination to wriggle or run was lessened as both children and adults became more aware of the range of playful, material and imaginative possibilities co-created with artists about how to occupy young children in such a space.

Vignette Three

Oscar and the Blue Chalk (Artist visit to Kensington Children's Centre).

Two weeks after the Turner Twombly Monet exhibition, the artist, Fiona, and Katy (the early years curator) visit Kensington Children's Centre to further explore the 'watery windy world' theme inspired by the Expressionists' paintings. On the visit, the artist took some time to carefully prepare the hall in order to offer a variety of creative materials. The children's drawings from the last visit

to the gallery are displayed at children's height, and another area is set up with clay and bundles of matchsticks. A photograph of Twombly's *Thermopylae* (1991) is displayed beside the activity and the children's 'alien' drawings of the sculpture from their previous visit to Tate are displayed on the wall at their height.

I move around the room as the children quickly involve themselves in the various art making activities, the three nursery practitioners spread out and position themselves with each group, and parents stand by or sit on chairs at the side of the hall. A huge piece of thick white paper is taped to the hall floor and spread across it is a selection of mark making materials, including soft pastels, oil pastels, glue sticks, rubbing materials and ripped paper for children to freely choose from. Some children sit in the middle of the paper, some around the edge. There is a brief introduction to the artist (who they met on the

Fig.5 *Oscar drawing with blue chalk. Photo: Denise Wright*

last visit), but the children all go off excitedly to various activities and are already busy making art. Not long into the activity a nursery practitioner was keen to call me over and point out a particular child, so I went over to observe him with her. Later she explained that she was surprised because it was unusual for Oscar (pseudonym) to concentrate for so long on one activity.

Oscar finds a space on the paper, he selects a dark blue soft pastel, holds it fully in his hand and begins to draw, pressing hard on the paper making thick circular marks and lines (see fig.5). He looks briefly across to the artist who is already moving across the paper drawing confident curves and swirling lines in soft pastels. She energetically smudges and blends her own marks beside him and he begins to replicate, rubbing the pastel into the paper with his free hand.

The artist follows Oscar's lead and he follow hers and a rhythm develops between them in silence, whereby flowing marks quickly appear on the paper. The artist continues to draw energetically across the paper alongside Oscar as she adds a vocabulary, simple words such as 'swirl' and 'twirl' as she draws rhythmically on the paper. Oscar continues to draw quietly alongside the artist for several minutes, his face near to the paper, deeply absorbed in concentration as he repeatedly draws, rubs and smudges the chalk. A creative collaboration is established between the artist and

child without verbal communication, seen through their physical actions as they draw alongside each other. Rhythmic movements appear as the artist and Oscar continue to make marks on the paper as they create alongside each other. A visible rhythm appears as Oscar continues to make bold circular marks and he pauses only to press, stamp or rub the pastel. Oscar appears to be in artistic flow, but he is soon interrupted by a nursery practitioner who asks what he is drawing and if he needs any help. He immediately stops, gets up and walks away to look for another activity.

Oscar's interest in mark-making for a sustained period appears to be extended by the artist's presence (Rinaldi, 2006), where her sensitive response proves valuable for Oscar's active involvement in the activity (Anning and Ring, 2004). Oscar's enthusiasm can be observed by his physical commitment which appears through action, rather than words. As the artist draws alongside Oscar, she continues to add a vocabulary, suggesting words like 'swirl' and 'twirl.' This simple creative narrative shows a sensitive understanding of knowing when to support, when to interrupt and when to extend the creative process, by provoking and inspiring (Nutbrown, 2011; Craft et al., 2012). Adult provisions and interactions influence children's drawings, with many children drawing in the company of others (Anning, 2002; Anning & Ring, 2004). Mathews (2003) stresses a need for adults to respond to children's mark-making by providing a vocabulary for talking about it. The artists rhythmic vocabulary adds to the nature of the mark-making, as children's drawings can be influenced by what others draw or say (Thompson, 1999; Richards, 2003). During this activity a communication is established between the artist and child with little need for verbal communication throughout the physical space and actions they encompass together. A collaborative co-construction happens when the artist copies the children and vice versa as they both place bold marks on the paper. In doing this, the artist is embracing a reciprocal respectfulness and appreciation of the child's space (Mayall, 1994; Lancaster, 2003). Athey (2007) suggests that children of this age are more likely to express patterns of repeated behaviour, through their 'motor action' schemas, and their fascination of things that turn or spin. Therefore, drawing in circular swirly patterns taps into children's rotation schema and their love of anything circular, especially anything that rotates (Athey, 2007; Nutbrown 2011) (for more on schemas see pages,127-129).

Oscar's earnest response to the art making process is observed by his deep concentration and involvement over a sustained period of time (Laevers, 2000; Cziksentmihalyi, 2003). Both Oscar and the artist appear to be in a self-motivated state of self-discovery and deep involvement. Csikszentmihalyi (2004) describes Oscar as being in a 'flow state,' which can be seen as a desire to repeat an enjoyable experience and become completely involved in an activity. Csikszentmihayli

(1979) suggests that concentration is one of the most predominant characteristics of achieving flow. He believes the best moments in our lives are not the passive, receptive, relaxing times, but rather the more challenging times, when a person's body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile. During this state he suggests the meanings of words and ideas are felt more strongly and deeply. The artist's simple use of action words and physical mirroring during the activity served to extend Oscar's concentration and flow. She was not asking questions, but was also being an artist working similarly alongside. Oscar appears to be in the present moment, in 'the now,' so any questioning would interrupt his thinking and his doing. This collaborative process for supporting creativity is underpinned by 'a complex artist pedagogy,' (Pringle, 2002:14), where artists use a 'co-constructed' approach. Learning is process-driven, experiential and occurs through a sharing of actions or ideas, where the artist 'functions as a co-learner, rather than an infallible expert and encourages participants to experiment within the supportive environment of the learning community' (ibid).

Vecchi (2010:6), one of the first Reggio Emilia artists, likens it to watching a 'dance,' while Laevers (2007) considers it to be deep level learning, which is only achieved with deep level involvement. Montessori (1995) disagrees with the notion of flow, believing that flow is not achievable for children. She prefers the concept of the absorbent mind, where children have lantern moments which involve children experimenting and playing with ideas. Oscar's spontaneous thought and behaviour is represented through his actions, rather than speech, as is often the case in the process of self-discovery (Craft, 2002; Edlington, 2003). His self-motivated state of deep involvement, flow or engagement in the activity was seen by his desire to repeat an enjoyable experience and become completely involved (Csikszentmihalyi, 2004).

Interrupting Art Making

A nursery practitioner interrupted Oscar to ask what he was drawing. I notice this happens a lot when children are art making. On some occasions, I hear nursery practitioners and teachers asking children questions such as: What is it? What are you making? What is it going to be? Who is this? How many eyes does it have? Practitioners often ask children to stand and hold their picture in front of them whilst they take a photograph. Often they are also documenting children's verbal responses alongside the photograph.

Much of the attention to children's drawings has been on the finished product and the labelling of that product (Einarsdottir et al., 2009), and children in early childhood settings seem quite familiar

with the process of drawing something, saying what it is and then an adult writes it down. If children are rushed into making representational drawings then they may decide at a young age whether they are 'good at art' or not, based on their ability to represent accurately. Asking children to explain their drawings may well aim to capture the children's voice and avoid adult interpretation of drawings (Merry and Robins, 2001). Coates (2002) notes that this highly ritualised process does not necessarily result in children sharing their intended meaning. I have noticed on many occasions that children can either move away and ignore the questioning or quickly make something up. Children can indeed become quite adept at giving the information that is required to please the adult and complete the task. I have seen young children scan a room for an idea of what to name their picture, to quickly say something they can see, like, 'it's a chair.' Children aged three to four still have a lack of motor control, so any attempt to impose meanings or representation onto their drawings may result in the child being dissatisfied and frustrated. Asking children what they are making moves them away from the process of making into the importance of an end product. This may lead to children deciding at a young age whether they are 'good at art' or not, based on their ability to draw accurately and the expected outcomes imposed on them to develop specific artistic skills. To overcome this problem I often tell young children they are playing with colour, light or whatever the materials are, so they do not have to make anything particular, or give it a name. In this way children can experiment and are less likely to get frustrated and think they have got something right or wrong. A child should 'invent her own forms and put down something of herself in a way that is uniquely hers' (Lowenfeld and Brittain, 1970:32).

Kellog (1967) emphasised the point that adults make the mistake of evaluating the quality of children's drawings by constantly comparing them with adults' work and rush a child prematurely into more advanced drawing stages. She notes that after the age of five they add pictorial detail in their drawings learned directly from adults. Both Richards (2003) and Anning (2002) suggest that as children move through school their interest and engagement in drawing tends to decline, possibly because of the changing contexts.

Oscar's repeated circular drawings are often categorised as belonging to the 'scribbling stage' of creative development (Piaget 1952; Lowenfold, 1962), yet this description of Oscar's approach to creativity, in terms of grouping or expected developmental stages may be limiting and not a useful construct. Murris (2016:48) considers Piaget's learning theories as problematic, suggesting developmental trajectories only place 'the child' on a linear journey towards 'becoming-adult.' From a broader developmental perspective, Western academics celebrate the visual arts as a kind of

early language for young children to express their thoughts and feelings (Vygotsky,1967; Rinaldi, 2006; Wright, 2015). The Reggio Emilia philosophy, for instance, (Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 1998a; Malaguzzi, 1996; Moss, 2016; Häikiö, 2018), acknowledges art as a language and recognises children's use of artistic media as integral to symbolic and aesthetic expression involved in learning. While the Reggio Emilia preschools embodied Piaget's developmental theory for some time, Malaguzzi began to look critically at parts of the theory, suggesting that the theory decontextualised and isolated the child, paid marginal attention to social interaction amongst children, and implied learning occurred in a linear way (Rinaldi, 2006).

Circular Scribbles

Oscar's physical rhythm could also be seen as a physical inclination to practice movements at this age. In his book, *Outlines of Psychology: With Special Reference to the Theory of Education* (1893), Sully outlined the physical sensation and emotional effects that movement can have upon the body and explains the need for young children to understand the developing world around them, which they absorb through the exploration of their space. In other words, materials, such as chalk can provide tangible enjoyment whereby children become emotionally engaged through an active imaginative process through the use of materials (ibid). Describing children's creativity in terms of stages, such as the 'scribbling stage' implies that something better will appear when children learn to draw something 'properly,' or more recognisable. It is often seen as a mindless activity, void of self-expression, or something that comes before a more important stage perhaps, like the representation stage. To 'scribble' can seem like a bit of an insult, it implies that the child cannot draw properly yet, so mark-making is a better description, although this term is frequently used to describe children's early attempts to write. Krotzsch observed early art development in children and his book, *Rhythm and Form of Free Art Expression of the Child* (1917), he emphasised the importance of scribbling for artistic development, and highlighted the 'rhythmic characteristics' which he described as three levels or phases within the scribbling stage: unrefined rhythm, refined rhythm, and naming (Michael and Morris, 1985:107). He suggested, the scribble stage begins at age two and ends around age four and is controlled by mark-making on the page, resulting in kinaesthetic satisfaction. Lowenfold (1962:87) suggests scribbles 'develop through an identified order from disorderly scribbling, controlled scribbling, circular scribbling and naming of scribbles.' Fig. 6 (below) presents a picture of a child's controlled scribbling. In disorganised scribbling, there is a connection between the marks the child makes and the physical movement the child uses to create the scribble. He suggests the child builds upon the repetition of movement in this stage to

gain confidence and increases mastery to proceed to the longitudinal or controlled scribbling stage. In the third stage, circular scribbling, the child uses their whole arm, so the materials and techniques used should 'encourage free expression without intruding technical difficulties' (ibid).

Oscar uses his whole arm to make the circular movements on the paper as he lays full bodied across the floor. This 'refined' rhythm is more to do with young children's natural movement and flow (Kellog, 1969). As for the naming of scribbles, Krotzsch (1917) saw the specific

Fig.6 *A three year old child's drawing of circular scribbles.* Photo: Denise Wright

naming of scribbles as influenced by adults rather than original children's thoughts. The scribbling phase precedes the representational stage of drawing, for example, something that might look like a person, a house or a sun. Children may not pass through developmental stages or creative levels in such a linear way and viewing children's artistic development in a fixed way forms part of an outcome driven education determined by assessing what is produced (Dahlberg, Moss and Pence, 1999), rather than the child's involvement in the process (Laevers, 1994). Oscar's scribbling or artistic development may happen in a different order to those set out in developmental theory. How he responds to a mark-making activity, whether he enters a rhythm or begins to name his scribbles may change according to the conditions, materials and opportunities provided. When adults become fixated on stages or measuring children's outcomes then they often disturb children's silence in art making and interrupt the 'magic' and 'wonder' of the moment.

Curious Young Humans

Young children enjoy large scale mark-making activities, particularly those set out on the floor where they can stretch out, kneel down and lean over as they draw. Unlike representational drawing, mark-making may have no context at this age, it is process driven and experimental so young children can enjoy moving about and making marks without any pressure to make an end product. Children often appear to be in the present moment through the process of art making and some appear more mindful than others, as in the example of Oscar when he appears to be making intentional marks.

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Children use art to explore materials and think in active ways as they interact with things, art processes, people, and words (McRae, 2007). McRae et al., (2017) discuss how cognitive and socio-constructivist models of the child dominate childhood and museum studies and argue for the potential of the perspective of the post human child to reconceptualise children in museums. This perspective offers a greater focus on the potency of objects themselves. With the emphasis on material, Oscar's interaction with the chalk is unknown, it is part of the process of experimentation, an uncertain process. During the interaction, while Oscar is 'doing' there is a continuing cycle of cause and effect. Through a post-humanist lens it is a performative happening between human (Oscar) and non-human (chalk and paper) (Barad, 2007). Barad suggests we take a performative understanding of discursive practices in order to challenge the representationalist belief in the power of words to represent pre-existing things (2003:801), she states that language has been granted too much power, and calls for a shift of emphasis from language, discourse and culture, to the focus of matter... 'matter matters', she insists, and 'materiality itself is always already figured within a linguistic domain as its condition of possibility.' The nature of the material effects Oscar's intra-actions and vice versa. Barad refers to performativity, not as an invitation to turn everything (including material bodies) into words; on the contrary, performativity is precisely a contestation of the excessive power granted to language to determine what is real (Barad, 2003:802). Performativity, therefore acts as an inquiry and Barad asks the question: How did language come to be more trustworthy than matter? (ibid). In practice, performativity respects the actions and choices made as Oscar investigates the material during the process of doing. He appears fascinated by the way the pressed chalk crumbles, becomes dust, fades and flattens when smudged, how it blends, grows and continues to change form as the process is repeated. Oscar's thinking-in-movement (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010), produces meaning which we can see happening but which we cannot, with any degree of certainty, name. It is improvised, it is uncertain, it is here and now. This process, or improvisation with material and colour are self-discovered, and are mostly experienced. It is a material relationship between human and non-human, which can grow, given the right conditions, such as space, time and the correct support. Photographs of children participating in the Tate Project are included on page 96 to show children's active engagement when they are experimenting with various open ended materials, for example, (fig. 7), presents a child playing with clay and shredded

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Fig. 7 *A child enjoying an open ended activity with clay and shredded paper*

Fig. 8 *A child plays with sticks and clay*

paper and (fig.8) captures a child's interest in playing with sticks and clay. Fig. 9 shows a child preoccupied with using a roller on a stick to paint with slip (clay mixed with water).

Creativity in this sense can be seen happening in the present moment, it does not need to be

Fig.9 *A child paints with clay slip on paper*

questioned, for letting go of certainties is a crucial part of the often abstract creative process, so children's artwork can be seen as a free expression devoid of hidden meaning (Levick, 1986). They are moments not to interrupt or question with an adult agenda about what the child is learning, but to stand back and observe (or join in making) and think about 'what is possible?' (Craft, 2001). Standing back, however, also means being deeply engaged with children's learning, responsive to their ideas and engaging in what Schön (1987) calls reflection-in-action. Pollard (2004) suggests reflective teachers may be more attentive to creating possibilities than pursuing predefined goals. This is how a more child-centred philosophy would, instead, observe Oscar as an artist, an investigator, a discoverer and an inventor (Malaguzzi, 1986). He appears as all of these and this is how Reggio acts as a reminder that it is possible to 'think and do differently' and that there are 'many different ways of working with young children' (Moss, 2013:128). Oscar's self expression is visible, he is in the moment, in 'flow.' He is immersed in a 'dance,' a moment of 'wonder,' of

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pleasure, and this could be observed by a pattern of movement, of continuous interaction with material and his 'visible rhythm' (McLeod et al., 2017).

Formlessness

When children are asked what they are drawing at this age, they do not often know and perhaps this experimentation with materials could be nurtured more, as a chance to play with materials, colour, line, light, texture, etc., without any context, other than their own, as a way of self-expression. When children are drawing, they are questioning. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) articulate an understanding of 'being' not as a fixed entity, but as a process of continuous transformation or 'becoming.' 'Children are Spinozists' (1987:256), they state, suggesting children can change and affect the world in a fashion not always available to adults because children are constantly growing and learning in many ways, and as curious young humans they are less passive or static. A child's capacity to ask questions, verbally or otherwise (in their many languages, is part of a curious way of making sense of the world and demonstrates how young children are playful, expressive and capable of thinking in many ways, yet, children's questions are poorly understood if they are not seen as 'question machines' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987:256). Therefore, children's questions, such as those asked silently, when art making, invite, like the work of Spinoza, an understanding of the world where the highest activity a human being can attain 'is learning for understanding, because to understand is to be free' (Dahlbeck, 2016:10).

Viewing Oscar as an artist is a more simple and accurate label than any description taken from a stage cemented in development theory or pre-determined learning outcomes. Oscar can remind us of abstract expressionist artists, like Jackson Pollock, making his intentional drip paintings, or action paintings. Abstract art moved away from accurate representationalist art, as a movement focused on creating art that defies conventional explanation. Audiences are often more curious about the process used by artists like Pollock, rather than what they are learning from it. Krauss and Bois (1996), argued that artists throughout the twentieth century, from the abstract expressionists, to post-modern artists have used the concept of 'formlessness' as a tool for creativity, not to elevate art as in the traditional notions of high art and representation but to reduce it to its base materialism. They suggest this debased state should be celebrated as a tool for creativity and offer the example of Pollock, who through the process of art making, dripped paint onto canvas laid out on the floor, allowing the paint to get mixed up with his ash dropping and whatever other debris, all of which would end up in the final work of art. Creating in this way, with the focus on doing, on the investigation of paint and other matter is an iterative process, like a jazz band improvisation, or a

dance free of rules, it changes its goals on a continual basis in dialogue with the physical world (Dewey, 1933). If children really are to be seen as artists in the moment, then they should be viewed by their individual self-expression, as abstract expressionists, action painters or producers of formlessness art. During the process of art making I often see children change their ideas according to what they see unfolding in front of them, when their lines and circular marks connect in new ways it can suddenly surprise them and remind them of things like, people, lollypops, trees and spiders. Then just after all their hard work they often colour over it, cut it all up into pieces or fold it into tiny 'presents.' These types of creative responses to material can be nurtured when adults understand more about the importance of process driven experiences and are free from guided curriculum constraints. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1970:108) assert, 'the art room should be a sanctuary against school regulations, where each youngster is free to be himself and to put down his feelings and emotions without censorship.'

When Oscar is interrupted he immediately stops, gets up and walks away. This displays the delicate role of the way the adult sensitively supports children's thinking and creativity without interrupting flow or restricting children's self determination and capacity to develop their own ideas. Gardner (2004:86) asserts the early childhood years are 'a time when every child sparkles with artistry.' If the right conditions and opportunities are created, then young children may get the chance to 'sparkle,' but not if the correct conditions are not in place to support their creativity. Supporting creativity is complex and requires complex thinking, but this can be confusing for educators, as there are a lot of conflicting theories on artistic learning and it is often taught as part of an education where children's learning is often judged against pre-determined criteria. In *Running Flow* (2017), Csikszentmihalyi notes a tragic tendency with education so rooted in testing and achieving outcomes. He insists that all types of meaningful play, work and learning is clearly done in a state of flow which is almost impossible to a achieve in schools. He believes that the natural connection between growth and enjoyment tends to disappear with time, suggesting that learning becomes an external imposition when schooling starts, so children lose the excitement of mastering new skills:

> Nature does not turn off this enormous desire and capacity to learn when children turn five or six. We turn it off with our coercive system of schooling. Instead of being drawn into self-development by self-oriented fun and fascination, the child is now prodded into it by other-oriented fear and guilt. This kind of motivation is unsteady, because the child naturally resents and rebels against it. School-generated neuroticism follows the child into adulthood and distorts her attitude toward work, learning, and play. She is unable to adopt a playful approach to her work, she studiously avoids study — rarely ever reading another book after graduation—, and her 'play' is largely limited to the

couch-potato variety. Her life is starved of true enjoyment and flow (Csikszentmihalyi et al., 2017:158).

Observing Oscar playing creatively with chalk, should not be for the purpose of recording a learning outcome, meeting a milestone, or capturing evidence, but to nurture his inner 'artist,' his spontaneity. It is not to rush him to the next developmental level, but to give him the opportunity to experience, to interact with materials, to experiment, to be uncertain, curious and more like a

Fig. 10 Children engaged in a gallery activity, drawing on silver card with pencils

Fig.11 A nursery practitioner draws alongside the children in the gallery.

Fig.12 Children dancing spontaneously during a shadow play activity

Fig.13 A child makes a squirrel park while a nursery practitioner supports by softening the clay and rolling out squirrel tails

'formless' artist. These moment by moment experiences belong to a more mindful pedagogy where children can suddenly have ideas to create something new in the moment.

The above stills (fig. 10, 11, 12, 13) have been taken from a film (full film available via film link, page 104). Each has been selected to show moments of children's curiosity, engagement with materials, spontaneity and freedom to experiment and interact with materials in the studio at Tate or in the gallery. For example, a three year old child (see fig.13) pushes small wooden sticks into clay

and watches as holes appear, she is not making anything particularly. Her clay suddenly reminds her of a squirrel, so she continues, with the support of a nursery practitioner to make a squirrel park. She is engaged in the activity for over an hour and takes all of her squirrels home with her. Children do not often know what they are making or going to make, their ideas often form during the moment of experimentation with materials. For example, a child (see fig.14) pushes lolly sticks into clay and is suddenly surprised that he has made a hedgehog.

Fig. 14 A child pushes lollysticks into clay and makes a hedgehog.

Fig.15 A child and her mother paint together with clay slip.

Nursery practitioners and parents (see fig. 15, 16 and 17) became more aware of following the child's ideas and interests on a moment-by-moment basis. This requires an amount of playful open mindedness on the part of the adult in order to observe, listen and respond to the many ways children express themselves and communicate. It also requires a kind of planning in the moment by adults, where materials, resources and ideas can be added, but how they are used is all determined by the children. I noticed, especially after some repeated visits how children and adults appeared to be alert, ready to actively learn and eager to explore and investigate materials. Sharing ideas and

Fig. 16 Children wrap a nursery practitioner in material and make her into a 'vase' photo:Jake Ryan

***Fig. 17** Children and a parent engaged in a clay activity photo: Jake Ryan*

thinking together requires some equal sharing of power between children and adults so that creative play can unfold and so that creative practice is a process which allows for children's existing knowledge and ideas to be respected as part of an enjoyable, imaginary and exciting collaborative practice.

DLA Piper Series: Making Sense of Sculpture

As part of the early years partnership between Tate, Kensington Children's Centre and the Lifebank Nursery we continued to question how the gallery could be a suitable space for welcoming and engaging young children and family visitors. The following session focuses on introducing young children to the DLA Piper Sculpture Series: an exhibition space which presented sculpture from the Tate Collection on two floors within the gallery. This is the first artist-led session provided by artist Michiko Fuji in the gallery space, designed to engage the children in the gallery, interacting in playful ways with artworks. During the same period I was also commissioned by Tate to design an educational resource (so I created the Rocketpacks) which would be used by family visitors in the gallery, some of the ideas came from observing the following workshop and inspired ways of engaging young children and adults in looking and interacting with artworks.

The artist shared a set of intended outcomes for the session before the day of our visit:

Child:

- To explore different sculptures and have the chance to engage with them in a fun and accessible way
- To extend their 'poetic languages' by responding to artworks through words, movement, mark-making, exploring related objects and materials, etc.
- To have fun and work on activities with their adult carer as well as working in a group
- To engage in child-led activity wherever possible

Adult (parents and nursery practitioners):

- To feel supported in working with their little ones, both on the gallery floor and during studio activities
- To understand that a) we can interpret artworks in different ways and b) that it's possible to pull out simple themes and ideas from a work of art and use these in activities with their little ones
- To feel that they have learnt something new by the end of the session and have had fun!

· Understand what kind of artworks (sculptures) we were going to look at and think about what they may be made out of, what they make us think about and how we can move around and explore these.

Vignette Four

The children head up to the studio on the first floor where they are greeted by (Michiko) the artist and Katy, the learning curator. We take our coats off and sit about on beanbags and sofas until the artist does introductions and leads the group into the gallery. Before entering the gallery the artist discusses the importance of not touching and poses questions such as: 'Why do you think we can't touch artworks?' The children do not answer. She asks them to put their wiggly fingers in the air and playfully asks them to 'use wiggly eyes to look really closely at things' (artists makes funny faces as she wiggles her fingers and the children copy), and 'remember,' she says,'we have to put our wiggly fingers away in the gallery unless we're told otherwise.' The artist begins by placing a sheet over Katy the learning curator: 'We can change the way this sculpture looks. Look the shape has changed. When we go through there we might see some sculptures standing still like this. We can look all the way around them.' The artist encourages the children to make sculptural shapes like circles, triangles and squares using body shapes and places a sheet over them, there is loud giggling and excitement.

Activities in the gallery are, in the artists words: 'set out to make the untouchable touchable.' She has left a trail of floor-based objects and prompts next to appropriate artworks. The artist says these offer a 'way in for both children and adults to look together, to understand and make physical and sensory connections with the artworks.' The artist leads us through the gallery and talks to the group in a friendly tone with an expression of intrigue (as used in children's story telling) about how the artist Richard Long liked to go on long walks and make temporary artworks along the way. She stops by his artwork, Southbank Circle (1991) made of many pieces of slate placed in a circle on the gallery floor. She encourages us all to make our own circular sculpture by laying on the floor with our feet joining (see fig. 18). Some children look sideways to their parents and share a playful moment. She moves on to ask the children what floor-based artworks they could make

Fig. 18 *Artist Michiko Fuji (in red) forms a circle on the floor with children, nursery practitioners and parents. Photo by Denise Wright*

with the materials and encourages them to make shapes on the floor using different wooden sticks.

The children find the first box of lolly sticks and the artist encourages them to put them in a line or a circle (see fig. 19), like the shapes in the sculpture, one child say she is making 'a tree,' and a nursery practitioner quickly reminds her that she, 'has to make a circle, try and make a circle.'

A tub of viewing tools are positioned for the children to pull out and use next to Dan Flavin's Untitled (Cornerpiece) light sculpture (1969). The artist gives plenty of time for the children to explore the activity at

Fig.19 Children use lolly sticks to make sculptural patterns like the sculptures they have seen in the gallery (photograph by Denise Wright)

a relaxed pace using various viewfinders, such as diffraction glasses and magnifiers. As she looks through various viewfinders she says what she can see, 'oooh, I can see long lines of green and silver sparkles.' We take our time to look with them and next we move to Julian Opie's artwork: You see an Office Building (1996). The children and adults use blocks to make their own tower as the artist encourages them to try and build it to resemble the sculpture. The artist describes her approach to the activity (as a written reflection afterwards):

'These prompts are positioned on the gallery floor as a kind of provocation which intend to provide adults with a way in to understanding sometimes challenging contemporary artworks. Meanwhile the materials are left for children to explore and play with in a way that is more open-ended as they can begin to make a more fluid, unconscious connection with the artworks and gallery space that surrounds them. It is important to provide extensive opportunities for young children and their adults to encounter artworks in the gallery together as this provides the time to question things and have discussions together.'

We spend an hour in the gallery and return to the studio where the artist had prepared a number of art making activities, choosing to use a 'set of materials and a theme which explores a journey from 2D to 3D, in a series of short activities.' Here, the choice and lay-out of materials and tools have been designed by the artist, 'to encourage a child-led response, rather than a specific product-oriented outcome.' Children began to use card, pipe-cleaners, plastic cotton bobbins, long tubes,

soft wire, pre-cut card strips, glue and recycled materials to make their own sculptures. The artist (in her written reflection) states 'I set out with a series of questions, which I 'kept in mind' whilst selecting key materials and processes, such as: 'What shapes can we see and make? Can we get our shapes to turn into forms that grow and stand up? What do our sculptures look like? What do they feel like? Think of words to describe it. How can we make our sculptures grow? Can we draw the shapes of our sculptures? Can we draw around outlines of shadows?' The artist did not ask these questions, she 'kept them in mind' and used them as ideas for what to say and do as she moved around and participated in the art making activities.

A child asks a nursery practitioner to make him a long 'stick' with straws taped to the end, he waits while it is being made and then is copied by three other boys who also want the same. The children wait as they watch their sticks being made. They are pleased with their sticks and start hitting the material which is being used to project onto. The last activity is relaxing and has a magical feel as

Fig.20. *Children watch as their artwork is projected onto material in the studio (photo-Jake Ryan)*

the artist turns down the lights, and slowly pulls the children's acetate creations over the projector

*to make beautiful moving shadowy reflections on the walls and ceiling of the studio **(see** fig.20). The children begin to move about watching their shadows as gentle Japanese bell like music is played (see fig.21, p.105). A film of the activity can also be viewed:*

Fig.21 *Children in shadow play with artist Michiko Fuju in the studio at Tate Liverpool (photo: Jake Ryan)*

What Can you See?

As with all of the visits, many things stood out about this one; the artist's approach to selecting artworks as suitable provocations for physical play and art making, the enjoyment shown by the parents, the large amount of questions asked to children, how the children were always active in the gallery and the various ways the artist occupied the children using a playful balance of artist led/ child-led activities. I was interested in the 'poetic languages' described by the artist in her plan for the session and how she referred many times to herself as an 'atelierista' (which I go on to explore). I listened and transcribed the audio recording afterwards as a way of reflection and analysis in order to investigate the naturally occurring conversation for closer inspection. Reissman (2003:2) states that narratives do not speak for themselves or have unanalysed merit, that they require interpretation when used as data in social research. She suggests the emphasis should be on the content of a text, on 'what' is said more than 'how' it is said, the 'told' rather than the 'telling.' She believes there is

an (unacknowledged) philosophy of language which underpins the approach of narrative analysis, where language is considered as a direct and unambiguous route to meaning.

