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Creative River Journeys: Using reflective practice to investigate creative practice-led research

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Creative River Journeys:

Using reflective practice to investigate creative practice-led research

This thesis is presented for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This 'Creative River Journey' doctoral study explored the processes of art practice and knowledge-making by six artist–researchers engaged in creative higher degrees by research (HDR) at Edith Cowan University (ECU) in three arts disciplines—performing arts, visual arts, and creative writing. The study applied the Creative River Journey (CRJ) reflective practice strategy, originally applied as the River Journey tool in music education (Burnard, 2000; Kerchner, 2006), but further developed by the researcher into a three-phase reflective practice strategy for its application in complex practice-led research projects over the extended period of the participants' HDR studies. Six rich cases studies of HDR artist–researchers, and their reflective practice and practice-led research, resulted.

The researcher took an a/r/tographical approach (Irwin & de Cossen, 2004) and specifically focused on inquiring into the intersection between <u>arts</u> practice, practice-led <u>research</u>, and HDR creative arts <u>training</u> and pedagogy. The study addresses three questions in relation to these three concepts about what the application of the CRJ strategy to the creative process elucidated for, and about, the HDR artist–researcher. A fourth question addresses the experiences and evaluations by participants of the CRJ strategy.

The 'Creative River Journey' study aimed to examine the way that reflective practice and the CRJ reflective strategy might add to emerging practice-led research methodologies for individual artist–researchers and the field of practice-led in general. In the past decade, there has been a significant continued discussion about the nature of research in the creative arts (for example, Nelson, 2013; Barrett & Bolt, 2007; Smith and Dean, 2009). This study adds the perspective of the HDR artist–researcher engaged in a creative arts doctorate to this discussion. The study's HDR perspective joins existing Australian contextual reviews of practice-led research, for example, effective supervision of creative practice higher degrees (Hamilton & Carson, 2013a), and examining doctorates in the creative arts (Webb, Brien & Burr, 2012). This study advances this discussion by providing rich case studies of HDR practice-led research from the outsider perspective of the researcher whilst, at the same time, providing a unique insider perspective as the researcher acts as a co-constructor of the participants' reflective practice, and as the participants independently document their creative practice and reflective practice strategies.

This thesis will demonstrate that the CRJ reflective strategy is an innovative way of exploring the relationship between the creative and critical components in creative arts higher education degrees. The strategy generated knowledge about how each artist–researcher engaged in a meld of practice and research in the art-making process within practice-led research, and brought to light key critical moments in the practice-research nexus. Of consequence to the knowledge outcomes for the HDR artist–researchers in the study is how these captured the phenomena of their praxis, and thus was a useful documentation approach to their practice-led research. This thesis will make evident the 'Creative River Journey' study's contribution to the rich established field of practice-led research in general, made possible through the deliberate pedagogical interventions of the CRJ reflective strategy.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

  i.   incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
 ii.   contain any materials previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text; or
iii.   contain any defamatory material.

Signed: Kylie J. Stevenson
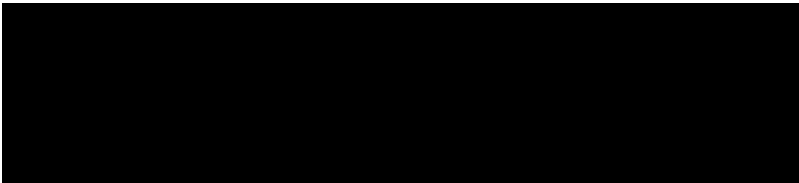
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Book Chapters

Stevenson, K.J. (2017). Mapping the practice: reimagining the creative process through the metaphor of the river. In P. Burnard, V. Ross, H.J. Minors, K. Powell, T. Dragovic & E. Mackinlay (Eds.) *Building Intercultural and Interdisciplinary Bridges: Where Theory Meets Research and Practice,* (pp.150–158)*.* Cambridge, U.K.: BIBACC Publishing. Retrieved from http://bibacc.org/ Refereed e-book chapter, online.

Murphy, R. & Stevenson, K.J. (2017). Reading migrant women: Combining story-telling and story-making in an Intercultural 'Narrative of Practice'. In P. Burnard, V. Ross, H.J. Minors, K. Powell, T. Dragovic & E. Mackinlay (Eds.) *Building Intercultural and Interdisciplinary Bridges: Where Theory Meets Research and Practice* (pp.20–30)*.* Cambridge, U.K.: BIBACC Publishing. Retrieved from http://bibacc.org/ Refereed e-book chapter, online.

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Stevenson, K.J (2013). Creative River Journeys: Using an a/r/tographical framework for a multifaceted PhD project. *Multi-Disciplinary Research in the Arts (UNESCO) e-Journal,* 3 (2), 1–25. Retrieved from http://education.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/ 0004/1107967/004_STEVENSON_PAPER.pdf. Refereed journal article, online.

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Non-Traditional Research Outputs

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Stevenson, K.J. (2015). "Process [statement]"; "On The Edge"; "Prayer Meeting by the Sea"; "Woolf's Pockets". In A. Dunill (Ed.) *All Living Language* (pp.39–43). Joondalup, Western Australia: City of Joondalup/Peter Cowan Writers' Centre. Edited poetry collection, print.

Stevenson, K.J. (2012) "Pound Bend"; "Cambridge Dreaming"; "Deep Water Point". In C. Abbs & C. Konrad (Eds.) *Breath of the Sea: Ten eclectic poets of the Peter Cowan Writers' Centre* (pp.55–60). Joondalup, Western Australia: Peter Cowan Writers' Centre. Edited poetry collection, print.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALTC—(Australian Government) Australian Learning and Teaching Council

AVPhD—Audio Visual Practice Based PhD Support Network, United Kingdom

CREATEC—(Edith Cowan University) Centre for Research in Entertainment, Arts, Technology, Education and Communications

ECU—Edith Cowan University

GRS—(Edith Cowan University) Graduate Research School

HDR—Higher degree research

OLT—(Australian Government) Office for Learning and Teaching

PLR—Practice-led research (Note: wherever possible the full term is used in this thesis)

SAH—(Edith Cowan University) School of Arts and Humanities (formerly the School of Communications and Arts)

SCA—(Edith Cowan University) School of Communications and Arts

TINAS—This Is Not A Seminar Creative Dialogues for ECU artist–researchers

WAAPA—Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

INTRODUCTION

Brief overview

This study investigated a model of reflective arts practice called the Creative River Journey (CRJ), a data capture strategy based on in-depth interviewing and visual mapping of critical moments experienced by a participant during the creative process. The participants in the study were all enrolled in a higher degree by research (HDR) and that research centred on their creative practice in one of three arts areas—performing arts, visual arts and language arts (creative writing). Using this model, I have explored, engaged with, and enhanced the reflective practice of these HDR practice-led artist–researchers. (The study itself is also called the Creative River Journey. In this thesis, where I refer to the study I have used the phrase 'Creative River Journey'. Where I refer to the charting strategy itself, I have used the abbreviation CRJ.)

The 'Creative River Journey' study examined the usefulness of the CRJ strategy to initiate or reveal reflective practice. The process set up a deliberate engagement with the knowledge-making process in practice-led research. For some participants, the CRJ encouraged participants to adopt a reflective strategy as part of their repertoire of emerging methodologies. For others, it revealed a less self-reflective approach to their practice. Of consequence to understanding the knowledge construction process in practice-led research was how critical moments identified in the CRJs aided artist–researchers in documenting the phenomena of their praxis. Thus, the CRJ strategy was revealed to be a useful contribution to a practice-led research approach.

I apply the term practice-led research as it is the most recognizable term in Australian higher education for research which is driven by an artist–researcher's creative practice, whilst acknowledging that there are other terms in use, such as artistic research or creative research. I will address some of the discussion around such terminology in this thesis. However, to begin with, in this project I applied the term practice-led research not to indicate a directional relationship between creative practice and research but rather as term that best described "an approach to a subject based on knowledge

through the act of creating" (Harper & Kroll, 2008b, p.4). I have also applied the term praxis to describe the meld of methods, theory and practice that is embodied in practice in a practice-led higher degree. One of the aims of this study was elucidation of the ways in which a range of HDR artist–scholars negotiated with such praxis. My thesis takes an a/r/tographical approach and therefore it explores the art practice, research and the training/pedagogical contexts experienced by the participants in their higher degrees by research.

My overall research methodological approach, reflected in the study's conceptual framework, was a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cossen, 2004). In this approach, the multiple concepts of arts practice, research and teaching are both explored and enacted in the multiple roles of the researcher. As research initiator, I inhabited artistic practice by including my own poetic inquiry in the thesis, research practice through my role as researcher, and teacher through my role as an educator and my interest in the pedagogical applications of the CRJ. In addition, the subject matter of this study: arts practice, practice-led research and arts education match an a/r/tographical conceptual framework.

The methodology encompasses the key concepts of critical moments and narrative inquiry method (Webster and Mertova, 2007) whereby reflection on a critical event can aid in the construction a story of a particular incident or series of incidents, and an aim of my study to construct a narrative of each postgraduate artist's praxis. The outcome of this was that such accounts are reported in this thesis via individual narratives of practice (Murphy, 2012).

This study is positioned at a time when understanding of the nature of practice-led arts research continues to expand through rich discussion and growing exemplars of methods in practice-led research. My intention was to explore how reflective practice, and the CRJ reflective strategy, might function as a way of documenting the praxis of individual artists, contributing to emerging practice-led research methodologies, and to discussion of practice-led research in general.

Background of inquiry

This study explored the processes of art and knowledge-making by six HDR students of three arts disciplines—performing arts, visual arts and language arts (creative writing)—through the CRJ reflective research strategy, drawn from its original proposition as the River Journey tool applied in music education (Burnard, 2000; Kerchner, 2006). This research built upon an inquiry I conducted in previous Master of Philosophy studies at the University of Cambridge, a small-scale research project in which I interviewed four students of a Master of Children's Literature degree about their experience of a creative writing elective component of that course, using the River Journey as a data capture interview tool. The research identified the potential of the River Journey tool to enhance reflective practice and to capture and document the elusive detail of the creative process. As a result of conducting this previous project, I also identified the potential to adapt and expand the River Journey tool into a more complex reflective practice strategy. I was keen to expand on the project to incorporate a more in-depth inquiry, to investigate ways to enhance the reflective practice of the participants, and to test the potential of the River Journey tool to explore the creative process across other arts disciplines and within longer practice-led research contexts. The result of this expansion is this PhD project: 'Creative River Journeys: Using reflective practice to investigate creative practice-led research'.

The PhD study had three phases. In the first, the artist–researcher subjects and I co-constructed maps of their creative journey to model the reflective arts practice inherent in the CRJ strategy. Through in-depth interview conversation with each artist–researcher, I used the CRJ to capture a record of the critical moments in the development of one piece of that individual's creative work (or work-in-progress) with the aim of developing reflective practice with each HDR artist–researcher.

The second phase saw the HDR artist–researcher construct a map of their own praxis themselves, using the CRJ as the model of reflective arts practice adapted to their own praxis. In some instances, this second phase saw a research participant identify in their

praxis an already established reflective practice strategy for identifying critical moments, such as an artist's notebook, conversations with a critical friend, or a writer's journal. In other instances, the CRJ elicited successful reflective practice but this did not transfer into the participant's own HDR practice-led research methods.

The third phase was a focus group collaborative reflection with the HDR artist–researchers, meeting in a group setting to explore the elucidations of their own arts praxis made possible by the CRJ, and to interrogate the potential of the CRJ strategy as an element of practice-led research methodology.

Conceptual framework and research questions
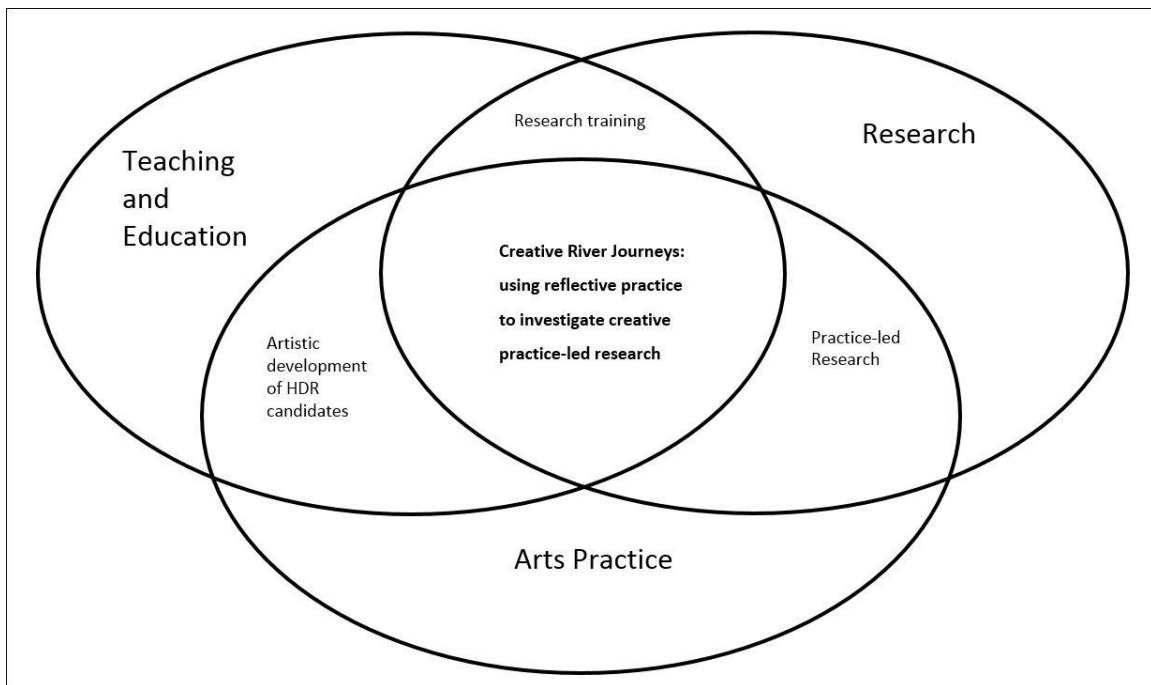
Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the Creative River Journey inquiry into using reflective practice to investigate creative practice-led research in higher degree education (taking an a/r/tography methodological approach).

The conceptual framework for the 'Creative River Journey' study (Figure 1) provided a context in which the researcher could apply principles of a/r/tography to research about artist–researchers in the higher degree setting, and also served as an organizing framework to direct the inquiry. The three key areas of the conceptual framework for this study were drawn from a/r/tography's three-fold foci on art, research and teaching.

As an a/r/tographer researching art practice in higher degree education, I narrowed these three areas into what I established as the three intersections of these focal areas: firstly, the intersection of arts practice and teaching I deemed to be the artistic development of the higher degree by research student. Secondly, the intersection of teaching and research in the higher degree I deemed to be research training. Thirdly, the intersection of arts practice and the research context I deemed to be practice-led research. Given the diversity of the participants' disciplines, art practices and methodological approaches, using these three intersections allowed me to establish common lines of inquiry across such complexity.

With these three intersections in mind, I addressed three research questions in relation to what the application of the CRJ strategy to the creative practice elucidated for, and about, the HDR artist–researcher. A fourth question addressed the heart of the conceptual framework, the experiences and evaluations of the CRJ strategy by the HDR artist–researcher participants. The four research questions about what the 'Creative River Journey' study reveals are as follows:

1. ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF HDR CANDIDATES:
   What factors are shown that impact on the artistic development in HDR practice-led research?

2. PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH:
   What are the challenges, skills and approaches to methodology that support HDR practice-led research?

3. RESEARCH TRAINING:
   How does practice-led research training induct HDR students into theory, practice, reflection, and academia?

4. CREATIVE RIVER JOURNEY INQUIRY:
   What are the participants' responses to using the CRJ reflective inquiry strategy?

Aim

The 'Creative River Journey' study aimed to examine the way that reflective practice and the CRJ reflective strategy might add to emerging practice-led research methodologies for individual artist–researchers and the field of practice-led research in general. It also aimed to explore what the CRJ strategy revealed about artistic practice, practice-led research and research training for HDR artist–researchers.

Thesis structure

In keeping with the metaphor of the river inherent in the CRJ, I have embraced the metaphorical implications of landscape for this study in the naming of the structure of the thesis chapters, for example, chapter one about the research context is called 'The Terrain'. In doing this, I was informed by my understanding that the creative practice-led research of HDR artist–researchers took place in the wider landscape of their creative practice and their lives in general. Furthermore, I was struck by the identification by some of the participants with the journey metaphor in relation to their PhD experiences. This was further confirmed in reading Gray and Malin's (2004) use of landscape metaphors in their text on visual arts and design research methodology. Thus, this thesis consists of the following chapters: Chapter 1—THE TERRAIN—of this thesis is a contextual review in relation to the practice-led research of HDR artist–researchers, addressing the broad concepts of Arts Practice, Research, and Teaching/Training. Chapter 2—THE RIVER—is a contextual review in relation to the 'Creative River Journey' and addresses the choice of the CRJ as a research strategy. Chapter 3—THE NAVIGATION—is an overview of the methodological framework of the CRJ project. Chapter 4—THE JOURNEYS—are narrative accounts of the practice-led research of each of the six HDR artist–researcher participants who completed the 'Creative River Journey' study, and who form the six case studies investigated in this thesis. Chapter 5—TALES THE RIVERS TELL—is a discussion of themes and further findings resulting from cross-case analysis of these case studies. Chapter 6—THE LANDSCAPE AHEAD—discusses recommendations, including for future research.

In keeping with an a/r/tography approach, in which the researcher aims to operate concurrently as artist, researcher and teacher, I have made space in this thesis for my art practice as a poet. In doing so, I am also informed by poetic inquiry as a methodology (Prendergast, Leggo & Sameshima, 2009a; 2009b) and Paul McIntosh's (2008) work on poetics, space and human geography within the context of visual and poetic methods as reflection. Poetic interludes appear between the chapters, and between each narrative of practice. In a/r/tography, attention is directed to the space in between art, research and teaching, and the inclusion of poems as poetic interludes also honours this aspect of a/r/tography. I have written these poems throughout the course of this PhD study, some of which have simultaneously been published in anthologies. Some poems are responses to ideas or theory in the study, others are responses directly to my experiences of researching with participants. Furthermore, as my a/r/tographical practice is at the heart of the study, and as I, the researcher, am present and visible as co-constructor at times throughout the study, I have elected to use the first-person voice where appropriate throughout the body of this thesis.

Significance of the study

This study demonstrated an innovative way of exploring the relationship between the creative and critical components in creative arts higher education degrees. The CRJ reflective strategy generated knowledge about how each artist–researcher engaged in a meld of practice and research in the art-making process within practice-led research, and brought to light key critical moments in the practice–research nexus, that is, in their praxis. Of consequence to the knowledge outcomes for the HDR artist–researchers in the study is how these captured the phenomena of their praxis, and thus became a useful documentation strategy in their practice-led research.

In the past decade, there has been a significant discussion about the nature of research in the creative arts and models for such research (Barrett & Bolt, 2007; Leavy, 2009; Riley and Hunter, 2009; Smith and Dean, 2009). Haseman offers a model outside existing qualitative and quantitative research paradigms which he calls performative

research, which encompasses practice-led research (Haseman, 2006; Haseman, 2007; also in Barrett & Bolt, 2007). However, the term practice-led research has become the more commonly used term in Australia (Barrett & Bolt, 2007,) and thus this study uses that term. Given this, in keeping with Haseman's notion of the shifting boundaries of creative arts research, the CRJ reflective practice strategy has its roots in the qualitative domain using interviewing and reflection, but examines a potential way to move forward into the domain of practice-led research through a focus on an artist's practice as the source of new knowledge. This study itself is not a practice-led research project, as the new knowledge it seeks is identified through qualitative methods such as interviewing, case study, creative content analysis and grounded theory data analysis of others' creative practice. However, in using a/r/tography as its qualitative methodological framework, the study is a timely experiment in relation to shifting boundaries between concepts and between methods in both qualitative research and practice-led research.

This study contributes to the field of practice-led research methodology and pedagogy by providing my outsider perspective as researcher to examination of the six case studies of the participants' practice-led research. At the same time, as researcher, I am allowed a unique insider perspective as both a co-constructor of the HDR artist–researchers' reflective practice through the CRJ strategy, and as the participants independently document their creative practice and reflective practice strategies.

This study adds the perspective of the HDR artist–researcher engaged in a creative arts doctorate to the research underpinning existing Australian contextual reviews of supervision, for example effective supervision of creative practice higher degrees (Hamilton & Carson, 2013a). It also supplements work on the creative arts HDR examination process, for example examining doctorates in the creative arts (Webb, Brien & Burr, 2012).

Limitations of the study

This study was specifically enacted within the higher degree arts education context of Edith Cowan University, and therefore is limited to examining practice-led research by postgraduate students in this setting. The subjects of the study were either candidates for master's degrees by research or doctoral degrees at commencement of the study, so the study's relevance is limited to the educational experiences and praxis of such postgraduate students in this setting.

The set of cases under scrutiny in the 'Creative River Journey' study is limited to six, all of whom were ECU HDR candidates, and this is acknowledged as a small and closely defined cohort. The set of cases under scrutiny in the 'Creative River Journey' study is limited to six, all of whom were ECU HDR candidates, and this is acknowledged as a small and closely defined cohort. Given the complexity of researching a/r/tography in the context of practice-led research, it was important to keep constant as many variables as possible. Given the diversity of approaches to creative research within institutions (let alone between institutions), it was decided to limit recruitment to one institution, It made sense for all concerned that the institution should be ECU. Restrictions by ECU's Ethics Committee meant that the researcher could not actively recruit participants. Instead, HDR supervisors of beginning HDR candidates engaged in arts practice recommended the project to participants, or the participants approached the researcher on hearing of the project through the HDR social network. It would have been even more complex had these requests involved multiple supervisors across several universities. This meant the researcher was restricted to only the number of cases from ECU whereby participants volunteered to be involved in the study. Ten participants initially agreed to participate, with four withdrawing from the study or their degrees, or not completing all three phases of the CRJ strategy. The six participants who completed all three phases of the CRJ strategy and completed their HDR studies have been included as the six cases in this thesis.

Rationale for limitations

Whilst this study explored reflective arts practice across arts disciplines, and set out to inquire into how the CRJ strategy functioned as a reflective tool in different disciplines, it was only within the scope of this study to examine three arts disciplines. The rationale behind this decision was that practice within each discipline is already highly varied and complex. Furthermore, those disciplines supported by the HDR education environment at ECU, such as performing arts in WAAPA, and creative writing and visual arts in the School of Arts and Humanities, limited the disciplines from which the participants would be drawn.

A further rationale informing this decision is my previous experience in using the River Journey in the aforementioned small-scale research project into the creative writing elective at the University of Cambridge. That research project highlighted to me the breadth of detail about the creative process that one brief interview using the River Journey tool produced. Thus, I chose to confine this PhD study to three arts disciplines, mindful of the River Journey tool's potential to provide a great deal of highly complex, in-depth data about the creative process.

In making this decision, I was aware that the choice of fewer disciplines does not provide extensive breadth of information about the entire field of arts practice-led research. However, the decision to select fewer HDR students and disciplines achieved depth of understanding of each individual postgraduate artist–researcher's experience, the phenomena of their praxis, and potential practice-led research strategies, leading to six rich and fruitful case studies.

The time limitations of this study also meant that there was initially no intended retroactive analysis of students after they have finished their doctoral or master's degree studies. The participants' 2–3 year time-frames for their own studies was to be a similar time-frame to my PhD study. However, the PhD process being what it is, many of my artist–researcher participants did not follow the decreed three year time-line for PhD completion and, indeed, nor did I. Therefore, retroactive analysis of five of the
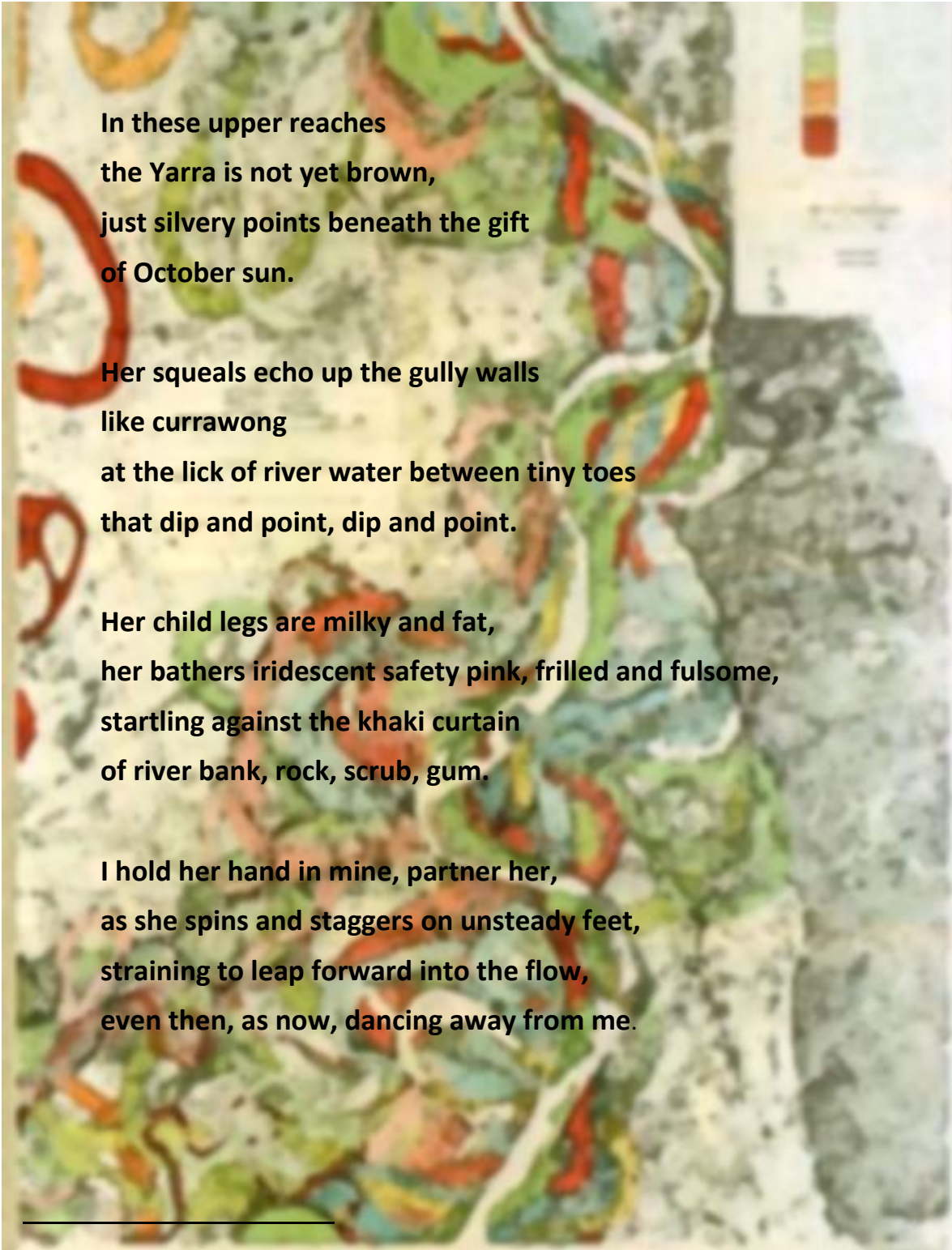
participants who completed within the time frame of this study, and of the sixth who was in the process of examination at the time that this 'Creative River Journey' study thesis was written, was possible.

Summary

This study set out to explore a space where the realms of arts, research and education intersect. Moreover, it was specifically focused on the intersection between <u>arts</u> research methods, practice-led <u>research</u>, and postgraduate arts <u>teaching</u>, learning and education. This particular nuanced triumvirate was investigated through reflective arts practice using the CRJ strategy.

Through the reflective arts practice inherent in the CRJ, I elucidated each individual postgraduate artist–researcher's tacit knowledge of the creative art-making process. In co-constructing the CRJ, the participant and I were able to identify the choices made in orienting their practical creative actions. We made visible these choices through interpretive understanding of the critical moments in developing a text, performance, artwork or other contained aspect of their practice. In conducting their reflective arts practice independently, the participants developed and applied their own strategy to self-identify key moments in their creative process, sometimes using and adapting the CRJ to their own purposes. Collaboratively, in the focus groups, the participants and I explored the potency of the CRJ strategy in elucidating postgraduate arts practice, and its usefulness as an aspect of practice-led research methodology. This process also rendered visible the experiences of the artist–researchers as postgraduate students at the vanguard of practice-led research in Australia. These deliberate pedagogical interventions, reflective practice, and the CRJ reflective strategy all added to emerging practice-led research methodologies for individual artists, and the discussion of this adds to understanding of the field of practice-led research in general.

POETIC INTERLUDE 1—POUND BEND[1] (YARRA RIVER)

In these upper reaches
the Yarra is not yet brown,
just silvery points beneath the gift
of October sun.

Her squeals echo up the gully walls
like currawong
at the lick of river water between tiny toes
that dip and point, dip and point.

Her child legs are milky and fat,
her bathers iridescent safety pink, frilled and fulsome,
startling against the khaki curtain
of river bank, rock, scrub, gum.

I hold her hand in mine, partner her,
as she spins and staggers on unsteady feet,
straining to leap forward into the flow,
even then, as now, dancing away from me.

[1] (Stevenson, 2012b, p.55)

CHAPTER 1—THE TERRAIN (CONTEXT)

A—ART PRACTICE

A1. The nature of creativity in practice

In the 'Creative River Journey' study, I have used reflection to aid the HDR artist–researcher to shift out of the unconscious state of creating and reflect consciously on their own creative processes with critical judgement. I have sought to create a way in which a HDR artist–researcher may carry out the delicate balancing act of practice-led research by way of using the CRJ strategy to make more conscious the critical moments experienced in their creative process. Though concepts of creativity are not used to map the participants' practice, nor to scaffold the artist' creative practice (as I am cognizant not to intervene in their creative process, but rather to engage with their reflective practice processes), these do underpin the theoretical understanding of art practice in the project. The artist's tacit knowledge at play in the complex creative process, which I captured in the CRJ strategy, bears some resemblance to Koestler's definition of creativity whereby:

> The moment of truth, the sudden emergence of a new insight is an act of intuition. Such intuitions give the appearance of miraculous short-circuits of reasoning. In fact, they may be likened to an immense chain of which only the beginning and the end are visible above the surface of consciousness. The diver vanishes at one end of the chain and comes up at the other end, guided by invisible links. (1975, p.211)

In this definition, whilst it recognises creativity as a complex process with a chain of elements impacting on the outcome, some of the beliefs about creativity that existed in the 20th century that position creativity as unfathomable persist. For example, that insight is the result of an act of intuition, that there is miraculous thinking, that the journey is made up of invisible, sub-conscious links. In this, Koestler's description agrees in part with Bourdieu's notion of the conscious and unconscious processes at play in habitus: "a practical sense . . . that inclines agents to act and react in specific situations in a manner that is not always calculated and that is not simply a question of conscious

obedience to rules". (Johnson, 1993, p.5). Certainly, no-one would deny there is hidden, tacit knowledge embodied in the creative process.

The 'Creative River Journey' study, however, has illustrated that it is possible to bring this submerged tacit knowledge to the surface. This study is founded upon Csikszentmihalyi's system model of creativity that involves three key components:

> The first is the *person,* who is predisposed by genetic endowment and early experience to become interested in a particular realm of art or science. The second is the *domain,* which is the set of rules and procedures that constitute the realm in question. Finally, the third is the *field,* which constitutes the gatekeepers of the domain and either encourages or rejects the person's innovation to the domain. (Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 2003, p.187)

Csikszentmihalyi's system model of creativity also identifies the conscious and unconscious aspects of the creative process. He outlines five steps in the creative process, but states that "the creative process is less linear than recursive":

> The creative process has traditionally been described as taking five steps. The first is a period of preparation, becoming immersed, consciously or not, in a set of problematic issues that are interesting and arouse curiosity…

> The second phase of the creative process is a period of incubation, during which ideas churn around below the threshold of consciousness…

> The third component of the creative process is insight, sometimes called the "Aha!" moment. In real life, there may be several insights interspersed with periods of incubation, evaluation and elaboration.

> The fourth component is evaluation when the person must decide whether the insight is valuable and worth pursuing. This is also when the internalised criteria of the domain, and the internalised opinion of the field usually become prominent…

> The fifth and last component of the process is elaboration…[In the study of the writer] Livi's case, elaboration consisted in selecting the characters of the story, deciding on the plot, and then translating the emotions she had intuited into strings of words. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, pp.79–80)

This study, though it acknowledges that creativity exists within a complex system and does not deny the importance of the domain and field, has as its focus the individual artist–researcher and their experience of creativity within a practice-led research

degree. Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura identify that the individual is the key component of the system whilst also drawing attention to the pleasure of creativity, "[the] necessary ingredient, namely the personal experiences of the creator and of the audience, because creativity cannot be understood without the joy it provides" (2003, p.189).

This study is built upon the conceptualization of contemporary understandings of creativity that are no longer bound by 20th century notions of the creative process as an internalised process by an individual or by the genius creative person (McWilliam, 2008, p.10). Instead, the study accepts new understandings of creativity that look towards a 21st century concept of creativity that is more interdisciplinary, collaborative, system-contextualised and learnable, and takes into consideration the Vygotskian notion that there is a continuum of creativity and that artist–researchers may be at any point on this continuum. Current discussions of levels of creativity, such as little c and big C creativity (Moran & John-Steiner, 2003; McWilliam, 2008; Spencer, Lucas & Claxton, 2012), propose early and late career creativity exist on this continuum: "Vygotsky's ideas would suggest that he considered little c, or individual inventiveness, and big C, or historical creativity, as dialectically connected. . . . For Vygotsky (1965/1971), there is no basic difference in the creative process between a storyteller and a famous creator" (Moran & John-Steiner, 2003, p.81). The study takes into account that degrees of creativity, such as Kaufman and Beghetto's (2009) Four C model of creativity, are possible. This model distinguishes creativity into four levels which Spencer, Lucas and Claxton list as follows:

> • Big C creativity = genius creativity
>
> • Pro C creativity = professional creativity (anyone who attains professional-level expertise in any creative area)
>
> • Little c creativity = personal creativity (those activities in which the average person may participate each day)
>
> • Mini c creativity = intrapersonal creative insights and interpretations which often only live within the person. (2012, p.17)

The submerged aspects of the creative process are also highlighted by Csikszentmihalyi who, at the same time, highlights how conscious critical judgement is required: "What is difficult about this process is that one must keep the mind focused on two contradictory goals: not to miss the message whispered by the unconscious and at the same time force it into a suitable form. The first requires openness, the second critical judgement" (1996, p.263). The CRJ strategy is an intervention designed to steer HDR artist–researcher participants toward such critical judgement.

A2. Artistic knowledge and transcognition

The knowledge that a HDR artist–researcher arrives at in their arts praxis was explored in this study, and can be described as knowledge in and of their own actions as an artist. It is artistic knowledge as Harper and Kroll explain below, a particular type of knowledge that is the subject of practice-led research in the arts disciplines:

> This knowledge, while intersecting with that acquired by the post-creation act of criticism, is fundamentally different in attitude because its purpose is primarily to inform the practitioner (and, by extension, other practitioners) and therefore give her or him better access to ideas and approaches that might enhance their own practice. (2008b, p.4)

In the CRJ strategy, knowledge generated through a process of reflection made it possible for the HDR artist–researcher to explore their own *artistic knowledge.* This concept of knowledge also echoes van Manen's seminal definition of practical knowledge:

> The practical then refers to the process of analyzing and clarifying individual and cultural experiences, meanings, perceptions, assumptions, prejudgments and presuppositions, for the purpose of orienting practical actions . . . at this level of the practical, the focus is on an interpretive understanding both of the nature and quality of education experience, and making choices. (1977, p.227)

This definition further corresponds with Stewart's discussion of the knowledge that a visual artist arrives at in practice-led research: "as practitioners who research our own praxis, we can present the kind of knowledge about the field generated by such

practice. In this way we can add to living theory through rich descriptions that illuminate and illustrate praxis in the field" (2003, p.2).

Concepts of knowledge in the 'Creative River Journey' study are also further informed by tacit knowledge as discussed by Polanyi (1962), and also Schön's notion of reflective practice knowledge, arrived at through action:

> the sorts of knowledge in our intelligent action – the publicly observable, the physical performances like riding a bicycle and private operations like instant analysis of a balance sheet. In both cases the knowing is *in* the action . . . and we are characteristically unable to make it verbally explicit. Nevertheless, it is sometimes possible, by observing and reflecting on our actions to make a description of the tacit knowledge implicit in them. (1987, p.25)

Sullivan (2001) has introduced the term transcognition to describe artistic knowledge. He calls attention to what he sees as an oversimplified dichotomy in the ways of describing thinking and knowledge in arts practice. On the one hand he depicts some as seeing "art cognition as process", a systematic view which sits alongside Bourdieu's theory of habitus. Sullivan states that in a system view of artistic knowledge "thinking in art and thinking <u>about</u> art is language dependent . . . a process mediated by social and cultural conventions" (2001, p.5). On the other hand, Sullivan shows that seeing "art cognition as product" is often a way of constructing artistic thinking: a "psychological tradition . . . [in which] the study of perceptual processes is seen as a way of understanding thinking . . . [where] different cognitive functions are associated with different media", and Csikszentmihalyi sits in this camp. Sullivan argues for a "reconciliation of the process-product dichotomy" (2001, p.5).

This reconciliation, Sullivan proposes, can be achieved through a complex reframing of artistic thinking as *transcognition* which he defines as:

> cognitive coalition [that] involves an ongoing dialogue between, within and around the artist, the artwork, viewer, and context where each has a role in co-constructing meaning. . . .The strategic interaction between the self and others occurs over time and involves iteration and negotiation as individual purpose is mediated by situational factors. (2001, p.9)

Sullivan declared that it is "important to consider all the relevant contexts that influence how creativity is conceptualized and theorized as research practice and to appreciate the educational rationale for creative-led research" (2007, p.1187). Sullivan goes further in drawing up a multifaceted model of creativity as research practice (Figure 2, below) to illustrate the context for *transcognition.* The 'Creative River Journey' study identified the highly individual approaches to knowledge construction that the HDR artist–researcher participants employed, housed within their idiosyncratic approaches to practice-led research. Therefore, Sullivan's is a useful model in trying to make sense of the diversity of practice-led research iterations in the study.
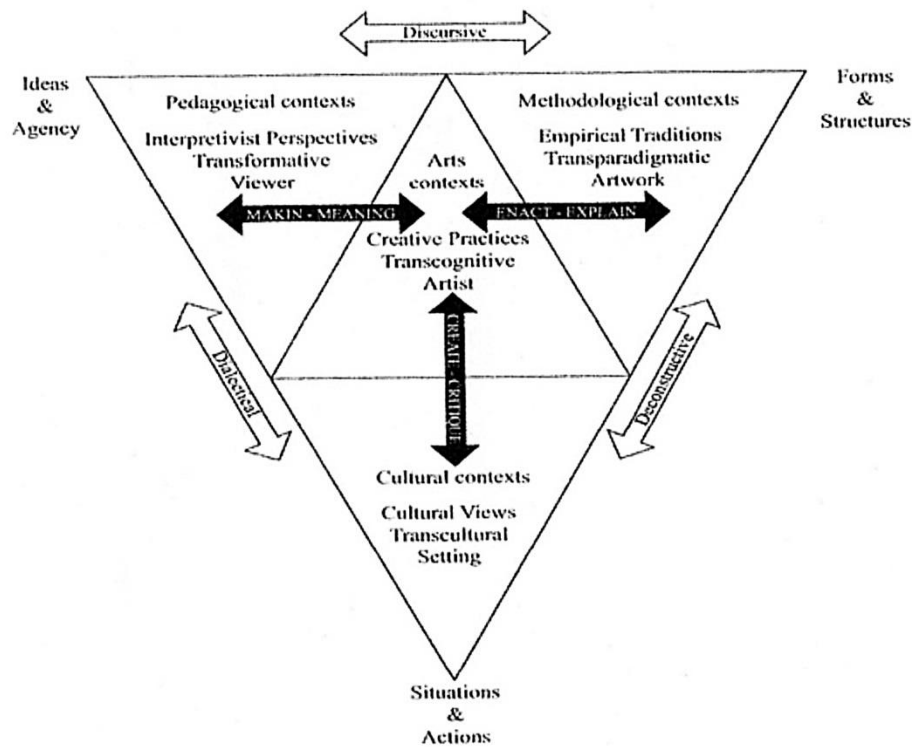
Figure 2: Research frameworks informing practice. Source: Sullivan, 2007, p.1187.
(Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: research or study).

A3. Practice, praxis and knowledge

PRACTICE

In describing practice as *transcognition* and modeling practice in this way, Sullivan provides a useful way of understanding the contexts that impact on practice-led research in this study. Sullivan's model corresponds with this study's a/r/tographical perspective, and both Sullivan's model and the 'Creative River Journey' study position the HDR artist–researcher's practice at the nexus of these contexts:

- wider *arts* practice – Sullivan's cultural context;
- *research* practice – Sullivan's methodological contexts; and
- *teaching* practice – Sullivan's pedagogical contexts.

This complex notion of practice was investigated in this study by documenting the journey of the creation of a particular work; each HDR artist–researcher participant's practice was explored via the CRJ strategy's scholarly examination of the significant influences and methods acknowledged by individual artists. This then led, in some cases, to independent scholarly examination of the significant influences and methods by the participants themselves.

But, as Sullivan's model of creative practice suggests and as Stewart suggests in her discussion of visual arts praxis, practice in a HDR setting is itself already a scholarly negotiation of contexts, methods and interpretations. In this study, practice is understood as a complex act of investigation, as Harper and Kroll define it: "practice, therefore, can be viewed as a mode of investigation, and a mode informed by individual and cultural circumstances" (2008b, p.6). They place the creative act as central to such practice, as does the 'Creative River Journey' study: "practice means an approach to a subject based on knowledge through the act of creating" (2008b, p.4). One of the aims of this study was elucidation of the ways in which a range of HDR artist scholars negotiated with these contexts to bring about the act of creating in their practice within HDR practice-led research.

It is in relation to the HDR artist–researcher's creation of "knowledge through the act of creating" (Harper & Kroll, 2008b, p.4) that this study was directed. Harper and Kroll state of practice-derived knowledge that:

> This knowledge is not superficial. It results from sustained and serious examination of writerly [or other arts] practice and might include not only contemporary theoretical or critical models but the writers' [or artists'] own past works as well as predecessors and traditions. In some incarnations, practice as research functions as the formal autobiography of an individual's craft, taking into account significant influences and methods. (2008b, p.4)

The benefit of the 'Creative River Journey' research lies in what it has revealed about individual knowledge situated in each artist–researcher's personal praxis, and the new knowledge generated by the creative practice-led research experience. The study offers a way of modeling this knowledge through the reflective arts practice inherent in the CRJ strategy and, in this way, this research is in keeping with Barrett's call for externalizing the knowledge made possible in practice-led research:

> The innovative and critical potential of practice-based research lies in its capacity to generate personally situated knowledge and new ways of modeling such knowledge while at the same time revealing philosophical, social and cultural contexts for the critical intervention and application of knowledge outcomes. (Barrett, 2007b, p.2)

PRAXIS

As stated previously, Stewart has argued for the use of the term praxis rather than practice, and says praxis-derived knowledge: "is concerned with the processes for theorising practice, using appropriation, pastiche and collaboration as basic tenants [*sic*]. In moving creatively into our practice we are fundamentally concerned to develop new knowledge" (2001, p.4). The 'Creative River Journey' doctoral study incorporates the term practice-led, not praxis, in its subtitle: 'using reflective practice to investigate creative practice-led research' and part of my own journey in this PhD has been wrestling with the terminology I should use to describe the complexity of creative practice and research that is embodied in a creative higher degree by research.

Nelson (2013) describes such creative research as "practice-as-research" and states that his preferred term is, like Stewart, praxis, to indicate "theory imbricated within practice" (p.5). Nelson's model of practice-as research (Figure 3, below) "is dynamic and interactive . . . Theory, that is to say, is not prior to practice, functioning to form it, but theory and practice are rather 'imbricated within each other' in praxis" (p.62). The process whereby theory and material practice are layered in this way fosters "the possibility of thought within both 'theory' and 'practice' in an iterative process of doing-reflecting-reading-articulating-doing" (p.32). Such praxis is a coherent approach that melds practice and research within a practice-led research degree. Bolt explains praxical knowledge and its relation to the doctoral exegesis:

> Praxical knowledge takes a number of forms and it is this multiplicity that provides creative arts research with its distinctive character. Whilst the artwork is imminently articulate and eloquent in its own right, tacit knowing and the generative potential of process have the potential to reveal new insights; both those insights that inform and find a form in artworks and those that can be articulated in words. It is here that the exegesis offers a critical role. (Bolt, 2006, p.7)

Critical reflection, Nelson suggests, mobilises both theory and practice, and makes accessible the tacit knowing of process. He cites Bolt's statement that praxis involves a "double articulation between theory and practice, whereby theory emerges from reflexive practice at the same time as practice is informed by theory" (Bolt, 2007, as cited in Nelson, 2013, p.29) and calls this double articulation *arts praxis* (p.37). The 'Creative River Journey' has revealed this very double articulation in action through the reflective practice elicited by in the CRJ strategy. Consequently, it is appropriate to apply the term praxis to the subject matter under investigation in the study, whilst still employing the term practice-led research to the wider HDR context for such praxis.
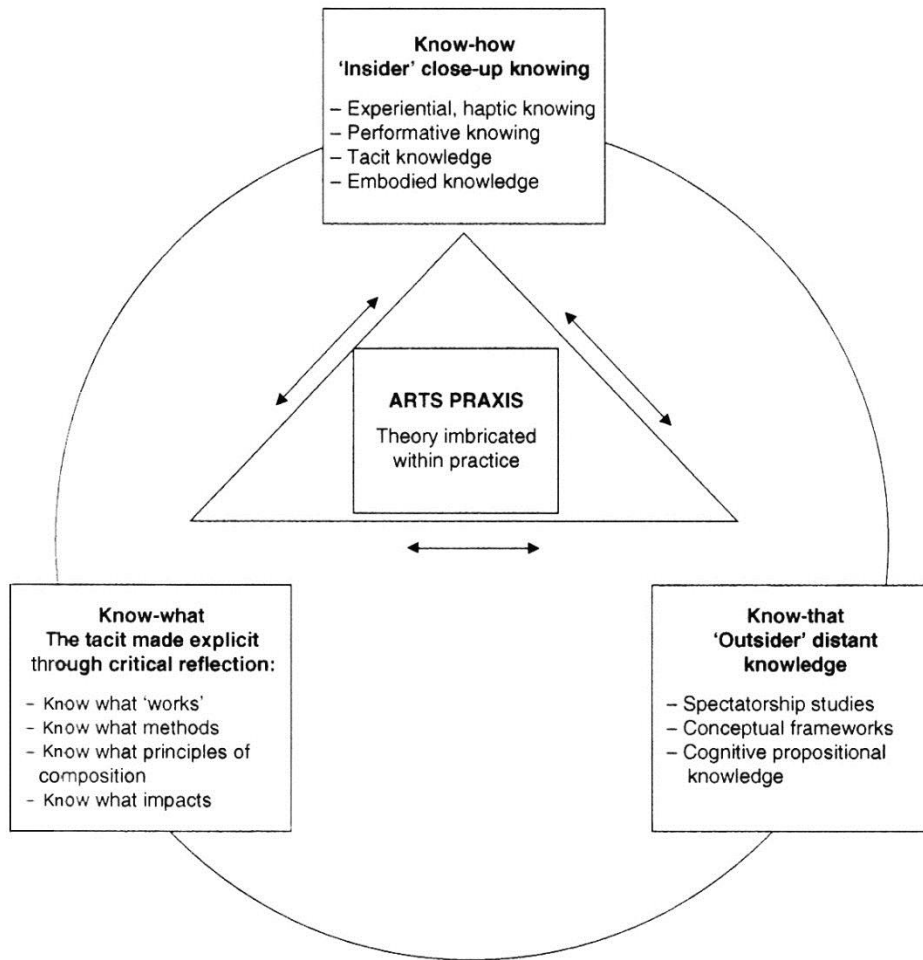
Modes of knowing: multi-mode epistemological model for PaR

Figure 3: Nelson's Model of Practice as research (Source: Nelson, 2013, p.3.)
(Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: research or study).

KNOWLEDGE

Nelson (2013) draws on the artist Marina Abromovic to introduce a more fluid way of knowing than "the scientific method" (p.39) or "hard facts": "knowledge comes from experience. I call this kind of experience 'liquid knowledge'" (Abromovic, 1996, cited in Nelson, 2013, p.52). Nelson argues that knowledge exists on a spectrum from tacit knowledge to codified knowledge (p.38) and proposes a model of 'practice-as-research' which encompasses three ways of knowing (Figure 3). Nelson advocates for the use of 'knowing' as an active verb in the model to take into account the mobilised, active

nature of praxis, though he also employs the term 'knowledge'. These three ways of knowing can be summarised as follows, and Nelson argues that "the pursuit of knowledge might best be served by embracing all [three] possibilities" (p.38):

- Know-how [or] 'insider' close-up knowing [that includes] experiential, haptic knowing, performative knowing, tacit knowledge [and] embodied knowledge;

- Know-that [or] 'outsider' knowledge . . . 'objective' (value-free) knowledge of objects seen clearly from a distance . . . [that includes] conceptual frameworks [and] cognitive propositional knowledge; and

- Know-what [or] the 'tacit made explicit through critical reflection' [that includes instances when the artist–researcher might] know what works; know what methods; know what principles of composition; know what impacts. (2013, pp.37–38)

This model serves not so much as a how-to guide for constructing practice-led research, but rather as a model in which a researcher might identify ways of expanding their knowledge of their practice through new modes of knowing that they do not usually privilege. Nelson states, "Recognizing the particularity of each PaR project, it [this diagram] has offered not a meta-theory but a model to house distinct, but dynamically interrelated, modes of knowing or knowledge and to show how these may be mobilized in PaR" (2013, p.47).

R—RESEARCH

R1. Practice-led research—an alternative research paradigm

As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, in choosing to use the term practice-led research to describe HDR arts praxis and its relationship to the academy, I am cognizant of the many circular arguments around terminology, especially the use of the term practice-led, in recent discussions about arts practice research methodology (Haseman, 2006; Fuschini, Jones, Kershaw & Piccini, 2009; Barrett & Bolt, 2007; Kershaw, 2011; Nelson, 2013). Much of this discussion results from calls for the legitimization of practice-led research and also from claims for territory within the wider research

landscape. I agree with Haseman's (2006) call for a paradigm shift in the way we conceptualise arts practice research methodology, a move away from the dichotomy of qualitative and quantitative research to the notion that there are three distinct categories of research: qualitative, quantitative, and performative research. However, I do not agree with a shift to the less-recognised term performative research (p.103). I heed that Haseman places practice as primary and thus believes that practice-led research is a term that illustrates the emphasis on practice more clearly. Haseman states: "The 'practice' in 'practice-led research' is primary – it is not an optional extra; it is the necessary pre-condition of engagement in performative research" (2006, p.103). Though Haseman separates qualitative and performative research, he acknowledges the inter-relationship between qualitative methodology and practice-led methodology, whereby:

> researchers [may] progress their studies by employing variations of: reflective practice, participant observation, performance ethnography, ethnodrama, biographical/autobiographical/ narrative inquiry, and the inquiry cycle from action research . . . it is not surprising to find practice-led researchers repurposing established methods from the qualitative research tradition. For example, practice-led researchers have used interviews, reflective dialogue techniques, journals, observation methods, practice trails, personal experience, and expert and peer review methods to complement and enrich their work-based practices. (2006, p.104)

Whilst the fact that only one of my participants used the term practice-led research suggests that the institutional search for the correct phrase is less pressing for artist–researchers, the problem of terminology has also plagued academics. Smith and Dean (2009) illustrate this in the very title of their book, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice*, in which they state: "In the discourse of practice-led research, the idea of the art-work as research, and the artwork plus surrounding documentations as research, occurs with different degrees of emphasis in the work of different commentators" (pp.5–6). In their discussion of dance research, academics Phillips, Stock and Vincs (2009) accommodate these different degrees of research by describing practice-based research, practice-led research, practice as research and mixed-mode practice as research (pp.11–12).

As a researcher in the field of practice-led research, I am often asked the question, 'what is the difference between practice-based and practice-led research?' And it is this question that has led me to this very discussion of the nomenclature of practice. This question is one part of the HDR process from which we should move forward. Working through three research projects centred on creative practice, I suggest that identifying one term that encompasses all modes of practice-related research, not various terms to describe micro practices, provides the beginning HDR artist–researcher with clearer boundaries from within which to define their practice-led project.

Practice-led research suits the complex process that artist–researchers engage in as they make creative practice central to their HDR endeavours, and also the process of 'becoming' an artist–researcher. They are often working in a number of ways throughout the lengthy duration of their research projects. For example, they may at one stage be researching about practice then applying that research in the studio or in the rehearsal room; thereby the practice becomes the focus of the project at that stage, thus it becomes practice-led research.

PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

International higher education has seen a move away from terms such as practice-based and practice-led. This is a very deliberate move, suggest the editors of the *Journal of Artistic Research* (JAR). JAR editor Schwab says: "'Artistic research', however, is not just another word for 'practice'; nor is it aligned per se with dominant political agendas: it is a term that has been, and still is, suspended in its definition" (Schwab, 2011, para. 1). In an earlier discussion of the term artistic research, Balkema and Stager (2004) discussed this change in the use of the word 'practice':

> An important shift has occurred in the modernist paradigm whereby the accent is no longer on practice as production. Rather practice has turned into a dynamic point of reference for theory-driven experimentation in general. While the traditional academic, artistic model could be described as one where experimentation is embedded in experience, the topical model [of artistic research] is one in which experience is embedded in experimentation. (p.9)

In Norway, the government has established a statutory body to oversee development of what they deem "artistic research", identifying the diversity of such research:

> The Steering Committee understands the academic framework in the field of art as containing the whole span of artistic expressions and disciplines, and assumes that the exchange of experiences and insights across all the individual disciplines will promote the understanding and development of the goals and framework for artistic research. (Ministry of Education Norway, n.d.)

The ambivalence of one of the artist–researcher participants to the word *research* is also reflected in Schwab's exploration of the term *artistic research* which he says "addresses the partially incompatible use of the word 'research' in academic and artistic contexts" (2011, para. 5). He also elaborates on an ambivalence to the shift away from linking practice with research in terminology, and indeed to the use of artistic research:

> For some, this moment represents success, since, particularly in institutional environments, the production of objects, events or concepts is starting to lose its grip on the less tangible, intellectual and open-ended requirements of practice. For others this moment is viewed less favourably and represents an erosion of art's perceived autonomy and efficacy. The argument being that, with 'research', political and bureaucratic interests have embedded a new and foreign term into art, through which they can operate. (Schwab, 2011, para. 1)

PRACTICE-LED IN THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

This way to name the diversity of practice at ECU by artist–researchers was discussed in a report arising from a research project conducted by the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and Deakin University which aimed at improving consistency in assessment of postgraduate dance degrees:

> In positioning creative practice within a research context, terms employed include practice-based, practice-led research, practice as research, performance as research, creative practice as research, creative arts research and research through practice. . . . The terms outlined all endeavour to deal with arts-based research degrees where the creative process and/or artefacts form part of the masters or doctoral outcomes, and are concerned with how the creative process is understood as research. (Phillips, Stock & Vinc, 2008, p.11)

The report's authors, after an attempt at defining several of these key terms, point out that there are "contradictions already institutionalised within the alternative terminologies" and chose themselves to use " 'multi-modal' research" because for them this term best "encompasses all the nuances of approach and uses of practice discussed" (p.15).

In the Australian context, where the term *practice-led research* has become a commonly used term to describe creative arts higher degrees by research (Brook, 2010, p.2), the consensus around the use of the term is by no means universal. In a paper presented at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Lelia Green discussed "a re-configured arts research environment characterised—in Australia—by a new acceptance of practice-led research" (Green, 2007, p.1). Green was building upon her work with Haseman in an influential special issue of *Media International Australia* journal on the theme of practice-led research (Green & Haseman, 2006). In this subsequent talk, Green (2007) was indeed prescient in her foretelling of the blurring of definitional boundaries around this term "practice-led research", stating that "no sooner will the boundaries of acceptable arts inquiry have been enlarged to accommodate practice-led research then artists will be challenging these limitations" (p.1). Since that time, Haseman, with Mafe, has gone on to argue for the legitimacy of practice-led research:

> Practice-led researchers join a bold tradition of theorists such as Bourdieu, Dewey and Schön whose central core '…conceives of practices as embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organised around shared practical understandings' (Schatzki 2001:2), . . . theorists who seek to build epistemologies of practice which serve to improve the practice itself and our theoretical understandings of that practice. (2009, p.214)

In Haseman and Mafe's view, the practice-led researcher demonstrates six conditions necessary for such research (2009, pp.214–217):

1. Resolving the 'problem' of the research problem
2. Repurposing the methods and language of practice into the methods and language of research
3. Identifying and deploying emerging critical contexts which are networked out of his or her practice

4. Identifying and engaging with the 'professional' frames within which practice is pursued
5. Anticipating and deciding on possible forms of reporting
6. Deliberating on the emerging aspirations, benefits and consequence which may flow from the demands and contingencies of practice.

Haseman attempted to find the one encompassing arts practice-oriented research term in his 2006 publication, 'A manifesto for performative research' (p.98). Unfortunately for Haseman, his argument for this one term, 'performative research', to describe practice-based or practice-led research, reached an audience at the same time as the influential Barrett and Bolt text *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (hardback edition 2007, paperback edition 2010). This was shortly followed by Smith and Dean's (2009) *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts,* and the clear waters of terminology made possible in Haseman's performative research model became muddied.

Haseman himself is included in the Barrett and Bolt publication, still arguing for the performative research paradigm, but now acknowledging that "'practice-led research' has become a prominent term for effectively describing the research approach that enables practitioners to initiate and then pursue their research through practice" (Haseman, 2007, p.147). Haseman suggests, like the WAAPA dance study, that a variety of terms have been applied to the research methodology adopted by creative practitioners, for example, 'practice as research', and 'practice-based research'.

Haseman asserts that practice-led research is the most appropriate term to apply to the creative work, however, because practice-led research: "asserts the primacy of practice and insists that because creative practice is both ongoing and persistent, practitioner researchers do not merely 'think' their way through and out of a problem, but rather they 'practise' to a resolution". (Haseman, 2007, p.147). Like many theorising practice-led research, Haseman cites the work of Carole Gray in his discussion of the use of the term practice-led research. Gray states:

> Firstly, research that is initiated in practice, where questions, problems,
> challenges are identified and formed by the need of the practice and
> practitioners; secondly, that the research strategy is carried out through

practice, using predominantly methodologies and specific methods familiar to us as practitioners. (Gray, 1996, p.3, as cited in Haseman, 2007, p.147)

Whilst practice-led research may have become a favoured term in Australia, Gray herself uses the terms 'artistic research' (Gray & Malins, 2004, p.20) to describe the paradigm of research in which practice-led research takes place, similar to Haseman's performative research paradigm, and 'practice-based' to describe research in creative practice (p.24). Given the range of opinions in regards to the nomenclature of practice as research, and given that practice-led research is a recognised term in Australia, I have chosen to apply that term to the research under investigation in the 'Creative River Journey' study. However, I do so cognizant of diversities of practice and terminology, even within my own research institution, ECU.

PRACTICE-LED IN THE ECU CONTEXT

What is also clear throughout my four year study of the creative practice of artist– researchers at ECU is the diversity of their practice and methodology. My study focused on artist–researchers across the fields of visual arts, performing arts and language arts, but it was very clear that there was little common ground amongst these artist– researchers in their descriptions of their practice. Though I choose to use the term practice-led research, the outcomes of the 'Creative River Journey' inquiry suggest that the term has not yet achieved common use amongst HDR artist–researchers at ECU, and this may also reflect institutional variations in the term applied.

ECU has demonstrated an aim for a comprehensive term within the university's administration of HDR procedures but also changes in terminology reflects some of the field's struggle with nomenclature. In 2014, the term 'creative research' began to be used in place of practice-led research. For example, in examination guidelines:

> The Master of Arts in various modes of creative research is an independent study based upon the perspective that creative art practices are alternative forms of knowledge embedded in investigation processes and methodologies of the various disciplines of performance (theatre, dance and/or music), the visual and audio arts, design and creative writing. (ECU, n.d.a)

However, further changes meant that, in 2017, the terms referred to for such research within the examination guidelines for a PhD read "creative research disciplines" (ECU, n.d.b) and for a PhD in (creative) writing, "creative project and critical essay" (ECU, n.d.c). Also, the ECU institutional guidelines for rewarding creative research (called Acknowledging Successful Performance In Research Excellence or ASPIRE) changed from referring in 2013 to research that "encompasses practice-based and practice-led research in the creative and performing arts" (ECU, 2013, p.1) to a current reference to "non-traditional research outputs [and] creative work" (ECU, 2017). These variations in terms applied by ECU to creative arts research about practice highlight the challenges an institution may face in finding one term to describe the diversity of practice-led research.

R2. Emergence and practice-led research methods

The use of the term 'emerging' is crucial in Haseman and Mafe's (2009) theorising of practice-led research. Their use of emerging is not to be conflated with misunderstandings about practice-led research as an emerging methodology, new on the scene of academic research. Practice as research can no longer be called an emerging methodology as it has been the subject of discussion for more than 20 years, beginning with Frayling in 1994, followed by Gray's (1996) influential paper on the subject. Nor should it denote that the HDR artist–researcher conducting practice-led research is an emerging artist, which usually indicates a beginner in an artistic field of practice. Emergence here refers to how knowledge and understanding in practice-led research arise, or emerge, from the doing of practice and from interpretive processes throughout that doing. Haseman and Mafe cite Goldstein in defining emergence "as a description for the way creative ideas, images, and insights can arise unexpectedly and radically distinct from whatever inputs that may serve as a groundwork for the created product" (Goldstein, 2005, p.3 as cited in Haseman & Mafe, 2009, p.219). They elaborate, in relation to practice-led research, arguing that this type of research is additional to the emergence of artwork through the creative process, once that process of creativity is put in the context of research:

The creative work is one research output but creative research itself is something that works with the creative component to establish something other, some critical or technological finding. So while there are emergent outcomes within creative practice, it is when this potent and somewhat unruly discipline is co-joined with research that creative practice-led research becomes truly emergent. (2009, p.220)

The CRJ strategy is designed to explore the emergent nature of practice-led research, with the CRJ strategy positioned to elicit reflective practice that brings to the surface the factors that are emerging from the creative work and the higher degree research. Sullivan (2006, para. 10) describes the attention to emergence in research as a "messy process", while Haseman and Mafe (2009, p.219) use the terms "chaos and complexity" to describe the challenge faced by artist–researchers as they navigate the emergence of practice-led research:

For the creative practitioner emergence and reflexivity are much more than distracting variables in the research which need controlling. Instead they are both foundational and constituting, operating at practically every level of research, and it is this which makes it difficult, messy and at times a frustrating endeavour for the creative researcher. (Haseman & Mafe, 2009, p.218)

The 'Creative River Journey' study explores the state of emergence of knowing through the CRJ strategy, which places a reflective practice strategy in this in-between emergent space of the participant's practice-led research. The metaphor of the river captures some of the chaos and complexity as critical moments emerge through discussion and reflection. Significantly, as a/r/tographical research, this study deliberately gives: "attention to the spaces in-between art, education, and research, in between 'art' and 'graphy', and in-between art a/r/t" (Irwin & Springgay 2008a, pp.xxvii). Of such spaces in-between, Haseman and Mafe state that in practice-led research:

interpretive complication is played out in the space demarcated between the material and intermediate qualities of any media/substance worked with, and its connections with the particular genre and creative discipline to which it belongs. The very establishment of its meaning and critical significance is constituted by a tension between critical understanding and affect. (2009, p.218)

R3: Capturing the complexity of practice-led research

The 'Creative River Journey' study is, in part, framed as a methodological inquiry into the terrain where arts practice and the institutionally decreed exegesis meet. It seeks insights into the ways HDR artist–researchers navigate the complexity of this terrain to arrive at a cohesive approach to their practice-led research which is then articulated in their exegesis. Robson, Brady and Hopkins, reporting on an ECU seminar of practice-led research oriented staff and students, suggest a multidisciplinary approach is a successful strategy to manage the complexity and chaos of emergent practice-led research:

> Ultimately, we have found that *multidisciplinary* investigation of the terrain where creative practice intersects with the institution-driven need to produce transferable, written knowledge can offer useful insight, provocation and possibility for enhancing any one particular arts disciplinary approach. (Robson, Brady & Hopkins, 2010, p.2)

Like the use of 'multi-modal research' in the WAAPA postgraduate dance research project (Phillips et al., 2009) discussed previously, 'multidisciplinary' is a term which draws attention to the diversity of practices and methods that an individual artist–researcher may engage in within one practice-led research project. Schwab applies the term 'transdisciplinary' when describing the complexity of such practice-led research (though in this instance in relation to 'artistic research'). He suggests the emergent nature of such research:

> makes it difficult to predict where and under what circumstances such activity might be located, adding to a sense of institutional openness within the academy and between academic and non-academic sectors. . . . artistic research's transformative nature, mak[es] the experience of a change of knowledge count, even as the mode through which this change was evoked remains undefined. (2011, para. 2)

The CRJ strategy is an attempt to accommodate the complexity of practice-led research, and the chaos of the unknown, but sets out to help make the artist–researcher participants transform this chaos into workable knowledge for the purposes of their desired practice-led research outcomes.

T—TEACHING

T1. 'Teaching' the artist–researcher in the context of higher education

Taking an a/r/tographical approach in the 'Creative River Journey' study means that the research pays attention to the teaching, or pedagogical, context for practice-led research higher degrees. According to Irwin and Springgay, "education in the context of a/r/tography is broadly conceived to mean any context concerned with learning, understanding and interpretation" (2008a, p.xxv). T for teaching in the 'Creative River Journey' study refers to the learning context of the artist–researcher's higher degrees. Furthermore, applying the CRJ strategy to engage the artist–researcher participants in reflective practice agrees with Irwin and Springgay's suggestion that a/r/tographical research creates the circumstances for learning, and does not just investigate these. They state: "In effect, a/r/tographers are concerned with creating the circumstances that produce knowledge and understanding through *artistic* and *educational* inquiry-laden processes" (p.xxvi). The 'Creative River Journey', therefore, is both a pedagogical intervention and a pedagogical investigation.

Van Manen (1991), speaking of primary education, describes pedagogy as "the art of tactfully mediating the possible influences of the world so that the child is constantly encouraged to assume more self-responsibility for learning and growth" (p.80). In the 'Creative River Journey' study, this framing of pedagogy in tertiary education is akin to how the beginning artist–researcher enrolled in a higher degree by research is guided throughout the complex influences impacting on their practice-led research towards self-efficacy. Pedagogical elements involved in this progress include institutional inclusion of practice-led research within research frameworks, supervision of the HDR artist–researcher, and support to develop the key skills of "acquiring know-how" (Haseman & Mafe, 2009, p.211), and reflective practice or reflexivity.

In terms of institutionally-framed practice-led research, this research takes place upon the ground established over the past twenty years in relation to practice-led higher degrees by research and their place in the university. Wilson suggests there has been "a

long path to acceptance" (2011, p.68) of practice-led research outputs in the higher education research landscape. During this time, Webb and Brien suggest ,"[c]reative arts disciplines constitute an important growth area for research higher degrees (HDR) and, in the years since the Dennis Strand's landmark study (1998), have built a body of knowledge and set of practices associated with research and research training" (2015, p.4).