I had already began to think a lot about whether too much importance was placed solely on spoken language as way of making sense of children's learning, and had noticed the children were very quiet at the gallery (compared to in the nursery and on the bus). I found that there were hardly any children's voices in the whole two hour recording, apart from the odd word, giggle, or some copying of the artist using 'I can see' statements in the gallery. The artist does not ask any questions to the children, she 'wonders,' she acts curious, she models the role of material investigator, but there are a lot of questions and instructions posed by the nursery practitioners to the children. Unlike Reissman, I became interested in what was said and 'how' it was said or was not said (as in the case of the children). The adults were trying their best to support the artists with her idea but it appeared as though they were taking over a bit, even making the children's sculptures for them as they sat and waited. I was also responsible at the time for providing creative support and training to the nursery practitioners and wondered what the best way of communicating this would be. I decided to type the transcript and share it with the practitioners in a meeting. We looked together at the amount and types of questioning used in the gallery and began to consider through careful debate whether questioning from adults posed an unnecessary interruption to children's creative involvement and flow.

Questioning is seen as an important teaching strategy for making meaning from learning experiences for young children and is seen as a way to improve children's learning rather than control children's knowledge (MacNaughton and Williams, 2004). However, research shows that teachers tend to ask closed-ended and direct knowledge questions (Storey, 2004; Blatchford and Mani, 2008, Lee, 2010; Bay, 2011). The use of questions is so pervasive in classrooms that they are a major influence on children's learning, interactions, and thinking (Wood and Anderson, 2001) and are seen as important in terms of revealing the ideas of children (Ozden, 1999; Cheminaist, 2009). King (2005) examined children's dialogue in preschools, and identified that children's critical thinking skills improved when they were asked questions. A lot of studies find that correctly planned and asked questions can improve the effective thinking of children and questions such as, 'Why do you think...? produce children's theories, understandings, imaginings and feelings, and provide teachers an opportunity for them to reconsider their experiences (MacNaughton and Williams, 2004). Asking questions is also important for evaluating children's learning (Johnston et al., 2007; Hartman, 2015). Dean (2001:94) considers questioning to have a range of purposes, such

as for finding out what children already know, for checking their understanding and for encouraging a further desire to enquire. Hartman (2015) concludes that asking questions in educational settings has been found to be an effective way to develop a range of skills, and thinking skills in particular. I do agree that open questioning can trigger thinking and stretch a child's knowledge and understanding but I think questions should also be carefully thought about and designed as curiosities to thinking. They are also better posed when there is an established relationship with the child and some familiarity of how they communicate.

The questions posed to the children during this activity were open and closed, such as 'What does this feel like? Is it hard? Is it soft? Do you know what that is? How many are there? What does is it look like? What does it remind you of? What colour is it? What are you doing? What are you going to make? What did you make? What can you see?' I did not think any of these questions were successful in developing children's range of skills or thinking skills, they certainly were not successful in gaining many verbal responses. When a child did respond other children copied and repeated exactly the same answer. Artists usually posed questions at more appropriate levels for the children in order to identify the level of children's understanding, they also challenged children to think further with varying degrees of success using more higher order questioning, questions such as, 'how would it feel if,' or, 'what do you think about...?' Which required more thought and input from the children, as illustrated in Bloom's Taxonomy (1956).

A question posed by an artist in one workshop, 'feel your trousers, what do they feel like?' was met with one child responding by saying, 'jeans,' and then other children saying 'jeans' even if they were not wearing jeans. On some occasions children were asked to recall what they had seen, such as in a workshop after a visit to the *Glam Exhibition* (2013). Clarke (2005) suggests that such recall questions are the easier type of questions to ask but do not challenge children enough to further their learning. *The Glam Exhibition: The Performance of Style,* explored themes of glamour and exaggerated identity. The whole group particularly enjoyed sitting about in Marc Camille Chaimowicz's glitter-strewn installation *Celebration? Real Life,* featuring mirror balls, stage lighting and music by David Bowie. Afterwards the children recalled seeing 'glittery lights,' mirrors, faces and hearing music. One child said it was like 'a holiday' and later asked if we 'could go to the holiday again?' The aim of the artist was to make connections between artworks and the *Glam Exhibition* through hands-on activities. After visiting the exhibition, the children went into the studio to create their own *Glam* style pictures by decorating giant black and white photographs of their own faces.

What is that Meant to be?

Modern art raises a lot of questions, so being at the Tate may have provoked a more curious inquiry from adults keen to discover exactly what the children were learning and what their thoughts were. Questions can of course be a fast and efficient way of finding out what children are thinking. On the first visits I recalled a lot of the adults being caught up in questioning artworks in the gallery, asking critical questions about the place of modern art, such as: 'Why is that art?' Or 'What's that meant to be?' Art is not a single type of thing of course and the possibilities are almost endless. Some modern art belongs to longer traditions, concerned with how things look and so is easier to understand, such as the Claude Monet's painting of *Rouen Cathedral* (1982), which some adults admired on the first visit to Tate. Expressionist art is more about visualising internal emotional states in colour or gestures and abstract art is about creating arrangements of colour that are deliberately not drawn from real objects in the world. Conceptual art was quite difficult for the adults to appreciate and is largely centred around an idea where the art object is not that important. Minimalist art (largely represented at Tate), was the most criticised by the adults in the group, as this art is mostly about the material itself. For example, *Duchamp's Fountain* (1917), a porcelain urinal, was exhibited at Tate Liverpool at the time of our visits; a readymade sculpture which challenged the traditions of judging artworks by their composition, light, colour, line and perspective in art making, thus removing the traditional metric for judging artworks. Duchamp attempted to shift the focus of art from the physical craft to intellectual interpretation. This was a difficult concept to explain to the adults, who found mostly toilet humour in the piece and had already made their mind up that the artist was 'taking the piss' along with other similar toilet puns. The young children, on the other hand, really enjoyed the opportunity to talk about a toilet and on one occasion they rolled about the floor laughing hysterically to each other repeating 'poo poo and wee wee.' The parents and nursery practitioners preferred art when it represented something, and saw 'good art' as art they liked, as something that realistically looked like the thing it represented, such as a painting of a landscape, a vase of flowers, or a person. The point I am making is that the adults did not see that art could be a simple interaction with the material or natural world. They thought that 'good' art had to realistically look like something, so they may also only value children's art if it too represents something. As the group became more exposed to various process driven practices they also became more enthusiastic to explore and experiment with materials and artworks as the children did. Taking the time to learn and understand does not simply mean exploring the materials as an adult, although this remains as a possibility. Rather it means observing the way children construct and produce, as

well as their physical responses and other reactions. It also means having a sensitive understanding of knowing when to question, when to stand back or how to extend creativity by adding various materials or ideas. This child-centred focus, where children make meaning based on their interactions with others and their environment remains at the heart of the Reggio Emilia philosophy.

The Poetic Languages of Children

'Is it so mistaken to believe in the possibility of learning in which wonder, ethics, beauty, pleasure and rigour are the basis of knowledge?' (Vecchi, 2010:25)

The artist, Michiko and the learning curators suggested a preference for working with young children using the much favoured Reggio Emilia philosophy (Maluguzzi, 1996). The Reggio Emilia preschools of northern Italy have become known across Europe and America for their progressive, child-led, creativity based approach to young children's education. The Reggio-inspired approach to children's learning is not a fixed model of teaching, but rather 'a way of thinking about children, schools, education and life (Rinaldi, 2006). Observing children in this way has been central to my research by examining how children visually express themselves through use of colour, light, movement, mark-making and through, although not limited to, their responses to shadow, scale and sensory stimulation. Working in groups with children on projects over a sustained period of time also reflects the principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy. In Reggio preschools, the teachers work collaboratively to build on ideas and children's evolving interests as a source of inspiration for collective projects, through observation and exploration. Informed by the earlier work of Montessori and theories of Piaget, Freire, Dewey and Vygotsky, Reggio recognises the myriad opportunities of self-expression through a metaphor of 'the hundred languages of children' (Malaguzzi, 1996; Rinaldi, 2006; Edwards, et al., 2012). Emphasis in Reggio preschools is placed on collaborative inquiry-based teaching and learning, on a culture of community, reflective practice and on the environment acting 'as the third teacher' (Rinaldi, 2006).

The creative workshops offered by Tate enable artists to use their own artistic skill, knowledge and practice to plan each session. As illustrated in the vignettes and films, artists began by selecting a suitable artwork from the Tate's collection as a starting point and this provided a stimulus, or 'provocation' for learning (Craft, 1999). This capacity to provoke, is perhaps one of the greatest and lasting legacies of any personal encounter with the Reggio Emilia experience (Abbott and Nutbrown, 2003). The artist stated that she wanted to extend the children's 'poetic languages' by responding to artworks through words, movement, mark-making and by exploring related objects

and materials. The poetic languages of children are also embedded in the Reggio Emilia philosophy and highlight the infinite ways that children can express, explore, and connect their thoughts, feelings and imaginings through symbolic languages (Malaguzzi,1996). Visual symbolic languages play an equally important role beside the spoken language. While Reggio Emilia is often described as an approach or form of art education, it is worth noting that the Reggio philosophy actually uses a much broader definition of creativity, which includes creativity of thought and creative responses to the world, and can therefore refer to activities which do not strictly involve the creation of artworks. The focus is very much on the process of creativity as a way of developing, expressing and sharing children's understanding of the world, rather than for the product of a finished piece of artwork. These various creative processes or activities are described by Reggio educators as being 'languages', which children use in the same ways (and, arguably, in many more ways) than adults use the written or spoken word. This leads to the Reggio concept of the 'hundred languages of children,' with 'languages' including the verbal, graphic, musical, gestural, symbolic, logical and imaginative, or, in fact, any way in which thought is processed and shared. The metaphor of the 100 languages is not only a way for using different materials or to communicate, but is also a 'meta-perspective of manifoldness, plurality, and inclusion' (Karlsson Häikiö, 2018:85).

The child is made of one hundred

The child has a hundred languages a hundred hands a hundred thoughts and a hundred ways of thinking of playing, of speaking.

A hundred always a hundred ways of listening of marvelling of loving a hundred joys for singing and understanding a hundred worlds to discover a hundred worlds to invent a hundred worlds to dream.

The child has a hundred languages (and a hundred hundred more) but they steal ninety-nine.

The schools and the culture separate the head from the body.

They tell the child to think without hands to do without head to listen and not to speak to understand without joy to love and to marvel only at Easter and Christmas.

They tell the child: to discover the world already there and of the hundred they steal ninety-nine.

They tell the child: that work and play reality and fantasy science and imagination sky and earth reason and dream are things that do not belong together.

And thus they tell the child that the hundred is not there.

The child says: No way. The hundred is there (Malaguzzi,1996).

Creativity and self-motivated learning were clearly important aspects of the museum experience that were valued by the learning team, this was apparent through the activities planned for the group and from our discussions. The learning team expressed a preference for embedding the educational principles of Reggio Emilia in their practice ensuring that the learning curators were knowledgeable in a relevant creative philosophy for working with young children, this enabled Tate to extend their understanding of the potential for visitor-led (and particularly child-led) creativity. The learning curator stated that having an understanding of Reggio practice 'raised her awareness of early years and of the importance of the child being free to create their own learning.' Much emphasis was also placed on the way children co-construct knowledge and make meaning in the gallery.

The Atelierista

The artist introduced herself as an atelierista. The atelierista of the 'Reggio Emilia preschools have been an inspiration for preschools worldwide' (Karlsson Häikiö, 2018:75). In Reggio Emilia, each school has a studio, or atelier as a central place in the school equipped for working creatively, with various tools, materials and an atelierista with an artistic background who strongly influences the whole curriculum. The atelier is a place where children learn how to master different techniques of visual symbolic languages such as painting, clay modelling and drawing. It also creates a place where children can learn how to master different techniques of visual symbol languages, such as painting, working with clay and drawing and helps adults in understanding the processes of how children learn and how children discover solutions in expressive, cognitive and symbolic freedom by means of communication (Tijnagel, 2013).

Vecchi an artist, or atelierista, in Reggio schools for over thirty years, states (in an interview with Gandini, 2012), that she was first attracted to the preschools in Reggio mostly because of the use of visual languages as a construction of thoughts and feelings and also for the opportunity to become a cultural vehicle for teacher development. Malaguzzi's introduction of the atelierista is 'of vital importance for the development of the Reggio Emilia approach' (Karlsson Häikiö, 2018:76), as is the role of the atelierista for developing visual skills through widening the visual perspectives of the children by 'educating' the eye and applying 'different ways of seeing as tools for creative thinking, reflection, and analysis' (ibid). Vecchi (in interview with Gandini, 2012) discusses the Reggio approach as being 'not a linear and predetermined curricular progression,' but an 'adventure,' believing, 'the expressive and poetic languages become part of the process by which knowledge is built.'

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Pringle considers in a similar way how artists perceived their role as educators in gallery education and describes, 'a complex artist pedagogy,' with artists taking a number of roles including 'educator, collaborator, role model, social activist and researcher' (2002:14). Vecchi (2010:45) explains that the Reggio Emilia approach to teaching was not overly structured, but 'perhaps freer and with more potential for irony, humour, or pleasure... with a certain freedom of thought' and believes the atelier is a place for children to become masters of all kinds of techniques, such as 'painting, drawing, and working in clay, all the symbolic languages.' She also emphasises the importance of circulating artistic discoveries and conceptual break-throughs made by artists to other adults in educational settings, so they can learn from them. For example, 'the way that artists have solved problems of representing light, combining colours, and creating a sense of volume are all very interesting and help us explore new paths with children'(ibid).

Vecchi found the atelier has an important, provocative, and disturbing effect on old-fashioned teaching ideas and discusses how the personality and style of each atelierista makes each atelier a different place. Vecchi (in Gandini, 2012:3) also discusses the way one should examine children's artwork:

> It happens very often that some of the children's products are so original that one wants to compare them with the work of a famous artists. But that kind of comparison becomes dangerous and fraught with ambiguity, especially if one tries to make comparisons consistently. It leads to false conclusions, such as that the behaviour of children unfolds innately, or that the product is more important than the process. To make comparisons that go beyond a simple and playful resemblance shows how little one understands either children or artists (Vecchi, 2012:3).

The atelier, therefore, not only acts as a creative vehicle for co-constructing learning between children and adults as part of their daily education but also as a place for 'creative exploration, exchange of ideas, and in-depth studies emanating from questions children pose' (Karlsson Häikiö, 2018:87). The Tate learning curators advocate for using a Reggio inspired approach with many of the Reggio principles adopted for welcoming children into the gallery. Unsurprisingly, one of the Reggio concepts which seems to have the most universal appeal to galleries and museums is that of 'environment as third teacher' (Kirk, 2012). During the Tate Project, we were unable to offer an atelier or atelierista as part of children's daily education as achieved in Reggio Emilia preschools, but we able to take some inspiration using some of the philosophical principles as guidance for creating an exploratory space for children, such as:

a) Using the gallery and studio spaces as stimulating and enchanting environments which could act as the third educator (Malaguzzi, 1993). For example, Fig. 22 (page 113) shows how one artist has taken time to set up the environment using strips of fabric and blocks of clay in order to offer a stimulating and aesthetic environment.

fig.22 *Artist Dina Bagi sets up the studio with clay, material and paper (photo: Jake Ryan)*

b) Co-constructing knowledge with children, where artists, nursery practitioners and parents become curious learners alongside the children

c) Observing, documenting and encouraging children's many ways of expressing themselves, both verbally and non-verbally through their many languages and through open-ended questioning and experimentation with materials, using children's curiosity and questioning as a starting point for further planning and investigation

d) Focusing on creative processes rather than end products

A Reggio Inspired Adventure

The reluctance of Reggio Emilia's pedagogical leaders to directly align specific theoretical inspirations with their practice may lie in the desire to 'distance themselves from being pigeon-holed into a single particular perspective' (Hall et al., 2010:1). Therefore, educators committed to social change particularly sought out information about approaches to pedagogy that valued democracy, community participation and social equity (Lazzari and Balduzzi, 2013). Malaguzzi was friends with Freire (who I later introduce, page, 175-177), and was influenced by Freire's progressive thoughts on education and his commitment to education for social change, freedom and

empowerment (Karlsson Häikiö, 2018). The nursery practitioners involved in the Tate Project had very limited knowledge of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, their knowledge base and training was mostly focused on planning and evidencing children's outcomes as set out in the EYFS curriculum (DfE, 2012). While many educators agree that Reggio provides an extremely positive and successful approach to young children's learning, its implementation outside of the region is by no means straightforward (Abbott and Nutbrown, 2001; Moss et al., 2010).

> Reggio Emilia is not important for providing a transferable programme or universal blueprint that, properly applied, can provide a panacea for early childhood education worldwide. Instead, it seems to me that the education undertaken in the municipal schools is best understood not as an 'approach,' implying a generalisable model, but as a local cultural project that has emerged from a very particular time and place, the time being the 1960s and 1970s and the place being Reggio Emilia in the region of Emilia Romagna, a place with a very particular history and political, cultural and social context (Moss, 2019:66).

The top-down approach to education in the UK and the focus on outcomes makes the adoption of this system so difficult, or whilst research suggests; most preschools simply lack the staff and resources to make use of these methods (Dahlberg and Moss, 1999). The Reggio educators themselves are keen that their methods should not simply be copied, but should rather be used by institutions as a way to hold up a mirror to their practice and to inspire new ways of working that are relevant to each particular context (Kirk, 2011). As described earlier by Vecchi, education in Reggio schools should be considered as an adventure, rather than an approach.

The child-focused pedagogy of Reggio Emilia employs many of Dewey's ideas about democracy, education and aesthetics (Lindsay, 2015). The atelierista also develops artistic skills as a 'transformative potential' (Karlsson Häikiö, 2007:275), that 'symbolises children's agency and learning as an emancipative force' (Karlsson Häikiö, 2018:82). Dewey extensively discussed the importance of democratic and aesthetic learning environments as a human right (Dewey, 1938; Page, 2006) and used very similar terminology to condemn traditional education for 'passivity of attitude, its mechanical massing of children, its uniformity of curriculum and method' (1907:124). Maluguzzi (1996) defines the role of the adult educator for developing relationships, not only between people but also between things, between thoughts and with the environment. In order to act as an educator for the child, the environment has to be flexible and undergo frequent modification by the children and the teachers in order to remain up-to-date and responsive to their needs as protagonists in constructing their own knowledge (Gandini,1998).

The Brushbots

Fig. 24 *The Brushbots creating colourful drawings*
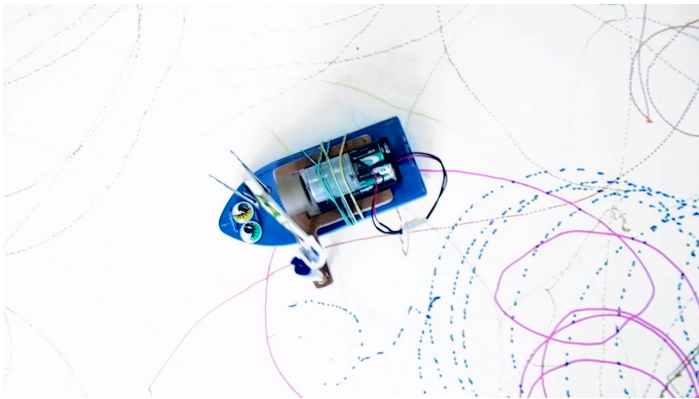
Fig. 23 *A mechanical Brushbot making circular marks on paper. (Photo:Jake Ryan)*

Artist Tony Hall uses art as a medium for exploring science and for demonstrating scientific concepts. Tony states that he 'encourages creativity through practical experiments and adopts the observational skills and methods used in art as a route to increasing engagement in science and vice versa.' Tony combined science and art to create the Brushbots; small mechanical drawing machines made from household objects (such as scrubbing brushes) for the children to play with. Each Brushbot has a pen attached so that colourful circular patterns appear on the paper as they move about and spin (see fig.23 and fig.24). Ten children participated in the Brushbot activity during a visit to the Tate, where the artist gave each child a Brushbot for them to

Fig. 25 *A boy watches the Brushbots and occasionally enters into imaginary private talk*
photo:Jake Ryan

decorate with stick-on googly eyes, lights and pipe cleaners. The artist did a Brushbot demonstration to the children and supported each child to build a Brushbot and to connect two electrical wires to a battery to activate the Brushbots. The Brushbots leave colourful circular patterns on the paper as they move about and spin. The short film, available here: https://www.dropbox.com/s/5hkxxry0s8dmsik/robots%20re-edit.mov?dl=0 shows how the children

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are captivated by the beauty and wonder of the Brushbot activity. The film link (1.58 seconds) shows one child engaging in imaginary private talk with a Brushbot (fig.25) and also captures a moment of learning of another child (see film: 2.13-2.40 seconds), which I attempt to unpick below. These moments are presented as a series of photographic stills taken from the film (figs. 26, 27, 28, 29) and offer an example of a three year old child learning how to connect wires to a battery after asking for help from the artist (Tony Hall). It's 'broken, it won't work' he says. The artist shows him how to connect the wires and explains why the battery must be connected to the motor. The boy watches and listens carefully and goes on to operate the Brushbot independently (fig. 28).

Fig. 26 *A child takes his broken Brushbot to the artist.*
photo: Jake Ryan

Fig. 27 *The artist shows the child how to fix the Brushbot by connecting the wires*
photo: Jake Ryan
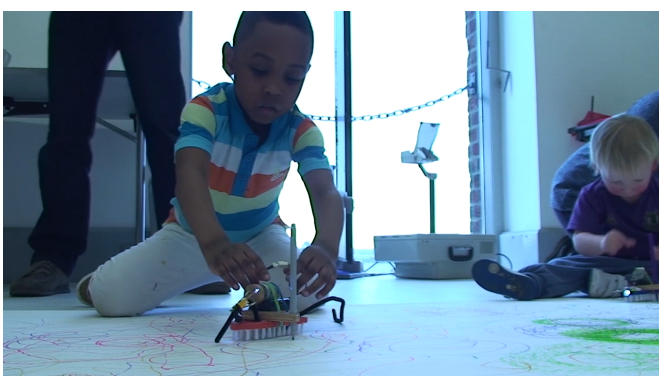
Fig. 28 *The child connects the wires independently*
Photo: Jake Ryan

Fig. 29 *The child skips with joy because he has fixed the Brushbot*
photo: Jake Ryan

The emphasis on 'how' children learn in the foundation years is reflected in a wealth of literature and corresponding theories using a continuum of beliefs that have influenced and shaped the early childhood curricula. Early childhood is an important time for all aspects of development and it is widely accepted that children should be provided with stimulating opportunities to learn through

play. Children's curiosity and capacity to make new meaning has been developed and shaped by many theorists including Rousseau, Froebel, Malaguzzi, Montessori, Owen and Steiner. Theorists such as Bruce, Bowlby, Vygotsky, Piaget and Bruner have influenced current early childhood practice, but it is important to consider that different theorists cannot fit every child (Alfrey, 2003). These theorists reflect traditional social-constructivist approaches to learning, based on an assumption that we need to constantly build on what has been acquired before. Gill (2010) disagrees and suggests some aspects of existing childhood pedagogy are not working and there is a need to break down barriers for children between educational settings and the wider world to include more social, environmental and cultural experiences.

Leggett and Ford (2013:42) also consider the difficult role that early years practitioners have in interpreting early childhood theories and play based programmes. They refer to various early childhood programs used across the world, such as High-Scope, Reggio Emilia and the Te Whariki curriculum in New Zealand and discuss the accepted view of early childhood pedagogy where children are recognised as being competent beings with sophisticated world views, 'shifting a deficit discourse to one of empowerment.' Leggett and Ford compare accepted play-based pedagogies with the lesser discussed pedagogy of 'intentional' teaching, where teachers are required to make decisions regarding children's learning opportunities. They consider the term 'teaching' in relation to early childhood pedagogy and how it is often avoided in early education and referred to instead as, 'guiding,' 'supporting,' 'enabling,' 'encouraging' or 'scaffolding.' Fortunati (2006:37) raises a similar discussion, suggesting that teachers can be 'technicians' who very precisely deliver predetermined outcomes, or 'reflective' teachers who may be more attentive to 'creating possibilities than pursuing predefined goals.' Fortunati also adds that practice always reflects the individual practitioners' perspective of childhood (ibid). Early childhood education can be discussed in terms of differences between adult led, top-down teaching, child-initiated or self-directed learning. These differing opinions and debates are significant for examining 'how' children learn especially for the various perspectives on the adult's role in supporting children's creative learning.

Social Constructivism

'If the constructivist museum is taken to its logical conclusion then surely there is no museum knowledge except for that which the visitor constructs in his or her head' (Fritsch, 2007).

For young children co-constructing knowledge and making meaning from the world belongs to a social constructivist epistemology, which draws on the developmental and constructivist theories of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner, whereby children are seen to learn by working together with others (teachers, parents, school staff and other children) to construct their own knowledge and meaning. The philosophy of Reggio Emilia and current museum learning theory are built upon social constructivist philosophies of learning where the focus is on the active process of knowledge construction on the part of the learner. Likewise gallery and museum learning theorists such as Hein (1998), Hooper-Greenhill (1999 and Falk and Dierking (2000) take a similar perspective. As in Reggio Emilia preschools, the free choice open-ended nature of the visits to the gallery gave children the power to follow their own interests and interact with elements of artworks in ways that make sense to them. Reggio philosophy and gallery education both draw on social constructivist theories of museum learning which put the visitor at the centre of their own meaning making. In other words, the learner's construction of meaning is acknowledged to be physically located within space and time.

Socio-constructivism represents the dominant theoretical framework for thinking about children in museums (Hein, 1998), in which visitors (including children) are seen to make sense of their experiences in museums through social interactions, based on prior knowledge and experiences. Much research on families in art galleries and museums understands learning as a deeply social activity, with both places often described as informal learning settings. Research shows that visitors have varying motivations and experiences, embracing social, cultural, cognitive and affective responses (Falk and Dierking 2000). Accordingly, cognition is recognised as only one element of what occurs (Allen, 2002; Rennie and Williams, 2002). Studying visitors' conversations with each other, for example, offers insight into differing styles and types of learning (Leinhardt et al., 2002). The free-choice, interactive and discovery model of learning adopted by science centres (Hein, 1998) also draws on socio-cultural approaches to learning (Leinhardt et al., 2002; Rogoff, 2008), by accommodating a variety of learning styles and by recognising learning as a process rather than an outcome.

Likewise, the contextual model of learning, proposed by Falk and Dierking (2010), has been influential within museum studies, illustrating that an individual's learning experience depends on the personal, sociocultural, physical and temporal contexts in which it takes place. Social constructivism relates to the role that social interaction and social processes play in creating knowledge (Piaget,1936;Bruner,1976;Vygotsky,1978). Vygotsky believed that learning could not be

separated from social context and argued that all cognitive functions begin as a product of social interactions. Piaget (1936) also took a constructivist approach to cognitive learning, believing individuals construct their knowledge of the world based on their experience. His theory on how children construct knowledge (cognitive development) has shaped the way we understand children's learning in the UK still today, and his stages of childhood development are often used to predict the capabilities of what a child can or cannot understand. Bruner (1960), suggested that a child's understanding can be taken 'to the threshold of their learning with the support of an interested adult,' or a 'more knowledgeable other.' He referred to this as 'scaffolding' and added that for a child to learn something new, they have to 'do it,' 'see it' and 'hear it.'

Vygotsky's (1930) zone of proximal development (ZPD), is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what a learner can do with help. The zone of proximal development (ZPD), suggests that a child's learning can be expanded with the support of a more knowledgeable person. This further suggests that cognitive development stems from social interactions via guided learning within the zone of proximal development as children and their partner's co-construct knowledge. 'The ZPD shows what children can do today with assistance and what they can do tomorrow without assistance' (1978:87). The Brushbots film captures a child learning how to connect wires to a battery after asking for help from the artist. It's 'broken, it won't work' he says. The artist assists and the child goes on to do it independently. Vygotsky, like Bruner, held that any task could be presented to a child, as long as it was in a setting that was appropriate to them and matched their developmental stage. Young children, aged three to four years, may still be putting objects in their mouths, some cannot use scissors and most can be quite heavy handed when handling objects as they are still learning to coordinate their movements. If the activity is about the process of learning then it is important that children are also given the opportunity to use the materials independently, or practice using the materials with the support of an adult. The Brushbots activity was challenging for the children as it required careful handling, concentration and coordination to attach the thin wires.

For Vygotsky, the environment in which children grow up will influence how they think and what they think about (1978). He suggests adults transmit their culture's tools of intellectual adaptation that children then internalise and argued that to understand human thinking, educators need to examine the significant and various signs that cultures provide, suggesting that humans use psychological tools or signs to aid in their thinking and behaviour. This implies that children learn by copying or imitating those around them. Vygotsky regarded speech as the most important sign,

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which allows humans to think about and reflect upon the past and make plans for the future. He emphasised the importance of speech as it enables children to 'participate intelligently in the social life' of their thinking. He believed that the ability to talk to oneself can be viewed as thinking with words, which contributes to the individual's power of thought and reflection. In contrast, Piaget (1936) maintained that cognitive development stems largely from independent explorations in which children construct knowledge on their own, yet also emphasised the importance of interacting with peers to promote 'social perspective talking.'

According to Piaget, language depends on thought for its development (i.e., thought comes before language) but for Vygotsky, thought and language are initially separate systems from the beginning of life, merging at around three years of age, producing verbal thought or inner speech. How children learn and develop, of course, differs from child to child and there still remains no singular truth for how children construct knowledge. However, most constructivists do agree that thinking and doing are paramount to building and expanding learning. For creativity, the 'doing,' appears as most important for building knowledge and understanding through hands on experiences. Applying a constructivist theory suggests that teachers, museum educators, parents, and peers can be viewed as valuable resources in the provision and scaffolding of learning by introducing new learning experiences and sensitively supporting them.

These alternating perspectives on early childhood pedagogy reflect dilemmas in determining whether practice is, or should be, 'adult-led' or 'child-led.' Yet a more contemporary focus on early childhood pedagogy moves somewhere between these descriptions in order to present a more 'participatory' approach to supporting children's learning. A participatory approach requires critical reflection on the adult's part to address power relations in adult-child relationships (Lancaster, 2003; Rinaldi, 2006). Nutbrown (1996:78) agrees that respectful educators are open to supporting children to develop their knowledge and for becoming active participants in the learning and listening process. This, she believes, is a more ongoing construction of new ideas 'with the freedom to be creative and share thoughts in the context of one's learning and teaching environment.'

Participatory Art

Participatory art is an approach to making and viewing art which often engages public participation in the creative process, letting the participants become co-authors, editors, or observers of the work. It intends to challenge the dominant form of making art in the West, in which a small class of professional artists make the art while the public takes on the role of passive observer or consumer

(Bell, 2017). In this respect, the artist is seen as a collaborator and co-producer of the situation (with the participants), and these situations can often have an unclear beginning or end. Participatory art has its origins in Futurist and Dadaist performances of the early twentieth century, which were designed to provoke, scandalise and agitate the public (Kelly, 2014). For example, in the late 1950s artists devised performances called 'happenings,' in which they would coerce the audience into participating in the experience. In this sense, participatory practice can mean different things to different people. For galleries it can mean working in collaboration with an audience or with visitors to create something together, it could be to make meaning or interpretation, a space or exhibition, a resource or a collective response, there are many possibilities (Simon, 2010). Rather than producing something that may be defined, the artist is creating something new in partnership with participants or audiences. For children in the early years, they are making new meaning by showing how they interact with artworks. It can also be about power being shared with an individual or community. This is the only way that participants might be offered the agency of creation; without this detail, participants will always respond within the domain of authority of the artist; they will be subjugated in this way, and the work will fail to be participatory. This is centrally important in asserting participation as an art form in itself, and effectively differentiates participation from interactive, community based art and socially engaged art.

Jacob and the Mirror Cubes

The artist, Michiko, hands out reflective mirror card and pencils to the group as they sit around the mirror cube installation. Jacob stands up and begins to side-step along the narrow roll of paper, pulling faces into one of the mirror cubes and watching his reflection as he dances his arms around in a rhythm. Jacob non-verbally expresses his interest to move through the installation and the artist confirms that he can enter but reminds him not 'to touch the mirrors.' Jacob continues to peacefully explore his reflection, waving his arms, pulling faces and curving his body around in a careful manner, without touching the mirrors. Whenever, he appears to forget, the adults softly remind him to try not to touch. Jacob's physical movements continue as a slow visible rhythm as he watches his reflections shift and move and change in each mirror, as he dances back and forth between the mirrors, slowly waving his arms (see fig.30). Afterwards we return to the studio where black and white paint, long rolls of paper and long strips of acetate are laid out on the floor. The children make black and white footprints by running up and down a long strip of paper. They also glue colourful shapes, cellophane and feathers to a narrow roll of acetate. Jacob continues to move carefully up and down the acetate line. Later the lights are turned down and the acetate collage is

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projected onto different surfaces. Jacob begins to dance again as he spins and waves his arms around while watching his shadow.

The mirror cubes (Untitled, 1965), are an asymmetric arrangement of four mirrored cubes measuring exactly three feet square, which reflect both the surrounding exhibition space and the body of the viewer within it. The mirror cubes were created by Robert Morris as minimalist sculptures of the mid 1960s, part of the Arte Povera movement. The movement was seen as a liberation of creating art objects free from the restraints of traditional practice and materials. The installation consists of four large mirror cubes positioned as 'situations'

Fig.30 *Jacob watches his reflections move and change in each mirror.*
(photo - Jake Ryan)

where 'one is aware of one's own body at the same time that one is aware of the piece' (Morris, 1965). Morris explores notions of space and movement in his work and often incorporates mirrored surfaces for the viewer to move through. As Jacob and the other children move through the space, weaving in and around the constellation, it becomes almost impossible to distinguish the real bodies of the children from their reflections, as each reflection in each mirror appears to multiply infinitely. It is hard to work out the exact locations of where they are in relation to others within the space, as the duplicated images appear and disappear. Morris's interest in movement and dance performances are evident in his sculptures as he attempts to stimulate an interest in movement in his audience and the activity of bodies in his sculptural spaces.

The sculpture creates an interactive experience, a shifting and changing intra-action (I expand on this idea later, see pages 127-129), between the children and the mirrored cubes, between people and things in the world (Barad, 2007). Jacob's absorption in and attunement to being in and experiencing his body in this place, leads to certain kinds of thought in movement. When young children think in movement, the thinking is happening through the body, rather than the mind, it happens unintentionally because this kind of thinking-movement occurs between the body and

place (McRae et al., 2017). Sheets-Johnstone (1981:399) considered the process of thinking in movement or thinking-in action through the improvisation of dance. She also explored the question: What is thinking? In terms of the process of movement through dance. 'No more than anyone else does the dancer know what this evening's dance will be until it has in fact been created, each dance improvisation is the only one of its kind.' Like Jacob's movements through the mirror cubes, improvised dance is uncertain. A dance, Sheets-Johnstone believes, can only 'come into being at this particular moment at this particular time' (ibid). Sheets-Johnstone views movement as having no past or future as it exists in the here and now of its creation. To create a dance, or a movement around the mirror cubes is not an artistic product, only a moment by moment process, as it cannot be repeated, or explained as any more than a unique action. Jacob's movements as a response to the various stimulus and environment is a dance improvisation; this is an unrehearsed and spontaneous form of dance. It is happening and unfolding with each second and its future is unknown (ibid).

Jacob's experience, or learning, is clearly connected with the uniqueness of the gallery and it's collection, his sequence of movements explore the boundaries and containments of space as he dances through the mirror cubes in the present moment. Through an entanglement with objects and environments (Barad 2007) and meaning as only thought-in-action (Sheets-Johnstone,1981; Anderson and Harrison, 2010), Barad (2007) places these kinds of intra-actions of children's experiences beyond representation. McRae et al., (2017) found that young children's visits to museums involved physical encounters with body and space in ways that often defy verbal explanation. She sees most research as drawing on conceptual models that can only account for what can be explained in words, where other aspects of what takes place are usually disregarded. The authors suggest that a great deal of what we do in everyday life, we do without thinking about it. Therefore a great deal of what a child does in an art gallery, or when art making, they may do without thinking about, and therefore they would struggle to explain it in words.

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11 Toy Surprises

*On this visit we are met by an artist/sculptor Kevin who has chosen an interactive sculpture for us all to explore; Julio Le Parc's Ensemble of Eleven Toy Surprises (1965). The artist welcomes the group (twelve children, five parents, two nursery practitioners, the learning curator and myself) into the studio where he has set up various materials all chosen to aesthetically link with the sculpture. We have lots of fun sticking giant white and orange circles, white squares and wide striped hazard tape to our clothes and faces, then we make some small shakers by filling little containers with rice and beans and tape those around our arms and legs. A few children want us to tape them to the top of their heads like 'ears,' so we do, and we all gradually turn into, what the artist describes as, 'noisy living sculptures.' We jump about laughing, shaking our shakers, then go (quite noisily) into the gallery as one large group, to the amusement of other visitors. We head up the stairs to the second floor gallery and the artist tells us the next part of the game, 'to go and find an artwork that looks like you.' So we all walk off slowly in different directions, curiously looking at each sculpture, trying to figure out if we look like any of them. I walk with Tina's son, who is almost three and he is pulling me about looking for 'a little boy that looks like me.' I actually don't know what I'm looking for, this collection is new, so I am curious. Some children come over wanting to know where it is, 'tell us, tell us,' they say. So we all walk as a big group, looking, pointing and shaking our arms and legs until we arrive at the sculpture (11 Toy Surprises, **see fig.31)***

***Fig.31** Artist Kevin Hunt introduces 11 Toy Surprises to the group of children, parents and nursery practitioners (photo: Katy McCall, learning curator)*

Colin (Emily's dad), notices a large black rectangular unit decorated with various shapes, patterns and orange and white stripes, he shouts in excitement, 'I think I can see something that looks like us.' Lucas can't believe it and keeps telling everyone, 'that's it, that's it! That sculpture is stripy like us!' (This is the same boy who said he was bored on the very first visit and would not go into the gallery). We all have a 'happy shake,' shaking our arms and legs (and heads) about playfully with the artist.

11 Toy Surprises, or Ensemble de Onze Mouvements-Surprise (1965), spans the length of the wall and has eleven compartments, each one featuring a different arrangement of motors and materials. The sculpture is a moving sound sculpture which is animated when visitors press buttons. We all sit and watch and take turns to press and flip each button. The various switches activate the contents of each single compartment which spin, vibrate or rotate in place to create an improvised score of sound and movement. The artist encourages us to think of words to describe what happens when we press each switch. Emily is reluctant for her turn, so her mum Tina stands with her and encourages her. Emily shyly pushes a button, the sculpture rattles and she turns to her mum looking quietly pleased. Tina claps (really loudly), high five's Emily and enthusiastically shouts, 'yey, you did it!' Emily hurries to turn the switch again and pauses with wide eyes while she waits for the 'surprise.' The artist writes each word generated by the children on individual large white cards, like, 'jiggly,' 'jumping,' 'wiggly' 'spinning' 'turning' 'twizzy' 'fizzy' and 'pop,' then he goes on to use the words for another game in the gallery space. We all find a space, stretch our arms out to the side and begin to 'spin' or 'jiggle,' etc., on the artists cue as he reads out each word. We really are 'noisy living sculptures.'

Ensembles of Discoveries

Julio Le Parc, inventor of *11 Toy Surprises* (1965), is an Argentinian artist best known for his pioneering works of Kinetic Art and his use of light, movement and subversive games, including 'ensembles of discoveries, sensations and experimentation (Tate, 2019). Visitors can interact with his artwork as part of a 'lively, noisy and fragmented experience' (ibid). Le Parc does not define his practice by a single style or medium, instead, he describes his art as a series of continuing 'quests' or 'research inquiries' that frame art as a 'social laboratory, playing down the notion of the individual creator' (interview, *New York Times*, 2016). Despite the playfulness and material simplicity, Le Parc's work has a sociopolitical agenda, seeking ultimately to 'democratise the artistic experience,' often with politically charged questionnaires and fliers, all intended to engage spectators with philosophical questions such as: Can art affect everyone and can it be part of

everyday life? He also asks, 'do we need to know who has made a specific work?' Le Parc states that he 'creates different experiences and does research about form and space and light (...) what I do is very different from an artist who wants to create artworks as unique objects.'

Le Parc's intention to create a 'different experience' was not wasted on any of us, it really felt like a special and unique experience. This was the first artwork that the children *could* touch and we played with it for a while before reaching a natural ending (when children began to wonder off). The artist's role in the gallery (as observed on other occasions), was significant for selecting the kinetic sculpture as an appropriate artwork for provoking a playful interaction. The gallery space also provided an enabling context for supporting early learning with capacity to respond to the sensory world through appropriate stimuli which was not overwhelming (Catherwood,1999). Kevin, the artist, intentionally chose to tap into children's early fascination of pressing switches, buttons and pulling levers to make something happen. As the name suggests, *11 Toy Surprises,* is full of 'surprises,' and might remind visitors of popular children's toys which hide a surprise element, like Jack-in-the-box, pop-up toys, or peek-a-boo and other games where things appear and disappear over and over again.

Children are interested in the outcomes of their own actions, fascinated by how things work and what they can make things do, such as shaking, throwing, rolling and spinning (Athey, 1972; Arnold, 2010; Nutbrown, 2011). This kind of investigative and repetitive behaviour appears as a 'schema,' made visible by children's 'consistent and persistent patterns of action' (Nutbrown, 2011:25). Nutbrown (2011) places great emphasis on the adults role to nourish children's schemas through interaction and through provision of a supportive environment. She views schemas as useful observation tools for professionals to plan around children's interests (Whalley, 2001; Arnold, 2010; Nutbrown, 2011). For example, a child might like throwing, so she may like to play ball games outside, or throw pebbles into water. Nutbrown describes children's desire for pressing switches as a 'cause and effect and functional relationship' schema (2011:78), and their enjoyment or fascination of things that spin or rotate, i.e *11 Toy Surprises,* as a 'dynamic circular schema' (2011:90). Nutbrown suggests teachers should introduce language to develop the 'cause and effect' schema further by saying things like 'it's doing that because, or that's why...' (2011:78). She adds that it is difficult to know whether children understand cause-and-effect relationships if they do not articulate their thinking (2011:91).

Nutbrown believes children's learning, through such scientific experiences, has its own 'intellectual honesty' (2011:92), so, 'it is the responsibility of teachers and other educators to include children in

discussions that feature different terminology so that children can build on these modelled vocabularies and generate the words they need to talk about their own findings and ideas.' Examining the different stages of learning through play in children during their early life has been a topic of interest for many theorists and there are numerous ways of thinking about and interpreting children's actions. Various theories set out to illustrate the characteristics of children's learning and development in many different ways, most of which are dominated in Western Education by cognitive and social theories (Murris, 2016).

Mind over Matter?

> For many centuries, humanism has exerted great influence over human thought and actions. At its heart is the privileged and central position given to human beings, lording it over the planet, apart from and above the environment, and alone having the capacity for agency-to act on the world to achieve a particular effect (Moss, 2019:143)

A whole new way of thinking about pedagogy has emerged over the past ten years as a paradigm shift from humanism to posthumanism (Moss, 2019), moving from a set of post-structuralist theoretical lineages, to non-representational theories which offer new philosophical perspectives for thinking about children's learning (Murris, 2016). This turn has brought about an increased interest in the role of the 'material world, material culture and material agency' (Lenz Taguchi, 2009:18). Posthumanist research engages with experimentation and new ways of thinking about humans, more-than-humans, nonhumans and other-than-humans (Taylor and Hughes, 2016:32), and sees the world as a place which is more than human, 'including things, objects, other animals, spiritual entities and humans' (Moss, 2019:144). In posthuman education, the aim is not to work towards qualifications, to represent or reproduce habitual patterns of learning (as in qualification and socialisation as aims of education), but to embrace a practice that is passionate and spontaneous, with 'students and teachers entering a zone of interrogation, in putting themselves, their lives, their passions and beliefs into question through the experience of thinking together' (Kohan, 2015:65).

In The Posthuman Child, Murris (2016) presents new approaches to learning in early childhood education, shifting attention to the force and impact which material objects and artefacts can have in learning:

> Disrupting the binaries of individual/society, teacher/learner and child/adult – the binary logic of Western metaphysics – requires posthuman educators to listen with an open fleshiness towards the human and the more-than-human in order to anticipate the not-yet-thought (Murris, 2016:123).

This more contemporary way of thinking has pedagogical implications for changing educational practice and makes a strong case for considering how researchers might begin to undo 'the humanist presumptions that have thus far grounded educational research,' not as 'how to' texts, but as invitations to think otherwise (Taylor and Hughes, 2016:32). Such non-representational theories have the potential to offer critically different perspectives than that of representationalism which centre on identifying relationships between distinct entities and approaches associated with functionalism or social constructivism (Murris, 2016). Murris (2017:121) argues for adopting a philosophy of 'critical posthumanism in order to conceptualise an educational intra-relationality with a posthuman reconfiguration of the educator.' Posthumanists, therefore, position the knowing subject as part of the world, and not separate from it, so the challenge is to find other, more tacit ways of experiencing the world which would also account for nonhuman or more-than-human experiences (Murris, 2017).

In Barad's opinion, from her perspective of quantum physics, we are all atoms or particles of matter, so there is no hierarchal relationship between different organising (human or non human) and the material world around us. 'Intra-activity,' a term Barad takes from quantum physics, refers to relationships 'between multiple bodies (both human and non-human) that are understood not to have clear or distinct boundaries from one another, rather, they are always affecting or being affected by each other in an interdependent and mutual relationship as a condition for their existence' (Barad, 2007:152). Intra-activity, she suggests, differs from interactivity, because interactivity refers to a relationship between bodies that are taken to be separate entities, including an interpersonal relationship between two humans (Barad, 2007). Intra-activity gives agency to matter, as well as the human, through intra-action between the human and nonhuman (Barad, 2007). This activity of one body making itself intelligible to another is an example of what Barad calls material-discursive intra-activity (Barad, 2003, 2007).

Barad (2007) maintains that meaning and matter are always ontologically entangled, yet she considers meaning making to be a social process involving human animals only. She suggests, 'neither discursive practices nor material phenomena are ontologically prior or epistemologically prior...matter and meaning are mutually articulated' (Barad, 2007:152). The interconnectedness of all human and nonhuman bodies implies that there are no individual agents and no singular causes (Barad, 2007). This shift in agency opens up new ideas for practice and also has methodological and ethical implications for research. Intra-activity, therefore, places importance on children's

attention to material beings and the role of these beings in shaping children's lives (**Lenz Taguchi,** 2010). These ideas, concepts and theories can open up new worlds and provoke us to think and practice differently, but they can also 'be daunting and difficult to grasp, not least because they challenge the assumptions and beliefs in Early Education that many people have become accustomed to and take for granted' (Moss, 2109:144).

McRae et al., (2017) consider the potential of using less obvious, non-mainstream theories for thinking about young children in museums. In doing so, they also seek to build on and disrupt more well-established social constructivist theories through which children's museum visits are most commonly analysed. Shifting from discursive practice in an art gallery, for instance, (through human and social interactions), to a more material-discursive practice can create new opportunities to think differently about children's pedagogy. This involves the reconfiguration of the educator as part of the experience, where children and objects become entangled in particular ways (McRae et al., 2017). Thus, the uniqueness of the materiality of an art gallery can open up many possibilities for 'surprises' to happen, for more spontaneous experiences to occur and for the unexpected.

The influence of this material turn is not new to artists, nor is their attention given to material-discursive practice. *C*hildren (and adults) taking part in the Tate Project have not only been discovering knowledge by themselves, but through intra-action between human and **non-human** as an essential part of their experiences, with multiple and unpredictable outcomes. Like Reggio practice, posthumanism offers educators a way of thinking differently, in a more experimental manner, as an investigative community rich in participating in unique exploratory encounters. Reggio Emilia's alternative narrative also carries within it some of the concepts and ideas of Foucault, Deleuze and posthumanism (Moss, 2019:67).

Shaking Things Up

Murris (2017:243) considers what it means to make a shift to posthumanist thinking in educational practices and asks, 'What difference does this make epistemologically, politically and ethically? Does it shift the 'who' of knowledge production and would the knowledge produced be different?' She also asks, 'What is the role of the educator in this kind of education?' Returning to our encounter with *11 Toy Surprises,* I continue by discussing the kind of knowledge production which is made possible in art galleries through intra-activity between children and objects of art, 'as entangled relationships and co-dependences between human and non-human performative agents' (Murris, 2017:234).

The visual arts have always been an integral part of cultural or social movements, sometimes following and sometimes being at the forefront of innovative philosophical thought. Art often acts in this way, as a source of insight and awareness for seeing the world in a new or different way. For example, Cecile B. Evan's Sprung a Leak (2016, Tate Liverpool, fig.32, page 130*)*, featured two humanoid robots and a robot dog. Sprung a Leak sets out to examine the increasing influence that new technologies have on how we feel and act by exploring the movement of data, artificial intelligence, and the relationship between humans and machines. I did not take any children in to see this exhibit (because one of the robots swore), but share it

here to communicate the existing parallels between posthumanist thinking in both education practice and the visual arts. Humanism in the Arts, for example, was visible in paintings during the Renaissance period and left a legacy of representation whereby people might still use it as a way of thinking about or comparing any art that has followed.

Fig. 32 Cecile B. Evan's Sprung a Leak (2016) Photo: Tate Liverpool

People commonly claim that they learn from art, that art changes their perception and has an impact on the way that they see and make sense of the world (see for example Dewey, *Chapter Seven)*. One parent, Colin, for example, tends to view art as *good* or *bad*, anything good is often representational, like paintings of the human form or landscapes, whilst anything bad is non representational, like minimalist art objects. There is something about the content of all artworks that can be knowledge-producing, but only is we are to be open-minded to other beliefs and opinions, so the challenge, I feel, is to encourage a more philosophical way of thinking about all objects of art, in order to get away from rigid beliefs of what can be judged as 'good or bad' art. Trying to encourage people to think more openly is a challenge, as being open to new ways of thinking means that we have to reject one's own limiting beliefs of what knowledge is. Le Parc wanted his art to bring people together, to democratise the artists position and to create experiences for visitors in the gallery, 'do we need to know the artists name?' he asks. By asking the question, Le Parc is sharing his awareness of the aesthetic and discursive importance that an object of art holds in the gallery space along with its material significance. For Le Parc, it is not about the creator, but more about the interaction between visitor and artwork.
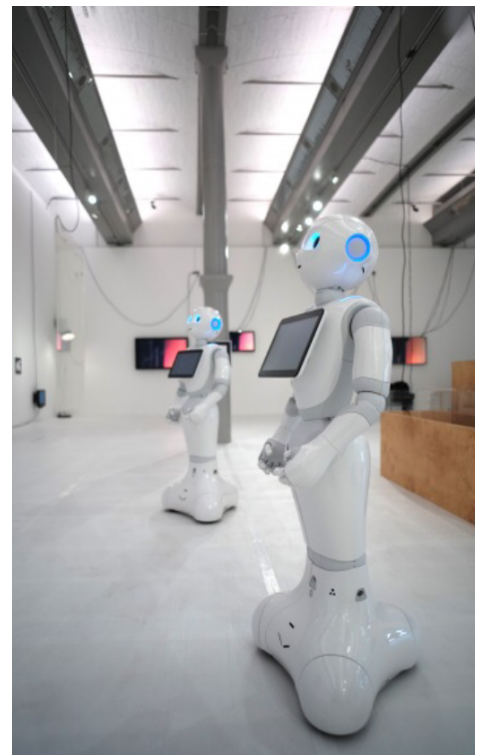
The children enjoyed the interaction with the artwork, pressing switches and watching what happened. In schema theory, described earlier, this interaction is seen as a 'cause and effect,' schema. During this visit the nursery practitioners related the children's interactions to their physical development, with emphasis on developing hand/eye coordination, fine/gross motor skills and social development, such as their ability to take turns. Posthumanist thinking demands a shift from such cognitive and social developmental ways of thinking, although posthumanism is different to other known pedagogies in that it avoids prescribed approaches to teaching and learning, (similarly to Reggio), so it cannot be exactly defined (Moss, 2019). Thinking in more unconventional ways can undermine the certainty of those who claim to know how to understand who children are and how they behave, based on dominant discourses in the context of schooling (Murris, 2017). For Barad (2003:802) the move towards performative alternatives rather than representation is a way of shifting the focus from 'questions of correspondence between descriptions and reality (e.g., do they mirror nature or culture)? to a more material discourse of 'doings and actions, where knowing is a matter of part of the world making itself intelligible to another part of the world' (Barad, 2007:185). In posthumanist terms, there is no single, cohesive meaning, as it almost seeks to rewrite the very definition of being human.

Modern objects of art frequently exceed their human prescribed meanings, so the gallery has so much potential for such improvisatory practice to unfold (McRae et al., 2017). Our encounter in the gallery with 11 Toy Surprises did not fit into dominant notions of learning policy and practice in which pre-planning and intended learning outcomes are frequently markers of quality (Moss, 2019), so knowledge production was spontaneous and unpredictable. Artists often set out to provoke and disrupt existing ideas, this, along with a visible interest in form, space and movement of material (as stated by Le Parc earlier) can offer new ways of thinking and 'doing' (Barad, 2007). Thinking in more philosophical or metaphorical ways is actively encouraged in art galleries through the multiple meanings that art objects bring to a gallery with their capacity to provoke different insights and perceptions. The sculpture (11 Toy Surprises), for instance, in a metaphorical sense can be seen repeating the same child-like knowledge over and over when its buttons are pushed. Could it be a metaphor for an education system, or a teacher perhaps, repeating the same knowledge over and over to children, like a factory or a machine? Le Parc creates 'brief moments of interconnection' and views the ideal gallery spectator (in contrast perhaps to the ideal pupil) as being the 'most free, most open, least conditioned' (Himelfarb, 2014). The children appear free as they spin about openly in the gallery space. They have not been conditioned to behave in any particular ways in the gallery,

only playful ways, so their very presence might challenge some typical ways of thinking about gallery visitors or privileged ways of seeing things.

In an agential realist sense (Barad, 2007), the smallest units of analysis are phenomena; 'a specific intra-action of an object which emerge from, rather than precede, the intra-action that produces them' (Barad, 2007:128). We emerge from our intra-action with 11 Toy Surprises as hazards, wearing hazard tape; a noticeable florescent pattern indicating danger. We are disrupting the perceived traditions of how gallery spectators should behave by becoming even noisier human extensions of the non human sculpture, spinning, jiggling and jumping, rattling, squealing and shaking about. We are shaking things up in the gallery. We are doing what Le Parc and the non human sculpture is limited to do.

In posthumanist thinking, adult, child and machine are entangled in the experience, so typical ways of thinking about the socially competent child or competency is extended to include collaborations with non-human or more-than-human performative agents (Barad, 2007). This approach puts greater emphasis on the active and performative force of the non-human, shifting attention to the part played by matter in ways that we come to know the world (Murris, 2017). A non-representation analysis relies more on understanding the force of material artefacts as performative agents (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). In posthumanism, the sculpture is a material body, making itself intelligible as it is examined by fingers using force on triggers, simultaneously making themselves intelligible to the material body in the encounter (Mol, 2008). The children mimic and extend the capability of the sculpture, giving it further agency, so the sculpture is part of the co-creation, it is equal, capable of producing wide ranging knowledge through an interconnected experience. As humans, we hold power in animating the sculpture yet the sculpture holds equal power as it exchanges a range of surprises. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987), expression 'becoming minoritarian' defines the very process of escape from 'majoritarian' norms, subject positions, and habits of mind and practice (Lenz Taguchi, 2012:266). According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987:276), it is this process, that makes it 'possible for the hu(M)an rational subject to disrupt hierarchical thinking and to think instead through zigzagging networks of minoritarian differences that move beyond constituting and stabilising dichotomies.'

Thinking in this way about knowledge production also challenges the position of the otherwise taken-for-granted 'majoritarian' position of the researcher as the sole subject of knowledge production (Barad, 2007). Nothing is inherently separate from anything else, but separations are often made by the researcher so one can examine something long enough to gain knowledge about

it or to provide a framework for thinking about how culture and habits of thought, this makes some things visible and other things easier to ignore or to never see. Writing about and including children's detailed encounters with objects offers opportunities for provoking more metaphorical and material discourses which are key for thinking otherwise, away from norms and rigid power-producing habits. Embracing a willingness to think differently, to be open-minded and to create and capture learning experiences without any fixed ideas, through human/non human intra-actions and material phenomena is likely to happen when artists are involved in interactions with children and families in an appropriate forum with many opportunities for 'surprise' encounters and unexpected 'doings.' Or, as Barad suggests, to responsibly engage in shaping the future, for humans, non-humans and the material environment in a co-existent relationship (Barad, 1999:7).

Palle Neilson and the Element of Risk

Many aspects of the visits to Tate were seen as being 'risky.' Travelling on a public bus with a large group of young children (without seat belts) was a risk-related dilemma, the notion of taking very young children near to precious artworks in a modern art gallery was a risk, even drawing on walls to music was considered by one parent as a risk because she thought it might encourage her child to draw on the walls at home. The learning team state (in their outcomes for early years engagement) that they incorporate 'play and risk taking' in their family activities. Art fosters risk-taking and exploration and is nurtured as children come to understand various art mediums and develop skills alongside facilitating adults (McArdle and Piscitelli, 2002). Artists often push boundaries and take risks, otherwise art would remain stagnant and creativity would be limited or thwarted. Experimentation is therefore a necessary part of being creative which requires an amount of freedom, time and space to think. The freedom to create and experiment with materials in educational settings, might feel a bit risky, as it is about letting go of control and entering into uncertainty about what will happen. The following activity illustrates a risky art making moment.

Slipping and Sliding

In this session the children worked with artist, Michiko Fuji, to do a large-scale painting on a giant piece of paper on the floor with brushes and rollers on long sticks. The idea was for the children to stand around the paper applying paint with rollers, but after a few minutes one of the children put his hands in the paint and started doing handprints on the paper and other children copied. Then one child wanted to take his shoes and socks off and stand in the paint tray, so the artist encouraged the child's idea and soon all ten of the children were standing on the paper with no shoes or socks on.

Some of the parents were delighted, as they watched their children slipping and sliding in the wet paint across the paper, and others were worried about them falling or getting covered in paint. The children were obviously loving the experience, standing in the paint trays, looking down at their colourful feet and wiggling their toes about, laughing and squealing with delight as they slid about with their friends. We all continued to observe and support the activity by refilling the paint in the trays. At the end of the activity we filled buckets with soapy water and began to wash and dry the children's feet (which they also really enjoyed).

The children had initiated the idea and were playing freely in the paint but some of the adults looked a bit anxious. I wondered if we could 'control' the activity and make it safer, but that would have meant stopping the children from playing freely. My rationale was that they were already covered in paint so we might as well let them continue and have fun (as I prefer to wait for activities to reach a natural ending). The two nursery practitioners were worried and one of them wanted to stop the activity earlier than we did. When we spoke about it afterwards she said that they often facilitate a lot of similar whole body messy play activities but it felt 'chaotic' because they were unprepared and also they

Fig. 33 A child making footprints
photo: Jake Ryan

were accountable if the children had accidents or ruined clothing in an activity that had not been carefully risk-assessed.

Fig.34 A child painting her feet. photo:Jake Ryan

Fig.35 A child pours paint into a tray and stands in it photo: Jake Ryan

These photographs (fig.33, 34, 35) show children on another occasion enjoying the opportunity to walk in paint, paint their feet and make their own footprint patterns on paper.

Freedom and Control

> Over the years, I have noticed that the child who learns quickly is adventurous. She's ready to run risks. She approaches life with arms outspread. She wants to take it all in. She still has the desire of the very young child to make sense out of things. She's not concerned with concealing her ignorance or protecting herself. She's ready to expose herself to disappointment and defeat. She has a certain confidence. She expects to make sense out of things sooner or later. She has a kind of trust (Holt, 1964:42).

Gill (2007) argues in, '*No Fear:Growing up in a Risk Averse Society,*' that childhood is being undermined by the growth of risk aversion and advocates for a philosophy of resilience that will help counter risk aversion and strike a better balance between protecting children from genuine threats and giving them rich, challenging opportunities through which to learn and grow. He states that children hunger for freedom and need freedom to figure stuff out for themselves, to learn new skills, and to build their self-confidence and their sense of what they are capable of. He refers to government policies on education and how these often restrict children's play, limit their freedom of movement, effect their relationships with adults and constrain their exploration of physical, social and virtual worlds.

Gill looks back over the past thirty years of play, and considers some of the key issues of risk aversion with regard to children's safety, including playground design, safety legislation, antisocial behaviour, bullying, child protection, the fear of strangers and online risks. In particular, he considers children's loss of freedom by the over-protection of adults. This, he believes, prevents them from playing as previous generations of children have enjoyed, because it is deemed dangerous, or the adults who permit it are branded as irresponsible. Gill argues that childhood is being undermined by the growth of risk aversion and its intrusion into every aspect of children's lives. This, ironically, can damage and endanger children's lives, as children do not develop resilience or the ability to carefully assess risks. '*No Fear*' advocates for a philosophy of resilience that provides a balance between protecting children from real threats and giving them rich and challenging opportunities through which they can learn and grow.

Children need challenge, adventure, uncertainty and risk. Children learn a great deal from their own efforts, and from their mistakes. Gill (2007) considers how, if we try too hard to keep children safe, we might take away important experiences that they need if they are to learn how to deal with the everyday ups and downs of life. Taking a balanced, thoughtful approach to risk is not easy. It means making judgments when the outcomes, by definition are uncertain. This is a complex process that simply cannot be reduced to risk assessment guidelines, procedures and checklists. Adult control and children's freedom could therefore, take many perspectives, it can be defined in an active way, as freedom to participate (rather than to learn in a passive way), and it can be defined as freedom from educational constraints and adult control over children's freedom.

Throughout history, societies have mostly been apprehensive about uncertainty and have feared the unknown (Füredi, 2019). How people respond to the unknown is subject to historical and cultural variations (ibid). There are times when people's response to the unknown is one of excitement, curiosity, inquisitiveness and eager anticipation. European sailors, for example, set out to discover an unknown world, and enthusiastic space travellers in the 1960s embraced the challenge of turning the unknown into the knowable (ibid). From this standpoint, uncertainty served as a stimulus to the positive act of discovery. At other times, communities have responded with anxiety to uncertainty and have regarded the unknown as merely a threat to avoid, rather than as an opportunity for discovery. In these circumstances, fear and dread express the dominant mood towards uncertainty. The future of the world appears to be a far darker and frightening place when perceived through the prism of possibilities rather than probabilities (Clarke, 2006). Clarke acknowledges the contrast between probabilistic and possibilistic thinking as two opposing ways of perceiving the future. He notes that if we imagine the future in terms of probabilities, then risks look safe but 'if we imagine the future in terms of possibilities, however, horrendous scenarios appear' (Clarke, 2006, in Füredi, 2008:206).