In the ECU context, as previously discussed, creative research is now embodied in the definition of research presented to academic staff. The key definition of research provided to ECU staff by the university's Office of Research and Innovation, however, has shifted recently. Currently, in 2017, 'practice-based and practice-led research' have been replaced by the word 'creative' in a broad definition of research, which states: "Research is defined as creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge" (ECU, 2017a, p.1)

The artist–researcher participants in the 'Creative River Journey' study conduct their practice-led projects, and have this work validated as research, due to their relationship with ECU's research context. Furthermore, the validity of practice-led research degrees in higher education contexts has been emphasised by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) who, along with the Australian Council of University Art and Design schools and a selection of key universities, established a project from 2007–2009 investigating the nature of higher degree creative arts research, stating:

> The PhD in the creative arts is now the accepted terminal degree in Australia as it is in a number of other countries such as Britain, Finland, New Zealand and Japan, along with the professional Doctorate of Creative Arts (DCA). Yet although it is quickly emerging as a significant measure of quality and innovation in the field, the PhD in the Creative Arts is still subject to variations in terms of form and implementation as exemplified by the wide range of examination procedures currently deployed in Australian universities. Such disparity in combination with pressing pedagogic and resource issues, have significance for both the integrity and growth of the sector. (Baker, Buckley & Kett, 2009, p.1)

This report also identified that the research culture of the home institution for HDR artist–researchers can be highly individual: " [a] diverse range of processes and expectations has grown from within the host institutions in accordance with the research cultures and local custom of the particular university" (Baker, Buckley & Kett, 2009, p.77). The ALTC report cited an academic who identified the need for beginning artist–researchers to be enculturated into the local research culture, into broad understandings of research, and into an understanding of research in their creative practice-led discipline area: "For other disciplines there is a sense that students in their undergraduate degrees are introduced to the research culture of their discipline and that they then make a choice to become a part of this culture, whereas [for] a lot of the people that come in to us, research is a totally alien idea" (Baker, Buckley & Kett, 2009, p.74).

In the UK, concerns regarding pedagogic issues in relation to creative arts PhDs were addressed by the Arts and Humanities Research Council who funded a training and support network called AVPhD (Audio Visual Practice Based PhD Support Network) from 2007–2009 "for all those doing, supervising and examining audio-visual practice based doctorates". The motivation for this, one academic writes, was the sharing of the models, expectations and pedagogy around practice-led research: "Discussions with colleagues . . . had suggested that HE institutions were working with a number of different models of the relation between theory and practice, and with differing expectations about what is submissable at PhD level" (AVPhD Steering Committee, 2008).

Thus, over the past decade there has been an evolving engagement between practice-led research and the higher education research agenda, impacting on approaches to training the HDR artist–researchers' praxis, products and methods. However, there has not been any uniform approach to research methods training for practice-led research. Some Australian institutions, for example RMIT University, Victoria University and Australian National University, have specific training modules or study units about practice-led research. For artist–researchers enrolling in a doctoral program at ECU,

there are no specific training modules. Generalised research training is provided by the university's Graduate Research School. For students enrolled in higher degrees by coursework, there is some discipline-specific research training, for example, Master of Arts (Performing Arts) enrolees complete a unit called 'Performing Arts Research Preparation' (ECU, 2017b, MAP5116). Master of Design enrolees are provided with methodology training as follows, with attention to reflexive practices:

> This unit introduces a suite of research methodologies which will equip communications, media and design students to research at postgraduate level. Rather than offering recipes for methods, it will provide a challenging environment to explore the epistemological origins of methodology. Students will investigate the possibilities offered by emerging, as well as traditional, methodologies and develop reflexive practices. (ECU, 2017c, CMM6166)

Filling the methodology training gap for practice-led researchers at ECU, the beginning artist–researcher has some support from inter-project and interdisciplinary discussion forums such as the WAAPA reading and writing group (a meeting of higher degree by research performing arts artist–researchers), a monthly WAAPA Music Research seminar group (a weekly meeting of music artist–researchers), and a weekly creative research forum for all higher degree by research artist–researchers called 'This is Not a Seminar' (TINAS) Creative Research. The latter discussion group was established by key practice-led research supervisors and postdoctoral appointees who state:

> In our experience, many creative researchers felt that qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method research excluded them from locating a suitable methodology for their processes and practices. They felt it necessary to either fit into these approaches or somehow abandon their practices temporarily so they might pursue traditional academic research. Yet, without a creative methodological grounding, it is nearly impossible for practitioners to develop a means for articulating their practice as research. (Adams, Kueh, Newman-Storen & Ryan, 2015, p.1332)

The bulk of the responsibility for providing a methodological grounding for beginning artist–researchers is borne by ECU supervisors of higher degree students. Generally, in keeping with the highly individualised nature of the one-on-one supervision process, they do so by guiding beginning artist–researchers toward an appropriate methodology

that fits with their practice-led research. Hamilton and Carson argue that "a PhD creative practice project requires a significant and unique type of commitment from both the supervisory team and the institution in terms of workload, resourcing and infrastructure provision" (2013b, p.2). Leaving the training of HDR students in practice-led research methodology as the sole responsibility of supervisors has implications for their workload but may also result in the beginning artist–researchers not gaining a broad grounding in all approaches to research, nor an understanding of how practice-led research fits into the overall academic research landscape.

T2. Supervision and examination of the practice-led higher degree

Institutional procedures for artist–researchers undertaking higher degrees by research have been the subject of some scrutiny, in particular relating to the supervision and examination of their PhDs. McCormack (2004) explored tensions between student and institutional understanding of higher degree research: She suggested:

> Postgraduate research is an individual, complex, personal and contextually mediated experience, [therefore] it would be reasonable to assume that mismatches between individual and institutional understandings of research might be widespread. . . it seems to be intuitively obvious that if students, supervisors and institutions knew more about each other's conceptions of research this knowledge might enhance individual students' ability to complete on-time. (p.321)

Mismatches are all the more likely when trying this understanding falls within the diverse area of higher degree practice-led research. Allpress, Barnacle, Duxbury and Grierson (2012) scrutinised the supervisory practices of academics at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, with a view to "mark and measure the terrain" (p.13) of practice-led research. The authors "set out to capture reflections on supervisory practices through which affective, creative and practical knowledge can be enhanced and transformed, offering models for supporting the generative practices and of knowledge yet to come" (p.13). In 2011, the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) provided a grant for research into the contextual frameworks and administrative practices surrounding supervision of creative practice higher degrees by

research" ('Supervision of Creative PhDs', n.d). This project drew on data from universities in Australia and New Zealand, arriving at recommendations about "effective supervision of creative practice higher research degrees" (Hamilton & Carson, 2013a, p.1). In 2013, Webb, Brien and Burr published their final report 'Examination of doctoral degrees in creative arts: process, practice and standards' from a research project also funded by the OLT. The importance of supervision and examination to all higher degree by research students is critical. However, these research projects highlighted how understandings of these two key areas which impact so significantly on the experiences of beginning artist–researchers have not necessarily kept pace with the growth of practice-led research enrolments within Australian academic institutions. Webb et al. argue "that the OLT and creative arts peak bodies [should] continue to support research into research training [for doctoral degrees in the creative arts], including issues associated with supervision and with examination practices and policies" (2013, p.12). Hamilton and Carson (2013a) arrived at twelve recommendations for supervision of creative practice higher degrees by research. I have summarised and listed these recommendations below:

1. Adopt a student-centred approach involves recognising each student's unique attributes, needs and capacity;

2. Embrace diverse projects, practices and working methods which focus on core principles of research design, while being attuned to the unique attributes of every individual project and candidate;

3. Ensure students believe in the validity of creative practice research and its experimental nature, noting that rigorous experimentation is integral to creative practice research;

4. The theory and practice need to speak to each other, . . . and some form of interweaving or integration of the practice and the writing is necessary to best articulate the contribution of the research;

5. The theory and practice might not be done simultaneously, despite the need to work together in the completed work;

6. Balance the big picture and attention to the detail . . . with an eye on timely completion and the rhythm of candidature;

7. Provide frequent constructive feedback;

8. A supervisor should also attend to the practice in the studio;

9. Provide support while managing interpersonal relationships with the supervision positioned as "a strategically guided journey";

10. Milestones are time consuming, but ultimately rewarding components of the journey;

11. Don't be limited by boundaries as a supervisor, but be aware of regulations;

12. Reflect, discuss and share one's own supervision practices with colleagues.

Hamilton and Carson's research garnered feedback from university administrators, supervisors and students. It highlighted that training for supervision of practice-led research does not always meet the needs of the supervisors, thus supervision may not always meet the needs of the HDR artist–researchers themselves:

> While some supervisors appreciate the insights into university processes and guidelines that institution-wide training offers, many are ambivalent, and some are unaware of their existence. Often they see little bearing [in their training] on the realities of supervising creative projects. There is a clear preference for localized training at faculty level, or perhaps even at the level of discipline (with the proviso that many projects are interdisciplinary), which addresses the unique contexts, particularities and complexities of supervising creative practice HDRs. (Hamilton & Carson, 2013c, p.2)

Hamilton and Carson suggested that supervisors of HDR artist–researchers distinguished between training candidates for the institutionally imposed, processual requirements and academic development, and a more "open and (welcome) way to refer to workshops, case studies and mentoring" (2013b, p.8). This two-fold distinction has implications for the way that training for the HDR candidates and supervisors could be supported in creative research discipline-specific contexts, firstly with research methodology training, secondly with more collaborative and collegial workshops and mentoring.

Also addressing the role of supervision in higher degree research training, Harrison and Grant suggest that "imaginative explorations of new models of research pedagogy that steer away from exclusive or heavy reliance on the canonised, hierarchical, master-apprentice-style supervision" (2015, p.564) are warranted with the "recent rise" of

practice-led research. They suggest one such new model for practice-led research in the academy might be "learning environments characterised by a common space and a common endeavour shared by masters and newcomers, where leadership is porous" (pp.558–9). Wisker, Robinson and Shachem offer a model whereby "communities of practice [are established] from the outset of postgraduate students' and supervisors' interactions" (2007, p.301). In this instance the community of practice is in relation to HDRs in general, not just practice-led research HDRs. They argue that this is one way to manage the often isolated experience of the HDR pathway. Taking a feminist perspective on supervising women as creative practice-led researchers, Pedersen and Haynes argue for "higher degree research supervision in creative practice that utilises collaborative methods and supports the development of horizontal networks" (2015, pp.1273–4) as potential pathways to redress cultural and institutional barriers for women researchers.   A suggested focus on doctoral writing by Aitchison sees her offer a new approach to supporting HDR candidates whereby "writing is about a process of *becoming*" (2015, p.1300) for the beginning artist–researcher. Aitchison argues that: "[t]his journey of 'becoming' is highly individualised as the researcher comes to know their field, their creative practice and possibilities for expressing this knowledge in written form that satisfies themselves, their supervisors and the established discourses around doctoral writing" (2015, p.1295).

This notion of the becoming artist–researcher, emerging in the process of developing through practice and research, was foundational in a workshop that I ran (outside the 'Creative River Journey' study) called "Finding Your Methodological Voice in the Arts" (Stevenson, 2011). This brief workshop was designed to introduce new HDR candidates to locating their place on the research landscape, helping them to discern how they might shape their highly individual practice-led research projects. Millward explores how metaphors "are shaping university approaches to artistic research" (p.1) and proposes that "'finding a voice' is a concept often used to describe the maturation of an individual creative identity" (2015, p.2). As workshop facilitator, I applied my knowledge of voice in creative writing to assist students to find a methodology that matched the

authentic expression of their practice-led research. Approaches to supervision, Millward suggests, should "make space" within institutional constraints for the development of the creative HDR student into an artist–researcher with an original voice, one that "resonates with how qualities of originality and the contribution to knowledge are defined in terms of doctoral practice-based research" (p.2).

The 'teaching' context of the HDR is also impacted upon by the processes around examination of a candidate's submitted project, including their exegesis or dissertation, Webb, Brien and Burr's research project "Examination of doctoral degrees in creative arts: process, practice and standards" (2013) resulted in a guide on examination for HDR supervisors, students and the discipline arising from their research. Webb et al. at the concluded that:

> There's no uniformity among creative arts doctorates, and there are no standards. There need to be agreement among institutions about what constitutes a doctorate in the creative arts. We can't get a standard for examination until we have a standard for what the doctorate is. (2012, p.9)

In this guide, the authors call for the highly individual nature of creative practice-led research be honoured, arguing for "standards, not standardisation" (p.9) in the examination process, which they suggest should be open-ended and dictated by the HDR artist–researcher's creative practice. This open-ended nature of HDR practice-led doctorate examination requires some guidance, however. In a later publication on the project, Webb and Brien stated: "Almost all the project participants, however, considered there should be clearer guidelines to assist supervisors in preparing candidates for examination, and examiners in making their judgements and preparing their reports" (Webb & Brien, 2015, p.1327). This builds upon an earlier recommendation for an "examiner's checklist" (Webb et al., 2012, p.6) rather than prescriptive examination guidelines, and the possibility of applying the following standards to the assessment of practice-led doctorates:

> It is not possible to standardise the creative work. But it is possible to standardise the following elements
> - The contribution to knowledge.

- The presence of strong intellectual inquiry.
- The use of sound and relevant theoretical paradigms.
- The rigorous demonstration of qualitative research and research methodologies.
- The contextualisation of the findings.
- The expected levels of discussion, analysis and conceptual thinking.
- The length of the critical essay.
- The length of the bibliography.
- Statement of behaviours expected in examination. (Webb et al., 2012, p.10)

The diversity of HDR practice-led research demonstrated in the 'Creative River Journey' study illustrates that standardisation of the supervision and examination processes of creative doctorates at ECU, where this study takes place, is not taking place or enforced. Guidelines such as those suggested regarding supervision (for example, Harrison & Carson, 2013) or examination (Webb et al., 2013) provide welcome input into the development of creative practice-led research within the ECU context.

T3. Learning reflective practice and reflexivity

The 'Creative River Journey' study adopted Hartley's suggestion that, in order to propel tertiary creative arts students towards an innovation agenda, we should "channel our students' creativity towards a destination that goes beyond the self-definition of the artist" (Hartley, 2004, p.xii). In this study, I aimed to highlight and preserve the important place of self-definition for the HDR artist–researcher through the reflective practice embodied in the study's three phases whereby small but deliberate pedagogical interventions in HDR arts education are applied by engaging the HDR student participants in the processes of reflective practice. In doing this, the research is informed by Burnard's work on reflective arts practice. Burnard, an academic and musician, whose passionate championing of the arts through meticulous research in the field of arts education was an inspiration for this study, states:

> As individuals, and collectively, we are constrained only by our willingness to engage with and our capacity to use reflective processes effectively as a source and resource for professional agency. . . . In the present global context, artists and art educators face the challenges of politically driven agendas that, most

commonly, focus on accountability and pupil attainment. It is timely to open the debate about whether a focus on reflective activity should dominate our thinking about arts teaching and learning, not least in an understanding of what reflective practice discourses might mean within the context of developing arts communities. (2006, p.3)

Burnard argues that there are three imperatives that need to be addressed in arts education and that these imperatives are best served by developing reflective arts practice. The first imperative she suggests is related to the way education plays a role in extending the boundaries of the arts profession: "An educational imperative is to expand the borders of professionalism between teachers and artists, artists and artists, in consultation with learners and to connect the uniqueness and sameness of artistic elements in reflective discourses shared across arts communities" (2006, p.7).

In each phase of my study, the reflective discourse crossed boundaries between researcher and artist though co-construction of CRJ charts, and between artists and artists in the focus group. In this latter phase of the research, there was intentional space made for artist–researchers to share the unique and correlative aspects of participants' reflective arts practice.

The second imperative that Burnard suggests is met by reflective arts practice is the transformation of artistic experience into meaningful learning:

> Artists seek to reveal meaning. What we attach ourselves to, identify with, and become vitally interested in depends a great deal on the ways in which we reflectively construct personal meaning within a situation. The challenge for artists and artist educators come in terms of *what* they do in their studios, their classrooms and *how* they see their roles in the classroom. So, how do we turn experience into meaningful learning? (2006, p.8)

Here, Burnard cites van Manen, in suggesting that the way to transform experience into meaningful learning in art education is through reflective practice: "Gaining a reflective grasp of the subjective experience calls upon 'a process of reflectively appropriating, of clarifying and of making explicit the structures of the lived experience' '' (van Manen, 1990, p.77, as cited in Burnard, 2006, p.9). Van Manen's discussion of practical knowledge (referred to earlier in this thesis) is made visible through an interpretive

understanding of an educational experience. Burnard suggests that in van Manen's phenomenological reflection, "meaning is constructed through summoning memories and discovering dimensions of experience" (Burnard, 2006, p 9). In the 'Creative River Journey' study, it is intended that dimensions of HDR artist–researchers' experiences of practice might be captured and explored through the CRJ reflective practice strategy, a co-constructive, transformative and meaningful process of knowledge-building.

The third and last imperative that Burnard posits is for the legitimacy of reflective *arts* practice alongside already established models of reflective practice, such as that suggested by Schön (1983; 1987). Burnard states: "For the artist, self-reflection is the means by which they simultaneously analyze situations, make judgments, and determine how successfully they handle the challenges through the transforming participation associated with art making" (2006, p. 9). The reflective processes elicited by the CRJ strategy, and the three phases of the overall study, asked just such things of the HDR artist–researchers; it engaged them in a rich process of reflection on their arts practice within the practice-led research education context. Thus the study meets with Burnard's characteristics of reflective arts practice: "involvement of mutuality, engagement with artistic materials, multiple perspectives, individual style, and transformative participation in artistic endeavours in which reflective processes are central" (2006, p.10).

In Gray and Malin's guide on the research process for art and design students, they parallel the active nature of reflective arts practice with both the active nature of learning and the dynamic nature of practice. They suggest: "We learn most effectively by doing – by active experience, and reflection on that experience" (2004, p.1). Explaining specifically the way they see that artists learn though practice, Gray and Malins present a model of practice-led research in which reflection is intrinsic: "We learn through practice, through research, and through reflection on both. This active and reflective learning makes a dynamic relationship between practice and research. Practice raises questions that can be investigated through research which in turn

impacts on practice" (2004, p.1). This description of reflective practice finds accord with Burnard's description of *reflective arts practice:*

> Reflective arts practice, as with educational practice, features on the spot judgements, criticizing, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understanding of experienced phenomena . . . but what is different in *reflective arts practices* is the involvement of mutuality, engagement with artistic materials, multiple perspectives, individual style, and transformative participation in artistic endeavours in which reflective processes are central. (2006, p.10)
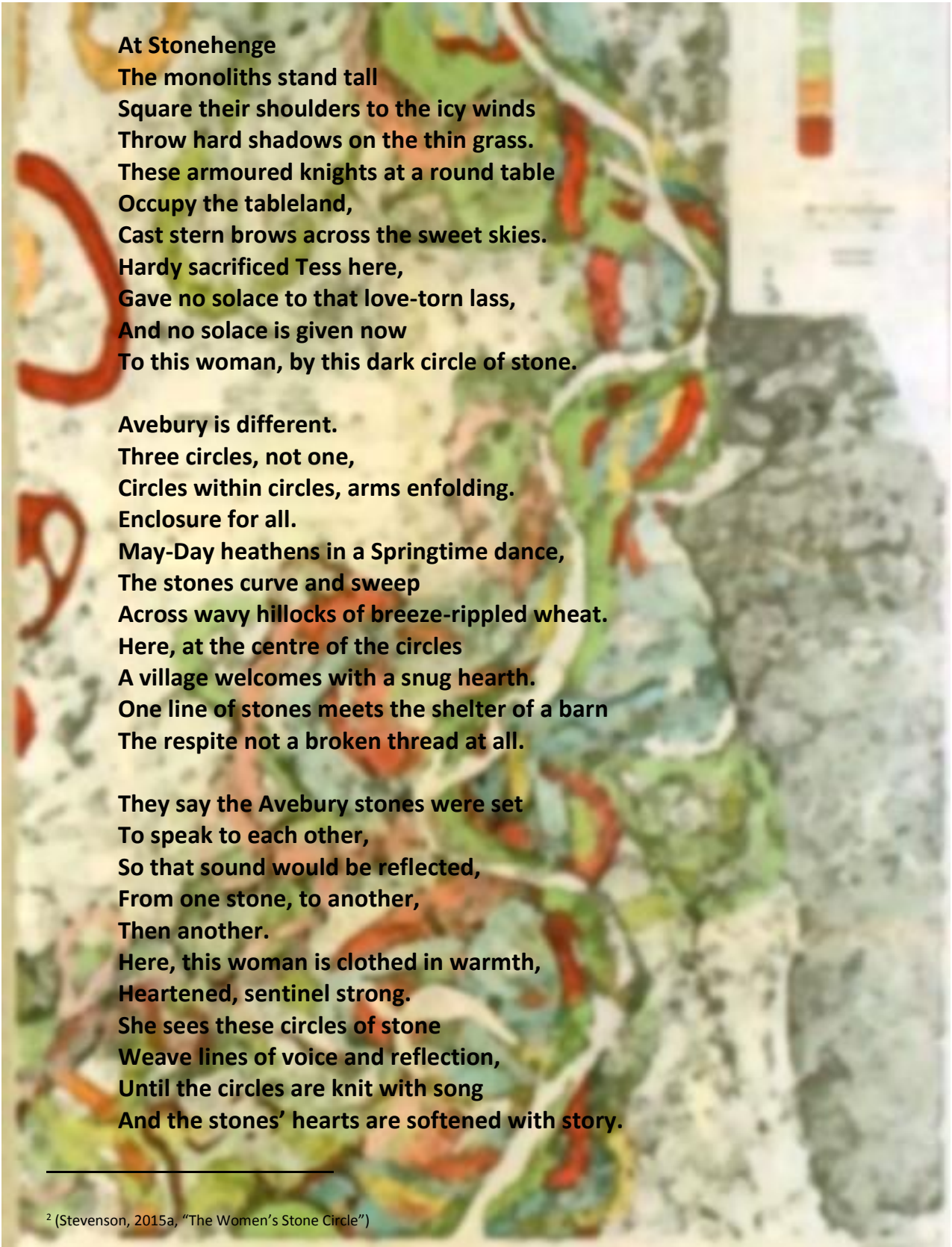
This study embodies the notion that reflective processes are central to reflective arts practice and in practice-led research, thus the reflective processes encapsulated in the CRJ strategy are placed at the centre of this study and at the heart of the research conversations with HDR artists-researchers. The intended benefit to these participants meets with Dawson's assertion that reflection on practice "empowers students to be producers rather than receivers of knowledge, and to develop critical skills focusing on process rather than product" (2003, p.5). One outcome of this study is an understanding of the potential benefits for the participants of their engagement with the CRJ strategy, and the reflective practice it embodies, in their own practice-led research processes.

In this chapter, I have set out to explore the context of the 'Creative River Journey' study, traversing the three terrains of the 'Creative River Journey' study's conceptual framework: art practice, research and teaching/higher education. In particular, I have touched on the nature of creativity and knowledge within artistic practice, and the relationship of art-making to the knowledge-making process with a view to consider the artistic development of the HDR artist -researchers. I have also discussed practice-led research as a methodological approach, and the way that complexity, emergence and reflective practice interplay within practice-led research in a higher degree context.

In regards to teaching, I have focused on some of the ways artist–researchers may acquire research skills in the higher education context, especially the significance of reflective and reflexive approaches by artist–researchers to their research. I have also set out to identify current thinking about supervision and examination of the practice-led doctoral degree. In the next chapter, I will explore the key concept of the river that is

central to the 'Creative River Journey' study and CRJ reflective practice strategy. The river as a metaphor, and as a data capture chart, is at the heart of the study's conceptual framework. Ideas about the motif of the river have provided me with inspiration and motivation throughout this research, and helped me to find my fluent and poetic methodological voice as researcher.

POETIC INTERLUDE 2—THE WOMEN'S STONE CIRCLE[2]

At Stonehenge
The monoliths stand tall
Square their shoulders to the icy winds
Throw hard shadows on the thin grass.
These armoured knights at a round table
Occupy the tableland,
Cast stern brows across the sweet skies.
Hardy sacrificed Tess here,
Gave no solace to that love-torn lass,
And no solace is given now
To this woman, by this dark circle of stone.

Avebury is different.
Three circles, not one,
Circles within circles, arms enfolding.
Enclosure for all.
May-Day heathens in a Springtime dance,
The stones curve and sweep
Across wavy hillocks of breeze-rippled wheat.
Here, at the centre of the circles
A village welcomes with a snug hearth.
One line of stones meets the shelter of a barn
The respite not a broken thread at all.

They say the Avebury stones were set
To speak to each other,
So that sound would be reflected,
From one stone, to another,
Then another.
Here, this woman is clothed in warmth,
Heartened, sentinel strong.
She sees these circles of stone
Weave lines of voice and reflection,
Until the circles are knit with song
And the stones' hearts are softened with story.

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[2] (Stevenson, 2015a, "The Women's Stone Circle")

CHAPTER 2—THE RIVER (THE STRATEGY) AS A METAPHOR

Mapping the creativity and practice

In the 'Creative River Journey' study, the metaphor of the river is used in the CRJ strategy as a kind of a data capture map when interviewing the artist–researcher participants about their experiences of conducting creative practice within the university research context. This section of the thesis will explore the metaphorical connections between various notions of the river, for example, in creativity theory and in the study. Furthermore, it sets out to make visible the way the metaphor of the river operates in the application of the CRJ strategy as a data capture and reflective tool. The CRJ chart is depicted in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Creative River Journey (CRJ) data capture chart pro-forma. Image source: author's own image.

The study sees the river conceptualised as a metaphor for artist–researchers' creative practice and also for the creative process. The weaving above ground and below ground of a watercourse is not unlike Koestler aforementioned of creativity, "an immense chain of which only the beginning and the end are visible above the surface of consciousness" (1975, p.211). A river's often subterranean waterways, and the process by which a river might vanish underground then reappears on the surface is akin to Koestler's diver negotiating a complex waterway by virtue of a chain of invisible links and submerged creativity.

Creative practitioners are familiar with periods of incubation and submersion in the creative process. One academic supervisor for my masters of creative writing degree very kindly referred to my long periods of non-writing and rumination as "filling the creative well". Even today, I have heard of these periods of immersion, when one lets the analytical go underground, referred to as "swimming amongst the ideas" and "going with the creative flow". Water, water everywhere.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) calls into play just such water imagery when he theorises about creativity and happiness. His study of the happiness of a broad stretch of people including sportspeople, scientists, artists and everyday workers identified optimal states of contentment which he described as *flow*. In this study, he defined flow as a state of "optimal experience . . . the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it" (p.4). Artists may relate to this description of being immersed in a practice for its own sake, and with its own ends, and the utter sense of satisfaction one feels during that immersion. Many points along the course of a creative practice can be seen as instances of flow.

River as metaphor in education and other contexts

My use of the river as a metaphor for the creative journey, adapting the River Journey tool from its use as a map of teacher identity and professional development (Burnard, 2004; Kerchner, 2006), follows a long tradition of using the river as a metaphor. For

example, the river has been used in a narrative therapy approach with Indigenous Australian men with substance dependency issues (Hegarty, Smith & Hammersley, 2010). In that case, the metaphor describes the shift from one state of substance abuse to a new state of well-being with that change being likened to a river crossing. The river metaphor has been used in teaching leadership theory to illustrate the forks and topography of the leadership journey (Burns, 2000), and this branching of rivers is also reflected in Figure 6 in relation to discussion of the 'Creative River Journey' study.

The river has been used as a metaphor for learning in educational psychology by Alexander, Schallert and Reynolds where they apply the metaphor to understand the complex interactions involved in learning:

> Just as one cannot begin to understand the true nature of a river system without understanding the continual interaction of all its elements at a time, and over time, one cannot begin to understand the nature of human learning without embracing its interactional complexity. (2009, p.176)

Here it has a close similarity to the application of the river metaphor to the complex and dynamic creative process, with the authors drawing upon the analogy of a river to consider the dynamic process of learning: "Not only does the metaphor of the river system bring to light the concept of complex interactions as it relates to learning, but it allows us to envision the dynamic nature of learning, which like the river system is in continual flux" (Alexander et al., 2009, p.176).

The use of the metaphor of the river in relation to art practice has also been the subject of the film, *Andy Goldsworthy Rivers and Tides—Working with Time* (Donop, Davies, Hill & Riedelsheimer, 2003). In this film, Goldsworthy talks intimately of his art practice and the film depicts a series of his works, paying close attention to their development and installation. One of the pieces featured is a large sculptural work Goldsworthy made in 1998 in the Storm King Sculpture Park in New York State, USA, called *Storm King Wall* (Figure 5) in which he created a meandering drystone wall throughout the parkland leading through a forest and ending in a pond (Storm King Arts Centre, n.d.).

Figure 5: Andy Goldsworthy (1998), Storm King Wall, field stones, 1m height, 700m length (Photographer unknown; image source Storm King Art Center [n.d.]).
(Exception to copyright. Section ss40, 103C. Exception: research or study)

In describing his conceptualisation of this sculptural work, Goldsworthy alludes to an image of the world which resonates with Alexander et al.'s dynamic educational river journey:

> At its best, the wall is a line that is in sympathy with the place through which it travels, and that sense of movement is very important in understanding the sculpture, all the movement of and passage of people, the movement of the wall—the river of stone as it runs round the trees, the river of growth that is the forest—and it has made me aware of that flow around the world, the veins that run round the world. (Donop et al., 2003)

Goldsworthy's discussion of his own practice throughout the film corresponds to Csikszentmihalyi's description of the state of flow as: "the way people describe their state of mind when consciousness is harmoniously ordered, and they want to pursue whatever they are doing for its own sake" (1996, p.6).

In a collection of poetry, a collaborative work between the poets Peter Porter, Sean O'Brien and John Kinsella (2002), Kinsella discusses the choice of *Rivers* as the title and

the river as the unifying concept of the collection, and how the river can represent the form of a poem:

> *Rivers* is a book of movement, a book of cultural change: replacement, loss, growth, destruction, and discovery. Beginnings and ends. A way of speaking across cultures, across gaps in a culture. Language and the river. The relationship of the poem's form to a river. Three distinctly different takes—geographies—finding connections. (Kinsella, 2002, p.11)

Another Australian poet, Andrew Taylor contrasts the human impulse for certainty, control and discovering the source of things, with the river's constant flow and dynamism in his poem "Rivers":

> The lake glitters in the morning/so smooth it's like a thought rehearsed/for centuries, polished as the hand of a holy statue./Rivers though/run always away, even where the plain/stretches around them to the edges/of sky, and a few isolated trees/fringing their banks try to hold them back,/they're still flowing downhill. Rivers/make their escape, and if they lead/anywhere it's to the question/ "Where did I come from?" (Taylor, 2004, p.364)

This relationship of geographies, of dynamic river systems, to the creative process is embodied in the application of the river journey metaphor to artist–researchers' creative processes in the 'Creative River Journey' study. This relationship has, unsurprisingly, led to the river becoming the subject of my own creative practice, in particular, in the poetry that I have written as part of a poetic inquiry method in the study.

My overall methodological framework is a/r/tography in which the researcher engages in the research from three perspectives, as artist, as researcher, and as teacher/educator, (hence a/r/t). Within that framework, as artist, I have chosen to respond through poetic inquiry. This has meant a challenge to my previous modes of writing, academic and prose, and involved following the advice of Faulkner (2009) on "research/poetry" who advocates that "researcher poets should study poetic craft" (p.2). Consequently, in 2012, I completed a year-long advanced poetry writing course at the Peter Cowan Writers' Centre on the Joondalup campus of ECU. In monthly workshops led by established poets such as Andrew Taylor, Lucy Dougan and Marcella

Polain, my critical engagement with poetry, combined with my engagement with the research material in my study, progressed my poetry writing rapidly.

My use of poems as a response to my research broadly follows Butler-Kisber's two-fold conceptualisation of poetic inquiry as, firstly, "found poetry", when words from interview transcripts are shaped into poetic form, and, secondly, as "generated poetry", whereby the researcher's own experiences and words are used as the basis for more autobiographical poems (Butler-Kisber, 2010a, p.83). I wrote a number of such "generated" poems about rivers, which form part of the collection *Breath of the Sea* (Abbs & Konrad, 2012) that resulted from the year-long course at Peter Cowan Writers' Centre. These poems (see poetic interludes 1, 3 and 4) are illustrative of my engagement with the river as a metaphor and came about through my own reflections on experiences of various rivers throughout my life. The poems speak of my own creative journeys with rivers—the river that is both a reality and a metaphor in the landscape of my own and so many others' creative practice.

In addition to the generated poetry in this thesis, I have experimented with Kisber's concept of found poetry with the poems that follow the narratives of practice of three of my participants: Gasser, Donlin, and Meader. These three poems have been constructed using language 'found' in the interview transcripts of the interviews with the three artist–researchers, and I am very grateful for the contribution these three participants have made to the poems in this thesis. Apart from these three 'found poems', all other poetic interludes are generated poems, including the three poems that follow the narratives of practice of Connor, Girak and Murphy. (Where a poetic interlude consists of a previously published poem, the reference has been included in a footnote for that poetic interlude.)

The river as an image of reflective practice in the study

The 'Creative River Journey' study has as its focus the artist–researcher's practice-led research within a dynamic system of creativity, and I have aimed to understand each artist–researcher's idiosyncratic creative process through the use of the CRJ strategy.

Though in the study I extract individual instances of creative practice through reflective practice, these can be used to exemplify an instance of practice, but do not serve to exemplify an artist's complete oeuvre.

A more appropriate way to think of each documented instance in a CRJ chart is as one part, or as one tributary, of a complex creative 'river' system of practice. Therefore the metaphor of the river is extended to be contextualised as part of a system of practice, reflected in some ways in the below diagram of a river system (Figure 6), with its complex connections between individual rivers.
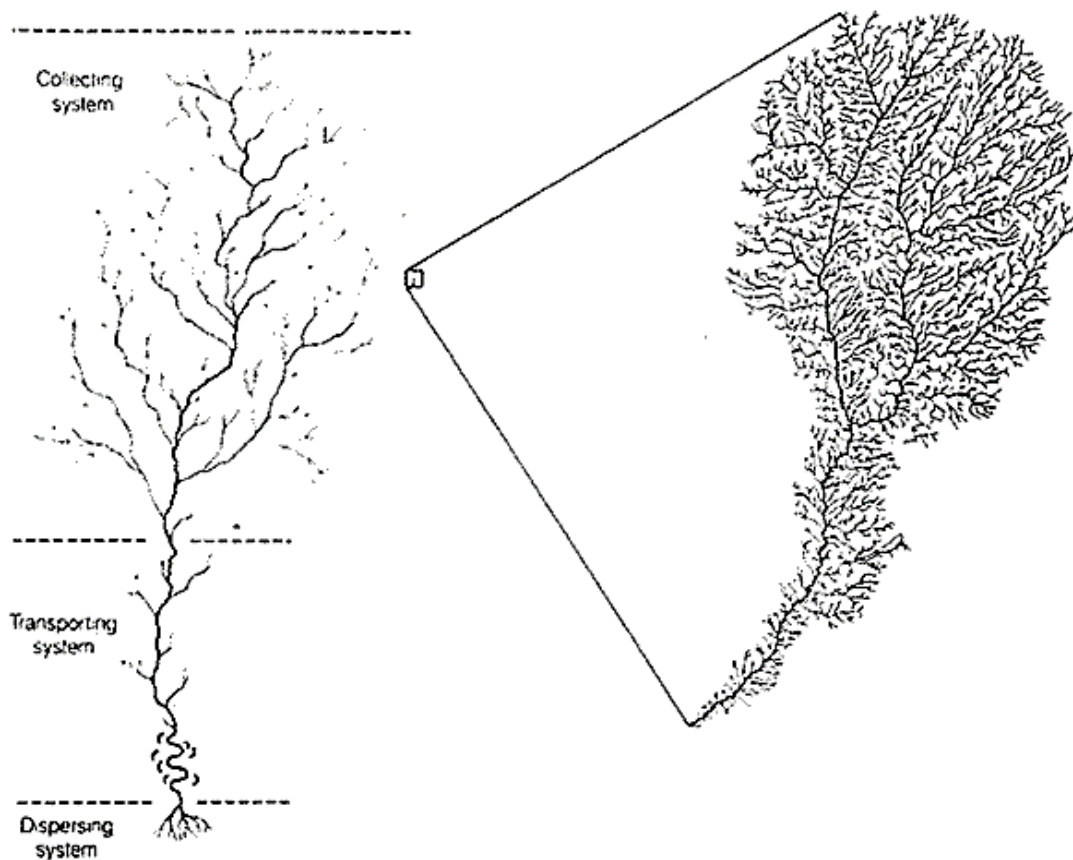
Figure 6: 'The upper, middle and lower reaches of a river course' [Online diagram], (FAO, 2001)
(Exception from copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study.)

Whilst using the river journey as a metaphor depicts one aspect of practice in a very contained way, if we were to take a bird's eye view of that artist's life and practice, if we were to zoom out our reflective camera as it were, we would see that the one aspect of practice illuminated in one CRJ chart is also part of a complex, interconnected network

of creative practice that makes up the artist's world. And we would also see that the artist's river journey connects with the creative worlds of other artists and individuals. Nevertheless, the CRJ strategy as a data capture chart does function successfully in the interview process as a tool with which to depict one aspect of an artist–researcher's practice. Each bend of the river depicts metaphorically the shifts and changes in an artist–researcher's creative process.

Figure 7: Plate 22, sheet 5 Mississippi River Meander Belt [online image] (Harold Fisk, 1944). (Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: research or study).

In trying to depict the CRJ charts of the artist–researchers interviewed in the study, I was interested in how I might represent these in a more dynamic way, with particular attention paid to trying to capture the complexity of the one instance of the artist–researchers' practice within an overall system of that artist–researcher's creative work. I arrived at the image of the river as depicted by Harold Fisk in his 1944 US government report on the iterations over time of the Mississippi River. Above (in Figure 7), I have reproduced the original map that Harold Fisk made of the Mississippi River meander belt (Fisk, 1944). Each colour on this map is an iteration of the river at a particular period in time.

The opportunity to explore the potential of this map to extend the creative river journey metaphor was presented in an ECU interdisciplinary initiative that paired a doctoral researcher with a design postgraduate (coursework) student. I worked closely with the talented designer Emma Loughridge over a semester-long period of creative collaboration in 2013 and we identified how this excellent depiction of a complex river system over time could serve as a metaphor for the iterations of creative practice of an artist–researcher's creative practice over time. In a process of collaborative design, Loughridge used her knowledge of design, and I used my close analysis of the data collected via the CRJ interview charts, to co-construct an interactive diagram prototype, depicted in Figure 8.

The intention was that the layering of the iterations of the Mississippi River in the Fisk map would itself serve as a metaphor for the complexity of an artist–researcher's practice, in particular, how that one instance of practice captured in one CRJ chart sits within the layers of an artist–researcher's complex system of creative practice. Figure 8 is a screenshot of the prototype diagram whereby the data collected from an interview was transposed onto the template of the Harold Fisk map to create a more dynamic CRJ chart.
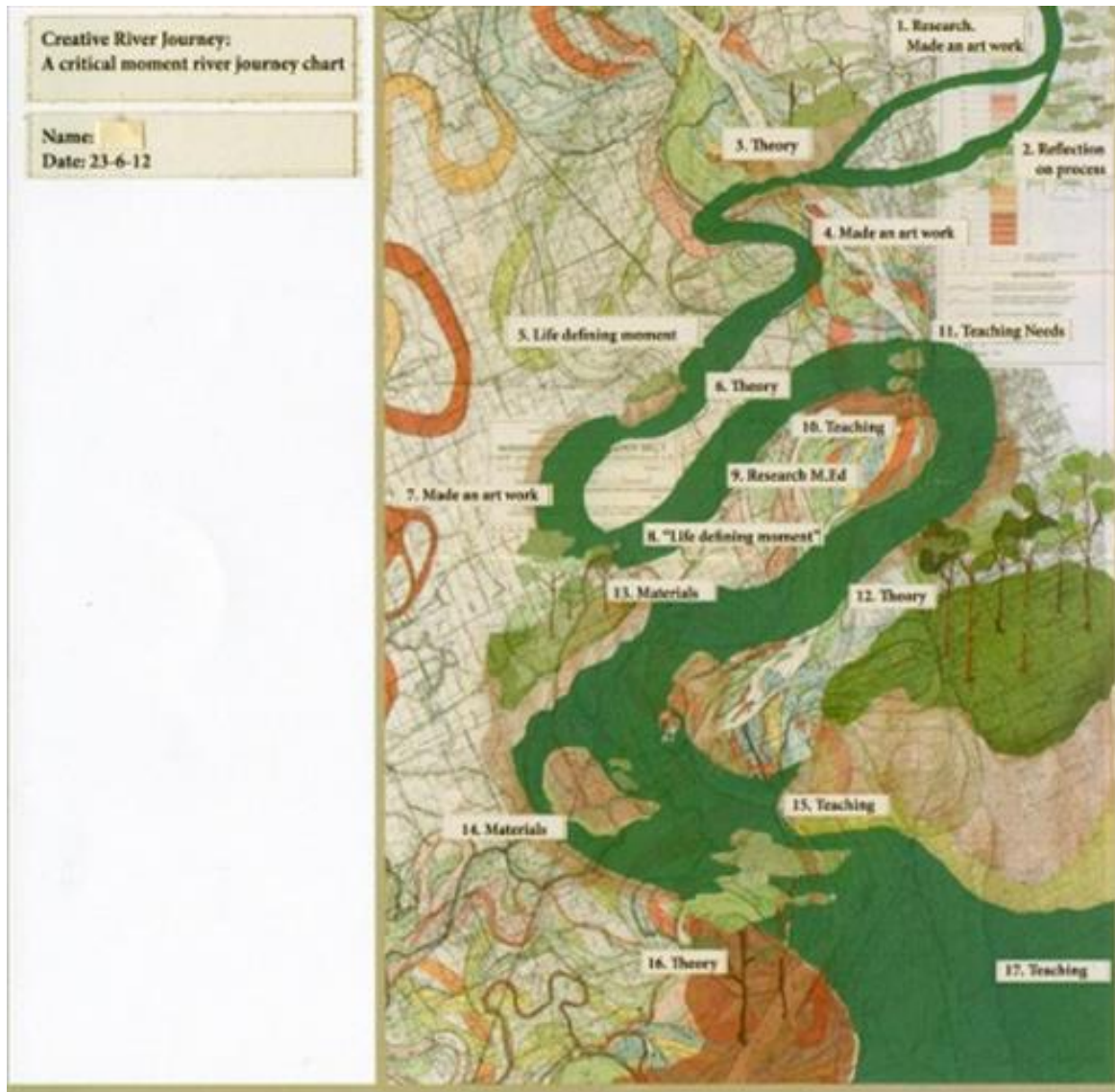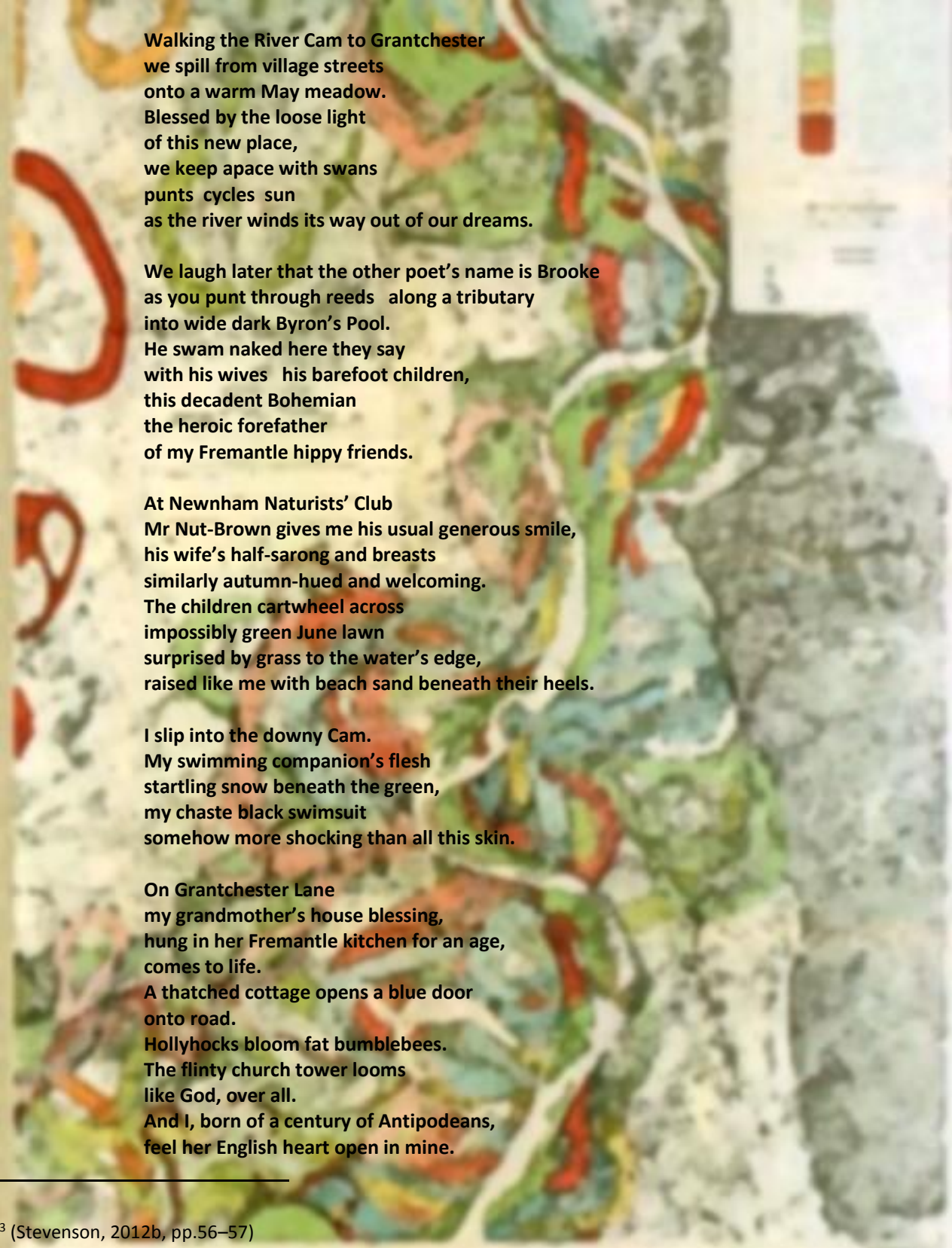
Figure 8: Screenshot of interactive interpretation of CRJ chart from ECU's Visualising Research by Loughridge & Stevenson. Image source: author's own image..

Unfortunately, the process of collaborative design, and the opportunity to construct all the river journeys as interactive diagrams, was ended when Loughridge moved interstate before completing her degree. Despite this, the initial prototype illustrates the potential for more creative extensions of the river metaphor in depicting images of art practice. I have honoured the short-lived collaboration with Loughridge, and the resonance I found between the Fisk map and creative practice in the project, by using this map as the background of my poems which constitute the poetic interludes in this thesis.

The river as an image and metaphor have deeply informed my approach to the 'Creative River Journey' study. From my first encounter with the river as a metaphor for critical moments in children's music development (Burnard, 2004), I have explored the potential of the river for mapping creativity and creative practice. This has led me to identify further applications of the river as a metaphor in not only education contexts but also in leadership, sculpture and poetry. My own explorations in poetry writing saw the river emerge as a theme in several of my own 'generated' research poems. Furthermore, extending the metaphor in ECU's Visualising Research initiative served to confirm for me the potency of the river as a dynamic metaphor for the complexity of an artist–researcher's practice-led research. The river has become a central strategy for navigating the process of capturing reflective practice in the CRJ charts, plus provided a rich motif informing the methodology of the 'Creative River Journey' study discussed in the following chapter.

POETIC INTERLUDE 3—CAMBRIDGE DREAMING[3]

Walking the River Cam to Grantchester
we spill from village streets
onto a warm May meadow.
Blessed by the loose light
of this new place,
we keep apace with swans
punts cycles sun
as the river winds its way out of our dreams.

We laugh later that the other poet's name is Brooke
as you punt through reeds   along a tributary
into wide dark Byron's Pool.
He swam naked here they say
with his wives   his barefoot children,
this decadent Bohemian
the heroic forefather
of my Fremantle hippy friends.

At Newnham Naturists' Club
Mr Nut-Brown gives me his usual generous smile,
his wife's half-sarong and breasts
similarly autumn-hued and welcoming.
The children cartwheel across
impossibly green June lawn
surprised by grass to the water's edge,
raised like me with beach sand beneath their heels.

I slip into the downy Cam.
My swimming companion's flesh
startling snow beneath the green,
my chaste black swimsuit
somehow more shocking than all this skin.

On Grantchester Lane
my grandmother's house blessing,
hung in her Fremantle kitchen for an age,
comes to life.
A thatched cottage opens a blue door
onto road.
Hollyhocks bloom fat bumblebees.
The flinty church tower looms
like God, over all.
And I, born of a century of Antipodeans,
feel her English heart open in mine.

[3] (Stevenson, 2012b, pp.56–57)

CHAPTER 3—THE NAVIGATION (METHODOLOGY)

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

The key ideas that form the conceptual framework through which I have designed the 'Creative River Journey' study are: arts practice, research and education. The study is a qualitative inquiry using an a/r/tography methodology (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2005), an approach that seeks to understand the intersection of art, research and teaching, and the interstitial spaces in between these.

The study is directed from a phenomenological perspective and consists of exploratory case studies of the phenomenon of reflective practice of creative practitioners—called artist–researchers—who are engaged in postgraduate research in the fields of the language arts (creative writing), the visual arts and performing arts.

The following diagram of the study's conceptual framework illustrates the intersections of these three broad concepts—arts practice, research and education—and how these underpin some of the research concerns of the study as follows:

- the development of the higher degree research student's artistic practice, where the intersection between arts practice and education occurs;

- the understanding of the HDR student's practice-led research skills, where the intersection of arts practice and research occurs; and

- the implications for creative HDR research training, where the intersection of research and HDR education occurs.

At the centre of these three intersections—artistic development of HDR artist–researcher, HDR practice-led research, and creative HDR research—is the 'Creative River Journeys' inquiry into HDR practice-led research through reflective practice.

Research training

Research

Teaching and Education

Creative River Journeys: using reflective practice to investigate creative practice-led research

Artistic development of HDR candidates

Practice-led Research

Arts Practice

61
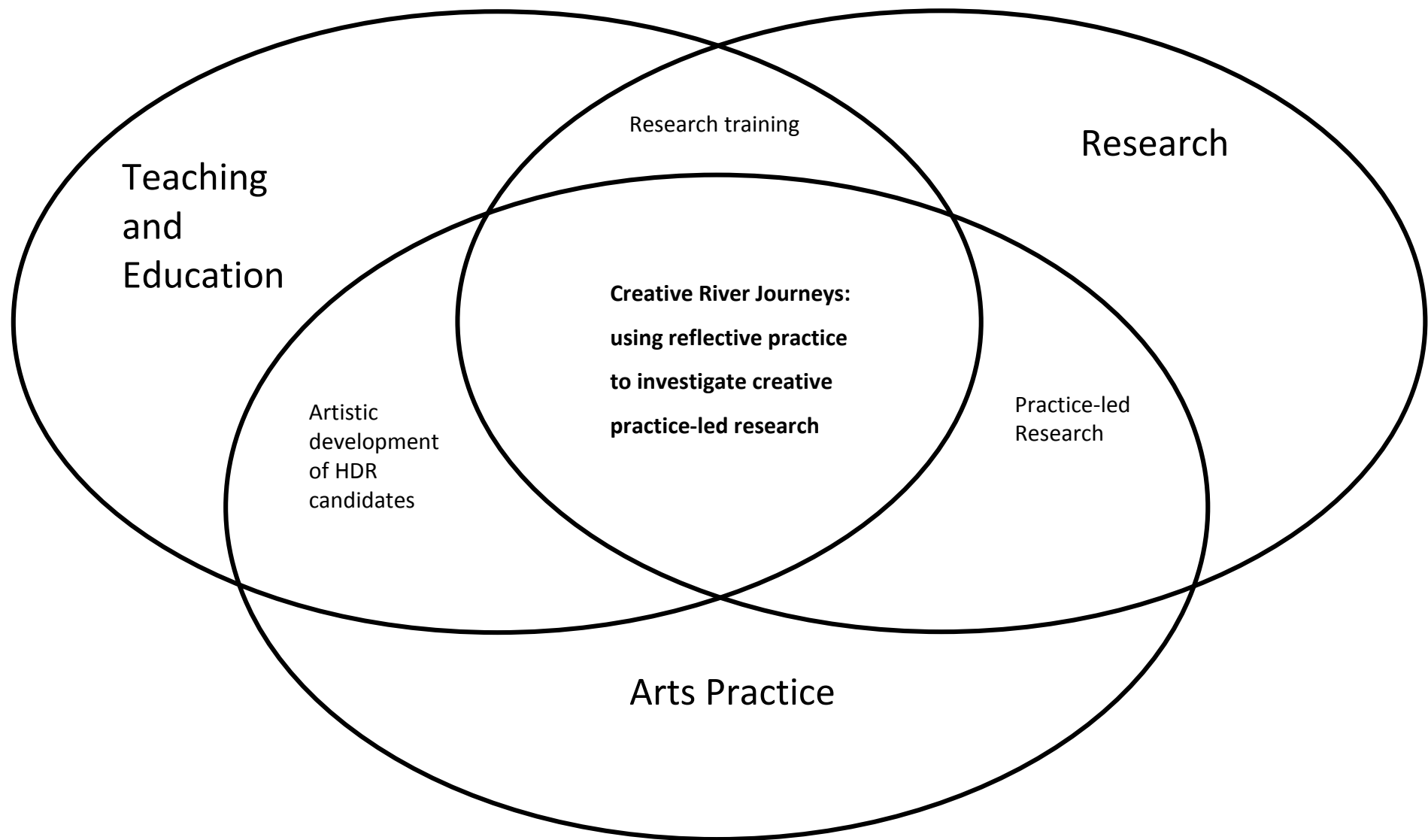
From Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the 'Creative River Journey' study

PARTICIPANTS

The artist–researchers participating in this study were a small cluster of higher degree by research (HDR) candidates at ECU, in the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and the (then named) School of Communication and Arts (SCA), (since renamed the School of Arts and Humanities (SAH)). Initially ten HDR artist–researcher participants nominated to take part in the study. However, four of these did not complete the study, with one participant withdrawing from the project in phase one, one participant withdrawing from her course in phase one, and two participants taking leave from their degrees at the time of phase two and three, therefore not completing all three phases of the CRJ strategy. The six participants who completed all the three phases of the 'CRJ' strategy are reported as cases in this thesis.

Four of the initial ten participants were unable to complete phase two, or, due to changes in their postgraduate timeline or experience, were unable to complete the study itself. Whilst this also provided insights into the postgraduate-artist experience, because there was not a full account of their engagement with all three phases of the 'Creative River Journey', these cases have not been reported on in this thesis.

The aim of exploring postgraduate reflective arts practice with these participants was to gain an understanding of the journey that each postgraduate artist engaged in when conducting practice-led research or creative research, and the outcome was the co-construction of narratives of HDR artist–researchers' practice.

RESEARCH PHASES

In the study, I supported this co-construction in three distinct phases, with each phase leading to greater autonomy for the student, and with each phase having specific data collection methods.

In the first phase, I co-constructed with the research participants a record of the critical moments experienced whilst developing one work of art or one contained aspect of their practice. These critical moments were documented using the CRJ charting strategy, based on the River Journey model of reflective practice (Burnard, 2000; Burnard, 2004; Kerchner,

2006), to be described in further detail later in this methodology section. The method of data collection in this phase was semi-structured interview. In the interview, the research participants recounted a chosen aspect of their practice and significant moments were marked bends in the river on the CRJ chart. (See Appendix A for blank chart, Appendix B for phase 2 chart, Appendix C for phase 3 focus group starter questions. Appendices D–I for scans of participants' original completed charts.)

In the second phase, I asked each artist–researcher to independently construct their own record of the critical moments experienced whilst developing another work of art or aspect of their practice, using the CRJ strategy. Participants were provided with instructions, a list of introductory questions, a blank copy of the chart, and an example of a completed CRJ chart from a previous study (see Appendix B.) In this phase, it was anticipated that a student may have had their own well-established method of reflection on the critical moments in their practice, for example, one may be using a reflective learning journal (Moon, 1999; Kerchner 2006), and yet another may keep a visual journal (La Jevic & Springgay, 2008). In that case, the method of data collection was negotiated with the participant, either the CRJ strategy, or the participant's choice of an established reflective practice that documented critical moments in their praxis. When it came time for me to collect the completed second phase CRJ chart, semi-structured interviews were offered to participants. For five of the six case study participants, an independently-constructed CRJ chart was the outcome of this phase, with a semi-structured interview conducted with each participant to gain a full understanding of the chart. In some instances, additions were made to the chart in this interview, which brought elements of co-construction into this second phase. The sixth participant completely adapted the CRJ strategy into a lengthy timeline-style reflective journal account of critical moments in her chosen aspect of practice.

In the third phase of the study, the research participants engaged in a group process of collaborative reflection in which they shared their experiences of the 'Creative River Journey' study, and their experience of research as a HDR artist–researcher. In this group collaboration stage, data was collected via focus-group style discussion.

These three stages are centred upon the CRJ reflective practice tool, and are predicated on an understanding of co-construction of knowledge drawn from educational theory and practice, as explained by Reusser:

> At the heart of this concept of co-construction are two coexisting activities: collaboratively solving the problem, and constructing and maintaining a joint problem space. Both activities require constant negotiations and recreations of meaning, i.e., trying to find out what can reasonably be said about the task in hand, and occur in structured forms of conversation and discourse utilizing language and physical actions as their most important mediators and resources. With the use of symbolic tools, it becomes possible for the conversants to express and objectify meanings, to compare and change them deliberately, to exchange and renegotiate them with others, and to reflect on the organization of judgments and arguments. (2001, pp.2059–2060)

All three phases were concerned with developing reflective practice with the artists in order to inquire into their experiences of being beginning artist–researchers. The study aimed to create conditions that helped enable them to construct narratives of their own practice, and to document the research strategies conducted they applied during their praxis.

A further aim of this documentation was related to the artist–researcher's own development throughout the course of their PhD or research Masters. This study sought to enhance the role higher education plays in building self-management, and thereby the acquisition of career–developing attributes by creative arts graduates (Bridgstock, 2009). Thus, in phase two, autonomous reflection was encouraged whereby HDR candidates might self-manage the development of reflection on their own art praxis. In phase three, when I engaged the students in a collaborative forum, the aim was to facilitate interactions between these HDR artist–researchers. In part, this concerned the sharing of practice-led research knowledge for further self-definition, and how the HDR artist–researchers might collectively facilitate their own engagement with the innovation agenda.

Each phase saw the research participants operate in consecutive stages of relative dependence, independence and interdependence with the study researcher acting as an interlocutor or facilitator (albeit at varying degrees of intervention) for all phases the CRJ strategy. This moved the participant along a journey towards a more autonomous reflective arts practice. Overall, the use of the CRJ strategy in this study provided the opportunity to

induct artist–researchers new to reflective arts practice, or to expand an artist's already established reflective practice repertoire, thus adding to their practice-led research skills.

A/R/TOGRAPHY AS A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This PhD project is framed as an a/r/tographical inquiry because it explores the inter-relationships between the acts of art-making, research and teaching. The importance that a/r/tography places upon reflection to elucidate these relationships closely mirrored my aim to examine the conceptual framework's key foci on art, research and teaching (and the in-between spaces in which these key concepts overlap) in the postgraduate experience of artists undertaking doctoral and research master's degrees. Furthermore, as Sullivan states of a/r/tography, "the centrality and the power of the arts as agencies of human understanding and community processes are at the creative and critical core of a/r/tography" (2008, p.240), and this met with my decade-long interest in creativity and artistic practice.

Some practice-led researchers have adopted the a/r/tography approach for self-study. In these instances a/r/tography can be somewhat akin to autoethnography (Irwin & Springgay, 2008a) which Creswell defines as "a reflective self-examination by an individual set within his or her cultural context" (2005, p.438). However, the self-examination in a/r/tography deliberately addresses not just cultural contexts, but embodied aesthetic understandings and the exchanges that arise from the spaces within and between art and text, between artist/researcher/teacher roles, and between art and viewer/reader. A definition of a/r/tography as a methodology has been put very simply by Bickel: "A/r/tography as living inquiry incorporates the transformative practices of action research and autoethnography" (2006, p.118). A/r/tography's similarity to action research lies in the reflection asked of the artist/researcher/teacher on the process they are engaged in. However, in a/r/tography, that reflection is not solely on a process of planned action to solve a problem, as is the case in action research (Creswell 2005, p.550). In a/r/tography, being 'in process' rather than examining 'a process' is important, as Winter, Belliveau and Sherritt-Fleming state: "In a/r/tography, process matters. This is because meaning is alive – always moving, always

growing. A/r/tographers view constructions of knowledge as infinite and in-process" (2009, p.8).

Another close match between the 'Creative River Journey' study and a/r/tography was the concern to elucidate the relationship between text and art-making in practice-led degrees. Bickel states that a/r/tography "combines and unites the visual and the textual, allowing a double meaning to emerge from the art and the writing, which is distinct and complementary" (2006, p.119). Furthermore, a/r/tography's application in multifaceted contexts such as performance art (Bickel, 2008), theatre (Beare, 2009), autobiography (Leggo, 2008a; 2008b) and poetry (Wiebe, 2008) illustrates the potential of the methodology for my own PhD project inquiring into practice across disciplines.

INTERSTITIAL SPACES OF A/R/T

The study's conceptual framework shows focal intersections between the three broad concepts of Arts Practice, Research and Teaching (and Learning). These interstitial spaces, akin to Beare's a/r/tographical "in-between spaces of art-making/ researching/ teaching (a/r/t)" (2009, p.163), are explored through the reflective practice of the CRJ strategy. Thus, the study is a/r/tographical research whereby, as Le Jevic and Springgay state: "it is an embodied query into interstitial spaces between art making, researching and teaching" (2008, p.68).

The inter-relationship of art and writing is also fundamental to a/r/tography and is embodied in the name of the research methodology itself, that is, a/r/t and graphy. This doctoral study used reflective practice to explore the interstitial space between art and graphy, between the practice and documenting the practice, and sought to construct a dialogue about the interconnection between art and graphy. A/r/tographers describe this interconnection as a "coming together of art and graphy, or image and word. It is a doubling of visual and textual wherein the two complement, extend, refute, and/or subvert one another" (Springgay, Irwin & Kind, 2005, p.900).

The study itself embodied these interstitial spaces by focusing on the experiences of the HDR artist–researchers as they make their art, the creative component of their PhD, as they

are researching both their practice and theory around their practice, and as they engage in the teaching and learning environment of their postgraduate degree. However, the project also positioned me as a researcher embodying these interstitial spaces of art-making, researching, and teaching and learning. This occurred as I engaged in poetic responses to my participants, made sense of the experiences in the project through synthesis and research, and engaged in and considered the implications of the teaching and learning environment for myself and my participants.

The 'Creative River Journey' study echoed the notion that reflective processes are central in a/r/tography, in reflective arts practice, and in practice-led research. Thus, the reflective processes encapsulated in the 'Creative River Journey' were placed at the heart of this project and at the centre of the research conversations with postgraduate artists. The benefit to HDR artist–researchers accorded with Dawson's empowerment through reflection perspective (2003, p.5), whereby engagement with the CRJ strategy and the reflective practice it embodied enhanced their own practice-led research.

A/R/TOGRAPHY AND THE RESEARCHER SELF

I commenced the 'Creative River Journey' study from a position built from three areas of vocational experience, each correlating with a/r/tography's framing of the a/r/tographer as artist/researcher/teacher, and each deeply informing the methodological path upon which I have embarked. This position was the culmination of experience, practice and research as an artist (a poet), a researcher and a teacher. Fundamental to the choice of a/r/tography as methodology were these aspects of my identity and an ability to enact these in the role as study researcher (Stevenson, 2012a). Bickel proposes (speaking of her own practice and research) that "[a]/r/tography calls for an inner collaborative relationship between my artist self, researcher self, and teacher self". Each of these roles, she suggests, engages the researcher in "a critical hermeneutic, self-reflexive practice of art-making and writing" (2008, p.126). Bickel highlights the particular benefits and beauty of a well-enacted a/r/tographical study, along with the demands:

> At its best, a/r/tography encourages the combined creative freedom and risk-taking of the artist with the theory, rigor, and responsibility of the academic researcher,

along with the ethics and compassion of the educator. Combining these three roles with the integrity and awareness of what is called for in each area is a demanding undertaking. (Bickel, 2008, p.136)

A—The 'a' in a/r/tography and my art practice identity

In my research project I was attempting to integrate three areas of my identity that I have mostly kept separate in my professional life: creative writing practitioner, academic researcher and teacher. Rather than privilege one, I sought to give equal time to each. Thus, the 'a' in a/r/tography and my art practice identity have required me to actively engage with creative writing in response to my research. Part of my experience has been as a practice-led researcher in the field of creative writing. In 2004, I completed a Master of Arts research degree in creative writing at RMIT University, Melbourne. This involved me writing a novel and an exegesis (Stevenson, 2004).

This experience created in me the initial fascination for the dynamic relationship between arts practice and research, brought about as I wrestled with how my exegetical component related to my creative component, a novel. In my exegesis, rather than undertaking an abstracted critical evaluation of my novel, I documented the process of writing the novel in relation to Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) model of creativity, *flow*.

My creative writing practice identity took a back seat to my academic researcher identity when I followed this creative writing master's degree with a Master of Philosophy degree in the Education faculty at the University of Cambridge (Stevenson, 2009). In proceeding to design this subsequent doctoral project, I deliberately chose the a/r/tography approach to re-engage with my creative writing practice, and I envisaged the A for artist being related in some way to my artistic practice as a creative writer, though at the outset of the project the specific genre of creative writing was not resolved.

The work of ECU researcher Dr. John Ryan in a doctoral research project quite different to mine, on the aesthetics of Southwest Australian flora, called my attention to Ryan's use of poetry as a method of inquiring into the nature of the flora: "My poetry evokes—and mimics at times—the processes of plants in order to express their mutability. The conflation of living plants with objects of art rests on the perception of their shared stasis" (Ryan,

2011, p.8). Ryan used poems as a method of capturing reflection on his field research and this approach led to a crucial breakthrough for me in defining the A in my a/r/tography method: it became A for poet. This critical moment in my own research journey resulted in the application of poetic inquiry within the project (Prendergast, Leggo & Sameshima, 2009a; 2009b) and the discovery and enactment of my own poetic voice. The poetic interludes are an expression of this voice.

The 'Creative River Journey' study has its main focus on the practice-led research of other artist–researchers, not my own creative writing process, thus my poems are written in direct response to engagement with my participants and the research material, not as research procedures under analysis themselves. However, in order to embed poetry into the already complex research process of my a/r/tographical project, I have needed to draw on other understandings of poetic inquiry within research frameworks. (For example, Leggo, 2008a, 2008b; Prendergast, Leggo & Sameshima, 2009a, 2009b; Butler-Kisber, 2010a, 2010b; and Faulkner, 2009; 2010). Within the 'Creative River Journey' study, my use of poetry has closely reflected Butler-Kisber's conceptualisation of poetry in research as two-fold: "two helpful ways for framing and thinking about poetic inquiry are as 'found poetry', when words are extracted from transcripts and shaped into poetic form, and as 'generated' or more autobiographical poetry, when the researcher uses her own words to share understandings of her own and/or others' experiences" (2010b, p.83).

The poetry generated in this study can be found throughout this thesis. Deliberate placement of these poems as poetic interludes in the spaces in-between chapters reflects the exploration of the project of the in-between spaces between art and graphy, between core concepts within the theoretical framework of the project, and in the in-between spaces of the researcher's multiple identity. Poetic interlude 4 at the end of this section is one example of one such poem, "Deep Water Point" (Stevenson, 2012b, p.58–60), the title of which refers to a bend on the Canning River in Perth, the city in which I now live. The poem was written in the first year of development of the doctoral study when, after a period of non-productivity, my then supervisor Julie Robson suggested I sit by the river and see what happened. It was redrafted extensively in 2012 during a year-long series of poetry

masterclasses at the Peter Cowan Writers' Centre situated on the Joondalup campus of ECU. The poem illustrates my engagement with the metaphor of the river, through which the artist–researcher participants' creative practices are documented, but it is also an autobiographical reflection on the way my identity as a parent and as a researcher are inter-related.

R—The 'r' in a/r/tography and my research identity

In terms of the R in a/r/tography and my research identity, three successive master's degrees, two by research, have impacted on my understanding of research and have aided the formation of my researcher identity. In addition to the aforementioned creative writing Master of Arts, I completed a Master of Education degree at the University of Melbourne, Australia, in 2007, which included instruction in the university's Centre for Evaluation, Curriculum and the Humanities. Studies in Cambridge in 2008/2009 heightened my qualitative research interests in a degree which itself was concerned with interstices: a Master of Philosophy in Arts, Creativity and Education. In Cambridge, we were pressed to consider the way that the arts and culture, research, and education interplay. The nexus of arts, culture and education in this research degree has informed my understanding of the relationship between art, research and teaching in my PhD project and in a/r/tography.

As a result of this extensive postgraduate study, my researcher identity has been predominant over the past decade. In electing to frame my 'Creative River Journey' project though a/r/tography, I have deliberately placed myself in the familiar role of researcher whilst at the same time confronting any complacency in that role by integrating two other aspects of my self, artist and teacher. In a/r/tography, a multiplicity of identities and the movement between these identities is acknowledged, and the thoughts, feelings, habits and work of all of one's identities need to flow together. As Irwin and de Cosson state, an a/r/tographer: "embraces a métissage [meaning multiple identities] existence that integrates knowing, doing, and making… [He or she] desires an aesthetic experience found in an elegance of flow between intellect, feeling and practice" (2004, p.29). Whilst much of the expression of my researcher identity is embodied in this thesis and in the conduct of the 'Creative River Journey' study itself, one way for my *métissage* existence to be expressed is

through the flow within the thesis between conventional expressions about the research study, accounts of practice in narrative form, and the poetic interludes between sections. In doing this, I am illustrating how, in the 'Creative River Journey' study, the usually polyphonous nature of these identities can be integrated and given a clear voice.

T—The 't' in a/r/tography and teaching identity

In considering the T in a/r/tography and my teaching identity, I decided to specifically work with postgraduate artist–researchers with the clear intention of exploring the university higher education context and its intersections with participants' creative practice. Placing such a focus built upon my own experience of postgraduate education, but was also motivated by my lifelong interest in the transformative power of education, with its roots in my secondary and tertiary teaching background. I have a lengthy and diverse background as an educator including ten years' teaching in secondary schools and adult education, and three years teaching creative writing at tertiary level. This has taken me into further educational areas such as developing project-based curriculum for students at risk; designing thinking skills curriculum for early secondary school teaching; and writing distance education and creative writing curriculum for adult learners.

The possible implications of this research for curriculum and pedagogy in the creative arts are of vital interest to me, as is the way in which my experience as a teacher/educator was integrated with my arts practice background and my research background as I enacted the study. "A/r/tography is . . . steeped in the arts and education", Irwin et al. suggest, with the words teaching, learning and education seeded throughout their description of a/r/tography as a methodology. Indeed, they suggest that the arts and education are fundamentally interlinked in this research approach which, they state, is:

> one of many emerging forms of inquiry that refer to the arts as a way of re-searching the world to enhance understanding. Yet it goes even further by recognizing the educative potential of teaching and learning as acts of inquiry. Together the arts and education complement, resist and echo one another through rhizomatic relations of living inquiry. (2006, p.70)

The phrase 'rhizomatic relations of living inquiry' is an apt descriptor of the complex nature of relations within the study's participants' practice-led research, and within the 'Creative

River Journey' study itself. The co-constructive process of reflecting on, and documenting, creative practice with the participants has illustrated the relational generation of shared meaning between myself as collaborator/teacher and the artist–researchers as co-collaborator students, and it has facilitated a fundamental growth in my understanding of the nature of teaching in higher degrees. Whilst my previous teaching style was never simply an instructive-style pedagogy, with the 'Creative River Journey' project I have now come to think of my teaching as "emergentist pedagogy" (Kalin, Barney, & Irwin, 2009, p.357), that is, arising out of the conscious and complex interaction between student, teacher and context. Furthermore, my understanding of teaching now includes Irwin and Springgay's conceptualisation of teaching as living inquiry: "giving attention to the complexity and contradictions of relations between people, things, and understandings" (2008a, pp.xxvii-xxxi).

'Rhizomatic relations of living inquiry' within a higher degree teaching context describes the connections that have been created within and outside the 'Creative River Journey' project. One artist–researcher was motivated to become a participant in the project because of her own use of a/r/tography as a methodology. This led to a shared generation of understanding of a/r/tography between participant and researcher, and unexpected reciprocal mentoring between us. Reciprocal mentorship can be conceptualised as a kind of teaching, albeit a mutual, deeply personal and complex form of teaching. The following quote is one of several references about mentorship and a/r/tography forwarded to me by this artist–researcher, and explains 'emergentist pedagogy' more fully:

> To interrogate our assumptions and unsettle our understandings, mentorship within a/r/tography requires provocation and flexibility . . . [M]entoring for emergence is concerned with the generating of meaning rather than the transfer of predetermined knowledge. This 'emergentist' pedagogy requires mentors to be cognizant of how their actions might cause the reproduction of their ways of understanding to the exclusion of emergent understandings. (Kalin, Barney, & Irwin, 2009, p.357)

I too have experienced crucial mentorship. In my doctoral study and a/r/tographical practice, I am fortunate to have outstanding supervision support from my own PhD supervisors, along with the support of a diverse and lively research community at Edith

Cowan University. But also, my practice as a/r/tographer is guided and motivated by the inspiring artist–researchers who are participants in my project and whose journeys I share. In revealing and exploring their own CRJ, they have partnered me in my a/r/tographical one.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL STANCE

Three key words define the epistemological foundations of the methodological approach I undertook in the 'Creative River Journey' study: interpretive, phenomenological and constructivist. I now address briefly all three of these epistemologies.

I have taken an <u>interpretive</u> approach by seeking to understand the participants' own arts praxis through reflective practices. In this way, I sought to illuminate their own practice-led research strategies. Accordingly, my research design met with McTaggart's description of an interpretive approach to arts education research which:

> seeks to understand what is happening in the terms in which participants in events actually understand the events themselves. By documenting carefully the ways in which participants talk about their work, the social structures and social relationships which shape the way they exist and relate to their work, and the nature of the practices people are actually engaged in, interpretive research creates understanding by connecting with the readers' own experiences in various ways. (McTaggart, 1991, p.4)

In the case studies of the HDR artist–researchers, my research perspective can be further described as incorporating <u>interpretivist phenomenology</u>, in that it is concerned with the phenomena of individual creative arts praxis. Crotty (1998) suggests that, in interpretivist phenomenology, researchers "attempt to identify, understand, describe and maintain the subjective experience of respondents" (p.83). The individual subjective lived experience of each artist's praxis, that is, the phenomenology of their praxis, is certainly the focus of my study. The interpretivist understanding of these phenomena is to be found in the reflective practice of each artist, in keeping with van Manen's (2006) view of phenomenology:

> When a phenomenologist asks for the essence of a phenomena—a lived experience—then the phenomenological inquiry is not unlike an artistic endeavor, a creative attempt to somehow capture a phenomenon of life in a linguistic description that is both holistic and analytical, evocative and precise, unique and universal, powerful and sensitive. (p.39)

Thirdly, the research is positioned as <u>constructivist</u>. Crotty states that, in constructivist research "meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they have been interpreting" (1998, p.43). Thus, through research conversations with the HDR artist–researchers, meaning is elicited for both the arts practitioner and the researcher of each artist's own individual experience: "Constructivism . . . points up the unique experience of each of us. It suggests that each one's way of making sense of the world is as valid and worthy of respect as any other" (Crotty, 1998, p.58).

Central to this study is the notion that I and the HDR artist–researchers have been engaged in a process of constructing personal knowledge about creative praxis and practice-led research. In the interaction between myself as researcher and each individual artist–researcher, we have co-constructed a record of each artist's personal praxis through reflection on that praxis.

That record, in the initial phase, was the CRJ chart co-constructed via the study's reflective practice strategy. But my research design adopts a further constructivist stance when, in the second phase, the artist is able to make a methodological intervention in deciding on their own reflective practice procedure. Furthermore, a complex group-oriented co-construction of meaning is intended as the third collaborative reflective practice phase of the study.

ABOUT THE DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Phase One: Co-construction of CRJs through reflective practice

In this research, within each case study, I aimed to provide a descriptive account of the process that each individual HDR artist–researcher engaged in to produce one artistic work, work-in-progress or one contained aspect of their praxis. This aim was realised using and adapting the River Journey research tool (Burnard, 2000; Kerchner, 2006): a method of data collection in which participants identify and explain the critical moments which occur throughout the process of creating this one work. (See Appendix A for a full page version of the CRJ pro-forma chart used in phase one.)

The project's use of critical moments as points for expanded understanding of tacit knowledge is built upon the work of Eraut (1995) who called into question some of Schön's

(1987) focus on the problem solving of knowing-in-action. Schön stated "it is sometimes possible, by observing and reflecting on our actions to make a description of the tacit knowledge explicit in [knowing-in-action]" (1987, p.25). However, Eraut asserted that reflection-on-action was not usually possible in the busy moments when tacit knowledge is in play: "Thus the more reflection assumes a critical function, the less appropriate it becomes to describe it as being in action" (1995, p.14). Eraut went on to develop the use of reflection on critical incidents, "a routine situation [that] comes to be perceived as problematic" (1987, p.13), suggesting this as a way "to recognize the high learning potential of such emotionally rich situations and to gradually focus attention on extracting key issues and addressing them in a manner that leaves participants better prepared for any similar incidents in the future" (2004, p.49). Reflection on critical moments also has resonance with threshold concepts in transformational learning which Meyer and Land describe as follows:

> A threshold concept can be considered as akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something. It represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something without which the learner cannot progress. As a consequence of comprehending a threshold concept there may thus be a transformed internal view of subject matter, subject landscape, or even world view. (2003, p.1)

The River Journey's focus on critical moments also correlates with Webster and Mertova's (2007) narrative inquiry method, whereby they advocate the use of reflection upon critical incidents as a way of conducting research : "In a narrative inquiry, questions should be structured in such a way that they encourage reflection and recall of the critical event" (p.86). In Webster and Mertova's approach, the aim is to construct a story of a particular incident or series of incidents, and it is an aim of my study to also construct the story of each postgraduate artist's praxis. There is further correlation with Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology (Dervin, 2003; Teekman, 1998) in which "Micro-moment Time-line Interview" charts are used to deconstruct an experience. Teekman's critical incidents in nursing anatomise an experience into steps which render the whole as a series of inter-related and interconnected micro moments.

Whether the purpose is to give a picture of one's professional identity, to give an overview of one's experiences, or to construct a narrative of an event that one has found powerful,

the charting of critical moments into a coherent narrative via the River Journey tool provides the opportunity for deep reflection by the research subject. Burnard states:

> As a tool for reflection, creating 'Rivers of Musical Experience' encourages active involvement from participants in an emancipatory and democratic way. Like rivers, the words start to flow because the participants, either on their own or with the help of their tutor/teacher or researcher, draw them in ways that they own and feel appropriate. (2004, p.8)

In taking the River Journey tool from situations whereby it was applied to children's musical experience (Burnard, 2000; Burnard, 2004) and adult teacher identity (Kerchner, 2006), and applying it to postgraduate artists' praxis, I am acting as a bricoleur researcher in much the way that Haseman described performative researchers employing a variety of qualitative methodological tools (Haseman, 2006, p.104). Denzin and Lincoln state that the qualitative researcher as bricoleur employs a research design that is an "emergent construction that changes and takes new forms as the bricoleur adds different tools, methods and techniques. . . . If the researcher needs to invent, or piece together new tools or techniques, he or she will do so" (2013a, p.5). Thus, I have pieced together a new tool through this latest adaptation of the River Journey for application in my creative arts education research. The Creative River Journey (CRJ) strategy is this new adaptation.

This action of adapting is in keeping with the generation of methods within an a/r/tography research approach: "A/r/tographical research in every respect generates itself from within—the processes, the modes of inquiry, the methods by which one conducts research, the analysis, and even the assessment—is created in the act of being in the midst of a/r/tography" (Irwin & Springgay, 2008a, p.xxxii). In phase one of my study, the co-constructing of the CRJs, I captured narratives about the process of postgraduate arts praxis.

Phase Two: Autonomous reflective practice

As discussed previously, the second phase of the study engaged the research participants in a process of independent reflective practice using the CRJ strategy, or an adaptation of any reflective practice already inherent in their arts praxis that evocated critical moments.

The participants were provided with a document that included beginning guide questions, a blank CRJ pro-forma chart, and an example of a completed CRJ chart from a previous

context (See Appendix B). I made no assumptions in embarking on this study that the CRJ strategy would be the only (or principal) model of reflective practice engaged in by postgraduate artists. I acknowledged that participants might have an existing reflective practice already in place, and this turned out to be the case for several artist–researchers.

Therefore, through a process of observation and interview data collection, I turned my attention to the postgraduate artists' existing praxis through interviews, through attending exhibitions, by reading their published scholarly material, and via other internet-based documentation (such as artists' web-pages, blogs and gallery sites) in order to identify where they were engaged in reflective practice. The aim of this phase was to explore a range of potential models of successful reflective arts practice, and to test whether the CRJ strategy can indeed be one of these successful models.

Phase Three: Collaborative reflective practice

Given that a/r/tography is about an inter-relationship between contexts of art practice, research and teaching, and that university research environments are essentially collaborative communities of researchers, this third phase aimed to establish an inter-relationship between my research participants. Whilst part of the intention of this stage was to gather focus group–style feedback in regards to the study's research questions, there was also an acknowledgement of two of the renderings of a/r/tography: living inquiry attention to the relations between people; and openings—attention to dialogue and discourse. In this phase, the participants were gathered in a focus group and provided with stimulus questions and a poem (See Appendix C) to begin a group reflective process about their experiences of their HDR practice-led research and of the CRJ strategy.

A/r/tography's rendering, living inquiry, asks that the researcher is cognizant of the relations between people in all their complexity. The postgraduate artists in my study were conducting their arts praxis in the community of the university. Thus, the relations between these members of this community offered opportunities to explore the complexities of the inter-relationships that arose in arts practice, in research and in the teaching context. Furthermore, the rendering, openings, asked that attention be given to discourse and dialogue, and I was conscious as a researcher that I did not want the discourse to be

controlled and captured only within my own research process. I aimed for the dialogue and discourse to be opened up between all research participants, to enable a fruitful shared understanding of the many guises and complexity of praxis and practice-led research.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

The sampling strategy used to recruit participants was purposeful sampling to identify appropriate candidates who were invited to take part by a general invitation issued through ECU's Graduate Research School and Centre for Research in Entertainment, Arts, Technology, Education and Communications (CREATEC) Google groups. I also consulted with CREATEC group leaders and other colleagues in ECU to identify possible participants. I adopted this purposeful sampling strategy according Stake's notion of collective case study sampling:

> In the beginning, phenomena are given; the cases are opportunities to study the phenomena. But even in the larger collective case studies, the sample size usually is too small to warrant random selection. For qualitative fieldwork, we draw a purposive sample, building in variety and acknowledging opportunities for intensive study. (2003, p.152)

Stake suggests in the collective case study that the researcher begins by "selecting a case of some typicality, but leaning towards those cases that seem to offer opportunity to learn. . . . Potential for learning is a different and sometimes superior criterion to representativeness" (2003, p.152). With this is mind, and as the phenomenon of intended study was the arts praxis and practice-led research strategies of students in higher degree tertiary study at ECU, I applied purposeful sampling in selecting cases of HDR artist–researchers who offered something to learn about their praxis and practice-led research strategies.

Broadly, I used the following selection criteria to recruit participants:

- Students drawn from membership of Edith Cowan University's Centre for Research in Entertainment, Arts, Technology, Education and Communication (CREATEC) and from the Faculty of Education and Arts at Edith Cowan University, including the Western Australian Academy of Arts (WAAPA);
- Students who were practicing in the discipline area of visual arts, language arts (creative writing) or performing arts;

- Students engaged in masters or doctoral postgraduate arts studies that included creative practice-led components at any stage of their postgraduate studies, but prior to the submission stage of their PhD project.

I initially aimed to select four postgraduate artists from each of the three discipline areas of visual arts, performing arts and language arts, with a total of twelve HDR artist–researchers as the subjects of the study. However, withdrawal of participants or an initial expression of interest then no further engagement resulted in me relying on the ten participants who volunteered. Of these ten, four were completing their degrees in WAAPA. Two of these were not 'performers' as I had anticipated, but instead were writers for performance, specifically, screenwriters. Therefore, the initial tally of participants was: three visual artist, two performing artists, two artists writing for performance (screen), and three language artists. The category 'writing for performance' that emerged illustrates the interdisciplinarity that can arise in creative higher degrees by research. Both these artist–researchers were enrolled with WAAPA in performing arts. Furthermore, one of the visual artists in the study, who completed an exhibition as part of her doctoral study, was enrolled in an Education doctorate.

This thesis provides case study accounts of six of the initial ten participants. Of the four of the ten who did not complete all three phases of the study, one participant from visual arts withdrew from the study before phase one was completed, and one participant from creative writing took extended leave over the period of data collection and thus was not available for the study. Unfortunately, the remaining two withdrawals were the two screenwriting HDR students, one of whom withdrew from her degree for parenting purposes, and the second of whom also took extended leave and missed crucial phases of data collection. A longer and more extensive study about the restrictions and challenges experienced by HDR candidates might reveal the multiple impediments on these four participants' engagement in their degrees, or in the 'Creative River Journey' study. However, this study did not collect data on the various factors that prompted these participants to withdraw from the study and I cannot therefore report confidently on these issues.

There were several further issues in regards to sampling that indicate either consistency or diversity in the selection of the participant cohort: artists' expertise, ethnicity, and gender balance. In regards to the length of time an artist has been in practice, I believed it was useful to survey across a range of artist expertise. As the phenomenon under consideration was arts praxis through reflective practice, I anticipated it would be useful to arrive at some comparison of the reflective strategies of HDR artist–researchers who identified as early, mid or senior career artists. In selecting a range of levels of expertise amongst the participants, I aimed to take into consideration the Vygotskian notion that there is a continuum of creativity and that selected participants may be at any point on this continuum. (See discussion of this in Moran & John-Steiner, 2003; McWilliam, 2008; Spencer, Lucas & Claxton, 2012). However, recruitment didn't specifically set expertise as a criterion. There were two participants with substantial international experience in their field, whilst others were just emerging as practicing artists.

The possible need to consider the ethnicity of my participants was also an initial consideration in recruitment. I had an informal meeting with Dr. Noel Nannup, lead Elder-in-Residence from the Kurongkurl Katitjin School at ECU, about my project, in relation to potential Indigenous participants. Whilst I did not purposefully sample for a range of Indigenous, ethnic or cultural backgrounds, I planned that should I identify participants who were, for example, Indigenous or whose first language was other than English, it would be critically appropriate to engage with whether they perceive this aspect of their identity as impacting on their resulting arts praxis and reflective practice.

The outcome of the recruitment indicated that there were three (out of the final six) participants writing in English but whose first language was not English. However, all three had substantial English language skills or experience living in an English-language dominant culture. Two had European backgrounds, and one of the three was from an Asian background and her own research focused on ethnicity. The complexity of these artists' practice meant that no fruitful comparison attributable to ethnic or linguistic diversity was possible with such a small cohort. Whilst I acknowledge these cultural backgrounds, issues

of ethnicity are complex and not germane to the topic under consideration, practice-led research.

In regards to selecting participants according to gender, it was not the intention of this study to make a comparison of arts practices based on gender differences. In the early stages of the study, difficulties arose in recruiting equal numbers of males and females due to the small pool of creative research doctoral and masters students available at ECU, and also due to a higher cohort of female students than males in the creative arts. Though it was not ideal to have substantially fewer participants from one gender, the final gender split of the initial ten participants who formed the case study cohort for this project was two males and eight females. The four participants withdrew or who did not complete all CRJ phases, and who are not reported on further in this thesis were all female. Therefore, there was a closer balance of gender in the final six cases reported, with two males and four females forming the six cases analysed herein.

CASE STUDY SELECTION

Multiple case selection for an exploratory perspective

The 'Creative River Journey' study's approach is in keeping with Yin's description of exploratory case study which "is aimed at . . . determining the feasibility of the desired research procedures" (2003b, p.5). One major aspect of the research is inquiry into the usefulness of the CRJ strategy to initiate and reveal reflective practice in arts praxis. The interpretive phenomenological perspective of the study also meets with Stake's description of the purposes of collective case study research whereby "a researcher may jointly study a number of cases in order to investigate a phenomenon" (2003, p.138). In the study as a whole, however, I am not taking an exploratory case study perspective alone, thus I have chosen to frame solely the selection of participants from an exploratory case study perspective.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data records

In phases one and two, I digitally recorded each interview with participants on an MP3 recorder and, in phase one, I manually completed a CRJ chart with participants during each interview. These interviews were usually one hour in duration with a great deal of variance in when the postgraduate artist was interviewed, according to where they were in their creative process. In phase two, I again conducted one one-hour interview with each participant to discuss either their completion of their personal CRJ chart or their own reflective practice documentation. In phase three, a one-hour focus group meeting was conducted and recorded on a digital MP3 recorder. All interviews were transcribed verbatim by an ECU-approved transcription service who had signed a confidentiality agreement. All participants were given the option, approved by ECU's Research Ethics committee, of either using their real names or remaining anonymous in the 'Creative River Journey' study. All six participants reported on in this thesis chose to be identified by their real names.

Analysis via conceptual framework and research questions

To prepare for data analysis, firstly, I revisited the CRJ strategy charts co-constructed during each interview. Then, I closely read each transcription of each interview, using the transcripts to check that I had made the correct annotations on each CRJ. (I had also checked at the end of each interview with the interviewee to ensure that my chart notations and interpretations of chart notations were correct.) Thirdly, I gathered data from participants' publications, theses, and other publically available data in order to complement findings from the CRJ strategies. Finally, I revisited the study's conceptual framework, narrowing the focus of analysis to concentrate my inquiry upon artistic development of HDRs, practice-led research, and training of the creative arts HDR candidates, alongside addressing the summative research question: "what are the participants' experiences and outcomes as a result of using the CRJ reflective inquiry"?

My interview structure allowed me to address the first question of what the CRJ strategy revealed in two ways: firstly, by compiling a full story of each artist–researcher's creative

process via a transcribed interview word document and individual CRJ strategy charts, originals of which are included as appendices to this thesis. An initial level of data analysis was introduced in the transcription of these original charts themselves with critical moments from the original charts categorised according to the a/r/tographical areas of arts practice, research and teaching plus other emergent categories such as supervision, theory, and reflection; and, secondly, by completing a narrative report of each artist–researchers participant's practice, included in chapter 4 of this thesis.

To compile these reports, I drew on interview transcripts, the transcribed CRJ charts, research proposals of artist–researchers, published articles and theses by artist–researchers, and other material readily available on the web in relation to each artist–researcher's practice. Yin (2003a) states that in a case study approach a researcher is engaged in a process of examining and categorizing in order to "address initial propositions of a study" (p.109). As these narrative reports were constructed, the researcher was engaged in a process of comparison between cases to look for common themes, critical moments or experiences. This is in keeping with Yin's suggestion that data analysis in case studies is a process of pattern-making and cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2003a, p.109).

Creative content analysis

Narrative reports of an artist–researcher's various activities and outputs were compiled by a process similar to qualitative content data analysis, which I call creative content analysis. This breadth of data was analysed to form individual case studies of each artist–researcher with the a/r/tographical conceptual framework and the summative research question guiding initial propositions. Just as I added the word creative to form the 'Creative River Journey', I propose adding the word creative to content analysis, forming *creative* content analysis to explain my method for analysing of the many forms of creative data arising from an investigation into practice-led research. Artist–researchers generate a breadth of creative content via their practice-led research. In order to construct the narratives of practice in the 'Creative River Journey' project, for example, I drew on the artist–researchers' CRJ charts, interview transcripts , research proposals, artworks, performances, creative writing, published academic articles, theses, and other material such as reviews and

blogs readily available on the web in relation to each artist–researcher's practice. Taking a content analysis approach meant that the breadth of data could be addressed and directed toward the construction of narratives of practice. Krippendorf (2013), in his seminal work on content analysis states, that content analysis accounts emerge from readings of texts: "This approach works with categories as well as with narrative descriptions but focuses on situations, settings, styles, images, meanings, and nuances presumed to be recognizable by the human actors/speakers involved" (p.23). This study's approach to content analysis accords with Krippendorf's description of content analysis in ethnography:

> Proponents of ethnographic content analysis oppose the sequential nature of traditional content analysis, suggesting instead that analysts be flexible in taking into account new concepts that emerge during their involvement with texts. This call acknowledges the theory-driven nature of content analysis but also demands that the analytical process be closely linked to the communicators studied. (p.27)

In the spirit of allowing new concepts to emerge, adding the word creative to content analysis is not simply a case of differentiating content from creative disciplines as opposed to other disciplines. Instead it is an acknowledgement that meaning in the art-making process emerges from a diversity of texts that surround that practice. Furthermore, creativity involves a different quality of experience from other experiences that may produce data. Howkins (2013, p.5) suggests creativity is diverse, implicit, often unstable, fluid, emerging, complex, self-organising, cyclical and process-oriented, and he differentiates this from more stable, explicit 'repetitive' systems of knowledge-making. 'Creative' in both creative content and analysis and the creative river journey acknowledges the experiential nature of artistic practice. Barrett (calling on Dewey) describes the process of artistic inquiry as "the flow of experience that runs its course to closure or fulfilment through the processes of adjustment to our environment and objects in the world" (2013, p.67). By being explicit myself in honouring the creative in creative content analysis, I am drawing attention to the slippery, subjective, experiential nature of the data that is being analysed.

In some ways, creative content analysis is similar to qualitative content analysis, which takes many forms but is familiar methodology for many researchers managing large data collections as described below:

Qualitative content analysis takes a holistic and comprehensive approach towards analyzing data material and thus achieves to (almost) completely grasp and cover the complexity of the social situations examined and social data material derived from them. At the same time, qualitative content analysis uses a rule-based and methodologically controlled approach in order to deal with the complexity and gradually reduce it. The procedures of summary, explication and structuring step-by-step reduce complexity and filter out the main points of analysis in an iterative process. Therefore, qualitative content analysis perfectly fits the credo of case study research: helping to understand complex social phenomena. (Kohlbacher, 2006, para.77)

Stemler states that "[c]ontent analysis is a powerful data reduction technique. Its major benefit comes from the fact that it is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding" (Stemler, 2001, p.9). Creative content analysis necessarily demands a different perspective.. Instead, the aim is to identify, collate and analyse as data the visual, written and ephemeral material generated by the artist–researcher, for example, in studio, in performance, at the reading desk, or through extensive reflections in forms such as artists' books, diaries and blogs. As the study's artist–researchers struggled to identify their practice as research, their CRJ reflective interviews implied that there is a similar struggle to identify the variety of creative material they produce as data. Just as the CRJs benefit HDR artist–researchers in sifting through past practice and new understandings of their research, propelling them toward an idiosyncratic model of research suited to their own individual practice, so they would benefit from a strategy for recognising the vast amount of data they may produce from their practice-led investigations, and a means to manage this in their creative research practice. Nelson suggests adopting a conceptual framework (2013, p.35) in order to complete a lineage of practice (or literature review), so that the artist–researcher can locate their practice in their field. This conceptual framework can then serve as the systematic technique for data reduction arrived at via the creative content analysis described above.

The CRJ charts can be constructed as a small form of creative content analysis, reducing the data generated verbally in conversation with the artist–researcher in a systematic way by focusing on critical moments and the metaphor of the river. Furthermore, I have applied the use of the conceptual framework for the 'Creative River Journey' project overall as a method of reducing the vast amount of data about the six participating HDR artist–

researchers into categories for analysis and reporting. Narratives of practice themselves are a creative content analysis strategy. As discussed previously, narrative reports of participants' art practices were compiled by a process of creative content data analysis of the breadth of all the data collected during the project.

Representation of data as narratives

The use of creative content analysis to construct narratives is in accordance with the principles of narrative reporting (Clough, 2002). An analysis of personal experience as research data, which leads to the creation of narrative accounts, is also discussed in the narrative inquiry methodology of Connelly and Clandidin (1990; 2006). The usefulness to me as the researcher of applying a conceptual framework and a narrative structure in order to sort, analyse and represent data has become evident in the emergence of critical categories from the case studies which reveal broad themes common to the participants' practice and experience.

Narrative as a form of data representation has other iterations. There are parallels between the construction of the narratives of the CRJs and critical incident narrative analysis as proposed by Webster and Mertova (2007). Barone and Eisner (1997) claim, of arts-based research, that: "the aim in these studies is to entice the reader to reconceptualise the educational process through intimate disclosures from the lives of educators and students" (p.82). My hope was that the narratives of each artist–researcher would illustrate the intimate disclosures about the creative processes made by my participants in the CRJ strategy interviews.

Using creative content analysis to construct such narratives resulted in both a full narrative of the critical moments in each participant's experience, and a holistic narrative of their experience as an artist–researcher. The emergence of critical categories throughout the process of creative content analysis showed that broad common categories emerged between the six participants. It has become evident to me that the narrative structure assists the researcher to sort, analyse and represent data. My construction of each individual artist–researcher's narrative provided, to borrow Siobhan Murphy's phrase, a

highly useful "meta-commentary on the movement of the project and the interrelatedness of its components" (2012, p.23).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Informed consent was sought from all participants by way of a signed consent form. In this, the HDR artist–researchers agreed to participate in all three phases of the research project. Participants were given the choice on the consent form to remain anonymous in the study, but none chose to do so. Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage, and indeed one participant withdrew during phase one of the project.

CRJ charts and transcripts were given to participants and were verified and approved by participants before creative content analysis. Transcripts and recorded material have only been accessed by me, my supervisors and one authorised transcriber, with all resulting data protected by locked storage, electronic and physical, accessible post-transcription only by me and my supervisors.

In conclusion, the methodological approach underpinning the 'Creative River Journey' qualitative inquiry was a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) which directed the focus of the research toward the interstitial spaces between art practice, research and teaching. Specifically, the study elucidates the artistic development of six HDR candidates at ECU, their experiences of practice-led research, and aspects of research training in the ECU HDR context. The outcomes of the study are six exploratory case studies of the phenomena of reflective practice actualised through the CRJ charts or employed independently by the HDR artist–researcher participants.

Six narratives of practice, constructed through a process of creative content analysis, were written about the participants and, together, these form the next chapter of this thesis. Verbatim quotes from participant interviews are included in these accounts. These, and direct quotes from CRJ charts, are italicised to distinguish the verbatim quotes from quotations from other sources related to the artist–researcher. The narratives of practice, grouped by discipline, appear in the following order: from performing arts, Russya Connor

and Mark Gasser; from visual arts, Jane Donlin and Sue Girak; from language arts (fiction writing), Rashida Murphy and Martin Meader.

POETIC INTERLUDE 4—DEEP WATER POINT (CANNING RIVER) [4]

1.
At Deep Water Point
The sky is gosling grey.
Clouds arc over us like Odette's wrists.
We are keeping the water's edge.

There, a boy just three,
Speeds a remote control battleship along the shore.
Tiny jet fighters and helicopters line its deck.
He thrills in the promise of return, the risk of loss,
Of it sailing into Deep Water Point, no return.
"Twenty bucks on eBay", his father says,
Another boyish delight altogether.

There, a girl of seven,
Prances her knees upwards almost to her chin.
Seersucker flutters on her gypsy tiered skirt.
She beams pleasure at the skip of her feet on soft sand,
Singing across the waves of Deep Water Point, no return.
"Don't get wet", her mother calls,
Another song altogether.

Further on, a man hoovers the sand,
Sweeps his metal detector like a robotic arm.
The beep, beep, beep foretells his discoveries.
He bends up and down, a toy bird drinking on a cup's lip,
His gaze lost in the sands of Deep Water Point, no return.
"Mine, mine, mine", I imagine he chants.
Another dream altogether.
2.
The tea-coloured river is edged with a fine frill of foam,
Dirty-beige like my grandmother's doilies
Or her aged net curtains,
Yellowed and fragile with the years.

And I am in the sleep-out sewing room once more,
Picking up pins, sweeping my horseshoe magnet
In arcs like science
Across the linoleum's blown-rose skin.

I am resting in the high kapok mattress,
The sheet's seam a solace between small fingers,
The trousseau sheets' outer edges
Turned inward after so many years of wear.

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[4] (Stevenson, 2012b, pp.58–59).

3.
I am at the river's edge,
The shore fringed with sand and tea-tree,
The hum of the freeway nearby like persistent life,
The old college solid on a hill above,
A child's idea of a mansion,
Red on a green velvet plinth.

A small boy, mine,
Another flash of red in this grey, watery world,
Flits by the shore,
Stops to sink his toes into silt,
Grins as the icy waters touch his shins.
"You've got to see this", he shouts.

But I have now sunk myself into grass,
The skipping girl has long gone,
The battleship boy I can see at the café,
His ship marooned on the table,
Metal detector man is way down the shore,
His dark back firm against inquisitive eyes.

I feel the cool earth beneath me,
The welcome rest of soil,
See the quiet shimmy of the paper-bark,
Want to close my eyes and hear only
The river gum's rattle-rustle above me,
 "You've got to see this", he gull-cries.

I stand at the water's shore,
His small hand slips into mine,
Our feet, his small and pale,
Are like white fishes in the tannin shallows.
The river bed is an intricate lacework
Of thousands of pearly, sparkling shells.

At Deep Water Point,
The sky is gosling grey.
Birds reel over us like Dervish dancers.
We are keeping the water's edge.

CHAPTER 4—THE JOURNEYS—NARRATIVES OF PRACTICE (FINDINGS)

RUSSYA CONNOR—NARRATIVE OF PRACTICE

Russya Connor was a doctoral student at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), a school within the Faculty of Education and Arts at Edith Cowan University (ECU) at the time of engaging in the 'Creative River Journey' study. Russya brought a particular cross-cultural sensibility to her work as an ECU artist–researcher, and the dissonance this created was not always comfortable for her. For Connor, her German upbringing and education permeate her thinking and understanding as a performance artist–researcher: "*I have a totally different philosophical concept [of some words] . . . The Australians shy away from death and being driven to these existential questions which is just normal for [Germans]*" (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011).

Connor began her training as a dancer in Munich at the Iwanson Centre of Contemporary Dance before completing performance studies in Hamburg and acting training in London. But her passion for performance was ignited by the childhood experience of attending the theatre for the first time:

> I have seen so many [productions] over the years living and growing up in Germany, as it has such a rich theatrical history . . . But probably the most amazing one must have been the first one I have saw, because it ignited my love of the theatre that has not left me since then, the opera of Hansel and Gretel in the Garnerplatz Theatre in Munich. The amazing chandelier, the marble, the smell, and then the lights on the stage and the beautiful music and all the magic, this wondrous transfixed absoluteness that was amazing. (The Blue Room, n.d.)

Connor's career in Europe saw her perform in theatre, dance, film and television. Then, after 2002 with a move to Australia, Connor mostly worked in Australia. She is a multi-skilled performer, now operating in an interdisciplinary manner, though this was not necessarily the case in the European phase of her career:

> *I suppose that's a little bit of a blend . . . I was kind of separated in Germany because as a dancer we're not really considered to be an actor and as an actor, you're not really a dancer, [there's] separation between the two streams. So I worked as a classical actor. Worked in theatre and on film. And then the other side, I worked as an oriental dancer.* (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011)

As an artist–researcher conducting PhD studies in performance at WAAPA, Connor stated more definitively: "*I'm a physical performer in Tanztheatre, physical theatre*" (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011). In later performance notes, she detailed how this notion of physical theatre has arisen out of multiple influences to become central in her performance practice:

> Tanztheater maker Hans Kresnik was a huge impact in my artistic ideas, as well as theatre-makers like Thomas Ostermeier, Frank Castorf [approaches that combine text and movement] or the works created by choreographer Anouk Van Dijk and director Falk Richter at the Schaubühne Berlin. I am also influenced by Subrabto Suyardamo (Javanese dance and meditation master) and the environmental work of Project Bandaloop and Andy Goldsworthy. (Russya Connor, as cited in Blue Room n.d.)

Connor's PhD project

Connor commenced her higher degree studies in 2010, initially as a master's by research candidate, before upgrading to a PhD. Even in an early description of Connor's research process in the CRJ strategy, the conditions of creative practice research in a context of performance were clearly visible:

> *I'm doing my PhD in performing arts, exploring the poetic expression of gravity in different performance, mainly underwater and up in the air, and how I can get that onto the stage. And what that means for a performer who goes into training in those areas, and how that shifts kinaesthetic awareness.* (RC, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Connor clearly placed her research within the field of performing arts, but rarely identified her research as taking a particular approach such as practice-based, practice-led or multimodal, despite these terms being advocated by her supervisor the late Associate Professor Maggi Phillips (Phillips, Stock & Vincs, 2009). Nevertheless, Connor demonstrated that she was conducting practice-led research in performance as Mercer and Robson (2012) define it. Rather than detail distinctions between terms such as practice-based and practice-led, Mercer and Robson, like me, seek to foreground what these methods of research have in common (p.11).

They "discern seven notable characteristics that typify the practice-led research approach in performance" (p.12). Connor's self-description reflects these seven characteristics which, Mercer and Robson argue, form "a central spine or backbone" (p.12) of performance practice-led research, characterised by methods which are:

1. underpinned by a pre-existing arts practice
2. multimodal, hybridised and plastic
3. personal, instinctual and compelling
4. evolving through failure and generosity
5. resounding through metaphor
6. revealed in time and space
7. enable thinking and articulating with the whole body. (pp.13–17)

The personal history of performance experience recounted by Connor in her CRJ made clear that she was basing her PhD research on a pre-existing art practice in dance and physical theatre. In the following description of her practice from an early journal publication arising from her doctoral research, however, we can see the hybridised nature of Connor's performance practice-led research, through her use of words like "crossover" and "culmination". Here, she demonstrated how she was exploring her ideas in time and space and through the use of her whole body:

> As a choreographer/performer, I am particularly interested in the culmination and crossover of the tacit, empirical, physiological and practical aesthetic, with spatial, psychological and theoretical knowledge in a performing body. An understanding of how the body is affected by gravity can arguably lead to further perceptions about environments and surroundings. Having a precise functional understanding about how we obtain our information about gravity, space and our surroundings allows for a deeper exploration of those principles. The conscious use of gravity can function as an anchor for the exploration in a creative practice. This knowledge can enrich and influence artistic practice. (Connor, 2012, p.1)

Connor's CRJs revealed that the personal, instinctual and compelling aspects of her research methodology in performance were the impetus for her kinaesthetic thinking and articulation:

> *I thought about 'what do I feel' and 'what's the kind of thing I would like to translate'. And for me being underwater is a really positive liberating feeling, so what I'm trying to do is encapsulate that and opening it up so people can maybe*

share into that experiences without having to be there [underwater]. . . .There is something in this being enwrapped or immersed which is maybe able to be translated in performance [so] they just feel what you feel. I don't know if it is possible but I want to have this moment of [the audience] not only being wrapped by the water, wrapped around by the water, but maybe also [having] the options, like all these options [underwater], like you can go in any direction. (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011)

Connor's CRJs

Connor engaged in the 'Creative River Journey' study project with a spirit of openness and intellectual curiosity but, unlike some other participants, did not overtly use the reflective aspect of the CRJ strategy as part of her own PhD writing or research process. This may be accounted for due to the early point in her higher degree process at which Connor engaged in the CRJ reflections. Reflection was readily adopted by a participant in the final writing up stage of her PhD; however, Connor's CRJs were conducted in the first year of her PhD when the proposal and project conceptualisation phase of her PhD research were in progress. Furhtermore, Connor also had a sense of herself as already functioning with a depth of reflective practice embodied and expressed in the reflective nature of her performance praxis. For Connor, the CRJ dialogues were a supplement to her usual recursive, reflective method:

> *I got more out of the conversation with you than out of doing the chart. I guess because it's quite similar to the way I think anyhow. It sounds a bit arrogant, but I do think I knew my critical moments. Maybe because it's more out [physically], it's not so much just in the head. [In performance] I could hit the point where it's not working physically so I have to change direction . . . But I liked the image of the river, I could relate to that.* (RC, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

There was clear indication that the idea of the river in the CRJs resonated with her on a number of levels, not solely one of image. Connor explained that she identified easily with the CRJ image and charting process:

> *Because I've spent so much time under water. I think because my project has a lot to do with nature, and it shifts and changes constantly, and I make a plan and say today I've got to film this, but then the weather's crap, or I can't go out [climbing] because it's raining and the rock's wet. And I could relate to this constant [change]. For me it's a natural river, it's one that goes like that [gestures winding and convoluted], and I guess my whole project feels like that, so I could relate to that aspect. I don't know*

if it's a tool of how I would reflect, but it's a good image for me. (RC, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

The CRJ chart itself is in keeping with one of Mercer and Robson's characteristics of practice-led performance research, "resounding through metaphor" (2012, p.16). For Connor, there was both metaphoric resonance and also a remarkable correlation between her own practice-led performance research in water and the metaphoric qualities of the river in the CRJ.

Connor's first CRJ

Connor chose 'the water aspect' of her PhD project as the subject of her first CRJ reflection, documenting the critical moments around this aspect on the following chart. On this first CRJ chart, apart from this chosen avenue of reflection, she demonstrated a number of points where she fluently moved between reflection, research and practice in her PhD project. On the following page is a transcribed version of Connor's first CRJ. (The original hand-written versions of all Connor's CRJ charts can be found in Appendix D of this thesis.)

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)
Name………………**RC**…………………Date……………**22-08-11**………………………
Artwork/Performance/Text……… **'Water aspect' of proposed PhD project**

1. REFLECTION Began to think of diving as an artistic expression.

2. RESEARCH Knew of Cirque de Soleil's water show. Heard of several dance companies using water. E.G. [revisited] 2007 performance at Sadler's Wells of Purcell Opera Dido & Aeneas has tank on stage. [See Higgins 2007]

3. REFLECTION Thought about own feelings and what RC herself would like to experience … "being under water is liberating."

4. PRACTICE: PHYSICAL UNDERWATER Experimentation with materials in scuba diving: putting air tank in different positions-equipment limits expressiveness.

5. PRACTICE: PHYSICAL Realised limitations of own free-diving abilities. Could only stay under water for 30 secs.

6. PRACTICE: PHYSICAL Begins training in pool to get under water breath time extended.

7. REFLECTION [Considers a] poetic image [she has had in mind for years] – white dressed figure floating above.

8. RESEARCH/PRACTICE SYNTHESIS: Branches off into 4 expressions; considers all four in performance: scuba dance performance, poetic image, dance movement under water, film storyboarded and choreographed.

9. PRACTICE: FILMING – how the practical aspects of filming, eg, bubbles [in shot]. Need to be precise about the image.

10. RESEARCH: INTERVIEWS Aerial work – lucky in getting an interview in USA & great support.

11. RESEARCH: INTERVIEWS divers/aerial artists [means] inquiry stays the same

12. PRACTICE: AERIAL – now at pragmatic/practical stage; WATER – moving into creative/consolidation stage.

13: REFLECTION How can I translate the experience into something tangible? How can you transport these ideas into performance for an audience?

14. REFLECTION: PHASE ENDPOINT [is] how do I get people to think/feel what I do? [How to] engage their mirror-neurons?

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Research

The revelation for Connor in the PhD process has been in expanding her notion of research to include artistic research. She also identified that considering matters of "research" in the moment of physical practice is not something that she strives for:

> I must say I think before in making art, I would have not called it research. But I had a strong research aspect, because I go in quite deep into the physical attitudes of gravity, and all that scientific stuff, and I like that kind of thing. So the more I know, and go into little bits of it, and how the body process neurologically that information differently, and how you can shift between brain perception or kinaesthetic perception, I like all of that informed stuff. But honestly, when I'm up in the air, I don't think about those things. It's cool later when I try to work something out, but [not] in those moments when you're in an experience of it . . . but who knows, maybe I'm better now. I don't know. I climb a lot better, although I haven't climbed for a long time. Maybe it has done something to my brain, which I'm not even aware of. Who knows? But in [physical] experience, it's not [about research], it's in the moment, I think. (RC, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Connor did not express critical moments related to reading about theory in this first CRJ. This is not an indication that Connor ignores theory; her thesis proposal and published article (Connor, 2012) express a sound understanding of theoretical works related to her project. It is rather that Connor's research is driven by her physical practice, and it is the needs of the physical practice that provide the momentum for her research process:

> There's always something new and that's what makes it so interesting. You always have more to learn. Even with dancing, I've been dancing since I was seven and there's still things that are really new. So there's always something. And, now because I'm learning all these skills that I've had a connection to but I haven't done before. Like, I did rock climbing [before the PhD] but never aerial stuff and I've done diving, but never excessively free-diving, things which are like a new set of skills for me in that sense. (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011)

Connor also used more traditional research methods via interviews and observations of other physical athletes such as climbers, which allowed her to make deep connections between her physical performance research and their climbing practice:

> Someone who has a dance background thinks about movement on a different [level], with a sense of more of an expressive quality. Like the climber I interviewed was a competitive climber in the sense of how they talk about the physiology and the movement and weight-bearing and the shifting and the mental set-up, like the

preparing or focusing, that's exactly the same. But for them a move is joyful in such but not as something translating. I think it's one of the most aesthetic things to see a really good climber. It's, like, so smooth and it has [aesthetic quality]. I think they dance in my view. Yeah, they dance with the rock. So it's like, this is the partner, they dance with gravity or move with them. So they have this partnership, this invisible partnership. And then it becomes fluid. (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011)

Connor's complex research process was documented at first on her initial CRJ chart as separate points of reflection, practice or research. Half-way through the first CRJ, these culminated in a critical moment in which her practice and her research began to be synthesised so that Connor was then able to conceptualise her project as a whole but also "*branching off into four expressions: scuba dance performance, poetic image, dance movement underwater, film storyboard*" (RC, CRJ chart 1, 22 August 2011). We see Connor demonstrating emergence (Haseman & Mafe, 2009) whereby her synthesis of modes of physical practice consolidated into an integrated performance practice, developing Connor further as a performance practice-led researcher.

Practice-led performance research

In Connor's first CRJ, she indicated that she began her PhD research with reflection on her experiences as a scuba diver. She explained how, in her PhD project, she could now conceptualise diving as an artistic expression:

I'd never thought about diving as an artistic expression. And then I started to. I went diving with my friends, with the sense of exploring I suppose, and just started mucking around underwater, spiralling and twisting and being, seeing what comes up through this movement; strange things like how were crabs crawling, all those things throughout the surroundings and what came out of that. (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011).

Connor moved from an intellectual reflection on diving to a testing out of the potential of diving for performance. As a physical performer, the testing out of this reflection was through the body and, particularly resonant with the 'Creative River Journey' study, through the body in water. However, this then led Connor to further her understanding via more traditional research into performance companies who had used water, such as Cirque De Soleil, which has a water show in Las Vegas. She also reflected back on a 2007 London

performance of Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas* in which there was a large glass water tank on stage in which the actors performed (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011). These investigations directed Connor back again to her own kinaesthetic experience that "*being under water is liberating*" (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011). The water became a studio space in which Connor was able to experiment with movement and with the many possibilities of underwater performance, extending her repertoire from scuba diving to include snorkelling and free-diving.

> *I went scuba diving several times and then I played a little bit with free diving and then I realised I needed some extra training. Because my skills didn't match my wants . . . I've always snorkelled and just dived with that but I never tried to extend [the breath]. It was just, I snorkelled, I'd see something, I'd dive down and when I ran out of air I came up. But then I realised I can only stay underwater for 30 seconds which isn't a lot if I want to do something, so my little everyday knowledge from snorkelling, I can't do something artistic with it. . . . It isn't very long. It's not really helping me and then I was huffing and puffing when I came up. I can never create an image of serenity underwater if I have to come up every 30 seconds. So I could get that with the scuba but then artistically I thought if I have the mask on it's not very expressive in a sense because you're kind of hidden*. (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011)

In keeping with a notion of the practice leading the research in practice-led research, Connor's practice propelled her to seek solutions or further information. In this above interview quotation, Connor expressed how she was confronted with the limitations of her ability to hold her breath underwater and how she explored the benefits and limitations of scuba equipment (as illustrated by one of Connor's published research images, reproduced in Figure 9). She identified scuba equipment as both an inhibitor of potential movement and expressiveness in performance, and a device for facilitating underwater performance.

In a later publication, and in her thesis, Connor included scuba-related images and discussed the role of scuba in the development of her performance practice. Connor confirmed how this emergent engagement with scuba developed further as she incorporated multimodal expressions of her knowledge-building underwater, such as film-based investigation, within her performance practice-led research:

My work reflects the relationship between movement and gravity in its emotional content. My culminated creative responses to my experimentation resulted in several underwater films. These films . . . have an intention to reveal a liberating and inspirational dimension of total immersion into the ocean. All water images in this paper are stills taken from the video 'red', dealing with buoyancy, floating and stillness. (Connor 2012, note 1)

Figure 9: Scuba Image from Connor (2012) labelled "Experiencing freedom from gravity allows maintaining shapes effortlessly which are impossible on land". Photographer: Alan Bird. Source: Connor, 2012, para.30. (Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: research or study).

This need to support her experimentation by developing her skills through greater understanding of practice also led Connor to more traditional avenues of research, such as interviewing specialists including aerialists or divers. In these interviews, Connor's research process resonated with Mercer and Robson's proposition that the practice-led methodology is "personal, instinctual and compelling" (2012, p.13). Connor was driven by the unique needs of her personal performance practice, and the expert-interviews were clearly

compelling for her. Mercer and Robson's characteristic of practice-led performance research as "evolving through failure and generosity" (p.15) is also reflected in Connor's experimentation.

Connor's research evolved through the failure of her skill level to meet the needs of her envisioned performance, but that failure was framed by the generosity—"really lovely support"—of those in the field that she trained with, and interviewed:

> *The people I talk to about the diving, they're kind of at the top of the field as well. So I feel quite intense and blissful that I am talking to all these amazing people. With the diving I'm a little bit, in a sense, stuck in Perth right now but not from the level of talking to people [at the top of their field]. I think I have had as exciting a time. And I've been lucky in the States, you know, [I] sent them an email and said I want to do this workshop and then when I ask, "Can I interview you?" she immediately agreed. So in that sense I guess I was very lucky that I got that really lovely support and then had the chance to interview another quite famous climber. He was one of the tech guys but he was one of the world record holders and a public speaker and so I just asked and he said of course. So that was really nice support.* (RC, personal interview, 22 Aug 2011).

What is not fully captured in the CRJ charts that Connor completed were her joyful and poetic expressions, what she found to be "intense and quite blissful", in embodying her research in movement. However, a year after the CRJs, she was able to express this elsewhere: "My creative work is homage to the magical qualities of water. The underwater can be felt; it is a dreamy place, it is a place where light shimmers and refracts, where gravity does not weigh us down, where movement can be full and free" (Connor 2012, para. 16). Here, Connor drew attention to the pleasure of her underwater research. The title of her journal article from which this quote is drawn, published in 2012, is 'Active Immersions: embodied knowledge in underwater dance'. This title clearly draws attention to two distinct aspects of Connor's project: the active engagement in her physical practice underwater, and the way that knowledge is generated through her underwater research and embodied in dance in the underwater context.

Connor's second CRJ

Connor completed the second CRJ chart in December 2012. A transcribed version of this second phase chart is on the following pages. (The original of this chart can be found on Appendix D of this thesis.) As had been established for this second phase of the project, she completed this CRJ chart independently. In this phase, participants were given the option of adapting the CRJ chart or replacing it with an already established method of reflection. Connor used the CRJ chart pro-forma but declined the opportunity for an interview about this second phase experience of the CRJ project, the only one of the six case study participants who chose not to be interviewed in phase two. This was possibly because she felt no need to (later stating in the focus group "I do think I knew my critical moments"), or possibly having documented her reflections so thoroughly on the CRJ chart itself. However, Connor did attend the third phase focus group interview, thus fulfilling the requirements of full participation in the study.
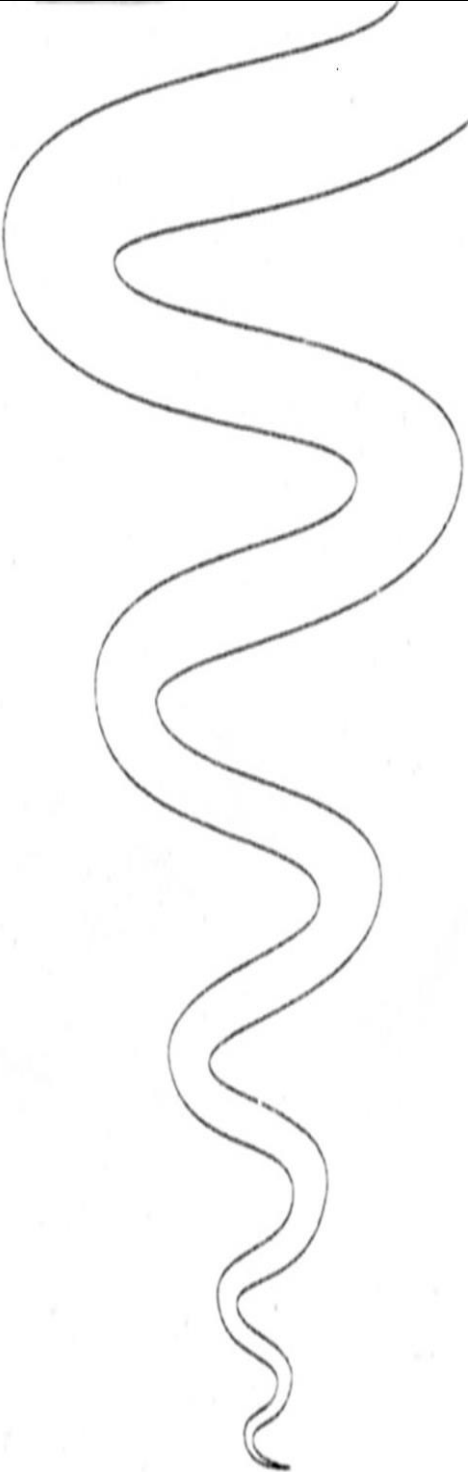
Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)
Name………………**RC**……………………Date……………**01-12-11**………………………
Artwork/Performance/Text……… *'BLAU'* [RC directed LINK dance company performance]

1. PRACTICE-PHYSICAL Underwater experiments.	2. RESEARCH expert interviews
	3. RESEARCH-PRACTICE clarified the elements I wanted to explore in this piece: floating, buoyancy, unison & freedom.
4. PRACTICE-FILMING Started filming over a period of several months. "red figure topic" continuous.	5. LINK dancers agreed to work outer frame was time: 1–12 mins' space: Studio A, [which] defines place.
6. RESEARCH -PERFORMANCE translation: which music transports my ideas: picked 5 songs to start with.	7. PRACTICE – CHOREOGRAPHY Decision on choreography method "transferability" experience + perception → expression.
8. RESEARCH preparatory aspects completed.	9. PRACTICE – REHEARSAL Active rehearsal process →dancers' perception of images /information & movement experience. (water, allows deep relaxation)
10. RESEARCH/PRACTICE – FILMING meeting with editor (describing the expression I'm looking for) combined with editor experiencing the filming.	11. PRACTICE – COLLABORATION - CHOREOGRAPHY dancers add their ideas
13. PRACTICE – SCRIPT "script" for editor with visual cues.	12. PRACTICE – PERFORMANCE setting, structure/choosing songs; rehearsal refined

NOTE # below.
14. PRACTICE – COLLABORATION
Editor watches dancers. New
adjustments: to reflect and match.

15. PRACTICE – FILMING –
COLLABORATION 17 Oct 2011 Editor
expressed her ideas-collaborative –
[filming done].

16. RESEARCH – SUPERVISOR
First feedback from
supervisor: testing and
clarifying the ideas.

18. PRACTICE –
CHOREOGRAPHY 19 Nov 2011
Refining choreography by
relating back to original
images.

17. PRACTICE – FILMING 16 Nov
2011 Adjusting edit to finalised
dance sequence.

19. PRACTICE – RESEARC H
Link gravity [and] dancer with
the projections.

20. PRACTICE – PERFORMANCE
Technical run. Costumes.

21. PRACTICE –
PERFORMANCE . [Link dance
company public] performance
20 Nov 2011.

Collaborative practice

In this second phase of her CRJ engagement, Connor reflected on her original dance work called *Blau* for the WAAPA-based Link Dance Company, a one year honour's program for dancers who have previously completed the three year dance bachelor's degree at WAAPA. This "offers a select group of graduate dancers a unique transition year between training and 'the profession' whilst still supported by a conservatory environment" (Link Dance Company, n.d). Connor's *Blau,* which she devised, directed and choreographed, was an original performance in which Connor was seeking to embody her research about underwater dance in all aspects of the performance. Connor documented this in the same journal article as her discussion of scuba diving, stating of *Blau*:

> My intention was to reveal a liberating and inspirational dimension of total immersion into the ocean and to reframe how the audience might perceive their environment, whether natural or built, to stimulate discussions about broader cultural and environmental aspects. The idea of a spatial experience becomes an intimation of the space within the performers, or occurs perhaps within both the audience and the performers. (Connor, 2012, para.26)

Connor identified her work on *Blau* as creative research, explaining her performance and choreographic practice.

> The aim of this part of the creative research was to recreate the sensual qualities encountered underwater using a different medium (dance) and in a different gravitational space (a stage). As this research is still in progress, I have not yet reached the final creation of a poetic or kinaesthetic experience on stage that satisfactorily translates to the audience the sensual qualities of moving or dancing underwater. In the choreography, I was however, able to create the illusion of the dancers being immersed in water, with the sensation of floating. (Connor, 2012, para.26)

In Connor's second CRJ, she identified critical moments related to *Blau*, documenting in particular how her practice had expanded to become highly collaborative. Smith and Dean (2009) state that practice-led research can be collaborative whereby "creative practitioners sometimes join forces with a researcher" (p.8) and, in this case, the creative practitioner is Connor as artist–researcher who joins forces with other creative practitioners being the LINK Dance company dancers. Connor demonstrated in the CRJ how collaboration is often

of crucial importance to the research process as Davis, Normington, Bush-Bailey and Bratton suggest: "Collaboration and interdisciplinarity is [*sic*] much talked about today by both national and international funding agencies . . . in theatre research of all kinds, collaboration is really of the essence" (2011, p.98).

Figure 10: From Connor (2012) "Water, reflections, and lightness. Photos of LINK Dance Company taken by author [Connor] during the performance of BLAU".
(Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: research or study).

Connor had more critical moments in this second CRJ than in the first; covering the two months of the development of the final performance *Blau* (Figure 10)*,* she documented over twenty critical moments. These critical moments indicate both the interdisciplinarity and the collaboration inherent in this story of Connor's performance practice-led research. The CRJ illustrated how she began the planning of her choreography of *Blau* based on research conducted earlier in that year. This process is an iteration of Mercer and Robson's (2012) criterion for practice-led performance research whereby it is underpinned by a pre-existing arts practice, in this case, Connor's prior underwater research and her expert interviews.

Connor had critical moments synthesising multimodal expressions of her research findings via music, choreography, film, scripting and scenography, evidence of her interdisciplinarity, and she listed these on the second CRJ as follows:

> Music : "which music transports my ideas: picked 5 songs to start with"
>
> Choreography: "decision on choreography method"; "transferability of experience + perception$\rightarrow$ [=] expression"
>
> Filming: "meeting with editor (describing the expression I'm looking for)"
>
> Script: "[wrote] 'script' for editor with visual cues"
>
> Space: "Studio A, [which] defines place". (Connor, 2nd CRJ chart, 1 Dec 2012)

Connor is functioning in the role of choreographer in all its complexity, not simply as the arranger of dance, but also as the devisor of a multimodal expression of her research. The complex role Connor undertakes as choreographer in developing the *Blau* performance, and which she documented in the CRJ, echoes Markstein's description of a choreographer below:

> Besides being the active translator […], the dancer/choreographer was to take on further roles, interrogator, creator, performer, taking on the role of a working scenographer, and in doing so: claimed authorship. Generating innovation over all practices in the course of the translation practice of de:signing, with resulting poetics in dramaturgy eventuating through the rendering from the translation of visual/aural signage, to movement. (2013, para.5)

For Connor, every step of the choreography process of *Blau* was part of her performance practice-led research. In the third phase of the CRJ project, the focus group interview, Connor made it clear that *Blau* had been an important part of her PhD research process, and she was prepared to defend its importance to her PhD supervisor, and defend its inclusion in her PhD. It is interesting that this was one of only two mentions by Connor of her supervisor in her CRJ charts and interviews, suggesting that, as a very experienced practice-led researcher, Connor's critical moments were not dependent on the PhD supervision process:

> *It's just really interesting, because I just had a conversation with Maggi [then head of research at WAAPA, who passed away in 2015] yesterday, and she said, [Blau] was just interim, so for my supervisor it's just in between, just 'phhhh' [indicates a skip] to the final end. But I'm feeling at the moment that, maybe it's not [interim] for me. I feel kind of different about it. So then I think, 'No, it's part of it, and I want to keep it'. (RC, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011).*

The CRJ strategy was not adopted as a tool in Connor's own performance practice-led research, perhaps because, as she stated in the phase three focus group, she did not feel she needed the CRJ reflective practice: "*it's quite similar to the way I think [and] I do think I knew my critical moments*" (RC, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011). Even so, the CRJ has proved itself a useful strategy in documenting the complexity of Connor's practice-led performance research. It revealed the intricacies of the choreographic outcomes of Connor's research, along with the multimodal, interdisciplinary and collaborative nature of her performance practice-led research. Both the CRJ and Connor's work in capturing her underwater research in the Link Dance Company performance have the characteristic of "resounding through metaphor" (Mercer & Robson, 2012, p.16), and can be viewed as deep expressions of practice-led research itself.

POETIC INTERLUDE 5—THE SEA INSIDE OF YOU

1.

Going home from your show
The moon is an upturned golden bowl
Autumnal   full   blazing
But all I see are your wings

The moon is an angel
Searing down to earth
Icarus-almost   but not lost
Wings not failed

Instead the light is a force
Swooping moonfire down
Going to ground
Before zooming heavenward again

For a moment   you   in the air
Are swan egret jabiru
Arms outstretched in flight
Taking wing   taking air

2.

In the beginning
Waves crashed like hammers
The lash of the storm
Cresting heavy on my head
My face forced earthward
Seaward   sand and grit in my teeth again

But then you gave me breath
Floating   suspension
Gifted me this balance between worlds
The lift and the lilt within the sea
And then the sea inside of you was
revealed to me

MARK GASSER—NARRATIVE OF PRACTICE

Mark Gasser has stated that he could read music before he could read words (as cited in McMaster, 2008). Gasser was born in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, and his parents discovered the depth of his musical prowess when they took him to the local music shop where the attendant suggested that they had better get the boy piano lessons. Though his mother played rudimentary piano, Gasser stated that he has no idea from whom he inherited his extraordinary piano expertise (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010).

Get lessons they did. Gasser studied at the Birmingham Conservatoire, part of Birmingham City University: "the first UK music college to have an active research programme, established in 1993 . . . now an internationally recognised centre for research into composition and performance with live electronics" (Birmingham City University, n.d.). He went on to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London, graduating with distinctions from both. In the early 1990s, Gasser was a founding member of the new music group *The Thallein Ensemble*, a group of advanced Birmingham Conservatoire students who gave over 60 acclaimed world premieres. In a publication, Gasser drew on his PhD subject, Ronald Stevenson to explain his beliefs about the work of being a performing musician:

> I was brought up in Sheffield at the height of the [British] Miners' Strike. . . . If you can come from that, it's not arrogance. It's having the steadfast belief in what you do and a determination to succeed. Ronald Stevenson once told me it's 2% talent and 98% work and if you're a genius, and I believe he is a genius, it's 3% genius, 97% hard work. And it is – it's just hard work. (Gasser, as cited in Yamaha Backstage, 2011)

It was at the Birmingham Conservatoire in 1990 that Gasser first met Ronald Stevenson, a revered Scottish composer and pianist, and the subject of Gasser's doctoral research at ECU. Asked by his Conservatoire lecturer to look after Stevenson during a visit to Birmingham from Scotland, Gasser was struck by a performance by the composer of Stevenson's *Passacaglia on DSCH* (the title of which includes Stevenson's reflection on Dmitri Shostakovich's music): "I first decided to play the work after hearing Ronald perform it in Birmingham where he quite literally stupefied the audience. It was one of those occasions when I thought then if I could ever perform a piece like that and never play again, that would be fine" (Gasser, n.d., para.8).

In his CRJ conversations, Gasser expressed how he was also touched by the warm personality and humble generosity of Stevenson during this time. He went on to participate in a further master-class with Stevenson in 1994, and formed a firm friendship with the Scottish composer and his wife that lasted over twenty years, until Ronald Stevenson's death in March 2015.

In the latter part of the 1990s, Gasser developed renown as concert pianist and a chamber musician in Europe. In 1998, to mark Stevenson's 70th birthday, Gasser returned to the Birmingham Conservatoire to perform Stevenson's most famous work. He played from copies of the original manuscript/score of the *Passacaglia* by Stevenson's wife Marjorie on which Ronald Stevenson wrote a note to Gasser: "In Communion of Spirit".

In 2001, Gasser again performed the *Passacaglia* to great acclaim at Wigmore Hall, London, a performance recorded by the BBC (BBC Radio 3, 2001). In October of that year, he performed it again at Weill Recital Hall in Carnegie Hall, New York (Ronald Stevenson Society, n.d.) as a fundraiser for the families of those killed in the September 11 tragedy. Immediately following the 2001 Wigmore Hall performance, Gasser moved to Australia where he took up a position as senior lecturer in music at the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Mackay, Queensland, a position he held until 2008.

In 2009, Gasser moved to Western Australia to commence a PhD on the subject of the music of Ronald Stevenson at WAAPA, part of ECU. That year, he also signed a three year contract with Yamaha to be one of a select few Yamaha piano artists in Australia. Yamaha cites international piano engineer Richard Dain speaking about Gasser: "I have no doubt that we are hearing one of the great pianists of the next century" (Yamaha, n.d., para.5).

Gasser's PhD project

Much of the above biographical detail about Gasser was collected easily because Gasser used his first CRJ to reflect back on the development of his interest, and relationship, with his PhD subject, Ronald Stevenson. Gasser's PhD project was initially planned to be solely on Stevenson's monumental 80-minute work, *Passacaglia on DSCH,* described in a review of Gasser's performance as follows:

This encyclopaedic pianistic essay is built over a repeated idea based on the musical motif that Shostakovich carved out from his own initials: D, Es, C, H (corresponding to the German names for the musical notes D, E flat, C, B). Over the top Stevenson unfolds the entire Western musical tradition. Overlaid on the refrain is a sonata, a suite, a nocturne, several sets of variations and many other classical and folk genres, culminating in a triple fugue drawing together Shostakovich's motto with the notes of Bach's name and the *Dies Irae* plainchant. (McCallum, 2012, para.4)

However, Gasser recounted in his first CRJ how his supervisor suggested, in the proposal stage of the PhD, that he should be doing the PhD on Stevenson's complete works:

I was just going to do it on the Passacaglia and then Jonathan [his supervisor] said to do it on the complete works. It is just that he has written so much, he has written hundreds of pieces. I thought that really is a ridiculous undertaking but then speaking to Marjorie [Stevenson's wife], she said someone needs to do this because academics have done it but they are doing it from a very academic point, they are not doing it from the point of view of a practical musician who has actually played the stuff. (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

In the first CRJ phase, Gasser revealed that his personal relationship with the Stevensons was a key impetus in conducting his doctoral study:

The first time I met Ronald Stevenson would have been in 1990. My old teacher at the Birmingham Conservatory, John Humphries, has been a lifelong friend of Ronald and I knew of him, he was a legend, he was a slightly odd character and he was quite mysterious. . . .He was a natural intellect, a fascinating guy, a lovely man, and very generous. He'd certainly be much happier talking to students than doing interviews for newspapers. He was just a lovely guy, and very humble as well. (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

Gasser used the first CRJ to conduct a professional resume of his relationship with the Stevensons, and with Stevenson's music. In his reflections, Gasser located both himself and Stevenson in the field of classical music performance, and identified the significance of Stevenson to Gasser's practice to date.