The Model

Artists have often challenged the perception of long-established constraints in the gallery environment and the way galleries can be perceived as belonging to an elitist and institutional ideology. In 1942, the artist Marcel Duchamp, known for his unconventional probing into the boundaries of art and art institutions, created, *First Papers of Surrealism.* For the show, Duchamp threaded an entire gallery space with sixteen miles of string, obscuring the view of many other art works. Visitors could only peer through the web as children moved in and out of it throughout the event, as they played with footballs and skipping ropes. The children were instructed by Duchamp

to explain to visitors, if asked, that, 'Mr. Duchamp said we could play here.' The artist, known for his intention of wanting audiences to construct their own meaning, may have wanted to make explicit the idea of creating a more playful and interactive museum.

The gallery boundaries were later challenged by Robert Morris (1972) when he exhibited *Neo–Classic*, an interactive artwork installed as a structure for children to play on in Tate Modern. The exhibition was closed after only one week when a young girl fell from a platform and broke her leg. Morris responded to the accident by stating that he, 'would rather break an arm by falling off a platform than spend an hour in detached contemplation of a Matisse' (Bryan-Wilson, 2013:160). Morris suggested that it was time for galleries to offer a more interactive experience, that it was, 'a time to press up against things, squeeze around, crawl over [...] what goes on between the physical self and external conditions doesn't detach us like the detached glance' (ibid).

In 1968, the Danish artist Palle Neilson produced *The Model - A Model for a Qualitative Society* by turning a Stockholm Museum into an adventure playground. Neilson turned the museum into a playground equipped with a range of materials including climbing ropes, a water chute, theatrical costumes, masks, hammers, saws, planks of wood, foam blocks and record players. The museum was occupied by twenty-thousand children in its first few weeks of opening. *The Model* challenged the perimeters of the gallery space, persuading a discussion on the purpose and place of galleries in relation to audience selection and participation. It was also considered as being an important contribution to debating children's place in society, the rights of the child and the innocence of childhood (Larsen, 2010). *The Model* was closed down after only three weeks, largely because of the public's concern about the risk to children's safety. Original film footage from *The Model* was exhibited at Tate Liverpool as a re-examination of the idea for 'turning the architectural space at Tate into a more welcoming and familiar space' (Tate, 2014).

As part of the Tate Project, we recreated Palle Neilson's *The Model*, with an artist, watching original film footage of the artist's playground with the children as a starting point for making their own designs for a children's play space in the gallery. These ideas were later scaled up to create an interactive installation for children to experience (see fig.36, page 137)**.** The playground did not present the same sort of risks to children or to the public, given that it was recreated using a range of materials, including cardboard boxes, foam structures and plastic hose. It may not have provoked the same controversy or 'risk' as the original instillation, but it did offer a playful and sensory environment for child-led exploratory play in the safety of the gallery.

Fig.36 *The end of first year celebration titled 'Our Exhibition' in the studio at Tate Liverpool. The playground space was designed by children with artist Sarah Marsh (photo:Jake Ryan)*

Rocketpack Early Years Resource

'Discover a galaxy of art with our brand new rocket backpack' (*Tate,* 2014)

During the first year of the Tate Project I was commissioned, as an artist, to design and produce an educational resource for young children to use in the gallery. As part of the commission I evaluated the design and the success of the resource in the gallery and produced the following evaluation report:

Rocketpack resources were introduced at Tate Liverpool in December 2013, designed to improve the experience of family visitors to the gallery; particularly those with children under five. This evaluation report describes the implementation of the rocketpacks by the Early Years and Family team at Tate Liverpool as part of their audience development strategy. It sets out to examine whether the rocket backpack serves its intended use as a self-directed resource for engaging young children and their adults with artworks during their visits to the gallery.

The Rocketpacks were developed and designed as part of an ongoing consultation process with children, parents and nursery practitioners from Kensington Children's Centre during visits to the gallery over a two year period. A qualitative evaluation methodology has been undertaken in order to monitor the success of the Rocketpacks using a range of data collection methods, including; interviews with children, parents, gallery staff (visitors experience) and early years practitioners.

Feedback from families is also included which has been collected from Tate's visitor comment book.

The purpose of the evaluation is to consider the success of the resource in encouraging young children to explore and experience what the gallery has to offer and to examine ways of improving the resource for future use. This evaluation report may be a useful reference for those wishing to introduce or evaluate resources at art museums for Early Years (children under five) and family visitors. It also outlines some practical considerations for implementing and selecting such resources for public use.

Fig.37 Content of Rocketpack: torch, backpack info, card game, foil blanket and viewfinders (Photo:Tate Liverpool)

The Rocketpack: Designed to help young children and families explore DLA Piper Series: Constellations Exhibition.

"... If you are visiting Tate Liverpool, grab a backpack and blast off into the exciting world of art..." (*Tate*, 2014)

The rocketpacks were designed to help families explore artworks from the Tate's own collection, DLA Piper Series: Constellations (on the first and second floors of the Gallery). Each back pack comes with a range of activities to help reinforce the experience of looking for young children and their adults (**see fig. 37**).

This resource was developed with children, families and nursery practitioners as a self-directed resource for early years visitors. There are currently six identical backpacks which are displayed in the gallery foyer, they are free for children to use and visitors are encouraged to sign them in and out. Each backpack contains a torch, a large sheet of shiny silver paper, a story book, binoculars, magic rainbow glasses, a floor plan and a matching picture card game. A free 'star' biscuit is also offered by the Tate cafe to children who use the bag.

The resource encourages children to 'become explorers' and play a 'spot game' around the building using specially designed prompt cards and to 'look through fabulous view finders and investigate every gallery corner using torches.' (*Tate*, 2014)

The backpacks were designed to be immediately recognisable for children and are presented in a fun rocket shaped design in Tate's complementary blue and orange colours (see fig. 39, page 140). A wide cushioned strap fastens across the front of the body where activities are placed in pockets,

allowing for easy access for young children. An open port hole pocket at the back of the bag also allows for busy parents (or small hands) to quickly place or take objects from the bag.

The backpacks and resources have proved popular with children and family visitors (see visitors comments below) and are used by an average of eight hundred visitors per month for approximately one to two hours.

Engaging a very Young Audience at Tate Liverpool

'The bags, (see children wearing them in the *Constellations Exhibition, fig.38)*, contribute to a vision of a democratic space where knowledge is not transmitted but is rather experienced' (Katy McCall, Learning Curator at Tate, 2014).

Fig.38 *Children playing Rocketpack game in the Constellations Exhibition at Tate Liverpool (photo - Tate Liverpool)*

Tate Liverpool uses art education as a way of promoting access and participation for those familiar with the visual arts yet also considers other ways for visitors to experience and respond to artworks. The Early Years and Family Learning team at Tate Liverpool have employed a number of initiatives for engaging with local communities in order to widen their early years and family audience. The introduction of a self-directed resource at Tate for preschool children is also part of Tate's continued vision to develop in response to their audience needs.

Tate Liverpool already offers a range of family drop-in activities and events for young children during weekends and school holidays. The family studio situated on the first floor of the gallery provides a range of daily open-ended art making activities for children and is a popular place for family visitors. In July 2012, the gallery began to further develop its Early Years and family audience by working with two local nursery settings; Everton Nursery School and Kensington Children's Centre. Groups of children aged three to four, along with parents, teachers and nursery practitioners began to regularly visit the gallery over a two year period to participate in workshops with various artists.

Fig.39 *The Rocketpack resource. Photo - Jake Ryan*

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The programme provided an opportunity for Tate to better understand ways of including very young children at the gallery.

Regular visits to Tate, combined with follow up visits from artists to both centres allowed for frequent exposure to multi-sensory opportunities where children's interests and responses were observed as they experimented with a wide range of creative activities (**see fig.40)**. Various participatory and exploratory approaches were used to engage children with artworks as they moved through the gallery space, exploring art objects with viewfinders, torches, magic glasses, magnifiers and reflective materials, (see fig. 41, 42, 43 and 44).

Fig.40 *Children looking through viewfinders in DLA Piper Series Exhibition. Photo: Denise Wright*
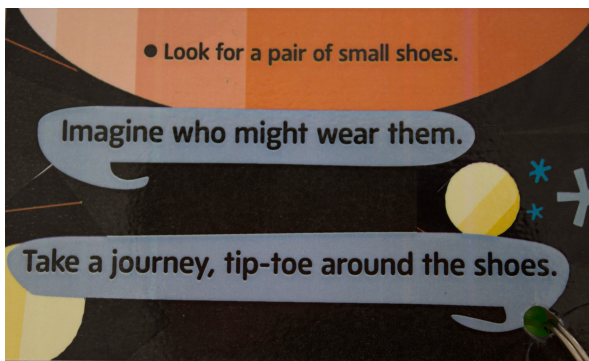

Fig.41 *A Rocketpack prompt (front of card)*

Fig.42 *A Rocketpack picture of exhibit prompt (back of card)*

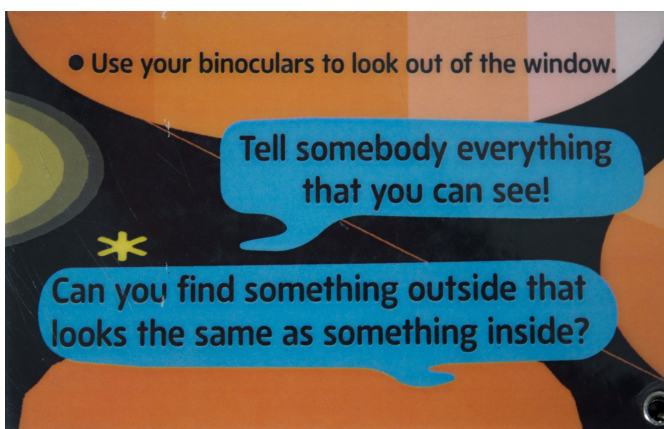**Fig.43** *A prompt to use the binoculars to look out of the window*

Fig. 44 *A child using the binoculars to look out of the gallery window during the trial*

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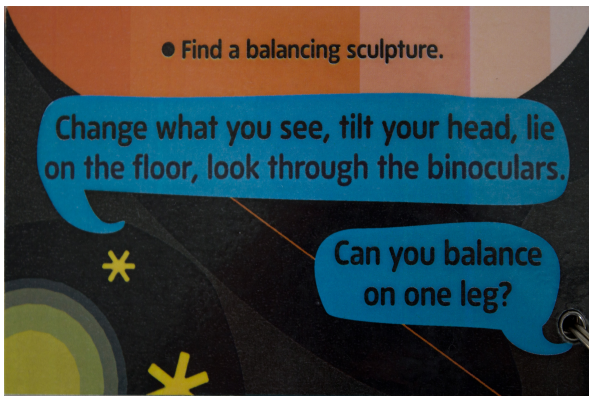
Fig.45 *A Rocketpack prompt*

Fig.46 *A child during the resource trial. Photo: Denise Wright*

During these visits children were observed and consulted with (through playful discussion) in order to determine their most-liked artworks and activities. Children's preferences for colour, shape, light, sound, movement and reflection were then used to develop the components that form the activities of the resource. Children's interest and curiosity in artworks were then produced as a set of cards, with images and written prompts displayed on each side. Starling's *Five man Pederson (*bicycle) is included as part of the set and is supported with prompts for children to 'count how many people can fit on it' and to imagine 'where they would go on it.' Pollock's *Summertime* painting encourages

children to 'look for shapes' and Cerith Wyn Evans's enormous glass chandelier prompts children to interact by 'clapping along to the rhythm of the flashing lights.' Popular too was Helio Oiticica's; *Tropicalias Penetrables* (two live macaws in a cage) and for this exhibit children were prompted to, 'listen carefully' to what the birds were saying, (this has recently been replaced by Sherrie Levines; *2 Shoes)*. Another card in the set encourages children to look for something 'shiny,' inspired by children's fascination with their own reflections. Children's interest in looking out of the window was also developed as a prompt (see fig. 45) for using binoculars (see fig. 46) to connect 'something outside with something inside.' High sculptures were chosen from children's curiosity for looking at towers, as well as a torch for enhancing their enjoyment of entering into dark sound instillations.

Is the Rocketpack effective in encouraging young children and families to explore and interact with artworks in the gallery?

10 parents were interviewed in the gallery

5 early years practitioners took part in informal discussions

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10 children were interviewed in the gallery (who were using the Rocket Pack)

3 gallery staff from visitors experience were interviewed

Children were interviewed during a visit to the gallery with their parents (after using the rocket pack and with parents permission), all were unknown to the interviewer. Children (aged four to six years) were asked questions as part of an open-ended interview :

1. What do you think about the bag?

2. What is your favourite and least favourite activities?

3. What artworks have you looked at?

4. What would you tell your friends about the bag?

Children typically responded that they liked 'everything' about the rocketpack. The most popular exhibits were Starling's bicycle and Oiticica's Macaws. Children mostly enjoyed using the binoculars, viewfinders or torches, and the least used were the shiny foil sheets. One child, aged five said, 'l like the cards the best and I look at my reflection.' Another child, aged 4 said, ' I like to look out of the windows with the binoculars and I like using the torch in the room with the drumming sounds.' One child said that she would tell a friend that the rocketpack had, 'a torch and that we can use it to look at all the artworks and you can look at all the lights with glasses on and it goes all like a rainbow.' Another said that he would tell a friend that, 'you get binoculars and wear them and look at everything with them.' One child (aged 6) said that they would improve the bag by including more picture cards for 'the hunt.'

Interview with Emily aged 4

Question: Do you have a favourite thing in the bag?

Emily: The glasses

Question: do you have a favourite artwork?

Emily: yes I like the bike

Question: what do you like about the rocket bag?

Emily: It's nice and shiny and I like the orange flame because I think it might glow.

Question: what would you tell your friends about the bag?

Emily: I like the way the wings go around the front and its nice and shiny. I like how it's got a game to find things and I like the cards.

Questions to parents

What is your main reason for coming today?

4 came specifically for the art activities for children

2 came because it is free and they like to introduce children to the arts

3 came to see the Mondrian exhibition

1 came because they had seen the Rocketpack on Tate website

What do you like about the rocketpack?

Does it encourage you to look at artwork together ?

What could be improved?

3 parents would like there to be more cards and their own set of prompts.

2 parents said they would like pencil and paper in the pack

1 parent said it should have a hoop to hang on the pram

5 said that their children like them, it gave them more ideas for what to do in the gallery and they would not make any improvements.

One parent is a regular visitor at Tate Liverpool, she describes her daughters fondness of the rocketpack, 'she is more keen to come now and gets upset if the rocket bags are not there and keeps going back to the foyer to look for one.'

Another parent brings her family to Tate occasionally and is pleased that her youngest son (aged 6) was enthusiastic to return to use the rocket bag. She said that she was always very conscious (when with young children) of not destroying the experiences of others, that the bag, 'gave us permission to lie on the floor and make a noise in the gallery...we had a discussion about bikes when we looked at Starlings work, and we spoke about the bike having five seats; that we could have it in our family because there are five of us.'

Another parent said how she and her child often use the cards to go looking at artworks together, that her daughter 'likes to keep it with her the whole time.' I asked if they used the written prompts, she said that her daughter doesn't always but sometimes asks, 'what does this one say.' The mother

adds that for her the Tate is an adult environment so she appreciates it that her daughter has something to occupy her.

Comments from informal discussions with Tate visitors experience staff

Staff from visitors experience (VE) thought that the bags were well displayed, easy to maintain and attracted a lot of positive attention from visitors as they arrived. The bags prompted people (even without children) to consider bringing children/grandchildren/telling others about the activity. One VE states that the 'trolley is a magnet,' for children, that they 'instantly recognise that the bags are for them to use.' Another VE added that, 'lots of people ask if they can buy them in the shop and there has been 100% positive feedback.' A suggestion was made for the silver foil and binoculars to be stored individually in packs for easy maintenance by visitors. VE staff agree that the bags are often used by older children (up to the age of twelve) who often carry them because they do not fit around them.

Tate Liverpool gathered qualitative feedback from families in a visitors comments book:

Comments collected from book:

- "We love the back pack."

- "The backpack was excellent! It really encouraged the children to interact rather than ask, "what's that?"

- "Tate Rocket-packs for adults please! Great for viewing DLA Piper Series: Constellations @tateliverpool"

- "They should be available in the shop! They're brilliant!"

- "My three year old LOVED using the constellation backpack you provided. She was genuinely interested in the art using the cards provided to spot the exhibits she had a picture of. I thought she'd be a bit young to get anything out of it and I'd have to drag her round but the back pack really captured her imagination.

- "It was fun. We enjoyed using the binoculars and viewfinder glasses to look at the lights and sculptures. Thank you for providing the backpack to enable the grown ups a change to look at the art."

- "This is a great way to introduce the children to art. They loved the rocket packs"

- "The pack made her genuinely interested in the exhibits rather than just being dragged round by me."

- "I enjoyed my visit to the Tate because I loved trying to work out what the paintings looked like in my vision."

- "Particularly loved the rocket packs - what a lovely idea! Kids had a great time."

- "This is great - my 6 year old enjoyed wearing his explorer pack — he likes to be given a mission!"

- "Fab resource which the children really enjoyed…a hunt where they looked closer at particular pieces. Great."

- "It gave us an excellent starting point for questions about the art works and installations. A great idea."

- "love the rocket backpack for kids brilliant idea'

- 'The idea of the pack is great. My 6 year old daughter liked the 3d glasses and torch the most.'

- 'I liked all the pieces of art and I liked the space rocket pack.'

- 'Backpacks really good idea for kids. We only visited with our son when we saw backpack idea we knew it would keep him interested. Very good, will visit again.'

- 'I think it was a good idea to have the backpack. It helped little children learn about art.'

- 'The family rocket pack was an excellent idea. My son and I had a good time. He enjoyed trying to find all the pictures / art on display. It was our first time at the Tate but it wont be our last.'

- 'Our 3 year old and our 6 year old sons were both very excited to come to the Tate today. They were excited to receive a rocket pack and to explore and go on a treasure hunt for art! Thank you for finding a fun way to involve the younger generations!'

- 'I am really impressed with the backpack, which we collected on the way in as it helped my son to engage with the exhibitions here in a way which he has never done before! Thank you! My son is 4 years old).'

- "Rocket bags for our kids (age three and six) were fabulous - we came yesterday and the kids wanted to come again today to use the bags, allowing us to see another floor of the exhibition. Thank you Tate!"

- "First visit to @tateliverpool What a brilliant idea #RocketBags. Didnt want to leave, an loved the search cards"

- "I thought it was a fish"

- "Excellent! Had 3 year old, 4 year old and 5 year old. Rocket backpacks kept them entertained whilst adults could look at the exhibition in peace. Will visit again soon. Thanks."

- "Re backpacks: Fantastic! Really interactive and made the gallery interesting for a 4 year old. Would highly recommend."

- "Dear Education team, The Rocket ship family activity packs are amazing - very clever and much, much enjoyed by our 2 year old son! He gawped in ah as he took of the kaleidoscope glasses and tried to figure out how to use the wind up flashlight. Brilliant fun!

- "Wonderful idea."

- "I think you should have them all the time, so kids can check out all the exhibits."

Informal discussions with Nursery Practitioners

Nursery practitioners thought that the resource packs enhanced their visit to the gallery and offered opportunities for young children to be involved in self-directed child-led experiences. Practitioners were keen for the resources to be available to book out for visits from preschool children to the gallery. They also thought that the gallery offered a 'unique space' for children, although their main concern was that young children may want to touch in the gallery. We established that the resource components, particularly the card prompts gave ideas for meaningful discussions in the gallery and meant that no prior experience was necessary for understanding art. Some thought that the gallery was too quiet and not a place for children, whereas others found that the unfamiliar and unusual environment increased opportunities for children voices and thoughts to be heard, where practitioners could 'stand back' and observe children's reactions to the artworks.

The rocketpack promotes a number of early learning opportunities to occur within the gallery, fitting with the *'Characteristics of effective learning' as part of the* Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS) (DfE, 2012), where children are supported to 'play and explore,' participate in

'active learning' and 'create and think critically.' The cards encourage children to count, look for shapes, move around, describe, tell stories, listen and make connections with their own existing knowledge. These experiences reflect the seven areas of learning and development outlined in the EYFS and can be used by practitioners to support children's literacy, mathematics, understanding of the world, expressive arts and design, physical development and personal social and emotional development.

Summary: Is the Rocketpack effective in encouraging young children and families to explore and interact with artworks in the gallery?

The rocketpack resource enables children and adults to interact in the gallery space through playful constructive thought and open-ended self discovery. Children and their adults enjoy using the resource and it is successful in engaging children in an imaginative response to a variety of artworks. The Early Years and Family Learning team at Tate Liverpool developed the resource in consultation with children, parents and practitioners and this ensured that suitable approaches and methods were selected for involving children in ways that are compatible with their perceptual ability.

The resources are well displayed, accessible and immediately recognisable to children and family visitors. Adults felt that the presence of the backpacks in the foyer gave a welcoming signal and some chose to visit because they had seen the rocketpack on the website alongside other family activities. The rocketpack is successful for encouraging children to move around the gallery and look for art objects that are suitable for provoking children's interest and engagement. One parent made reference to another museum and how they 'get stuck' in an art making room without seeing any exhibits in the rest of the building. Some parents felt that the rocketpack allowed opportunities to view art while their children were occupied with their own investigations, whereas other parents felt that it was good to do the activities together and described their enjoyment of having meaningful interaction with their children.

Both parents and practitioners described a tension (or pressure) to control young children, particularly at the Tate gallery where they were concerned about perceived restrictions on young children to not run, touch, play or make a noise. Most parents considered Tate to be an adult environment that was largely unsuitable for children and were worried about 'ruining' the visiting experience of other adults. One parent, for example, told her child to behave like they were 'visiting a library.' Parents were therefore pleased and relieved that the resource gave 'permission' to behave

in a different way around the gallery; to dance, lie on the floor, stamp feet and clap. One parent said that other visitors 'seemed to enjoy,' seeing young children playing and interacting with art works in the gallery space. Furthermore, parents and practitioners felt that the prompts and activities were inspiring and gave interesting ideas for what to do in a gallery environment with children.

How can the Rocketpack be Improved?

Some parents thought that having more cards would extend their enjoyment of the resource, particularly for older children. The straps on the Rocketpack also need some further adjustment to fit older children The rocket backpacks are a popular resource and more are needed to meet the demand of family visitors during busy periods, such as school holidays.

The bags are durable and need little maintenance. The rechargeable torches are the most expensive component and need frequently replacing because they break or go missing. Some parents said that they do not always get all of the components in the pack during busy times at the gallery. One parent suggested that adults could have their own set of prompt cards, while others expressed a desire for more art making materials to be included in the pack, such as pencils and drawing paper. When such ideas were used during trails in the gallery (with under fives) it was found that giving pencils, sculpture kits and such art making materials prevented children from exploring the gallery (they become too interested in the art making activity). Binoculars, viewfinders and picture cards however, were successful in encouraging children to move about and explore the gallery.

Tate Liverpool's Early Years and Family team have implemented a variety of approaches for visitors with young children to feel welcome in the gallery. Having self-directed resources for families at Tate supports their vision for offering a more democratic space which enables children to gain access to art on their own level and terms. The rocketpack provides a fun and playful introduction to developing children's aesthetic and artistic understanding in an art museum and is successful in motivating children to move around the gallery. The resource engages young children's attention through suitable interaction and participatory activities. It also provides opportunities for adults to observe how very young children perceive and respond to art objects.

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Chapter Seven

Dewey's Experiential Learning Theory

This chapter draws on Dewey's Experiential Learning Theory in order to further analyse some of the key activities and encounters which occurred during the Tate Project, as discussed throughout *The Adventure (Chapter Six)*. This section discusses Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), in order to offer a more narrow analysis of how children were learning by 'doing' with artists throughout the Tate Project and how knowledge is created through the process of such active experiences. Dewey's ideas on progressive, democratic and museum education are used to offer a constructivist analysis of knowledge and learning which emphasise the importance of organising the educational process around the personal experiences of the learner. The processes used by artists during the visits are related to Experiential Learning Theory, which entails meeting children and adults 'where they were' in their understanding and interests in order to build knowledge, skills, confidence and competence to the point where they became independent, self-directed learners. Given that our repeated visits to Tate involved continuity and interaction with artists, artworks and materials, through 'process driven' encounters, then many of Dewey's ideas are relevant for theoretically underpinning the way learning took place for young children and families through their spontaneous thoughts, interactions and art-based experiences. Dewey's influence on the Reggio Emilia philosophy and his ideas on reflective practice are also related back to moments taken from *The Adventure.*

Gallery Education and Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential Learning Theory, (like the Reggio Emilia philosophy), views the 'process' of learning as the primary focus and this is in contrast to an education with excessive emphasis on performance and learning outcomes; where knowledge is often transmitted and tested. In art galleries we might read labels, listen to audio recordings or have guided tours, we might expect to make accurate representations of artworks, to explore form, discuss colour or the life of the artist, but the young children did not do any of these things. Nothing was transmitted in the traditional teacher-led sense of learning.

During the visits to Tate, the children were introduced to a broad range of new experiences, including an art gallery, private exhibition collections and free flowing art making activities with artists. They slipped about barefoot in paint, tried various resources, were enchanted by mechanical drawing machines, made giant collages and projections of their own faces, experimented with light,

clay, paper, unusual materials and colour and they even curated their own risky playground as an exhibition space. The children also experienced a boat journey on the River Mersey, 'to make connections with watery windy worlds and reflections in Monet's paintings' (as outlined in the artist's plan).

All of these sensory experiences were designed to provoke fun and appropriate ways for young children to experience a modern art gallery and to playfully interact with artworks. The significance of children being active, playing or 'doing' manifests itself in the wider field of experiential learning theory (ELT) whereby active experiences offer many opportunities for new learning to take place. At the start of the project, a member of the Early Years and Families Learning team emphasised the importance of the gallery for being a place for children, where 'learning is experienced rather than transmitted.' The Tate's Early Years offer to Kensington Children's Centre also highlighted the gallery as a democratic space for children's learning 'where early year's audiences can feel comfortable in using the collection as a resource to push learning possibilities, promote experimentation, fun, play and risk taking and therefore promote family relationships, wellbeing and readiness to learn.'

Many theorists believe children's learning is shaped by everyday experiences, social interactions and interested adults. Educational leaders such as Dewey, Froebel, Montessori and Steiner advocated for an approach to learning which ensured active engagement with the environment. Piaget, Vygotsky, Jung, Freire and Rogers also gave experience a central role in their theories of human learning and development. John Dewey, the American philosopher, psychologist and educational reformer, (1859-1952), believed that knowledge was gained through experiences and through interaction with the environment, where learning should lead to more learning, as we are all active learners (1902). He also strongly believed education and learning to be a social and interactive process and emphasised the power of education for the production of a more democratic society.

Dewey's philosophy on democratic learning and museum education provides a philosophical starting point for understanding how democratic learning can be achieved through gallery experiences with artists, and through interaction with artworks. Dewey's ideas on progressive education suggest that schools should, 'endeavour to shape the experiences of the young so that instead of reproducing current habits, better habits shall be formed, and thus the future adult society be improved' (1916:79). Through books such as '*The Child and the Curriculum*' (1902), '*Democracy and Education*' (1916), '*Art as Experience*' (1934) and '*Experience and*

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Education' (1938), Dewey advocated for a more progressive educational structure that could strike a balance between delivering knowledge whilst also taking into account the interests and experiences of the student. In *Experience and Education* (1938), Dewey examines 'experience' and draws attention to 'continuity' and 'interaction' as being vital elements of the process of learning. Given that our repeated visits to Tate involved continuity and interaction with artists, artworks and materials, through 'process driven' encounters, then many of Dewey's ideas are relevant for theoretically underpinning the way learning took place for young children and families through their spontaneous thoughts, interactions and art-based experiences. Dewey's ideas of the live creature interacting with its environment owes much to Charles Darwin (Perricone, 2006).

The aim of education, Dewey (1944:119) believed, was to 'correct under privilege and unfair deprivation, not perpetuate them.' Dewey was referring to a more personal, creative, process driven and unpredictable education that could not be taught by a traditional strict curriculum focused only on 'right or wrong' outcomes or solely on the subject matter being taught. He believed this method of traditional teaching only promoted the inactivity of the student, whereas a more progressive education, he argued, would allow for new content to be presented in a way that enabled the student to relate new information to prior experiences in order to deepen connections and make new knowledge. In *Art as Experience* (1934), Dewey presented a discussion on the power of connecting art processes, art products, culture, politics and everyday life to offer a transformative and aesthetic experience for both individuals and communities. Emerging ideas about nature study and art informed his democratic retort to traditional methods of teaching (Waks, 2009). Dewey proposed that a child's innate impulse to make and communicate meaning using aesthetic materials should integrate play, aesthetic awareness, communication and cognition (Dewey, 1916). Hence, Dewey believed that all students should have the opportunity to take part in their own learning and would thrive in an environment where they were allowed to 'experience' and 'interact' with the curriculum:

> ...work with paper, cardboard, wood, leather, cloth, yarns, clay and sand, and the metals, with and without tools. Processes employed are folding, cutting, pricking, measuring, modelling, pattern-making, heating and cooling, and the operation characteristic of such tools as the hammer, saw, file, etc. Outdoor excursions, gardening, cooking, sewing, printing, book-binding, weaving, painting, drawing, singing, dramatisation, storytelling, reading and writing as active pursuits with social aims, not as mere exercises for acquiring skills for future use (Dewey, 1916:109).

Not everyone agreed that such activities were suitably educational and Dewey also spent considerable time and effort thinking about their educational worth (Skilbeck, 2017). Dewey feared

that these sorts of activities could be used to simply make life easier and provide relief from the strain of formal school work and suggested they therefore needed a more rigorous justification. He argued that an excess of 'child-centred' education could place too much reliance on the child and be equally detrimental to the learning process. This would minimise the importance of content as well as the role of the teacher. As a solution to this dilemma, Dewey advocated for a balance between delivering knowledge and taking into account the interests and experiences of the student (Dewey,1902:16). Dewey believed assessment should be carried out, but through careful observation and judgement of experiences by teachers who could guide students to build on what they already know, before pursuing further learning.

An experience, according to Dewey (1938:43) can be broadly conceived. It is more than 'simply a matter of direct participation in events or objects which one constructs in fancy or discussion.' The experience should be created, as 'purposeful' for meeting individuals' needs and learning capacities. There must also be a reason for 'thinking that they, (materials and methods) will function in generating an experience that has an educative quality with particular individuals at a particular time' (1938:46). Dewey suggests experiences can be both 'educative' and 'miseducative.' A miseducative experience, he notes, is one that, 'arrests or distorts growth [...] experiences alone are not enough, even educative ones' (ibid). His comment that experience is educative unless it, 'distorts or arrests the growth of further experience,' has received considerable attention (Rodgers, 2002) and is interpreted in many ways. Dewey offers an example of a miseducative experience of a young child learning to manipulate her parents by getting what she wants with negative behaviour. A more relevant example of a miseducative experience in relation to the Tate Project might examine how a gallery visit could, 'arrest the growth of further experience,' if it were to make parents feel uncomfortable, offer a negative experience or prevent them from ever returning to an art gallery. Dewey suggests that learning from any experience requires, 'a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence' (1938:48). What is critical, he notes, is how those experiences are perceived and how new meaning is made by an individual.