The Musician–Teacher

In this first CRJ, Gasser reflected on how Ronald Stevenson's belief in Gasser from the earliest point in their professional relationship worked as a kind of mentoring or modelling for Gasser of what it is to be a great musician–teacher. Gasser explained that he has carried on this spirit of mentorship in his own teaching practice:

On my copy of the Passacaglia he has dedicated it—I use a hand written score. On the top he has written something like . . . 'in communion of spirit'. He always writes 'your comrade in art'. I think that is someone's belief in you. It is ridiculous when you're young that someone of that stature considers you part of their art form. I'm like that with my students now because you always think when you're studying that you are never going to get to that level. They are the future of my art form, the future of my industry. Otherwise it dies with me. (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

In this way, Gasser demonstrated that he is a musician–teacher, an artist–teacher, defined in a sweeping US study of teaching artists simply as "an artist for whom teaching is part of their professional practice" (Rabkin, Reynolds, Hedberg & Shelby, 2011, p.6). In another Australian study of artist–teachers (Blom, Bennett & Wright, 2011, p.361), artist–teachers were asked to place themselves on a continuum with 'only artist' at the left and 'only academic' at the right, a blend in the middle, and there was an even spread along the continuum of where artist-teachers placed themselves. In this same study, the "communion of spirit" between Stevenson and Gasser that Gasser found so surprising is echoed by one musician–teacher who states of her work that "the heart is particularly important" (Blom et al., 2011, p.363). For Gasser, it is the humanity imbued in his piano performances that is crucial: "*With piano it is not just technical, it is all about the emotion, the humanity that is inherent in it*" (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010).

The Blom et al. study cites Glenn Gould, the acclaimed Canadian pianist, whose notion of the spiritual is akin to Gasser's piano being "all about the emotion, the humanity". Gould's definition of a musician is cited as being:

> someone who should be more concerned with the development of musical and spiritual ideas rather than the physical manifestations connected with music making (cited in Angilette, 1992, p.91) . . . Here the holistic body—visceral, emotional, spiritual, mental and physical—is in play. (Blom et al., 2011, p.363)

Gasser, undertaking his doctorate as an artist–teacher, in effect can be viewed as having developed into an artist–researcher–teacher. A/r/tography, the methodological approach in which the 'Creative River Journey' study was grounded, places particular emphasis on the blended roles of artist–researcher–teacher whereby "an individual's stance as artist/researcher/teacher is central to the production of arts-informed research . . . [and] is

nurtured from a holistic perspective to enable us to compose media rich, integrated, arts-infused research" (Gouzouasis, 2006, p.23). Gasser makes some very clear rejections of the researcher label, however, and his ambivalent relationship with the idea of research are discussed later in this section.

Gasser's first CRJ

Gasser committed himself generously to all the phases of the 'Creative River Journey' study, and expressed some of his musician–teacher custodian approach to his participation: "*This PhD, it is hard enough doing this as it is, you know, and everyone knows how hard it is to do, and this is just helping someone*" (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012). In his first CRJ, conducted at the beginning of his PhD process, Gasser offered a comprehensive overview of his doctoral topic, beginning with his first meeting with Stevenson and his previous performances of Stevenson's *Passacaglia on DSCH.*

What is captured in this initial CRJ is firstly, a professional résumé of how Gasser came to be doing the PhD, and secondly, a review of his Stevenson-related music practice. The musician-researchers Blom and Viney (2009) state that, in music practice, "it seems wise always to mine information provided by the composer when trying to establish an aesthetic framework for interpretation" (p.37). Gasser's first CRJ illustrates him, over time, mining information related to Stevenson's work.   We can see the complex building of Gasser's knowledge, understanding and experience which enable him to reach the highly acclaimed position of international performing musician, and which parallel the building of a relationship with a musical icon—Stevenson. These trajectories chart the factors that led Gasser to commence his PhD. This complexity of factors supports Schmidt's list of the key features of a music education journey: "Personal meaning, interpretation, self-social-cultural understanding and expression, as well as a wider knowledge of the world, should come first in the conceptualization of music education" (Schmidt, 2005, p.8). (Following is a transcribed version of Gasser's first CRJ chart, with the original versions of all Gasser's CRJ charts to be found in Appendix E of this thesis.)

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)

Name………………**MG**…………………….Date……………**16-12-10**………………………

Artwork/Performance/Text………**Ronald Stevenson's *Passacaglia* on DSCH**…………………………………

1. PERSONAL INTERACTION 1990 – lecturer asked MG to host Ronald Stevenson (RS) on visit to Birmingham Conservatory

2. PERFORMANCE – played for RS then at Birmingham then in 1990

3. LEARNING – attended summer school with RS in 1994

4. PERSONAL INTERACTION Drove up to Scotland –afterwards 25/8/98 received manuscript from RS's wife Marjorie with notation "In communion of spirit"

5. STUDIO PRACTICE – 8/98-12/98 deep immersion in practice "Felt like climbing Everest" practiced 17 hours a day for 3 months. "Began in late summer then looked out window and saw snow".

6. PERFORMANCE 5/12/1998 Birmingham Con performance RS said greatest ever performance of Passacaglia- MG felt "climb was arduous but view from the summit was worth it"

7. PROFESSIONAL – was visiting professor piano at Royal Holloway

8. PROFESSIONAL worked at Australian National Academy of Music 2001 after moved to Australia for personal reasons

9. PERFORMANCE – 16 Feb 2001 debut at Wigmore Hall, London, performed *Passacaglia*, broadcast on BBC

10. PERFORMANCE – 25 Feb 2001 at South Melbourne Town Hall performed *Passacaglia*, broadcast on ABC "felt this was the best performance he's done"

11. STUDIO PRACTICE – Sept 2002 deep immersion in practice. Hired a rehearsal studio and was so immersed in practice when building robbed, he did not notice intruder.

13. PROFESSIONAL – moved to Mackay Central Uni of QLD Conservatoire Head of Keyboards til 2008

12. PERFORMANCE – Oct 2001 debut at Carnegie Hall, New York performed *Passacaglia*

14. PROFESSIONAL – sister encouraged him to go back to touring artist career "rock-star lifestyle". Moved to Perth 2009.

15. RESEARCH – WAAPA met with Jonathan Paget re PhD, commenced in 2010 – encouraged him to expand to whole of Stevenson oeuvre. PERFORMANCE Will play *Passacaglia* in 2012 for PhD

16. PERFORMANCE - POST PhD 5/12/2013 wants to play *Passacaglia* for 50th anniversary of its first performance in South Africa

Music performance as art practice

In his first CRJ, Gasser made it very clear where his priorities lay in terms of his musical practice as a performer, and how performing was so vital to his sense of self:

> *I am a performing musician, that is my priority. I take that a hundred times more seriously than this PhD. Everything I play I take seriously, and that is the problem because I think if I was just doing this [thesis], it would be very easy to do. I've been doing all this stuff at WAAPA accompanying people; I played for nine recitals in two days, public ones, which is ridiculous. But if I didn't actually keep my playing up, I think I'd lose the will to live and not be able to do this anyway. I'm not an academic. I'm strong academically but I'm not an academic at all, I'm a performing artist.* (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

Unlike a visual artist whose studio work on materials, for example, can clearly be envisioned as practice-led research; unlike a performing artist whose physical practice in the rehearsal or dance studio can clearly be envisioned as practice-led research; Gasser never mentioned his hours of piano practice in relation to Stevenson's work as related to research in any way:

> *I'm playing the Passacaglia and you do think that's great, then think, oh my God, I've got to learn it. [The first time I played the Passacaglia], I kept putting it off and off, and I thought, I'm a quick learner. Everyone kept asking how the Passacaglia was going. It was like climbing Everest, only five people have ever played the piece, it is that difficult. I remember that I just lied to them—said it's going fine—I hadn't even bought the music. I'd got to do something about this, so I got Marjorie to send me the music and distinctly remember the day, it was 25th August 1998, and the concert was on 5th December, and I hadn't started.* (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

The level of difficulty involved in Gasser's studio practice and the way he used studio practice as a method of thinking through the music was evident:

> *I wasn't doing it for fun, that was learning it as quickly as I could, and giving each note the respect it deserved, and really thinking about it. I certainly wasn't wasting time, I was doing it as quickly as possible. It did feel like I was climbing Everest, it was just so difficult. The stamina you need – you lose half a stone in one performance*. (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

Yet he felt utterly comfortable in performing the *Passacaglia* twice as part of his doctorate and discussed later in his second CRJ how he used his accumulated past studio practice and performances of Stevenson's *Passacaglia* to inform his current PhD performances of the work. Yet, Gasser did not identify this as a form of research:

[Performance], that's my comfort zone. Because the piece is the longest continuous piece of music ever, there's nothing you can do about that. I think I told you the amount of practice I did before. Now that was good in that, because I'd probably done—I don't know—three or four thousand hours if you added it all together, . . . it would have been impossible to learn it in that time [of the PhD] that I was using. I probably worked at it for about a month [during the PhD performance], which is the shortest time I've ever worked on it. I guess it's only accumulative of practice I've done in the years before. (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012)

In this description of Gasser's accumulative knowledge-building though practice, his art practice agrees with Blom, Bennett and Wright's description of the art practice of artist–teachers in academia:

> It involves arduous skilled regimes and knowledge of structure, timbre and other technical elements. It is holistic with the human being as part of this site of knowledge – visceral, spiritual and sensory perception, involving emotions, social intelligence, artificial intelligence, life history, interaction and collaboration with others. It is about itself, involving tacit knowledge and aesthetic knowledge (largely non-verbal). It is beyond itself, involving storytelling and positioning the artist as public intellectual who is part of an international community of practice. (Blom et al., 2011, pp.368–369)

Gasser related to the idea of the journey inherent in the CRJ chart and conveyed how he identified with the study's focus on artists, whom he described with humour:

> *I think in the arts it's always a journey anyway . . . you set goals, and it always is a journey with any creative project, but then there's always something else beyond that. So I think probably, as artists, that [journey] is the way we think. And all artists are a bunch of nut cases, no matter who they are. Anyone I know in the Arts isn't in the completely normal category, you know. . . . Because they think differently, think in abstract forms, and different ways.* (MG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

However, the fluidity of the journey itself may also have resonated for him as a musician. In The first CRJ chart, Gasser illustrated the flow of his career, each career critical moment leading towards the final critical moment: commencing the PhD. We see the flow of his career move from his own music conservatory education through performance to his role as a teacher then PhD artist–researcher. Musician-academic Liora Bresler draws attention to such notions of flow and fluidity in social life, teaching and learning in her musicianship: "Musical laws are dynamic . . . Sound and music, like life, is always in flux. Sound does not have the stability that color has; it fades as soon as it is created. Musical qualities are

represented by concepts that attend to the fluid quality of musical experiences... [T]hey capture well [the] important aspects of the flow of social life, the processes of teaching and learning" (Bresler, 2005, p.172).

Traditions in music research

What this first CRJ demonstrated was Gasser's construction of a holistic, fluid aesthetic framework for Gasser's *interpretation* of Stevenson's work. This is paralleled by the construction of a holistic framework of *performance practice* in which Gasser developed as a performing musician, building his performance through his accumulative experience, relationships, education and art practice. Thus Gasser's framework for interpretation of Stevenson's work was shown to be a complex one that involved aesthetic knowledge but also personal and professional knowledge.

Gasser followed a long established research tradition in developing his practice in this way. The notion of building an aesthetic framework is an accepted aspect of music research in Europe (Parncutt, 2007) where there is commonly a scientific or empirical approach to music research. Yet, this first CRJ captured how Gasser's doctoral study differed from musicology in that it involved both performance and reflection, from a personal perspective, on Stevenson's work. This differs from the European model. In European music education institutions, the term "systematic musicology" (Parncutt, 2007, p.1) is commonly use to describe music research, and Parncutt differentiates between scientific and cultural musicology:

> Scientific systematic musicology (or scientific musicology) that . . . involves empirical psychology and sociology, acoustics, physiology, neurosciences, cognitive sciences, and computing and technology. Humanities systematic musicology (or cultural musicology) involves disciplines and paradigms such as philosophical aesthetics, theoretical sociology, semiotics, hermeneutics, music criticism, and cultural and gender studies. (Parncutt, 20017, p.1)

'Empirical aesthetics' is a term embodied in the name of a key European institution, the Max Planck Institute for Emperical Aesthetics in Frankfurt. The music department of this institution explains that an empirical aesthetics framework foregrounds music production and reception:

In this framework, the problems posed and solutions found within the historical-aesthetic, theoretical, pedagogic, sociological, ethnological, psychological, and neuroscientific areas of research on music—areas in part operating at great mutual distance—are meant to be placed in systematic relationship to each other. Forms of musical expression in their cultural, social, and historical specificity here play an important role, as do the recipients themselves. (Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics, n.d.).

This same institution explains (as does Ball, 2008) how the empirical turn of musicology, and the basis of music in mathematical calculations, reaches as far back as the Ancient Greeks: "Pythagoras is supposed to have recognized consonances—regarded even then as having aesthetic value—in the harmony of some hammers in a smithy and . . . he discovered that musical intervals were based on the simple relations of natural numbers" (Max Planck Institute of Emperical Aesthetics, n.d.). Cook and Clark (2004) go so far as to say "there is no useful distinction to be drawn between empirical and nonempirical musicology, because there can be no such thing as a truly non-empirical musicology" (p.3):

Empirical musicology, to summarize, can be thought of as musicology that embodies a principled awareness of both the potential to engage with large bodies of relevant data, and the appropriate methods for achieving this; adopting this term does not deny the self-evidently empirical dimension of all musicology, but draws attention to the potential of a range of empirical approaches to music that is, as yet, not widely disseminated within the discipline (Cook & Clarke, 2004, p.5)

This long association of music research with musicology may help explain Gasser's uniquely (amongst the 'Creative River Journey' participants) dismissive attitude to research. This may be the result of Gasser's perception of an uncomfortable fit between the project's depiction of research as practice-led and the wider context of this long-standing empirical paradigm of music research. Even so, Gasser expressed a rejection of not only practice-led research as such, but also of the institutional push for academics to research. This dismissiveness of research he also said resonated with his work colleagues, stating:

If you go to the WAAPA canteen or around the place, and if you said to someone, 'what are you doing over the Christmas break?', if you said to someone, 'I'm doing research', it will make them laugh. It will honestly get a laugh, because research in music, certainly [at] WAAPA, well it's almost a dirty word, it's a dreaded word. (MG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Four other artist–researchers who (initially) participated in this project were HDR candidates from WAAPA and, unlike Gasser, they did not express this same rejection of research in their CRJs. With Gasser being the only music researcher participating in the project, it is also inappropriate to generalise from his case to all music researchers in WAAPA. Certainly, researchers in New Music at WAAPA are at the forefront of research into new music practice (James, 2005; Hope, 2010; Francis & Hope, 2013). My own experience of editing the proceedings from a New Music conference (Hope & Stevenson, 2013) indicated that new music practitioners across Australia and New Zealand are engaged in research arising from their practice. But Gasser is a performing classical musician coming from a long history of classical musicianship, not the more *avant-garde* approaches to music such as those advanced by Hope and Mace. This may explain his rejection of 'research'.

Music research and ECU institutional guidelines

All music researchers at WAAPA, including Gasser, are researching under the institutional guidelines about research provided by ECU's research infrastructure. At the time of Gasser's CRJs, ECU and WAAPA academics were able to have their creative work recognised and rewarded though ECU's ASPIRE (ECU, 2013) system, which embodied recognition of creative work and practice-led research in its guidelines:

> This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D), one that recognises research as comprising creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise applications. It also encompasses pure or strategic basic and applied research. Applied research is original investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge but directed towards a specific, practical aim or objective (including a client driven purpose). This definition encompasses practice-based and practice-led research in the creative and performing arts. (ECU, 2013, p.1)

In the collaborative CRJ focus group, Gasser made a comment that directly reflected ECU's instructions in the guideline document applicable at that time, on how to categorise creative research as "Major, Substantial or Minor" (ECU, 2013, p.2):

> *I just means that you're manipulating the system, research. It's whether you're doing it because you want to tick all these little boxes: has it got national significance? Does it have international significance? Does it have local significance? You know*

the thing, and everyone is just fiddling it, whatever it is that they've done, they're trying to make it sound as good as possible, and research is just seen as a joke, because the uni wants us to do research of it [music]. (MG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Gasser's depiction of research as requiring him to "tick all these little boxes" is reflected in recent research by Draper and Harrison about the emerging practice-led doctorate in music. Echoing Gasser's perspective, they cite Coessens, Crispin and Douglas (2009, p.22) when they identify:

> Resistance from some academics who view that the inclusion of artistic practice within a research paradigm can only harm a discipline oriented to craft and tacit know-how; that it will reduce music making to 'what is demonstrable while apparently successfully ticking the boxes of orthodox protocols' (Draper & Harrison, 2011, p.88)

This idea of the music discipline embodying craft and tacit know-how through performance rather than through research is also referenced by Gasser when he makes a comment about his conception of research, and his work as a performing musician:

> *The best analogy would be—and if you're in music, there's nothing wrong with research and if you're a musicologist, of course that's valid, studying music per se— but it's the difference between being an artist or a painter: it's alright saying 'that's how Rembrandt did it', but if you are a contemporary artist, it's you doing it rather than talking about doing it.* (MG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Gasser's preference for the active nature of music performance practice, "doing it", rather than discussing it in research, that is, "talking about doing it," adds to how one might understand his perception that research is about ticking the boxes of institutional requirements. The move by ECU to recognise creative work as research through the ASPIRE guidelines is in keeping with institutional approaches in the UK that do the same: "driven by governmental research assessment, there have emerged a range of equivalency arguments for artistic practice by universities and academics eager to establish research *bona fides* in relation to grant income, tenure track and promotion" (Draper & Harrison, 2011, p.88). Gasser maintained his passion for resisting the institutional push for research even as he accepted that such a push is inevitable in doing PhD research:

> *Music is a performing art. It's not an academic subject, although it can be on a dry level. I just see that, you know, music should be played, I mean, three people*

worldwide will read this thesis. If I have a CD then millions of people will hear it on the radio so, anyway, it's just a cross you've got to bear, I suppose. (MG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Gasser's resistance to a practice-led research paradigm in music research sits alongside a more accepting uptake of this approach by other performing arts such as those in dance and theatre, (see Phillips, et al., 2009; Mercer & Robson, 2012). Yet some performing musicians are themselves looking for deeper understandings of research and how it relates to their music practice, albeit not necessarily through the practice-led paradigm, as Davidson aims to do in her book on music research: "Practical musicians of all descriptions are serious about their profession and are constantly looking for ways and means of assessing their own practices. . . .The explicit aim of this book is to engage music practitioners and demonstrate the many potential links between research and practice" (2004, p.1).

Theory and the reluctant researcher

Despite Gasser's seeming rejection of research, his first CRJ demonstrated a close relationship with theory through frequent mention of theorists, writers or quotations in a way that academic researchers would be familiar with as research. Yet he did not identify these theoretical connections as critical moments in his PhD research. Firstly, Gasser revealed his theoretical research about his doctoral focus, Ronald Stevenson, and this showed how his lifelong relationship with the subject of his PhD, and the various conversations with Stevenson over that time, facilitated these connection to theory: "*Talking to Ronald, he won't talk about playing the piano at all – all he is talking about is poetry and other arts and the synthesis of art*" (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010). Gasser did not identify his conversations with Stevenson as related to his research. Gasser identified theoretical aspects of Stevenson's work *Passacaglia,* which he performed twice for his PhD research, but again Gasser did not flag these as having any implications for his research:

> *There are many literary allusions there [in the Passacaglia]. At the beginning [of Stevenson's score] it gives you an insight into it. He has one section where it floats up into space near the end 'as though with Gagarin's perception of space', which he writes in Italian. Because Gagarin was circling the earth whilst he was actually writing it. I like it.* (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

Gasser also made allusions to other musical theorists and expressed how this theory related to his work on Stevenson, without ever being explicit that it was theory. In fact, he recommended one theorist to me as the researcher, rather than to himself:

> There is a great book which might be worth you looking at - Pierre Boulez' _Orientations_ [1986] – exact opposite of Ronald, hard core as – but there are some very nice metaphors in there. Boulez says that art, or music in particular, is like long dead stars that we still see glittering. The light takes so long to reach us from the star that it is almost like it is casting its light down through the centuries, it still looks as though it is alive but it is not. Ronald is a bit more poetic than that; he says it is up to us to reinject that humanity into the music, to make it human again. The score itself is nothing. This is what my thesis will be about. (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

He followed this remarkable discussion of one theorist, Boulez (1986), with reference to another theorist Busoni (1979/1921) and in doing so made a very direct connection between the theory he cited and his research subject, Stevenson:

> Busoni [1979/1921] says, and Ronald's always followed Busoni as a kind of mantra in some way, that the composition itself is a transcription from an original idea. What he means by that is the real music is in the composer's head and when they actually write it down that is a very primitive, very flawed way, to get that thought down on paper. The real music is actually in the head and he's hearing it. (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

Later in the first CRJ interview, Gasser mentioned a work by the highly regarded composer Philip Glass and how he uses that work in his teaching practice. Again, he recommended this theoretical link to me the researcher without making the link to his own PhD research:

> A piece of work worth listening to by Philip Glass is _Knee 5_ [1978]. I often play this to the students because you can say – is this piece a load of absolute codswallop, or is it art? I'm still out on whether it is or not, but it is beautiful. It is people in a choir just singing numbers, then gradually there are weird conversations that come in and out. There is a poem at the end which is really beautiful. (MG, personal interview 1, 16 Dec 2010)

And yet, Gasser was light-hearted when he dismissed the role that active research into theory played in writing his PhD thesis. He doesn't acknowledge the key role that theorists and composers such as Boulez, Busoni and Glass play in his theoretical knowledge about Stevenson:

I've read two books, for God's sake, that's all I've had. I never went to the library [much], I only went once. Never got anything out, so I'm just doing it all out of my own head. But that's the best way to do it in some ways, if you can get away with it, because then it's giving you the new knowledge, isn't it? . . .I could bring in other books, of course. (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012)

He also found no resonance with his supervisor's attempts to guide him towards theory, saying: "*My supervisor sent me this list [of readings] . . . I didn't even know what the titles meant, to be honest, about 'something' methodology, study, etcetera*" (MG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011). Gasser also stated that he was confounded by the lunchtime meetings of the Music Research Group at WAAPA, led by Professor Cat Hope: "*It's quite heavy. To be honest, it was just so hard-going. I just stopped going and just thought I'd finish the PhD*" (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012). Clearly, the available institutional support and guidance towards researching his practice was not effective in helping Gasser to conceptualise his musicianship and performance as research. Even with the complex theoretical links he expresses in his first CRJ, Gasser did not choose to make those theoretical links, nor did he identify theory as informing any critical moments in his second CRJ.

Gasser's second CRJ

Gasser was unusual amongst the research participants in that he used the second CRJ not to reflect on his actual creative practice, nor the theoretical content of his thesis, but rather to reflect on the practical process of writing the PhD exegesis. He used the second CRJ as a record of critical moments, or key procedural steps, in writing the exegesis. This may be accounted for by his submerged understanding of the relationship between his musicianship and research, or his unwillingness to locate himself in a field of music practice-led research.

Bentall states that "composition often best embodies the ideas of musical research in that it creates fresh questions about what music actually is" (2011, p.6) but, unlike a doctorate in music composition whereby a completely new musical work is created and the exegesis documents the creation of that work, Gasser's PhD involved the interpretation for performance of an existing work. This may account for his difficulty in reflecting on his music practice in both the CRJs and the exegesis.

In this second CRJ, Gasser rarely reflected overtly on the processes involved in his interpretation of Stevenson's work. Yet, he did identify what a very huge task was required of him in both performing the *Passacaglia* and preparing for that performance and compared this to the PhD task:

> *Playing the Passacaglia I'd say 'the climb is arduous but the view from the summit is worth it'. I remember telling you that before. With this, the PhD itself, you think, oh, the view from the summit will be worth it – but it's not. I actually think it's like I've only just scratched the surface, and even though it's what, 60, 70,000 words, it's still, obviously, so basic what I'm actually saying. The subject, it's so massive that you can do a PhD on one of his pieces, never mind the whole period of works.* (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012)

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)
Name………………**MG**…………………Date……………**28-07-12**………………………
Artwork/Performance/Text………**PhD dissertation on Ronald Stevenson's *Passacaglia* on DSCH**

1. PhD PROCESS - WRITING
7 Jan 2012 start (date for writing).
[Aim] 2000 words every day.

4. PhD PROCESS – WRITING 1st
April – rough copy

7. PhD PROCESS – SUPERVISION
gave to supervisor → 1st July

8. PhD PROCESS – WRITING
PhD

2. PhD PROCESS - WRITING
Very Hot – worked at
night – 3 days per week

3. PhD PROCESS -
RESEARCH
Had to be organised

5. PhD PROCESS
Really is a journey

[Participant drew
signpost but left it blank]
[MAKES REFERENCE TO
SEAMUS HEANEY POEM
"Night drive" (see note 1
below) being akin to PhD
Process]

6. STUDIO PRACTICE MID
MAY – Start[ed] practice
for
→Opera House
→WAAPA

Note 1: "Night Drive"by
Seamus Heaney (2008, p.45)

PhD thesis examination

In this second CRJ, Gasser drew attention to various aspects of his doctoral writing process and was also able to compare the PhD writing process to his own creative studio practice process, once more reflecting on how unrewarding he has found it to write a thesis: "*I view it like a prison sentence. You know, I don't know anything about a prison sentence but I thought, you just do your time, get shot of it as quickly as you can. There's no skill in it, there's no skill in a PhD, I don't think. It's just hard work*" (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012). He also took time in this post-CRJ interview to reflect on the examination process of the PhD, specifically upon the examination of the performance aspect of his project:

> *Two of the examiners came [to MG's Sydney International Piano competition exhibition performance of the Passacaglia at Sydney Opera House] but I'm going to get them to use the WAAPA performance, I've got it on DVD, so they can watch that. . . . Because I haven't done an exam for 20 years—and this is exactly what this [PhD process] is—it was very stressful. Because there's enough pressure on you, as it is, do you know what I mean? But [at] WAAPA, I'd already got the [Sydney] performance out the way, I just went for it and did what I normally do and I thought it was a lot better at WAAPA. The acoustics are better at WAAPA.* (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012)

Gasser was very articulate about how the pressures to perform as a musician compare with the pressures to perform as a PhD researcher.

> *The pressures are there, as I said before, but the problem with doing both of these [the exegesis and the performance] is a concert always has a deadline. It's all you need. And there's a lot of pressure with that, too, like, whatever that one is [gestures to a 'Powerhouse, Brisbane' concert poster on his wall], not that it really happens, but what if I'm ill? It's just me and the piano. There's a thousand people there, what do you do? That's the problem with the PhD, you can always put it off, do it tomorrow, do it next week. So there is no pressure as far as that's concerned from WAAPA.* (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012)

The CRJ process

In one critical moment in this second CRJ, Gasser made a distinct connection between the PhD process and theory in the form of a poem he had read, linking this to the PhD process, his experience as a performing musician, and his PhD performance of the *Passacaglia* in Sydney. In this connection he also shifted his point of view about the PhD being a hardship,

a "prison sentence", to a view that the PhD leads to something positive. He did this by way of drawing a signpost as a critical moment on the CRJ chart:

> *I think if you look at the river, though, the thing is the PhD really is a journey, it really is a river. The point with it—this is from a poem actually, by Seamus Heaney [2008][5] that I was just thinking about—If you imagine that it's not a river, but it's a road here, and this is a sign post. [Gestures to the signpost he had drawn on the CRJ chart] Heaney said, this struck me years ago, in a line that says something like 'each place named that they were driving through grants its own fulfilment' - they're passing through towns and they're not stopping, right? But that's what concerts are like, each concert people always say leads to something. It never leads to anything, a concert's a concert. That is the end result, and it doesn't actually lead to anything. But the PhD does, do you know what I mean? So for the first time in a long time I can actually see that it is worth doing, do you know what I mean? You've got something at the end of it. Concerts you're always doing something but it's forgotten after a week, you know. . . . It's interesting the review title "Quiet night makes for an epic climb" [McCallum 2012, SMH online], because they were picking up on that, what was it he said? . . . Somewhere it says, "This Pianistic Everest." So that was nice.*
> (MG, personal interview 2, 26 Jul 2012)

For all Gasser's nonchalant dismissiveness of research and his oscillating feelings about the PhD process itself, his engagement in the 'Creative River Journey' project was revelatory. It has effectively drawn attention to the struggle music researchers might have with the practice-led research paradigm due to clashes between it and established empirical frameworks in musicology research.

Gasser's contribution also called attention to the complexity of classical music performance research. Far from being mere interpretation, Gasser demonstrated that his doctoral practice involved a complex, holistic interpretation through his construction of an aesthetic framework for the performance of a classical work. In Gasser's case, he brought to his study

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[5] Note [added to CRJ chart by researcher]: "Night Drive" by Seamus Heaney (2008, p.45)
(Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study.):

The smell of ordinariness/Were new on the night drive through France:/Rain and hay and woods on the air/Made warm draughts in the open car.

Signposts whitened relentlessly./Montreuil, Abbéville, Beauvias/Were promised, promised, came and went,/Each place granting its name's fulfilment.

A combine groaning its way late/Bled seeds across its work-light./A forest fire smouldered out./One by one small cafés shut.

I thought of you continuously/A thousand miles south where Italy/Laid its loin to France on the darkened sphere./Your ordinariness was renewed there.
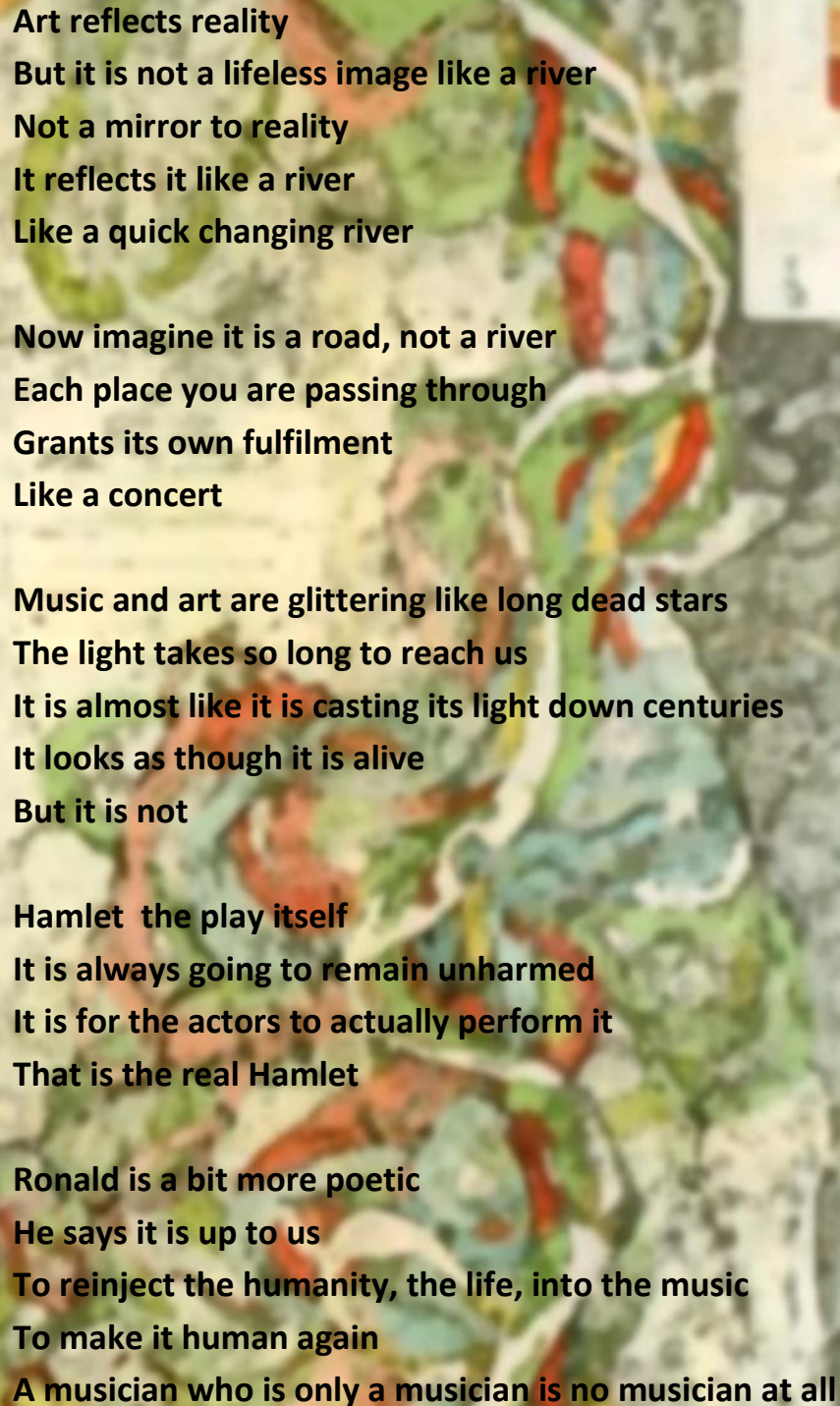
a lifetime of knowledge of, and relationship with, the composer Stevenson, all of which came into play in his PhD performance piece, the *Passacaglia on DSCH.*

Importantly for this 'Creative River Journey' inquiry into practice-led research, Gasser's perspective facilitated an understanding of the empirical foundations of music research that practice-led research methodology in music might push up against. Sloboda (2004) calls performing musicians "the athletes of the hand and voice" and he says these musicians "deserve the support of the full range of disciplines that can help them achieve and maintain the high standards which are integral to their success" (p.xxiv). I see the 'Creative River Journey' study as one way to achieve interdisciplinary support for performing musicians. However, I also take heed of Sloboda's warning not to impose research that holds no meaning within the paradigm of musical performance. The best research, he says, is whereby "these insights are not, in the main, provided by researchers 'parachuting in' from the detached heights of a nearby psychology [or other disciplinary] department" (p.xxiii).

Even so, despite the 'Creative River Journey' study being interdisciplinary, and not housed within music research paradigms, Gasser found resonance between his experiences of the PhD and the metaphor of the river. He made meaningful connections between the CRJ notion of a 'journey' and his poetic interpretations in relation to Stevenson's work. Although Sloboda calls for research from "the coalface of music training and education" (p.xxiii), and implicitly sees less value in other perspectives, Gasser's engagement in the 'Creative River Journey' study demonstrates its usefulness for music researchers as providing meaningful and useful research from the coalface of the creative practice-led PhD experience.

POETIC INTERLUDE 6—LIKE CLIMBING EVEREST

(A found poem—with thanks to Mark Gasser, Ferrucio Bussoni, Seamus Heaney, and Ronald Stevenson)

Art reflects reality
But it is not a lifeless image like a river
Not a mirror to reality
It reflects it like a river
Like a quick changing river

Now imagine it is a road, not a river
Each place you are passing through
Grants its own fulfilment
Like a concert

Music and art are glittering like long dead stars
The light takes so long to reach us
It is almost like it is casting its light down centuries
It looks as though it is alive
But it is not

Hamlet the play itself
It is always going to remain unharmed
It is for the actors to actually perform it
That is the real Hamlet

Ronald is a bit more poetic
He says it is up to us
To reinject the humanity, the life, into the music
To make it human again
A musician who is only a musician is no musician at all

JANE DONLIN—NARRATIVE OF PRACTICE

Jane Donlin remembers little of her birthplace, Kenya, having moved back to Germany with her German-born parent as a very young child. She then moved to Australia as a 30 year old, 25 years ago. She explained in her first CRJ that she has found it hard living with two cultures, her German background and her Australian life, though she loves Australia. Her cultural past in Germany, however, has provided a certain 'tradition' that has since become part of her understanding and practice. Donlin very consciously draws on her German heritage as she says it is an important part of her background which provides her art practice with a certain "*poetry [and] beauty*". (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011)

On arriving in Australia, Donlin did a TAFE course on weaving which she loved because it provided a tangible link to her cultural heritage which she calls her "*European background*". She went on to complete a visual arts master's degree starting with craft, "*making a lot of string, knitting and felting*" with an ecological focus, producing textiles using natural plant materials as colourants, whilst printing the names of pollutant dyes on the textiles. As a result of this degree, Donlin became part of an informal group of textile makers, some who identified as artists, some not, which met regularly at ECU. In this master's degree, Donlin explored the question 'What is it like to be living at the end of nature?' drawing on Gidden's theories of modernity and modernity's impact on nature. Before she came to her postgraduate studies in what she calls "*Art School*" (visual arts study at ECU), Donlin felt that her art practice was "*pretty directionless*" and the theory discovered at art school propelled her work forward (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011).

Donlin's PhD project

Donlin commenced her doctoral studies in 2007, but didn't then explicitly plan the craft and weaving focus of the PhD project. However, this had developed to be an integral aspect of her art practice by the time of her participation in the 'Creative River Journey' study. Donlin had looked at "*the end of nature*" in her previous degree and, in the PhD, she wanted to look at "*the end of tradition*". She explained that, at the outset of the PhD, she didn't really know what the project would entail. Donlin then realised that if she was going to deal with

tradition, she would need to do something very traditional and that's when she decided she would weave. Donlin completed a thesis titled 'The dialectics of textile hand production. In search of poetic content: an enquiry into the position of the traditional textile crafts' (Donlin, 2011) and was awarded her doctorate in December 2011. The creative component of her project was completed throughout the PhD and exhibited firstly at the Art Gallery of Western Australia in April 2011 as part of the Remix exhibition: "a showcase of the creativity of twenty contemporary Western Australian artists" (Art Gallery of Western Australia, 2011). In April 2013, Donlin's PhD artworks were exhibited at the Spectrum Project Space, ECU, and the exhibition catalogue summarised her work as follows: "In her solo exhibition *Continually*, artist Donlin explores the creative, poetic potential of traditional handcraft production, using the ancient techniques of handloom and tablet weaving and questions how traditional textile production can continue to exist in the context of a highly industrialised world" (Spectrum Project Space [ECU], 2013).

Donlin's first CRJ

Donlin engaged in the 'Creative River Journey' study with depth and thoroughness, despite being in the final year of her doctoral study. In the first interview, conducted approximately six months prior to the second interview, Donlin revealed a series of critical moments that were related to, in order of occurrence: research, theory, art practice, and reflexivity. Donlin demonstrated in the first CRJ interview that she was transitioning from engaging in the experience of these various aspects as separate milestones on her research journey toward a more integrated approach to her practice-led research. This deft and cohesive combination of research, theory, art practice and reflexivity are evident in the second CRJ chart and in her final exegesis. A transcribed version of Donlin's first CRJ chart follows on the next pages with her second CRJ chart appearing later in this chapter. (Original versions of these two charts can be found in Appendix F of this thesis.)

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)
Name **JD**   Date **18-03-11**
Artwork/Performance/Text **Weave piece "the loneliness is very great..."(Ruskin)**

1. RESEARCH Masters – card weaving piece. Ecological focus-considered how concept of pollutants transposed onto natural textiles. Had done Giddens – end of nature & end of tradition.

3. SUPERVISOR & THEORY Christopher Crouch introduced Ruskin's [philosophy] to Donlin: "Cultural poetry exists in tradition"; "tacit knowledge". "Ruskin first to talk about defilement of nature, damage to humanities, return to craft"

6 THEORY is the key – read Giddens, Adorno "The Culture Industry", Habermas on the process of social transformation. All provided key turning points.

8. ART PRACTICE Made long hand-woven cloth piece.

11. THEORY & PRACTICE Waiting for the poetry to come. No book tells you how to create the poetry [of the creative process].

2. RESEARCH Commenced PhD -connection between the end of nature and the end of tradition.

4. THEORY & PRACTICE End of tradition became clear PhD focus so went back to traditional weaving

5. THEORY Read Ruskin book – his famous axiom "There is no wealth but life"

7. ART PRACTICE made card weave piece with Ruskin Quote.

9. ART PRACTICE Made stitch sampler but colour not right (red & white) so redid blue.

10. THEORY & PRACTICE throughout making – reading, writing, thinking, not just making (but) skills is important.

Research

In this first CRJ, Donlin explained that she began her PhD research process without a defined question but that the inquiry had its foundations in her Master of Arts (Visual Arts) degree completed in 2010: "*You want to know how the PhD project developed? I didn't plan that. I didn't even plan to do weaving, it evolved after a little while. I don't think my question was that refined when I first started the PhD. I think it was quite vague*" (JD, personal interview 1, 18 March 2011). She made links back to previous research as she explained that she knew her PhD project had a connection between the end of nature and the end of tradition, but was not *clear of the exact connection:*

> *For my Master's, I had looked at Giddens' idea of the end of nature and the end of tradition and I focused on this idea 'what is it like to be living at the end of nature?' It was more about the effect of human activity on the environment and all the ecological disasters and threats we are facing so I made a lot of clothes and printed the names of the pollutants all over them. It wasn't really craft-based at all.* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 March 2011)

This engagement with the initial conceptualisation stage of the PhD research process allowed her to make connections between her reading of theory, initially guided by her supervisor, and her proposed art practice:

> *I was going to do the end of tradition but I didn't know what that entailed at that point. I'd looked at the end of nature, now I need to look at the end of tradition, so the idea evolved gradually. If I was going to do tradition then I would need to do something very traditional in my practical work. That is when I decided that I would weave.* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011)

A critical moment in her emergent practice-led research helped Donlin to define her HDR project. It was when she was prompted by her supervisor to read John Ruskin, the artist social philosopher and art critic of Victorian-era England, that she found the theory to match her intended focus on the end of tradition. One of the earliest critical moments that Donlin identified in her first CRJ interview, and indeed in her research process, was in relation to her exposure to Ruskin and his theories. In this, her supervisor was a crucial influence:

> *My supervisor, Christopher [Crouch], he suggested I should look at Ruskin . . . pretty early because my project was about the craft object and Ruskin places a great deal of emphasis on the importance of the arts and crafts. . . . First I read him through the*

eyes of other theorists because he's very difficult to read, so I needed to get an understanding and a feel for him. One such theorist is Peter Fuller—he's a strong advocate of Ruskin—and a few others. And eventually I picked up the original version and I found that it was difficult to interpret Ruskin. Ruskin stands pretty much on his own. He's very unique in his choice of language and outlook. (JD, personal interview1, 18 Mar 2011)

In reading Ruskin, Donlin found a quote in a 1863 letter by Ruskin to the prominent American social and art critic, Charles Eliot Norton, that was highly significant for her: "The loneliness is very great and the place in which I am at present is only as if I had buried myself in a tuft of grass in a battlefield wet with blood for the cry of the earth about me is in my ears continually" (John Ruskin, 1863, as cited in Alexander, 1973, p.210). This was a critical moment for Donlin, who explained this significance:

> *This is a quote by John Ruskin. Ruskin might have been one of those first social theorists who saw a connection between the ending of the arts and crafts and the damage it does to humanity, and ultimately to nature itself. He saw that connection between the defilement of nature and the damage to humanity and he saw a return to the arts and crafts, with the so called health-giving labour, as a way out of that dilemma. Making art is more than a rescue; [it is] an alternative, a solution almost, in his view.* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011)

The Ruskin quote became embodied, quoted verbatim, in one of three intricate pieces of weaving (Figure 11) that formed the studio practice element of Donlin's PhD project in visual arts. Symbolically, Donlin literally wove together theory and practice in this piece, one of two pieces of Donlin's work chosen for a group exhibition at the Art Gallery of Western Australia. The work also provided the title *Continually* for her later solo exhibition at ECU's Spectrum gallery.

Theory

Donlin's first CRJ demonstrated how her engagement with theory, and with the quotation itself, were critical events in the developing understanding of her own research problem:

> *It [the Ruskin quote] is in his book 'Unto This Last'. It is about the political economy of art, a criticism of human influence. In that book is his famous axiom—there is no wealth but life. Ruskin feels that human society has confused the riches of true wealth with this monetary vision. And therein lies the crux of all problems. And so this desire to gain ever more wealth in monetary terms has led to the industrialisation of society, exploiting the earth's resources and destroying the lands.* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 March 2011)

Figure 11: Jane Donlin (2010) Continually 1, cotton fibres, plant dyes, 384 x 4.5 cm.
Photographer: Adrian Lambert. Source: Donlin, 2012, p.127.
(Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103c. Exception: research or study)

But Ruskin was not the only theorist to influence Donlin. Half-way through the first CRJ, she was able to articulate a critical moment where she directly applied theory to answer the needs and questions of her research project, expanding her theoretical knowledge about tradition and craft to fill gaps she identified through her practice:

> *Again, I go back to the theorists because once I read Adorno and once I read Ruskin, all for different reasons . . . each of their writings was a piece of the puzzle and contributed to the whole. I read Giddens for what we have today, Habermas for describing this process of social transformation. What I am actually doing is I am trying to understand the social phenomenon of the changing nature of the textile crafts. The crafts we have today are completely different to what we had back then, so I am trying to explain that process of change. What are the key factors that led to the crafts changing so dramatically?* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011)

Art practice

In this first interview, Donlin used the artwork *Continually I* (Figure 11) as the focus of discussion, encouraging the interviewer to handle and look closely at the art work, which at that time was untitled and went by the working title "the loneliness is very great…", drawn from the aforementioned Ruskin quote. Two other artworks were also viewed and handled as part of this first interview, *Continually II* (Figure 12) and *saumplarie* (Figure 13), discussed later in this narrative of practice), highlighting the tactile nature of Donlin's hand-woven and hand-dyed material practice.

In her doctorate, Donlin engaged in traditional craft-based skills for her art practice, including hand-woven, hand-dyed and hand-stitched textile artworks in her final submission. She took the opportunity of the first CRJ reflective practice to explore and explain her practice:

> *This is a card-woven object; the technique of card weaving is 5,000 to 6,000 years old. The cards used to be made from bones or from wood because they didn't have cardboard back then. I made square cards from cardboard, 7 x 7 cm square. Then you punch four holes in each corner of each card. You handle about 60 cards altogether, with four threads in each card, threaded alternatively with a dark and light colour. You turn the cards, and according to how you manipulate them, you can lift or lower the light and dark threads so that you can create images and text.* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011)

The textile artwork discussed in Donlin's first CRJ interview, *Continually II*, provided Donlin with an exemplar of her method in which the *hand-making* of the textile artworks was fundamental to her research project. It was through the making that she interrogated theory relating to tradition and craft, in particular, Ruskin's ideas:

> *It is not enough [to just see the craft]. You need to do it. Craft is very much physical. Going back to Ruskin, he says work made by hand is intellectual, physical and it is linked to the soul. Those three things coming together. And the soul is that emotion connected to the poetry, those humanitarian values.* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011)

Figure 12: Jane Donlin, Continually II (2011), hand-spun hand-woven cotton, flax, Eucalyptus Cinerea, 382 x 82 cm. Photographer: Adrian Lambert. Source: Donlin, 2011, p.130. (Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study.)

In both CRJs, Donlin illustrated, through her explanation of the acts of making and the inter-related exegetical interrogation of the theory of tradition and craft in a post-traditional society, that she was engaged in practice-led research. In her work, Donlin was engaged in a cyclic, reiterative imbrigation of theory and practice (Nelson, 2013), and the theory is both a point of departure and a point of return for Donlin's practice and for her exegetical writing. She stated this point of departure clearly:

> *We now live in a so-called post traditional society. My work is craft-based. For this project I decided to weave because that is a very traditional craft. This idea of craft I think is also tied up with tradition, especially this so-called traditional craft like weaving. These three things [nature, tradition and craft] are very closely interrelated . . . the ending of tradition implies that the tradition of craft has ended too. That's my point of focus, my point of departure throughout the entire thesis.* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 March 2011)

By the time of the CRJ focus group, Donlin was very succinct in her explanation of her project, its interrogating focal point and its outcomes: "*My topic is called the dialectics of textile hand production. I'm in the visual arts and I question the position of really traditional crafts, and what kind of position they have in the art world, or in society as a whole. That's my general topic. I've produced a body of work. It was shown in the Art Gallery [of WA]*" (JD, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011). As it was for many of the artist–researchers who participated in the 'Creative River Journey' study, for Donlin the art-making process was an essential avenue to making visible her doctoral research and the ethos embodied in her practice. In this first CRJ interview, Donlin drew attention to her process and at the same time was able to articulate this process through reflection:

> *My work's very much about process and I wrote a lot about process, because textile hand-production is all about the process, and the finished product is not really that important at all, and most people don't even like it that much, but it's the process of creativity, of making, of doing, and it's an experience, and it's an experience of living life, being creative. And these are the bits that are so undervalued in society, perhaps they're not really that visible, you can't see what's happening . . .I don't like to call it subversive, but our world today is so technologically orientated.* (JD, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Donlin's account of process challenges Smith and Dean's (2009) explanation of *process* in practice, whereby "to be process-driven is to have no particular starting point in mind and no preconceived end." (p.23). Donlin's CRJs demonstrated that her process clearly had a particular starting point, and that the goal of the doctoral exegesis provided a conceivable end. Smith and Dean also state, however, that process in practice-led research "can be directed towards emergence, that is, the generation of ideas which were unforeseen at the beginning of the project" (2009, p.23). The exploration in Donlin's second CRJ chart displayed the emergence of key connections between theory and practice, previously unforeseen by her. Donlin's use of the word process in the CRJ focus group also echoes the focus on process in a/r/tography in which constructions of knowledge are viewed as occurring "in-process" (Winter, Belliveau & Sherritt-Fleming, 2009, p.8).

In addition to the word 'process', Donlin also used the words 'reflexive' and 'reflexivity' to describe her approach to creative practice. Early in our first CRJ, she used these terms in explaining a critical moment when she was propelled back to reading theory. Donlin made it very clear that engaging with theory was inseparable from engaging in practice, and that theory itself provides critical moments in her practice:

> [T]he theory is key. The more I read about cultural theory, the more it informs my art practice. I would say theorists like Giddens, Adorno, Habermas, those are key turning points because they provide that sociological explanation for why things are the way they are, and once we've got that understanding then we can respond to that and change the way we think. That is what we call reflexivity: that understanding in light of that knowledge that we have gained causes us to act and behave in a different way. So my art is reflexive and that is why we call our art practice reflexive. My art practice can't be traditional even though I use very traditional techniques. It is contemporary so what I need to say now, [is] that my art practice is reflexively motivated. In light of all this knowledge that I've gained, I'm responding with this kind of art work. (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011)

In taking a reflexive stance, Donlin explained that her research was concerned with both the practice-led and social implications of her research. She later cited Giddens in relation to reflexivity in her thesis: "'Social reflexivity refers to a world increasingly constituted by information rather than pre-given modes of conduct. It is how we live after the retreat of tradition and nature' (Giddens, 1994, p.115). Social reflexivity is a more conscious way of interacting in the world." (Donlin, 2011, p.10). In this focus on social reflexivity, Donlin may have been informed by the work of her PhD supervisor, Christopher Crouch, who has written on reflexivity and praxis: "debates around the idea of the reflexive practitioner have increasingly moved the conceptualization of what it is to be a practitioner from a condition of reflective to reflexive thinking, moving a professionally-oriented research model to a more fluid, praxis-based one" (Crouch, 2007, p.111). Crouch further defines reflexivity as encompassing social construction:

> Adopting praxis assumes a process of meaning making, and that meaning and its processes are contingent upon a cultural and social environment. Because praxis is not self-centred but is about acting together with others, because it is about negotiation and is not about acting upon others, it forces the practitioner to consider more than just the practicalities of making. (2007, p.112)

Reflexivity is also explained in Haseman and Mafe's (2009) discussion of the processes through which HDR artist–researchers acquire the skills of practice-led research:

> Reflexivity is one of those 'artist-like processes' which occur when a creative practitioner acts upon the requisite research material to generate new material which immediately acts back upon the practitioner who is in turn stimulated to make a subsequent response. Within this looping process authorial control can be fragmented, raising doubts about purpose, efficacy and control. A kind of chaos results and it is from this chaos and complexity that the results of the creative research will begin to emerge and be worked through. (p.219)

This notion of reflexivity in art practice also corresponds with the project's use of Burnard's reflective arts practice in which "self-reflection" brings about "the transforming participation associated with art making" (2006, p.9). The addition of a social critical perspective to Burnard's reflective arts practice is found in reflexivity as explained by Crouch: "Introducing Giddens' ideas about the reflexive self (1991), and using reflexivity as a critical tool, can create an intellectual climate for research that takes the emphasis away from the narcissistic, without negating the importance of the self" (Crouch, 2007, p.108). In her final thesis submission, Donlin explained her use of reflexivity as a methodology:

> Reflexivity is a kind of collective appropriation and re-appropriation of knowledge and information, which in the light of new understandings has the potential to cause widespread changes in attitudes and behaviour. For myself as an artist, reflexivity essentially entails a constant negotiation between the theoretical, contextual content of my work and the lived experience perspective as a maker. Also, researching new knowledge helps my practical work to evolve. Since informed reflexive action has the potential to re-evaluate and redefine the way we think about the crafts, it is a central method used in my art praxis. (Donlin, 2011, p.118)

The use of the term reflexivity by Donlin represents both her understanding of her creative process from a subjective perspective and her understanding of her own practice from a theoretical perspective. It is not a theory of practice in general but a theory of tradition *and* craft practice. Donlin's CRJ engagement demonstrated the merging of these two aspects, the subjective and theoretical, and this is also illustrated in the below quote from the CRJ focus group where she further described the research process of her project as "philosophical inquiry":

There's a kind of poetry in the handmade that you don't get in these commercially produced products, and it's that poetic content that I was looking for, there's a kind of aestheticism about it, and that's a subjective thing. How do you determine that something's aesthetic? So it's a . . . philosophical inquiry into this idea of aestheticism, beauty, and those kind of things, and how to express it through the handmade object. (JD, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Donlin's philosophy of practice is coherently accounted for in her second CRJ chart.

Donlin's second CRJ (next page)

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)

Name………………**JD**……………………Date……………**13-10-11 (Done by JD independently)**

Artwork/Performance/Text………**On Tradition**…………………………………………

1. **Research** Work with traditional techniques therefore need to understand tradition.

2. **Research** I begin the research by collecting and reading texts from critical theory.

3. **Theory** Trying to make sense of theoretical understandings.

4. **Theory** complex topic, very hard to comprehend.

5. **Art practice** Too difficult to deal with, best to work on a practical level with "traditional" technique. I begin to **make** hand-loom cloth.

6. **Reflection on process** Hope to gain understanding through making: thinking about project; designing patterns; calculating threads; preparing the loom; dyeing fibres with plant dyes - a lengthy process; spinning some of the fibres into yarns; threading; weaving.

7. **Reflection on process** There is a lot of technique in the work! And a lot of repetition. It seems I am doing the same work over: weaving entails repetition.

8. **Reflection on process & theory** This work is very slow to develop. But it has a certain aesthetic quality to it. Must continue. Is monotonous. Is this in contrast to contemporary ideas of freedom?

9a. **BIG MOVEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING Research & Theory** - Back to reading: tradition has certain generic characteristics: ritual; repetition; a connection to a form of mystical truth. Traditions are the properties of collectives → **BIG MOVEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING** → implies a connection to the past

9b. **Reflection on theory** → traditions need guardians to interpret the truth. →

9c **ANOTHER BIG MOMENT OF REVELATION. Reflection on theory.**
Further understanding leads into questions: what is tradition's connection to the crafts? Has the same characteristics but is removed from ritual (!!!)

10. **Research & Theory** I start reading craft theory. Need to understand the wider implications of craft:
-has a connection to human values;
-is an experience often denied in contemporary society;
Has been practiced for millennia;
-has tacit knowledge claims;
-in traditional societies contributes to social and economic advancement.

12. **Reflection on theory** This is a murky area: mystical truths and tacit knowledge. Is this the realm of poetry? Is this what I am looking for? Where are the guardians? →

14. **Research & theory** Now begin to read extensively about the aesthetic – expressive capacity of tradition. Where has the poetry emerged from? → from a mythological understanding of the world. How do traditions sustain themselves? → through tradere: the passing on of knowledge from one generation to another →

15. **A BIG INSIGHT**! **Reflection on theory & practice** Because craft is passed on along with social values and norms, tacit knowledge is learned from doing and from the master – not from books!!

18. **Reflection on theory** →→ IS THIS THE LOSS OF POETRY?

19. **Reflection on theory & practice** What to do? A →
B→

20 B. **Reflection on practice & theory.** reflexive action: on the basis of new understandings (obtained from reading and from the actual experience of making) I continue with the act of tradere (social renewal). The traditional craft have certain aesthetic – expressive capacities that still have value to society at large, to social-economical development and personal experience.

11. **Reflection on theory & practice** Now that I have gained an actual experience making, I am in a better position to understand the theoretical underpinnings. I am partially interested in the relation between tradition's mystical truths and craft's tacit knowledge.

13. **Reflection on theory** →Tradition is an ambiguous affair. Has been contrasted with modernity. Some dichotomies:
T / M
reactionary/ progressive
fixed/innovative
subjective/objective
irrational/rational
superstitious/science
personal, closed/impersonal
centred/open, decentred

16. **Reflection on theory** →Q. why then is craft often devalued?

17. **Reflection on theory** Critical theory informs that the Enlightenment thinkers devalued the mythological understandings of the world. It was [considered] superstitious, irrational, nonsense.
Craft theory informs that machine-made replaced handmade. Craft was economically unviable.

20 A. **Reflection on practice & theory** My work is set in the post-traditional context. It is not informed by tradition but by reflexivity

21. **Research** [PhD] Chapter complete ☺ – woohoo.

Critical moments as big insights

Donlin made it very clear in her second CRJ chart that there had been critical moments brought about by the CRJ reflective practice, which she identified as a "*big movement in understanding*" or a "*big insight*" (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011). In this second independently completed CRJ, Donlin chose to use the charting process to help her reflect on, and progress, writing a chapter of her PhD exegesis titled "On Tradition". The attribution of the size 'big' to these insights was different to her first interview and indicates the potential of the CRJ to develop for the artist–researcher greater understanding of 'critical moments' in their creative process over time:

> *Key points just jumped out at me . . . In a way it's a good way of summarising what is this chapter about. So it helps bring understanding and coherency into the project, this charting this out. They [key points] definitely tell me something about the process of development, how did I develop this chapter. They map out that path that I took. And it's a pathway . . . It holds lots of different aspects*. (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011)

Here the river journey metaphor is adopted and adapted into a pathway for Donlin, leading her toward understanding the process of the development of her ideas in the thesis chapter. Donlin explains the significance of the chapter to her overall thesis:

> *That's my first chapter of my thesis. So it's quite a significant chapter because it introduces my ideas. It frames my work . . . I had just completed that chapter, so it was just really fresh in my mind, and it was a very significant part, almost the most significant chapter of all of them. . . . I mean, not the most significant, equally significant, but it sort of leads into the research project and it was probably the most challenging chapter that I wrote.* (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011)

In the final version of this chapter published in her doctoral exegesis, the ideas explored in the second CRJ are refined, as evident in her statements in that chapter, "I use Giddens (1994) to research the notions of tradition . . . [who] posits that social action today is a reflexively critical endeavour that is no longer based on mythological understandings of the world" (Donlin, 2011, p.vix).

The second phase CRJ charting process allowed Donlin to make deep reflections about her PhD project. She demonstrated the emergent nature of the connections she was making between the act of making and the theory, and how the practice, or gaps in the practice, moved her onwards to investigate theory further:

> *It was the first part of research that I did, so I didn't have the skill yet or the experience of researching. So I didn't actually know what I was doing. And the theme tradition is very, very complex. [...] And I had enormous difficulty trying to understand what it is. It's more than just a way of life; it's much more complex than just custom or habit. There's something about tradition that is quite profound, but how do I articulate it?* (JD, interview 2, 13 Oct 2011)

Donlin charted a journey from a point of grappling with the complexities of her practice in relation to theory, to a point of deeply complex knowledge of the relationship of her practice to theory. In this way, her process is reminiscent of Smith and Dean's iterative, cyclic web of practice-led research and research-led practice (2009, p.20), whereby they detail a process of moving through and between practice-led research (where one begins with the practice), research-led practice (whereby theoretical and material research suggests new applications in practice) and academic research (whereby the experiences and findings of the first two stages are consolidated and written up for thesis purposes). Donlin's journey documented in this second CRJ articulates the nuanced and cyclic relationship between practice and research in her process, in a way that reflects Smith and Dean's web:

> *This is virtually the beginning. I begin the research by collecting and reading text from critical theory, anything that has to do with tradition you just collect text, don't you? Well, with traditional technique therefore I need to understand tradition, that's my motivation and that's how I begin. And then I try to make sense of the theoretical understanding because there's just so much out there. Yeah. How do you sift through all this information, what's relevant and what's not relevant?* (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011)

The CRJ functioned as a means for Donlin to sort through the internal processes of thought related to her practice. She made sense of theory in an emergent process, moving toward a more coherent, integrated theoretical position. This engagement with theory led Donlin back to making her textile artworks, thus she arrived at Nelson's (2013) definition of praxis, theory imbricated with practice:

[It's] best to work on a practical level with traditional technique so this is when I begin to make. And this sort of shows you how making and theory embody one another. A complex topic, very hard to comprehend, so how can I understand tradition by physically engaging in traditional process? I hope to gain understanding through making, so now I think about a project, design patterns, calculate threads, because my point is to make hand-woven cloth using traditional techniques. There's all sorts of methods, techniques and processes involved in tradition. It's very structured. You prepare the loom, dye fibres, dye with plant fibres. A lengthy process. You spin some of the fibres into yarns and start warping up the loom, preparing it. Iit's very physical. (JD, interview 2, 13 Oct 2011)

In this second CRJ, Donlin showed she had acquired a greater understanding of how her understanding of the theory around tradition deepened to a level where she was led further to a point of contrasting and comparing theoretical perspectives:

Now I'm really getting an understanding of what tradition is about, possibly through contrasting it with modernity. So what's the difference between these two? So now I begin to read more extensively about that aesthetic expressive capacity of tradition . . . this [book JD has with her] is about Habermas's theories. (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011)

Donlin was able to explain how her work is positioned in relation to tradition much more clearly than in the first interview: "*Because my work is set in the post traditional context, my work is not informed by tradition, that means I did not learn how to weave from the previous generation, I had to learn by doing a course at TAFE and from books*" (JD, interview 2, 13 Oct 2011).

Again, Donlin called attention to the crucial role that reflexivity played in her methodological approach:

My work is informed by reflexivity, it's just quite an empowering way of looking at things. Because reflexive action means that, on the basis of understanding which I've obtained from reading, and from the actual experience of making, I can continue with this act of tradere which actually means social renewal, the passing on. You are renewing your social norms, values, all of these things. Traditional crafts have certain aesthetic expressive capacities and these still have value to society today. My argument basically is that being engaged in a craft activity is not just about my personal experience, I think that it has value to society at large and to the culture that we have. If we de-value the crafts we are losing a part of our cultural heritage. (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011)

In this CRJ reflection, Donlin demonstrated a critical moment in which she had arrived at an integrated description of her praxis. Here, she generated new knowledge about not just her own art practice but about tradition and textile art practice in general and "tradere" (Latin, meaning the passing on of a tradition). Thus, for Donlin, engaging in textile artworks is not simply about "personal experience", it is has wider cultural implications.

The 'Creative River Journey' process

Donlin's engagement with the 'Creative River Journey' study illustrated her shift from questioning her textile artwork practice, to a point whereby she understood her textile artwork practice as 'tradere' in a post-tradition world. Reflection alerted her to gaps in her making skills, which led her on to gaps in her theoretical stance, as the following two quotes, in relation to the textile artwork *saumplarie* (Figure 13), illustrate:

> *I had this idea that I wanted to recreate one of the 18th Century stitch samplers that are so beautiful. After a while I realised I couldn't do it. I didn't have those stitching skills. I don't know how to set out the patterns and all of these things. So that experience really reinforced the idea that the textile crafts are learned skills, passed on from generation to generation. If they are not passed on, something is lost.* (JD, personal interview 1, 18 Mar 2011)

By the second CRJ, Donlin had established for herself a way to answer the questions her practice-led research raised:

> *And how do the traditions sustain themselves through tradere? That's what I was saying earlier. The passing on of knowledge from one generation to another. That is a key insight. And craft. Craft knowledge is passed along with social values, norms, beliefs, everything. Everything together gets passed along in a traditional society, this tacit knowledge that was learnt from doing and from copying the master. You do not learn tacit knowledge from books.* (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011)

For Donlin, the CRJs provided a means of structuring the reflection she was already engaged in through her reflexive approach. Her interviews suggested that, because the process corresponded in some way to her already established reflexivity, she was very open to the CRJ process:
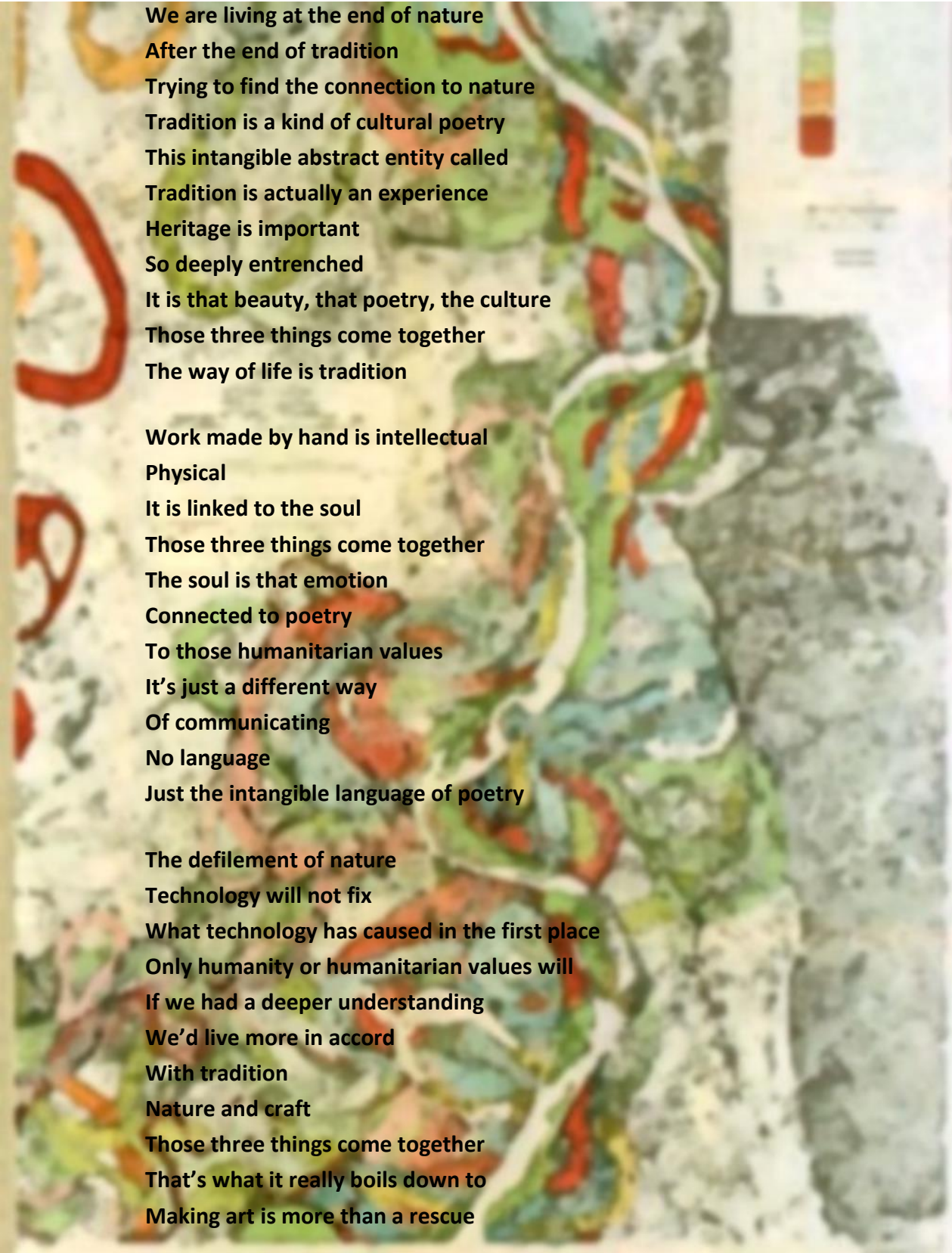
> *I quite liked it because I thought of it just from a metaphorical point of view, because it twists and turns and diverts, and that's exactly what your journey is about. And I think it's quite good. You can pinpoint your highlights when you've got all these bends, so it makes it quite visual, those crucial turning points, or the key moments . . . So from a metaphorical point of view I thought that was quite good, because the river is very fluid, and your practice is very fluid. I mean, there's no such thing as straight-forward research, not for me anyway. It's a process of evolution, and development, in whatever area we work in. Even in the sciences and in the arts, everywhere.* (JD, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

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For Donlin, the 'Creative River Journey' experience was a useful way to identify critical insights in the creative practice PhD process: "*I thought it was really great the way it highlighted the central insights for me . . . I didn't have to think about it, I thought 'yeah, this and this happened' then it just came naturally*" (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011). Donlin engaged with the 'Creative River Journey' study in all three phases with generosity, deep reflection and highly astute analytical thinking. Donlin's use of these phases to progress her writing of the thesis chapter illustrated the potential of the CRJ strategy to assist a doctoral student at the end writing-up stage of a PhD.

Donlin's CRJs also illustrated very clearly the process of practice-led research as proposed by Haseman and Mafe (2009) who suggest that, for practice-led researchers, "problems emerge over time according to the needs of the practice and the practitioner's evolving purposes" (p.214). Donlin is also an exemplar of Crouch's idea of 'praxis' as a result of her reflexive stance whereby: "adopting a reflexive viewpoint allows an understanding of the creative process from a subjective viewpoint, revealing the dynamic relationship between the context, construction and the articulation of the act" (Crouch, 2007, p.108). The CRJ strategy proved itself to be a useful tool both in Donlin's textile artwork practice, and in writing up her PhD project, revealing the CRJ's potential to assist HDR practice-led research writing. Donlin's meticulous documentation of the critical moments in her creative practice was clearly adopted by Donlin as a method for exploration in her reflexive artist–researcher praxis, illustrating the adaptability of the CRJ strategy in the emergent methodology repertoire of practice-led researchers.

POETIC INTERLUDE 7—MORE THAN A RESCUE

(A found poem—with thanks to Jane Donlin, Anthony Giddens and John Ruskin)

We are living at the end of nature
After the end of tradition
Trying to find the connection to nature
Tradition is a kind of cultural poetry
This intangible abstract entity called
Tradition is actually an experience
Heritage is important
So deeply entrenched
It is that beauty, that poetry, the culture
Those three things come together
The way of life is tradition

Work made by hand is intellectual
Physical
It is linked to the soul
Those three things come together
The soul is that emotion
Connected to poetry
To those humanitarian values
It's just a different way
Of communicating
No language
Just the intangible language of poetry

The defilement of nature
Technology will not fix
What technology has caused in the first place
Only humanity or humanitarian values will
If we had a deeper understanding
We'd live more in accord
With tradition
Nature and craft
Those three things come together
That's what it really boils down to
Making art is more than a rescue

SUE GIRAK—NARRATIVE OF PRACTICE

Girak's PhD project

Sue Girak entered the 'Creative River Journey' project in 2011 as a School of Education master's by research degree student, upgrading to a doctorate in 2013. This was the culmination of years of study at ECU which began with a teaching degree, then a bachelor's degree in visual arts, before commencing her HDR candidature. Throughout the project, Girak was able to chart the development and conceptualisation of her artworks from initial B.A. works to her master's degree work. Her CRJ reflections aided Girak in identifying connections between past art-making and her concerns about consumerism, for example in *Retail Therapy* (Figure 14) involving handmade shopping bags, and *Footprint* (Figure 15), an artwork featuring magazine advertising and mid-20th century house plans, all of which informed the Masters artwork *The Empty Promise* (Figure 17). Also striking in her CRJs was the way that Girak's identity evolved from separate roles as primary school teacher and her *"crafts [or] hobby"* as artist (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011) into an attempt to weave these two identities together with that of researcher to become a rigorous artist–researcher-teacher. Girak came to the CRJ ready for the reflection process and was able to identify many critical moments in this process of development, which she initially called *"turning points"* and *"life defining moments"*.

Girak's project initially did not foreground her own artistic practice. Girak's project involved her using recycled materials within her part-time primary school art teaching role to create artworks that helped raise her students' awareness of sustainability issues. Partly, Girak was motivated by necessity due to next-to-no budget available for art materials at her school. But she was also motivated towards sustainability research through identification of environmental transgressions in her own home life, after realising the impact of the huge footprint of the new house she and her husband had just built, and in art practice when she was alerted to her use of non-sustainable art materials. Further motivation arose via her volunteer work at REmida, "a not-for-profit organisation that spearheads educational workshops in creative reuse and sustainability" (REmida, n.d.), and that is accessed as a

stock house of recycled materials available to primary school teachers. As a result of her engagement with REmida, who advocate for the Reggio Emilia approach to preschool and primary education , Girak also became interested in this educational approach, whereby teachers: "recognise children as social beings from birth, full of curiosity and imagination, and having the potential and desire to find connections and meaning in all they experience. We acknowledge their ability to reflect upon and contribute to their own learning through their many languages of expression and communication" (REAIE, n.d.).

Figure 14: Sue Girak, 2007, Retail Therapy. Brass and gilt safety pins, jump rings, magazine paper and wooden hangers. Dimensions: variable. Photographer. Gunilla Brattstrom-Conqvist. Source: Girak, 2015, p.153. (Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: research or study).

Girak described this confluence of her art practice, her work at REmida, and her teaching when contributing to a CRJ focus group:

> *I'm a Master's by Research student and I'm doing my Masters in Visual Arts Education and it's on creative re-use so I'm using REmida principles, which is a set of principles that I've loosely put together from REmida, which is a creative reuse network. I'm using those principles to develop environmental sustainability with students, and myself as an artist-teacher. (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)*

Girak's methodology, identity and interdisciplinarity

The complexity of her interests and her practice meant Girak was able to identify with the

methodological approach a/r/tography, whereby she could operate concurrently

artist/researcher/teacher:

> *I've got a two phase project where I work with students, and now I'm in the process of making my own artwork, and responding to their work, my teaching practice, and my art practice, all rolled into one in a methodology that Kylie knows is called a/r/tography, so that's what I'm up to. I've got another year to go. I'm like five years into my one-year degree. So it's stretched out.* (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Girak admitted that her postgraduate studies had been a lengthy process and this may be attributed to Girak juggling multiple demands as mother to four children, wife, part-time primary school teacher, small business owner, and researcher. Responding dismissively to one focus group member's comment that it was easy to do a complete thesis in a few months, Girak laughed then explained:

> It's just me being sexist in one way, when you're saying doing your PhD within a certain time frame, and saying it's only 40,000 words. But me, doing 30,000 words in five years, I'm thinking, "When will I ever finish?" The demands of whose education is more important: my children who are going through TEE, that's the beginning of their journey, or me doing my crafts? [laughter] . . . and my hobby, as my husband thinks it is. So it's putting that onto my performance, but you're right, it's not really hard. (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Illustrating Pedersen and Haynes' finding that "women face additional barriers when they hope to forge a career in academia from their practice-led research" (2015, p.1266), one of which relates to issues around identity, Girak clearly described the sudden awareness of these multiple roles. She linked this to her role as a/r/tographer:

> One critical moment that had nothing to do with either project, but about my methodology, is just sitting at our house on Mother's Day, or Father's Day, or some birthday, where—because I am doing a/r/tography I could never get my head around artist, researcher, teacher, and this voice, and that voice, and blah, blah, blah—And I think it was for my Mum's birthday, and then I thought, "I'm in a room, and I'm me, Sue, but I'm someone's daughter, I'm someone's sister, I'm someone's mother, I'm someone's wife, I'm someone's sister-in-law, it's still me." And that's that critical moment where I thought, "Hang on, it's one voice, but multiple identities". (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Girak's practice-led doctorate was, unusually, housed in ECU's School of Education. However, she was also supervised by an artist–researcher-teacher within the School of Arts and Humanities. This situation, with Girak having a research home in two 'houses', truly reflected the multidisciplinary pathway she initially took in completing her higher degree research, though she later became transdisciplinary in her practice.

The terms multidisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity are often used interchangeably, however correct application of the terms can help highlight the shifting boundaries of knowledge that occur in complex practice-led research. Multidisciplinary

research is when a problem is approached by various disciplines in order for the problem to be understood from various perspectives and where the disciplinary boundaries remain in place when reaching this understanding. It is the least integrative and can be seen as disciplines side by side (Graham, 2011; Stock & Burton, 2011). Had Girak applied the principles and knowledge of sustainability and the principles and knowledge of primary education separately, and analysed her research findings specifically for the field of sustainability using theory from this field, then analysed these separately for the field of education, Girak's research would have been multidisciplinary.

Girak's knowledge of sustainability and her knowledge of teaching, however, were applied in a more integrated way in the initial conceptualisation of her research and, thus, the initial plan of her research is best described as interdisciplinary. Stock and Burton call interdisciplinarity "a step up from multidisciplinarity" (2011, p.1096). Interdisciplinary research, they state, sees "people and ideas [come] together from different disciplines to jointly frame a problem, agree on a methodological approach, and analyse data" (p.1096). The individual interdisciplinary researcher takes the ideas and concepts from different disciplines to frame her research questions and devise a singular methodological response and solution, whilst still acknowledging the source and boundaries of knowledge. The interesting outcome in relation to Girak's research process was how she shifted from more traditional education research approaches such as action research, toward the methodology of a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) which is particularly interested in the integrative process of crossing boundaries of practice between art, teaching and research.

Girak illustrated this well in her final thesis in a diagrammatic representation (Figure 16) of her research process, one in which she also integrates the 'critical moments' concept introduced to her in the 'Creative River Journey'. This depicts Girak's own diagram of what she calls 'The A/r/tographic Action Research Spiral, her adaptation of several research models that she lists in her exegesis: "The Action Research Planner, by S. Kemmis and R. McTaggart, 1988, p.11; 'Multi-roled and Skilled Teachers of Art', by M. Räsänen, 2005, International Journal of Education through Art." (Girak, 2015, p.200). The complexity of Girak's methodological blending meant that her initial interdisciplinary approach was

developed through the course of her research, but she later moved towards a more
transdisciplinary research stance.
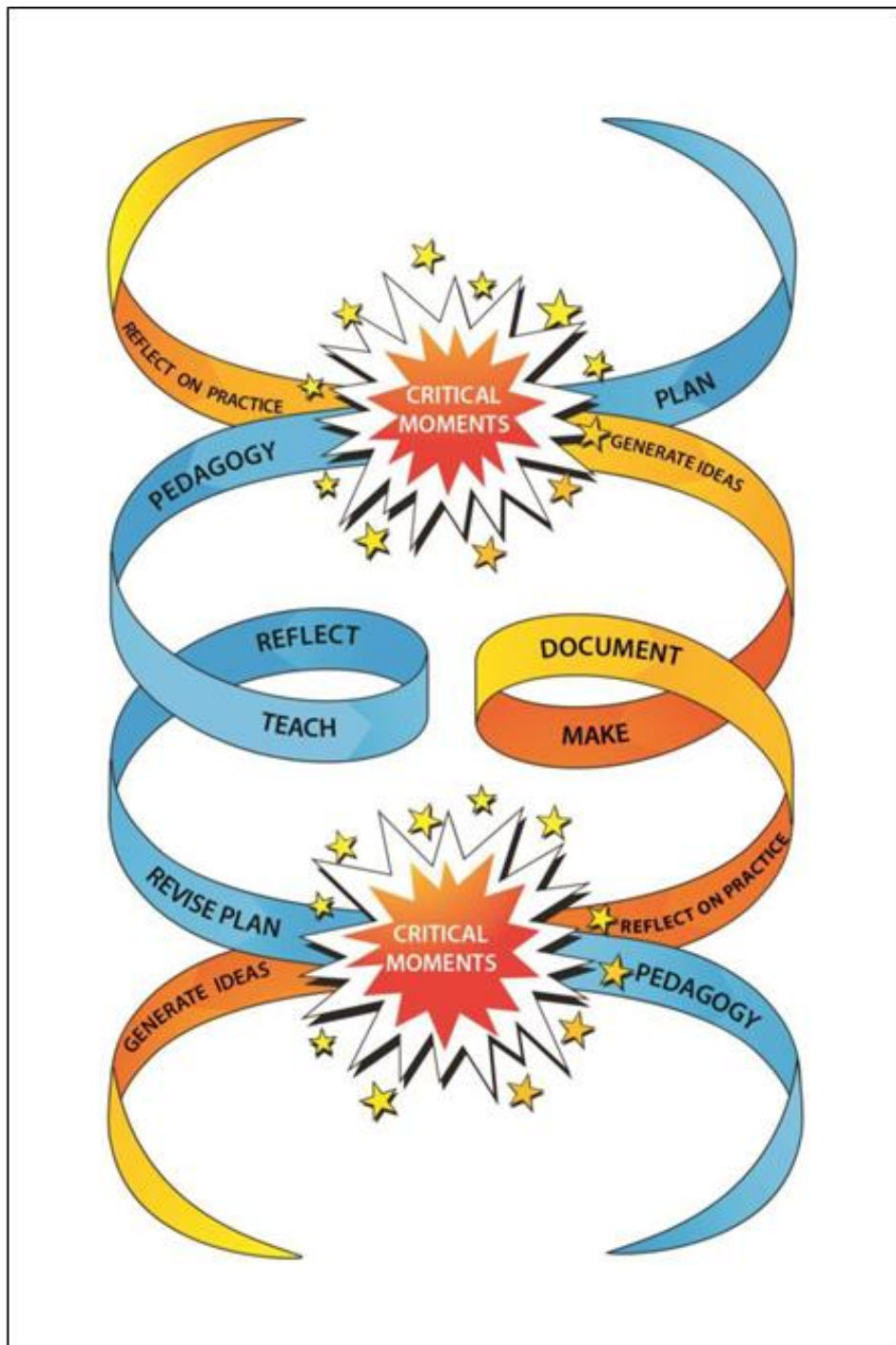
Figure 16: Sue Girak's "A/r/tographic Action Research" methodology diagram Source: Girak, 2015, p.200.
(Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study.)

Transdisciplinarity, Graham argues, "involves a cooperative effort towards the integration of knowledge from across disciplines in a specific context" (2011, p.29). It is the synthesis of disciplinary knowledge for a final outcome that differentiates it from interdisciplinary research. In transdisciplinary research, boundaries are both inhabited and transcended to form something new: "transdisciplinarity is . . . at once between the disciplines, across the different disciplines, and beyond all discipline. Its goal is the understanding of the present world, of which one of the imperatives is the unity of knowledge" (Nicolescu, 2002, p.44, as cited in Graham, 2011, p.27).

Shifting, integrated and transcended boundaries are a feature of transdisciplinarity which Stock and Burton explain involves: "integrating the research outcomes from disciplinary research, thus breaking down the methodological, epistemological and ontological boundaries that prevent shared understandings of complex issues" (2011, pp.1091–2). However, Girak did not describe herself as a transdisciplinary researcher. Rather she stated that her blend of sustainability and education aims meant that she took a social constructivist approach, which is research that focuses on social questions with the aim of creating a better society. Girak stated in her exegesis:

> Framed within an interpretative inquiry and informed by constructivist epistemology, I identify Pragmatic Social-Reconstructionism (Efland, 1990) as my theoretical framework and a/r/tography as my methodology, which lays the foundation for a bricolage of methods supporting classroom-based and studio-based research. (Girak, 2015, p.53)

A constructivist approach

Girak's bricolage of methods were situated within a/r/tography as a methodological approach, whereby her knowledge as artist, teacher and researcher became seamlessly blended in her doctoral project. It was a/r/tography as a methodology that first brought Girak to the 'Creative River Journey' research. Having chosen a/r/tography, Girak was struggling to find anyone with knowledge and resources about this methodology. When she was alerted to the fact that I was applying a/r/tography as the methodological framework for the 'Creative River Journey' project, Girak sought me out and offered to be a participant in the project. So began a remarkable collaboration which illustrated the potential of the CRJ

strategy as a method of facilitating support for HDR practice-led researchers, but also challenged my own sense of boundaries around, and within, constructivist research. This process also highlighted the fact that that artistic higher degree research, indeed all higher degree research, takes place within a social context.

Whilst my thesis includes my own discoveries and represents my personal, idiosyncratic views, it also reflects a social community of practice amongst ECU HDR artist–researchers whereby knowledge is shared in a heightened social setting. Like an ensemble theatre piece, individual players in the field build on each other's contributions, share ideas, take these shared ideas and see what can be developed from them; we adapt. Extending Isaac Newton's metaphor, we always stand not only on the shoulders of giants but, in higher degree creative research, on the shoulders of each other: peers, supervisors, fellow researcher, and the research community of creative practice within which our work develops. Knowledge construction, therefore, in the social setting of creative higher degree research, is adaptive and generative, not plagiaristic. Often our work is validated, confirmed or triangulated when it is taken up and applied by others as part of this community of practice. I have come to see Girak's adaptive engagement with the 'Creative River Journey' project methods as a natural outcome of the social community of practice that is the ECU higher degree practice-led research cohort.

Girak's CRJs and other conversations

Understanding the social nature of knowledge construction within a community of practice-led researchers has been crucial in resolving a critical moment for me as a researcher. This critical moment arose because Girak's enthusiastic engagement with the CRJ project saw her soar forward in her reflective strategies, adapting the CRJ project's methodologies including my conceptual framework, and applying this in a highly sophisticated way, well beyond what I expected of my participants. This challenged my resistant, internal sense of ownership of knowledge in the face of such exemplary adaptation. It directed me back to my own design and the initial aims of my project.

One of my aims articulated in the proposal for the 'Creative River Journey' research was to explore the potential of the CRJ strategy to meet the research needs of the practitioner and their practice in order to enhance the reflective practice of the participants. Another was for participants to eventually self-manage reflection on their own art practice. I wanted to facilitate a fruitful shared understanding of exemplars of practice-led research. My intention was to foreground co-construction of knowledge through the collaborative conversations and completion of the CRJ charts. All of this meant that knowledge generated within the project would be shared in order to empower participants to become autonomous in their reflective practice.

After the first CRJ, Girak adapted the language and the process of the CRJ to suit her own style. She recognised the important role that critical conversations, such as those she had with me as a researcher and with others, played in her knowledge creation. In the second CRJ, Girak stated: "*I don't think I could do this critical river journey if it was just with me. I have to talk to someone because I know what's going on in my head so it sounds lame having to write it down*" (SG, personal interview 2, 11 Nov 2011). So important was this to Girak's doctoral process that, after the CRJ interview process ended, she engaged a 'critical friend' to have repeated conversations about research with her which Girak then recorded and transcribed.

> In this research, conversations with colleagues and friends informed my action research. While many of my conversations occurred during my day-to-day activities, I also took a more structured approach. I had regular one-hour sessions with Kate (my critical friend). Our conversations became part of the planning and reflective process, where Kate took on the role of coach and supported me by employing a variety of techniques to stimulate reflexivity. (Girak, 2015, p.202)

Critical friendship is a concept made popular in education in the 1990s when introduced by Costa and Kallick (1993). They argued that the benefit to the learner is that they "receive both critical and supportive responses to their work" (p.51). Girak's use of critical friend "Kate" is key to her knowledge construction through reflective practice, and Girak argues that "[r]eflecting on artmaking through critical conversations adds an extra dimension to the reflective process" (Girak, 2015, p.201). Conversations with supervisors also surface as critical moments for her. In keeping with Swaffield's definition of critical friendship,

whereby it is "interpretive and catalytic, helping shape outcomes but never determining them" (2008, p.323), Girak's conversations in the CRJ interviews, with supervisors, and subsequently with her critical friend, became part of a repertoire of reflective practice skills which, she stated, facilitated her "embodied knowledge . . . [or] knowing-in-action" (Girak, 2015, p.201).

The language of 'critical friendship' and 'critical moments' is not evident in her first CRJ. Though she identifies "turning points" in which conversations with others helped her to reach new understandings, it is in her second CRJ that she adopts the use of the term "critical moment" for the first time, organising her reflections around these moments. In her exegesis, Girak stated the importance of the CRJS in foregrounding her understanding of critical moments: "critical conversations, critical to my working process, were used to inform . . . the a/r/tographic Action Research Spiral [Figure 16], and by participating in *Creative River Journey* reflections I was able to identify the critical moments that shaped my practice" (2015, p.203). She followed this statement with a copy of her first CRJ included in her exegesis ("Figure 48", p.204). Girak's emphatic adaptation of the methods used in the 'Creative River Journey' study contributed significantly to the development of her autonomous reflective practice, and her knowledge-building skills.

Girak's first CRJ

In our first conversation, Girak chose to document the creation of her artwork, *An Empty Promise* (Figure 17)*.* However, Girak expanded this focus on a singular artwork to reveal connections between other artworks, life events, theory and material thinking, maximising her reflective practice skills and demonstrating (though not yet aware of this) a reflexive art practice.

The artwork *An Empty Promise* is depicted in Girak's doctoral exegesis as follows: "Figure 22. Girak, 2011, The Empty Promise [Clear Polypropylene Sheets (Sourced from REmida WA), Clear Nylon Thread and Wooden Hangers (New Materials), Dimensions Variable]. Exhibited April, 2012 for the trial exhibition, Edith Cowan University" (Girak, 2015, p.160). Girak also devoted a section of both her thesis and the artist's book accompanying her final PhD exhibition to this artwork.

In reflecting on this artwork in the first CRJ, Girak articulated a kind of 'story-so-far' about the development of her practice, in keeping with her later conceptualisation of reflection as "a method of self-analysis that reviews or relives an experience" (2015, p.197). Thus, in this first CRJ, Girak is in the process of 'becoming' a practice-led researcher, as her separate reflections are given coherence through the metaphor of the CRJ 'map' of practice. Girak's art practice, teaching and research are merged into an action research-like process of rigorous reflexivity. This CRJ also offers the first indications that conversations with artist-friends impacted powerfully as a change agent in Girak's art making process, and prompted key moments of change, or critical moments, throughout her reflection.

Figure 17: Sue Girak 2011, The Empty Promise, clear polypropolene sheets (sourced from REmida WA), clear nylon thread and wooden hangers (new materials) Photographer: unknown. Source: Girak 2015, p.158.
(Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study.)
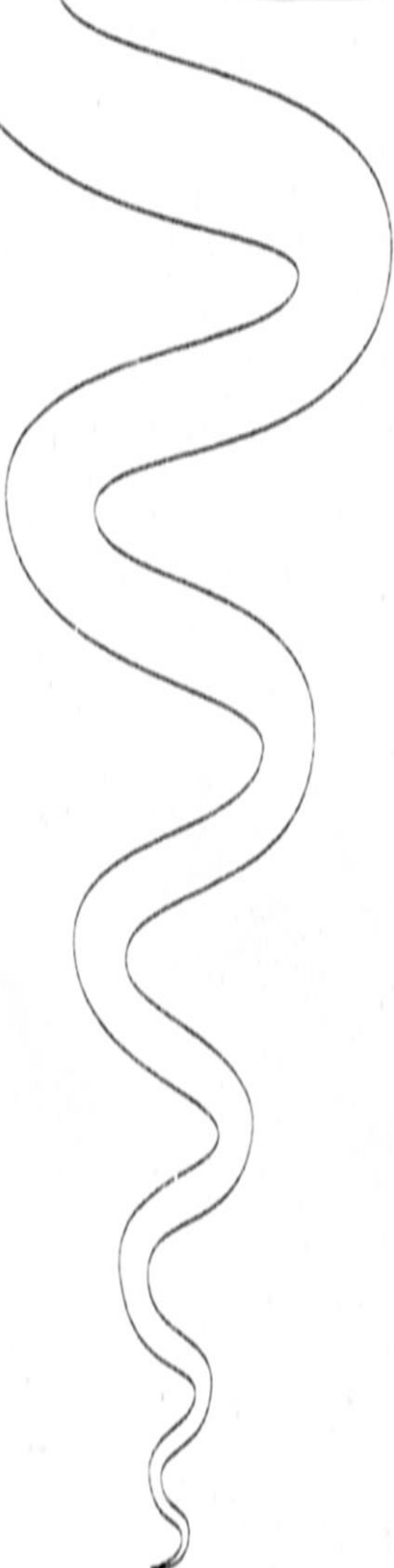
Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)
Name………………**SG**…………………Date……………**23-6-11**………………………
Artwork/Performance/Text………**The Empty Promise**……………………………………

1. BA vis arts **research** – "a turning point" **Made an art work** *Five degrees* with focus on environmental issues using Shibori tie-dye

3. **Theory-** Attends talk by professor on environmental sustainability

5. "**Life-defining moment"** Built own home but started feeling guilty about size/environmental impact

7. 2007 **Made an art work** *Retail therapy* embodying ideas from *Affluenza* and other consumerist notions

9. **Research** Began **M.Ed**. (Vis Arts) mid 2008 –

10. **Teaching** team-taught art ed students with Julia Wren in arts education program.
Found it too busy and took a break.

12.**Theory** & resources identified after attended REmida workshop at ECU (www.REmidawa.com)

14. **Research** Proposal had to be written for M.Ed. Vis. Arts – wanted to use REmida, show how it had transformed her practice and thinking; wanted to test out impact for her kids and her teaching

16. **Theory** – Found book in ECU library *Teaching meaning in* a*rt-making (Walker, 2001)* that was so useful she bought a copy

2. **Reflection on process**: artist friend identified paradox of using non-environmental materials in the process but commenting on environmental issues.

4. BA 3rd year - **made an art work** *Footprint* using magazines and safety pins about past house blueprints

6. Read **theory**: Clive Hamilton's (2006) *Affluenza* – impacted on own feelings about building huge house

8. **"Life defining moment"** – beginning of 2008 offered and accepted primary school art teacher job for six months

11. **Teaching needs** – budget cut to virtually zero – went to REmida for resources to support primary school art teaching

13. **Materials** Volunteered at REmida – helping them to move premises made her realise about the potential of the materials

15. **Teaching**: formulated REmida style principles and taught unit on Humanities Impact on the Environment using Andy Goldsworthy (2001) ideas/**theory** about art-making

17. **Teaching** – after reading Walker rethought her process and response in her primary school art teaching and went back to the class with this new thinking

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		18. **Research proposal** applied – taught a 10 week project to primary aged students incl. visit to art gallery, REmida, then art-making and art-exhibition. Used Creative problem solving model **theory** by Jane Bates (2000) *Becoming an Art teacher*
19. SERENDIPITY – **teaching** A sustainability day was programmed for the primary school		
		20. **Teaching**- was disappointed with outcome; artworks were more like social studies projects
21. **Teaching** – changed the way she taught art-focus on the kids rather than her own imposed concepts		22. **Teaching** – another teachers' knee jerk reaction – destroyed kids' spontaneous artworks in situ in school playground
23. **Teaching** – gave up teaching as school's operation clashed with her own philosophy		24. **Reflection on process** – artist friend suggested shopping bags made from flywire in *Green is the new black* artwork not highly original –said idea had been done to death
25. Returned to M. Ed. Vis, Arts **research.** Bit the bullet and focused on own art processes.

26. **Reflection on process** – critical friend gave her permission to revisit old work, building on 2007 *Retail Therapy* | | 27. **Made an artwork** *The Empty Promise* – literally boxes of nothing using discarded cellophane and hangers from REmida |
| 28. **Materials** – boxes were different. Flimsy cellophane boxes didn't have same materiality. Had 20 hangers = 20 bags. | | 29. **Research** - Currently put own artwork in for ECU Visualising Research display

30. **Reflection on process** – has questions about how to show the work; thinking about light and shadow and relating it to Reggio Emilia concepts; has questions about context |

Critical moments

Girak's first CRJ illustrated her developing awareness of moments of change as significant to her art-making and PhD process, and also showed she was yet to adopt the term 'critical moment' in her own research. In this initial CRJ in June 2011, Girak used terms like "a turning point" and "a life-defining moment" to indicate instances when her understanding developed as a result of a sudden insight. By the CRJ focus group interviews in December, 2011, Girak was actively using the term "critical moments" in place of these other terms. By the time she submitted her exegesis in 2015, Girak had incorporated the construction of critical moments into an adaptation of the action research spiral as illustrated previously in Figure 16. Also charted are the complex connections Girak made between her own personal ideology of environmentalism and its corresponding theory, and the materiality within her art-making practice.

One of these first complex connections was her explanation of a critical moment, "the turning point" when she realised the materials she used in her art practice conflicted with her ideology of minimal impact on the environment. What is important to note in this critical moment is that it was a complex reflection on practice which included reflection on her artworks, on the ideology informing the artworks, on the materials she was using, along with a reflection on the power of a critical conversation to create change. Later reflections illustrated how Girak sourced theory to test, refine and develop her ideological stance.

> *What led me to doing the degree was my BA, and I suppose the turning point was when I was looking at environmental issues and I did a few pieces of work and they were commentary on global warming and one piece of work was called 'Five Degrees' which was a Shibori piece. I called that Five Degrees because I used the browns and it was a common saying that if we don't look after our environment then this is what could happen, this desolate desert, five degrees above the average temperature. So I'm carrying on like a pork chop and thinking, you know, feeling really proud of myself until after one of my friends said, "Well, yeah, but you're telling us all this but you're using acid dyes and your technique is actually destroying the environment so it's not congruent with what you're saying".* (SG, personal interview 1, 23 June 2011)

This 'turning point' embodied several key features of Girak's practice as an artist–researcher which were eventually voiced in her PhD thesis: critical moments, critical conversations and material thinking. Regarding the latter, Girak identified in her thesis the important role of dialogue not just with other people but with materials: "In material thinking, reflection and reflexivity occur during and on account of engaging in a dialogue with materials" (Girak, 2015, p.197). Dialogue with materials and with other people are inextricably linked in this particular critical moment. The potential of a critical moment to impact upon an artist–researcher's knowledge building was highlighted in how Girak went through stages of "thinking" as a result of this turning point:

> It made me start to think about the material, and then it started making me think about what materials do I use that won't hurt the environment, and then I started to think about, I'm only talking about everyone and other and other, other, other and not me. So I'm commenting on everyone else's contribution but I'm not looking at myself, so in one way I'm being quite self-righteous about what I'm saying. (SG, personal interview 1, 23 June 2011)

The questioning that Girak was engaged in was very much in keeping with her choice of the methodology a/r/tography, which is described as embodied living inquiry, and in which questioning is central: "For a/r/tographers this means theorizing through inquiry, a process that involves an evolution of questions. This active stance to knowledge creation informs a/r/tographers' practices making their inquiries emergent, generative, reflexive and responsive" (Irwin et al., 2008, p.206).

The simplicity of Girak's explanation of her thinking belied the complexity of Girak's research stance as a/r/tographer and practice-led researcher. It showed her being artist and practice-led researcher simultaneously, engaged in deepening reflection. It also showed she was a participant within her own research. This put an added onus on Girak to be observant of her choices not just in art but in social contexts also. Girak's self-reflective practice brought to mind participant observation within ethnographic research, which McIntyre argues is: "a close approximation of the description of the activity a reflective practitioner undertakes in accumulating usable knowledge in their own production of culture" (2006, p.5). He draws on the seminal ethnographic methodologist Spradley who urges that the researcher should: "watch her own actions, the behaviour of others and everything she

could see in this social situation" (1980, p.54). Spradley identifies that moments of sudden awareness, which in the CRJ strategy are deemed critical moments, force the researcher to stop and critique their own practice: "On some occasions you may suddenly realise you have been acting as a full participant, without observing as an outsider" (1980, p.57).

Girak expressed several other critical moment in this first CRJ which demonstrated sudden realisations that had impacted on her practice. One of these was similar to the previous critical moment, as it reflected on her personal life choices. At this stage of her engagement in the study, she used her own language rather than the term "critical moment":

> *A life defining moment is when you move into a new home . . . you start to wonder whether you've done the right thing, maybe we should have not upsized but downsized. So I was just thinking that I had a "footprint" but this was still my behaviour, I'm still getting sucked into that dream, still wanting to buy a lifestyle more than anything.* (SG, personal interview 1, 23 June 2011)

Again, this moment was more complex that it may initially read. This was because this realisation was facilitated by Girak's exposure to theory by way of attending a talk about environmentalism which introduced her to Hamilton and Denniss's (2005) book *Affluenza*. The term footprint (which she herself put in inverted commas in the CRJ) was also introduced to her during this talk:

> *After I'd listened to the environmental speech about footprints, the man must have talked about Clive Hamilton or somehow I heard about Clive Hamilton so I wanted to read 'Affluenza'. So I read 'Affluenza' and it started talking about that need to consume and that sickness that we have to buy and consume*. (SG, personal interview 1, 23 June 2011)

The sudden realisation about her house's impact on the environment coincided with Girak being exposed to theory, which then led to a direct impact on her art practice. This impact, described in this first CRJ, illustrated an instance of Girak's developing reflexivity. The willingness to critique her own personal values provided Girak with a way to synthesise her personal life practice with her art practice and her teaching practice. Girak exhibited a high level of self-awareness of the power of these moments of change :"*And then another defining moment . . . was a couple of ladies who worked at REmida in Italy came and presented a few workshops and explained their philosophy a bit more to the people*" (SG,

personal interview 1, 23 June 2011). Using the term 'defining moment', Girak was also able to identify how theory impacted on her changing understanding of sustainability principles and practice. Furthermore, in this first CRJ, Girak identified a key text, in addition to *Affluenza,* that contributed to her theoretical knowledge and which played a role in pushing Girak toward critical reflection. Girak adopted "*the creative problem-solving model . . . [by] Bates [2000]*" but was challenged to be more reflective about her teaching approach by Bates' critique of art-teaching:

> *I picked out this book and it said, "Art making with meaning", and I opened it and it was like a teaching book, I had a few hours to kill and, oh my God! [Laughs]. There was the Andy Goldsworthy lesson that I had planned . . . It was a student teacher who had planned my lesson and they critiqued the lesson and pulled it to shreds. [Laughs].* (SG, personal interview 1, 23 June 2011)

Critical conversations

Girak's first CRJ indicated the beginning of Girak's formalisation of using conversations with critical friends as part of her individual reflective practice process. By the second CRJ, which Girak adapted to suit her own style, she had documented critical conversations as a key facilitator of critical moments in her practice. In the third phase of the CRJ project, in a focus group of all artist–researchers in the project, Girak identified how the CRJ conversations taught her that dialogue, not writing, was one of her key knowledge construction techniques:

> *Well, I found that I was more of a talker, and I think people just assume [that] because of your craft that's how you process, or reflect, and because you're an artist you have to do visual diaries with lots of sketches, and I hate drawing. I don't mind drawing, but I hate drawing as like memory joggers, and I'm not a writer. And the fact that I was talking to Kylie, and she's fresh to the project, I really had to reflect, because I know what I did in my mind, so if I write it down in a visual diary . . . it's fake. I'm doing it to please someone else, whereas when I talk to someone, it's an interaction and it's a conversation, and some of those critical moments happened when someone asked a question, or someone made a remark, and that's where I got my critical moments*. (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

At another point in the CRJ focus group, Girak employed both the term 'critical friends' and the term 'critical moments' to explain how conversations brought about for her new knowledge and understandings which then impacted on her art practice.

These were not everyday conversations, but deliberate conversations centred on her art practice and thus there was a reiterative process of practice–reflection–practice: "*Some of the questions that Kylie asked, some of the questions that my critical friends asked, made me identify those critical moments, so I've become really aware of critical moments, and how they've shaped my practice*" (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011). Critical conversations were both structured activities, such as the CRJ conversations and her conversations with critical friend Kate, and incidental interactions. Key changes in practice came about because of incidental conversations in Girak's everyday life, such as this example of an exchange with a teacher from her children's high school:

> *[I was] just sitting down picking up my kids at high school, and the art teacher that I know was sitting down waiting for a lift home. "How're you going?", we're having a conversation, and I said, "Look, I've got these materials and I just don't know what to do, blah, blah, blah". He goes, "Why don't you try melting them?", and honestly I got the heat gun and then I started making these corsets and these bags that envelop these torsos. So just little words, and I wonder because I'm open to that research thing. I don't know really if I was an artist/artist whether I would do that or not*. (SG, personal interview 1, 23 June 2011)

Girak had used the phrase "artist/artist" several time in this first CRJ to distinguish between herself, an artist/researcher/teacher, and someone wholly committed to being an artist above all other professional commitments. Girak questioned here whether her willingness to adopt suggestions from others, such as the heat gun, disqualified her from being a true artist. This brings to mind Bloom's (1973) *Anxiety of Influence* in which he suggests poets are hindered by an ambiguous relationship to pre-existing poetic works in the originality of their creative process. However, in this instance, Girak is living out her own approach to teaching her primary school students: social constructionism. The following quote from Girak's doctoral exegesis demonstrates her stance to teaching, but also sheds light on how she responds to her own knowledge construction in her practice-led research.

> Undeniably, social constructivists have a valid argument for the place social interaction has in cognitive development and knowledge building, since learning does not come about in isolation . . . Undoubtedly, social interaction with peers and teachers allows students to reflect, refine and articulate their cultural understandings, and is an important component of process-based learning (von Glasersfeld, cited in Lombardi, 2005). However, this research is not limited to social constructivist pedagogy; it is concerned with personal shifts resulting from the

artmaking process in students and myself. Radical constructivism provides the link between the personal shifts that arise in the classroom and the art studio as artists construct knowledge and meaning through APLR [art practice-led research]. (Girak, 2015, p.61)

As she articulated in her first CRJ, Girak experienced a building of confidence, an internalisation of her personal rules of practice, through critical conversations.

> *I always thought at uni, because art was part of my research, that I had to come up with a brand new idea every time. And I never ever thought that you could go back into an idea, because I always thought, "oh well, you're just repeating yourself, and so obviously you're handing in old work from another [assessment task]", you know, like that . . . To me, I just thought, "that's not right, you're not allowed to do that". And so I was talking to a really good friend of mine who's an artist, and I said, "What if I went back to Retail Therapy? Is that alright or is that cheating?" She said, "Don't be ridiculous, it's not cheating. You're actually extending yourself".* (SG, personal interview 1, 23 June 2011)

The first CRJ documented examples of Girak making meaning through talking with others, but that experience of the CRJ documentation also constituted what she eventually termed a 'critical conversation'. How Girak was engaged in knowledge-making through various dialogic transactions was made visible in the CRJ. Girak was adaptive with this strategy of knowledge-making moving forward from the CRJ project, formalising critical conversations by way of her dialogues with critical friend 'Kate'. Ultimately, in her PhD exegesis, Girak acknowledged the importance of critical friend conversations and how these formed a key element of her research process.

An interpretive turn and Girak's reflexivity

Critical conversations impacted on Girak, and developed her understanding and skills as an artist. They also provided her with a journey towards reflexivity and practice-led research. Sullivan (2010) argues that reflexivity for the artist "acknowledges the positive impact of experience as a necessary agency to help frame responses and to fashion actions" (p.52). Girak exhibited a research process akin to Sullivan's model of interpretivist art practice as research whereby "the central role is experience as it is lived, felt, reconstructed, reinterpreted, and understood. Consequently, meanings are made rather than found as human knowing is transacted, mediated, and constructed in social contexts" (2010, p.101).

Girak's interpretive approach to research was again evident as she drew on the advice of others, such as the ArtsEdge workshop presenter, to clarify and develop her understanding of REmida.

> *Going to REmida . . . when I first went there a couple of times for XXX school, it didn't show me too much, but then I went to a workshop here at ECU and it was an ArtsEdge conference [www.artsedge.dca.wa.gov.au] and there was a woman who was really, really passionate about REmida. We went to a workshop that was working [with] art and food, it had nothing to do with REmida, but she was so passionate about REmida she was like, "Come along and have a look".* (SG, personal interview 1, 1 23 June 2011)

Recorded in the first CRJ, Girak identified how professional development for her teaching role introduced her to REmida and prompted her to use recycled material for her art teaching. Unlike a sudden moment of illumination, Girak's understanding of the value of REmida grew over time, as a result again of a conversation, this time an incidental one at a conference. Girak, at this point, demonstrated an 'interpretive turn' though, in the first CRJ, was yet to use the language of that research paradigm. It is later, in her submitted exegesis, that Girak identified with interpretive research as a methodological foundation, arguing that her "interpretive paradigm is 'a way of seeing both reality and knowledge as constructed and reproduced through communication, interaction, and practice' " (Tracy, 2013, p.62, as cited in Girak, 2015, p.56).

Girak was also able to contribute to REmida by developing the Perth-based organisation's operational mission and principles after travelling to Italy, the original home of the Reggio Emilia educational approach and REmida's 'head office'. (Reggio Emilia is acknowledged in the RE in the REmida name. See "About REmida", REmida, n.d.). This led to Girak developing through her research both her own and the organisation's understanding about sustainable art practice:

> *It's really helped them become more grounded because like all of us, we knew what it [sustainable practice] was but we really didn't know what it was. And me going to Italy and doing research and formulating the set of principles and when I was in Italy, interviewed people and went to meetings and presentations, and really defining [REmida concepts of materials], coming back and saying, "This is what they want to have as REmida materials, this is what REmida materials are".* (SG, personal interview 1, 23 June 2011)

The CRJ contributed to Girak's evolving understanding of her practice, and her methodology's relationship to that practice. She was able to see that she had developed an idiosyncratic approach to practice and began to articulate that through the research methodology a/r/tography:

> I think during this process, reflecting on my practice, looking at a/r/tography as a methodology, it legitimises my process of going on tangents and almost being manic sometimes and then just a super sloth other times because I'm thinking about things, and that legitimises that process. I'm now starting to think, well, you know, I do have a process, and it's giving me permission to play with these artworks whereas I always thought you have to do the hard yards of the actual written work. But it's taken me a long time to work out that this is another way of communicating. (SG, personal interview 2, 11 Nov 2011)

This understanding of practice was eventually clarified in Girak's doctoral exegesis when she, like the instigators of a/r/tography, adopted the seminal work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to identify a/r/tography as a methodology involving "rhizomatic relations of living inquiry" (Irwin et al., 2008, p.205), by which they mean research that "responds to the evocative nature of situations found in data, and that provides a reflective and reflexive stance to situational inquiries" (p.205). In her exegesis, Girak argues that:

> A metaphor used by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) is a powerful example of my working method and my life, where 'rhizomatic' research occurs in the 'real' world, continually building on knowledge by making connections and spreading in a multitude of directions. Coming from the lived experience, typically it is complex, interconnected, spreading and non-linear, with no beginning or end. (2015, p.157)

In the CRJs, Girak made complex interconnections between her teaching, her interest in sustainability, her volunteer role at REmida, her art practice, and her methods such as critical conversations. By following one of these rhizomatic tangents of inquiry, Girak was even led to be a participant in the CRJ in the first place, as a result of a 'tip' from another postgraduate that Girak and I were using the same methodology of a/r/tography. All of these growing interconnections engendered in Girak greater confidence in adopting her individual approach to reflective art practice, demonstrated in her adaption of the CRJ in the study's second phase.

Girak's second CRJ

Girak completely discarded the metaphor of the river for her second CRJ chart, instead providing over ten pages of text (4600 words) in list form, which she referred to as a 'timeline': "*My charting was more like numbers, but the actual river is an extra visual that I don't need, and I can't see it going from a, like, an hourglass shape, . . . I think it goes both ways. I think it starts small and then goes, like a snake, really, and just doesn't work like that for me. So for me it's like a timeline*" (SG, personal interview 2, 11 Nov 2011).

[Due to the length of the second CRJ, I have included a 'verbatim' extract of approximately two pages below, including the guided questions instruction page. The complete ten pages of Girak's second CRJ are available in Appendix G of this thesis.]

VERBATIM EXTRACT: CRJ SUE GIRAK PHASE TWO—4 NOV 2011 (INTERVIEW 7 NOV 2011)

<div style="border:1px solid">

PHASE TWO: REFLECTING ON YOUR CHOSEN ARTWORK, PERFORMANCE OR ASPECT OF PRACTICE
Describe briefly the topic that you have chosen to reflect on for this river journey task.
I have chosen to reflect on two things:
1.   how materials influence how I make an artwork;
2.   and what I am trying to communicate to the viewer with that particular artwork.
The material I am discussing is a set of torsos found at the REmida Creative Recycling Centre and how I have decided to use them to comment on my topic 'humanity's impact on the environment.'

Was there a reason you chose this particular topic to reflect on?
I have chosen to reflect on this topic because I am experiencing difficulty committing to a particular idea. With so many possibilities in mind I have been able to bring myself to actually making a piece.

What dates did you complete it?
I still haven't completed the work but I have decided how I am going to use the torsos in my artwork. I am now at the stage of making prototypes.

Was there an intended audience for this? (If there is a different long-term audience, e.g., the audience for a work-in-progress is peers, whereas the final performance is for the public, please indicate).
The intended audiences for the finished piece are primarily my examiners and after the examination process the artwork will be displayed along with others as a part of a solo exhibition, open to the public.

</div>

Did you have any set purpose in mind in carrying out or completing this aspect?
The purpose of completing this aspect of the artwork is to be able to have a strong message behind the artwork that relates to my research and theory.
Critical moments
I have decided to include a mix of diary entries and reflections. Most of my critical moments occur during my conversations with others and some of those conversations have been digitally recorded, so you have a transcript of those recordings.

1. FINDING THE FIRST MANNEQUIN
(Dairy entry)
There is a torso (mannequin) at REmida. A volunteer at REmida was going to take it home and put it in his garden but then he thought the better of it and decided to leave it. So I took the opportunity and have taken it home. I have a couple of ideas; cover it with gold leaf (as if it had been touched by King Midas) and hang a necklace over it or paint it with a beautiful pattern, possibly floral or eucalyptus leaves.

(Conversation)
I think the common thread has to be the statement from my students that relates it back to my research project. A group of students produced a piece of artwork. The meaning behind their work was, as people we destroy the environment and then try to improve on the environment by trying to fix up our mistakes but it's just never the same.

So it's almost like – how do you make a body more perfect? What do you do? I mean the torso is not a real body and I'm trying to make it beautiful. But it's just a torso. How do I try to improve on that and try to improve on nature, I don't know – Without it looking tacky, I don't want things to look kitsch and tacky and this is the thing with the material, you can make things look like junk stuck together. I don't want it to look like junk stuck together I want it to be absolutely beautiful objects.

It's getting that thread and that idea and going through the process and making it look beautiful – the thread that runs through everything I do is potential. The potential of the materials, of the people, of the ideas, of creativity – it's always about potential. The potential of creativity from the materials comes from me because I give it the potential because you might throw it in the bin but I might see potential in their so it comes from me. It comes from me because I must recognise the inner beauty of it. I recognise the inner beauty by first of all I give it value and respect and even though it is an inanimate object I respect that object because it doesn't deserve to be chucked away if it's got some us, and I give it value because it could go into landfill but rather than it go into landfill I'm giving it a new life. So one of the volunteers was going to take it [torso] and just stick it in his garden and he said oh no that looks a bit kitsch so as soon as he said he was going to take it I thought oh bugger I wish I could have got it and then he goes 'no, no, no' and I said 'do you want it? Because I'll take it if you don't want it.'

But I don't want to start hoarding everything to save everything. I want to look it and its beauty and the thing I like about this one [torso] compared to others is that it actually has a pose like you would for a sculpture. It's got a pose that I would like to draw. So I could put it on a pedestal and I could just leave it there on the pedestal and have a set of charcoal drawings of the torso in different in lights and different positions using the light and things like that. I could do that because I don't have to make something from it.

2. AN UNDERGRADUATE IDEA
My friend said the idea of putting gold leaf on a torso was too simple and I needed to think about the idea a bit more. She suggested I painted the sea just like Julie Silvester's images but I wouldn't because the sea doesn't resonate with me in the same way as it does with Julie. I need to find out what resonates with me. When I do then my work has more substance. I'll have to think a lot more that try to work on my initial ideas. I know I am looking at aesthetics but there needs to be more to it.

With the mannequin idea – my friend challenged me and I think that's what I appreciate from her. She challenged me and said that torso was just a very basic idea. It's been done before a lot of times she said. She said you've got to push it further and you've go to extend it and I don't know how to do these things and I don't know what strategies to take and I don't know whether it's just the process of having to just get out and draw it and look at it and research it or maybe I want something in my head straight away without actually working for it and I know when I work for something it'll happen but I want something almost instantaneous.

I was overwhelmed by her criticism because I thought I had an idea and that was one piece ticked off the box and I thought Oh NO, it really is babyish. I knew it myself a bit. When I've been challenged by my friends and I take their advice my work is better. I'm in conflict with myself because I do like a challenge but I don't like a challenge because I know it means some work and I suppose I'm a bit afraid to start. So I go to REmida and I collect materials and I and I bring them home and I've got stuff and I'm thinking Oh God, why aren't I making things? Why is it that hard? Maybe it's because I don't have a theme in mind or an idea mind or I don't know. I want things to look beautiful but if you have an exhibition it all has to tie in together so I need that common thread.

Girak applied the concept of critical moments as the organising principle in this second CRJ, documenting nine critical moments in the development of her artwork involving torsos sourced from REmida, focusing on materials and meaning-making. Though Girak discarded the river chart form for her second CRJ, using a kind of learning journal approach instead (Boud, 2001), the CRJ process offered significant benefit to her evolving reflective practice strategies and the resulting knowledge-making process:

When I had my final critical moment at the very end [of the 2ⁿᵈ CRJ], I tried to write it in a diary and it sounded awful, and then when I just emailed you a little bit, I could articulate it better. So for me to write, I don't think I could do this critical river journey if it was just with me. I have to talk to someone. (SG, personal interview 2, 11 Nov 2011)

The final moment Girak referred to in this above quote are the closing lines of her second CRJ, in which the very act of writing the CRJ brought about a critical moment, one she highlighted as significant by presenting it in red text:

The feedback from my supervisor and Lyndall was mixed. . . . I[t] made me think and I have decided to make the female form using the torso as a mold and then lose it. I want floating torsos that interact with the light to cast shadows on the ground below. I want to say that we should cast a shadow on the earth but not leave a footprint. By the way this last paragraph is another critical moment that I just had while I was writing this very second. I now feel ready to start making. [Appears in red type in Girak's CRJ] (SG, 2ⁿᵈ CRJ chart/document, 7 Nov 2011, p.10)

Girak drew on a number of sources informing her critical moments in the second CRJ, fulfilling the aim of the CRJ project to encourage participants to adapt phase two to suit their own established or emerging reflective practice strategies. Girak also highlighted the pedagogical benefits of the CRJ strategy for HDR artist–researchers:

I also lifted my verbal diary so they're just verbatim quotes. So that's why [the CRJ timeline] it's fine but I don't think I could have done it on my own in isolation as thoroughly if I was not talking to you . . . what I found is that the first interview was absolutely fantastic and it made me think, whereas if I'm thinking to myself, I'd probably take short cuts or I don't necessarily remember things that I might find important later on. (SG, personal interview 2, 11 Nov 2011)

Girak also identified the deepening complexity of her reflective process, something she laughingly worried was, up until then, "*a bit Dr Phil-ish*" (SG, personal interview, 11 Nov 2011):

When we were talking I think I was more thorough in what I was saying and, when you ask questions, I try to clarify what you were asking and, by me clarifying what you were asking—obviously I wasn't communicating my ideas as clearly as I thought—then I had to reiterate and think more carefully, more clearly, so I could articulate my ideas more clearly . . . I like that conversation where someone will ask me and then I'll clarify because when I clarify things, sometimes, more critical moments happen. (SG, personal interview 2, 11 Nov 2011)

Girak's "Dr. Phil" suggestion is closer to the outcome of reflection than she imagined. Though Bolton (2005) suggests that some reflection can run the risk of becoming "confessional" (p.5), Moon (2006) proposes there is an element of "emotional insight" in regards to any reflective practice (p.29). However, emotional elements notwithstanding, the increasing depth and complexity of Girak's reflections on critical moments in this second CRJ are in keeping with Moon's (1999) argument that the purposes of reflective practice include: "To deepen the quality of learning, in the form of critical thinking or developing a questioning attitude, . . . to enable learners to understand their own learning process, . . . and to increase active involvement in learning and personal ownership of learning" (pp.188–194).

This deepening of Girak's HDR artist–researcher knowledge, she stated, was the result of the more formal structure of the CRJ and having me as interlocutor:

> *It's through talking I can understand things, I can process things. If I'm not clear then people will ask me things, will ask me to clarify what I'm trying to say, because it's all in my head. I know it. I don't need the River Journey as such, it's only for the piece of paper—the exegesis—that I have to write it. But, some of the questions that Kylie asked, some of the questions that my critical friends asked, made me identify those critical moments, so I've become really aware of critical moments, and how they've shaped my practice.* (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Moon offers a number of different levels in her model of reflection, drawing on Hatton and Smith's (1995) much cited work in this field. It is the two 'deepest' levels of reflection that correspond with Girak's reflections in the second CRJ: 'dialogic reflection' where reflection is "a stepping back from events and actions leading to a different level of mulling about discourse with self and exploring the discourse of events and actions . . . The reflection is analytical or integrative" and 'critical reflection' whereby actions and events are acknowledged as having multiple contexts and perspectives (Moon, 2006, pp.40–41). This second CRJ, which Girak adapted into her own idiosyncratic method of reflection, demonstrated both dialogic and critical reflection. Girak's eventual integration of these into an "A/r/tographic Action Research [Spiral]" (Figure 16) illustrated her growing reflexivity as an artist–researcher–teacher.

The 'Creative River Journey' and mentorship
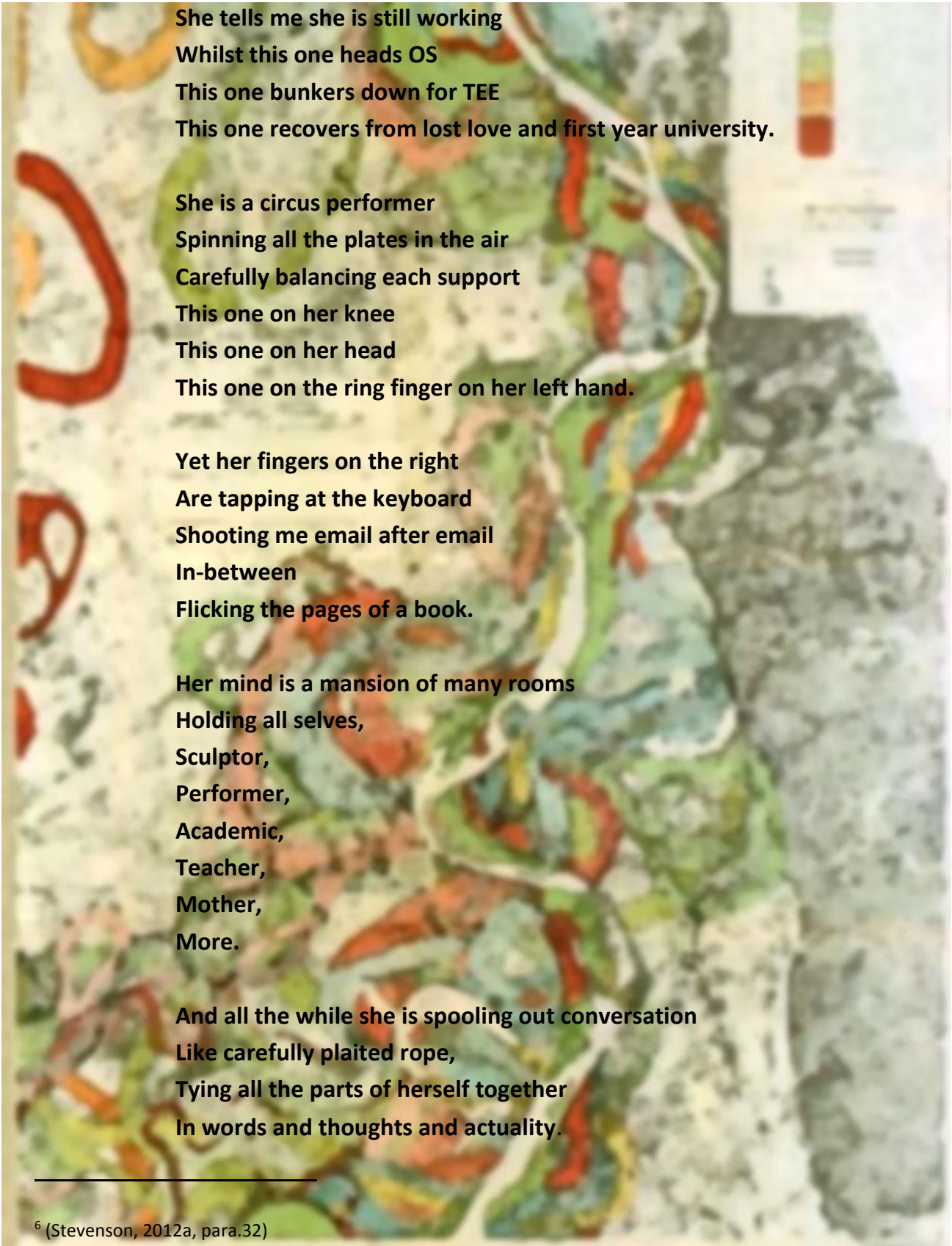
Girak was motivated to become a participant in the 'Creative River Journey' project because of our shared use of a/r/tography as a methodology and this led to a shared generation of understanding of a/r/tography between participant and researcher. I shared my research library with Girak. Later, after interviews ended, and to support Girak in her upgrade from master's to doctoral level studies, I shared the theoretical foundations of this research project by way of emailing her my research proposal, and my previous research related to the project. Girak enthusiastically sent me a/r/tography journal articles I had yet to read, and a link to an a/r/tography website. The year after our interviews were completed, we co-authored a conference paper (Stevenson & Girak, 2012). The reciprocal mentorship and Girak's move from participant to independent adopter, then devisor, of her own method reflected a commitment that we both had to the a/r/tographic research principles as expressed by Irwin:

> A/r/tographers recognize that no researcher, or artist or educator exists on their own, nor do they only exist within a community for, in fact, both occur. We are singular plural beings that are part of the whole of being singular plural. This is significant of a/r/tographers as they understand the need to be engaged in their own personal pursuits while they also recognize their pursuits are contiguously positioned alongside the pursuits of others, and together are becoming whole constellations of pursuits. (2008, p.73)

The way that this unexpected mentorship evolved between us was exhilarating and challenging: exhilarating because it fulfilled many of the aims of the project. I sought to enhance the reflective practice of practice-led postgraduate artist–researchers, to add to emerging practice-led research methodologies for individual artist–researchers, to inquire into the usefulness of the CRJ strategy to initiate and reveal reflective practice, and to engage with the knowledge making process in practice-led research. However, it was also challenging because Girak's whole-hearted engagement with the project meant she took aspects of the research that I had originally perceived as my 'own', developed them according to her needs and integrated them within her research. Her adaptation of the 'critical moments' terminology between the first phase CRJ and the second are examples of the way in which she embraced and repurposed her engagement with the 'Creative River

Journey' study. I have deliberately set out to overcome the challenge I experienced by identifying myself as an a/r/tographic mentor, and by understanding how both Girak and my research make significant contributions to our community of practice: practice-led research at ECU.

POETIC INTERLUDE 8—ACTUALITY[6]

She tells me she is still working
Whilst this one heads OS
This one bunkers down for TEE
This one recovers from lost love and first year university.

She is a circus performer
Spinning all the plates in the air
Carefully balancing each support
This one on her knee
This one on her head
This one on the ring finger on her left hand.

Yet her fingers on the right
Are tapping at the keyboard
Shooting me email after email
In-between
Flicking the pages of a book.

Her mind is a mansion of many rooms
Holding all selves,
Sculptor,
Performer,
Academic,
Teacher,
Mother,
More.

And all the while she is spooling out conversation
Like carefully plaited rope,
Tying all the parts of herself together
In words and thoughts and actuality.

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[6] (Stevenson, 2012a, para.32)

RASHIDA MURPHY—NARRATIVE OF PRACTICE

Rashida Murphy submitted her PhD project in Creative Writing in April 2015. As with many doctoral artist–researchers, Rashida's doctorate reflected a synthesis of several of her passions and life experiences. For Murphy, this meant drawing together her talents and desires as a creative writer, her commitment to supporting migrant women, her experiences as a teacher of English to migrants of many cultural backgrounds, her deep understanding of Indian and Iranian literature, and her use of the autobiographical details of her own migrant journey and her childhood growing up in India.

Murphy was born in Jabalpur in the state of Madhya Pradesh and lived there until she was 24 years old. She migrated to Australia in 1985 alongside her first husband and infant daughter. In the critical essay component of her thesis, Murphy explained a little of her family background in India:

> I was raised in a liberal Muslim household in India where faith was secondary to education and employment. Girls did not veil themselves in my family, nor did men have multiple wives. Islam did not operate as an inflexible ideology with absolute truths that could not be questioned. In my childhood home, religion was required to fit around the daily business of life. I was sent to a Catholic school, run by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. . . . Our neighbours were Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian, as were the girls with whom I went to school. (Murphy, 2015, p.153)

Murphy revealed in her first CRJ that she began her research at ECU in 1999. At this time, Murphy completed a Master of Arts by Research in Creative Writing, completing 35,000 words of autobiographical writing, supervised by the academic who would become her first PhD supervisor. Following graduation, Murphy continued her association with ECU through involvement with the Peter Cowan Writers' Centre, situated on the Joondalup campus of ECU (though funded and managed independently of ECU). It was there that Murphy again encountered her supervisor in 2009, who invited her to apply for a PhD. In this first CRJ, Murphy revealed how, at the same time, her husband had "*nagged at me virtually every day [for two years] until I ran out of excuses*" (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011) in relation to doing a PhD in fiction writing. In 2011, Murphy was able to cut back her full-time work as a TAFE teacher to one day a week, and her PhD journey commenced.

Murphy's PhD project

In the 'Creative River Journey' focus group interview in December 2011, Murphy was in the first year of her PhD and described her research project thus:

> *I'm doing a PhD in creative writing. My project is called 'The Historian's Daughter: Of Monsters and Memory', and it does deal with monsters and memory. It's about fractured families; it's going to be in fiction. It is based on my collected experiences as a migrant woman, so I'm going to be looking mostly at migrant and refugee women, and how they cope when their families fracture in a new country miles away from their support systems, their language, their culture, their religion, and so on.* (RM, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

At the time of the focus group, Murphy described having completed chapter one and two of her novel (approximately 9000 words). In her second CRJ interview conducted just a month prior to the focus group, she had stated "*[I] don't know what shape it will take yet though*" (RM, personal interview 2, 3 Nov 2011). Despite stating she was unsure of the "shape" of the project, Murphy's PhD submission in 2015 remained consistent with the vision she stated in the focus group. Her final PhD submission, which she described as a "thesis compris[ing] two parts, a novel and an essay" (Murphy, 2015, p.ii), consisted of a creative component, the novel titled *The Historian's Daughter,* and a 20,000 word critical essay *Monsters and Memory.* Murphy stated that the critical essay, which was autoethnographic and exegetical in style, "explores the role of memory in ideas about home and identity" (Murphy, 2015, p.139).

Murphy's first CRJ

Murphy's engagement with the 'Creative River Journey' project took place on three occasions over the first year of her PhD: individual interviews in July and November 2011, then a focus group interview in December 2011. In the first interview, conducted four months into the first year to her PhD, Murphy explored the decisions leading to her choice to begin her doctoral research and her experiences in this early part of the PhD program. In her second CRJ interview, Murphy deliberately narrowed the focus of the CRJ strategy to reflect on the writing of the second chapter of her novel, with which she had been engaged for over five months since the first interview.

In the first CRJ, Murphy used the process to reflect on the steps that had led her to commence the PhD. This was not uncommon amongst the project's participants, with several participants' first CRJ interviews commencing with, or being dominated by, a reflection on beginning their HDR candidature. Murphy's autobiographical reflections may be indicative of the female creative HDR experience, that Wisker and Robinson explain often includes "the interrelationships between their sense of identity and the PhD" (2015, p.49). Though Murphy was only beginning to use terms such as methodology and theory, she made clear comments about how notions of research, her writing practice, and theory interconnected at this point of commencement. She went on to reflect that various encounters with academic theory and methodology in that first year of her PhD "*opened the possibility of what she could do*" in the future (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011). (Scans of Murphy's first and second CRJ charts can be found in Appendix H of this thesis.)

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)

Name………………**RM**……………………Date……………**01-07-11**………………………

Artwork/Performance/Text………**The Historian's Daughter**……………………………………

1. RESEARCH MA Creative writing 1999 – 35,000 words autobiographical writing, supervised by Susan Ash	2. WRITING PRACTICE- idea of writing longer piece 75,000 but just writing bits on holiday
5. PERSONAL REFLECTION – husband Mike nagging for 2 years to do PhD and novel writing	3. PROFESSIONAL NETWORK 2010 Peter Cowan Writers Centre asked RM to get group for launch of short story prize.
6. RESEARCH 2010 Susan Ash invites RM to apply for PhD, offered opportunity of scholarship (built on previous conversation in 2009)	4. PERSONAL REFLECTION- realised how much she missed this (writing life)
8. RESEARCH for PhD proposal RM needed to know what she was doing. Recalled reading Nafisi's *Reading Lolita in Tehran*.	7. PROFESSION – manager of TAFE teaching job allowed her to go from full-time to 1 day a week
9. WRITING PRACTICE – wrote first chapt (4000 word) for PhD proposal	11. WRITING PRACTICE – first sentence "This is not the story my father wanted me to tell"- wondered what do I write next?
10. RESEARCH – entered PhD March 2011	12. THEORY – started trying to think through theory – transnational fiction; "the unspeakable"
13. WRITING PRACTICE – characterisation – choice of characters' names - Magician (mother), Historian (father)	14. THEORY – read Azar Nafizi (2003) *Reading Lolita in Tehran,* about setting up book club in Iran. Had earlier read all she can about Iran for a year.
16. WRITING PRACTICE – first half of 2011 redrafting 4000 words	15. RESEARCH/SUPERVISOR - Susan Ash said we've moved on from post-coloniality to trans-nationality
18. RESEARCH – postgrad seminar about methodology. Met me (Kylie) prior to joining project. Kylie mentioned autoethnography as a possible methodology. Very interested.	17. THEORY – Still influenced by Edward Saïd's (1978) *Orientalism* (1993) *Culture and Imperialism*; opened the possibility of what she could do
20. RESEARCH – writing proposal and theoretically very affirming – theory reflected for RM key aspects of herself	19. RESEARCH – more reading for PhD

PhD process

The initial part of Murphy's first CRJ was dominated by her reflection on what led her to commence the PhD. In this way, Murphy shows she is making sense of her personal choices, how her own sense of self led to the commencement of the PhD, highlighting what Griffiths (2011, p.167) calls "the significance of self" within the processes of research. Murphy mentioned that she had "*the idea of writing a longer piece*" following on from her Master of Arts in Creative Writing, but had only been doing bits and pieces on holidays. She drew attention to two practical supports that made it possible for her to see full-time doctoral study as possible. Firstly her husband 'nagging' her over a two year period to do a PhD focused on novel writing and, secondly, the unconditional support of her ESL teaching workplace for her choice to take leave.

> *I was already committed to a lot of teaching and work and I understood that I mix with the team and what they would have to go through to replace me if I kind of turned up and said that's it, I'm out of here. So I said I really need to have these discussions with my manager. So I went to her and I said, "This is what I want to do and I know it's not very useful from your point of view because it's not a PhD that actually directly contributes to this workplace but I'd still like to do it". And then she asked me what I was writing about and I said, "My migrant refugee women" and she said, "That's exactly what we want you to do". And so she virtually gave me her blessing and said "go and do it, and how can I support you?"* (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

Murphy detailed another critical moment in the pathway leading to commencement which connected her past academic studies with a community based writing initiative:

> *The Peter Cowan Writers' Centre, they had asked me, because they knew I had university contacts, if I would get a group of academics who were also writers together to introduce the Peter Cowan short story competition. And so I rang [ECU's] Ffion and said, you know, could you launch this short story competition because the writing centre has asked me to do so [and] she very kindly agreed. And then I rang [ECU staff] Susan and Andrew and Glen, all the people I sort of knew for a long time in the [ECU] creative writing program and said would you like to come along. And they all did which was nice.* (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

This re-engagement with the ECU creative writing teaching staff caused a critical personal moment for Murphy concerning her relationship with her writing self: *"I realised how much I missed this. I mean, even though I stress myself, you know, doing it, it's still challenging and*

exciting and this is what I want to be. I've always said when I grew up I wanted to be a writer. So how much more grown-up do I have to be? (Laughs)" (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011). This humorous comment about being 'grown-up' illustrated Murphy in a state of 'becoming' as a writer, akin to how Griffiths describes the evolution of the self in research. She suggests that "the process is continuing: we are always in a state of becoming . . . [and] we make ourselves in relation to others" (2011, p.168). Murphy came to the PhD at a time when she was fully cognizant of the challenges ahead, but when a number of personal factors—her husband's encouragement, her work's support, her engagement with the ECU creative writing community—all coalesced with her inner sense of progressing her writer self:

> *I feel I'm ready. I don't think I could have done a PhD ten or twelve years ago. I just wasn't emotionally ready for it. And this is a good challenge to have and, I don't think it's all going to be smooth-sailing and happily ever-afters and things like that but that's okay, nothing ever is. And I'm prepared for that, I hope*. (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

Here she was enacting the transformational possibilities of becoming a researcher in creative writing, experiencing what Higgs calls the "transcendental capacity" (2008, p.552) of the arts. He goes on to say that the arts, "allow the creator and the viewer to imagine possible ways of being, encourage the individual to move personal boundaries, and challenge resistance to change and growth" (p.552) and certainly these qualities of becoming, change and growth are embodied in the first critical moments described by Murphy in her CRJ chart.