A Complex and Messy Education

A philosophy that permeated all Dewey's ideas (and a recurring theme throughout my thesis, was that life is never simple or easy; it is always complex, uncertain and messy [...] therefore education, he suggested, 'should give up trying to achieve certainty' (Dewey 1929:302). For Dewey, there needed to be a shift in teaching which allowed for uncertainty to be recognised as part of a changing

world, in which we often struggle to make meaning. He wanted education to 'embrace life with its opportunities for both meaning-making and feeling, and rejoice in the complexities of the rich environment in which we struggle' (Hein, 1998). The Tate artists and the learning team placed emphasis on the process driven nature of all the activities. The activities were planned to ensure many opportunities for self-expression and interaction with artworks. In Deweyan terms these are desirable 'educative' encounters as they are open-ended, experimental, uncertain, unpredictable and have no right or wrong outcomes.

So what makes for an 'educative' experience, what makes the 'process' of doing or making more educative than an outcome-driven education? Experience, according to Dewey, is not the same as thought, because it is the meaning that one perceives and constructs from the experience that gives the experience value. An experience, continues Dewey, requires interaction between a person and the environment and is not educative unless it involves interaction between the self and another person, the material world, the natural world or an idea. I expand on this further through Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy on rhizomatic learning and human/non-human interactions, in a later section (see pages, 192, 123-129). The children and adults at Tate were always interacting as a group, with an artist, with the environment and with the material world. Dewey states that as a result of the interaction there should be a change in the self or the environment, so the effect is dialectical, with implications not just for the learner but for others and for the world. The measure of the value lies in the perception of those experiences and how they are perceived by the learner afterwards. In '*How we Think*' (1933), Dewey identifies several modes of thought for how humans perceive experiences, including 'imagination,' 'belief' and 'streams of consciousness.' However, the main mode he was interested in was reflection, see below (Rodgers, 2002).

Perception through Reflection

According to Dewey, reflection is a deliberate and active process which requires some thinking in order to understand what is being learnt. In Dewey's words, it is an 'active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it leads' (Dewey 1933:118). Dewey suggests that reflection requires the learner to look back over what has been done to extract new meanings and requires a lot of intellectual organisation and a 'disciplined mind' (1938:87). He contended that the mind needs opportunities to connect with and keep these perceptions, as perceptions are the new information and knowledge that the mind is acquiring through experiences. He believed any explanation of life, including thoughts, action and interactions with others must be based on what we have experienced

and have experienced historically, singly or, most especially, collectively. Dewey (1902) argued that learning from educational experiences would be most effective if content was presented in a way that allowed for the student to relate new information to prior experiences, thus deepening the connection with new knowledge.

The artists at Tate often related gallery experiences to children's existing knowledge so they could make personal connections with the sort of things children of that age already know about, or are interested in, such as shapes, physical games, magical people, places of fantasy, forest animals and creepy crawlies. The Rocketpack resource, for instance (pages,138-149) was designed from observing children's interests in the gallery, such as looking at shiny sculptures, spinning in circles, looking out of the window, clapping hands, laying flat on the floor or talking about some of their favourite things, like superpowers and rainbows. New knowledge, Dewey believed, should be constructed through a series of repeated exposure and thought, with each learner constructing meaning as they learn, that 'constructing meaning is learning and there is no other kind' (1902:253). Dewey wanted to abandon any ideas of the student being seen as passive or disinterested, so reflecting on experiences ensured each learner could discover new meaning as a purposeful quest; individually, or together, as co-learners. 'Making the individual a sharer or partner in the associated activity so that he feels its success as his success, its failure as his failure' (Dewey, 1902:35). Reflection therefore, according to Dewey, should be planned, intentional and preferably happen in collaboration with others, as part of a social activity along with an awareness for learning together:

> As soon as he is possessed by the emotional attitude of the group, he will be alert to recognise the special ends at which it aims and the means employed to secure success. His beliefs and ideas, in other words, will take a form similar to those of others in the group. He will also achieve pretty much the same stock of knowledge since that knowledge is an ingredient of his habitual pursuits. (Dewey, 1902:1)

Conducting critical reflection is problematic because of how it is widely interpreted and is subject to change in different contexts (Fook et al., 2016). Rodgers (2002:845), uses four criteria to characterise Deweys concept of reflection and the purpose it served:

> i) Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from experience into the next with deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas.

> ii) Reflection is a systematic, rigorous disciplined way of thinking, with its roots in scientific inquiry.

> iii) Reflection needs to happen in community, in interaction with others

iv) Reflection requires an attitude that values the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and others.

Reflecting with artists and curators at Tate happened by way of a write up or a discussion at intervals or after each session. Earlier I spoke about writing as a way of knowing and as a way of thinking (see *Chapter Three*). For me, reflection happens during the cyclical process of reading and writing, where reading offers a provocation or sense of clarity for existing thoughts, and writing offers a space to further expand on those thoughts to confirm ideas. It is a messy process of making sense, of enquiring, of simultaneously writing and re-writing. Reading and writing both offer a tool for thinking by, and an opportunity to connect new knowledge to practice or literature. Learning in this way is often regarded as a learning cycle, with reflection included as part of the process of learning (Kolb, 2014), but it can be crystal shaped, as described earlier (Richardson, 2000) or an even messier process, with thoughts expanding out in many directions. The Deleuzian (1987) metaphor of a rhizome, for example, is often applied to the process of making meaning, as a mass of roots that can spread out in many directions, horizontally, vertically and diagonally, consisting of a series of nodes, with no distinct centre, beginning or end (see diagram page, 193).

Moon (2004) offers guidance on critical reflection, mostly to students to assist them with academic writing. She uses the metaphor of 'cognitive housekeeping' to imply the nature of reflection as a sorting out or clarifying process. She also regards it as a messy process that is not straight-forward, which often includes the writing and re-writing of thoughts. She notes that reflection should go beyond description to include thoughts, emotions and perceptions, mostly about experiences and knowledge. Moon believes reflection is also shaped by the reason you are writing or discussing reflectively, such as personal reasons, e.g., writing a diary, or for academic purposes. She also believes what you share is influenced by who you are sharing it with, your emotional state at the time of writing and what you know about being reflective.

With the nursery practitioners, we reflected when we could as a group to further explore moments that had stood out for us as being moments of wonder, magical moments, tensions or 'sticky moments' (see page, 71). It was not always practically possible to find time to reflect as a group because of tight staffing ratios in the nursery and it was also difficult to get a chance to reflect with the parents during or after visits about their perceptions, because they were always so preoccupied with looking after the children or collecting older children from school. As Dewey suggests, reflection should be a systematic, rigorous and disciplined way of thinking, but time and space must be afforded in order to achieve this way of thinking about experiences. One of the nursery

practitioners put it more boldly when talking about her busy role and tight ratios in the nursery, when she said, 'we don't even get time to think.'

For many reasons, reflecting with the parents and nursery practitioners was not very successful as a research method for collecting thoughts about their experiences. This was mostly because we did not have enough space or time to establish a 'disciplined way of thinking.' Reflecting with very young children, on the other hand, required even more careful consideration, together with an understanding of how children learn through play and how they communicate their learning in many ways, especially when considering the visible nature of creative experiences. How children perceive their experiences, or what they might be learning is better observed than any dependance on spoken words. Dewey's idea of reflection being a meaning-making process that moves a learner from experience to a deeper understanding of what has been learned, may be an appropriate way for older children and adults to learn from experience, but for young children, making sense of their experiences is more likely to happen through their imagination.

Imagining as a way of Knowing

Young children use their imagination through various types of play and often make sense of the world through role play, art making or small world play. For young children, the process of making meaning takes the form of curiosity and play which allows children to take control of reality. Children's meaning making may be visible and immediate or it may sit in the mind and come out during another experience, specifically during imaginative or creative play. For example, two children were seen in the nursery role playing at going to Tate and being artists, so the nursery practitioners made their role play area into an art gallery and over some weeks they heard the children talking about 'The Tate,' 'artists,' paintings,' 'sculptures' and lots of other gallery related knowledge which must have stayed in their minds. These appeared as new concepts that may not have existed otherwise.

Throughout my research, I noticed the children's responses in the gallery were often immediate and visible through their physical responses and material interactions rather than through verbal discussion or questioning. I thought the children were typically in the present moment with us in the gallery activities, in that it felt like a mindful experience, especially as they became more familiar with the gallery. The gallery (not for everyone of course) offers a meditative, mindful place which brings people 'into the now' through higher consciousness. There is a wealth of literature about the place of galleries to make people feel good and enhance or improve their confidence and wellbeing

(manchesterartgallery.org.2019). As children continued to visit they seemed to come in expecting something great was going to happen and their anticipation to play and have fun was clear. When I went into the nursery the children would come running to me in excitement and would often ask if we were going to Tate. Their questions would also give me an idea of some of their favourite activities, 'can we paint again,' or 'are we going to play with clay.'

The children's responses to artworks in the gallery were encouraged in many ways, initially through the selection of an appropriate artwork that could act as a provocation for interaction. Artists also enhanced the experience of interacting, by tapping into the children's imagination by playing in the gallery, using movement, story telling, viewfinders, shapes or art making activities. As stated earlier, I found it was better to observe the children than to rely on separate discussions when the experience had passed. This worked well for discussing the individual experience of adults, but with children, away from the stimulus, it was not so successful. Children's responses were much more immediate and they didn't seem to want to talk about past experiences, whether it was about the exhibition they saw at Tate the week before or what they did in the gallery. Questioning children is often part of an adult agenda and if the children are not answering then it seems their responses to experiences are better observed. A lot of parents would agree that they are often met with silence when they ask their young children what they have been doing at school that day, or what they have had to eat. Of course young children are not all the same and there will also be children who will want to talk in great detail about their experiences. Some of the parents of the nursery children involved in the Tate Project also said that the children spoke very little of what they had been doing there.

It is important, therefore, when researching with young children to establish an understanding of the different ways or 'languages' children use to communicate. Dewey is acknowledged as a source of philosophic influence by educators in Reggio Emilia (Edwards et al., 2012), with Gandini (2011) stating that of all the theorists who inspired their work, Dewey was the most influential. Dewey as later conceived by Reggio in their hundred languages of children, regarded artistic expression (such as children's drawings) as languages. He stated, 'there are many languages...each medium says something that cannot be uttered as well or as completely in any other tongue' (1939:110). He also considered the construction of these languages as a creative process, allowing the child to make connections, 'between thoughts and objects that bring about innovation and change, taking known elements and creating new connections.' Maluguzzi's (1996) original concept of, '*The Hundred Languages of Children*' places great value on children's thinking, with children in Reggio schools

being observed using a range of 'symbolic languages.' I was already aware of these specific Reggio principles before I began to conduct the research so I gave careful consideration to the ways in which individual children communicate using a 'multiplicity' of languages which are not limited to being verbal or spoken, but are seen as a means of expression (Rinaldi, 2006:193). I was cautious from the beginning and throughout the project not to interfere with the children's natural flow (or the artists' plan) by interfering with questioning or discussions for my own research agenda. Asking questions for the sake of research, for example, would disturb children's imaginative thinking and bring them back into the adult world, back to an adult agenda. To be more critical, I think adults interference often disrupts creativity and flow for the child (for example see pages, 91-97). Children often find out about the world by asking 'why' questions (verbally and non verbally) but they may not get opportunities to ask these questions in an environment where questions are pre-planned and decided by adults. This may give them even less time and freedom to play, explore, and pursue their own interests. It is often from a distorted and divided perspective that adults construct the educational experiences of children (Skilbeck, 2017).

When children feel comfortable they often progress into their own imaginary world, seen as imaginative stories, private speech or humming, on their own or with others. This started to happen more as the children grew comfortable with the gallery and being part of the same group. Dewey considers how younger children use their imagination to connect creativity, art, consciousness, perceptions and minds. He shares how children use their imagination in this way to make sense of everything from exploring their environment to understanding the world:

> Imagination shares with beauty the doubtful honour of being the chief theme in aesthetic writings of enthusiastic ignorance. More perhaps than any other phase of human contribution, it has been treated as a special and self-contained faculty, differing from others in possession of mysterious potencies. Yet if we judge its nature from the creation of works of art, it designates a quality that animates and pervades all processes of making and observation. It is a way of seeing and feeling things as they compose an integral whole (Dewey, 1933:267).

Dewey is considering the imagination as something which has the power to connect and recollect experiences in the same way as critical reflection can for adults. As Dewey suggests, 'imagination denotes a quality which is present when varied materials of sense quality, emotion, and meaning come together in a union that marks a new birth in the world' (1938:267). It is important, therefore, when undertaking research or arts-based activities with young children to ensure that other adults also understand the nature of participant observation and of sensitively supporting young children's

creativity, by joining in with their imaginative world, or by standing back and not interrupting with repeated questions about what the children are making, thinking or doing. It is better to observe or tap into children's way of exploring by being imaginative with them, or by adopting, like children, a playful attitude towards playful experiences.

The Artist Educator: A Playful and Serious Balance

'To be playful and serious at the same time is possible, and it defines the ideal mental condition' (Dewey, 1910:32).

Dewey suggested that art experiences 'keep alive the sacred spark of wonder' and 'protect the spirit of inquiry' (1910:30). He believed the art of teaching should foster the 'attitude of the artist,' with the selection of appropriate materials, methods and social relationships (Dewey, 1910:204). Dewey's belief was that philosophy and theory are only useful if they inform practice (Dewey, 1910), so he opened The Chicago Laboratory School (1896-1904) as a school where action research could be used to explore the best conditions which most effectively support children's learning, development, and engagement, including their 'capacity to express' themselves 'in a variety of artistic forms' (Dewey, 1905:118). Hildebrand (2008) explains that Dewey's belief in the aesthetic experience and philosophic inquiry led him to focus on exploration, hands-on activity and communication using artistic materials and processes within his ideal school. He positioned art-making as a context for research in which children would engage in an active cycle of experimentation, knowledge and skill development, similar to the scientific research undertaken in laboratories (Dewey, 1939). Dewey (1902:31) believed that environmental provisions and art methods alone would not be transformative unless a knowledgeable teacher collaborated with children to both 'determine the environment' and influence the direction their learning could take. He suggested the personality of the teacher was even more important than other dimensions of the context, such as the space, the materials and the activities on offer. He likened such educative leadership to leading games or sports (Stern, 2014). Teachers in Dewey's laboratory school were positioned as leaders of group activities who were, 'intelligently aware of the capacities, needs, and past experiences of those under instruction,' which would, in turn, facilitate child-initiated co-operative projects (Dewey, 1939:85).

Dewey, as later mirrored by the atelieristas (artists) placed in schools in Reggio Emilia, positioned the teacher as a collaborator, researcher and co-learner in partnership with children (Skilbeck, 2014). In '*How We Think,*' Dewey explores the topic of work and play as distinct kinds of

educational activity and considers the mental states of both attitudes of 'seriousness' and 'playfulness.' Dewey argued that teachers should adopt a combination of 'playfulness' and 'seriousness.' This he believed, represented the ideal mental attitude of the artist, 'teaching is an art, therefore the teacher is an artist and the ideal mental attitude of teachers to their work combines the playful and the serious' (Dewey, 1939). Dewey suggested it was the task of the teacher to encourage such habits of mind in her students for whom it is, implicitly, the ideal mental state for learning. Dewey considers the relationship between playfulness, seriousness and humour and believed that adopting an attitude of playfulness was much more important than the actual action of play. He thought play was just a passing manifestation of this attitude; that without the right attitude there would be no play.

> What is required is an authentic presence that is attuned to the nature of what is being taught, together with a concern for the outcomes to be achieved. Such an attunement would allow for playfulness and humour as well as seriousness (Dewey, 1939:102).

For Dewey, it was artists who could achieve the 'harmonic balance' of seriousness and playfulness. Such a spirit of inquiry, he believed, could enable learning if it is carried out in the spirit with which the artist works, open to new ideas and open to making new associations. This, he believed, would lead to moral and intellectual growth and development. For artists, what is being explored is not determined or limited to objectives or outcomes. Artists are free to offer explorative encounters focused on any aspect of an artwork, on colour, the artist's intention, shape, scale, context. What the artists all aimed for, during the Tate Project (more than any focus on learning outcomes) was to ensure that the children had fun, enjoyment and could playfully interact with the artwork.

Dewey thought the attitude of playfulness was more important than the act of playing. He was mindful of the suspicion that such activities are often viewed as no more than 'child's play' in which the child loses themselves in 'an imaginary world alongside the world of actual things' (1938:162). The role of the teacher, he believed, was to create playful opportunities in the classroom, believing it is a playful attitude that engages the interests of students, encourages inquiry, exploration, experimentation and encourages children to participate and 'open up' to new knowledge. Encouraging play and playfulness will help students not only get more enjoyment from their learning but also make more progress. Put simply, being playful will lead to being happy and having fond experiences, because we are more likely to learn when we feel good and are enjoying ourselves.

> The artist retains the childlike capacity to respond openly with both seriousness and playfulness to the world and is able to turn responsiveness into the products of art (Skilbeck, 2017).

This is akin to Dewey's sense of purposeful activity in which a playful approach creates the kind of embodied experience that will help students achieve desired educational outcomes. As part as the conditions for learning Dewey not only placed importance on the teacher, but also on the environment, with strong suggestions for using museums and objects as places for provoking new learning as part of every day. His ideas (below) are still as relevant today.

Dewey and Museum Education

Dewey was a keen museum visitor and developed an interest in the place of museums, (including art galleries) as ideal learning environments for offering educational experiences. He considered museums as places where visitors could have a choice of interests to explore at their own pace, where they could interact with others and expand on ways of thinking to gain new knowledge and understanding (Hein, 2004). Museum collections, Dewey thought, could engage sensory perceptions, personal feelings and responses to stimulate changes in learning and overall knowledge. More traditional instructional learning methods, he believed, lacked the experimentation and imagination that museums could offer through a variety of object-based learning opportunities. Dewey recognised museums as ideal spaces where learners could bring their own personal interpretations.

Leading museum educator, Hein, (2004) regards Dewey's ideas about experiences, as holding crucial lessons for museum educators, for engaging with museum content and making personal connections with museum experiences. More importantly, states Hein (ibid), not only did Dewey realise objects in museums could act as stimulants for learning but attributes Dewey's greatest contribution to gallery education as being his suggestion that there should be more focus on the learners rather than on the material to be led. Dewey had a clear sense of the educational potential of museums, yet he criticised them as much as traditional schools and recognised that in the public mind, museums, like schools, were seen 'as dusty places filled with rows of objects, neatly catalogued but devoid of the interactions that animate knowledge' (Hein, 2004:32). He goes on to comment that art galleries are primarily the product of the capitalist urge to show off wealth, with the result that the fine arts have been separated from the rest of life and are 'cloistered in selected, inaccessible places' (ibid). Dewey was highlighting the problem of the separation of the fine arts

from practical arts, of art and its appreciation from other life activities, and the gap between museum exhibitions and popular education:

> Are museums primarily educational, or are they for only such educational work as can be carried on without limiting the curatorial function? A few museums have decided for education first, but most – most of the great as well as most of the small – are still letting education get along as best it can in an awkward setting (Coleman 1939:392).

Dewey believed museums should be an integral part of any educational setting, and the most desirable museums were those used for educational purposes, associated with life activities outside of the museum. He did not see art as being for the museum and gallery, just for the discerning, he saw it as belonging to everyone. Museum experiences, he thought, just like weaving, building a play house, or cooking in progressive schools, needed to lead to something more, as they are not complete educational experiences simply in the doing. They require integrated settings that foster discussion, challenge the learner, make connections to issues of interest to the learner, and provide guidance for application in the world outside the museum. His conception of experience rested on the ability of the student to relate the immediate outcomes of museum experiences back to life. Dewey believed art was for everyone and everyone had an interest in art, in some way. He recognised the average person as having an interest in art:

> In things he does not take to be the arts: for instance the movie, jazz music, the comic strip, and too frequently, newspaper accounts of love-nests, murders and exploits of bandits...Many a person who protests against the museum conception of art, still shares the fallacy from which that conception springs (Dewey 1934:6).

Most adults who came on visits to the Tate regarded the gallery as a 'boring' or 'stuffy' place before they actually started visiting. One nursery practitioner was worried that she was going to be asked questions about the art and would have to hold some pre-existing knowledge about art and artists. She also thought she might have to be responsible for explaining the art to children. Over the repeated visits it was a relief for her to notice that she could get involved in a lot of practical art making activities.

Dewey suggests learning has meaning when it is clear to learners what they have processed. For young children, as observed with Twombly's Alien (page 77-78) it may be that the learning and recalling of prior experiences are only visible through repetition and interaction. Young children enjoy repetition. For example, they like to read the same book over and over or watch the same movie again and again. It was apparent during the first visits that learning would take place through

the manipulation of materials and through playful interaction with appropriate artworks. The initial reluctance of the adults to respond or discuss artworks may have been because they had never had their opinions valued before. The Tate offered a democratic space for this to happen and the adults perhaps needed to become more relaxed in the group and build relationships in the space before feeling confident enough to share their personal opinions. They came to see that there was no right or wrong answer to their interactions with art. One of the parents said in an interview, that she 'didn't think they'd let people like her in there' (see page, 165-171). If she didn't feel 'good' enough to visit, then she was unlikely to feel her opinions were valuable enough to share.

The artist role in engaging the children and adults in hands-on activities was crucial. Dewey believes an educative experience in a museum must be 'hands-on' and what he referred to as 'minds-on.' Offering hands-on experiences for children (and adults) in the Tate required some careful planning by artists, for engaging the children to use materials that they could touch. Essential to learning in the museum is the meaning-making made by museum visitors, that these meanings are mediated not only by museum objects and the way in which they are presented but also by the visitors' culture, previous personal experience, and conditions of their visit (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999). Experiential Learning Theory, therefore, holds that learning is influenced through the process of learning, the characteristics of the learner and the learning space.

Greene (2000) extends the work of Dewey and agrees that imagination and the arts play a critical role in the making of democratic communities. She suggests that school curricula should aim to prioritise the releasing of the imagination through providing rich aesthetic experiences for children. These then provide new modalities for children to sense, experience and learn through the world. She suggests visual art as well as the arts, more generally, have the ability to make people aware of different ways of thinking and being in the world. This builds on Dewey's ideas of democratic learning, by working against reductionist and singular ways of thinking. Learning through artworks, therefore, has the potential to challenge dominant discourses and ways of thinking. Hein (2004:27) further explains, 'Dewey's philosophy does not aim to solve human problems; rather it focuses on the process of addressing problems and the means of ameliorating negative aspects of life and society.' Greene (2004) goes on to argue that if a school curriculum is to support imagination through the arts then children's encounters need to be aesthetically varied, rich and (as Dewey also emphasised), reflective. Finally, learning takes time; it requires meaningful experiences which lead to further experiences and continuity, it is a continuing process.

Cultural Capital and Symbolic Violence

This chapter begins by sharing my own personal history and experience of growing up in a single parent family in the early nineteen seventies on one of Europe's largest council estates in Liverpool. It goes on to consider why children growing up in poverty can often feel looked down on by teachers and by wider society throughout their education. Bourdieu's theory of capital culture and symbolic violence is used to examine some of the parents' experiences through their own past negative experiences of education and why these may also act as barriers to visiting art galleries. A class discussion is presented as a way of sharing popular negative discourses on poverty, before concluding on the value of the repeated visits for parents over the course of the Tate Project. The final section considers how such community-based projects can act as 'dreamkeepers'; as being valuable democratic spaces for re-engaging parents in a more democratic education.

I Didn't Think they'd let People like me in here

Fig. 47 *Netherley Cluster Flats, 1980*

I grew up in Liverpool and I was three years old (in 1974) when my family were moved to Belle Vale as part of the city's slum clearance. Belle Vale had not long been built on farmlands at the south-east edge of the city, a brand new council estate designed for modern family living. Residents began to move from many parts of the city to their new houses on Belle Vale or one of the other

vast adjoining housing estates; Netherley, Naylorsfield, Hartsbourne and Lee Park. Families were placed in newly built red brick or pebble-dashed houses, in tower blocks (high-rises) or in low rise high-density cluster blocks (maisonettes). The one to four bedroom properties offered gas central heating, one or two bathrooms, gardens and communal yards. I don't remember our old two up-two down terraced 'slum' but I know that it had an outside toilet, a coal fire and that life had been pretty difficult for my Mum, who had been through a strenuous divorce and had no choice but to raise her three young children on her own. We never saw our father again.

It did not take long before the estate became notorious for its high levels of poverty, poor housing, drugs, crime and single parent families. In a parliamentary address Anthony Steen MP voices the 'appalling' state of problems in such high density estates, with specific reference to the 'horrific' conditions and 'squalor' that families were living in on Belle Vale:

> The underground car parks under the spine blocks were skilfully designed with massive iron bars and gates to protect them from the people living there. Even these are now empty. The reason is clear. Those who left their cars there have learned what happens to them. Like vultures, the gangs descend, take the cars to bits and within a few days only the shaft of the cars are left. They are to remain there today (Hansard, 1979).

Steen's statement was made in a parliamentary forum in 1979, delivered as a dominant and credible discourse, wrapped in powerful messages about the residents living on the Belle Vale estate. When Steen describes gangs 'descending' like 'vultures,' he is presenting a savage image of a desperate and feral underworld. He is sharing one narrative, a deficit insight into the living conditions of Britain's poorest families as a world driven by gang violence, crime and morally impaired youths, their behaviour so savage that they could 'tear' cars apart. Steen's voice represents a pattern of blame, whereby the residents, particularly the families living on the estate, are labelled as 'the problem.' He implies that if their behaviour was corrected then the problems would be solved. This is part of what McKenzie (2015) describes as the continuing and (conservative) trend to label working class or welfare-dependent families as underserving or feckless... Steen (1979) continues in his parliamentary speech:

> Rubbish containers, some four or five feet high at the end of the spine block chutes down which people living in the spine block flats send their rubbish, are usually smouldering because children have set light to them. The smell of charred paper and burning rubbish pervades the whole estate when the wind blows in a particular direction.

That might have been true on the day of his visit, but it wasn't the whole story. This speech was made in March 1979 just after the widespread stoppage of work by thousands of private and public-sector workers over limits on pay rises across England. The 'Winter of Discontent' had happened and a wave of industrial action swept through the country with mass strikes by the public sector, including waste collection workers. I don't recall any such 'sinister gangs'... perhaps Mr. Steen was referring to us children 'playing out'; it was the norm to play outside a lot without adult supervision for children in the seventies. Three thousand adults lived on the estate and were outnumbered by more than five thousand children. Belle Vale at the time contained one of the highest child populations of any estate in Europe.

In her book, *Getting By,* McKenzie shares the narratives of single parent mothers living on the St. Annes estate in Nottingham, (where she also lived as a lone parent for some time). McKenzie's ethnographic study attempts to portray the complex culture that exists amongst single parents within that community. An acute awareness is depicted of how the women felt they were viewed from the outside, how they often felt 'looked down on' and how these were constant problems for them in many ways.

Steen (1979):

> What is it that makes the estate so dreadful? It is not so much the shadow of the spine blocks that looms over the estate, nor the density of the housing, but the total absence of space for children to play, the absence of trees, grass, shrubs or plants, the absence of playgrounds, play spaces, shops, community centres and youth clubs.

Duckworth (2013) explores the lives of women in her home town of Oldham by collecting and presenting literary narratives from learners on a basic skills writing course. Duckworth shares similar experiences to her research participants, of an education where she also felt 'looked down on' by teachers. McKenzie and Duckworth offer rich conceptual insights into the lives of women from two very different yet similarly marginalised communities by sharing accounts of their own personal experiences which are woven-in throughout their discussions in order to present a rich empathic understanding of the participants' spoken or written narratives. Both studies interpret an aspect of Bourdieu's cultural capital theory (1977) which suggest that 'symbolic violence' is inflicted on working class learners throughout their education, so pupils belonging to the 'lower classes' often do not pursue demanding educational options because they have an awareness of the tendency of their whole class not to pursue such choices. This opinion is often shared by teachers, assuming children from lower classes are not interested in, or capable of, achieving such goals.

The following section explores a similar and unexpected theme which emerged during my study as parents participated in gallery activities with their young children at Tate Liverpool. They began to speak about how they often felt 'looked down' on by teachers throughout their education. Three mothers spoke about how they were frequently labelled by teachers as 'lost causes' 'low achievers' or being 'off the rails,' throughout their secondary school education. Through such labelling, students are deselected from merit and hence social mobility, becoming marginalised as adults (Bourdieu, 1979). The parents in my study describe the negative impact such experiences had on them of being taught in schools where very low expectations of pupils were held by teachers of children living in poorer areas. Steen (1979) goes on:

> As the estate gets worse and the housing deteriorates, only the hardest pressed will accept living there. This increasingly means that those with a criminal element congregate there [...] It is a new kind of peacetime concentration camp, from which everyone dreams of escaping but which few do. It is no exaggeration to say that it is the sort of misery which illustrates the squalor of life [....] Belle Vale should be the last housing disaster ever built.

McGarvey, a Scottish rapper, known as 'Loki,' examines Britain's 'underclass,' in his book '*Poverty Safari* (2017) through his own experiences, and shares the devastating effects first-hand. He considers why people from deprived communities often feel angry and unheard and talks about his own experience of growing up in poverty as a way of showing the real pressures people face and how hard they are to overcome. In his book, McGarvey discusses typical daily problems people cope with when living in poverty and these are very similar to those faced by parents living in deprived areas who use Children's Centre services, for examples, anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, stigma, bad diet, obesity and health problems. McGarvey also discusses widespread alcohol and drug abuse, yet these are not typical problems for any of the parents who took part in this study. In one chapter, McGarvey (2017: 87) observes and analyses the differences between two children, one from a family in poverty and the other from a more privileged background. He summarises the inequalities:

> The second these girls leave the playgroup their lives will continue to diverge, as they have done since the day they were born; their respective social environments and how they impact upon them psychologically, emotionally, socially and culturally are likely to produce two very different people.

This analysis may seem rather deterministic and implies that certain privileges will always produce people who are somehow psychologically, emotionally, socially and culturally 'better' than others.

McGarvey frequently makes the point that people are much more complex than that and recognises that this is not always the case. If our destination or life chances were strictly determined by whether we are born rich or poor, or by parental capital (see below) then surely there would be no point of education, for anyone. The right experiences and opportunities to learn and work can move people out of poverty, and despite their struggles (or even because of them), I see parents determined to work hard and succeed. Yet discourses on poverty (as I go on to discuss) often dismiss the 'qualities' and talents of people from lower classes to focus on 'inequalities,' adding to an already negative discourse based on generalisations about problem behaviour.

In McGarvey's story of his own childhood he describes his family as being one of the few visibly chaotic families on his estate and describes the many difficulties he experienced as a neglected child of an alcoholic mother. Yet through all of these difficulties McGarvey developed a love for words and a love of books, and began to read as much as he could to 'escape,' as he puts it. Despite his childhood problems, patchy education and mistrust of teachers and authority, McGarvey has gone on to create his own very unique career as a successful rap artist and educator. In McGarvey's case, his struggle gave him a sense of determination, resilience, creativity, a greater need for introspection to succeed, along with a determination to seek change through education. Some might even say he is one of the 'lucky ones,' but democratic education should not be about luck. Greater emphasis is required for teachers to recognise the interests and potential of all pupils and for creating as many learning experiences as possible, so talents and interests can be nurtured (which often sit outside a set school curriculum), particularly for those children who might be identified as vulnerable, for whatever reason, who may not have their abilities recognised or nurtured at home.

In conversation with some of the parents participating in my research I explored how identity, such as family background and education had shaped their experiences. I offered the participants opportunities to review the transcripts and 'snippets' from conversation that I had selected to include. This gave a chance for them to provide comments, expand on thoughts, suggestions or offer criticisms. The parents chose to include some of their comments about feeling 'looked down on,' because it was a chance to get their voices heard about their 'unfair' treatment at school. It was also an opportunity to advocate for more opportunities to learn in their own community. I had reservations about including the negative reaction of one parent at Tate, as this, I thought, could undermine the amount of positive work put into the project by the learning team and artists to make us all feel welcome. Yet I did set out to reveal the value and the tensions of taking young children to

Tate and this incident sparked many other conversations about the parents' previous negative learning experiences at school. I include a conversation here as an example:

Me: (to parent): You got quite annoyed on your first visit to Tate, do you remember?

Tina: It was the way they spoke to me, I was just giving the baby some milk

This incident happened almost a year before the interview date, so we discuss how this might reflect on Tate and all the great times we have had since, but Tina insists I leave it in to show how people will react if they are stressed and worried about being in a new place with young children. We are in a room at the Children's Centre and I have prepared a buffet lunch so we are moving about and eating whilst talking. I return to my questions in between other conversations when I can, whilst also playing with a baby on the floor. I want to ask about the children's learning too:

Me: What do you think about the children's learning at Tate?

Tina: I like the way it's not like school but the kids are learning.

Me: What has been your favourite part?

Parent: Loads, like playing with stuff they've never played with before and seeing them like little artists. It was good for the kids, they made friends and loved it all.

Parent: All of it. I like the artists, they are all sound. The kids liked painting, they loved them little robots and we've been looked after, they all love us, the artists love our kids and our kids love them, they just go over to them now.

Me: And you've been doing some of it at home...?

Parent: Oh we just give them big brushes and paint and let them go in the yard. We took that clay home and we all sat and made a mess, the kids love it.

As in many conversations, the parents go on to discuss their own educational experiences, how difficult it was going to school and how teachers 'gave up' on them. Some of the parents have revealed some really negative aspects of their life history too, but I have made an ethical decision not to tell any of these conversations, to protect them from potential harm, as they may be identified in the films (see ethical considerations). So I keep my questions to how they feel about going into art galleries, but the conversation often returns to their dislike of teachers:

Me: You've said a few times that you've never liked teachers

Parent: I still don't. Not even one of them has been alright in that school (where her older child goes).

Me: Why what's happened?

Parent: Nothing. They look at you like you're stupid or something (pause)...and they talk to you like that...when we come here (to Sure Start) it's not like that, you're a teacher but you don't treat us like that... cos you're different, you're just like one of us.

Me: Do you feel teachers look down on you then?

Parent: Yes they always did, they still do when I go to the kids school

Me: Was that just something you felt or was something actually said to you?

Tanya: It's because I didn't have the *things*

I think I knew what she meant by 'things'... things other children had, a pencil case, a full P.E kit, a school bag, money for trips, pens, things like cookery ingredients, holidays, books etc., but I asked:

Me: What things?

Tanya: All the things other kids have, stuff you have to have for school and other things.

In a later documentary made by Tate, a parent states in an interview, that she 'didn't think, at first that they would let people like me in here.' When she also spoke about not having the 'things' and not feeling like 'one of them,' she is talking about feeling different, out of place or not good enough to go into some places. Other comments taken from conversations with parents illustrated similar feelings when they went to Tate for the first time, such as, 'some fella looked at me as if to say what's that pleb doing in here,' and 'I think they thought I was going to rob something' and 'they don't really want the likes of us in there because they want people with money who make donations.'

Symbolic Violence

According to Bourdieu (1984), those of a higher social status come to understand early on that they have certain *thing*s, options, and privileges available to them because of their positioning in society. Heavily influenced by Marxist beliefs on societal divisions and class conflict, Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital suggested that various forms of capital dictates one's position within the social order. For Bourdieu and Marx, the more capital one has, the more powerful a position one occupies in social life. Bourdieu extended Marxist ideas of capital beyond economic inequalities to focus on

more symbolic elements such as skills, tastes, clothing, mannerisms, material belongings and similar credentials that one acquires through being part of a particular social class (Bourdieu,1977). Sharing similar forms of cultural capital with others, such as the same taste in art or literature for example, or other things that symbolise cultural competence and authority, like theatre going or taste in music were conceived by Bourdieu as 'habitus,' a system of shared dispositions that generate perceptions, appreciations and behaviour (Lareau and Weininger, 2003). 'Habitus, he believed, was the system of socially constituted dispositions that the individual acquires, most effectively in early life, that determines his or her entire orientation to the world and modes of conduct within it' (Bourdieu, 1990:66). It is claimed that upper-class individuals, for example, have a taste for fine art because they have been exposed to it and have appreciated it since an early age. Bourdieu emphasised that habitus was acquired within families, however, in terms of social reproduction theory he was criticised for not considering other influences (Goldthorpe, 2007), such as educational influences. The overarching theory of social reproduction can be shown to have serious inherent weaknesses and, further, to be overwhelmingly contradicted by empirical evidence (Jenkins, 2002; Weininger, 2005).

DiMaggio (1982) studied the effects of cultural capital on educational attainment, examining parental behaviour in respect of cultural tastes and preferences. Like Bourdieu, Di Maggio found that not only parental economic resources, but parental cultural resources matter in children's educational careers. He found that parental cultural capital was important for passing on specific cultural dispositions which enhanced educational outcomes for children. Cultural reproduction theory (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977), suggests that preferences, attitudes, and behaviours are dominant in higher social classes and are rewarded by the school system and thus reproduce social inequalities. For example, children will share a common mode of speech and style of social interaction with their teachers and neither the content of what they are taught (syllabus) nor the manner in which they are taught (pedagogy) are likely to appear strange to them (Lareau and Weininger, 2003). In contrast, for children from other class backgrounds, and especially for those of working-class or (as Bourdieu put it, 'peasant' origins), the school will represent an alien and indeed hostile environment, a cultural and social world set apart from that of their families and communities, and one in which they are likely to feel out of place (Goldthorpe, 2007).

Most research investigating parental cultural capital concentrates on parents' cultural activities, such as attendance at art galleries, exhibitions, classical music concerts and other resources, such as literature (1984). Cultural capital theory suggests that children who are not familiar with the kind of

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socialisation of theatre and gallery going, museum visiting and the reading of certain literature will experience school as a hostile environment. An alternative view of the workings of cultural capital, labeled cultural mobility theory (DiMaggio 1982), holds that cultural capital also serves as a path to social mobility for children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Children who do not have these tastes or the attitude to enjoy them will simply lack the skills, habits, and styles that are rewarded throughout their education. As a consequence, Bourdieu (1973) suggests children will grow up to refrain from higher education (self-selection), and if they do participate in higher education, they will not attain the expected results (indirect exclusion) or may not be recognised by teachers (teacher selection). This suggests an unfair advantage for pupils because education is more fashioned to guarantee the success of students from certain privileged groups, where teachers also favour pupils who hold the dominant linguistic styles, aesthetic preference, and styles of interaction.

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) consider cultural and social capital as a source of social power and also as a form of violence perpetrated indirectly through cultural mechanisms like education. Symbolic power, and the violence it symbolically produces, is a mode of dominance that helps contribute to an already existing social structure founded on and strengthened by social inequality and bias (Bourdieu, 2001:1). Bourdieu describes symbolic violence as 'a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims,' exerted through the most part by the purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition. No kind of violence is gentle of course, but noticing symbolic violence is more difficult in schools, because it is not a form of overt coercion, making it that much more damaging to those who experience it. In a nutshell, Bourdieu's cultural capital theory suggests children belonging to high income families gain social and cultural capital because they have access to a more privileged lifestyle, including better areas to live, access to better schools, better resources, and extracurricular activities because they can afford the costs involved in extending educational careers and tend to invest more time and effort in schooling.

Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) blame schools for being social institutions which preserve and reproduce already existing social inequalities, and not as institutions that foster agency and freedom. Yet Halsey et al., (1980:77), disagree and discuss how school systems...

> ...do far more than 'reproducing' cultural capital; they create it, too. They are not merely maintaining a 'cycle of privilege' in which cultural capital is acquired by those from educated homes. They are at least offering an opportunity to acquire cultural capital to those homes that had not secured it in the past.

When one parent in my study said, 'I didn't think they would let people like me in here' (meaning at Tate Liverpool), it implied that we come to unconsciously understand that our choices are defined by limits within society based upon the culture or class we are socialised into (Bourdieu, 2001). The parent had placed her own limits on herself perhaps, deciding where she does and does not belong. She casually dismissed feelings of difference and not belonging with a certain amount of acceptance, like she was so used to those feelings that it didn't really matter anymore. McGarvey (2017) explains why people from poorer communities often turn to this kind of self sabotage as a way of defence when feeling 'looked down on.' He refers to how he was so aware of being looked down on throughout school by teachers and his peers that he learned to make a joke of it, 'to get in first,' before others did.

A lot of the parents I worked with in Kensington Children's Centre have been fearful of re-engaging in education systems that have failed them, mostly they put this down to teachers who have considered them to be incapable of learning. Most of them left education at age sixteen and have not wanted to return because it had been such a bad experience, or they were made to feel 'stupid'. One mother in my research discussed how she felt 'invisible' at school as a teenager, saying, 'teachers didn't even know my name and no one was bothered if I didn't go in...I had all sorts going on and the only thing they ever said to me was to take my earrings out and make-up off.' One parent spoke about the way teachers in her school just thought she was a 'scally' and looked at her like 'dirt,' and another recalled how she 'just messed about' instead of doing any work because nobody expected anything of her. Teachers also referred to some of the parents as having 'attitude problems' and if they complained they were seen as having 'a chip on their shoulder.' Such prejudice, or symbolic violence often experienced by pupils belonging to the lower socioeconomic groups (Bourdieu, 1977) has formed the basis of much debate on inherent inequalities in the UK education system which reflects broader societal divisions based on cultural differences, where 'scallies' are seen as problematic or incapable of learning or 'stupid' (see pages, 178-181). These experiences, all forms of symbolic violence, have profoundly shaped the parents' perspectives on and understanding of education, where they have often felt undeserving of an education, even blaming themselves for being 'naughty, difficult, not being able to listen, not seeing the point of some subjects and for not fitting in.'

Teachers often deem children from poorer background as being incapable of learning and lacking the attitude to learn, hence they have lower expectations of children from poorer backgrounds than more privileged children (Hattie, 2003). With the emphasis on teachers, low estimates of

achievement by teachers on pupils from poorer families are believed to have the highest-impact influence on student learning and achievement. Research undertaken by University College London Institute of Education (discovery.ucl.ac.uk, 2019) compared results from standardised tests by 5,000 primary school pupils in England with assessments of their ability by their teachers. It found significant differences in how the pupils performed compared with their teachers' judgment, particularly for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds who tend to be perceived by teachers as less able than their more advantaged peers, despite getting equivalent scores in tests. Hattie (2003) believes that teachers need to recognise explicitly the psychological processes that teachers, like everyone else are prone to and how they may 'look down' on children from poorer background and judge their ability as low due to existing prejudices and negative assumptions. Teachers are clearly in a position of power within classrooms and are still influenced by societal stereotypes and subject to the institutionalising thoughts and practices of schooling (Scott, 2012). This highlights existing class stereotypes in schools where the curriculum has been built on middle class tastes and delivered by teachers who might hold assumptions that being poor or from a low income family itself is a failure. Because of this, research has long shown teachers have lower expectations for students from low-income families and has challenged the belief that learners who face poverty are not capable of learning. Often this is seen by teachers as a problem associated with family cultures and attitudes and see differences in educational outcomes between poorer and more privileged pupils as caused by the individuals (Duckworth, 2014).

Bourdieu was often criticised for not being relevant because he was writing about a French education, but he was also writing of a universal problem, of the attainment gap and unfair advantages between rich and poor, particularly in relation to education which did not live up to its promises to 'treat each child as a unique individual,' to 'fulfil each child's potential' or allow each child 'equal opportunity to succeed' (1977). At the same time Bourdieu was writing (1960s-1970's), scholars in other locations were also focusing on the same phenomena of underachievement at school, of the poor and the attainment gap (Young 1971; Freire, 1972). In South America, for instance, Freire (1972) began writing about the oppression of poorer communities, not in regard to taste, but in terms of opportunity and the division of societal power. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972) Freire took a critical look at pedagogy and the relationship between teacher, student and society, drawing on his own experiences of helping Brazilian adults to read and write. Freire illuminated the educational deficiencies of the poor when he drew attention to the absence of education amongst millions of school-age children who were deemed illiterate (Freire, 2008:37).

These experiences underpinned Freire's political commitment to address the needs of the poor, in particular their lack of education, which he saw as inhibiting the development of Brazil and the wider humanity. Freire saw education as part of a wider problem connected to cultural and political liberation, believing that no pedagogy could be truly liberating if it treated poorer communities as unfortunates. He believed that the poor, or the oppressed 'must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption' (Freire, 1970:54).

Freire (1968) criticised the 'banking' concept of education whereby he equated teachers with bank clerks and considered them to 'deposit' information into students rather than drawing out knowledge or creating inquisitive beings with a thirst for knowledge. Ultimately, through 'banking,' teachers impart knowledge and this is legitimated by teacher perceptions of students being 'ignorant' and 'devoid of knowledge' (Freire, 1972:54). Ironically Freire contends, 'unlike the slave,' students 'never discover that they can educate the teacher' (ibid) so he argued that pedagogy should instead treat the learner as a co-creator of knowledge. The 'banking approach' prevalent in schools at the time was viewed by Freire as serving the interests of the ruling class (whom he termed the 'oppressors') 'the more the oppressed, the more easily they can be dominated' and 'dehumanised' (1972:55). He considered education ignored students' prior knowledge (and background), understandings, skills and interests as it is was underpinned by a false understanding of students as 'receiving objects,' they just receive rather than process/challenge the information received. Poorer communities therefore remained oppressed because their thoughts and 'creative power' (1972:58) were inhibited. Freire (1972:62) suggested that teachers should be both educators and learners and maintained 'banking attitudes' to education only 'mirrored oppressive society as a whole.' In other words, filling working class pupils with knowledge was dictated by the ruling/ middle classes, who become educated in to accepting their place and role in society without question or challenge. Freire believed that once students realise the contradiction of their earlier education they would develop critical thinking and awareness of the society in which they live, and struggle for their liberation. Ultimately, for Freire, education is 'the practice of freedom' (ibid) and the route for the oppressed, (the working class) to become literate and educated, which ultimately leads to individuals 'becoming human.' Freire argued for an education of problem-posing to affirm 'men and women as beings in the process of becoming... as beings who transcend themselves, who move forward and look ahead and more wisely build the future (1972:65). Freire proposed a different kind of education based on problem-posing, as he, in the same vein as Marxist beliefs, sought to make a change and a difference to the education of the masses (the working class).

Many of the adults in my research felt oppressed by society but this was often voiced in other ways, through sarcasm, frustrated comments, even humour about how they were treated unfairly by teachers. A lot of the parents had experienced family difficulties and stress throughout their childhood and some of these problems had continued into adulthood. Their problems at home had often resulted in problems at school through conduct, attitude or attendance problems. This was exasperated by a lack of understanding on the schools behalf and treated with harsh discipline rather than any empathy for understanding their difficulties. At age sixteen they were never encouraged to stay on at school and did not place any value on education. At home they were also pressured to leave school to find a job, earn money, move out or 'pay keep' to stay at home. A lot of the parents in this study have no wider family support network due to various problems, such as family relationship breakdowns or other problems that were visible during the project. Not only did they have feelings of being on the outside, but some parents frequently had other problems such as, debt (sometimes rushing off to pay the loan man, or 'provvy' (Provident-high interest small cash loans that are not means tested), no electricity (because it is on a meter and they had no money to top it up), problems with private landlords not doing housing repairs, no mobile phones or credit, no working appliances, no clothing for changing seasons, no food, no cooker, health problems, untreated rat infestations in the area, no computer or internet at home, serious dental problems and obesity. Whilst some of these may be problems for anyone, long term poverty can frequently include all these factors and eventually cause them.

Out of Placeness

Holt (1964) wrote *How Children Fail*, sharing an understanding of what schools do to produce and reproduce the broader social, political and economic system. He considered failure both in and beyond schooling with a closer look at curriculum and classroom environments:

> Incompetence has one other advantage. Not only does it reduce what others expect and demand of you, it reduces what you expect or even hope for yourself. When you set out to fail, one thing is certain-you can't be disappointed. As the old saying goes, you can't fall out of bed when you sleep on the floor (Holt 1964:34).

Some parents in this study felt out of place at Tate Liverpool. Feeling 'out of place' was the reason Bourdieu began to explore his theory of cultural capital in relation to his own education. In *Sketch for a Self-analysis* (Carlson, 2009) Bourdieu reflected on his own life, beginning with his childhood and how he developed a sense of his own otherness and class position as a son of a village post office worker where he entered school with a much more modest upbringing compared to others.

Bourdieu remembers how he was not a model student in school and was seen as rebellious because he was conscious of the way city children and teachers looked down on 'peasant' pupils like him. His 'out of placeness' he believed caused him trouble so he dealt with it by attacking the 'arrogant bourgeoisie' to defend his own self and position against what he perceived to be their contempt. Bourdieu can be considered as a success of a meritocratic school system through which bright children from any background can reach their highest level of achievement, yet this is an interpretation that Bourdieu rejected (ibid). He argued, that, unlike him, most children from working class families did not succeed and ended up poor, in the same social and economic position as their parents. This was not because of any lack of intelligence but because he believed the school system was designed to work in this way. Furthermore, he suggested, even those who did make it against all educational odds were still scarred by the experience. Bourdieu was not concerned with issues of his own life trajectory, but was interested in addressing such inequalities in social reproduction. He wanted to argue for a more democratic education for everyone and to critically interrogate the conditions under which education was conducted.

Looked at me like I was a 'Scal'

As stated earlier Bourdieu's 'habitus' (1977) extends to dispositions and taste for cultural objects such as art, food, literature and clothing. Sharing similar forms of cultural capital with others, such as the same taste in art or literature can symbolise cultural competence and authority. Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory suggests that particular tastes are passed down in families. British artist Grayson Perry agrees and created six tapestries to visually illustrate his point. His tapestries, *The Vanity of Small Differences* (2012) illustrate how one's social class determines one's taste. Perry suggests that people curate their possessions to communicate consciously, or unconsciously, depending on where they want to fit into society (Telegraph, 2013). He believes that the British care more about taste than any other factor, more than age, race, religion or sexuality, because it is inextricably woven into our system of social class. Social class and taste, he states:

> ...are something bred into us like a religious faith. We drink in our aesthetic heritage with our mother's milk, with our mates at the pub, or on the playing fields of Eton. We learn the texture of our place in the world from the curlicue of a neck tattoo, the clank of a Le Creuset casserole dish, or the scent of a mouldering hunting print. A childhood spent marinating in the material culture of one's class means taste is soaked right through you. Cut me and, beneath the thick crust of Islington, it still says 'Essex' all the way through (ibid).

One of the participants in my research shared how teachers referred to her as a 'scally,' she was the same parent who also said someone looked at her in the art gallery as if to say 'what's that pleb doing in here?' In the 1990s a plethora of (highly derogatory) terms such a Scallies (in Liverpool), Neds (Glasgow) and Townies (Oxford/Cambridge) amongst others emerged in various parts of the United Kingdom that sought to overtly label a particular culture of behaviour and its associated conventions of meaning, symbolism, and style (Hayward and Yar, 2006). Studies found what was new and interesting, was how one term, 'chav,' became popular above all others as a dominant synonym (ibid). Indeed, for many commentators, 'chav' was 'the word of 2004' (Burchill, 2005). Discourse on chavs in contemporary Britain has been widely implicated in the reinforcement of social inequalities and has become, alongside its various synonyms and regional variations, a term of abuse for the white poor (Tyler, 2008). Hayward and Yar (2006:18) discuss how the term underclass was made popular in the late 1980s and early 1990s through media discussions about social welfare, crime and disorder, and changing values and morals. They refer to the 'emergence of the figure of the chav' and how this has made class differences and antagonisms explicitly visible in contemporary Britain. (ibid). At this time other terms such as 'social exclusion and underclass were cynically promoted and utilised by the British Government and policy makers and rapidly took the place of terms such as working class' (Skeggs, 2005:47). The term chav is aligned with stereotypical notions of lower-class and is, above all a term of 'intense class-based abhorrence' (Hayward and Yar, 2006:16).

The 'underclass' concept, popularised by the conservative American political scientist, Murray (2001), functioned as a focus for reflections (from both the political Left and Right) on the social causes and consequences of mass unemployment and shifting behavioural norms among the 'lower' classes (Hayward, 2008). For Murray, the underclass is distinguished by a distinctive set of cultural dispositions that inform behavioural patters and choices, such as chronic welfare dependence and antisocial conduct (2001:26). During the period (1995-2003) the term 'underclass' fell by 50 per cent or more, while uses of the term 'chav' increased suggesting that the decline of the underclass discourse, and the rise of the 'chav' were connected (ibid). While many analyse the media construction of 'chavs' by locating this discourse within the broader socioeconomic processes of marginalisation, some have since taken hold within the public imagination, using acronyms for the term 'chav,' including, 'Council Housed and Violent' (Jones, 2011). Leaving aside the overt prejudice inherent in these acronyms, what is more important is how these fabrications serve to firmly realign the word 'chav' with stereotypical notions of lower-class, mostly for a disaffected

urban youth. In contrast to previous commentaries on underclass groups, 'chavs' are viewed as undesirable members of the population who have chosen to reject mainstream aspirations or desires. Instead the 'new British underclass' are increasingly understood as 'flawed consumers,' directly attributed to their tastes and as unable or unwilling to make the 'right' type of consumer choices. Furthermore, the term working class has been incrementally emptied of meaning and teaching and research into issues of class inequality is now often seen as paranoid and embarrassing (Tyler, 2008). In the last two decades academics from working class backgrounds and those who work within disciplines founded upon research on class, such as media and cultural studies and sociology, experience their own class origins as a dirty secret (ibid) and shameful (Sayer, 2002).

Skeggs (2005) expands on this further, suggesting a need to understand that the disappearance of class as an analytic category has occurred alongside the rise of political and academic rhetoric of discussions around 'inclusion,' 'classlessness' and 'social mobility.' Social classifications are complex political formations, she states, that are 'generated and characterised by representational struggles, therefore social class is emotionally mediated' (Skeggs and Lawler, 2005:964). Skeggs also sees an increased 'ambivalence generated by the reworking of moral boundaries where new forms of neoliberal governance views culture as a form of personal responsibility' (Skeggs, 2005:965). Skeggs discusses how the representation and identity construction of poor families, particular mothers, have been made popular by the media and only serve to exasperate the problem of social marginality through caricatured figures like those appearing on television and media, such as '*White Trash TV*,' the '*Hen Party Menace*,' '*White Girls are Easy*' (C4) and '*Loudmouthed Women*' (C4), who are held up for ridicule on programmes such as *The Jeremy Kyle Show* and more recently, I add, *Benefit Street*, which only further exasperated the depiction of people, particularly mothers on benefits who are portrayed as undeserving dole scroungers. Skeggs makes particular reference to how women are often depicted through their cultural tastes and discusses the 'hen party phenomena' which expanded into a media obsession 'with chavs, where white working-class men and women are depicted as tasteless and excessive' (Skeggs, 2005:966). She refers to an extract produced by Peter Mandelson MP as part of the launch of the Social Exclusion Unit (1997):

> We are people who are used to being represented as problematic. We are the long-term, benefit-claiming, working-class poor, living through another period of cultural contempt. We are losers, no hopers, low life, scroungers. Our culture is yob culture. The importance of welfare provisions to our lives has been denigrated and turned against us: we are welfare dependent and our problems won't be solved by giving us higher benefits. We are perverse in our failure to succeed, dragging our feet over social change, wanting the old jobs back, still having babies instead of careers, stuck

in outdated class and gender moulds. We are the 'challenge' that stands out above all others, the 'greatest social crisis of our times'. (Mandelson, 1997, in Haylett, 2000:6)

Skeggs draws on this characterisation by Mandelson and refers to it as a reproduction of the pathology that has been historically associated with the term class, where those belonging to lower classes, particularly women are represented as a disparate discourse, as dysfunctional, anti-social, and morally and ecologically decayed (Skeggs, 2005:967). As such, behavioural problems associated with the underclass, such as non-participation in paid employment, impoverished communities, crime and delinquency passed down by parents (who rob children of strong role models and discipline) result in a generation of children who run wild and perpetrate further acts of an antisocial character (Hayward, 2008). The excessive, unhealthy, publicly immoral white working-class woman is a handy figure for the government to deflect its cuts in welfare provision via the identification of a 'social problem.' Rather than addressing poverty as a problem, the people in poverty are seen as the problem.

While there has been a considerable amount of discussion on taste and class influenced by Bourdieu, the emphasis on emotions have been marginalised within class research. If teachers are swayed by public opinion as suggested in my earlier discussion then they may also hold existing deficit opinions about 'scallies,' they may 'look down' on poorer families and talk about them as being problems rather than thinking about what can be done. Consistent with Bourdieu's (2007) thinking, symbolic violence, not fitting in, or feeling 'looked down on' is still relevant today. This is because teachers often represent another whole class of people who look, talk and behave differently and belong to a section of society who view poorer learners often in terms of 'hard to reach' or inclusion discourses.

Dreamkeepers

Many of the parents who come along to take part in the Tate activities were already attending my Arts and Minds group. Often the parents were referred to the group for therapeutic support by other professionals at the Children's Centre, such as family link or health promotion workers. Parents often identify themselves as needing additional social and emotional support to manage with feelings of stress. Criticisms of Bourdieu's cultural capital imply a failure to see class conditions as sites of struggles and therefore 'opportunities' (Goldthorpe, 2007). Some research views Bourdieu and Passeron's (1990) theory of symbolic violence as an undesirable theoretical position to adopt in educational research, as it offers no construct for freedom from damaging effects of social

institutions. Government documents in the UK now routinely assert the importance of teachers accepting the need for intelligent handling of emotions and empathy with others and claim that such practices are inextricably linked to good citizenship, work success, inclusion and social cohesion (Ecclestone, 2007:460). The Arts and Minds group offers Arts-Based Education as a teaching model that is often identified as a 'community of learning.' Lave's community of practice (1998) and Rogoff's community of learners (1994) emphasise the ways in which learning is deeply situated in a person's becoming part of a community through participation in socially organised activities or practices where learning is culturally relevant, learner driven, and socially empowering (Freire, 1972). Communities of learning can assist marginalised adults by acknowledging and helping them to develop positive learning identities, transform a limiting habitus and rebuild social and intellectual capital (Ladson-Billings,1994). School experiences of failure have left many low-income adults scarred and afraid of returning to any form of adult or higher education. As such, adults have been 'wounded' by the schooling system, intellectually, physically, and psychologically (ibid).

Ecclestone (2004) expresses her concerns about ways of describing learners in terms of support, and sees it as part of conflicting policy goals in adult education that seek to achieve equality and social justice along the themes of emotional well-being and engagement. She suggests there are problems with the rise of a 'therapeutic ethos' together with the 'rise of low self-esteem,' (a common diagnosis given to learners by educators). In particular Ecclestone commented on the policy focus on 'self-esteem' in discussions of cycles of deprivation and the consequences of 'low self-esteem' for community development. She argued that a 'complex reality' had been reduced by media language to issues of 'self-esteem' and that the acceptance of the term in popular culture and policy had become a 'folk-myth' (2004:100). Ecclestone refers to curricular and pedagogical implications and notes how a 'therapeutic ethos' often uses a language of damage, fragility and dysfunction to characterise groups of learners as part of a tendency and trend about the ability of some learners to function effectively. She believes it adds to a negative discourse and a view of life that presents people as vulnerable and psychologically unwell. For teachers, such ways of thinking lead to labelling students as 'diminished' (Ecclestone, 2004:110).

Within the educational field, Ecclestone recalled the radical and critical traditions of adult education and a commitment to the transforming power of education with the fundamental belief that people have an innate capacity and potential for agency, or the idea that people can and should aspire to control their own life (Ecclestone 2004:118). She also noted the consequences for adopting a

therapeutic approach and assuming that people deemed to be marginalised or disaffected were unlikely to be able to cope without support. She argued such ways of thinking focused attention on individual failure rather than wider structural issues and shifted attention away from inequalities outside and inside the system to focus on individual feelings about life circumstances. This raised further concerns about conflicting policy goals in education which on one hand sought to achieve social justice but on the other focused on outcome-led assessment (Ecclestone, 2004). She also suggests this drew attention to the proliferation of guidelines, inspection, quality assurance and outcomes-led assessment that contributed to greater self-surveillance and peer-surveillance. She found that, despite the absence of clarity around major policy concerns around social exclusion and inclusion, there was a policy language of people being 'at risk,' 'vulnerable' or 'suffering' from 'fragile learning identities,' a policy language of disadvantage framed in personal and psychological terms (2004:111).

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES, 2005) claims research evidence shows that emotional skills make people more effective in communities and workplaces and that children with emotional problems are prone to mental illness, marital breakdown, offending and anti-social behaviour. Despite the popularity of such ways of thinking, Ecclestone suggests that emotional concepts in use are 'slippery' and are themselves 'fragile'; she references a review by psychologists (Matthews et al., 2002) on emotional intelligence and says they found no conclusive evidence for the construct and real difficulties in assessing it's validly or reliably. Despite such frail foundations, there is an increasing commitment to the promotion of personalised services in education and social services using the language of responding to individual needs and promoting emotional engagement, taking account of people's feelings about services. Despite Ecclestone's reservations I believe this reality becomes an embodied identity by adults who also view themselves as incompetent adults and incapable learners. Given their negative experiences of institutional education, these adults frequently report shame, depression, discouragement and despondency making it difficult to generate the desire and energy required to restart an educational journey. I see that adults often still hold a desire to learn yet they may need additional support, mostly because they refer to themselves as lacking confidence and require more emotional support, so they often do appear as 'fragile' learners. Ecclestone's research argues for a different kind of thinking around the labelling of vulnerable learners, yet she addresses this largely from a political perspective with the emphasis on policy making and ethical discourse rather than through the emotional experiences of such learners.