As the first interview progressed, Murphy began to use her reflection on past choices that led to the PhD to make connections with her PhD research choices, chosen theory and methodology, and her writing practice. Murphy's reflections move towards providing what creative writing research theorists have called a "formal autobiography of an individual's craft" (Harper & Kroll, 2008b, p 4). However, it was rare for her to use terms such as research or theory in this first CRJ. Instead it was me, as researcher constructing the CRJ, who was identifying these characteristics of PhD research as the conversation unfolded, and later in my thematic data analysis.

Research

Murphy's discussion of research in her first CRJ involved her reflecting on her novel's content, but in a way that illustrated the beginning of her research interests and how there was a synthesis of personal experience and research in her practice:

> *The India that's in the story comes easily because that's recollection. You know, I grew up in an Indian family and it was noisy, not always pretty but family with relatives. So, yes, a lot of it is lived experience because, loosely, they are a combination of characters that I grew up with.* (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

But she immediately followed this reflection on the autobiographical connections in her fiction with a reflection on the kernel of her research passions:

> *But what really started me on this journey was a book I read written by a writer called Azar Nafisi 'Reading Lolita in Tehran'. And this woman founded a book club in post-revolutionary Iran because every text by Western writers was banned and she was a university professor teaching English and she was not allowed to teach Nabokov and James. She wanted to teach those things and there were students who were interested in learning those things. So she started teaching these young women in burkhas and chadurs in her own house at great risk to herself. So this story was the story of a woman, western educated liberal Iranian Muslim woman writing about reading books that were banned in a totalitarian regime. And I thought how fantastic. I wonder what happened to normal people, just because they had a revolution what happened. There must be so many people like her, you know. And I wanted to read more about Iran.* (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

In this first CRJ, Murphy identified the first instance of what became her own approach to research, exploring first-hand accounts by women, and reading books such as Nafisi's autobiographical work. Though it was not clear that there was any method in her approach at this time, by the time of her doctoral submission Murphy was able to articulate very clearly that reading was part of her research methods: "As a writer of fiction, my methodological approach has been to read other writers of fiction and memoir" (Murphy, 2015, p.147)

The first CRJ took place as Murphy was developing her PhD research proposal. She reflected on how writing the proposal allowed her to make sense of how her fiction writing and personal interests were being reshaped for the purposes of research:

The proposal that I'm currently writing, which is in its kind of second or third draft version, is quite different from what I thought it would be. And I guess I needed that distance from what I was writing to what it will eventually be. I haven't written the novel. In no way do I even have a draft of how the chapters are going to evolve into this book. But I know what I want to write about and writing theoretically and writing the proposal for the seminar that's going to happen this month was really affirming. Yeah, it sort of made sense. (RM, personal interview, 1 July 2011)

It made sense for Murphy because the research process allowed her to make connections between what she envisaged creatively but was yet to research, and what was possible as a result of new engagement between her fiction and research. She demonstrated in the CRJ conversation how her plan for the reading group had evolved:

It's changed because in the exegesis I was going to actually have a focus group of Indian migrant women first generation and Iranian refugee women. And I was going to bring their voices and perspectives into the exegesis. And suddenly that didn't seem like the right way to go about it. So I'm instead going to read four works of fiction and memoir written by Iranian and Indian women, and position and critically review those four works. So one is the memoir, 'Reading Lolita in Tehran,' another is a fictional, semi-fictional I think, book written by a Jewish Iranian woman. And her accounts of how the minorities were executed and tortured before she fled Iran. And two books written by Indian women, one of whom is a Muslim woman. Because I'm finding that thematically it's really important to get the perspective of Muslim women because the Magician [mother character in her fiction], even though she is absent for most of the book, is a Muslim woman. And because she's half Iranian and half Indian it's important for her to be represented. (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

Murphy communicated a sense of her project shifting, and she demonstrated that she was already engaged, albeit somewhat unconsciously at this point, in the reflexivity that is inherent in practice-led research. Haseman and Mafe (2009) have argued that the practice-led researcher requires a "heightened sense of reflexivity" and by reflexive they mean that "the reflexive defines a position where the researcher can refer to and reflect upon themselves and so be able to give an account of their own position" (p.219). In the first CRJ, Murphy provided an account of her shifting position in relation to the structure of the reading/reference group proposed for her doctoral research, evidence of her developing reflexivity. Although she does not use the word 'reflexivity' in any of her CRJs, in her final PhD critical essay, Murphy describes herself as a "reflexive researcher" engaged in "a fluid,

experiential and continually evolving methodology" (2015, p.179). This description accords with Hunt's definition of reflexivity as evolving and fluid:

> Reflexivity involves putting something out in order that something new might come into being. It involves creating an internal space, distancing oneself, as it were, so that one is both inside and outside of oneself simultaneously and able to switch back and forth fluidly. (2004, p.156)

Murphy identified methodology as another aspect of her research that constituted a critical moment in this first CRJ, a moment that involved the researcher, though well before Murphy had offered to be a participant in the 'Creative River Journey' study. I have written elsewhere (Stevenson, 2012a) of the role that serendipity played in identifying poetry within my methodology, and in practice-led research in general. I have also noted how serendipity has been identified in research by Adams (2008) in regards to the serendipitous in her studio practice and Green (2011) in the "the planned and the serendipitous in the writing" (p.230) of her novel. The serendipitous instance between Murphy and myself took place early in 2011 in a postgraduate seminar run by ECU. Unusually, the seminar leader did not turn up thus the group of postgraduate students awaiting the seminar was left to talk amongst themselves. This became an informal postgraduate discussion group in which each group member introduced themself and talked a little about where they had reached in their PhD progress. We also discussed our methodology, and in her first CRJ Murphy stated how my mention of the methodology of autoethnography in this discussion became a critical moment for her:

> *That turned the tide for me. At that stage I was ready to give up. I was ready to go back to Susan [supervisor] and say if you haven't got something, you know. But just a word, all you said was autoethnography and I went off and I did it. I mean, this is the funny thing, I had been reading feminist ethnography and all of this sort of stuff and I didn't connect. But just that single word opened it up.* (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

For Murphy, finding a methodology that would suit her multi-strand research project, whereby she was running a reading group for migrant women, reading Iranian and Indian contemporary memoirs and fiction, and using both of these to inform the writing of her novel, had proved difficult. So the idea of autoethnography proved to be crucial and enlivening for her research design:

When you mentioned autoethnography and I went off and read about it and it was "yes, yes!"' I was running around, skipping and jumping, and thinking it all makes sense. And I thought "how do I use this?" And I guess if I had to describe my project which is the novel and the exegesis I would probably say that autobiography has made a huge impact. . . . So there has been that freedom to explore and I guess the liberty to read other works in that light, you know, to read autobiography ethnographically. (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

Murphy's delighted discovery of autoethnography as a framework for understanding the various aspects of her project is in keeping with some of the steps Gray and Malins (2004) suggest for research in art and design. They propose that the crucial stages of creative research design include a "contextual survey and review" (p.14) of the area of research, in Murphy's case contemporary Iranian and Indian literature and fiction writing. However, Gray and Malins also identify that the artist–researcher must have "located your position" (p.15) in order to move forward into planning the research. Through the discovery of autoethnography as a methodology, whereby "it all makes sense" for her, Murphy was able to locate her position in the wider realm of research. Methodology and methods, Gray and Malins note, allow the researcher to move forward, "crossing the terrain" of the chosen practice (p.15) with confidence and rigour. In Murphy's case, she also moved forward with vigour, as she was no longer tempted to give up but intellectually "running around, skipping and jumping" with this new understanding of her project's relationship to methodology.

Autoethnographic transnational theory

Murphy also identified another critical moment in which the word transnational created a shift in her approach to her project, this time in conversation with her supervisor.

Susan said, we've moved on from post-colonial and we are now in the transnational era. So now I go and read transnational theory. And basically, yes, it is the step forward from post-colonial. I find myself still influenced by Edward Saïd because I find everything that he's written resonates with what I'm reading and what I'm trying to write about. So for me he was the writer that opened the possibility of what I was trying to do. And so, yeah, Edward Saïd was a huge influence. And I am reading everyone that acknowledges him as a huge influence as well. (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

Murphy identified that she already had a theoretical understanding of the terrain of her research through her knowledge of Saïd. Even so, her supervisor was able to help her more fully identify her position in relation to the theory in her area by introducing her to more current views of the field. This also allowed Murphy to understand her own creative practice as a fiction writer in terms of transnational theory.

> *When I read transnational theory and came across 'these are the standard themes of transnational fiction' . . . I knew those were my own themes anyway. So it was kind of "aha, I'm a transnational writer". Unconsciously, through osmosis I've absorbed all these notions of hybrids. I mean, I say that, but that sounds too neat because nothing's unconscious.* (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

This was not an easy "aha" moment for Murphy, because it came on the back of her attempts to locate her methodological position as she conceptualised her research in the first year of her PhD, a task that almost made her abandon the PhD:

> *I had been reading feminist ethnography and all of this sort of stuff and I didn't connect. But just that single word [autoethnography] opened it up and then she [Murphy's supervisor] said transnational fiction and that was the other [word], and I just felt, well, why didn't someone talk to me [about this] three months ago? I've been reading social identity theory and you know how that is. (Laughs). It was horrible. That's what I felt, "That's it. I was not designed to do a PhD, I've got to go home and lie down". [Laughs]* (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

Although enlightening, this new theoretical understanding also presented Murphy with the problem of how she could use theory to inform, but not consciously drive, her own fiction writing: "*now that I have this theory I have to forget it and just write creatively. But it was interesting how the theory informed what I'm trying to do*" (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011). This echoes Lasky's (2013) suggestion that too much attention to critical and theoretical inputs can result in "inhibiting the writing process and paralysing the ability to write freely" (p.23). That being said, in the first CRJ, Murphy was able to interpret this critical moment in her new understanding of autoethnographic transnational theory as a very positive step forward, in " *that [it] was really good to come to that point*" (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011).

Murphy's writing practice

Just as Murphy used her first CRJ to reflect on the developmental steps in her research design—in particular, life choices in arriving at the PhD, and her choices about methodological and theoretical framework—Murphy also reflected on the fledgling stages of writing the first chapter of the novel that would form the creative part of her PhD Project.

> *As soon as I applied for the PhD I decided that I wanted to be as prepared as possible. I mean, when I started looking at filling out the forms and the little proposal [in the application] for a PhD that you had to fill in, I thought, well, I have to know what I'm doing. And the only way to know what I'm doing is if I actually start writing.* (RM, personal interview 1, 1 July 2011)

This is evidence of Murphy embarking upon the formation of "knowledge acquired through the act of creating", which is fundamental to practice-led creative writing research according to Harper and Kroll (2008b, p.4). Those authors also argue that "the triumvirate of practice, research and pedagogy defines Creative Writing as a subject in universities" (p.1), and it is interesting to see how Murphy engaged with reflections on practice (on her writing), and reflections on research (on methodology and theory). But in her reflection on writing this first chapter, something she did as part of her PhD application process, Murphy demonstrated early engagement with the pedagogy of the PhD research design process, in particular, supervision, methodology and writing the research proposal. This pedagogy was further illustrated in her contacts with supervision and through the pedagogical intervention of the CRJ reflections themselves. Her reflections on her writing practice reveal how she was, in fact, following her own pedagogical instincts:

> *Because if I don't write something down, all I have is a vague idea that I'm writing a story about migrant and refugee women. But if I actually start writing something then how much of that is actually about migrants and refugees and how much is that about relationships and the unspeakable elements of what happens to migrant families when they are trying to communicate something foreign in the language that's not their own. Those sorts of things. So that's why I started writing, so I virtually wrote the first chapter before I applied to do the scholarship. Because I thought that's what you had to do. Nobody told me any different.* (RM, personal interview, 1 July 2011)

In this exchange, Murphy demonstrated her early forays into making new knowledge through, and about, the practice of writing: if she did not write something down, she only had "a vague idea". Murphy's practice of writing for understanding met with Barrett's explanation of the link between practice-based research and "personally situated knowledge" (Barrett, 2007b, p.2). This was also evident in Murphy's combined writing practice and her early steps in defining the theoretical and methodological foundations of her research.

Murphy's first CRJ, and indeed her second, illustrated her use of this reflective process as a way of documenting her own personal journey into and through the PhD, a kind of autobiographical account of her PhD process. This is in keeping with research approaches to creative writing practice in her discipline area, with Harper and Kroll stating "[i]n some incarnations, practice as research functions as the formal autobiography of an individual's craft, taking into account significant influences and methods" (2008a, p.4). Murphy's critical moments describe various and significant influences in her PhD process.

Murphy's second CRJ

For her second CRJ, Murphy completed the chart independently, with a short second interview with the researcher after its completion to clarify the chart where needed. In her notes regarding the second chart, Murphy indicated that she had chosen to reflect on the writing of Chapter Two of the novel, which was drafted between February and June 2011. This second CRJ was completed nearly six months after the first, on 3 November 2011, with the subsequent personal interview regarding the second chart on 11 November 2011. (The CRJ focus group was held on 16 December 2011). An emphasis on writing practice was evident in the critical moments that Murphy noted on the second CRJ chart with nearly all comments related to writing practice. This contrasted with Murphy's first CRJ which was dominated more by explorations of theory and methodology. Murphy's motivation to use the second CRJ to focus on her writing practice, rather than research design, theory or methods, may be accounted for in one of Murphy's preparatory notes before completing the chart in which she said "*The story must be told! I'm convinced of it. Don't know what shape it'll take yet though*" (RM, CRJ chart [notes], 3 November 2011).

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)
Name………………**RM**……………………Date……………**03-11-11**………………………
Artwork/Performance/Text……… **Chapter 2 (The Historian's Daughter)**

1. RESEARCH - PhD project (novel in progress)

2. WRITING PRACTICE Chapter 2 emerged out of a jumble of words and ideas

3. WRITING PRACTICE I felt really self-conscious writing this as it was the 'Australia' Chapter. Ch.1 had flowed and I was happy with it.

4. WRITING PRACTICE I decided to introduce new characters and build on existing ones.

5. WRITING PRACTICE How to make this flow as well? I try to remember what Perth looked like/felt like when I first saw it 26 years ago.

6. WRITING PRACTICE Quite shamelessly base the character of 'Anya' on one of my daughter's psychotic school friends – it works! I think.

7. WRITING PRACTICE **Strongest memory that emerged was how empty and clean Perth was – so I decide to begin the chapter with this image.

8. WRITING PRACTICE Wonder if I should keep Anya. I've sort of ditched her but she could be useful later.

9. RESEARCH/REFLECTION This was slow – read about Perth, the Hills, went back, revised, distanced myself, looked again at it.

10. WRITING PRACTICE Quite happy with the way the characters are developing, their relationships and youthful angst.

11. WRITING PRACTICE I seem to be writing from an outsider POV. Why is this? I don't want this to fell so foreign. I realise that I write best about a landscape when I leave it temporarily. Holiday in October might help? I'll definitely revise, re-write, edit.

12. WRITING PRACTICE Do I want to be believable or not? Struggling a bit with the TONE of DESCRIPTION (RM'S emphasis) of some characters ** i.e. Historian and his women. The Historian is emerging as a pretty awful character & I'm okay with it surprisingly, because I don't think he is one dimensional. I need to work out why the Magician loved him though.

13. RESEARCH/WRITING PRACTICE Freefall workshop (Sept 2011) with Barbara – lots of aha moments – lots of doubts about the construction of the chapter now.

15. WRITING PRACTICE Much more aware after Freefall – do I sound bitchy about certain characters in this chapter? Still doing a lot of telling – not enough showing.

17. WRITING PRACTICE /REFLECTION ON THEORY This chapter contains fragments of a fictitious diary (unconsciously autoethnographic). Now that I know this I can strengthen the unconscious moments. (It's okay to write like this).

19. WRITING PRACTICE/CRITICAL FRIEND Share doubts with Sabah (my daughter); she thinks the novel is fine and I shouldn't mix up the 2 narratives – her advice 'write Freefall' and write the novel – they can be two different projects.

14. RESEARCH/WRITING PRACTICE Freefall workshop – lots of soul searching – rather dark writing emerges – I like it – but the novel has a different voice. Do I change the novel now or do I write in 2 different voices?

16. WRITING PRACTICE Really need to slow the narrative down somewhat – shop through dialogue rather than internal monologue.

18. WRITING PRACTICE/CRITICAL FRIENDS Revise and reinvent some scenes to slow them down. Need to show this to the Writer's Group to see what they think.

20. WRITING PRACTICE May be a good idea – two parallel writing projects – one can inform the other?

[RM made following statements in the interview as she explained this chart and interviewer made notation as follows at end of chart. 'As I was writing this River Journey chart, I started to have a dialogue with myself' about what I am capable of. I realised that I can do both – the freefall emotional unloading; the more organised academic writing process'.]

Practice-led creative writing

In using this second CRJ to reflect on her fiction writing, Murphy was clearly demonstrating the characteristics of practice-led research in creative writing of which Harper and Kroll state:

> This knowledge, while intersecting with that acquired by the post-creation act of criticism, is fundamentally different in attitude because its purpose is primarily to inform the practitioner (and, by extension, other practitioners) and therefore give her or him better access to ideas and approaches that might enhance their own practice. (2008b, p.4)

Murphy identified key aspects of both the contents of her chapter and the choices she makes in what she does with these contents. She distinguished the difference in her feelings as a writer in the experience of writing chapter one as opposed to writing chapter two, "*I felt really self-conscious writing this as it was the 'Australia' chapter. Ch.1 had flowed and I was happy with it*" (RM, 2nd CRJ chart, 2 November 2011).

Murphy actively attempted to reflect back on that past experience of immigrating to Australia in order to help with the writing process when she asked "How to make this flow as well?" One way she did this was by going back to her personal experiences, "*I try to remember what Perth looked like/felt like when I first saw it 26 years ago*" (RM, 2nd CRJ chart, 2 November 2011).   This form of discovery is in keeping with Gray's seminal, definition of practice-led research, cited in full earlier in this thesis, with its focus on questioning: "where questions, problems, challenges are identified and formed by the need of the practice and practitioners" (1996, p.3).

So when Murphy raised the question about the need to improve the fluency of her writing in chapter two, "how to make it flow", she identified the problems inherent in trying to remember: "*This was slow – read about Perth, the Hills, went back, revised, distanced myself, looked at it again*" (RM, 2nd CRJ chart, 2 November 2011). But she also marked other critical moments with other questions that alluded to methodologies familiar to most writers of fiction – questions about tone, descriptive writing, character and dialogue, for example – and she used this questioning to arrive at her own solutions.

This documentation of her questioning, and experience of the critical moments in her creative writing practice, showed that Murphy's reflections occupied what Colbert argues is a focus on the experiential in practice-led research, on "the personal, experiential and iterative processes which influence the making of the creative artefact" (2009, p.7). For Murphy, the critical moments became a conversation with herself about key aspects of writing. In one particular instance, she asked "*Do I want to be believable or not? Struggling a bit with tone and description [Murphy's emphasis] of some characters*" (RM, 2nd CRJ chart, 2 November 2011). This highlighted that Murphy was engaged simultaneously, and in a complex way, with questions about tone, description and character. In another critical moment on this second CRJ, she said "*I seem to be writing from an outsider POV. Why is this?*" She immediately considers a solution "*I realise I write best about landscape when I leave it temporarily. Holiday in October might help?*" In operating in this manner, questioning and seeking solutions, Murphy was being both reflective and reflexive to arrive at new knowledge about her writing. Lasky suggests that "this is the kind of knowledge practice-led research develops, knowledge that grows in the shift between writing and reflecting modes" (2013, p.24). Murphy's "enquiry cycle" (Haseman, 2007, p.152) was clearly documented by the CRJ strategy thus achieving one of the aims of the 'Creative River Journey' project, making the tacit knowledge of creative practice explicit.

In September 2011, Murphy enrolled in a writing workshop external to ECU called "Freefall" (Turner-Vesselago, 2013) and she noted this as a critical moment in her second CRJ chart, and a turning point in her creative writing practice. In Freefall, Murphy experienced "learning how to allow your willing, intending self to get out of the way, so that a deeper level of vulnerability becomes possible . . . writing in this open, surrendered way is relaxing the tight grip of the rational, egoic self in order to gain access to a deeper field of awareness" (Turner-Vesselago, 2013, p.2). Despite this new-age sounding précis, Freefall aims to be "a very practical guide" (p.5) to creative writing practice. Within this critical moment charted on the CRJ, Murphy also identified Freefall as itself facilitating a number of critical moments. These Murphy called "aha" moments, although they were not always emotionally comfortable: "*Freefall workshop (September 2011) with Barbara – lots of aha*

moments – lots of doubts about the construction of the chapter now" (RM, 2nd CRJ chart, 2 November 2011).

Haseman and Mafe (2009) cite Sullivan (2006, para.10) in calling such "aha" moments in practice-led research "the shock of recognition" and they argue that such critical moments allow "practice-led researchers [to] find their way through the ongoing state of emergence which characterises their research studies" (p.219). Emergence here refers to the questioning aspects of Murphy's reflexive writing process as a result of the Freefall workshop, which creates for her "*lots of soul searching*" though she is "*much more aware after Freefall*". These questions allow for doubts about her authorial voice: "*Do I change the novel now or do I write in 2 different voices?*" (RM, CRJ chart, 2 November 2011). Haseman and Mafe state that this questioning is an essential condition experienced by the practice-led researcher as they shift between reflection and practice:

> Within this looping process authorial control can be fragmented, raising doubts about purpose, efficacy and control. A kind of chaos results and it is from this chaos and complexity that the results of the creative research will begin to emerge and be worked through. (2009, p.219)

Immediately following her Freefall critical moments, and towards the end of this second CRJ chart, Murphy recalled critical moments in which she returned to the novel-writing work to "*revise and reinvent some scenes*" but also in which she reached out to others to resolve some of these doubts about her creative writing PhD project. For example, she chose to "*share doubts with Sabah (my daughter); she thinks the novel is fine*" and also the "*[n]eed to show this to the Writer's Group to see what they think*" (RM, 2nd CRJ chart, 2 November 2011). I have written previously about the importance of the input of critical friends, in this thesis for the artist–researcher Sue Girak, and elsewhere for the emergence of creative writing practice (Stevenson, 2009). Costa and Kallick suggest these critical friends "examine the work through another lens" (1993, p.50) in order to help the writer resolve doubts. These examples of Murphy's critical moment illustrated that she was using her daughter as a reader and critical friend. Furthermore, Murphy's writing group functioned as a quasi-workshop group in which she was able to test her writing on an audience.

The use of such workshops in emerging creative writing practice can be "a deliberate and conscious training-ground for apprentices or a place of learning–through–experiment" (Brophy, 2008, p.77). With the help of others' perspectives to reflect back to Murphy aspects of her writing, she was able to internalise a way to resolve some of her doubts and conflicts about her writing by the end of the second CRJ: "*As I was writing this River Journey chart, I started having a dialogue with myself about what I am capable of. I realised I can do both – the Freefall emotional unloading, and the more organised academic writing process*" (RM, 2nd CRJ chart [notes], 3 November 2011).

Murphy's insights and growing confidence confirms that engagement in the CRJ strategy can inculcate in the participant their own internalised process of reflection. It is also indicative of one of the aims of the 'Creative River Journey' project in relation to what the reflective process might elucidate for the practice-led researcher. In Murphy's case, it elucidated a resolution for her about how to marry her Freefall "emotional unloading" style of writing – a more autobiographical style – and a more measured "organised" approach to fiction. It also suggests that this awareness of how to manage the two styles gives her more control and understanding of her own practice-led strategies: "*It was interesting to know I can write creatively in two ways. I can write all sorts of cathartic stuff and still make it creative . . . and then [I can] say 'Okay, now I'll go back to my civilised writing'*" (RM, personal interview 2, 2 November 2011).

In all the various steps of Murphy's CRJ, she demonstrated that she occupied a creative writing practice-led approach that is in keeping with Harper's (2014) manifesto about the future of creative writing research and practice. Harper suggests that this research and practice must "involve consideration of responses and responsiveness in a creative writer's process, the ways in which a writer reacts to stimuli, draws upon knowledge, combines ideas of form with ideas about implementation, and more" (2014, p.48). The CRJ strategy helped achieve this for Murphy as she negotiated the practice-led researcher's "extremes of interpretive anxiety" (Haseman & Mafe, 2009, p.220). Additionally, it provided insights for me as the researcher seeking to understand the experiences of the creative writing practice-led researcher by revealing the nuances of decision-making in Murphy's writing process and

how she, and perhaps other creative writers, "explore and gain knowledge from a combination of their practice and critical considerations" (Harper, 2014, p.13).

The CRJ process

The charting process in Murphy's CRJ reflections both appealed to and benefitted her, but they also presented her with some barriers. Part of the appeal of the process lay in the metaphoric nature of the name, Creative River Journey: "*Well, I work with words, so the words appealed to me, the Creative, and the River, and the Journey; all three words were so resonant of everything that I was trying to do*" (RM, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011). However, that metaphor also presented her with some limitations:

> *And critical moments? Again I think I got much more out of having conversations with you, and then sort of just put it down fairly blandly, because the conversations were so rich, that when I tried to reproduce them, as a twisting, turning, metaphorical journey, in a way I was kind of confined by the image rather than putting down on paper what I really wanted to say.* (RM, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

This need for an interlocutor, in this case myself as researcher in conversation with Murphy, was in keeping with other strategies that Murphy demonstrated to resolve doubts about her writing, namely, her use of her daughter as a critical friend and of her writing group to resolve doubts and reach new understandings. That being said, Murphy acknowledged that she was able to independently reach some new understanding of her practice through personal reflection, and it is clear that she was able to reach certain insights due to the reflective practice inherent in the CRJ process. These insights related to her understanding of how to incorporate both her emotional and more detached styles of writing in her practice, which in turn led her to conduct research into different styles of writing, such as autobiography:

> *I wouldn't have come to that particular insight that it's okay to write creatively in more than one way, that it doesn't have to be this either/or thing. I can detach myself and I can tell a story, and hopefully it will be a good story, and then I can sort of intensely immerse myself in what seems like memoir, and do that as well. So maybe just connect the two and so I went off and read autobiography and all that sort of stuff as well, because it was interesting to . . . I can accept that now.* (RM, personal interview 2, 11 November 2011)

This benefit related to how the CRJ process allowed Murphy to bring out her tacit and unconscious understandings into new light: "*I had unconsciously done that, but it's about consciously recalling it, I think. That makes a difference*" (RM, personal interview, 11 November 2011). This relationship between the conscious and unconscious aspects of her writing practice was not highly evident to Murphy at the time that she completed the CRJ chart, even though they are now evident within the critical moments documented in the chart:
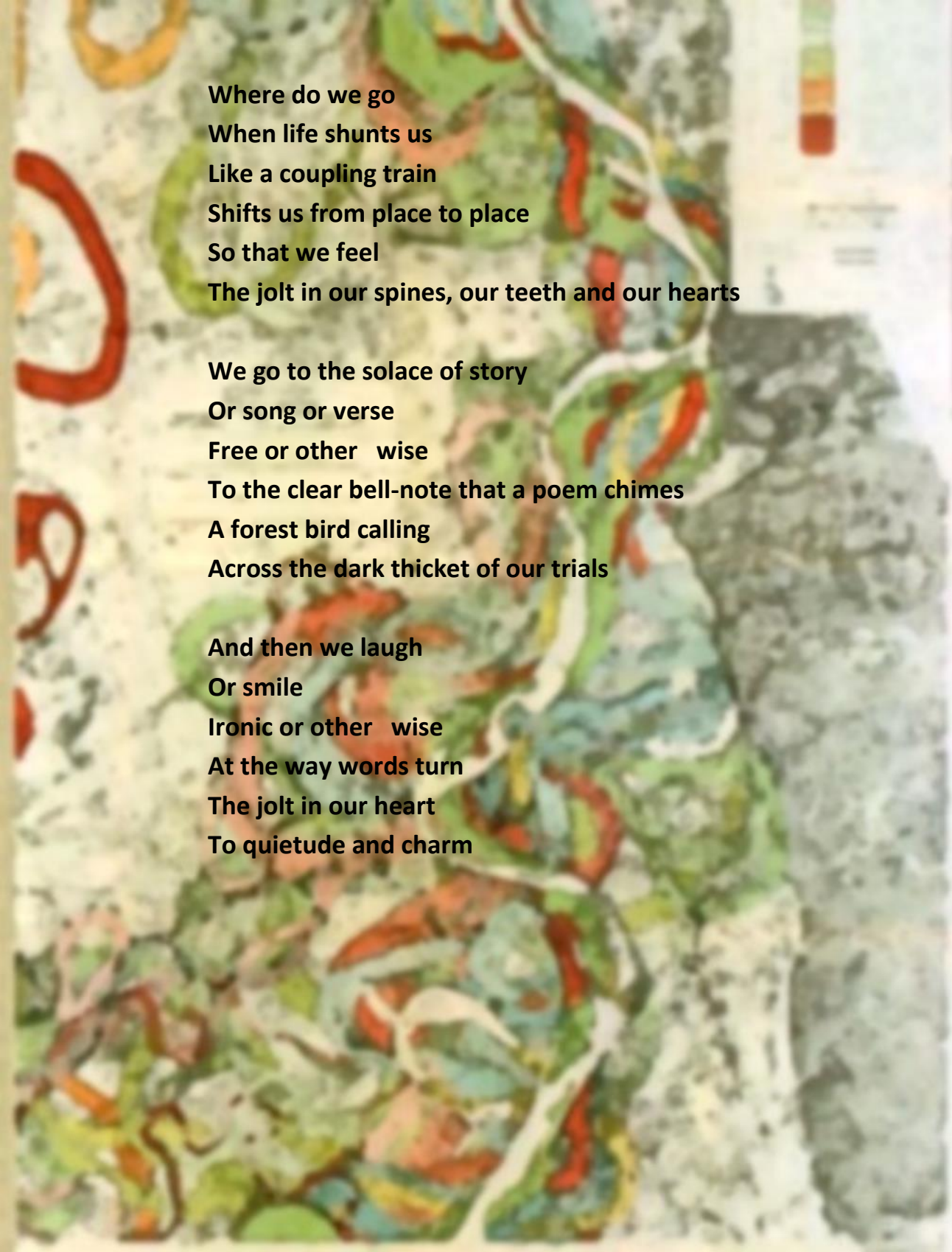
> *It was when I started doing the curvy snaky journey that things came up and I thought I don't know if it will ultimately make sense because I kind of started writing in the left of the page and thought I would follow that thought through there and then have another thought but then things got a bit jumbled up.* (RM, personal interview 2, 11 November 2011)

As a strategy to document the critical moments impacting on Murphy's creative writing practice-led research process, the CRJ was a successful one. But it was the combination of choices Murphy made to push the boundaries of her own writing practice, in this case the choice to participate in the Freefall workshop, and then closely reflect on that in the second CRJ chart, that allowed Murphy to achieve such significant new understanding. In fact, her breakthrough was so significant, that she called it an epiphany:

> *I did identify critical moments. There were several, and the epiphany at the end of it for me was that I was trying not to be intuitive while I was writing, and I know that sounds silly to people who are writers, because how do you write if you don't write intuitively? But I was trying to write properly, like a grown-up person, so I had a plan, and I had chapters, and I had characters; you know, Mr Smith was going to appear in Chapter Four, and this was what he was going to do. And that so wasn't working, and I just wanted to do something unruly, and wild, and childish, and as soon as I identified that it was actually okay to do that, the writing improved. The plan stayed, but the writing improved.* (RM, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011)

Rashida's CRJs captured her choices and her breakthrough epiphanies as she negotiated the 'jumbled' disorienting experiences and 'interpretive anxiety' that many artists who become researchers through a practice-led research paradigm experience. With her growing reflexivity and self-confidence as an artist–researcher, Rashida was guided by the CRJs to explore, analyse and produce new knowledge about her creative writing practice, her critical research frameworks and her artistic choices.

POETIC INTERLUDE 9—THE SOLACE OF STORY

Where do we go
When life shunts us
Like a coupling train
Shifts us from place to place
So that we feel
The jolt in our spines, our teeth and our hearts

We go to the solace of story
Or song or verse
Free or other   wise
To the clear bell-note that a poem chimes
A forest bird calling
Across the dark thicket of our trials

And then we laugh
Or smile
Ironic or other   wise
At the way words turn
The jolt in our heart
To quietude and charm

MARTIN MEADER—NARRATIVE OF PRACTICE

Martin Meader has described himself as "dad, choral director, musician, writer and film producer" (Meader, n.d.a.) and this captures the multidisciplinary nature of Meader's talents and art practices. He has postgraduate qualifications in creative writing, film-making and jazz musicianship, and his professional creative practice incorporates all these and more. Meader is well known and respected in Perth as a choral director having established choirs for the ABC and the Festival of Perth. His commitment to the redemptive power of the voice is indeed striking, and Meader certainly demonstrates a remarkable and thorough commitment to a creative life that inhabits the disciplines of music, film-making and writing. So what prompted Meader to do a PhD?

Meader commenced his PhD at Edith Cowan University in July 2010 (with his critical essay and creative project under examination in early 2017). Meader explained: "*I chose to undertake a PhD because I knew it would stretch me. I also chose children's literature because that is what I love, especially Roald Dahl. His work and my own led me to examine the bullying of children*" (MM, personal communications, 13 June 2016).

He had already written and published a children's novella called *The Adventures of Charlie & Moon: Book One—facing the Quincequonces* (Meader, 2009) which he describes as: "a fantasy adventure for children about a boy named Charlie Ramsbottom who opens a mysterious birthday present the night before his ninth birthday and the consequences that follow" (Meader, n.d.a. 'Charlie & Moon'). In his doctoral project, Meader initially proposed to write two further novellas in the Charlie and Moon series, though his final submission altered from this plan. Meader also writes short stories for children and it was these short stories that eventually became the creative component of his PhD.

Meader chose one of these short stories, 'Twenty Four Carrots', which uses the same setting as the Charlie and Moon novellas, as the subject of his first CRJ, stating in an email at that time "*I am not sure where this story fits in with the PhD. It might become a chapter, it might become part of a novella or it might just stand alone*" (Meader, March 2010, personal communication).

Meader used his first CRJ to note that he found inspiration in the writing style of Roald Dahl. Dahl's body of work was to be the subject of the critical essay component of Meader's PhD project, though he developed this intention to explore the theme of bullying in his own writing, and in the work of Dahl. Meader also aimed to evoke in his fiction some of Dahl's other recurring themes such as the child versus giant odds, orphaned children and injustice against children. What is striking about Meader as a participant in this project is that he came to his doctoral studies, and the 'Creative River Journey' study, as a fully operational busy professional creative. He was not entering the PhD in order to learn new creative skills. Meader did not use the CRJ charts or interviews to reflect on his decision to do a PhD, or summarise his professional career. However, he maintained contact with me from the outset of his engagement with the project until, and after, he submitted his PhD for examination. This suggests that he may have constructed his involvement with the 'Creative River Journey', and with me, as providing informal support in his network of practice.

Meader treated both CRJ interviews as creative conversations that led off on tangents about his life beliefs and his professional work. He declared that he avoided reflection on his practice yet, despite this assertion, Meader's first CRJ conversation closely examined the development of character in his fictional work, 'Twenty Four Carrots'. In the CRJ interviews, however, Meader's reflections on the various modes of his creative work, the business of his creative practice, and his beliefs about the nature of his creativity, dominated actual discussion about his practice-led research process.

Meader's first CRJ (next page)

(Scans of Meader's original first and second CRJ charts can be found in Appendix I of this thesis.)

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)
Name………………**MM**…………………Date……………**03-03-11**……………………
Artwork/Performance/Text…………**Twenty Four Carrots**…………………………………

2. Bankwest overcharged MM…he had a frustrating conversation with bank.

4. Characters based on Jim & Sheila, neighbours in Mosman Park – he was Sir James/she Lady Sheila). Lady Sheila real Aussie. Sir James not like Mr Sneaky.

6. Ritual Sunday dinner that he & his father experienced

8. Always thinking about how the bits fit together

10. Scriptwriting tends to teach you along the way, [e.g.] story arc, front mirrors the back

1. Roald Dahl's *Magic Finger* the inspiration…aimed to write similar short books.

3. conversation with ex-bank worker housemate gave him insight [into banking]

5. 'Awright' [character's language] draws on growing up in East End London.

7. [Martin] sits down every day, like Roald Dahl in his beautiful home, writes.

9. Setting reflects own experiences living in Mosman Park

11. *On Writing* [by] Stephen King (2000), [MM's] "bible"

12. Did some research on children of divorced parents. Realised his book *[The Adventures of] Charlie & Moon* reflected his own experiences. Aim "for children to become heroic"

13. Writing for kids: main character in the novel is a child-hater. The Sneakys keep their kids locked away. "They should be seen and not heard".

15. A friend worked for Bendigo Bank. MM inspired by their community service vs. [other] bankers

14. Son suggested changing the name to English Lord. [Was] Count Von in the beginning.

16. WORK WITH SPIRIT: thinking outside the 5 senses…ask for something, and you get it. That world that MM is in when he [creates].

17. In the end [of the story], there is good.

18. Sends the story out to friends, son, business manager (MA in Educ.), publisher, really good school teacher, read it to kids

19. Talking with kids

20. Hope it works

21. Self-publishing an option. *[Adventures of] Charlie & Moon* currently distributed through Woolridges [Education Supplies].

Reflecting on character and creativity

Meader's first CRJ charted the development of key characters in 'Twenty Four Carrots', the first of the four short stories that would form the creative component of his practice-led creative writing PhD. Meader's PhD is clearly centred on his creative practice which responds to his interest in childhood bullying and the literary work of Roald Dahl. Haseman and Mafe suggest the practice-led researcher deploys personal theory and style that is "networked out of his or her practice" (2009, p.215) The grounding of his writing in these two key research contexts, and the way he responded to challenges and questions that were emergent from his writing practice, identify Meader's process as practice-led research. However, when the researcher asked Meader directly if the words practice-led research held any meaning for him, he replied: "*I don't know what the hell they are*". Asked if he'd heard of the term practice-led research or its meaning, Meader replied "*No. I've got no idea*" (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012).

Meader's unwillingness to identify as a reflective practice-led researcher related to how he conceptualised himself as a highly experienced creative person. In his CRJs, Meader revealed that he viewed the writing process to be hindered by in-depth analysis, not helped by it, and he endeavoured to protect the freedom of his creative process. When asked directly if the CRJ reflective process had helped him in any way to build the body of knowledge required to fulfil the critical component of his PhD, Meader stated : "*I really haven't thought about it, I just want to let, you know, the creative stuff come up first*" (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012).

Despite declaring his choice of "not thinking about it", critical moments in the first CRJ chart showed Meader making links between his personal experience and his fiction writing. Meader identified direct influences on his novel's characters. For example, critical moments related to how his past experience of living next door to Sir Jim and Lady Sheila in Mosman Park informed his novel's central character Lady Sheila, how ritual Sunday dinners with his family in the past informed a set-piece meal in the novel, and how the patois of his London East End upbringing was voiced when his characters greet each other with 'awright?' Furthermore, his bank-worker housemate's insights about banking, and his experience

being overcharged by Bankwest, directly informed the actions of the story's central protaganist Lord Sneaky.

When theorising about the creative writing process, MacRobert argues for the application of both creativity theory and psychological understandings of the writing process. She suggests that for writers like Meader, with his interest in childhood bullying and the literary work of Roald Dahl, the inner and the outer world of their writing practice and personal beliefs are synthesised into a unique writing practice, which can provide rich fodder for the creative and critical components of a PhD: "the inner world(s), both past and present, of an individual might find echoes in wider issues in the individual's society and in existing literature, which can be synthesised into unique writing goals for content and style" (MacRobert, 2013, p.73).

When asked directly in the first CRJ interview about his day-to-day writing process, Meader answered in a way characteristic of his informal, conversational style: firstly, he avoided close reflection on the writing process by explaining how his lengthy experience of writing meant he didn't reflect; yet, at the same time, and unaware of this as reflection, Meader conveyed how an element of the story (the child character names) came about, and how this was linked to his yearning for past experiences of sit-down family dinners:

> *Because I'd been writing a book before, I think that once you've written a book—and I've written film scripts—there is a lot of stuff that you don't have to do any more. I was thinking about how the bits and pieces fit together. Only recently I thought that the children should have the same name. That only came up because I thought the story still needs to have a bit more depth to it and the fact that the kids start coming to the house and Lady Sheila starts coming and they start having dinner together, because sitting down together is a really important thing, and something that they haven't had, something that people miss out on. When they actually have it, they really like it. You get a group of people sitting down together to have food together, it's a wonderful atmosphere.* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

Meader explained in this CRJ that, in his approach to writing, there was a period of letting new writing sit unrevised for a time without close reflection until problems were resolved or new elements emerged: "*I think you just let it sit there for a bit. Not worry about it. When I finish writing I don't go around thinking about it but ideas do suddenly pop into my head*" (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011).

In letting his writing just "sit there for a bit" awaiting the emergence of new ideas, Meader is unwittingly enacting the balancing act of the creative writer identified by Csikszentmihalyi who states: "The work almost evolves on its own rather than [via] the author's intentions but always monitored by the critical eye of the writer" (1996, p.263). Meader's critical eye remained somewhat invisible to him as he suggested "I don't go thinking about it" yet also identified that "ideas suddenly pop into my head", during these down times. At other times, Meader indicated a more directed focus such as "I was thinking about how the bits and pieces fit together", illustrating that he was also embodying a critical dimension. According to Csikszentmihalyi, the writer must manage a creative process that is twofold, and that encompasses:

> Two contradictory goals: not to miss the messages whispered by the unconscious and at the same time force it into a suitable form. This [first goal] requires openness, the second critical judgement. If these processes are not kept in a constantly shifting balance, the flow of writing dries up. (1996, pp.263–264)

This suggests the writer must develop skills in both listening to intuitive ideas and knowing how best to bring these to the surface and present them to readers in a suitable form. In his first CRJ, Meader explained that he no longer needed to overtly attend to the critical dimension; as an experienced creative practitioner who had previously written books and film scripts, "*there is a lot of stuff that you don't have to do any more*" (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011). Meader's practice ensured he was open to the new ideas that emerged in his "uncritical" stance, ensuring to his satisfaction that he was managing the delicate balancing act of the adept writer.

The professional creative

In Meader's first CRJ interview, whilst focusing on the short story he had written 'Twenty Four Carrots' and charting the inspiration for characters in this fictional work, he also used the interview conversation to explore potential creative opportunities, frequently giving me, the research interviewer, advice about how to turn an aspect of the 'Creative River Journey' doctoral research into a professional opportunity. Furthermore, in his second CRJ, Meader revealed aspects of the inspiration for his life as a busy creative professional. However, he did not use his discussion of his professional work to identify critical moments in his doctoral

creative writing practice. When asked if 'Creative River Journey' project facilitated any knowledge-building outcome for him about his creative practice, Meader replied by summing up his busy creative life and explained how supporting himself financially through his creative work was a prime priority:

> *I'm creative all the time, so my life is creating. I do writing, I do music, I work on films. I don't think about it, I just do. I don't think about it being a process, I just think, what's the next thing I have to do. I've got to finish that off, I'll do that, and then I've got to go and do three choirs a week, to conduct them, get the music ready, go. So I'm just always on the go, and working towards concerts or working towards finishing scripts or working towards finishing business plans or books, trying to study, trying to make money.* (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012)

Meader's summary of his professional creative life depicted him as a one-man creative enterprise, managing his own career. His matter-of-fact summary of his various creative activities—"I do writing, I do music, I work on films . . . do three choirs a week"—called attention to the multiple activities in his professional life. His statements "I do music" and "do three choirs a week" referred to his work both running choirs and writing music for performance and publication. Meader's 'Born to Sing' choirs are run on a philosophy of all welcome: "non singers, shower singers, park singers, car singers, air guitar singers and actual singers" (Meader, n.d.a. 'Born to Sing') and Meader runs these weekly choir classes in three Perth suburbs. With business partner, Deb Saville, he also runs choir workshops for corporate organisations, dementia sufferers and the homeless. In his "non-religious" choirs, participants sing "songs from the heart that engender good-will, raise self-esteem, help you lose the blues [...] anything that moves the soul" (Meader, n.d.a. 'Born to Sing'). In addition to his choral direction, Meader is a song writer and musician. In 2008, he completed an album *Inside the Heart* with friend and collaborator Rob Spence featuring 11 tracks on the theme of love.

When Meader stated in his CRJ that "I work on films", he was referring to a key event in his creative practice, the writing of a screenplay for the film *Paradise Road* (Coote, Milliken & Beresford, 1997). In 1990, whilst a film-making postgraduate student at Swinburne University, Melbourne, a choir performance by a vocal orchestra made up of World War Two Sumatran prisoners of war caught Meader's attention. Along with a co-writer and

researcher, David Giles, Meader researched the true story of this prisoner of war camp choir and wrote the story as a screenplay. After raising partial funding for the film, Meader eventually sold the project to 20th Century Fox who, with Bruce Beresford rewriting the script and credited as writer and director, made the successful film *Paradise Road*. Meader and collaborator David Giles were credited as original story co-writers. Concurrent with the PhD, Meader was developing another project for film called 'ALPHABETICUS', a children's animated film for literacy education for which he had already written, produced and marketed a word-making card game called *ALPHABETICUS Spell*. (Meader conducted this commercial project—an animated movie with an accompanying game card series and teaching guides—separate, but concurrently, with his doctorate in children's fiction writing).

Such management of multiple activities by Meader indicate his creative work accords with the concept of the "portfolio" creative worker as defined by Bridgstock, Goldsmith, Rodgers and Hearn in their study of creative graduate pathways:

> Creative workers are often driven to portfolio working arrangements through financial necessity or industry norms and configurations (in the creative industries, much work is project-based and, therefore, of finite length). In portfolio work, the worker assumes individual risk and responsibility for all aspects of their career. (2015, p.333)

There is no evidence in Meader's CRJ interviews that he has been "driven to portfolio" practice by financial necessity or industry norms. Taylor and Littleton (2012) apply the term portfolio worker to a type of creative worker, however, that corresponds to the pattern of Meader's creative professional life. In their study of creative work and identity, Taylor and Littleton's describe the "portfolio worker, autonomous and busy with an ever-changing combination of interesting activities and projects" (p.27). Bennett argues that "there are growing social and economic demands for [creative] graduates who are responsive to change, entrepreneurial, able to contribute creatively, and engaged in lifelong learning" (2014, p.236), and Meader certainly fits the entrepreneurial model. In his first CRJ, however, Meader revealed an alignment with Bennett's further finding that an individual's creative work practice is often driven by "intrinsic success defined in terms of self-identity and personal and professional needs" (2014, p.236). This is despite Meader's suggestion that making money was a vital motivation. Rather than being driven by work/career goals,

Meader's CRJ reflections suggested his multidisciplinary creative practice is defined by art's intrinsic value to him, and its importance as contribution to humanity:

> *What we do as artists is really important. When there is a national catastrophe or devastation, people often come together and sing. They don't come together and do accounting or standard deviations or whatever it is. They come together and do something artistic. So there's a value in that.* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

Working with spirit

Meader had a unique view amongst CRJ participants about the inner source of his creative output, an esoteric belief that his creativity was a manifestation of a spiritual realm. He asserted that:

> *The home of creativity isn't something you can measure scientifically. You work in the spirit's world. We all do it . . . you are thinking outside the five senses, you are thinking on higher levels so that's how I work.* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

Meader's idea that his creativity is aligned with the world of the spirit supports Hecq's statement that creative writers read, think and research differently. She proposes they do this through "a methodology of active consciousness whereby knowledge emerges from the unknown to the known [and] new knowledge is produced 'out of sync' from a dialectical process between consciousness and the unconscious" (Hecq, 2013, p.181). Hecq's use of 'dialectical' accords with Sullivan's (2007) modelling of creative practice-led research, which he later explains as having three methods of inquiry: discursive methods to identify patterns, deconstructive methods to identify systems and structures, and the method pertinent to this discussion of Meader's process, dialectical method, whereby language-based methods such as metaphor and analogy are used to challenge, change and create (Sullivan, 2010, pp.108–109).

However, Meader's reflections suggest that he would resist Sullivan's attribution of critical discourse (p.108) concerning his creative output, and Hecq's methodology of active consciousness, which she argues "highlights the active participation in the reflexive method of inquiry [and] which is particular to creative writing research" (2013, p.184).

Despite engaging in a reflective process in the first CRJ chart and interview conversation, Meader asserted of his writing practice: "*I don't think about it. I don't intellectualise about what I am doing, I just write*". Meader elaborates:

> *It is not an intellectual thing. Where do ideas come from? People think that ideas come from the mind, but that's bullshit. I wrote a song once, an original melody. I used to sing with this other guy and we used to write stuff – sometimes he would write, sometimes I would write. I went to his house and I said, "Don, I've written a song". So I played the song to him and the words, and he said it was really good. Then he said, "I've written the same song with different lyrics". You can't explain that. It comes from going beyond the mind, going beyond the brain.* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

Meader identified as someone who is "creative all the time" and for whom a prime driver is the inner rewards of creative practice. He was very clear and emphatic about the spiritual source of his creativity, and his skills in managing his own creative process sourced in this way:

> *I know how to do it. It's part of my life. The life that I lead is a spiritual life and it's all around creativity. It's how I try to deal with people, and I am not always successful, but I try to deal with people from a spiritual point of view. What is the best way of serving this person? It works if you get into that space, people respond to it because you care for them. You get it wrong sometimes. By working with spirit it comes to you all the time, in all different forms. It doesn't always happen while you are asleep, it happens while you are awake as well.* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

It is tempting to disregard Meader's discussion of spirit as a factor in his practice-led research, given the esoteric and indefinable nature of Meader's method of "working with spirit", and also in light of his determinedly unreflective orientation to his PhD; but that would be to miss what Meader clearly stated is a key aspect of his creative practice and a fundamental feature of his practice-led process. "Working with spirit" is an integral part of Meader's ontology, defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2013b) as that aspect of research concerned with raising "basic questions about the nature of reality and the nature of the human being in the world" (p.189). Meader certainly questioned traditional paradigms, or realities, of research and creative practice. To position Meader's ontology of spirit within the landscape of practice-led research methodologies, one must look to discussions of Indigenous research methodologies such as Dillard and Okpalaoka (2013) who identify the

importance of "discourses of the spiritual and the sacred" (p.307) and the "sacred and spiritual nature" (p.305) of such research. For them, spirituality in research is "to have consciousness of the realm of spirit in one's work and to recognize consciousness as a transformative practice in research" (p.308). In this first CRJ, Meader drew attention to how his creative process was enmeshed with the transformative power of "working with spirit", which led to reliable creative outcomes for Meader such as character choices in his works of fiction:

> *The creative process works if you put time in every day. If you don't, it doesn't work. So you put the time in, you do the writing, you go away and you work with spirit. Spirit brings you ideas in all kinds of ways. Some days you just think, [for example] I used to live in Bird Street next door to Sir James and Lady Sheila, so you put it in the story.* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

By Meader's second CRJ, his discussion of his practice had shifted from an exploration of the spiritual dimensions of his personal practice to a more pragmatic focus on the practical elements of his PhD such as supervision, along with future-oriented thinking about the project he was developing outside the PhD, 'Alphabeticus' (Meader, n.d.b.).

Meader's second CRJ (next page)

Creative River Journey: a critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)
Name……………**MM**…………………Date……………**29-11-11**……………………
Artwork/Performance/Text………**The Chocolate Marvel**……………………………………

2. 2009 Published *The Adventures of Charlie & Moon*.		1. [*Alphabeticus*] 20 year in development – started in 1993
		3.Conceived of 2nd & 3rd book in trilogy – applied for PhD
4. Accepted for PhD 2010 to write 2nd & 3rd books --------------------→		---→ *The Chocolate Marvel* & *The Lake of the Lost Kisses*
		5. Sent *24 Carrots*…Jill Durey, supervisor, gave permission to do four stories + novella *Chocolate Marvel*
6. Same time working on producing first book as a feature, [throughout] 2009–2011		7. At same time as writing 2nd book, came up with 4 short story ideas which are: 1. 24 Carrots ✓ 2. Ms. Eta Rip 3. Fish Out of Water, ½ completed 4. The Immaculate Contraption, yet to be written

		8. 2011 Feb – completed *24 Carrots* with drawings (see initial sketches [provided by MM].
9. 2011 Aug Completed *Ms Eta Rip,* (pirate backwards).		
		10. Oct 2011 – had interaction with Daniel Jeanette, animation director of Happy Feet and [I] am now reviewing *The Chocolate Marvel* to make it more epic in nature.
11. Feb 2012 – Finding a new director (animation director *Happy Feet*) -linked to Henson Group (who MM worked with on character drawings, paid them to do that) -Tues 21 Feb Phone conversation with Henson re co-producing the project/director to co-produce		

The role of theory in Meader's practice

In his second CRJ, Meader identified Roald Dahl as a pivotal resource, not just because Dahl wrote for the same child readership, and not just because Meader shared Dahl's interest in addressing bullying though fictional narratives; Meader stated that he drew on Dahl for inspiration for his writing strategies in the same way that he drew on King, with a sheet of 'writing tips' pinned above his writing desk. These tips were most likely drawn from Roald Dahl's story *Lucky Break,* which is his 1977 account of how he became a writer, republished on the Roald Dahl's website as 'Seven Tips from Roald Dahl' (n.d). Meader explained:

> *I don't read what the Marxists are doing or, you know, whatever other terms . . . I don't read any of that stuff because I'm not interested in it. I read Roald Dahl, he's the guy I read, because I think he's appealing to millions of children and he didn't go to university. He just wrote. And he didn't do any research, apart from what's in his books. And so he's got it right. So I want to try and do that. That's my aim. Here you go [indicating a photocopied document pinned above desk] 'Roald Dahl's writing tips'. That's what I do.* (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012)

With this reference to Dahl, Meader's CRJ also demonstrated how he interpreted Dahl's writing practice to be devoid of research, and this influenced Meader's conceptualisation of his own writing practice. Like many artist–researchers who undertake doctoral studies, Meader came to his PhD with a long list of experiences that fed into his professional practice and his writing practice. Meader was able to identify how past script writing experience and previous study of Film, English as a Second Language, and Creative Writing all contributed to his knowledge as an artist–researcher writing fiction for his PhD, even if he didn't reflect on these in any overt, reflexive way:

> *I don't intellectualise about what I am doing, I just write. Because I've written scripts, and the scripts have been made into films, you tend to learn along the way how the elements come together, how there has to be a story arc, how the front mirrors the back, it's a very Shakespearean thing. All those things, and my first degree in literature, second degree a Grad Dip in film, I've done a teaching degree in teaching English as a Second Language, and a Masters in Creative Writing. I've written with great people and learnt from great teachers along the way and I always try to find someone who is better than me. So the editor, when I needed help to edit my book 'Charlie & Moon', she had a great knowledge about writing. So that's how you learn. And I read a lot. There is a book by Stephen King called 'On Writing'. It's just fantastic, it's the bible, because he is such a great writer and he's such a wonderful*

person—when you read what he's gone through. That's by my bed all the time. He just tells you what to do. (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

His lack of recognition of the term practice-led research, and his assertion that he didn't "intellectualise" about writing, both suggest that his concept of his writing practice is that it is free of theory. Yet, the above account was one occasion in the CRJ interviews in which Meader referred to reading theory, identifying the influence of American horror writer Stephen King's (2000) *On Writing: a memoir of craft* as a pivotal resource in his approach to writing.

The supervisory influence and research

In another CRJ reflection Meader was, however, able to identify a specific critical moment related to research in his past practice during a Master of Arts (Creative Writing) degree. Whilst writing his first book, the influence of the higher degree context, and of his supervisor, meant he conducted research that proved very meaningful for him personally:

> *When I was doing 'Charlie & Moon', when I was doing my research proposal, Marcella [Polain], she said I should do some research on children who have lost their parents or been divorced or orphans, and so I did some research on children whose parents had split up* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

What was most striking and poignant about Meader's recount of this critical moment in his higher degree research was how it impacted on his own understanding of his immediate family, and consequently influenced the choices he made in his fiction writing:

> *As I was reading this research at Edith Cowan, I was crying because of . . . [a child I knew well]. I saw his experience, he'd been bullied, he'd lost his confidence. So that had a really profound effect on me. I showed this stuff to . . . [a friend] and she was really moved by it because she didn't realise. These people had written about what happens to kids so I think that's why I write children's stories, for children to become heroic because children are abused.* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

Meader went on from his master's to eventually make bullying the central theme of his doctoral research and critical essay. In the second CRJ interview, Meader again identified HDR supervision as having specific influence. Whilst in his first CRJ, he didn't state that the supervisory relationship initiated any critical moments in his practice, by the second CRJ interview, he noted a critical moment in which he sent the short story 'Twenty Four Carrots'

to his PhD supervisor. (MM, 2nd CRJ Chart, 29 Nov 2011). She gave permission to Meader to do four short stories plus the novella 'The Chocolate Marvel' as the creative component of his doctorate, allowing him to alter the original proposal. Furthermore, one can see from another of Meader's comments that this supervisor had significant influence on the content of his writing. Meader also revealed confidence in his supervisor's ability to critique his writing, and how he welcomed her editorial eye to improve the quality of his fictional writing:

> As long as I deliver good work to Jill [Durey], she's happy, and I've given her three stories so far and she likes all of them. She's really critical. I think if I can satisfy her, I'm on the way, because she's really, really tough. So I've given her three, I'm going to give her another three by July the 20th and another one by the end of August, which will be the longest section of the second Charlie book retried and turned into a short story. Actually, the first draft of Charlie [&] Moon, the second story, she didn't like it and she was right, so I've gone back to the beginning and started all over again. (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012)

Meader's confidence in his supervisory relationship also came, in part, from his supervisor's knowledge of the seminal fictional work of the Victorian novelist Charles Dickens. This knowledge of Dickens, a master story-teller, conveyed to Meader that his supervisor had the skills and knowledge to help his work meet the requirements of the PhD:

> She's a disciple of Dickens, so she knows a lot about the novel. So her knowledge of Dickens is really, really good and about story, you know. And of writing at a really good level so she's happy with what I'm doing. And if she is happy it means that when we send stuff out to the examiners, there's every chance that they'll be happy too. (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012)

Meader's reliance on the supervisory relationship, expressed in the second CRJ, sat alongside Meader's declaration that he sensed a lack of an artist–researcher community at ECU to which he could feel a part of. He expressed this as follows:

> When I go there, no one knows who you are, apart from Duncan [a fellow PhD student in Meader's shared office space]. He's the only person I ever see. [Meader's son] is out there doing singing, so I see him, but apart from that, no one . . . I don't think there's a community at university. I think there's a lack of community because everyone's doing their own thing . . . We come together, a writing group, once a month, but it's only for an hour and a half, two hours. That's good, that's very good. But universities need to be more community driven. (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012)

Kroll argues that in the situation where a doctoral researcher like Meader finds no connection with his university, then the supervisor must address this: "If the institutional research culture does not offer students enough guidance, supervisors must take up the burden" (2009, p.9). References to his supervisor in Meader's second CRJ suggested this may have been the case for him. Kroll, however, suggests that this lack can also be addressed with "the aid of workshops and postgraduate support groups to foster a successful work ethic and speed completion" (2009, p.9), but it is clear from Meader's CRJ comments that even existing ECU writers' groups were not successful in fostering his sense of belong to a community of artist–researchers.

The mature creative

Instead, Meader's second CRJ illustrated him engaged in a number of connections with other professional projects, for example, the 'Alphabeticus' project and potentially producing his first book 'The Adventures of Charlie & Moon' as a film. In this way, Meader's identity as a creative professional appeared to be fully developed through his extensive creative repertoire, something he had built over decades of working as a professional creative. Taylor and Littleton's study of creative work and identity categorised several types of creative workers, one of whom they called the "mature creative" (2012, p.99), that is, someone who had reached an established point in their career after many years of creative practice. Meader's CRJs illustrate that he can be constructed as being a mature creative, aged over 60 years and having worked as a creative professional for decades. He spoke with some pride that one of his projects 'Alphabeticus' was coming to fruition after "*20 years in development*" (MM, 2nd CRJ chart, 29 Nov 2011). Taylor and Littleton draw attention to how mature creative practitioners are generally part of a well-developed network of support, engagement and facilitation:

> Thus, whilst the dominant cultural images of artists and other creative is of the individual worker finding inspiration for and developing their own work in solitude, the reality for many creative is that they pursue and develop their work supported, encouraged and influenced by other people . . . This depiction of creative work as a socially constituted and mediated process marked many mature creatives' accounts of their lives and work. (2012, p.99)

Meader's position as a mature creative working within a well-developed creative community of practice may account for his perception that there was a lack of a community of researchers at ECU. This lack may have been in contrast with his already complex and cohesive professional network. In the course of his CRJ interviews, Meader identified many collaborators and supporters, summing this up at one point in relation to his developing 'Alphabeticus' project:

> *We have people working with us now. One guy, a director, has just come on board and he's won four Emmys. He's been nominated fourteen times. Another guy doing what's called transmedia producing—where he works out all the ways you can get into the market via games, comics—he did 'Avatar' and 'Pirates of the Caribbean'. He is really high profile, so my PhD is, like, over here [gestures to a pile of papers on the desk]. One page a day and I'll get through it, because I've got to write my next two books as these will be films.* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)

What is also significant about this statement is how the PhD became just another part of Meader's creative professional portfolio, one that he suggested took less priority at times than other aspects of his creative practice. But writing was always prioritised by Meader, and he was supported by a range of collaborators or facilitators that encourage him in his professional writing practice:

> *Through my publisher I learnt a lot when we were doing that. We were going backwards and forwards with different drafts. The draft gets to a certain level and you start calling it something else, but can't recall that. There is a printer here who does green printing. I'll get a proof reader in to proof read it. I've got a friend who can set it up and will do the drawings for me so that it is printable, then we'll print it and get an ISBN number. Through Woolridges, I started selling 'Charlie & Moon' to schools, so they cover all the schools in Australia. And the lady there said, "Martin, you need to start writing more".* (MM, personal interview 1, 3 March 2011)
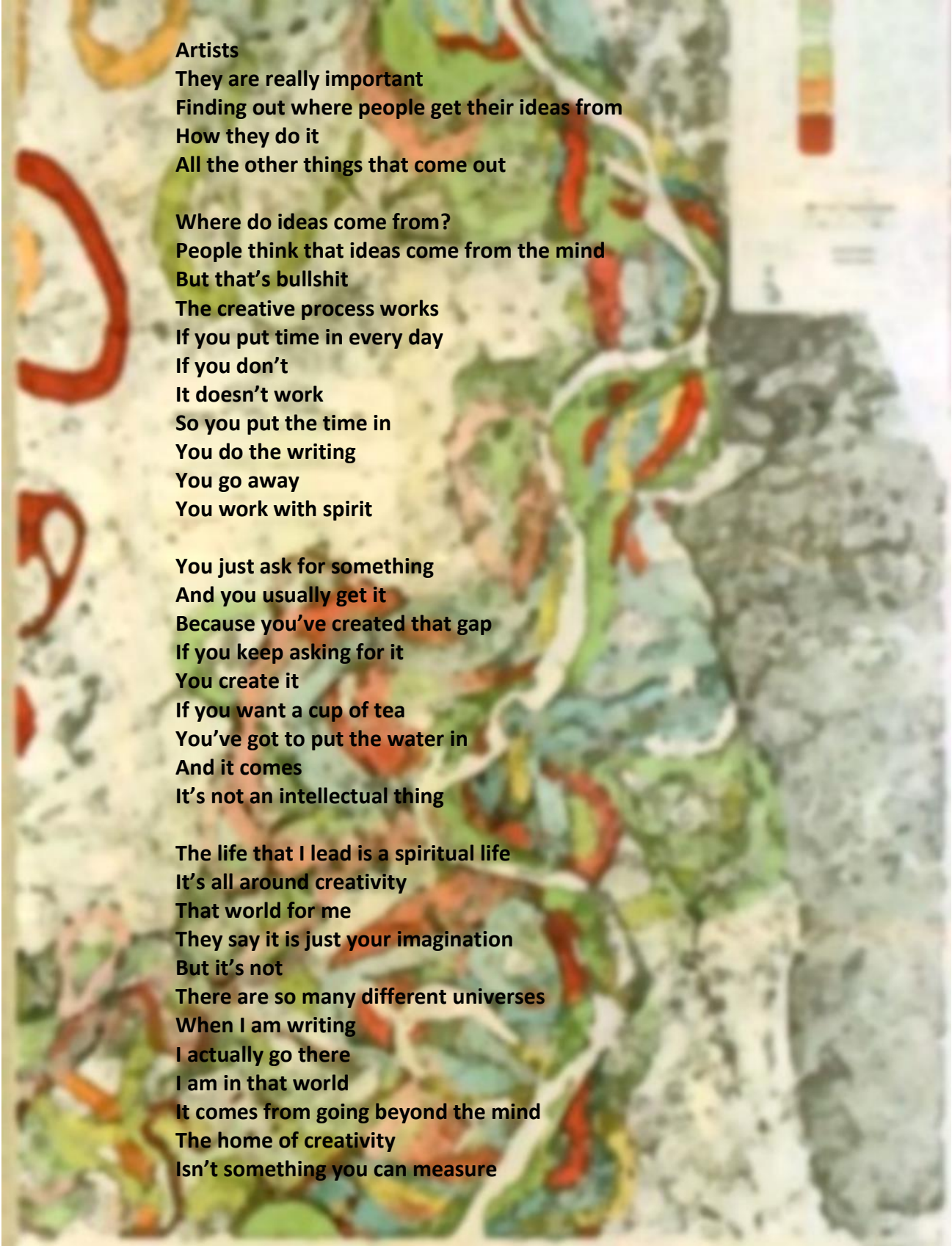
When Meader stated in this CRJ reflection that "I do writing", he was not only alluding to his professional writing; he also revealed in the second CRJ interview that, despite the PhD being "over there", he did carefully plan how his PhD writing would fit into his writing life:

> *I should be finished by next August [2013] but I mightn't, I don't mind. June, July— three of my stories to Jill [his PhD supervisor], then—end of August, the final story to her, and then I've got a year to write 30,000 words. Well, I try and write a thousand words a day now when I'm writing all the books, so that's not going to be hard, to write 30,000 words in a year.* (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012)

Like many doctoral projects, initial timelines can expand, shift and change. Kroll suggests, of the practice-led PhD researcher, that "Supervisors cannot perform miracles, but they help to establish the route, track progress and assess fitness" (2009, p.16). Despite Meader's supervisor establishing a timeline and a route to completion as indicated in his 2012 CRJ comment above, Meader eventually submitted his PhD in late-2016. Kroll also suggests "a supervisor's greatest reward is to be left behind as candidates move into the professional league" (2009, p.16). In Meader's case, however, he was already operating as a fully-fledged mature professional creative. Thus, it can be argued that the reward of the PhD for Meader resided in the PhD being added to his established portfolio career. Meader's CRJs suggested that the role of creative writing artist–researcher (and the works of fiction arising out of this role) have value to him, not by changing Meader's identity from creative professional to artist–researcher, but instead by being integrated into his existing professional practice, thus becoming part of his creative repertoire and livelihood.

POETIC INTERLUDE 10—THE HOME OF CREATIVITY

(A found poem—with thanks to Martin Meader)

Artists
They are really important
Finding out where people get their ideas from
How they do it
All the other things that come out

Where do ideas come from?
People think that ideas come from the mind
But that's bullshit
The creative process works
If you put time in every day
If you don't
It doesn't work
So you put the time in
You do the writing
You go away
You work with spirit

You just ask for something
And you usually get it
Because you've created that gap
If you keep asking for it
You create it
If you want a cup of tea
You've got to put the water in
And it comes
It's not an intellectual thing

The life that I lead is a spiritual life
It's all around creativity
That world for me
They say it is just your imagination
But it's not
There are so many different universes
When I am writing
I actually go there
I am in that world
It comes from going beyond the mind
The home of creativity
Isn't something you can measure

CHAPTER 5—TALES THE RIVERS TELL (DISCUSSION)

The preceding six narratives of practice give individual accounts of what the CRJ reflections revealed about each artist–researcher. These narratives—from performing artist–researchers, Russya Connor and Mark Gasser; from visual artist–researchers, Jane Donlin and Sue Girak; and from fiction writing artist–researchers, Rashida Murphy and Martin Meader—contribute to our understanding of HDR practice-led research by providing idiosyncratic windows through which to gain insights about individual experiences.

Analysing the contributions of this diverse range of artist–researchers to the 'Creative River Journey' project required several layers of data analysis, the first layer being the 'narratives of practice'. These were compiled using the data from CRJ charts and interviews, participants' creative works, their exegeses and their own publications, adopting Siobhan Murphy's (2012) term for her own account of her practice-led research. Such an approach to data analysis is also in keeping with qualitative data methods such as narrative research (Webster & Mertova, 2007) and Yin's advice in using narrative in case study research (Yin, 2014, p.126). This stage, whereby each "case's own story" (Stake, 2003, p.144) emerged as a narrative of practice, reflected and paid respect to the highly individual content of each of the artist–researchers' CRJs, and indeed their higher degree journey overall. Thus, the first stage was the creation of individual case studies which nonetheless shared a consistent approach.

A second layer of data analysis was applied in order to identify common themes that emerged from the diversity of the narratives of practice, and it is this data analysis that forms the discussion in this next chapter. In keeping with the a/r/tographical focus of 'living inquiry', in which the embodied meanings of the artist–researchers' experiences are explored, celebrated and interrogated, these commonalities were arrived at through "constantly comparing themes that emerge through the data" (Irwin & Springgay, 2008a, p.xxix). This is also in keeping with cross-case analysis techniques whereby the outcome of the comparison of these narratives of practice "can be new categories and concepts which the investigators did not anticipate" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.541). This is certainly the case in the unanticipated emergent theme of the "intangible emotion" of art practice and "the

importance of personal relationships and networks" (not just professional ones) within context and community.

To report on this variety of themes that emerged and to arrive at findings about these cases, however, it was necessary to distil the diverse themes through the use of a third layer of data analysis. Yin suggests that adopting "theoretical orientations guiding the case study" (2003b, p.122) is a useful analytical strategy to report on the most significant aspects of multiple cases. In this third stage of data analysis, therefore, I returned to the conceptual framework that I established when I initiated the project. The multiple themes from the second stage of data analysis were categorised according to the intersections of the a/r/tographical conceptual framework (Figure 1), that is, art practice, research, and teaching/education.

The resulting categories—*artistic* development of HDRs; practice-led *research*; and research *training*— were themselves nuanced by their intersection with the second stage themes. Thus, the three key categories for data analysis are described as follows, with a fourth category examining the CRJ itself:

1. **ARTISTIC** DEVELOPMENT OF HDR CANDIDATES: Context and community; relationships and personal networks; approaches to art practice; identity; knowledge creation
2. PRACTICE-LED **RESEARCH**: challenges; skills; methodology
3. RESEARCH **TRAINING**: theory; lifelong practice; reflection and reflexivity; induction into professional networks;
4. CREATIVE RIVER JOURNEY INQUIRY: participants' experiences and outcomes.

1. ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF HDR CANDIDATES

Context and Community: the creative ecology of ECU practice-led research

The process documented by the six 'Creative River Journey' participants concerning their experiences of becoming researchers highlights how crucial the university context is for their development as artist–researchers. All of the participants in this project were candidates at ECU's Mt Lawley campus, and they were either enrolled in higher degrees by research through the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) or ECU's (then named) School of Communications and Arts (SCA). Both these schools, WAAPA and SCA, have provided workshop- or studio-based education in the visual arts, performing arts and creative writing for several decades. Many of the lecturers and higher degree supervisors are artists with professional careers outside the academy. This practitioner–researcher–teacher base provides a skilled and sympathetic orientation towards supporting practice. It also provides an example of Howkins' (2009) concept of a rich creative ecology, which he describes as: "a niche where diverse individuals express themselves in a systematic and adaptive way, using ideas to produce new ideas; and where others support this endeavour even if they don't understand it" (p.11).

ECU supports practice-led research artist–researchers in a number of ways, including practice-led research sympathetic supervision, inter-project and interdisciplinary discussion forums and a weekly creative research forum called 'This is Not a Seminar' (TINAS) Creative Dialogues. TINAS was established by key practice-led research supervisors and postdoctoral appointees who state that: "The overriding ethos of TINAS has been to dissolve the silos of disciplinary thought and practice, and to equip creative postgraduate students with a range of research skills related to creative practice within the academy regardless of discipline" (Adams et al., 2015, p.1334).

As identified via Girak's process of adaptive, social construction of knowledge through her artistic research, the practice-led research program at ECU exists in a social community of practice, whether the artist–researcher identifies themselves as part of that social community or not. Donlin was a member of an informal group of ECU textile artist–researchers, each of whose art practice focused on the hand-made. Connor's second CRJ

reflection was on the ensemble experience of translating her research into a performance for WAAPA dancers. Even Gasser, explaining that he did not actively engage in the practice-led research community, drew attention to the fact that he was located within an influential community of musicians at WAAPA which he felt "would laugh him out of the canteen" if he called his music investigations research.

Gasser's comment also alerts those concerned with sustaining practice-led research higher degrees that practice-led researchers need to feel part of an inclusive and supportive community to help them identify as researchers. Donlin said that she sometimes felt isolated during her PhD but that the CRJ focus group was beneficial: "*Quite often when you work in the arts, you are all by yourself a lot of the time, so it's really good to have this exchange of ideas*" (JD, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011). For Meader, a once-a-month meeting of creative writing postgraduates was not sufficient to foster a sense of him belonging at ECU as a practice-led researcher. Meader's reflection that "*universities need to be more community-driven*" (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012) is notable for his call for a greater focus on inclusion within the ECU creative ecology.

Howkins argues that in a creative ecology inter-relationships are found in overt and intangible communities where "it is the relationships and actions that count, not the infrastructure" (2009, p.1). Pedersen and Haynes, when researching the experiences of women in practice-led research, argue that "a horizontal networking of peers' brings many benefits to artist–researchers" (2015, p.1272). These findings support the experiences of the CRJ participants documented here. The research participants suggest that the relationships they have within their various communities, tangible and intangible, have a substantial impact on them as researchers, and that this is an aspect of practice-led research training and support to which universities should pay particular attention.

Relationships and personal networks

Along with institutionally constructed formal and informal networks, such as the ECU creative ecology, the CRJs of the artist–researchers revealed the importance of personal relationships and a personalised network of both professional and personal contacts to support their artistic practice. Personal relationships were highlighted by several of the

participants. For example, Gasser discussed his existing friendship with PhD subject Ronald Stevenson and his wife Marjorie. This friendship existed alongside his mentorship by Stevenson and grew into his close study and performances of Stevenson's compositions. Girak described the importance of a personal friend, Kate, to her knowledge construction. Her conversations with the friend grew into a key component of her reflective practice, with Girak recording and transcribing these conversations as they became part of her critical reflection process.

These engagements with others occur within the individual's self-constructed social network of practice which includes both personal contacts and professional contacts (such as those found in the academic community of practice-led researchers). Just as each practice-led researcher's methodology evolves to be highly individualised according to the needs of their practice and research, so each PhD candidate must develop their own social network of practice according to their own personal circumstances and context. WAAPA theatre and performance students have been lucky in that there is a community of practice-led researchers deliberately formed to support postgraduate researchers, the WAAPA Reading and Writing Group. However, this group did not afford a music researcher like Gasser a similar sense of inclusion, suggesting that his identity as classical musician was not congruent with the theatre and performance focus of this group.

One of the reasons for this need for the artist–researchers to construct, or further construct, a social network of practice is that they are in the process of moving from an existing role as artist to become an emergent artist–researcher. There is, as Biggs and Büchler argue, a disruption and conflict that arises when an artist moves from the shared values of a creative practice community into the shared values of an academic community (2011, p.87). This disjunction may be what Gasser was alluding to when he discussed the potential derision of his shared creative community of practice which encompassed the musicians in the WAAPA canteen. Biggs and Büchler suggest this dissonance between artist and artist–researcher is due to the relatively new induction of practice-led research into academic communities of practice. (Although practice-led research has been accepted for over three decades, it is new compared to research in centuries-old disciplines such as some sciences, classical music

or the traditional humanities). Biggs and Büchler suggest that there are shared values in creative arts communities of practice, and shared values in an academic community of practice, but that a shared set of values in the creative practice-led research community of practice is yet to evolve. They state:

> The hasty academicization of the creative practice community has had a disruptive effect. The phenomenon has caused the coherence between values and actions to be broken and each community [academic practice and creative practice] finds itself judging activities that did not emerge from its own values. (2011, p.89)

Similarly, the notion of a shared community of practice is visible in Burnard's account of Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus'. She describes this as the way people develop shared ways of doing things when "individuals belonging to different social locations are socialized differently", giving them a "sense of what is comfortable or what is natural" in that social setting (Burnard, 2012, p.217). Bourdieu states that "when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it finds itself 'as a fish in water', it does not feel the weight of the water and takes the world for granted" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1989, p.3). As Webb, Schirato and Danaher explain:

> Once people enter a field, their habitus begins to take on the values and norms of that field, and to generate dispositions to think, act and believe in ways that are approved by the field. (2002, p.174)

This suggests that changes to habitus may create a dissonance for artists as they enter the academy. Creative practice community members may feel like fish *out* of water as they enter the academy and learn the characteristics of research required of PhD candidates, eventually achieving a coherent approach to practice-led research. Artist–researchers are often being inducted into a process of PhD 'training' to learn a new way of doing things, and thereby recognise the dissonance between creative and academic community values. Thus, their existing 'habitus' can be unconsciously challenged and expanded when they overcome this dissonance to form their own highly individual interpretation of practice and research. One way for an individual to overcome this cultural divide is to build their own coherent social network of like-minded artist–researchers, working to support each other as barriers are reconstructed into bridges.

Professional networks can be critical in building a personal identity within practice-led research. In her CRJ, Murphy described her network within the writing community, and how it led to her reconnecting with her former ECU master's supervisor. Meader's research drew on an extensive personal network of creative mentors and supporters developed through his professional practice. In one CRJ interview, Meader eagerly shared a series of illustrations he had commissioned from a long-time creative collaborator for one of his children's stories, a story to be included in the PhD creative component. Later, I saw that these illustrations were not included in his final PhD submission, perhaps as they were not his own original work, but it was evident that this collaboration with the illustrator contributed significantly to Meader's growing creative writing practice.

Individual approaches to art practice

The case studies of these various artist–researchers and their experience of practice-led research reveal their highly individualised approaches to art practice. This is not surprising, given that the CRJ project was deliberately structured to examine cases from various artistic disciplines, and various manifestations of creativity.

Such diversity is also acknowledged in Burnard's discussion of music practice research where she discusses not 'creativity' but 'creativities'. Arguing for a place in music research for "digital musicians, video game sound designers, community musicians, singer song-writers, record producers" and more, Burnard "debunks residual misconceptions and myths associated with a notional singular musical creativity" (2012, p.3).

In Nelson's model of "theory imbricated with practice"—the insider (know-how); the outsider (know-what); and the "tacit made explicit through critical reflection" (know-that) (2013, p.37)—all three ways of knowing exist in an approach to practice-led research that is multimodal, dialogic and dynamic. The participant artist–researchers demonstrated that this was true of their practice-led research. It can be seen that researchers privileged a particular type of knowledge, however, even within one broad discipline. For example, of the two performing arts higher degree students, Connor privileged the 'insider knowing' of her embodied knowledge in her physical performance practice. In contrast, Gasser adopted a musicology 'outsider knowledge' position in his final exegesis, which was wholly focused on

theories and conceptual understandings of his composer subject. Though the two visual artists in the CRJ project demonstrated all three ways of knowing to a substantial level, Donlin privileged two: the 'outside' knowledge she found in theory from thinkers such as Ruskin and Adorno, and the 'tacit made explicit' through reflection on this theory and its relationship to her tradere practice, literally and reflexively weaving theory and practice together to generate artistic outcomes. Girak, as both an art teacher and artist, privileged 'the tacit made explicit through critical reflection' with her highly refined critical processes reflecting on her teaching and on her material art practice.

Of the two creative writing PhD participants, Murphy expressed a difficult journey in which she was able to reconcile her preferred style of writing using an experiential 'inner knowing' (such as the Freefall cathartic, 'unshackled' writing) with a more controlled, academic style of writing. Unlike Donlin and Girak, the 'tacit made explicit' knowledge-making process was less formalised for Murphy, and thus her exegesis privileged the experiential over the theoretical. Meader's exegesis almost fully privileged the experiential over the tacit made explicit, and over outsider theoretical knowledge. In Meader's practice-led creative writing research, his inner world of past and present (tacit knowledge through personal experiences of bullying) collides with wider issues he has experienced in society (banks, greed, institutional control) leading to a unique writing style. Meader is overt about his refusal to reflect on his creative practice, preferring to do (tacit knowledge) rather than think about it (tacit made explicit and conceptual knowledge).

Haseman and Mafe (2009, p.219) argue that practice-led research is a process that inevitably entails chaos and complexity but which leads to the emergence of more refined practice. Nelson (2013, p.37) suggests this emergence from complexity is achieved through engaging three modes of knowledge together, as in his model of Practice-as-Research (PaR) included in Chapter 1 (Figure 3). There are a number of factors identified by the participants in their CRJ reflections that do not readily fit into Nelson's model, nor indeed into academic notions of research. The emotion involved in creative work was highlighted by several participants. Gasser explained that his music performance practice is "*all about the emotions*", and he drew on poetry and metaphor, playing "*like climbing Everest*" for

example, in the CRJ conversations to communicate this emotion (MG, 1st CRJ chart, 16 Dec 2010). Murphy identified a time of "*lots of soul-searching*" during her creative writing process and a need to "*share her doubts*" with her daughter (RM, 2nd CRJ, 3 Nov 2011).

Meader drew attention to his preference that he should "*work with spirit*", that is, "*thinking outside the five senses . . . ask for something and you get it*" (MM, 2nd interview, 3 Mar 2011) in order to be creative. Meader also wrote of magic as part of the creative process in his recently submitted exegesis. Girak frequently talked about "life-defining moments" in which her sudden creative realisations were resonant with emotional impact for her.

In a chapter entitled 'The Magic is in the Handling', Bolt (2007) argues that new knowledge is achieved in practice-led research through "shocks of thought" (p.33). These are not, in Bolt's view (which might well disappoint Meader), achieved through magic. Instead, Bolt believes the artist–researcher creates new knowledge through the movements in thought brought about by writing the exegesis, a "vehicle through which the work of art can find a discursive form" (p.33). Bolt further states: "Such movement cannot be gained through contemplative knowledge alone, but takes the form of concrete understandings which arise in our dealings with ideas, tools and materials of practice" (p.33). Even so, all the artist–researchers revealed in their CRJs that there must be a place in the practice-led PhD journey for the inconcrete, for the emotional, intangible, serendipitous or 'magic' aspects of the research to emerge and be recognised.

Looking at Nelson's model it is hard to see where this emotional, intangible element might be placed, though 'experiential knowing', part of 'insider', close-up know-how, would seem to be the closest fit. But the CRJ project has revealed that the emotional experiences and less tangible qualities like intuition or doubt within the practice-led PhD demand attention and validation in the practice-led process. Ken Robinson (2011), in his book on creativity, argues for the role of feelings in the creative process: "It is through feelings as well as through reason that we find our real creative power. It is through both that we connect with each other and create the complex, shifting worlds of human culture" (p.196). Robinson identifies aesthetics as one of those 'intangibles' that sit outside traditional academic ways

of knowing. In an argument for creativity across disciplines, he also claims a place for aesthetics and feeling in creativity and suggests:

> Aesthetics is a powerful force in all forms of creative work: for scientists and mathematicians just as for musicians, poets, dancers and designers. It is one example of the many ways in which being creative may include, but always goes beyond, the confines of academic intelligence. Being creative is not only about thinking: it is about feeling. (p.169)

If there is dissonance between creative communities of practice and academic communities of practice, this will inevitably generate feelings. The processes for resolving this dissonance, and the experience of 'becoming' artist–researcher, will inevitably produce feelings for the HDR candidate. So how does one honour the role of emotions, feelings and intangibles such as intuition, fitting these into the process of the practice-led degree? In their work on practice in health, education and the creative arts, Higgs and Titchen (2001) suggest that attention needs to be paid to "internal frames of reference" such as culture and life history. They argue that there are: "four key dimensions of practice: 'doing', 'knowing', 'being' and 'becoming'" (p.viii). In their model of practice, 'becoming' is a creative process that allows an artist–researcher to imagine possible ways of being and involve "aesthetic dimensions of practice" (p.5), along with other intangible issues such as authenticity, personal transformation, ethics and wisdom (pp.69). This notion of becoming or evolving is common to the CRJ artist–researchers, as is another aspect of the artist–researchers' reflections on art practice: the concept of identity.

Identity

The doctorate that each artist–researcher embarked on was a close reflection of their lifetime creative practice. For each participant, the PhD role added to their existing repertoire of creative skills, or to an extant creative professional life. For example, for Meader, the PhD was not his central focus, but instead was added to his complex and varied roles as filmmaker, musician, choirmaster and writer. On the other hand, for Girak, the PhD became a way to synthesise two aspects of her identity—artist and teacher—whilst adding a third aspect, researcher, in an integrated self-concept as a/r/tographer. At the same time, Girak was synthesising a passion for sustainability and Reggio Emilia principles into all three

aspects of her practice. In one critical moment, she describes how she was able to reconcile these complexities of identity, and interest, explaining "*it's one voice, but multiple identities*" (SG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011).

In most cases, the PhD journey is a complex synthesis of lifelong passions and practice that challenges the notion of the higher education degree enrollee as 'student'. Yet there is still a significant aspect of development of self that is inherent in becoming a researcher. Murphy, for example, discussed "becoming a grown up" and a writer through the PhD process. On the other hand, Gasser resisted the process of becoming a researcher, as it challenged his sense of identity as a performing artist. What both of these cases point to is the need for overt discussion with a higher degree candidate about the transition from artist to artist–researcher as part of enrolling in a higher degree by research.

In an early review of practice-led research (Rust, Mottram & Till, 2007) for the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council, it was suggested that many artists conducting PhDs see "practice-led research as the only way they can reconcile their dual identity as an artist/designer/architect on the one hand, and an academic on the other" (p.61). Rust et al. argue that 'we must develop the practical methods that can be used to give the practitioner/researcher proper ownership of the [practice-led research] process" (p.63). This may be difficult to achieve however, given institutional requirements for new knowledge creation and the reporting of findings in a master's or doctoral exegesis. An artist may have the choice to have 'proper ownership' over their artistic process, but when an artist–researcher's artistic process is embedded within a higher degree by research context, the demands and constrictions of academic research accompany their artistic development. There needs to be clear discussion at commencement of the PhD that the artist–researcher must fulfil two processes: becoming (more) artist and becoming a researcher.

Experiential knowledge and individual practice

A variety of terms are applied to knowledge and knowledge-making in practice-led research. Nelson calls it, in part, know-how (see Figure 3). Sullivan suggests transcognition is a term better suited to what he describes as "the thoughtful movement of the artistic mind" (2010, p.134). Carter introduced the term 'material thinking' which he proposes typifies the

thinking that "occurs in the making of works of art . . . an intellectual endeavour peculiar to the making process" (2004, p.xi). But the 'Creative River Journey' research has identified two terms that are useful when exploring the highly personalised and idiosyncratic knowledge that the artist–researchers in this study brought to, and generated from, their practice-led research. These are 'personally-situated knowledge' and 'experiential knowledge', even though these two terms may often be used interchangeably. Personally-situated knowledge, first mooted by Polanyi (1958), is that which resides in, and is created from, the personal and subjective experiences of an individual. Barrett argues that "the situated and personally motivated nature of knowledge acquisition through [practice-led research] approaches presents an alternative to traditional academic pedagogies" (2007b, p.2). Experiential knowledge has its roots in Dewey's theories (1934/1980), and is knowledge that is generated through experience on a continuum, as each new experience builds on previous experience, creating new knowledge. Sutherland and Acord suggest that experiential knowledge is contextual: "inseparable from the context of its production and reception' (2007, p.125). In practice-led research, the experiential knowledge is located in, and acquired through, practice within a research context. As Barrett explains:

> Creative arts research is often motivated by emotional, personal and subjective concerns; it operates not only on the basis of explicit and exact knowledge, but also on that of tacit and experiential knowledge. Experience operates within the domain of the aesthetic and knowledge produced through aesthetic experience is always contextual and situated. (2007a, p.115)

Nelson argues against the use of the noun 'knowledge' in practice-led research, instead suggesting that the verb form 'knowing' better conveys the subjectivity in which an artist–researcher is engaged, and the processual relationship of knowledge-making through practice (2013, p.20). Nelson also adopts the term praxis, "the imbrication of theory within practice" (p.5), to indicate that kind of knowledge in practice-led research which is generated through the overlapping of theory and practice. To explain imbrication further, he identifies his model of art praxis as akin to Smith and Dean's (2009) explanation of practice and research as being "interwoven in an iterative cyclic web" (Smith & Dean, 2009, p.2, as cited in Nelson, 2013, p.21).

In their study of artist employed in academia, Wright, Bennett and Blom (2010) argue that "the capacity of the artist–academic to translate the research skills that stand behind artistic accomplishment into a form valued in the university environment . . . is central to considerations on the future of the 'artist-academic' (p.462). The 'Creative River Journey' participants' capacities for knowledge-building from their own creative practice is demonstrated to be a key requirement of their HDR practice-led process but the participants did so to varying degrees. I suggested earlier how important past experiences were for the artist–researchers in the 'Creative River Journey' study, in developing their practice-led research. Reflection on this, such as that in the CRJ strategy, may assist participants to identify existing knowledge and help them translate this for the HDR context. The artist–researcher participants came to their doctoral studies with extensive personally-situated knowledge created through a long history of practice, and often a lifetime's engagement with the chosen focus of their research. For example, Murphy's many years of personally-situated knowledge of creative writing and transnational fiction was then interwoven into her PhD practice-led research. Her knowledge moved from a less cohesive frame of intuitive creative production, such as her Freefall writing, to integrated fully formed concepts such as her self-identification as a transnational fiction writer. As she acquired new knowledge of methodology and theory, Murphy applied this to her creative writing and reading groups in a complex experiential knowledge-making process. Her creative writing practice-led research led to new knowledge not just for herself, but also to inform fellow writing practitioners and the creative writing field in general.

For Gasser, the PhD made concrete the personally-situated knowledge that had, to date, been tacit and ephemeral, locked within his own embodied music performances, and disappearing once a concert had been performed, as he discussed in his Seamus Heaney-related CRJ critical moment. His lifetime of experiential knowledge concerning his practice-led research subject, Ronald Stevenson, built through his relationships with the composer and his *Passacaglia* composition, became embodied in his performances of the work. However, Gasser chose not to transform the personally-situated knowledge of his own music performances into accessible, explicit knowledge in his exegesis. Instead, Gasser built a detailed aesthetic framework around the works of composer Ronald Stevenson,

positioning his thesis as "a critical summary of his life's body of work as a composer-pianist and his eight-decade relationship with the instrument . . . [which] explores Stevenson's core artistic ideal that humanity can tangibly be reflected in art" (Gasser. 2013, p.3).

Clearly, his experiences of the CRJ reflections were not enough to induct Gasser into any explicit process of reflection upon experiential and tacit knowledge. McAlpine and Weston suggest of higher education that "transforming experiential and tacit knowledge into principled explicit knowledge . . . requires intentional reflection for the purpose of making sense of and learning from experience for the purpose of improvement" (2002, p.69). Yet there is no intentional reflection by Gasser upon his own piano practice (except upon the work of Ronald Stevenson) included in his thesis. I suggest that conflicts about research that exist between his usual community of practice, the music performance community, and the academic research community of practice meant that 'reflection' was rendered a research skill to be avoided. Gasser stated: "*I've got to do this PhD to get a job, because the way it's going in music [in higher education], you've got to have the academic qualifications*" (MG, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011), suggesting there was no intrinsic motivation on Gasser's part to reflect on practice for his PhD. He stated that his motivation to engage in the CRJ project was out of colleagiality and support for a fellow PhD candidate (me), not out of a need to explore his own practice.

Two other participants, Connor and Meader, also wrestled with the idea of transforming their experiential art practice knowledge into an academically accessible form of knowledge. Connor was initially focused on communicating her embodied underwater experiences to an audience primarily through her performance practice. By the end of her PhD, however, she saw her practice-led research as "the culmination and crossover of the tacit, empirical, physiological and practical aesthetic, with spatial, psychological and theoretical knowledge in a performing body" (Connor, 2012, p.1). Meader was clear about his limited use of reflection to transform or make knowledge, stating "*I don't intellectualise about what I am doing, I just write*" (MM, personal interview 1, 2 March 2011). In this instance, Meader saw reflection on his practice as incongruent with his concept of what constitutes creativity. He elaborated: "*It comes from going beyond the mind, beyond the brain*" (MM, personal

interview 1, 2 March 2011). Here again there was dissonance between Meader's concept of creativity within what he recognised as his own community of practice, and the formalised expression and documentation of creativity in the academic community of practice.

2. PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH

Applying the term

One of the initial challenges faced in drawing together data from the project's diversity of practice-led research is that it was not the case that all of the artist–researchers who participated in the 'Creative River Journey' project identified as practice-led researchers. This is despite the participants completing their doctorates over an eight year period from 2009-2016, when ECU's institutional and supervisory understanding and support for practice-led research burgeoned (e.g. Stock et al., 2009; Robson et al., 2010). One of the last participants to submit, Martin Meader at the end of 2016, does not mention practice-led research in his critical essay at all, despite his thesis being examined on the criteria for creative research disciplines. (ECU's Creative Writing discipline area has elected to use the term 'critical essay' rather than exegesis, however, both Meader and Murphy's doctoral submissions were more akin to an exegetical reflection on their own art practice and the relationship of theory to their practice, than an objective critique of theory). This challenge illustrates that practice-led research is both a highly individualised, personal construction of creative practice, and a research approach that is resistant to categorisation and 'sameness'. At the same time, practice-led research embodies common qualities of commitment to building new knowledge out of a researcher's personal disciplinary practice, rigorous reflective practice or reflexivity in that practice, and a genuinely original contribution to a chosen field of creative practice.

In choosing to use the term practice-led research to describe the participants' higher degree creative research, I am engaging with a field where a variety of terms are applied to similar research, as discussed in the literature review. I have chosen to apply the term practice-led research, however, as it is a well-recognised descriptor of this kind of research in the Australian context. I employ it as an umbrella term under which to group researchers who are engaged in creative practice as a component of their higher degree, and whom are

engaged with theory about their practice in some way. It is not necessarily as a term that indicates a directional inter-relationship between their practice and their research.

This view of practice-led research is further informed by Haseman and Mafe's (2009) definition of practice-led researchers as people "who seek to build epistemologies of practice which serve to improve the practice itself and our theoretical understandings of that practice" (2009, p.214). As illustrated in the project's narratives of practice, the artist–researchers are conducting practice-led research congruent with this definition.

By choosing this term, I am also putting at the forefront of this thesis the proposition that creative practice-led research offers an alternate paradigm of research alongside the more traditional choices of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, similar to Haseman's positioning of practice-led research as "a third species of research" (2007, p.150). An artist–researcher may adopt any of the methods from these two paradigms in their practice-led research, a process which reflects Denzin and Lincoln's model of the qualitative "researcher-as-bricoleur" (2013a, p.7). Mafe and Brown say the value of practice-led research is that it allows "the voice of that 'alternative' logic of practice to be made accessible" and from which arise "potentially new insights that contribute to the fabric of human knowledge" (2006, p.2). The creative practice-led research paradigm has at its heart the tacit, complex knowledge embedded in art-making processes and adds immense value to the rich tradition of hermeneutic research approaches.

One of the initial aims of this project was to make deliberate pedagogical interventions into the reflective practice of artist–researchers. By aiding participants to describe and document their practice, I sought to help them make the transition from practitioner to practitioner–researcher whilst retaining the authenticity of their individual voices. Helping them to access the tacit knowledge of practice, and highlighting theory that the artist–researchers were adapting and exploring, moved their practice toward Nelson's model of praxis: 'doing-reflecting-reading-articulating-doing' (2013, p.32). All participants were initially able to voice their practice, with some arriving eventually at detailed documentations of complex praxis. Sue Girak, for example, adopted the reflective practice of the CRJ and expanded it into an idiosyncratic critical reflexive methodology.

It is the idiosyncratic nature of practice-led research and the individuality of each artist–researcher's voice that resists categorisation of individual artist–researchers' methods into one cohesive methodological system of practice-led research. (Hence, I pose it as an umbrella term, not a model or system). However, if one accepts that the common element in all the researchers' projects, and indeed in the CRJ itself, is what Nelson calls the "iterative, dialogic engagement of doing thinking" (2013, p.19), then the challenge posed by the diversities of practice may be overcome.

The challenge of diversity

When discussing practice-led research, one way of taking up the challenge of what Kershaw calls the "extraordinary diversity within its overall methodology" (2011, p.64) has been to see each artist–researcher within the CRJ project as a singular case. Yin suggests that the case study method suits a situation where the boundaries between the phenomenon studied and its context are not clear (2003a, p.13). However, that doesn't assist researchers who are new to practice-led methodologies to navigate their way forward and plan their practice-led research. This trajectory is further complicated because there is also diversity in the various conditions that theorists suggest are required for practice-led research, with Haseman and Mafe arguing that there are six conditions of practice-led research (2009, pp.214–217) and Mercer and Robson proposing seven conditions of practice-led performance research (2012, pp.11–20). Nelson cites Jones who suggests that, 'Our greatest challenge is to find ways . . . of housing the mix of performative and textual practices alongside one another" (Jones in Allegue et al., 2009, p.21, as cited in Nelson, 2013, p.7). Nelson suggests his model of practice-as-research (PaR) "affords one way of housing the mix" (p.7), providing a simple definition:

> PaR involves a research project in which practice is a key method of inquiry and where, in respect of the arts, a practice (creative writing, dance, musical score/performance, theatre/performance, visual exhibition, film or other cultural practice) is submitted as substantial evidence of a research inquiry. (2013, p.9)

All of the artist–researchers in the 'Creative River Journey' study used practice as a key method of inquiry and submitted a creative project and an exegesis (or critical essay). Further, all reflected on their practice in some way as a component of their PhD project.

Four of the participants—Connor and Murphy, Donlin and Girak—closely reflected on their own practice through highly individualised processes of research reflexivity. Gasser completed an exegesis that closely reflected on the subject of his piano practice, the composer Ronald Stevenson, but did not reflexively critique his own practice. This was despite his CRJs reflecting on his own practice quite closely. In Meader's critical essay component of his doctorate, he did not take a practice-led approach. Though it included deeply personal reflections on his experiences of bullying, little detail was given on how this has influenced the contents of his fictional short stories. Rarely during the CRJ project, and in many cases in their exegeses, did the six artist–researchers call themselves practice-led researchers. Yet, all could be described as striving to find their own highly personal, individualised approach to the interrelationship of practice and research

Despite this diversity and the dissonance between their exegetical submissions and practice-led research, if these artist–researchers' CRJ reflections and their projects are analysed against definitions of practice-led research, such as Nelson's (2013) or Mafe and Brown's (2006), many would recognise these six artist–researchers as conducting a type of practice-led research. This is why I have chosen to use this term. However, in future research, it may be more appropriate to apply an even more encompassing term such as creative practice research to describe cohorts of artist–researchers, as this would honour their highly individual self-actualisation as researchers. That being said, as many informed theorists would recognise these six cases as exemplars of the diversity within practice-led research, I will now illustrate some of the challenges faced in practice-led research, each using a specific case of an artist–researcher's practice to illustrate the nature of each challenge.

Idiosyncratic terminology in practice-led research: what Donlin's tale reveals

I have written earlier in this chapter about how the nomenclature of practice-led research is contested, for example, it goes by other names such as Nelson's practice–as–research (2013) and Schwab's (2011) artistic research, and this can present the HDR artist–researcher with a particular challenge in defining their research process. One artist–researcher in the 'Creative River Journey' project, Jane Donlin, who was the first participant to submit her thesis in 2011, avoided the variants of practice-led/practice-as terminology and explains her

methodology as "reflexive art practice" (Donlin, 2011, p.115). At no point in Donlin's CRJ interviews, nor in her final 70,000 word PhD submission (which she called a thesis, not an exegesis), did she use the terminology practice-led research or practice-as-research. Instead, Donlin stated that her "art praxis is contextualised within the framework of reflexivity, the idea that creative art practice and theory build on one another" (Donlin, 2011, p.ii) She went on to explain that this involved two research methods: firstly reflection on her role as a traditional textile maker, and secondly rethinking the position of the traditional textile crafts in society and culture by drawing on critical theory. Both of these strategies are consistent with practice-led research.

I will write further in this chapter about reflexivity as it was an important concept for several of the artist–researchers. However, on this occasion I wish to draw attention to how the process of developing an art practice within a research higher degree also entails the formulation of one's idiosyncratic methodology. For Connor, for example, as outlined previously, this involved honing her methodology into a clear performance practice-led research framework. For Donlin, this involved devising her methodology—reflexive art praxis—using her creative practice of traditional methods of making textiles (including dyes, weaving and stitching) as the basis for her inquiry. Donlin explained:

> For myself, as an artist, reflexivity essentially entails a constant negotiation between the theoretical, contextual content of my work and the lived experience perspective as a maker. Also, researching new knowledge helps my practical work to evolve. Since informed reflexive action has the potential to re-evaluate and redefine the way we think about the crafts, it is a central method used in my art praxis. (Donlin, 2011, p.11)

What is significant here is Donlin's clear identification of reflexivity as central to her lived experience as both an artist using traditional techniques and as a reader of theory. Like several of the artist–researcher participants, Donlin chose to take a slow and meticulous journey in constructing her personal methodology. In her independently completed second CRJ chart, she showed her reflexivity in action as she slowly completes a work and reflects on its meanings: '*Reflection on process & theory: this work is very slow to develop. But it has a certain aesthetic quality to it. Must continue. Is monotonous. Is this in contrast to contemporary ideas of freedom?*' (JD, CRJ chart 2, 13 October 2011).

A practice-led research theorist would identify Donlin's research as fitting a practice-led research framework. For example, following Haseman and Mafe (2009, p.214), she was clearly building an epistemology of practice about tradition and art-making, and her thesis made a solid contribution to our theoretical understandings of tradition and craft-based arts. However, Donlin stated that for her "theory is key" though "my research is hard to pin down" (Donlin, 2011, p.128). For Donlin, the term practice-led research did not explain the deep inter-relationship between theory and her practice that allowed her to carry on the traditional arts and position her work as a social contribution. She employed an idiosyncratic meld of theory and practice to carry out what she saw as the integral intention of her art praxis: "*from reading, and from the actual experience of making, I can continue with this act of tradere*" (JD, personal interview 2, 13 Oct 2011). So, despite Donlin's approach being akin to practice-led research, we must respect the idiosyncratic terminology that she applied to her methodology as it has evolved through the process of her PhD. All six artist–researchers demonstrated a personal approach to methodology that evolved into an idiosyncratic methodological framework. For these participants, this process of emergent methodology was clearly part of their experience of HDR practice-led research, and one that took its own time within the HDR journey.

Needing time to identifying practice-led research methodology: what Connor's tale tells

One of the challenges of practice-led research that was revealed by artist–researcher participants is the time that is required as a HDR practice-led researcher to arrive at and define their methodology, a crystallisation of which did not occur for some participants until final thesis submission. Russya Connor, for example, submitted her performance-related PhD exegesis in 2014. Titled 'The poetics of gravity: Performance experiments from the natural environment to the stage' (Connor, 2014, p.i), the exegesis succinctly explained the inter-relationship between Connor's artistic practice and her investigations into gravity, identifying the project as practice-led. Connor stated:

> This practice-led research explores gravity in both artistic and functional contexts. . .
> The work's text/ures will hopefully enable the reader to experience something of the

Unteilbarkeit (indivisible nature) of being-in-the-world which is central to my approach to the research. (2014, p.13)

Connor drew attention to the difficulty of separating research and practice, and noted that her research was embodied in her physical performance practice, particularly the physical expression of that research. In the CRJ project interviews with Connor conducted in 2011, however, she rarely mentioned the words research or practice. When she did, it was to reflect on the changing inter-relationship between her performance-making and research as a result of the PhD: "*I must say I think before, in making art, I would have not called it research. But I had a strong research aspect*" (RC, focus group interview, 14 Dec 2011). In a subsequent publication in 2012, Connor's conceptualisation of her practice became more nuanced, describing her higher degree as "a practice-based PhD in performance' (p.1).

Connor moved from not thinking about art as research before embarking upon her PhD, as she stated in the CRJ focus group, to thinking of it as practice-based, to providing in her exegesis an articulate expression of "being in the world" as an artist–researcher via her highly idiosyncratic approach as "performance as research or practice-led research" (p.57). Connor enacted Nelson's "doing thinking" (2013, p.19) as a practice-led researcher, and explained that "[b]eing 'immersed' in research allows me to think into, through and for my practice, which is central to any conceptualisation of practice-led research methodology" (Connor, 2014, p.56). Nelson's iterative, dialogic characteristics of practice-led research are also evident in Connor's summary of her approach: 'My research process is tailored to respond to the practice, continually re-orientating itself to delve deeper into questions and existing literature and practices to grapple with the entanglement of body and words in the research and creation of performance work" (Connor, 2014, p.58).

What is demonstrated in Connor's growing understanding of her own research is that practice-led research is a paradigm within which each artist–researcher develops their repertoire of research methods according to the needs of their practice, and is an emergent process over time. Given that methods are so embedded in individual creative practice and are, as Robson argues "typically multimodal, hybridized and plastic, . . . [and] highly idiosyncratic" (2013, p.135), the usual structure of a higher degree research proposal which

documents research questions, a literature review and specifies a research methodology, needs to be more accommodating of the emergent processes of practice-led research.

Discipline-specific inclinations toward research: what Gasser's tale suggests

Another challenge can arise when the categorization of the creative process as research may meet internal resistance on the part of the artist–researcher, as exemplified in some of Mark Gasser's CRJ responses. Gasser's PhD project saw him twice perform the Scottish composer Ronald Stevenson's *Passacaglia on DSCH*. This performance was submitted as the creative component for his PhD examination along with a 30,000 word "exegetical critique from a pianistic perspective" of Stevenson's work (Gasser, 2015, p.ii). Significantly, this exegesis is clear evidence of an in-depth research inquiry into Stevenson's piano skills, compositions and artistic philosophy. Gasser did not, however, document or analyse his own performances of the *Passacaglia* as a method of research inquiry.

Gasser's research is of particular interest in light of Nelson's definition of a practice–as–research higher degree who notes that the term (Nelson uses the term practice–as–research but acknowledges that this equates to practice-led research) is used where practice is submitted as substantial evidence of a research inquiry (2013, p.9). Rather than aim to capture his own practice, Gasser stated that the aim of his exegesis "was to capture the essence of Stevenson and his eighty-year connection with the [piano] instrument, without—to borrow a phrase from Richard Dawkins, b.1941—unintentionally 'unweaving the rainbow,' nor dissipating or trivializing his uniquely imaginative aspirations" (Gasser, 2013, p.213). Even so, in interviews, Gasser expressed detailed and passionate views on his practice and how his involvement with his subject, Ronald Stevenson, had impacted on him. Gasser reflected on his relationship with Stevenson and his wife, on his practice, and on the differences between the quality of his PhD performances at Sydney Opera House and WAAPA. Gasser shared his views on various theoretical influences and other creative connections such as the work of poet Seamus Heaney. Gasser did not unweave the rainbow, but instead wove his own style of reflective practice in detailed reflections on his music practice throughout the CRJ conversations.

I have argued that one way to consider Gasser's reflective practice is that he was building what Blom and Viney call "an aesthetic framework for interpretation" (2009, p.37) to inform his practice. Even the most conservative of music departments is moving towards recognising creative practice as research. For example, students enrolled in the music PhD at the University of Cambridge can now "include a performance component in their eventual submission" and, if so, the candidate is "specifically asked to describe how their scholarly research and performance activity will interrelate and inform each other" (University of Cambridge, n.d.). Yet, such personal praxical interconnections between Stevenson and Gasser remain invisible to the reader of Gasser's exegesis, though not invisible to the CRJ researcher. To accommodate the internal (and external) dissonance Gasser indicated he experienced in regards to research, he adopted a musicology research framework for his exegesis rather than a practice-led one. As I have argued earlier, Gasser's case highlighted the struggle some music researchers are having with the practice-led research paradigm.

Emergence in evolving methodologies in practice-led research: what Girak's tale reveals

Sue Girak embraced a growing knowledge of practice-led research in her visual arts education PhD as she progressed from being a Masters level candidate to doctoral student. Girak's methodology was characterised by adaptation and absorption of specific methodologies, such as: Irwin and Springgay's (2008a; 2008b) a/r/tography; Carter's (2004) material thinking; and Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) action research cycles. Haseman and Mafe (2009) argue that emergence and reflexivity operate at every level of practice-led research (p.218) and, in Girak's project, this is particularly evident in the ongoing evolution of her methodological approach, exemplifying a common HDR experience.

Initially in her Masters proposal, Girak adopted the methodology of a/r/tography. As she progressed, Girak did not replace a/r/tography with a practice-led research framework. Instead, through a reflexive process of responding to new understanding as the project developed, she combined her existing knowledge of action research in education and a/r/tography, with: new understandings of practice-led research methods; the terminology of critical moments (gained through the CRJ project); and knowledge of material thinking, to

form her own complex methodological framework. Girak identified the significance of materials in her research, combining material-led research and practice-led research into an approach she described as "an arts practice-led research approach where materials (media) are privileged and are the determiners of the research through the creative practice" (Girak, 2015, p.19). Girak never lost sight of her initial methodological approach a/r/tography, arguing that a/r/tography is itself an adaptive composite of practice-led research approaches: "I consider a/r/tography as a composite of practice-led research, comprising Arts-practice-led research and teaching-practice-led research" (2015, p.74). In her final exegesis, Girak arrived at a model of her research, the a/r/tographic action research spiral (Figure 16).

Some of this methodological emergence may be explained by Girak's supervisory team expanding over the course of her higher degree, from solely education supervisors to include a contemporary artist supervisor. Other aspects of methodological emergence are contributable to expansion of the scope of the project as the project grew to include a primary school arts education project, an art exhibition of Girak's own artworks, and an artist's book. But the methodological adaptation that Girak documented in her exegesis exemplified how Girak, as HDR practice-led researcher, constructed her unique methodological framework by creating a conglomerate of various methods, as referenced and evidenced in her description of her materials-led approach "building on from Arts practice-led research (Haseman, 2010) and new materialism (Barrett & Bolt, 2013), material productivity (Bolt, 2010) and material thinking (Carter, 2004)" (Girak, 2015, p.19).

This highly individual constructed methodology illustrates a HDR artist–researcher generating "personally situated knowledge" (Barrett, 2007b, p.2) about practice and methodology. Kershaw argues that practice-led research tends to "resist the incorporation into metaschemes of systems of knowledge" (Kershaw in Allegue et al., 2009, p.2, as cited in Nelson, 2013, p.5). However, the example of Girak, who needed to formulate her own complex methodological framework that subsumed her "arts practice-led research [into her] a/r/tographic practice" (2015, p.2), illustrates how a HDR practice-led researcher may

draw on emergent knowledge from her personally-situated practice to evolve a highly individualised metascheme of practice-led research methodology.

The shock of recognition and mess: what Murphy's tale tells

In their proposal of six conditions for practice-led research, Haseman and Mafe describe HDR practice-led research as "a difficult, messy and at times frustrating endeavour for the creative researcher" (2009, p.218). Rashida Murphy's CRJ reflections exemplify the often disorienting nature of the HDR practice-led research experience, but also show how the recognition of important key concepts orient the HDR artist–researcher amidst the mess.

Murphy submitted her doctoral project in 2015. It consisted of a novel *The Historian's Daughter* (Murphy, 2016) and an exegesis titled 'Monsters and Memory' which she called an essay (following the ECU PhD examination guidelines for Writing in which it is deemed a 'critical essay'). Murphy opened her exegesis by stating that '[t]his essay discusses the impact and limitations of the methodology I chose [in order] to research and write 'The Historian's Daughter.' (Murphy, 2015, p.139). It is significant that Murphy identified the essay's focus on the "impact and limitation" of methodology from the outset because Murphy's CRJs highlighted that a large part of her PhD experience involved identifying her methodological and conceptual frameworks through the impact of sudden moments of new knowledge.

Murphy's CRJs illustrated critical moments in which she identified sharp, sudden resonances between her work and theory such as Edward Saïd's (1993) *Culture and Imperialism* (Murphy, 1st CRJ chart, 1 July 2011). The CRJs also documented how Murphy experienced the "shock of recognition" (Sullivan, 2006, para.10) when she came to identify with concepts such as autoethnography, hybrid identity and transnationality as she undertook the work required to write her PhD proposal. Identifying with such key concepts provided for Murphy important moments of recognition that allowed her to navigate through the "messy" HDR practice-led research process. Such shocks of recognition facilitated a synthesis of identity, practice and experience, so that her exegesis becomes what Harper and Kroll call an "autobiography of [her] individual's craft (2008, p.4)". Both her first and second CRJ charts provided Murphy with orientation as a practice-led researcher: in the first, as her

methodological approach emerged; and secondly, as she documented a reflexive process to writing a chapter of her novel. The challenge for Murphy of the mess and shocks of the HDR practice-led research experience were evident in the critical moments she identified in which she "shares doubts" and did "lots of soul searching". But this process of reflection also led Murphy to undergo a sense of integration, as indicated by her comment about having a dialogue with herself in her second CRJ chart. (RM, 2nd CRJ chart, 3 Nov 2011). Murphy's case suggests that once critical concepts have emerged or been 'recognised' by the artist–researcher, something that can be brought about by structured reflection or in sudden shocks, methodological and theoretical frameworks may become synthesised into a congruent personal praxis.

The creative arts professional and the doctorate: what Meader's tale reveals

Martin Meader, like several of the practice-led artist–researchers in this project, came to his doctoral studies when already recognised as having a fully developed and multi-faceted creative practice. Bringing such experience to the HDR context can provide a challenge in how to 'fit' such a mature-career creative professional into a practice-led research 'student box'. Meader's four decades' long career as a film-maker, choir master, musician and fiction writer meant that, by the time he commenced his PhD, he had woven together a distinctly individual creative practice and, because of this, may be considered to be at the peak of his creative self-actualisation. Meader submitted his doctoral project in (Creative) Writing in 2016 and received his thesis back from examination in early 2017. He kindly shared his critical essay with me despite his examination not being fully complete at that time.

With his existing professional creative practice, Meader had no pressing need of becoming an artist as part of PhD: he already was one. And, surprisingly, he had no need to become a career researcher via his PhD as he already had an established professional practice. One might ask why a person of Meader's experience and career complexity might undertake a PhD. Meader himself stated that he undertook the PhD because he knew it would extend his skills. (Meader, 13 June 2016, personal communication). So, for Meader, the PhD was not a journey towards a research career but an act of self-realisation. It was not a quest for emergent praxical knowledge but the culmination and expression of a lifetime career's

worth of well-developed creative skills and knowledge. Dallow suggests that emergent knowledge in practice-led research can follow from "the application of a developed creative methodology" (2003, p.55) and this is certainly true of Meader; he brought his established, mature practice into interface with the HDR practice-led research context in order that fresh understanding might emerge for him about how bullying formed a motivating theme in his fiction.

Meader, however, was resistant to overt reflection on practice and the fresh understandings were not clearly articulated in his CRJs, or in his critical essay. As previously noted, he emphasised in one CRJ interview that he avoided reflecting on his practice: "*I don't think about it, I just do*" (MM, personal interview 2, 2 July 2012). Yet, in his final submission, Meader described the critical essay component of his doctoral submission as having "a strong autobiographical foundation and a reflective autoethnographic approach" (Meader, 2016, p.250). Rather than his reflection being part of a structured, theoretically-framed, methodological scheme, Meader conducted his doctoral work about bullying via a form of reflective practice characterised by Griffiths (after Dadds 1995) as "a passionate inquiry which uses a range of means of symbolizing personal and inexplicit understandings, attitudes and reactions" (2011, p.184).

The reflection in Meader's critical essay can be characterised as highly personal and somewhat unstructured. When unstructured like this, the knowledge-making inherent in reflective practice can remain a tacit process. In 'just doing' the critical essay component of the practice-led research doctorate, Meader is not necessarily expressing himself with appropriate doctoral academic rigour required. But maybe we should not be seeking to fit a well-established professional like Meader into the 'postgraduate student' box with rigid rules of expression. This would be to diminish what Meader calls the 'magic' of his creative process. I agree with Webb and Brien when they state that we should be "interested in standards [in the creative arts doctorate], not in standardization" (Webb, Brien, & Burr, 2012, p.9). This may require encouraging a mature-career HDR artist–researcher to bring tacit knowledge into light, and to identify the many existing skills they already possess, in their own highly individualised way. Somewhere between the professional doctorate and a

purely creative arts doctorate perhaps lies a pathway for an experienced professional creative practitioner such as Meader. Broadening the practice-led doctorate to embrace a range of approaches, such as a critical career review, may have allowed Meader to exploit and draw on his many years of experience.

The challenge of identifying methods familiar to the practice

What is implicit in these six diverse exemplars of the concept of practice-led research is that defining one's methodology is part of the higher degree by research transition from artist to artist–researcher. Indeed, it is a feat of great complexity, which takes considerable time, and which may lead a researcher to a highly individualised self-concept of their research practice. Nelson (2013) suggests that the "adjustments from practitioner to practitioner–researcher" include that the PhD candidate not only "specify a research inquiry at the outset" but also find their place in the field by "locating their praxis in a lineage of similar practices" (p.29). Many artist–researchers who identify as practice-led researchers adopt the definition proposed by Carole Gray two decades ago whereby Gray identified the practice-led researcher as "using predominantly methodologies and specific methods familiar to us as practitioners in the visual arts" (Gray, 1996, p.3). Gray was speaking specifically about research in art and design but the "in visual arts" of her definition is often dropped to allow its application to other art practices. This seminal definition calls for the research of individual artist–researchers to be built upon challenges and questions posed by their practice and their needs as artists. Certainly, in the 'Creative River Journey' study, this definition holds true. We can see how each project is structured around the questions of practice. For example, Murphy's questions are about tone, character, and point of view in her novel writing practice; Donlin's deep exploration is of the relationship between tradition, craft and her weaving practice; Connor's tests inquire into notions of gravity within (and to expand) her dance performance practice; Meader's adaptation of Dahl's writing techniques and themes propels his creative writing practice forward.

Gray also argues for practice-led researchers to use methodologies and specific methods familiar to the practitioner, however, and this is where the definition presents some challenges, especially for artist–researchers who are just beginning their research careers

through master's or doctorate level studies. Student artist–researchers don't always recognise particular aspects of their practice as research methods. For example, Gasser built an aesthetic framework of understanding about his research subject through his personal relationship with the composer Stevenson; through attending and performing the composer's works; through repeated piano practice of the composer's works; through reading texts suggested by the composer; and through the work itself. However, Gasser rejected notions that these were methods of research. Girak took many years of PhD study to arrive at an understanding of material thinking, despite her art practice being grounded from the beginning in using and manipulating recycled materials. Murphy, who had been reading migrant women's fiction and writing autobiographically and fictionally about her own migrant experience, needed the process of the PhD to identify that her methodology encompassed autoethnography, transnationality and hybrid identity. Meader, who had been writing children's fiction for many years, needed his supervisor's direction to point him towards exploring the world of children's literature theory and practices.

Though methods familiar to the artists are to be encouraged and developed in practitioners' practice-led research, space must also be made in the PhD process for artists to encounter the unfamiliar and, indeed, for the unfamiliar to give rise to emergent new research methods and approaches that resonate deeply with each researcher's individual ethics, practices, theoretical underpinnings and lived experiences. It is contingent then for the PhD process to provide conditions in which the candidate is "directed towards the unknown, rather than what is known" (Sullivan, 2006, para.9). This process helps identify methods that then become familiar to the more experienced artist–researcher. This "shock of recognition that comes from new insight" (Sullivan, 2006, para.10) assists PhD candidates undertaking creative practice research to formulate their often highly individualised approach. Insights become markers of development as PhD candidates make the transition from artist to artist–researcher. Critical moments in the CRJ charts can assist with this process, suggesting various methods and theories that are significant or resonant.

The CRJ process can also assist candidates to make sense of the complexity of becoming an artist–researcher. Rather than immersing them in Gray's (1996) already familiar methods,

creative research will inevitably engage the candidate in the "messy research project . . . [and] complexity" that is characteristic of practice-led research (Haseman & Mafe, 2009, p.217). Through reflexivity, which Haseman and Mafe argue may be "marked by extremes of interpretive anxiety" (p.220), an integrated, personal theoretical and methodological framework of practice can emerge, along with the metamorphosis of the developing artist–researcher.

Conceptualising methodology

Construction of a conceptual framework can be a vehicle that leads an artist–researcher to identify appropriate methodology to apply to their practice-led research project. While I have identified that practice-led research is the methodological approach common to the artist–researchers in this 'Creative River Journey' study, they did not readily identify this themselves. This may be because there has been a failure to explain that practice-led research is a methodological approach, like qualitative research, quantitative research or mixed methods research. It is not itself a fixed set of methods or strategies with which to carry out a research project. I suggest this is why the artist–researchers in these case studies struggled to claim practice-led research as their own. Had practice-led research been presented to them as an umbrella approach under which they can construct a methodology that is idiosyncratically suited to their practice, they may have responded otherwise. Such a methodology can contain a variety of methods or a highly individualised hybrid methodology, such as Murphy's transnational authoethnographic fiction writing methodology.

Gray and Malins state that methodology is a vehicle for "crossing the terrain [of practice-led research] . . . with confidence and vigour" (2004, p.15). Like the 'Creative River Journey' study, they present a landscape-oriented metaphor of practice-led research that echoes Nelson's call for locating oneself in the field. First they suggest that once a practice-led researcher has "planned the journey, mapped the terrain and located [their] position in it" (p.15), they should choose a vehicle, or methodology, to carry out the project. However, they conflate locating oneself in the field with a conceptual framework, instead suggesting a contextual survey and review as the stage before methodology is decided. In the case

studies of the artist–researchers features, however, planning the journey needed to remain very loose. It was only after locating themselves in the field and constructing a conceptual framework (albeit not as formalised as this term suggests) that CRJ participants were able to identify a methodology, or construct a methodology, that corresponded appropriately with their art practice. It was through choreography, reflected upon in her second CRJ, that Connor was able to identify a method of communicating her own embodied experience to others. It was through adopting reflexivity as a method that Donlin was able to weave the theory that strongly resonated with her art practice. Gasser never found a method to incorporate reflection on his practice into his exegesis, and this may be due to his need for a methodology that more closely fits within the classical music discipline, not "parachuted in from outside" (Sloboda, 2004, p.xxiii).

Leaving methodology until after a practice review and conceptual framework are decided allows the practice-led researcher to fully survey their practice-led research terrain and arrive at a methodology that 'makes sense' of their practice, as Murphy found, or construct a bricolage of method, as Girak did. Thus the experiences of the CRJ researchers suggest that, firstly, practice-led research needs to be explained as a methodological approach not a set of methods to apply directly to practice. The 'Creative River Journey' case studies suggest artist–researchers need to explore existing practice and survey new methods and methodologies in order to build an idiosyncratic practice-led set of methods that best accommodates their practice and their research. Finally, artist–researchers should be offered methods that resonate within their discipline boundary whilst also being presented with opportunities to extend those methods and those boundaries via an introduction to theory and methodology outside their own disciplinary practice. In this way they will be able to build new knowledge and make original academic, praxical and empirical contributions to their field.

3. RESEARCH TRAINING

Curiosity, passion and practice-led research

In order to overcome resistance to research like that expressed by Gasser and Meader, attention needs to be paid to helping higher degree by research artist–researchers conceptualise the curiosity and passion they have for their practice as a driver for practice-led research. Connor was able to do this because she wanted to find out more about her own body and its responses to gravity in order to enrich her performance practice. At the same time, she was working through ways to communicate to her audience the embodied physical experiences she had underwater, and this led her to develop an interest in brain science. Yet, Connor did not identify with the term practice-led research. Donlin was able to do this as her practice-led research was driven by a desire to understand the historical and philosophical context of her craft-based art practice. Yet, she also did not apply the term practice-led research.

Arguably, the participants' research was better facilitated in the cases where there was a personal fit between the participant's practice and a theory they were researching, such as Girak's interest in recycled materials finding resonance with Paul Carter's (2004) material thinking, and in Murphy's identifying her writing practice within a transnational literature framework. But it is worth noting that there was little to no ownership of the term 'practice-led research' amongst the participants. This suggests a failure on the part of research training to explain practice-led research as an umbrella research approach in which practice forms the pathway (leads) to theory, and thus research, and within which researchers can construct their own idiosyncratic set of research methods. One way to help artists become artist–researchers, thus being able to meet the institutional requirements of the PhD, is to be overt about the personal specificity that practice has to theory, encouraging artist–researchers to think about their art practice in the higher degree context as both practice and theory, that is, as art praxis.

Locating oneself in a lineage of practice and theory

It is a requirement of research in the academy that the work to be undertaken adds new knowledge to the researcher's chosen field, recognising in the arts that fields are very complex and diverse. An artist–researcher's doctoral process requires the early stage HDR student to first define their field. This can be a difficult task, but it is an essential part of the PhD proposal stage for a practice-led researcher. This is because, though they will be developing and refining their practice throughout their PhD, they need to locate themselves within a disciplinary field in order to orient their practice to research that reflects this practice. It is this practice and research orientation that facilitates them making their project become practice-led research. Those artist–researchers who struggled with conceptualising themselves as researchers, for example, Gasser, Meader and, initially, Murphy, did not always have a clear notion of their location in the field. Murphy's 'critical moments' of identifying her place in the fields of transnational literature and autoethnography propelled her research project forward and resulted in a highly successful and fluent exegesis, and a swiftly published creative component, the novel *The Historian's Daughter* (Murphy, 2016).

From working with the research participants and documenting their struggles with defining their fields, it seems that locating oneself in a field may best achieved through a conceptual framework first, methodology second. Nelson suggests that a practice-led research degree requires not just these two, but three things: "location in a lineage by way of a practice review, [a] conceptual framework, [and an] account of process" (2013, p.34.) In other words, location in a creative field, description of key concepts that apply to or will arise from the practice-led research, and an account of the artistic methodology processes.

The artist–researchers in this study more easily embraced research when these three elements were built upon the existing base of the PhD researchers' knowledge. For example, Girak's art teaching practice which evolved into her artist/researcher/teacher practice; and Donlin's craft-oriented art practice which evolved into a deeply philosophical enactment of tradere. But the artist–researchers in the study all expressed some disorientation and discomfort at the 'not knowing' stage of the PhD. Whilst this is common to many PhD experiences, the 'not knowing' was particularly prolonged for these

participants as they set out to construct a personal approach (within a practice-led framework). Since existing research models such as qualitative action research or case study can fall short of the requirements of a creative arts research project, HDR artist–researchers should be encouraged to scaffold their PhD research upon existing knowledge and practice in a way that encourages synthesis of the existing knowledge with the new knowledge which arises from the PhD inquiry. A conceptual framework as the basis of the practice-led research may facilitate such scaffolding.

Scaffolding is a principle within education which was first introduced by Bruner (1973), developed from Vygostky's concept of the zone of proximal development (Harland, 2003). It describes how a learner is supported to achieve new understandings or skills, beyond their current skillset (Rosenshine & Meister, 1992) or knowledge, by beginning with the existing skillset then gradually propelling the learner forward in a supported way into less known areas (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976, p.90). In the case of HDR practice-led researchers, they could first be directed toward theory that resonates because it exists within the artist–researcher's realm of experience and practice. This would alert them to theory that they are already using, applying, and reading, and could give them a good basis from which to expand that theoretical understanding when guided into new methodological realms. For example, Murphy had been reading Iranian women writers and migrant non-fiction, and Edward Saïd, without identifying her research interests as transnational literature and hybrid identity. A review of her own practice at the very beginning of the PhD in order to construct a conceptual framework for her research project may have assisted Murphy to more readily identify these key theoretical concepts. Meader discussed in his CRJs his interest in the writing methods of Roald Dahl and Stephen King. So a review of his writing practice alongside theirs may have helped him be more precise about how bullying and threat functioned as a plot device in his own writing. This might then have then led him to place bullying within a clear and concise conceptual framework. Indeed, Girak used her first CRJ to review her previous art practice, discussing several past artworks and reviewing the commencement of her interest in environmentalism. Thus, the critical moments recorded in her CRJs formed key markers in the lineage of her own practice. With a more formalised review of other environmental art practices, she may have been more quickly able to locate

her place in her field of practice. Thus theory, by way of a review of practice and a conceptual framework, can become the fuel that propels the practice forward into new knowledge, building more theory and knowledge as the artist–researcher further defines their practice.

The practice-led degree as the culmination of lifelong practice

This is not to say that these artist–researchers should be viewed as coming to their higher degrees as blank slates. In fact, quite the opposite. All of the participants in the CRJ project were exploring a personal creative practice that had been established by them for many years, in some cases, for decades. Their choices of topics for their doctorates arose out of a personal praxis that was often the culmination of a lifetime's passion, interest or artistic practice. Nearly all of the participants were over the age of 40.

For several participants, the CRJ reflective process enabled them to conduct a review of their career or practice, in order for them to contextualise their PhD topic within this lifetime interest. For example, Russya Connor recalled a poetic image of being underwater with a white-dressed figure floating above "*that I've had in mind for years*" (RC, CRJ chart, 22 August 2011). She recounted influences such as a 2007 performance of Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas* (at Sadler's Wells Theatre, London) using a water tank on stage with submerged performers, along with Cirque du Soleil's water show, as key experiences that converged with her poetic image of the floating white-dressed figure to propel her PhD creative practice of gravity and dance. Mark Gasser began his CRJ by harking back to 1990 and the first time he encountered the composer Ronald Stevenson, when Gasser was an undergraduate at Birmingham Conservatory. He then identified critical moments throughout his career, such as receiving a hand-annotated manuscript from the composer's wife in 1998, and a performance of the composer's work in 2001 at Wigmore Hall, London, as informing his choice to do a study and performance of Stevenson's *Passacaglia on DSCH* in his PhD. (MG, CRJ chart 1, 16 Dec 2010). Meader identified his children's literacy project 'Alphabeticus' as being "*20 years in development" (*MM, CRJ chart 1, 29 Nov 2011) and a key influence on directing his writing towards children. Sue Girak reviewed her artistic practice beginning with a BA in visual arts in the early 2000s, via reflecting upon the various artworks

she had made in the ten years prior to commencing her PhD. This review identified the emerging environmental focus in her art practice (SG, CRJ chart 1, 23 June 2012).

In these various ways, the practice-led PhD is demonstrated to be one (very large) step in a lifelong journey of creative self-determination. It becomes practice-defining and life-defining, this latter term suggested by Girak in her CRJ when she labels various critical moments in the development of her practice as "*life-defining moments*" (SG, CRJ chart 1, 23 June 2012). Taylor and Littleton (2012), in writing about contemporary creative work, draw on in-depth interviews and various theoretical sources to argue that "the ultimate act of creativity is the making of the self" (p.5). They identify contemporary creative work as a form of "self-actualization" (p.5). In the CRJs, the participants are often seen to be reflecting on various life experiences, professional practice and art practices to create a mental map of what led to their decision to undertake the PhD.

Griffiths (2011) argues that an understanding of one's self in relation to one's research is crucial, though this can cause "troubling issues for arts-based, practice-based researchers", namely, criticism for "personal involvement in research" (p.179). She proposes a model of the self in which the self is unique and not determined but, rather, in a continuous state of becoming. This, Griffiths argues, occurs in relation to others, to specificities of time and place, is contextualised within socio-political power structures, and is experienced as an embodied, lived experience (pp.168–169). Many of the artist–researchers' reflections hark back to specific times and places of influence. Some identify particular institutional power structures as influencing their art practice, such as Meader's 'big banks', and Girak's experiences of the constraints of art practice within a primary school setting. All, I argue, are in a state of 'becoming artist–researcher' as they grapple with the opportunities, methods and requirements of conducting research for their practice-led research higher degrees. Murphy's 'aha' moment when she realised that her writer 'self' could be authentically, theoretically framed as one with a transnational hybrid identity evidences her 'becoming artist–researcher', and not solely fiction writer. Reflexivity is, moreover, a key characteristic that propelled many of the participants forward on their journeys of becoming-researchers.

Reflection and reflexivity: key characteristics of practice-led research

Grappling with the unknown in order to form an individualised artist–researcher practice and identity can be achieved through a process of reflexivity, Haseman and Mafe (2009, p.220) suggest. Indeed, reflexivity is evident in the research strategies of four of the artist–researchers in the 'Creative River Journey' project. Reflection is common to all the participants, partly because the CRJ deliberately sets up a process of reflecting on practice, but also because the very nature of higher degree research requires deep, informed reflection on a subject. The CRJ was originally built upon Burnard's concept of reflective art practice which she describes as "engagement with artistic materials, multiple perspectives, individual style and transformative participation in artistic endeavours in which reflective processes are central" (2009, p.10). These various terms—reflection, reflexivity and reflective art practice—highlight the problematic nature of the terminology used in describing reflective and reflexive practices arising in artistic research. Hunt echoes Donald Schön's reflection in and on action (1983, 1987) in her definition of reflexivity:

> Reflexivity involves putting something out in order that something new might come into being. It involves creating an internal space, distancing oneself, as it were, so that one is both inside and outside of oneself simultaneously and able to switch back and forth fluidly. (Hunt, 2004, p.156)

There are many terms applied to the kind of complex reflection that Hunt describes as reflexivity. Sullivan (2009) proposes the term "critical reflection" for "a process of inquiry that involves creative action and critical reflection" (p.51) when art practice is theorised as research. Sullivan is very specific about three orientations towards practice in which this critical reflection takes place (p.50): conceptual practices whereby the artist–researcher thinks through a medium to generate new knowledge, such as Girak's material thinking; dialectical practices whereby the inquiry is centred on the human, lived experience of the making and the artwork such as Connor's inquiry into gravity and her physical performances; and contextual practices whereby the practice-led research may take the route of critical inquiry that is situational and interested in social change such as Donlin's focus on tradition. I would argue that in some cases, such as with Murphy's creative writing informed by immigrant women readers and her own hybrid identity, all three occur equally

in the one practice-led research project. However, common to all is this notion of questioning one's practice though a process of critical reflection.