Tina, the mother in my study tells her story of how she identified as having post-natal depression, low self-esteem and no confidence, in her words, the group 'had saved her life.' Over the course of the Tate Project, she became the self proclaimed 'star' of the group. She attended every session with her children and, at the end of the second year she appeared in a documentary made by Tate Liverpool and a national newspaper 'family section,' telling her personal story of how 'art changed her life' for the better and freed her of depression. The mum had a new purpose, it seemed, and was in 'her element,' getting involved in the preparation and design of activities with artists and curators and helping to organise the final celebration event at Tate, '*Our Exhibition.*' At the same time, she actively wanted to advocate for such Arts-Based initiatives to continue, so that other young children and families in the area could also benefit. Such community adult learning organisations are vital for enabling a learner identity based on success, which I believe can undo the scars of symbolic violence and turn what I believe are 'fragile learner identities' and 'wounds' into more positive learner identities with a new attitude of achievement rather than failure. Arts and Minds and The Tate Project offered a familiar environment for learners to experience a more encouraging form of education and enabled them to move beyond previous negative learning experiences and transform their 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1988). Such communities of learning can give a new sense of belonging, of being listened to and being valued.

Informal adult education such as that offered by Sure Start Centres provides a different kind of educational space that large institutionalised schools cannot offer, where 'wounded' learners weave 'new stories which thread into an identity of capability,' most importantly, they banish their fears to dream once again (Lange et al., 2010:122). Duckworth (2013) explores personal learning trajectories, violence and empowerment amongst adult basic skills learners and considers the complex lives of marginalised communities and the link between learning, literacy and symbolic violence. Her study explores negative stereotypes of adults who struggle to read and write who were often labelled and stigmatised, and in doing so she exposes why and how basic skills learners often find themselves in marginal positions. Many of her adult learners in Oldham, similar to mine, were caught up in structural inequalities across both the private and public domains of their lives. Duckworth's research uses learners' narratives to expose the contradictions, complexities and ambivalences they have experienced and how they try to make sense of them from their positioning as basic skills learners in a society based on inequality of opportunity and choice.

Educators, who create a context for working through 'woundedness,' re-storying identities, keeping personal and community dreams alive, and who widen pedagogical ways of knowing, are

'dreamkeepers' (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Dreamkeepers can offer the extra emotional, social, and intellectual support needed for healing from educational injury and for restarting a learning journey. In this way and through the learner's determination, marginality can be slowly transformed, not only through short-term social mobility but by fostering a critical consciousness of their own social location.

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Chapter Nine

End of The Adventure: A Summary of Conclusions

Adventures often happen during the course of a journey, and like the Tate Project adventure, they typically bring challenge, uncertainty and risk. The gallery was a culturally unfamiliar place to visit for the children and families who took part in the project and some adults held preconceptions of the gallery as being a 'stuffy' place which was not suitable for children. Like travel adventures, or unique journeys, the most memorable moments are often the challenging parts, the enchanting moments, or the things that we did not quite understand. Yet, the unfamiliar, such as interactions with strange objects, materials and artists in an unusual space became more familiar as we continued to visit the gallery. So the challenge of turning the hesitant viewer into an active participant and the unknown into the knowable was achieved over repeated visits, where uncertainty was not only expected but was held up as a stimulus for the positive act of discovery.

Throughout *The Adventure* I presented the many ways artists used artworks as provocations for creative encounters with young children and families. The parents and nursery practitioners often found it difficult to describe their experiences at Tate, so they frequently referred to them in more simple terms, as being 'a bit different.' To begin with, the parents and nursery practitioners were not confident with being in the gallery, nor with their own artistic ability or knowledge of art, so they potentially could have limited or influenced the children's thinking in more negative ways as they openly dismissed some of the art as being 'weird' or 'rubbish.' At first the adults seemed daunted and confused by their role in supporting the predominantly unstructured, process-driven and experimental nature of the artists' workshops, so there was some initial reluctance to participate. The role of the artist educator was therefore essential for engaging children and families in more imaginative ways of interacting with, and thinking about artworks, by opening up the unique possibilities of the gallery for spontaneity, fun and experimental relationships with objects and materials. Artists have a particular interest in objects and materials, so they are well placed in gallery education for offering material encounters and supporting material relationships to grow. This way of working with young children and families uncovered new insights and possibilities for how the gallery could offer an alternative, diverse and innovative education for preschool children and their families.

Unique interactions are possible at Tate Liverpool and such contexts have much in common with those emphasised by educational philosophies, such as those posed by Dewey and Reggio Emilia,

whose ideas similarly place importance on democratic environments for learning through extended creative projects between adults and children. Art galleries, like Tate, are able to respond in less bureaucratic ways than schools because they are not regulated by curriculum bodies, so have more freedom to plan creatively to meet the needs of their visitors. Yet access, or attempts to widen local audiences to include young children and family visitors from areas of deprivation is not just a matter of inviting new communities in, it is also about attitudes, information and ways of engaging audiences when they arrive. Hence, gallery resources, including artist educators are essential for providing a positive family visitor experience and play a crucial part in engaging members of more deprived communities in cultural and creative partnerships. Developing relationships with diverse audiences, means developing relationships with children and adults as an important way for offering a sense of belonging, particularly for those families that may not traditionally visit art galleries. Welcoming young children and family visitors to the gallery also means understanding the needs and feelings of visitors, including the many ways young children might respond in a gallery. Young children, as illustrated throughout this thesis, have a physical inclination to move about, to run, wriggle and touch in the gallery, so access is also about including suitable artworks or resources that may be touched or physically interacted with (for example see, *11 Toy Surprises*, pages 123-125 and *The Model*, pages 136-138), to meet with the sensory needs of such young visitors. This requires some further debate about how artworks and objects are selected and presented for different audience needs.

Throughout the Tate Project I have been an artist researcher and bricoleur, far more interested in communicating my interests in insight, discovery and interpretation than on cementing a narrow finding, a creative model, single conclusion or approach. Adopting a bricolage research design has offered a way of presenting many stories and perspectives for assuming that there can be no single or triangulated finding. Using a bricolage methodology, as a postmodernist mixed-genre text, has enabled a way of presenting a theoretical collage for including a broad range of encounters, experiences and analyses. Using the process of writing as an epistemological pursuit, as a way of knowing, or coming to know, has enabled a method for my own process of thinking to unfold as an iterative process for thinking with theory and with data, without the restrictions of linear social science structuralist rules. Hence the process of writing and telling started as a crystal shaped metaphorical description for researching which expanded into a rhizome (see diagram page 193). Writing, as a process of thinking also became a tool for new connections to emerge between theory, knowledge and personal beliefs. I would therefore argue the case for paying attention to the

multiple, rhizomatic, (rather than narrow) directions that creative research may take when conducting ethnographic research with community-based projects. Participating in this type of research requires a creative leap, and that leap depends on one's willingness to think differently, messily, generously, and remain in a space of confusion when necessary (Frankham, 2013).

Creativity, therefore, overcomes habitual repetitions and inherited ways of being, so my conclusion, summary, or findings, named in usual academic traditions are not final thoughts, because questions are still emerging (Frankham, 2014), and so the rhizome can continue to grow. In Deleuzian terms, there is no end, we are always in the process of becoming, so no single conclusion or approach can be cemented for conducting such creative projects. I will however, attempt to frame the relationship between thought and creativity (below) whilst advocating for a participatory approach to co-creation as an open-ended experimental education which allows for rhizomatic thinking, uncertainty, freedom and artistic flow.

Polanyi (1967) says that creativity happens because of a desire or passion and Robinson (2011) adds that it is about finding a medium you love, whether it is painting, writing, piano playing or mathematics. Robinson (2011) describes creativity as finding and being in your element, with emphasis on collaborating with others as a way of finding your tribe. Being part of a group for so long certainly gave a lot of parents a sense of belonging and a purpose, some said they felt like we were 'one big family.' Bringing participants along and sharing power enabled the participants to actively take part and understand their role as co-researchers, so they felt their opinions and efforts were valued. Parents living in deprived areas often return or begin a new educational journey by taking part in programmes offered in community settings, such as local Sure Start Centres. Therefore, community-based projects, or creative and cultural partnerships, such as the Tate Project are valuable, not only for creating new and exciting contexts for working with families, but for offering a democratic and inclusive education, where all learners are equally respected, listened to and valued. Some parents taking part in the study had felt 'out of place' throughout their education. They often felt looked down on for being poorer than others and for not having the same 'things' that everyone else had. Feeling 'looked down on' for some families from deprived areas was an unexpected theme that emerged during the course of this research, when some parents felt (to begin with) out of place and looked down on at the gallery. The same adults did, however, continue to visit and developed a sense of belonging and being 'listened to' at Tate. Unfortunately, listening to, exploring and discovering children's and family interests, talents and existing knowledge becomes less and less likely as children continue through school, particularly for those who may not 'fit in'

or 'feel looked down on.' Arts-based educational projects, such as the Tate Project, therefore, can readdress negative identities of learners, because, unlike school, gallery education is able to respect that children and families come with their own funds of knowledge which may sit outside of a set curriculum. Respecting families own unique funds of knowledge also means respecting a families culture. So adopting an understanding of the many ways this knowledge can be communicated is essential for engagement, which can often be heard through individual behaviour, actions, verbal and non-verbal interactions.

In social constructivist theories, the creative process is seen to have cognitive benefits of drawing on the imagination for developing new insights, new skills and knowledge (as I observed in activities), such as during the Brushbot workshop for example (115-117). Dewey referred to these kind of adventures as educative experiences or encounters, placing emphasis on the learners opportunity to construct meaning. His conception of experience rested on the ability of the student to relate the immediate outcomes of gallery experiences back to life. I draw on a new materialism discourse to extend on Deweys Experiential Learning Theory (1938) in order to consider how artist educators act as creative agents for the process of making art, intra-actions or creative entanglements with materials, or matter (Barad, 2007). Shifting to posthumanist ways of thinking means that research avoids any contribution to dominant deficit discourses, classifications or stereotypes of poverty, i.e, where children and families from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are seen as lacking, underserving and incapable of learning. A new materialist discourse views participants as belonging to a more natural world without deficit social or cognitive constructions, where each material encounter offers a new and capable material relationship with the world. This way of thinking requires a creative push for thinking about research and about humans as belonging to a more natural world, where all possibilities for 'becoming' can be remade in each meeting (Barad, 2007). In this sense, equal agency is given to material interactions and to what happens during each encounter, rather than on what someone has, or does not have (like cultural capital).

The Tate Project brought about many opportunities to expand vocabulary and to talk in new contexts. Throughout this research I began to observe and think more about how thought and concentration appear to happen in silence, without words, and how there was an over dependence on children's ability to communicate their understanding by what children say, rather than what they do. Throughout the activities, the primary focus (for the nursery manager and practitioners) was mostly placed on children's verbal communication, speaking or listening abilities and language development. It was evident during the first few visits that the artworks could provoke imaginative

conversations and stories to occur (for example, see *T*wombly's Alien, pages 77-78, where the tranquility of the gallery environment appeared to amplify the children's voices. Children began to broaden their vocabulary (according to the observations made by nursery practitioners), to include words from the context of the gallery, such as 'sculpture,' 'exhibition' and 'photography.' Children's vocabulary for describing materials was also expanded, including wider descriptions for shapes and colours. As we continued to visit, the nursery practitioners began to also focus on the children's poetic languages (see pages, 109-111), by standing back and observing children's many ways of expressing themselves. For the nursery practitioners, the Tate Project gave an opportunity to understand some of the principles of the Reggio Emilia approach in practice. Adults developed more of an understanding of how the environment could act as a third teacher, how adults act as creative pedagogs for inspiring new ideas, and how extended creative projects or repeated activities can serve as rhizomatic knowledge production.

The personal and emotional benefits for participating in the Tate Project for the children were also discussed, such as the opportunity to take risks in a safe context, as they did when we were slipping and sliding in paint (pages 133-134). Understanding the benefits of risk taking and allowing freedom for children to experiment also emerged as a theme. Children's play is often restricted by risk averse educational policies and these factors may limit children's freedom to play, freedom of movement, effect relationships with adults and constrain the exploration of physical, social and material worlds. The presence of lively young children in the gallery also pushed the boundaries for the gallery, for thinking about how art should be viewed. This challenged the concept of galleries as places for interaction and as suitable places for playful young visitors.

Children's artistic flow was another theme that emerged throughout the research, when I began to notice how children, without limits, or adult expectations and interruptions, could be absorbed in deep level thinking and artistic flow. Children's ability to enter into a state of flow is much debated, yet I observed this on some occasions, enough to consider it as a finding, or a theme to pursue further. For example, when observing Oscar drawing with chalk (pages 88-91), and Jacob moving about in the mirror cube instillation (pages 121-125). I noticed that they seemed to be in a state of flow, which appeared as a rhythmic state, or a visible rhythm. This occurred when children were given dedicated time and space for self-expression without pre-determined outcomes. Children entered the flow state during deep level concentration and interactions with suitable objects and materials. This argues a case for more time to be placed on the act of process-driven creativity than on the finished work itself, so children have opportunity to get completely immersed in an activity

with intense focus and creative engagement. Facilitating children's flow means making time and space for suitable creative participation, such as large scale mark-making activities set out on the floor, or opportunities to play with clay and water. Such activities provide opportunities for children's physical schemas to be nurtured through the repetition of actions, such as their early inclination to draw in large circles. When adults become fixated on measuring or assessing children's creative outcomes then they often disturb children's art making and interrupt the (often) silent space where artistic flow might occur. This also interferes with the 'magic' and 'wonder' of the moment, by interrupting children's thinking and their ability to imagine. Artistic flow in children was nurtured by the delicate role of the artist, sensitively provoking, extending and co-creating alongside children, often silently, or in an imaginative context, but mostly by adding a simple children's vocabulary related to movement or action words. Flow was achieved when adults supported children's imagination, physical inclinations, expression and creativity without interruption or questioning, which seem to restrict children's self determination and capacity to develop their own ideas. This gave children freedom to figure stuff out for themselves, to learn new skills, and to build their self-confidence and sense of what they are capable of. Involving children and adults in extended visits to galleries therefore moves away from developmental ways of thinking to more reflective thinking about one's ability to support early creativity and the value of standing back and not interrupting children's imagination, or flow. If children, or adults are to achieve a level of deep concentration then appropriate time should be included as a purposeful part of their daily education. Galleries offer a suitable space for allowing a more mindful pedagogy to be adopted, where children have time to arrive at their own questions, follow their own interests and develop their own ways of thinking through expressive processes.

Human self-expression can be realised though creative encounters with the material world but these encounters are not easy to define, or measure, as each response is spontaneous and uncertain. Enabling creative freedom involves having a suitable place, space and resources for active participation which is free from educational constraints. This also means examining the tension between teacher control and children's freedom as part of a progressive and critical creative pedagogy. The Tate Project has captured new insights for creative education and for offering gallery education as a contemporary pedagogy for young children, one which allows time for creative thinking and for original and expressive thinking. Gallery education offers a suitable environment for the production of new thinking and new practice for young children and adults, which can be included as part of an existing pedagogy as an effective way of promoting family learning. The

possibilities and the prospects of gallery education are exciting and 'different,' with the capability for surprises, adventures, and dynamic encounters to happen with artists, objects and materials. These experiences provoke experimentation, movement, and new ways of thinking about diversity, inclusion and contemporary educational projects for young children and adults. Embracing a willingness to think differently, to be open-minded and to create and capture learning experiences without any fixed ideas, through human/non human intra-actions and material phenomena is likely to happen when artists are involved in interactions with children and families in an appropriate forum with many opportunities for 'surprise' encounters and unexpected 'doings' (Barad, 2007, 2009).

Children's creative thinking, or knowing, can be shown through their many languages. Through mindful moments and beautiful silences, or imaginary worlds and flow states, such magical encounters and enchanting experiences are often easier to feel, than to capture in pictures or words. Such adventures can only be shared through experience, as they are beyond any description or true representation. Artistic endeavours, including engagements with objects of art are something that require a more mindful, philosophical and metaphorical way of thinking. Some would say that such curious experiences and magical happenings are outside of language, or beyond words.

Rhizomatic Conclusions

A visual diagram (page 193) presents the multiple findings which emerged from adopting a bricolage methodology and illustrates the potential of gallery education as a rhizomatic pedagogy. The diagram is presented in colours of botanical rhizomes: ginger root, turmeric, bamboo and irises and is followed by a table of conclusions (pages 194-196), with words placed in bold to assist with identifying some of the key insights and discoveries made from conducting this research. A more detailed discussion follows (pages 196-200), which concludes that gallery education should be considered as a Rhizomatic Education.

Gallery Education is Rhizomatic

Cognitive · Rocketpack · Self-expression · Democratic · Artist Educator · Messy and Unbounded · Humanism · Experiential Learning Theory · Freedom and Risk · Social Relationships · Multiple Directions · Material Relationships · Process Driven · Bricolage Methodology · Artistic Flow · Posthumanism · Moment by Moment · Performative · Visual Rhythms · Time and Space · Mindful Pedagogy
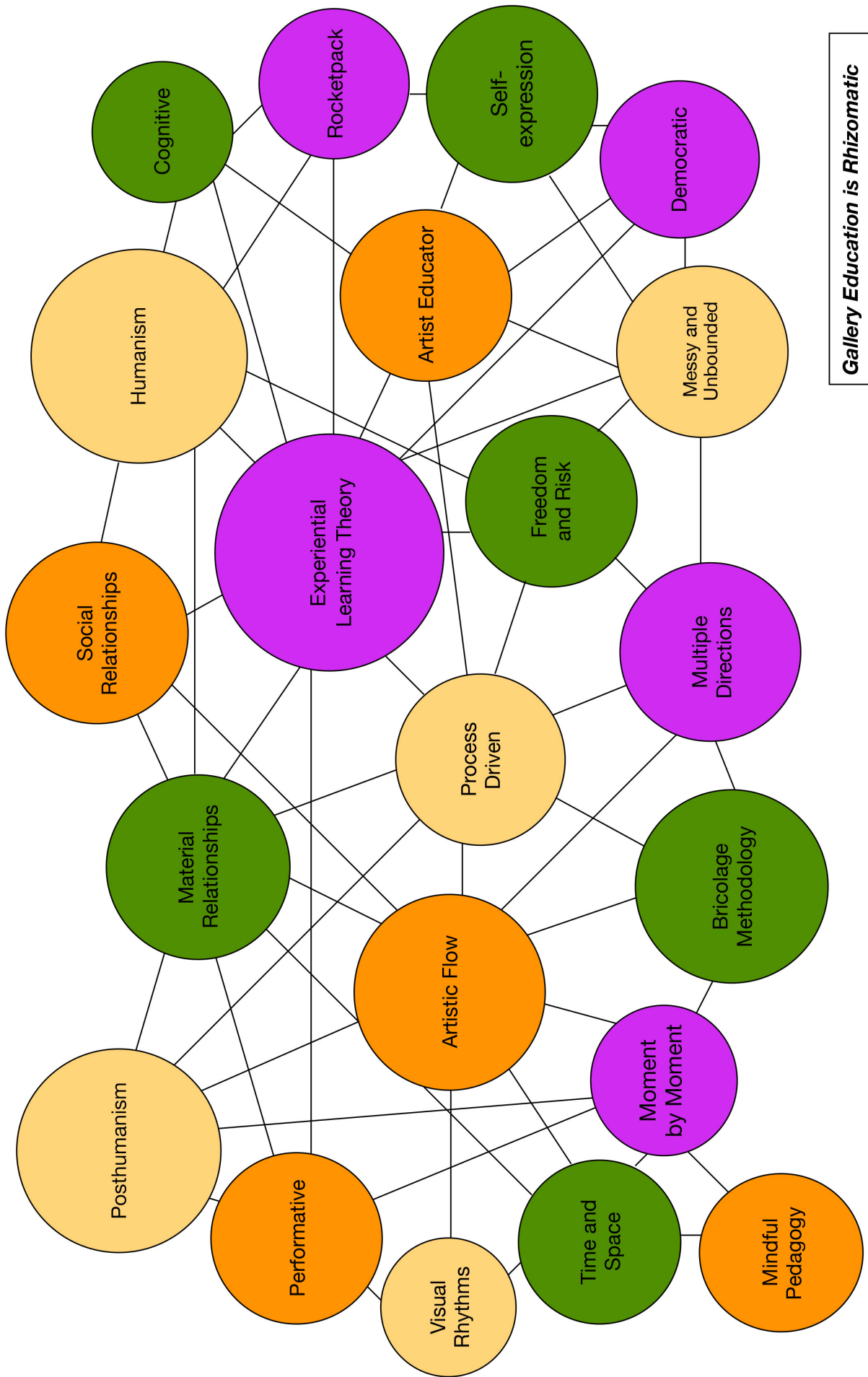
1. **Gallery education is rhizomatic.**

Creative encounters with artists within the context of an art gallery offer rhizomatic, **unpredictable experiences** for children and families, full of possibilities which can grow and spread, like a rhizome, in **many unexpected directions.** Adopting a **rhizomatic pedagogy** means that knowledge can be constantly negotiated, can change **moment by moment** and is **co-constructed** through contextual experiences and through **social** and **material** relationships. As a rhizome, any aspects of **humanist** and **posthumanist** theorising can be connected and seen as working together to make new, holistic artistic and cultural practices. **Social** and **material relationships** are therefore given equal importance during encounters with **artists** and with **objects** of art, as part of an active, **experiential model of learning.** Writing and thinking rhizomatically about gallery education and early years creative pedagogy allows for existing cognitive and socio-cultural perspectives of children's learning to be brought together in the vein of Deleuzian philosophy, as **positive differences,** or **entanglements** with new materialist ways of thinking. Thinking in this way about early years creative pedagogy and gallery education can widen the theoretical scope beyond linguistic and socio-cultural learning perspectives of the child, to thinking more **performatively** about what children are **doing.**

2. **The role of the artist educator and gallery resources are valuable for improving the family visitor's experience.**

The role of the artist-educator was valuable for engaging children and families in more imaginative ways of **interacting** and thinking about artworks. **Artist-educators** and **gallery resources** can open up the **unique possibilities** of the gallery for **spontaneity** and for **playful**, **experimental relationships** with **objects** and **materials.** Artists have a particular interest in objects and materials, so they are well placed in gallery education for offering **material encounters** and for supporting **material relationships** to grow. Developing relationships with diverse audiences, means **developing relationships** with children and adults over **repeated visits,** as an important way for offering continuity and a **sense of belonging**, particularly for those families who may not traditionally visit art galleries. Artist educators and gallery resources encourage more **active** and **experiential** ways of interacting with objects of art and open up **new ways of thinking** in order to get away from **rigid beliefs** of 'good' or 'bad' art.

3. Gallery Education is a Balance of Freedom and Risk.

Artists create opportunities for young children to take **risks** in a **safe context.** Risk taking is valuable for giving freedom for children to learn through play, by experimenting and experiencing boundaries in **new contexts.** Children's **freedom to play** is often restricted by a **risk averse society** and this is reflected in educational policies which often limit freedom of movement, effect relationships with adults and constrain the **exploration** of the **physical, social** and **material** world. The challenge of turning the hesitant viewer into an active participant and the unknown into the knowable was achieved over repeated visits, where **uncertainty** at first felt **uncomfortable** but was soon held up as a **stimulus** for the positive act of **discovery.**

The presence of lively young children in the gallery also pushed the boundaries for the gallery, for thinking about young visitors and how art should be viewed. This also challenges the concept of galleries as places for interaction and as suitable places for playful young visitors.

4. Gallery Education offers a Suitable Space for Children to enter into Artistic Flow States.

Children's **artistic flow** happens when children, without limits, adult **expectations** and **interruptions** are absorbed in **mindful, deep level thinking** and artistic flow. Flow states in children can appear as a **rhythmic** state, or as a **visible rhythm** when children are given dedicated time and space for **self-expression** without **predetermined outcomes.** If young children are to achieve a level of deep concentration then appropriate **time and space** should be included as a **purposeful** part of their daily education or through **repeated visits** to galleries. Assessing children's creativity by developmental outcomes belongs to a teacher-led education which is limiting, as this often views children's artistic expression as contained within the boundaries of a defined curriculum with no room for artistic flow to occur. Artists use a **collaborative process** for supporting children's creativity which is a **complex pedagogy** involving multiple ways of facilitating individual self-expression which is underpinned by an **active co-constructed approach.** Learning is **process-driven**, **experiential** and occurs through a sharing of **actions or ideas,** where the artist is also a discoverer and encourages **experimentation** within a supportive and carefully prepared aesthetic **environment.**

5. **The Bricolage Methodology is Suitable for Experimental Creative Inquiries.** Adopting a bricolage methodology for community based creative pursuits can offer an **unrestricted creative inquiry,** in order to include the **multiple, rhizomatic**, (rather than narrow) **directions** that creative research may take when conducting ethnographic research with community based projects. Using the **process of writing** as an **epistemological** pursuit, as a **way of knowing** and as a way of **analysing data** through the ongoing act of writing enables a method for a researcher's own **expressive process** of thinking to unfold whilst thinking-with-theory-and-with-data, without the **restrictions** of **linear** social science **structuralism.** Problems may arise when presenting post structural **expressive ethnographies** as experimental research designs, because this requires a **creative leap** in thinking about how research is told, as it poses a **challenge** to **traditional** modes of **thinking,** by re-imagining the role of the **researcher as artist.**

Experimental research designs, can be further strengthened with individual diagrams, visual illustrations or artist's drawings in order to support the research structure and to present rhizomatic, rather than narrow conclusions.

Gallery Education: A Rhizomatic Education

In Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus.* Deleuze writes:

> You think you know how a book works, well you're wrong. You only think you know how a book works. Check this shit: books are like people; scatterbrained and all over the place. Sure, some of them seem 'organised,' but that shit's just a way that we constrain ideas. To ask what a book is about is to deny the book it's bookness; it's to confine what a book can do in a prescribed little box that your puny brain has made up. You know what? There are three kinds of books (we love threes) and they're all unique. Some might be better than others. Some might not be. But there are three (themantle.com, 2018).

Deleuze refers to three books; a root-book, a radical book and a rhizome. He describes the root-book as an 'organised and controlled way of writing and thinking, such as writing a five-paragraph essay.' The radical book, he states, incorporates Marxist, anti-capitalist, and communist ways of thinking, which 'never fully breaks free from the root-book system, not only are the ideas bland and repetitive, but the whole damn thing is structured just like a root-book. It's that god-damn five-paragraph essay again' (ibid). Delueze introduces the third kind of book, a rhizome, as an

alternative model of 'books and thoughts and life and everything and stuff...it is a model that is characterised by hating trees, seemingly random linkages of ideas, and total connection'(ibid). Botanically speaking, a rhizome is an underground plant stem that grows horizontally, producing roots and shoots, for example, ginger, bamboo and irises are rhizomes. Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concept of the rhizome, both distinct from and linked to the biological one, has grown in non-linear ways, finding alliance with varied disciplines, modes of thought and artistic practices because of its uncertain growth, which has 'no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo' (Deleuze and Guattari,1987:27).

Creative encounters with artists within the context of an art gallery offer rhizomatic, unpredictable experiences for children and families, full of possibilities which can grow and spread, like a rhizome, in many unexpected directions. The rhizome, therefore, acts as a metaphor for creativity,

because children's creativity, or human expression, as I have argued, does not grow like trees in linear developmental terms. Assessing children's creativity by developmental outcomes is limiting, as this often views children's artistic expression as contained within the boundaries of a defined curriculum with no room for artistic flow to occur. Rhizomatic learning, however, poses a challenge to such traditional modes of thinking by re-imagining the role of the teacher, as artist perhaps, by removing conventional measurement frameworks in order to adopt a mindset of unrestricted creative inquiry. Gallery education at Tate Liverpool has no defined programme or curriculum, so it is well placed to offer a rhizomatic way of learning, which (like Reggio Emilia) is not a fixed model, but an education built on democracy where knowledge can be continuously negotiated. It is a messier way of educating that does not rely on documentation, so it can grow and spread in strange ways and is flexible enough to integrate things a learner knows with what a learner does. Viewing creative pedagogies as rhizomatic models can ensure that creativity is valued as an improvisatory practice and as an ongoing process. Adopting a rhizomatic approach in creative practices, such as gallery education, ensures multiple ways of thinking are encouraged as part of a participatory inquiry, for children and their parents to learn together.

The Tate Project offered various encounters with artists, artworks and material experiences, with each encounter offering an uncertain potential. A rhizomatic model of education is flexible enough for knowledge to develop and change through each different and unusual intra-action (Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Barad, 2007, 2013). Western discursive practice is mostly applied to children's cognitive and social learning in galleries and museums, holding on to stubborn humanist binaries whose influences are present in much of educational theory and practice (Moss, 2019). Yet these

new ways of thinking about pedagogy have emerged over the past ten years as a paradigm shift from humanist to posthumanist thinking (Moss, 2019), moving from structuralist theoretical lineages, to non-representational theories, which extend on philosophical perspectives for thinking about children's learning in art galleries (Murris, 2017). This pedagogic turn has brought about an increased interest in the role of the material world, material culture and material agency, as new materialism and posthumanism discourses. It is this move from the discursive to the material-discursive that makes a posthuman ontology with implications for the role of the educator and for a change in educational practice. Posthumanism not only disrupts the 'adult:child binary, but profoundly democratises the playing field in many directions, where nothing is considered to stand outside or above or to take a true, privileged, transcendental position' (McRae et al., 2017:4). Material-discursive practice and research, therefore, offers a theoretical move away from popular perspectives in humanist traditions and shares an agenda with posthumanism for repositioning the human amongst the nonhuman. Advocating for a more critical materialist attention to the natural world is also a shift towards a more natural way of living, away from the global, distributed influences of late capitalism (Anderson, 2018).

Throughout this thesis I have included humanist perspectives, such as sociocultural, linguistic and cognitive perspectives, alongside posthuman perspectives. Socio-constructivist, cognitive, and posthuman constructs of children's learning have been brought together, each being equally important for understanding how children's learning is conceptualised in gallery education. This is the first in-depth study for exploring what happens when young children, families and nursery practitioners visit Tate Liverpool for an extended period, so many perspectives have been explored to reflect the multiple ways that learning can occur, including my own emergent and rhizomatic thinking as an artist researcher.

Giving agency to material, as well as children, is part of a material shift when thinking about extended creative projects and offers a new way of researching children's critical engagement with objects, artists and materials. These perspectives move away from research which largely focuses on linguistic and social constructionism in gallery education to adequately address the material realities for humans and nonhumans alike. Expanding on humanist notions of children's learning by including new materialist and post-humanist theorising, I would argue, allows for embodied encounters to be recognised when conducting research and when thinking about creative practice. Writing and thinking rhizomatically about gallery education and early years creative pedagogy has allowed for a way of drawing on existing cognitive and socio-cultural perspectives of children's

learning, including political and cultural discourses as an entanglement with new materialist ways of thinking (Barad, 2007). As a rhizome, any aspects of humanist and post humanist theorising can be connected and seen as working together. Like creativity and creative thinking, visits to art galleries have ability for multiplicity and variety, meaning also, that creative experiences should not be reduced to any structural oppositions, as there is no right or wrong. The rhizome is resistant to being broken apart, so in Deleuzian terms (1987) the rhizome does not work in opposites, or dualisms, and any knowledge can be connected as 'positive differences,' which recognises that many discourses can work together to make new, holistic and transferable artistic and cultural practices. 'Some might be better than others. Some might not be,' Deleuze states (1987:23). Therefore, Deleuze and Guattari's idea of the 'rhizome' not only acts as a framework for talking about education but raises ontological questions about what counts as knowledge and what it is to know. Adopting a rhizomatic understanding of education in art galleries recognises that learning is a complex and unpredictable process of sense-making to which each learner not only brings their own context, funds of knowledge and own needs, but can interact with objects and materials in many different and unexpected ways. In short, rhizomatic learning is messy, unbounded and does not sit comfortably within current structures of formal teacher-led or outcome driven education, as it resists tightly organised ways of thinking, or fixed ways of learning which only reproduce narrow linear trees of thought:

> Our thoughts has become so tree-like and so binarised that until you think rhizomatically, you can't see the awesome and weird connections between things you thought were unconnectable. Hell, without the rhizome you're stuck in the tree desperately trying to find pre-determined paths from one idea to another. When you're in the rhizome, you can swim in the mud and freely jump from idea to idea without following some rigid and annoying branch.' 'This shit is a whole new way of looking at philosophy and all that other shit you learned (except for Nietzsche) is just boring and too constraining. We're post-modern now! (Deleuze,1987:11).

Seen as a model for the construction of knowledge, rhizomatic processes of learning appreciate how ideas can be connected as well as have boundaries and may not, as in child development terms, have a starting point. As a rhizome has no beginning or end, then nor does a learner, so this means any visitor of any age, background or ability can interact with materials and objects without expectations, or right or wrong thoughts and actions. Thinking in this way about early years creative pedagogy and gallery education can widen the theoretical scope beyond linguistic and socio-cultural learning perspectives of the child, to thinking more performatively about what children are

doing. Adopting a rhizomatic viewpoint means that knowledge is constantly negotiated, or co-constructed through contextual experiences and through social and material relationships.

> The Deleuzian 'material' or 'ontological turn' has informed a new scholarship in education to focus not only on the human and the discursive, but also to include the more-than-human, such as chairs, textbooks, the national curriculum, governing bodies, atmosphere, runny noses, the absence of nonhuman animals, ancestors, the land, or the video cameras that 'collect' data for educational research....In this practice, becoming and knowing are understood as in a state of interdependence (Lenz Taguchi, 2018).

Therefore, I make a case for material experiences and material relationships to be considered alongside social constructivist and cognitive pedagogies through exploratory processes which are continuously negotiated and can change moment by moment. Artworks can act as rhizomes of knowledge production, but only is we are to be open-minded to other beliefs and opinions. Artist educators, as part of gallery education, can encourage more philosophical and metaphorical way of thinking about objects of art and can open up new rhizomatic ways of thinking in order to get away from rigid beliefs of 'good' or bad' art. Over time, rhizomatic thinking can spread and grow, and like gallery education, it has a myriad of possibilities, as it is always in the process of becoming, or as Deleuze (2017) suggests, a rhizome has 'no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things. The tree imposes the verb 'to be,' but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, and… and… and...'

....

Date re-ceived	Initials	LJMU REC Ref

Ethical Approval of Undergraduate, Postgraduate or Staff Research involving Human Participants or the Use of Personal Data

Where research involving human participants or databases of personal information is being conducted by a member of staff or student LJMU Research Ethics Committee (REC) considers and advises researchers on the ethical implications of their study. **No research must be started without full, unconditional ethical approval.** There are a number of routes for obtaining ethical approval depending on the potential participants and type of study involved – please complete the checklists below to determine which is the most appropriate route for your research study.

A. Pedagogic Research

	To find out if your study can be conducted under the University's Code of Practice for Pedagogic Research please answer the questions below.		
1.	Is the proposed study being undertaken by a member of LJMU staff?		No
2.	Is the purpose of the study to evaluate the effectiveness of LJMU teaching and learning practices by identifying areas for improvement, piloting changes and improvements to current practices or helping students identify and work on areas for improvement in their own study practices?		No
3.	Will the study be explained to staff and students and their informed consent obtained?		No
4.	Will participants have the right to refuse to participate and to withdraw from the study?		N/A
5.	Will the findings from the study be used **solely** for internal purposes? e.g. there is no intention to publish or disseminate the findings in journal articles or external presentations		N/A

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If you have answered **Yes to all Qs1-4** your study may be eligible for consideration under the University's Code of Practice for Pedagogic Research. You should **not** complete this application form but seek further guidance at http://ljmu.ac.uk/RGSO/114123.htm or by contacting Sue Spiers s.spiers@ljmu.ac.uk.
If you have answered **No to any of Qs1-4** you should complete the checklists below to determine which route you should use to apply for ethical approval of your study.

B. National Research Ethics Service (NRES)

To find out if your study requires ethical approval through NRES answer the questions below.			
1.	Involve access to NHS patients or their data?		No
2.	Include adults who lack capacity to consent as research participants?		No
3.	Involve the collection and/or use of human tissue as defined by the Human Tissue Act 2004? **		No

| If you have answered **Yes to any of Qs1-3** you should **not** complete this application form. You must seek approval for your study through the NHS National Research Ethics Service (NRES). For further information and details of how to apply to NRES can be found at http://www.nres.nhs.uk/

Please note that once ethical approval has been received from NRES University staff or students **must** submit a completed LJMU Research Governance Proforma and provide LJMU REC with written evidence of full, unconditional ethical approval from NRES prior to commencing their research. On receiving confirmation of NRES ethical approval formal notification of LJMU REC approval will be issued via Chair's action. |
| --- |
| If you have answered **No to all Qs1-3** you should complete the checklist below to determine whether your application is eligible for proportionate review or if a full review by the University's REC is required. |
| ** Studies involving the use of human tissue from healthy volunteers which are taking place within the University's Research Institute for Sports and Exercise Sciences (RISES) can apply for approval through the University REC (for further information contact Sue Spiers – s.spiers@ljmu.ac.uk) |

C. Full versus Proportionate Review

	Does the proposed study:		
1.	Expose participants to high levels of risk, or levels of risks beyond those which the participant is likely to experience whilst participating in their everyday activities? These risks may be psychological, physical, social, economic, cause legal harm or devaluate a person's self-worth. e.g. untrained volunteers exposed to high levels of physical exertion; participants purposefully exposed to stressful situations; research where participants are persuaded to reveal information which they would not otherwise disclose in the course of everyday life.		No
2.	Involve the administration of drugs, medicines or nutritional supplements as part of the research design?		No
3.	Include adults who may be classed as vulnerable? e.g. adults with learning disabilities or mental illness; drug/substance users; young offenders; prisoners/probationers; those in a dependent relationship with the researcher		No
4.	Include children or young adults (below 18) where parental consent will not be sought?		No
5.	Involve the discussion or disclosure of topics which participants might find sensitive or distressing? e.g. sexual activity; criminal activity; drug use; mental health; previous traumatic experiences; illness; bereavement		No
6.	Use questionnaires which focus on highly sensitive areas? e.g. illegal activity; criminal activity; disclosure and analysis of findings based on sensitive personal information as defined by Data Protection Act eg racial or ethnic origin; political opinions; religious beliefs; trade union membership; physical or mental health; sexual life		No
7.	Incorporate interviews or focus groups which involve the discussion of highly sensitive areas? e.g. illegal activity; criminal activity; disclosure and analysis of findings based on sensitive personal information as defined by Data Protection Act eg racial or ethnic origin; political opinions; religious beliefs; trade union membership; physical or mental health; sexual life		No

8.	For research accessing and analysing existing datasets. Will the dataset include information which would allow the identification of individual participants?			N/A
9.	Involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?			No
10.	Involve recruiting participants who have not been provided with a participant information sheet and asked to sign a consent form? Please note that for questionnaire based studies a consent form is generally not request as consent is implied by the completion of the questionnaire. Applicants conducting **questionnaire-only** studies should answer NO			No
11.	Involve the collection and/or use of human tissue from healthy volunteers? Under these circumstances human tissue is as defined by the Human Tissue Act 2004 – "Any, and all, constituent part/s of the human body formed by cells." Research studies involving the use of plasma or serum are not covered by the HTA.			No
12.	Involve high levels of risks to the researcher? e.g. lone working at night; interviewing in your own or participants homes, observation in potentially volatile or sensitive situations			No

If you have answered **No to all Qs1-12** your study is eligible for proportionate review. You should complete the following application form and submit it electronically with any supporting documentation e.g. participant information sheets, recruitment letters, consent forms to **EthicsPR@ljmu.ac.uk** . Your application will be reviewed by a sub-committee of the University REC and you will be informed of the outcome within 2 weeks. Please note that if the allocated reviewer finds that your application has been wrongly submitted for proportionate review you will be notified and your application will be forwarded for consideration at the next University REC.

If you have answered **Yes to any of Qs1-12** your study is not eligible for proportionate review and will be considered at the next meeting of the University REC. You should complete the following application form and submit it electronically with any supporting documentation e.g. participant information sheets, recruitment letters, consent forms to **researchethics@ljmu.ac.uk** .

Please note that applications involving the use of human tissue originating from the School of Sports and Exercise Science should complete the Research Ethics Application Form for Studies Involving the Use of Human Tissue available at http://ljmu.ac.uk/RGSO/93717.htm

Guidance on completing the LJMU REC application form can be found at http://ljmu.ac.uk/RGSO/93717.htm

Please note that following submission of your application to the relevant email address a signed copy of the application's signature page only must be sent to the Research Ethics Administrator, Support4th Floor Kingsway House, Hatton Garden.

Visit http://ljmu.ac.uk/RGSO/93126.htm for REC submission and meeting dates.

Where teaching practices involve invasive (psychological or physiological) procedures on students or others staff should refer to the guidance provided at http://ljmu.ac.uk/RGSO/93087.htm regarding the development of departmental/faculty codes of practice.

Research Mode

	Undergraduate – specify course		
	Postgraduate		
	MRes,		
	MPhil,	yes	
	PhD		
	Prof Doc		
	Other – please specify		

	Postdoctoral
	Staff project
	Other – please specify

Has this application previously been submitted to the University REC for review? – **Yes / No**
If yes please state the original REC Ref Number and
the date of the REC meeting at which it was last reviewed

NO

Section A – The ApplicantA1a. Title of the Research

Widening participation of underrepresented family and early years visitors to Tate Liverpool

A2. Principal Investigator (PI) *(Note that the in the case of postgraduate or undergraduate research the student is designated the PI. For research undertaken by staff inclusive of postdoctoral researchers and research assistants the staff member conducting the research is designated the PI.)*

Title	MS	Forename	Denise	Surname	Wright

Post	Lecturer Edge Hill University Artist Kensington Children's Centre

Department / School / Faculty	Education Community and Leisure

Email	okdenisewright@tiscali.co.uk	Telephone	7723069363

Relevant experience / Qualifications

Currently employed as a Lecturer in Early Years Education
Currently employed as a consultant to Liverpool Children's Centres
BA Fine Art/Sociology 2:1
PGCE

A3. Co-applicants *(including student supervisors)*

Co-applicant 1

Title		Forename		Sur-name	

Post	

Department / School / Faculty	

Email		Tele-phone	

Relevant experience / Qualifications

Co-applicant 2

Title		Forename		Sur- name	

Post	

Department / School / Faculty	

Email		Tele- phone	

Relevant experience / Qualifications

Where there are more than 2 co-applicants please append an additional page to your application containing the relevant details

SECTION B – PROJECT DETAILS

B1. Proposed Date for Commencement of Participant Recruitment *(Please enter the date when you propose to start recruiting participants – note that no recruitment can take place without full, unconditional ethical approval)*

Start Date May 2013

B2. Scientific Justification. State the background and why this is an important area for research *(Note this must be completed in language comprehensible to a lay person. Do not simply refer to the protocol. Maximum length – 1 side of A4)*

Early Years Education for children aged 0-5 is an area which is still being developed and improved.

This research offers an important opportunity for examining the barriers and benefits of involving very young children in gallery education. These visits aim to provide Tate with the opportunity to consider the responses and needs of a new and non-traditional visitor to the gallery.

The research will examine and explore the process, purpose, benefits and successes of regular visits to the Tate and sets out to discover encouraging ways of improving participation for local early year provision and for families with very young children.

Gallery education is an important area of education for all ages and continues to develop in response to changes in art practice and audience needs. Early Years involvement with gallery education and artists is an area that has been identified as requiring further research. This research aims to capture vital evidence about the partnership in relation to what happens when adults, families, staff and early years audiences from areas of deprivation regularly visit Tate Liverpool.

The study aims to develop an understanding of the pedagogical approaches employed by key participants and partners, how galleries, nursery staff, teachers and adults support children's creativity. It forms the basis for discovering how gallery education fits into wider pedagogical approaches for early years care, education and development.

B3. Give a summary of the purpose, design and methodology of the planned research

This research will take an ethnographic approach to studying behaviours, perspectives and beliefs. It attempts to get 'inside' the life and experiences of the community and examine opinions, feelings and beliefs from the point of view of the participants. Using an ethnographic methodology allows for deeper observation and interaction with the audience in a real life environment.

Primary research methods include participant observation, interview and questionnaires. A combination of these methods will offer a variety of sufficient, valid, reliable and accurate data to emerge over the duration of the study.

Children, parents and nursery staff will be observed as they attend activities at the Tate and at Kensington Children's Centre. Two visits a month are planned for a six month period. Every visit will be observed using video, photographs and audio recordings which will then be transcribed. The participants will be observed over an average of twenty visits (ten visits to the gallery and ten visits from artists to Kensington Children's Centre). A holistic approach is taken for observing participants on every visit in order to capture conversation, comments, activities and interactions.

Photographs and video footage are used to provide visual evidence of the activities; these are shared with key partners in the project and with parents of the children involved at regular intervals. Photographs of some activities may be used in the findings, offering a more visual ethnographic methodology to emerge in the study, using visual images to highlight discussions when necessary or to strengthen the reliability of the evidence. The photographs of children will include only images of them involved in creative activities at the Tate or Children's Centre. Their names will not appear in the thesis and consent will be sought to include images in the final publication. No images will be used without their parent/s permission. The visual data is also important for collaborating and reflecting on activities retrospectively and for encouraging further discussions to occur.

Interviews will be conducted with adults involved in the project to collect a variety of perspectives about visiting the gallery. Interviews with nursery staff, artists, the nursery manager, curators and parents will explore a variety of perspectives about the benefits and barriers related to the gallery visits. Interviews will be semi-structured, aimed at collecting thoughts and feelings referring to parental interests, value of cultural experiences and cultural practices and tastes. Planned semi-structured interviews allow for open-ended conversations to emerge and will be conducted with participants in the gallery space or at the children's centre. Shorter, more reflective conversations and interviews are also used to consider what artists, gallery educators, teachers and children feel about their experiences after each event has taken place. Questionnaires aimed at collecting further qualitative data from a wider sample of parents will be used for analysing views and opinions relating to museum and gallery visits. This method will allow

B4. State the principal research question

What are the benefits for children in the foundation years of attending the Tate gallery Liverpool?
What are the barriers for children in the foundation years of attending the Tate gallery Liverpool?
What are the benefits of participating in creative activities?
How can galleries address issues of social inclusion?
How do galleries, nursery staff, teachers and adults support children's creativity?
How does gallery education fit into wider pedagogical approaches for early years care, learning and development.

B5a. Give details of the intervention(s) or procedure(s) which involve human participants *(including psychological or physical interventions, interviews, observations or questionnaires)*

Procedure	Number of participants	Numbers per individual participant	Avg. Time / Intervention / participant	Is this a novel procedure?
Eg Interview	*25*	*1*	*1 hour*	*No*
Interview	15	1	20 minutes	no
Observation	13	20	2 hours	no

To include additional interventions place your mouse cursor in the last cell of the final column and press the tab button on your keyboard. A new row will be created for the above table.

B5b. Where questionnaires are to be used have these previously been validated?

		No	

*If yes, state by whom and when. If no, you **must** append copies of the questionnaire to this application.*

B5c. Where interviews or focus groups (structured or semi-structured) are proposed you must append an outline of the questions you are going to ask your participants.

Interview questions?

semi-structured interviews- difficult to construct all questions, how many on average?

B6. Will individual or group interviews/questionnaires discuss any topics or issues that might be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the study? (e.g during interviews or focus groups)

If yes give details of procedures in place to deal with these issues. Information given to participants should make it clear under what circumstances action may be taken

Confidentiality will be discussed with adults before each interview. Participants are made aware of the safeguarding policy and procedure, this is signed for as part of the consent process including the passing on of information if a disclosure is made.

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B7. Where will the intervention (s) take place?

			Public places

B8. How will the findings of the research be disseminated? *(eg thesis, dissertation, peer-reviewed articles, conference presentations, reports)*

Thesis and conference presentations and peer-reviewed articles. Summary of thesis will be provided for Tate Liverpool and they may engage in further dissemination activities via their own website.

SECTION C – THE PARTICIPANTS

C1a. Identify the participants for the study *(LJMU staff, LJMU students, members of the public, other please specify)*

Children 35
Parents   20
Nursery staff 6
Tate Curators 2
Artists 7
Early Years Teacher 1
Nursery Manager 1
Children's centre coordinator 1

C1b. How will the participants be selected, approached and recruited? If participants are to be approached by letter/email please append a copy of the letter/email. Please include details on how much time participants will have to decide if they want to take part.

All children aged 3-4 were selected in both Kensington Children's Centre and Everton Nursery School. A newsletter will be sent home to all parents, a letter and posters will be displayed inviting families to attend the Tate workshops. A meeting will be held for parents and staff so that they can ask any questions and discuss all aspects of consent. Parents will be given a week to decide if they want to take part.

C2a. How was the number of participants decided? *(eg was a sample size calculation performed)*

Sample size was identified through what is practical to achieve in the course of PHD study using a qualitative methodology. Sufficient data will be generated from the group of children aged three to four years who consistently attend nursery on a Thursday afternoon in two locations. The study aims for depth and detail rather than large scale or randomised work. All children involved have parental consent for visits to the Tate and to attend workshops with artists.

C3a. Will any of the participants come from any of the following groups? (Please tick all that apply)
Please note that the Mental Capacity Act 2005 requires that all research involving participation of any adult who lacks the capacity to consent through learning difficulties, brain injury or mental health problems be reviewed by an ethics committee operating under the National Research Ethics Service (NRES). For further information please see
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/RGSO/101579.htm

yes	Children under 16 Adults with learning disabilities
	Adults with mental illness (if yes please specify type of illness below)
	Drug / Substance users

Young offenders	
Those with a dependant relationship with the investigator	
Other vulnerable groups please specify	

Justify their inclusion

This study examines the benefits of gallery education for children aged under 5 years.

C3b. If you are proposing to undertake a research study involving interaction with children do you have current, valid clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

Yes		

C4a. What are the inclusion criteria? *(Please include information on how you will ensure that your participants will be informed of your inclusion criteria and how you will ensure that any specific inclusion criteria are met)*

Children under five years old
Families who have given full consent to being voice recorded, filmed and photographed for the study
Staff who are fully involved with the study, who give consent
The visits to the gallery are planned during normal nursery hours
Families attending children's centre activities

C4b. What are the exclusion criteria? *(Please include information on how you will ensure that your participants will be informed of your exclusion criteria and how you will ensure that any specific exclusion criteria are met)*

Children over the age of 5 Those who do not give full consent to be involved Any vulnerable adults, children and families Adults who may not have the ability to understand the study or reason for consent, such as language differences Any children that may not want to visit/return to the gallery Any children who may not be safely included on visits outside of the nursery.

C5. Will any payments/rewards or out of pocket expenses be made to participants?

	Yes		

If yes what or how much?

Travel to the Tate Gallery Liverpool; bus tickets are issued. Refreshments are also provided at Tate.

SECTION D – CONSENT

D1. Will informed consent be obtained from (please tick all that apply)

	The research participants?

yes	**The research participants' carers or guardians?**
yes	**Gatekeepers to the research participants?**

(ie school authorities, treatment service providers)

D2. Will a signed record of consent be obtained? *Please note that were the study involves the administration of a questionnaire or survey a signed record of consent is not required for completion of the questionnaire as long as it is made clear in the information sheet that completion of the questionnaire is voluntary. Under these circumstances return of the completed questionnaire is taken as implied consent.*

In such cases the REC would expect a statement to be included at the start of the questionnaire where the respondent confirms that they have read the participant information sheet and are happy to complete the questionnaire.

Participation in any other interventions within the same study eg interviews, focus groups must be supported by obtaining appropriate written consent.

	Yes			**Implied consent for questionnaire**	
If no please explain why not					

D3. Will participants, and where applicable, carers, guardians or gatekeepers be provided with an information sheet regarding the nature, purpose, risks and benefits of the study?

	Yes			
If no please explain why not				

Date received	Initials	LJMU REC Ref

D4. Will participants be able to withhold consent or withdraw consent to the procedure?

	Yes			
If no please explain why not				

SECTION E - RISKS AND BENEFITS (Where risks are identified an LJMU risk assessment form must be completed)E1. Describe in detail any potential adverse effects, risks or hazards, including any discomfort, distress or inconvenience, of involvement in the study for research participants. *Explain any risk management procedures which will be put in place.*

Risk assessments of the gallery space, activities and journey to the Tate are conducted in order to maintain safety. Children have a higher ratio of staff when visiting the gallery 1:2. Parents understand that they have responsibility for their children when they are visiting.

E2. Explain any potential benefits of the proposed intervention for individual participants.

This study considers how contemporary galleries provide educational opportunities in order to reach wider socio-economic audiences. These educational opportunities aim to provide participants with frequent exposure to multi sensory opportunities that meet with the specific learning and development outcomes in the early years foundation stage learning goals.

E3. Describe in detail any potential adverse effects, risks or hazards (mild, moderate, high or severe) of involvement in the research for the

researchers. *Explain any risk management procedures which will be put in place.*

There are mild potential adverse effects on the researcher in terms of the sorts of relationships she may develop with the participants, who may come to rely on her for more than support for visits to Tate Liverpool. This is a consequence of the protracted contact she may have with them and the nature of the methodology. The researcher is experienced in this challenge due to the nature of the work that she has carried out at Children's Centres. She will be supported by her Supervisor should any conflicts of interest arise.

SECTION F – DATA ACCESS AND STORAGE

F1.Personal Data Management

Will the study involve the collection and storage of personal, identifiable or sensitive information from participants? Please note that signed consent forms constitute personal data. *(eg names, addresses, telephone numbers, date of birth, full postcode, medical records, academic records)*

	Yes		

If yes please provide details of what personal information will be collected and stored

Names, addresses, telephone numbers,date of birth, photographs, video footage and voice recording.
Reflections, notes, questionnaires and interviews.

*Applicants should note that personal identifiable information or sensitive information relating to participants **must not** be transferred in or out of the EEA without the explicit consent of participants. Such information must be handled with great care and only used in the way described in the written information you give your participants.*

*You **must** store any hard copies of personal date (eg printed data sheets, signed consent forms) in locked cupboards or filing cabinets and any*

*electronic data containing personal information **must** be stored securely on LJMU password protected computers.*
*Personal data **must not** be stored on USB drives or other portable media or stored on home or personal computers.*

Where the use of verbatim quotes is proposed in future publications or presentations or it is intended that information is gathered using audio/visual recording devices explicit consent for this must be sought from participants.

F2. Will you share personal, identifiable data with other organisations outside of LJMU or with people outside of your research team? *(eg supervisor, co-applicants)*

NO

If yes please provide further details

| |
| |

F3. For how long will any personal, identifiable data collected during the study be stored?

The data will be stored only until the PHD has been completed

Once you have completed the above application form please submit it electronically to either **EthicsPR@ljmu.ac.uk** for proportionate review or to **researchethics@ljmu.ac.uk** for full review by the University REC. *If possible please submit your application form and any additional supporting documentation as a single pdf file.*

Both you and you supervisor or school director must sign the signature page below, complete the checklist of documents sent electronically and send a paper copy of the following 2 pages only to the Research Ethics Administrator, Research Support Office, 4th Floor Kingsway House, Hatton Garden, Liverpool L3 2AJ.

Please ensure that you complete the summary project details below to ensure that your signature page can be associated with your electronic submission for approval.

Title of the Research Study

Widening participation of underrepresented family and early years visitors to Tate Liverpool

Principal Investigator (PI)

Title	MS	Forename	DENISE	Sur-name	WRIGHT

For RSO use only

DECLARATION OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR / SUPERVISOR / STUDENT
The information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.

I undertake to abide by the ethical principles underlying the Declaration of Helsinki and LJMU's REC regulations and guidelines together with the codes of practice laid down by any relevant professional or learned society.

If the research is approved I undertake to adhere to the approved study procedures and any conditions set out by the REC in giving its favourable opinion.

I undertake to seek an ethical opinion from LJMU REC before implementing substantial amendments to the approved study plan.

If, in the course of the administering any approved intervention, there are any serious adverse events, I understand that I am responsible for immediately stopping the intervention and alerting LJMU REC.

I am aware of my responsibility to comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.

I understand that any records/data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in the future.

I understand that personal data about me as a researcher will be held by the University and this will be managed according to the principals of the Data Protection Act.

I understand that the information contained in this application, any supporting documentation and all correspondence with LJMU REC relating to the application will be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. The information may be disclosed in response to re-quests made under the Act except where statutory exemptions apply.

I understand that all conditions apply to my co-applicants and other re-searchers involved in the study and that it is my responsibility that they abide by them.

Signature of Principal Investigator

.

 D.WRIGHT

Date

Print Name DENISE WRIGHT

Signature of Supervisor / School Director or nominee

Date

1st JUNE 2013
Print Name   DR JO FRANKHAM

CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY (Please tick relevant boxes)

	Ethics Application Form (MANDATORY)	yes
	Protocol (MANDATORY) see note below	yes
	Copies of any recruitment/advertisement material e.g. letters, emails, posters etc.	
	Participant Information Sheet	yes
	Carer Information Sheet	
	Gatekeeper Information Sheet	
	Participant Consent Form	Yes
	Carer Consent Form	
	Gatekeeper Consent Form	
	Non-validated questionnaires	yes
	List of interview questions	yes
	Risk Assessment Form	
	Other please specify	

Note
A research protocol is *a document describing in detail how a research study is to be conducted in practice, including a brief introduction or background to the study, the proposed methodology and a plan for analysing the results. For the purposes of your application for ethical approval it is something which can be presented in a variety of formats dependent on its origin for example:*

· *for postgraduate research students it may be the programme of work embedded within their programme registration form (RD9R)*

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- *for studies which have obtained external funding it is often the description of what they propose doing which they submitted to the funder*
- *for other students it is the study proposal they have written and had assessed/approved by their supervisor.*
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Appendix Two: Consent Form

Widening participation of underrepresented family and early years visitors to Tate Liverpool

Denise Wright and Faculty of Education, Community and Leisure

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and that this will not affect my legal rights.

3. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be anonymised and remain confidential

4. I agree to take part in the above study

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

Name of Researcher   Date   Signature

Name of Person taking consent   Date   Signature
(if different from researcher)

Child (or if unable, parent/guardian on their behalf) / young person to circle all they agree with

Have you read (or had read to you) information about this project?	Yes/No
Has somebody else explained this project to you?	Yes/No
Do you understand what this project is about?	Yes/No
Have you asked all the questions you want?	Yes/No
Have you had your questions answered in a way you understand?	Yes/No
Do you understand it's OK to stop taking part at any time?	Yes/No
Are you happy to take part?	Yes/No

If <u>any </u>answers are 'no' or you **don't** want to take part, don't sign your name!

If you **do** want to take part, you can write your name below

Your name _____

Date _____

Your parent or guardian must write their name here if they are happy for you to do the project.

Print Name _____

Sign _____

Date _____

The researcher who explained this project to you needs to sign too.

Print Name _____

Sign _____

Date _____

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Title of Project
Widening participation of underrepresented family and early years visitors to Tate Liverpool

Denise Wright and Faculty of Education, Community and Leisure

To be signed by all participants, including artists, nursery practitioners, learning curators, nursery manager, centre coordinator

You and your child/children are being invited to take part in a research study. Be-fore you decide it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it involves. Please take time to read the following information. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more in-formation. Take time to decide if you want to take part or not.

1. What is the purpose of the study?

Children and families will be invited to attend workshops with artists at the Tate Gallery Liverpool (Albert Dock) and at Kensington Children's Centre. Children and families can get involved in regular visits to the Tate and artists will be visiting Kensington Children's Centre to do a variety of creative activities with children and families.

The purpose of this study is to examine ways of supporting creative opportunities for young children and their families. The research will consider some of the be-nefits and barriers of working in partnership with artists and galleries. This re-search is being conducted as a piece of doctoral research by Denise Wright. Den-ise will be researching the project to explore what happens when adults, families, staff and young children regularly visit Tate Liverpool and attend workshops with artists.
The Tate Liverpool often offer opportunities for schools to visit the gallery and have now chosen Kensington Children's Centre to take part in this special project, so that they can understand the best ways of planning and providing art activities for families with children under five years old.

2. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do you will be given this information sheet and asked to sign a consent form. You are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw will not

affect your rights or any future service you receive from Kensington Children's Centre.

3. What will happen to me if I take part?

You will attend planned visits and trips out to the Tate, travel will be paid for.
The visits may be planned fortnightly or monthly. Some of the visits there will be led by artists and you will be responsible for encouraging your child to participate in the creative activities, you may want to get involved too.
If you agree to be interviewed you will arrange a meeting time and it will last about twenty minutes. You may also agree to take a questionnaire to complete and return.

4. Are there any risks / benefits involved?

This project will allow your child the opportunity to be involved with important research that may help other children with future early education. It will also be a fun, positive and creative learning experience for you and your child.

5. Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

This will involve taking photographs of children during activities, voice recordings and transcribing activities, video filming children during activities and interviews with parents, nursery staff and artists.
This research is confidential, your identity and your child's name will not be included in the final publication. Photographs of participants will not be used in the final publication without your consent.

Contact Details of Researcher

Denise Wright
The Lifebank
23 Quorn Street
Liverpool
L7 2QR
0151 300 8420

denise.wright@parksoptions.co.uk

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Sample Interview questionnaire   (semi-structured)   Interview prompts

1. Tell me about your previous visits to galleries or museums. Did you visit galleries or museums as a child?

Could you tell me about those visits?

If not -why do you think you never went to galleries or museums?

2. What are your experiences of visiting galleries or museums with your children?

Have you ever visited galleries or museums with your own children?

3. If yes? What did your children get from the experience?

4. If yes: What did you get from the experience?

If no: Why have you never visited galleries or museums before?

5. Remember we did the following activities (prompt with photograph or video footage)

What did you enjoy about this particular activity?

Did you enjoy this activity? If so, what did you enjoy about it? If not, why not?

Do you think your child enjoyed it?

What did you think your child enjoyed about it?

6. What activities would you like to do again at the Tate?

7. What special activities/exhibitions would you be interested in returning for?

8. How did you feel when you first heard about the project?

9. How did you feel when you visited the Tate for the first time?

10. Have any of the activities inspired you to do anything new with your child?

11. Has the Tate been welcoming?

If so what did they do to make you feel welcome?

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