What Sullivan is describing as 'critical reflection' is in fact the process of inquiry through reflexivity. Burnard, in her model of reflective arts practice, notes the artist–researcher is "questioning and analysing what constitutes tacit knowledge" (2009, p.10). The centrality of questioning and analysing is at the heart of practice-led research reflexivity, and the CRJ sets up the conditions for such questioning to reveal tacit knowledge: Murphy questioned her choices as she wrote the second chapter of her novel; Donlin questioned the interrelationship between theory and practice; Girak's second CRJ was a kind of question and answer diary of her creative practice. Connor's CRJs were more like reflections but her exegesis documented a practice-led process of reflection in and on action, of which she said '[b]eing immersed in practice allows me to think into, through and for my practice' (p.56). Connor cites Crouch on reflexivity as informing her research process:

> I see this as very much a reflexive loop embedded in the practice-led research methodology explained by Christopher Crouch: "Adopting a reflexive viewpoint allows an understanding of the creative process from a subjective viewpoint, revealing a dynamic relationship between the context, construction and the articulation of the act". (Crouch, 2007, p.107, as cited in Connor, 2014, p.201)

I propose that, just as iterations of practice-led research by artist–researchers are highly idiosyncratic and nuanced, so is the way in which each individual participant in the CRJ project set about the process reflection. I have argued previously that the artist–researchers' narratives of practice documented the process of reflection that they were engaged with. The CRJ reflections were designed, just as Siobhan Murphy (2012) suggests of narratives of practice, to elucidate the "oscillation between immersion in and reflection on practice" (p.21). Haseman and Mafe (2009) describe this oscillation as characteristic of reflexivity which they argue is "one of those 'artist-like processes' which occurs when a creative practitioner acts upon the requisite research material to generate new material which immediately acts back upon the practitioners" (p.219). It is this iterative process of engagement and re-engagement with new material that brings about a change in the artist–researcher's practice, whether that be theoretical material, artistic materials or the embodied experiences of art practice and research. The CRJs of four of the artists—Girak,

Donlin, Murphy and Connor—document this, providing specific evidence of their practice-led research processes and their reflexivity.

As for the other two artists, Gasser and Meader, I would argue that each has demonstrated a process of reflection, either in their CRJ or in their exegetical writing. Theirs were "reflections as a form of conversation" (Burnard, 2006, p.6), a form of reflection whereby artist–researchers "actively construct and find personal meaning within a situation" (Falk & Dierking, 2000, p.41, as cited in Burnard, 2006, p.6). Although engagement with theory was demonstrated by Gasser in his CRJ conversations, and by Meader in his doctoral exegesis, neither made explicit the links or changes that this theory made to their creative practice, and thus I would describe each as engaged in reflection, but not reflexivity.

Four exemplars of reflexivity

Girak demonstrated a highly developed reflexive process but it is one in which external interlocutors become vital to her process of reflection, and which led her to an internal process of synthesis of theory and practice. Girak draws on structured conversations with critical friends, supervisors, and mentors and incidental conversations with fellow artists to reach new understandings about her practice. She then transferred this process to an internal dialogue of questioning her practice in her reflective journal and artist notebooks. She echoed this internal dialogue in her adaptation of the CRJ model in her second CRJ chart, making it into a series of questions and answers about her own practice and research. Girak's internalisation of this process can be found in her design of a model of her iterative process (Figure 16). This model illustrated Girak's dynamic looping reflexive process in which she reflected on both art and teaching practice, including to: 'reflect—teach—revise [and] document—make—reflect on practice' (2015, p.200). Reflexivity became both an impetus for, and a documentation of, her decision-making process, illustrating the positive impact of Girak's experiences in helping to frame and further inspire her as artist–researcher–teacher. Girak's looping between making, documenting and reflecting, and between these identities, sees her achieve Sullivan's reflexive "art practice as research" through spirals of "creative action and critical reflection" (2009, p.51).

Reflexivity is characteristic of Donlin's method of working/researching, creating gaps through questioning her practice, filling these gaps with theory then pushing her practice forward into new or more complex terrain. Donlin achieved this reflexivity through a deep, intrapersonal process of reflection on theory and on practice. Her reflexive dialogue is with herself and with theorists such as Adorno, Giddens and Ruskin who address her concern with tradition. Rarely was this conversation with an external interlocutor, though in her first CRJ, she did identify her supervisor as directing her towards Ruskin. Through Donlin's "reflexive action" (2nd questioning, and reflectingCRJ chart, 13 Oct 2011), she reflected both on her own embodied knowledge coming out of a long-held craft practice and her Germanic heritage, and she explored and applied social constructs and theoretical framings of art, craft and tradition. In an embodiment of reflexivity, she literally wove and stitched theories of tradition and craft into her artworks, such as a Ruskin's quote in *Continually I* (Donlin, 2011, p.126), discussed previously. Donlin's reflexivity exemplifies Bolt's (2007) description of practice-led research: "a double articulation between theory and practice, whereby theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time as practice is informed by theory" (p.29).

Murphy's developing reflexivity was demonstrated in her CRJs, through a process of question and answer in order to build her methodological position, and later in her PhD submission. In her second CRJ, she made particular use of this questioning in order to complete chapter two of her novel, for example, "Do I want to be believable or not?" and "How to make this flow as well?" (Murphy, 2nd CRJ chart, 3 Nov 2011). Haseman and Mafe (2009, p.219) call this a "looping process of authorial control" characteristic of practice-led research, which they further argue "can be fragmented, raising doubts about purpose, efficacy and control" (p.9). Though Murphy raised doubts through questioning, she went on to resolve these by answering her own questions or identifying the strategy to resolve her uncertainty: "Really need to slow the narrative down somewhat . . . Revise and reinvent some scenes to slow them down" (Murphy, 2nd CRJ chart, 3 Nov 2011). This reflexive questioning process facilitated Murphy's authorial control, and her internal recognition of her methods and practice. By the time of her PhD submission, Murphy described herself as a "reflexive researcher" engaged in "a fluid, experiential and continually evolving

methodology" (Murphy, 2015, p.179). Murphy referred to the ethnographer Anderson's concept of "reflexive self-observation" (Anderson, 2006, p.377, as cited in Murphy, 2015, p.152) to describe how her own reflexivity made it possible to shift from being slightly conscious of choices and influences to being an active agent of choices, and to make deeply personal connections between autobiographical experience and her own evolving practice-led research methodology.

Connor clearly demonstrated reflexivity in her PhD research, even though she called her methodology "reflective" in her exegesis: "This has been a reflective practice-led research project in that at every stage of the process I question, challenge and reflect on my artistic practice as it relates to my research drive to investigate the experiences of gravity" (Connor, 2015, p.13). This process of questioning and reflecting on practice was evident in her first CRJ, for example, the poetic image she had kept in mind for years of the woman in a white dress under water and how she might recreate this; and how she might get people to think and feel what she felt through triggering mirror neurons for her audience. (Connor, 1st CRJ chart, 22 August 2011). Connor's second independently completed CRJ chart was a more pragmatic reflection on the production elements of performance-making, such as choosing music, choreography and studio space. However, in this chart she was still reflexively exploring the idea of transferring her underwater sensibility into her dancers' performances so that the audience could receive this: " I wanted to explore in this piece [*Blau*]: floating, buoyancy, unison & freedom . . . 'transferability': experience + perception → expression" (Connor, 2nd CRJ chart, 1 Dec 2011). Connor's use of the term "reflective" in her exegesis is a further encounter with the convolutions of having different terminology applied to similar qualities in the participants' methodologies, and indeed in the wider field. Connor's "reflective practice" equates with Burnard's definition of reflective art practice whereby "self-reflection is the means by which they [artists] simultaneously analyze situations, make judgments, and determine how successfully they handle the challenge . . . [of] art making' (2006, p.9). This notion of self-reflection is equivalent to the process Connor described, and to the reflexivity that has been described, and/or engaged with by other CRJ project artist–researchers.

Two cases of reflective practice

The cases of Meader and Gasser illustrate that not all participants have demonstrated reflexivity in their CRJs, though all have demonstrated reflective practice. In Griffiths' (2011) essay on research and selfhood, she sets out to distinguish reflexivity from reflective practice. She states that "Roughly, 'reflective practice' attaches more to the relational self, embedded in time and place, and as becoming what it is not yet" (p.184). Though Gasser and Meader are already established in their professional creative careers, they are becoming researchers through the process of the PhD, that is, becoming what they are not yet: fully experienced creative practice-led researchers. Griffiths goes on to say that "'Reflexivity' attaches more to the relational, embodied self in a specific social and political context: to his or her individual perspectives and positionality" (p.184).

Meader and Gasser, for example, were engaged in reflection upon their existing professional practice: Gasser as a professional classical musician; and Meader as a professional multi-disciplinary musician, creative writer and producer. Gasser illustrated in his CRJs a process of reflection on practice, making autobiographical connections when discussing his personal relationship with, and mentorship by, the composer subject of his thesis. He also identified a diverse number of theoretical or artistic links such as the Seamus Heaney poem that fed into the building of his aesthetic framework of performance practice. Based on the CRJs, however, it would be hard to argue that either Meader or Gasser had been deeply engaged in reflexive methodology: Meader said "I don't think about it, I just do it" and Gasser held proudly to his assertion that "music is a performing art" with the emphasis on performance.

Gasser's final doctoral submission made no reference to self, or to any of the conversations about his autobiographical perspectives or personal art practice position. Meader, in his final doctoral submission, began to make connections between the personal and his writing practice, in what I would describe as fledgling reflexivity. Though he acknowledged there are connections, he did not explore or explain any clear methodological position, nor does he detail the connections between his creative writing and his personal experiences.

He was alert, however, to the ways in which his orientation of not thinking about it, just doing it, still embodied an unconscious reflexive process:

> Quite unconsciously, I have drawn from and used experiences for my stories that have occurred in XXX's life and in mine. Reviewing the work and seeing how I have utilized these personal incidents, event and encounters, has been a revelation in comprehending how it affects my own cultural experience and has produced deeper empathy in me, with reference to people being bullied and the ways which it impinges upon them. (Meader, 2016, p.250)

Artists undertaking PhDs through art practice are positioning themselves as artist–researchers, not simply as artists. All artists do research, but when artists doing doctorates do their research, it is within an academic context that requires a particular articulation of that research. The luxury of artists not thinking about their practice in a deeply reflexive way is no longer afforded to the artists in the higher degree context. An artist–researcher would usually be encouraged to think about it and do it. Several artist–researchers in the CRJ demonstrated the reflexive, relational, contextual self that Griffiths describes; we can see this in action, for example, in Girak's critique of her own art education context and a/r/tographic practice, and in Donlin's detailed critique of the social context of tradition and craft.

Bolton suggests the term reflective practice is not a particularly useful one with its connotations of mirroring, and she sharply asks: "What is the reflection of shit? Shit?" (2005, p.4). She calls instead for a "'through-the looking-glass model" in which "reflective practice is more than an examination of personal experience; it is located in the political and social structures" (p.5) that hem practitioners in. Here Bolton's reflective practice conflates with reflexivity. As I have suggested, when grappling with terms such as practice-led research and practice-as-research, spending inordinate time explaining the difference between critical reflection, reflective practice and reflexivity does a disservice to the complexity of the ways in which artist–researchers apply reflection in practice-led research. Using the six cases as exemplars, one might argue that there are differences between reflection and reflexivity, but that an artist–researcher can also be both reflective and reflexive and that these two can occur as part of the one process of practice-led research.

Unlike in other forms of research whereby the purpose of reflexivity is to "trace the presence of the researcher onto the research context" (de Freitas, 2008, p.470), the purpose of practice-led research reflexivity for these participants is to trace the presence and actions of the artist–researcher as they question, analyse and move their practice forward, producing artistic emanations of tacit knowledge. The word 'traces' suggests a kind of mapping, and it is no coincidence that I have used the metaphor of the river to 'map' the journey of practice-led research. Though I have chosen not to apply Deleuze and Guattari's (1997) metaphor of the rhizome, as this would only complicate the river metaphor already existing in the CRJ strategy, I do acknowledge that the CRJs are more than just 'traces'. Deleuze and Guattari assert that "A rhizome is altogether different [than a trace], a map and not a tracing. Make a map, not a tracing" (1997, p.12). I have referred to the CRJ process as "mapping the practice" (Stevenson, 2017, p.150) of my artist–researcher participants to help identify the depth of understanding achieved through the in-depth interviewing, creative content analysis and reflective art practice engendered by the CRJs.

I myself have extended the CRJ metaphor elsewhere to include "the river in a landscape of creative practice" (Stevenson, 2013, p.1). Here, I suggest that the CRJ becomes a map of an instance of practice within an artist–researcher's creative oeuvre, one river in the 'landscape' of their practice. McIntosh, in his exploration of metaphor as a method of capturing and communicating experiences of health-care professional practice, also applies the landscape metaphor:

> Working lives are constructed out of a landscape of interchangeable environments, equipment, documentation, dialogue with others, patient/client/student activity, protocols, codes of conduct, etc., and our identities in part result from this landscape. (2008, p.77)

He also states that metaphor engenders reflexivity practice "which enables the documentation of the self as a key fieldwork tool" (2010, p.51). For most of the artist–researcher participants, the CRJ process has engendered a kind of reflective practice. In some cases, Gasser for example, this was only evident within the CRJ interview conversations and was not extrapolated in his final doctoral submission. For others, Girak for example, the CRJ process was absorbed and transformed into a deeply personal praxis

method, contributing to the artist–researcher's growing repertoire of practice-led research skills.

Induction into professional networks and contexts

Characterising six conditions for practice-led research, Haseman and Mafe (2009) propose that one of these is "identifying and engaging with the 'professional' frames within which practice is pursued' (p.216). Whilst Haseman and Mafe are arguing for research to identify "professional protocols and regulations that contain or delimit" shared understandings of art practice (p.216), the CRJs revealed that induction into professional networks, along with research into a professional frame, can bring about this understanding.

In a practice-led higher degree by research, the induction required is an induction into art practice within the HDR context. This may involve the artist–researcher being welcomed into the community of art practitioners within the university, and also induction into the wider research community of the university and its associated academic fields.

For Connor, becoming a choreographer at WAAPA presented her with an opportunity to apply her research about underwater movement to an undergraduate dance performance. This provided her with understanding of the limitations of choreography, including constraints such as studio space, performance length, and available hours of practice

The importance of a professional context for higher degree artist–researchers is less evident amongst the other artist–researchers in the 'Creative River Journey' study than is the contribution to their creative practice made by personal relationships and affinity networks. Gasser called on his existing friendship with the subject of his PhD, Ronald Stevenson, to initiate then expand his idea of knowledge and practice. Murphy initiated her PhD studies as a direct result of her personal network in the writing community; in particular, with the Peter Cowan Writers' Centre. Girak was also attracted to commence her PhD by a former ECU colleague and mentor, and drew on her friendship network to provide her with critical friends, a reflective practice that became integral within her practice-led research process. Meader drew on his extensive personal network of creative mentors, partners, and supporters, developed through his professional practice, to find further support for his PhD writing.

Another way in which artist–researchers are inducted into professional and practice networks is when they take on a teaching role, such as when Connor became a choreographer and Gasser began teaching WAAPA music students. This experience of being teacher/mentor can provide HDR artist–researchers with an opportunity to apply skills and test ideas from their own practice-led research context, and this teaching experience can, reflexively, influence their own practice.

Practice-led PhD supervisors also play a critical role in inducting HDR artist–researchers into the academic context. The 'Creative River Journey' participants experienced mentorship through guidance about scope as they were forming their project, and by way of introducing particular theory to the artist–researchers. Hamilton and Carson suggest supervisors can provide HDR artist–researchers with "a strategically guided journey" that includes induction of "the candidate as a newcomer to the field with [room for the candidate's] individual working styles, strengths and support needs" (2013a, principle 9). Their *12 principles for the effective supervision of Creative Practice Higher Degrees,* based on interviews with supervisors from various Australian and New Zealand institutions, also acknowledges that, for supervisors, this can be a complicated and sensitive task that requires them:

> Being tolerant of ambiguity and at the same time assist[ing] candidates to navigate their way through process . . . and to support them to reach a balance between allowing the work to find its own performativity and identity and conforming to the requirements of the degree. (2013a, principle 11)

The CRJs make clear how supervisors impact on some of the HDR artist–researchers' projects. For example, Gasser's supervisor pushed Gasser to "do all of Stevenson's work, not just the *Passacaglia*". Girak explained how supervisor feedback created points of transformation, themselves critical moments, in her practice-led research process. Donlin's supervisor introduced her to the work of Ruskin which became a critical theoretical component of her praxis. Murphy's supervisor introduced her to the term 'transnational literature' which immediately enlightened her to her position in the field. The CRJ reflections made it possible for the HDR artist–researchers to identify points where the supervisor was engaged in the complicated task of assisting candidates to navigate their way through the PhD process. Along with the hard work of their supervisors, the reflective

practice inherent in the 'Creative River Journey' encouraged the HDR artist–researcher participants to engage with the 'professional' frames of academia, in particular, how to articulate one's research, thereby fostering further induction into the professional academic context.

4. THE 'CREATIVE RIVER JOURNEY' PROCESS

Bringing knowledge to light

The CRJ strategy sets up a process of critical reflection that externalises tacit knowledge and makes connections between theoretical knowledge and tacit knowledge. It supports the conditions for reflective practice which can lead to reflexivity. This critical reflection cycles the HDR artist–researcher through Nelson's (2013) three ways of knowing: insider or tacit knowledge, outsider or theoretical knowledge, and critical reflective knowledge (p.37). By guiding artist–researchers to sift through practice to identify critical moments, the CRJ strategy enables and facilitates the conditions for "the shock of recognition" (Sullivan, 2006, as cited in Haseman & Mafe, 2009, p.219), transforming tacit knowledge through critical reflective knowledge into new accessible outside knowledge. The word 'shock' suggests a very sudden moment of enlightenment. However, this belies the time it can take for the transformation of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, even if there is a specific moment when information or theory 'clicks' for the artist–researcher. For example, autoethnography and transnational literature resonated with Murphy's tacit understanding of herself as a writer, however, she needed the time taken to engage in further writing practice, and the time to reflect on this through her second CRJ, to create a dialogue with herself about this. Thus, Murphy was supported to integrate her tacit knowledge with more outsider theoretical knowledge, arriving at critical reflective knowledge about her own practice.

The CRJ process can bring tacit understandings of 'career' progression into the context of the participant's academic study. For example, the CRJ can serve as a review of a professional creative life as it did for Gasser, or a review of practice to date, as it did for Girak. Similarly, it can read as a history of training, and applications of that training, that have led to the participant commencing the PhD, as it did for Connor. Or it can be a

reflection on one's personal background, as it was for Donlin and Murphy, and also reveal the role of key theoretical concepts in their practice. In this way, and in keeping with the idea of narratives of practice, the CRJs often captured 'the story so far' of the artist–researchers' creative practice. This reflective awareness about themselves positioned the artist–researcher on the solid ground of situated knowledge, ready for forward thinking and new discoveries as they made room for future possibilities as theory and methods were discovered.

Critical moments as portals

Critical moments, those bends of the river journey when change, transformation or new understandings occurred, serve as the portals for creating new knowledge from existing knowledge. For some, critical moments were big movements of understanding such as Donlin's "*BIG INSIGHT! Because craft is passed on along with social values and norms, tacit knowledge is learned from doing and from the master—not from books!!*" (JD, 2nd CRJ chart, 13 Oct 2011). For others, critical moments were a synthesis of understanding, complex moments when theory and practice collided, that were only brought about by the participant adopting and adapting the CRJ process into a reflective process of their own. Using critical moments as a reflective strategy to sift through the breadth of one's tacit, practice-led knowing facilitated a process of stepping back, moving the HDR artist–researcher from nebulous understandings of practice to see a bigger, more structured, picture of one's own practice. Nelson too identifies the vital importance of a reflective practice strategy: "The key method used to develop know-what [explicit knowledge] from know-how [tacit knowledge] is that of critical reflection—pausing, standing back and thinking about what you are doing" (2013, p.44). As Murphy stated of the CRJ, "it sort of made sense". The CRJ process illustrated that critical moments are an easily understood aspect of reflective practice that helped to provide a pathway of knowledge-making for the artist–researchers' practice-led research.

The fluid river of creative practice

I suggest that the reason the CRJ process made sense for Murphy and others is that the river functions as a metaphor for the creative process. Visualising or expressing ideas through

metaphor is a tacit practice that artist–researchers bring to the CRJ ready-made, as creative practitioners. They are already engaged in transforming ideas in one form into another congruent with their own creative practice. Thus the process of metaphor is familiar to them. Donlin stated that the river metaphor resonates with the fluid nature of her weaving practice, and Connor identified with the metaphor of the river due to her inquiry into underwater performance. Sometimes the HDR artist–researchers transformed the metaphor of the river into one of their own. Gasser related to a metaphor of journey, along with the river, and transformed the CRJ river image into a highway. "The thing is the PhD really is a journey, it really is a river," Gasser said, using a signpost and quoting the Heaney poem to make sense of the relationship between concert performance and his PhD writing 'performance'. Murphy said that it was "when I started doing the curvy snaky journey that things came up", so the river became a snake as a metaphoric portal for transforming tacit know-how and making it explicit.

The importance of the interlocutor

This does not deny the importance to the artist–researchers of conversations with a critical interlocutor in the CRJ process in making tacit knowledge explicit. Connor explained that talking to me about the work she did was more important to her than charting the critical moments. Murphy stated "I got much more out of having conversations with you . . . because the conversations were so rich". In the cases of these six HDR artist–researchers, the first CRJ interviews acted as an induction into reflection on practice, a way of externalising tacit knowledge through dialogue with the aim that that critical reflective practice became internalised when the artist–researchers carried out the second CRJ on their own.

However, as I have shown, the level to which the artist–researchers took up the task of independent critical reflection on their practice varied greatly. Some adapted the reflective practice process into a form that suited them. Girak, for example, adopted a critical reflective practice by setting up a critical friend for further conversations, and adapted the second CRJ into a detailed reflective journal. A further example is Connor, who showed little engagement with the metaphor of the river for critical reflection, but whose journal entry of

the creative development of her early research (Figure 18), completed several months after her CRJ interviews and included in her PhD exegesis, reflected that she may have internalised to some extent the river metaphor in a fluent, exuberant river-shaped 'mudmap' of her creative development process.
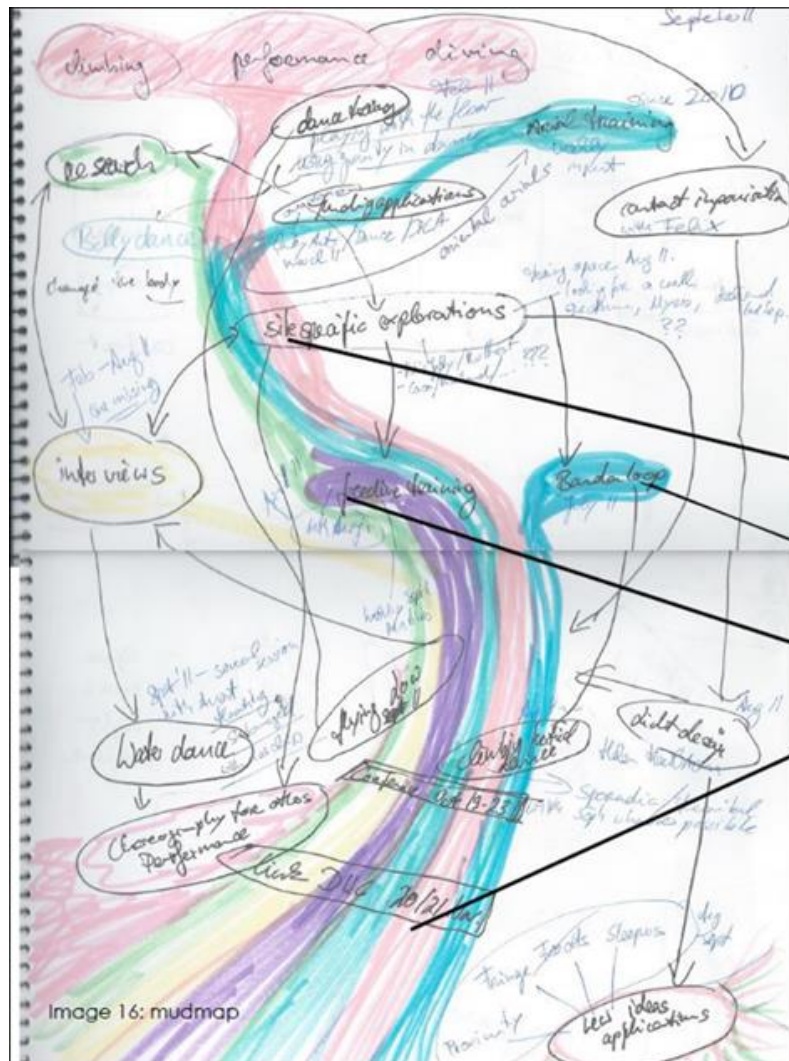
Figure 18: 'Image: mudmap of first 15 months of research' by Russya Connor from exegesis 'The Poetics of gravity'. Source: Connor, 2014, p.74. (Exception to copyright: Section ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study).

Some participants such as Meader and Gasser engaged in reflection on practice in conversation with the interviewer as interlocutor, but did not demonstrate any particular attempt to internalise this, or establish a reflective practice of their own. Gasser's exegesis was a musicological account of the work of Ronald Stevenson, the composer whose works
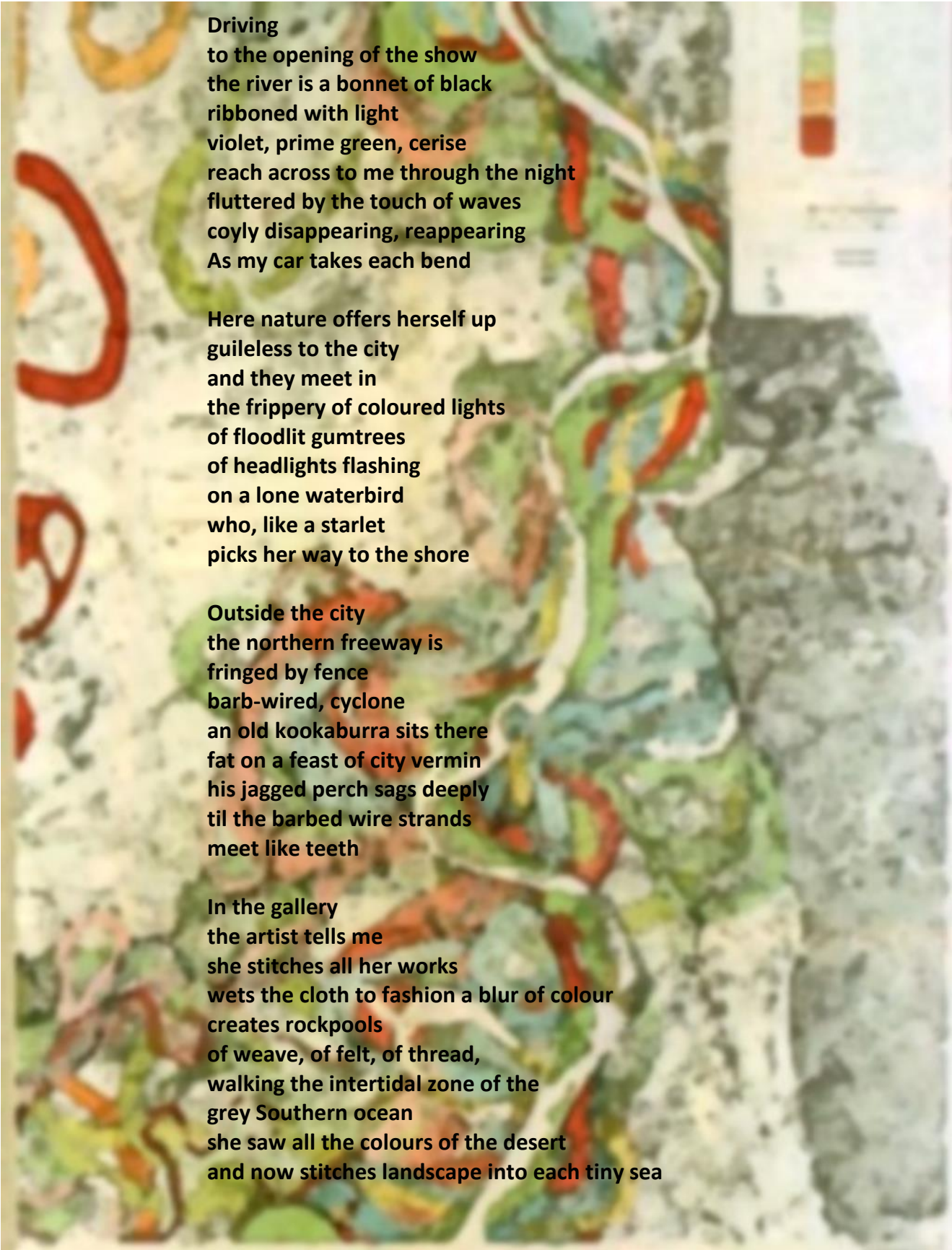
he performed. Meader's exegesis went some way towards reflecting upon his life experience of the key concept in his creative writing practice, bullying, but there was no account of how the features of his creative writing practice embodied or articulated this concept. Therefore, he did not document or externalise his tacit knowledge of "just doing" his children's fiction writing.

Methodological possibilities

The CRJ conversations serve as a reflective practice method that makes it possible for HDR artist–researchers to externalise knowledge through dialogue and through visual and written documentation. Documented reflective practice becomes a form of data about their practice-led research, and offers the possibility of a further methodological approach by contributing to a body of data that can be analysed. In effect, these documented, co-constructed reflective practices support, and become a part of, the creative content related to the artist–researcher's praxis.

The experiences of these six artist–researchers show the CRJ to be an adaptive, fluid model of reflective practice that can assist higher degree artist–researchers to build their own practice-led research framework or approach. The CRJ strategy illustrates one way to lead artist–researchers toward an internalised, idiosyncratic reflective practice that suits their own practice-led research, that is, by modelling this in the first instance with a supportive interlocutor. The CRJ strategy facilitates participants' access to their own tacit, personally-situated and experiential knowledge, whether that knowledge be drawn from aesthetic knowledge, personal knowledge, professional knowledge, kinaesthetic knowledge, embodied knowledge, material knowledge, spiritual knowledge, or another form of knowledge. It contributes to the body of research data that an artist–researcher may draw upon in order to explain their practice-led research in their final exegesis. The CRJ is a strategy that can assist with the building of an integrated individual practice-led research approach that generates the new knowledge required of a PhD.

Driving
to the opening of the show
the river is a bonnet of black
ribboned with light
violet, prime green, cerise
reach across to me through the night
fluttered by the touch of waves
coyly disappearing, reappearing
As my car takes each bend

Here nature offers herself up
guileless to the city
and they meet in
the frippery of coloured lights
of floodlit gumtrees
of headlights flashing
on a lone waterbird
who, like a starlet
picks her way to the shore

Outside the city
the northern freeway is
fringed by fence
barb-wired, cyclone
an old kookaburra sits there
fat on a feast of city vermin
his jagged perch sags deeply
til the barbed wire strands
meet like teeth

In the gallery
the artist tells me
she stitches all her works
wets the cloth to fashion a blur of colour
creates rockpools
of weave, of felt, of thread,
walking the intertidal zone of the
grey Southern ocean
she saw all the colours of the desert
and now stitches landscape into each tiny sea

CONCLUSION
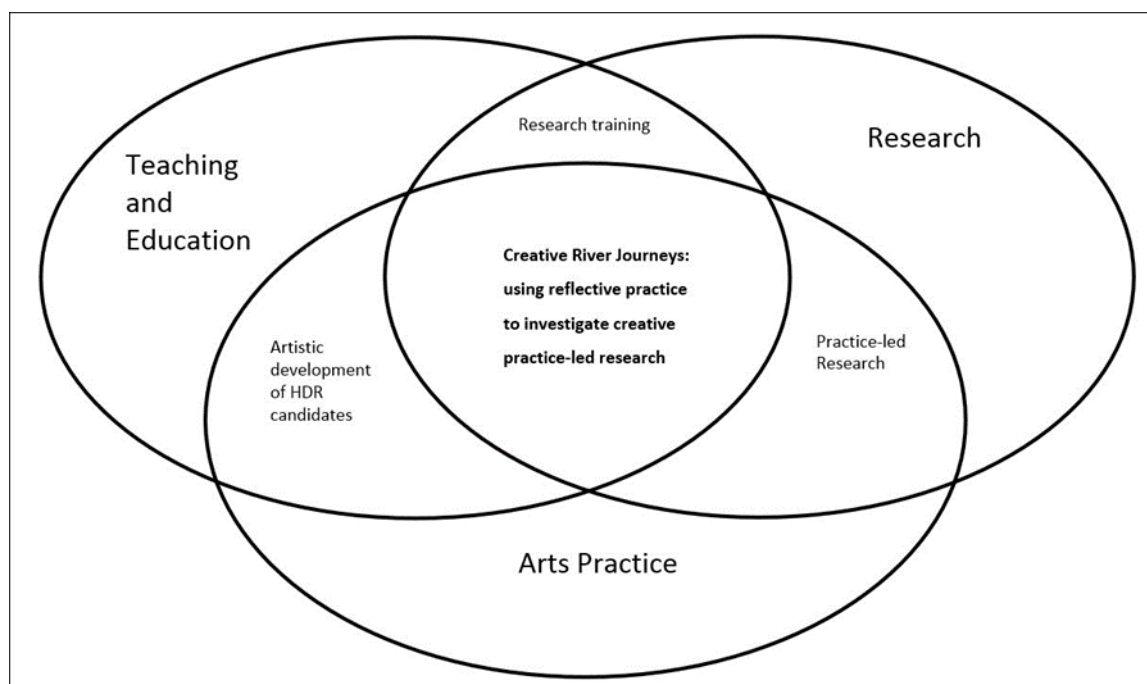
From FIGURE 1: Conceptual framework for the Creative River Journey inquiry into using reflective practice to investigate creative practice-led research in higher degree education (taking an a/r/tography methodological approach). (Repeated image – not in figure list).

SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE

In concluding this account of the 'Creative River Journey' doctoral study, I will now summarise aspects of the project then explore the significance of implications arising from the research. These implications are particularly pertinent for key aspects of the research's conceptual framework: arts practice, practice-led research, and creative practice-led HDR training and pedagogy.

It has been my great privilege to have been immersed in this exploration of the processes of art practice and knowledge-making within the HDR practice-led research context at Edith Cowan University for the past eight years (on a part-time basis). Through the generous participation of the six artist–researchers who were each engaged in their own demanding creative practice-led higher degree research at ECU, the study has provided insights about the experiences of these six participants across the three arts discipline of performing arts, visual arts, and creative writing.

The study was predicated on the notion that these artist–researchers were conducting their creative practice in a system of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; 1999) and adopted a 21st century conceptualization of creativity whereby it is interdisciplinary, collaborative, system-contextualised and adaptive (McWilliam, 2008). The concept of knowledge generated by the artist–researchers via their practice-led research was broadly interpreted so that it might encompass the many types of knowledge artist engage in, for example, practical knowledge (van Manen, 1977), praxical knowledge (Stewart, 2003), tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1962), and reflective knowledge (Schön, 1983). Furthermore, new models of knowledge-making in practice-led research such as Nelson (2013) and Sullivan (2007) added other concepts such as liquid knowing and artistic transcognition to how knowledge was understood in the study.

Contextualized amongst rich contributions to methodology in the practice-led research field, (for example, Barrett &Bolt,2007; Smith & Dean, 2009), this study further stakes a claim that practice-led research is a valid and successful methodological approach to creative higher degree research. The 'Creative River Journey' study has at its heart the belief that practice-led research can successfully accommodate and facilitate the complex processes that artist–researchers engage in as they make creative practice central to their higher degrees by research. The study, and the CRJ reflective strategy within it, engaged with the emergent nature of each of the six artist–researchers' individual practice-led research, bringing to the surface the many factors that impacted upon this as they negotiated the HDR context, and began to transition from artist to artist–researcher.

Adapting the River Journey tool from Burnard (2000) and Kerchner (2006) to the new context of creative practice-led research provided the means to induct these six artist–researchers into reflective practice, and explore their existing reflective and reflexive processes. In addition to testing out the CRJ reflective practice, this thesis has experimented with methodology in more ways than the application of the CRJ strategy alone.

I have used the a/r/tography framework to help establish a conceptual framework for the project which both defined the scope of the project and directed lines of inquiry. In this way, as a qualitative researcher, I have been modelling Nelson's (2013) suggestion that a

conceptual framework can help direct the beginning artist–researcher through the complexities of the doctoral research journey. The metaphor of the river has been explored in the CRJ strategy itself, and also in naming parts of this thesis, for example "The Terrain" instead of literature or contextual review, signally the importance that metaphor has played throughout this study. Additionally, I have experimented with poetic inquiry as an aspect of this thesis. I did so to honour my own creative practice as a poet, thereby acting fully as a/r/tographer. I also did this to make space in this 'traditional' thesis for creative ways of responding to the rich research outcomes made possible by the study's engagement with the creative practice of the artist–researcher participants.

Interview data and CRJ charts were collected in three phases: firstly, in CRJ reflections in semi-structured interviews; secondly, when the artist–researchers independently completed the CRJ; and thirdly, via collaborative reflection in a focus group. This was complemented by a process of creative content data whereby I drew on the artist–researchers' CRJ charts, interview transcripts , research proposals, artworks, performances, creative writing, published academic articles, theses, and other material such as reviews and blogs readily available on the web in relation to each artist–researcher's practice. Narrative accounts of each artist–researcher's practice-led research were compiled by a process similar to qualitative content data analysis, which I have called creative content analysis. This breadth of data was analysed then conveyed in 'narratives of practice' (Murphy, 2012, p.21) to form individual case studies of each artist–researcher with the a/r/tographical conceptual framework and the summative research question guiding initial propositions.

The study addressed three questions in relation to the three intersections of key terrains in my conceptual framework: the artistic development of practice-led HDR candidates, practice-led research in the HDR context, and research training of the artist–researcher. In addition a fourth question addressed what the application of the CRJ strategy to the creative process elucidated for, and about, the HDR artist–researchers.

In regards to the factors that might impact on the artistic development in HDR practice-led research, the study of these six HDR candidates has revealed the significance of the creative ecology of the higher education context on their practice-led research. It has also shown

that approaches to HDR art practice can be highly individual, and how identity, personal networks and relationships impact on HDR practice-led research.

In relation to the challenges, skills and approaches to methodology that support HDR practice-led research, the six case studies have illustrated that there is still not necessarily comprehensive understanding of this methodology nor adoption of it by artist–researchers, despite its decades of acceptance as a valid approach to creative research. The varied art practices of the artist–researchers also illustrated both the rich potential and the challenges that diversities of practice can present. Emergence has been revealed as a key characteristic of HDR practice-led research, in particular how this might imbue the research journey with a discombobulating quality.

Insights have been revealed in relation to the aspects of research training that may more readily induct beginning artist–researchers into higher education research. The study has illustrated how reflective practice can aid artist–researchers to locate themselves in their field of research. It also revealed that the beginning artist–researcher requires the skills to recognise methods within their existing practice, whilst at the same time be given the opportunity to scaffold new knowledge upon existing knowledge and praxis. Reflective practice is demonstrated as one possible method to assist them with this.

In regards to how the artist–researchers responded to the CRJ strategy, the study has revealed that the reflective practice generated by the CRJ is a method which brings tacit knowledge to light. The strategy can reveal critical moments that themselves are portals to the artist–participants' new knowledge creation. The importance of an interlocutor in revealing these was shown to be crucial for some participants. For many participants, the CRJ process resonated with the fluidity of their own individual creative practice, and it was an approach to reflective practice that was amenable to further development by some participants. What is most demonstrable is that the CRJ strategy, whilst not necessarily adopted by all participants, set up the conditions for reflective approaches to their HDR practice-led research.

In all, the study met its aim to examine the way that the CRJ reflective practice strategy might add to practice-led research methodologies for beginning artist–researchers. It makes

a contribution as a new methodological possibility in the field of practice-led research. The study's HDR perspective joins existing Australian contextual reviews of practice-led research. It further meets the aim of contributing to practice-led methodologies by advancing this discussion through providing rich case studies of HDR practice-led research from the outsider perspective of the researcher whilst, at the same time, providing a unique insider perspective. This latter perspective was also two-fold: the researcher acted as a co-constructor of the participants' reflective practice; and the participants independently documented their creative practice and reflective practice strategies.

The implications arising from the 'Creative River Journey' are particularly pertinent for the three intersections in the study's conceptual framework: the artistic development of practice-led HDR candidates, practice-led research in the HDR context, and research training of the artist–researcher. Given that this doctoral study consists of six case studies within one university environment, there are significant limitations to the potential generalisation of any implications. Even so, the 'Creative River Journey' project serves as a close study of the methodologies used by practice-led researchers, and provides detailed insights about the development of their reflective practice.

These forthcoming implications are positioned in the context of the rich support that many HDR supervisors provide for practice-led researchers, the institutional support that is in place in many instances (for example, ECU's TINAS), and contextual reviews such as Webb, Brien and Burr's (2013) review of doctoral examination and Hamilton and Carson's (2013b) review of practice-led research supervision. These implications are proffered in a spirit of collegiality and contribution to the field of practice-led research pedagogy and methodology, not out of a motive of criticism of existing practices. Nelson (2013) argues that methodology and reflective practice are critical tools for artists who use HDR studies to transition into the higher education environment to become artist–researchers. This study addresses these areas. In addition, the 'Creative River Journey' investigation made a deliberate pedagogical intervention into the HDR candidates' learning experiences through its application of the CRJ reflective practice strategy in a new creative context, and there are resulting findings with regard to the effectiveness of this strategy.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH HDR CANDIDATES

Idiosyncratic and individual journeys of 'becoming'

The CRJ strategy has illustrated that every case of artistic practice-led research included in the study was conducted in a highly individual fashion, emerging according to the idiosyncratic needs and interests of each of the participant artist–researchers. Their PhD foci often reflect the culmination of a lifetime's interest in a topic, and an extensive history of arts practice and/or professional practice. Though artists enter the PhD process with a set of pre-existing skills and knowledge regarding their art practice, they then fashion this over time to develop a coherent research approach, adopting appropriate theory and methods that facilitate this coherence. In effect, practice-led HDR candidates undergo a process of emergence, and it is this process that requires particular attention in the supervisory relationship. I suggest that part of supporting that process of emergence could be a reflective practice-facilitated career review at the start of the HDR candidates' doctoral journey, a strategy employed by several of the participants (for example, Gasser, Connor, and Girak). This will elucidate internal frames of reference for the beginning artist–researcher. It may also help then narrow down the rationale for their proposed study, and provide impetus for their work by way of promoting self-understanding, thus helping them maintain the momentum required to complete a creative practice-led PhD.

Practice-led research knowledge-making in a system of creativity

This research identifies that each individual conducts their artistic practice-led research within a complex system of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi 1999), and in which they are subject to the particular rules and limitations of a disciplinary domain: for example, a musicology approach (Gasser); the embodiment of research in a performance (Connor); or the impetus towards a gallery exhibition as a visual artist (Girak). These disciplinary-based rules need to be acknowledged by the artist–researchers so that unspoken assumptions do not bring about misunderstandings when defining their approaches.

Furthermore, there are understandings specific to the artist–researcher's field of study that prescribe how knowledge is made. These also need to be brought to the surface for the commencing artist–researcher, as they have implications for the HDR candidates in translating this knowledge for the purposes of practice-led research, where praxical knowledge is expected. (Connor translated the knowledge embodied in her physical performance, yet Gasser chose not to do so for his music performance; Girak extended her project when she upgraded to a doctorate to include an art exhibition as an expression of her artistic knowledge-making, although this was additional to her initial discipline-driven, education-related knowledge.)

The beginner artist–researcher will benefit from exploring a way to identify assumptions about knowledge in their field (for example, Gasser and musicology), and also a way to identify the knowledge-making process they favour in their practice (for example, Meader and tacit 'spirit' knowing). Models of knowledge making such as Sullivan's "research frameworks informing practice" (2007, p.1187), which includes discursive, dialectical or deconstructive modes of knowledge-making, or Nelson's "model of practice-as-research" (2013, p.37), which includes tacit knowledge, embodied knowledge, cognitive propositional knowledge and critical reflective knowledge, for example, can alert beginning artist–researchers to alternative modes of knowing. With the possibility of alternative modes of knowing, they may be more able to extend themselves toward new pathways of knowledge-making, and such new awareness can be instrumental in the artist–researcher forging new methods, approaches and insights.

Locating oneself in the field and through the HDR research proposal

HDR artist–researchers may be conducting their doctoral work within an existing field (for example, Meader's children's literature) but they may also be extending that field as a result of their research (for example, Connor's inquiry into physical gravity-oriented aspect of performance research, or Donlin's 'tradere through craft' approach to visual arts research). Thus, the supervision and training of a beginning practice-led HDR candidate requires deft handling to develop a clear analysis of their field. Any attempt to homogenise creative

practice-led researchers into a common approach will come up against fundamental differences in domain and field rules.

The artist–researchers in this 'Creative River Journey' project demonstrated that the discovery of field-related theory and methods was instrumental in progressing their research (for example, Girak and material thinking; Murphy and transnational literature). This formation of a model for one's idiosyncratic creative practice requires a certain amount of freedom to explore which, in a practice-led research HDR, is paradoxically bound by institutional requirements such as timely completion and the need to present a research proposal early in candidature.

The artist–researcher participants demonstrated engagement in an emergent process of identifying their field and their methods as they progressed their doctorates. In order to make more room for this emergence, I advocate for a move towards the use of a conceptual framework (as argued for by Nelson, 2013) by beginning HDR practice-led artist–researchers as part of the required research proposal process rather than the use of a set of strict research questions that must be addressed. This will help emergent artist–researchers explore various spaces in the terrain of their practice, leading them towards identifying their place in the field.

Social construction of knowledge

The knowledge making of HDR artist–researchers has been demonstrated to be a subset of the social construction of knowledge, at the very least within the social context of the university HDR setting. But there are also other complexities to the social milieus that impact on the HDR candidates' experience, and from which they may have drawn their knowledge and support in the past. For example, an individual's professional creative practice, their network of critical friends, the creative community of practice of their fellow artists, even their family as supporters and providers of feedback. Many of the 'Creative River Journey' participants highlighted their enjoyment of the focus group because it brought together arts-oriented researchers within the university setting (Donlin) or because they found the HDR experience isolating (Meader) or hard-going alone (Gasser). Such isolation can be interpreted as the dissonance that beginning artist–researchers

experienced as they shift from their usual creative communities of practice into a research community of practice.

I suggest that in order to induct beginning HDR artist–researchers into research communities of practice they should first be inducted into a broad creative research community of practice. Such an induction acknowledges both the shared understandings that come from a creative community of practice, and the potential for future acquisition of shared knowledge forged through the socially constructed exchanges of the research community of practice. It also highlights for the beginning artist–researcher that, when conducting practice-led research in the university context, they are moving from artist to artist–researcher.

Such a transitional induction (Figure 19) introduces the issues, restraints and responsibilities of positioning creative practice within a research context, a useful introduction given that others may experience similar dissonance to the 'Creative River Journey' artist–researcher participants, who did not necessarily adopt shared understandings inherent in the given ECU research community of practice. At the same time, it pays heed to the existing knowledge and tacit understandings the creative practitioner brings with them into the research community of practice, and makes space for these in a Creative Research Community of Practice.

Figure 19: Transitioning communities of practice for beginning HDR artist–researchers. Source: Author's own diagram.

I propose using the term creative research for such a community of practice. As stated previously, I use practice-led research as an umbrella term which I argue best demonstrates the centrality of creative practice to the artist–researchers' doctoral studies, (indeed, creative practice is what 'led' the artist–researchers in the study to undertake their PhDs in the first place); however, for beginning HDR artist–researchers in an emergent process of identifying their ways of knowing, their field and their methodology, practice-led research may not be easily identified with. Certainly, none of the artist–researcher participants in this study used it at the outset of their degrees. Therefore, the broadest possible term should apply to this group in order to encourage the beginning artist–researcher to identify their place within the creative research community of practice. Thus I suggest the term Creative Research Community of Practice.

ECU's School of Arts and Humanities (formerly SCA) and WAAPA have gone a considerable way in establishing such an interim group with the 'This Is Not A Seminar' (TINAS) weekly forums, established in 2012, a "dialogic, multidisciplinary forum" (Adams et al. 2015 p.1334) structured to support the skill development of creative postgraduate students. In addition, some areas within these two schools have smaller discipline-based groups such as the creative writing group mentioned by Meader, the WAAPA Reading and Writing group mentioned by Connor, and the Music Research group mentioned by Gasser. TINAS, having commenced a year after most of the CRJ interviews were conducted, was not mentioned by any of the participants in their interviews for the 'Creative River Journey' study, but it also did not feature in any of the other published material or exegeses produced by the participants. This may indicate that it was simply overlooked by them as a discussion topic, that the artist–researcher participants were not aware of the group, or that they did not feel ownership or inclusion in the group.

Communities of practice established with the involvement of 'guardian' supervisors, wherein the principles of communities of practice are applied, have proven successful for creative HDR researchers in other university settings. Wisker, Robinson and Shachem (2007) explain the use of communities of practice for postgraduates from across disciplines at Anglia Ruskin University in the United Kingdom and suggest that three principles drive the

successful community of practice: "1. Enterprise; shared goals, mutual accountability, fluent communication. 2. Mutual engagement; individual or group connection. 3. Shared repertoire; pooling of resources, material and emotional" (p.307). Thus, whether it is a disciplinary group or a multidisciplinary group, the isolation and lack of connection to research groups that some 'Creative River Journey' participants experienced suggests that a creative research community of practice constructed according to these three principles of shared enterprise, mutual engagement and pooled resources may provide fertile ground for the transition of the artist into the role of artist–researcher.

IMPLICATIONS FOR HDR PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH

Tacit knowledge and an individual process of reflection

Practice-led research involves tacit knowledge and requires a process of reflection in order for that tacit knowledge to become a resource contributing to the exegetical requirements of the PhD (Nelson, 2013). But this process of reflection, like the participant artist–researcher's creative practice, is idiosyncratic and personal. The two participant artist–researchers who engaged least in reflection on their creative practice in their exegeses, still demonstrated reflection on their practice in the CRJ interviews. This perhaps suggests no directive from their respective supervisors to engage in reflective practice for exegetical purposes. It is to be acknowledged, however, that these two participants were the two males of the six case studies. Whilst there may be gender dimensions in terms of their preferred mode of reflection, this was not specifically addressed in the 'Creative River Journey' study and would require investigation in a study with a greater number of participants than six case studies.

Reflection, reflective practice, and reflexivity are skills that artist–researchers adopt to varying degrees. The CRJ reflective practice strategy demonstrates that it is possible to induct HDR artist–researchers into a reflective process and thus reveal critical moments in practice that help to inform the participant about their practice-led research. But the varying levels of adoption shown in the second independently-completed phase of the CRJs, whereby some participants completely adopted and adapted the CRJs whilst others

conducted a pragmatic recount of an event, illustrate that like practice-led research, reflective practice is highly individual. Even application of terminology such as reflexivity can illustrate differences in the ways HDR artist–researchers interpret these terms. Some may use a critical friend or interlocutor to verbalise reflections (Girak); some may use theory as a pathway into reflexivity (Donlin); for some, reflection may be autoethnographic, about the evolving self as artist–researcher (Murphy); some may take an outsider reflective position on a subject (Gasser); some may appear to take an objective reflective stance on a theme but arrive at a subjective understanding of that theme's link to personal experience (Meader); others may already have an established reflective method and see alternative methods as being echoes of their existing practice (Connor). Thus, the 'Creative River Journey' study illustrates that it is possible to induct HDR artist–researchers into reflective practice but it has also identified that, in doing so, the HDR artist–researchers remain free to adopt, adapt or resist that induction, according to their own individual approach to reflecting on practice.

Practice-led research as a methodological approach, not a set of methods

The 'Creative River Journey' study has revealed the highly individualised construction of methods by the each of the HDR artist–researchers in enacting their creative practice-led research. I have identified that I use the term practice-led research as an umbrella term but that there was no use of the term in any of the individual CRJ interviews. Three of the six participants mentioned the term in their submitted exegeses, but of these three, only Girak included a complex explanation of how practice-led research fitted into her material-centred a/r/tographical research methodology.

I have argued that one of the barriers to HDR artist–researchers adopting the term 'practice-led research' is that new HDR candidates come to it in the hope that it provides a set of methods with which to navigate the "difficult, messy and at times frustrating endeavour" (Haseman & Mafe 2009, p.218) of creative research. Practice-led research is a research paradigm that sits alongside qualitative and quantitative research but differs from these because the knowledge created is derived from the individual creative practice working

methods of the artist–researcher. It is praxical knowledge, theory imbricated with creative practice (Nelson, 2013), not the result of theoretical deductions alone.

In order to arrive at a set of methods, the 'Creative River Journey' study demonstrates that the HDR artist–researchers may need to experience the "shock of recognition" (Sullivan, 2006, para.10) in order to identify methods that they recognise as corresponding with their practice. This is further argument for the HDR artist–researcher commencing their PhD process with a review of the field and construction of a conceptual framework, rather than proceeding from first base with a detailed description of methodology. In this way I am suggesting the HDR creative artist–researchers position themselves, to use McIntyre's term, as 'agents-experient'. He explains that such creative researchers "locate themselves within a problematic situation as concerned actors" (2006, p.6). When beginning HDR artist–researchers locate themselves in the field, and concern themselves with problematizing their inquiry within that field, it facilitates the shock of recognition. Once the HDR artist–researchers have clarified their position in the field and the key concepts that they will be exploring, they can be offered methods that resonate within the boundaries of their practice whilst, at the same time, be experimenting with theory and methodology from outside their disciplinary and practice boundaries. Thus, once they explore existing practice and survey new methods, they have the opportunity to find their methodological voice and thus apply a composite methodology that makes sense for them and their inquiry.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING THE HDR ARTIST–RESEARCHER

Importance of self-constructed social networks

The artist–researchers' CRJs demonstrated well-developed, self-constructed social networks that supported their practice. For example, Donlin met weekly with a group of friends whom she had known for years, all engaged in studying textiles at ECU (though not all HDR candidates) and with only some members identifying as artists. Donlin invited the researcher to meet the group. The group's shared passion for textiles and hand-making was made evident following introductions, when, simultaneously, they all reached across the table and touched my Italian woollen scarf then laughed, with Donlin going on to explain to

me that the scarf was hand-woven, and by what method. Girak mentioned in her CRJs that she drew on the support of her close friends, her child's teacher, her fellow REmida volunteers, and one critical friend. I have mentioned previously the need for transitioning the HDR artist–researcher from an artist community of practice into an artist–researcher community of practice. However, in light of how isolating several of the participants found their HDR process, I suggest alerting the HDR candidates to their existing self-constructed social networks. Using these in the context of their HDR journey might help alleviate that sense of isolation felt by some. A professional review of practice by the beginning artist–researcher at the outset of the HDR could be accompanied by a review of social support networks, so that the artist–researcher has an extensive map of their personal network and practice within which to locate themselves as they progress into the emergent, often-destabilising stages of doctoral practice-led research.

Practice-led knowledge and professional advances

As Gasser identified, there is some dissonance between perceptions of artists as they conduct their art practice for creative, performative outcomes and perceptions of research. This is partly overcome by consciously alerting beginning artist–researchers to the differences between their creative community of practice and the research community of practice; but it can also be overcome by helping HDR candidates to identify the relationship between knowledge generation from their practice-led HDR and potential professional advances. Identifying their place in the field and then contributing to that field in a public manner can assist this. For example, Donlin reflected on the affirming experience of having her work included in an exhibition of Perth contemporary artists at the key state gallery, the Art Gallery of Western Australia. Gasser discussed the performance of the *Passacaglia* at the Sydney Opera House and compared it to his performance at WAAPA, exploring verbally the impact upon his performance of the two venues. Connor explained how communicating her practice-led research via the *Blau* choreography was central to her research, showing a professional application of her investigations. Connor also created a public performance *Sea Inside* at the Blue Room Theatre, Perth, on which she was examined for her PhD. Meader was actively working on his children's book with an illustrator, with a view to future

publication. Murphy submitted her creative work to a publisher shortly after completing the PhD, embracing this external affirmation of the quality of her work. In some cases, these public performances or exhibitions were mapped out in the research proposal, in others they evolved as the PhD progressed, or followed on after it. I suggest that locating oneself in the field and mapping a pathway to public performance, exhibition or publication is a method by which the important ideas in a creative community of practice are embedded into a creative research community of practice.

Scope to recognise methods and theory extant in individual practice

Such a review of public manifestations and disciplinary fields would also provide the scope for the beginning artist–researcher to recognise methods within their existing practice that can be called on when designing their practice-led research project. At the same time, this scope needs to be expanded to encompass new methods, introduced to them by their supervisor, by postgraduate discussion groups such as ECU's TINAS, and by targeted practice-led research methodology training. Murphy's identification with autoethnography was pivotal in progressing her research but came about serendipitously, rather than being an outcome of structured methodology training.

Furthermore, introduction of theory by her supervisor aided Murphy in identifying her practice as a transnational writer. Several of the participant artist–researchers discussed theory without identifying it as such. Thus, the CRJ reflective practice proved itself to be a successful strategy for bringing to light the existing theory that participants were already using. A specific critique of such a CRJ by a beginning artist–researcher, assisted by an interlocutor, would help them identify points of theory existing within their practice, or points where their practice intersects with theory that they have yet to identify. This can form a basis upon which new knowledge can be scaffolded.

Scaffolding new knowledge upon existing practice

The PhD practice-led research process of making new knowledge or methods is scaffolded upon existing knowledge. The use of CRJs to bring tacit knowledge to light creates the foundations for scaffolding new knowledge upon existing knowledge. At the same time, a conceptual framework and review of practice at the outset of the HDR may add impetus to
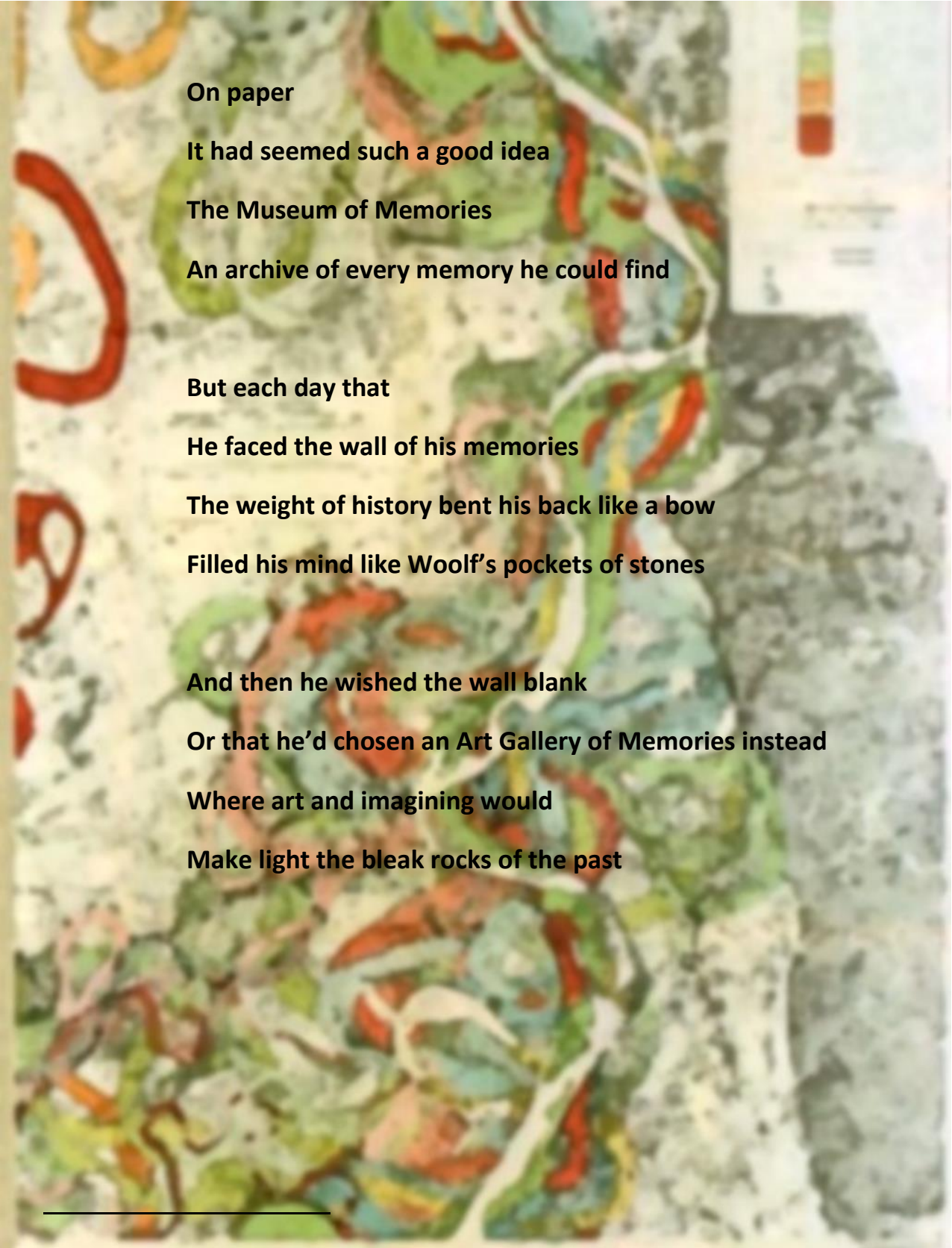
the synthesis of new knowledge-making with existing knowledge, and provide the beginning HDR artist–researcher with more confidence as they move forward through their HDR journey.

THE END OF THE JOURNEY

The rich data revealed by the 'Creative River Journey' study, and the subsequent findings and implications arising from analysis of this data, make a considered contribution to our understanding of HDR practice-led research. This thesis has demonstrated the CRJ reflective strategy to be an innovative way of using metaphor and critical moments to instigate independent and collaborative reflection. The knowledge created by the CRJ reflections can provide HDR artist–researchers with a means to explore the relationship between the creative and critical components in their creative arts higher education degrees. The strategy generated knowledge about how each artist–researcher engaged in a meld of practice and research in the art-making process within practice-led research, and brought to light key critical moments in the practice-research nexus. Of consequence to the knowledge outcomes for the HDR artist–researchers in the study is how these captured the phenomena of their praxis, and thus proved a useful documentation approach to their practice-led research.

This thesis has made evident the 'Creative River Journey' study's contribution to the rich established field of practice-led research by way of the deliberate pedagogical interventions embodied in the CRJ reflective strategy. This new methodological possibility sits alongside the many existing rich contributions to the field, including: artist–researcher self-studies, such as those contained in the six artist–researchers participants' own doctoral theses; existing contextual reviews of creative practice higher degree research; and methodological contributions. Collectively, these methodological and theoretical innovations can continue to be central to the field, providing the grounds for an exciting future in which practice-led research for HDR artist–researchers is supported and celebrated, and in which creative arts hold their place in the academy, making clear the unique and vital role of the arts in contributing to knowledge, society, and humanity.

POETIC INTERLUDE 12—WOOLF'S POCKETS[7]

On paper

It had seemed such a good idea

The Museum of Memories

An archive of every memory he could find

But each day that

He faced the wall of his memories

The weight of history bent his back like a bow

Filled his mind like Woolf's pockets of stones

And then he wished the wall blank

Or that he'd chosen an Art Gallery of Memories instead

Where art and imagining would

Make light the bleak rocks of the past

[7] (Stevenson, 2015b, p.42)

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APPENDIX A—PHASE ONE CRJ CHART PRO-FORMA (pages 1 & 2)

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name..Date.............................
Artwork/Performance/Text..

1

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

2
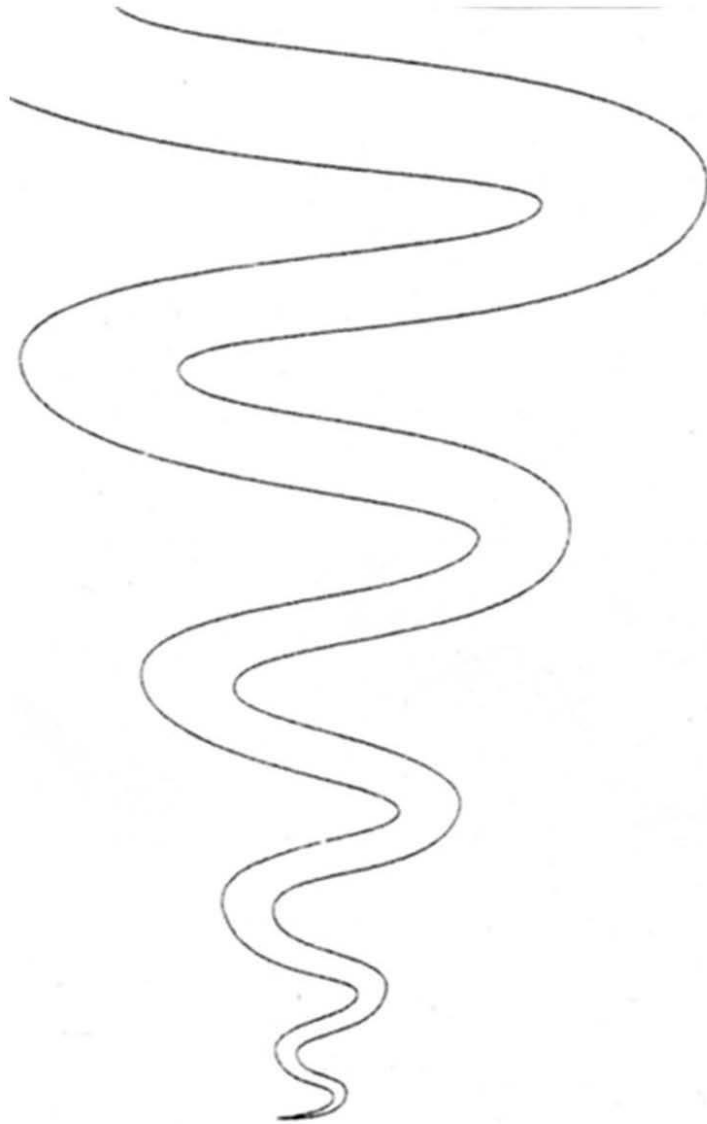
APPENDIX B—PHASE TWO CRJ INSTRUCTIONS AND CHART (pages 1–6)

<u>PHASE TWO: REFLECTING ON YOUR CHOSEN ARTWORK, PERFORMANCE OR ASPECT OF PRACTICE</u>

The first step is to select a topic – usually an artwork, performance or other aspect of practice - to reflect on that is related to your research project. Here are some examples of topics: a period of development, a particular artwork, a performance, a series of interviews, a chapter, training in a particular skill, a period of reading and writing, a storyboard.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

Describe briefly the topic that you have chosen to reflect on for this river journey task.

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Was there a reason you chose this particular topic to reflect on?

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What dates did you complete it?

……
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Was there an intended audience for this? (If there is a different long-term audience, e.g., the audience for a work-in-progress is peers, whereas the final performance is for the public, please indicate).

……
……

Did you have any set purpose in mind in carrying out or completing this aspect?

……
……
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<u>THE CREATIVE RIVER JOURNEY CHART</u>

NOTE: Critical moments are events or points within a process that are illuminating, compelling or instructive. Such moments often change, influence or inform a key element or problem in your project or practice.

On the chart provided (on pages 3 & 4), please document the period of development or process of making this artwork, performance, or aspect of practice yourself, using each bend on the Creative River Journey Chart as a point where a critical moment (as described above) occurred?

Start at the very beginning... (if not noted on the journey). One way to begin is to try to recall any incident that was the kernel or the genesis of the artwork or aspect of practice.

You might like to quickly jot down the main critical moments using a key word or phrase at each bend, then go back to reflect a little more deeply on each critical moment.

Suggested prompts for identifying and describing more deeply each CRITICAL MOMENT:

- *What happened...?*
- *Where did it happen...?*
- *Why is it significant?*
- *What role did others play in the moment...?*
- *How crucial was it in the development of the artwork or text...?*
- *If there was one thing you would say about that moment, it would be...?*

(These are not a set of questions to be answered but rather ways to think more deeply about each moment).

<u>*ABOUT THE ATTACHED EXAMPLE OF A CREATIVE RIVER JOURNEY (on pages 5 & 6)*</u>

I have included in this information an example of one person's river journey chart, completed for a previous study with masters of creative writing students.

You do not need to follow this example exactly. You are free to complete the river journey in a way that suits your personal practice and reflective style. You are even free to copy the chart and complete it more than once if this is more to your liking. The important point to follow is that you capture the critical moments in your practice on the chart.

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart

(adapted from Kerchner, 2006, p.128)

Name....................................... Date ....
Artwork/Performance/Text...
When was it completed/performed ....
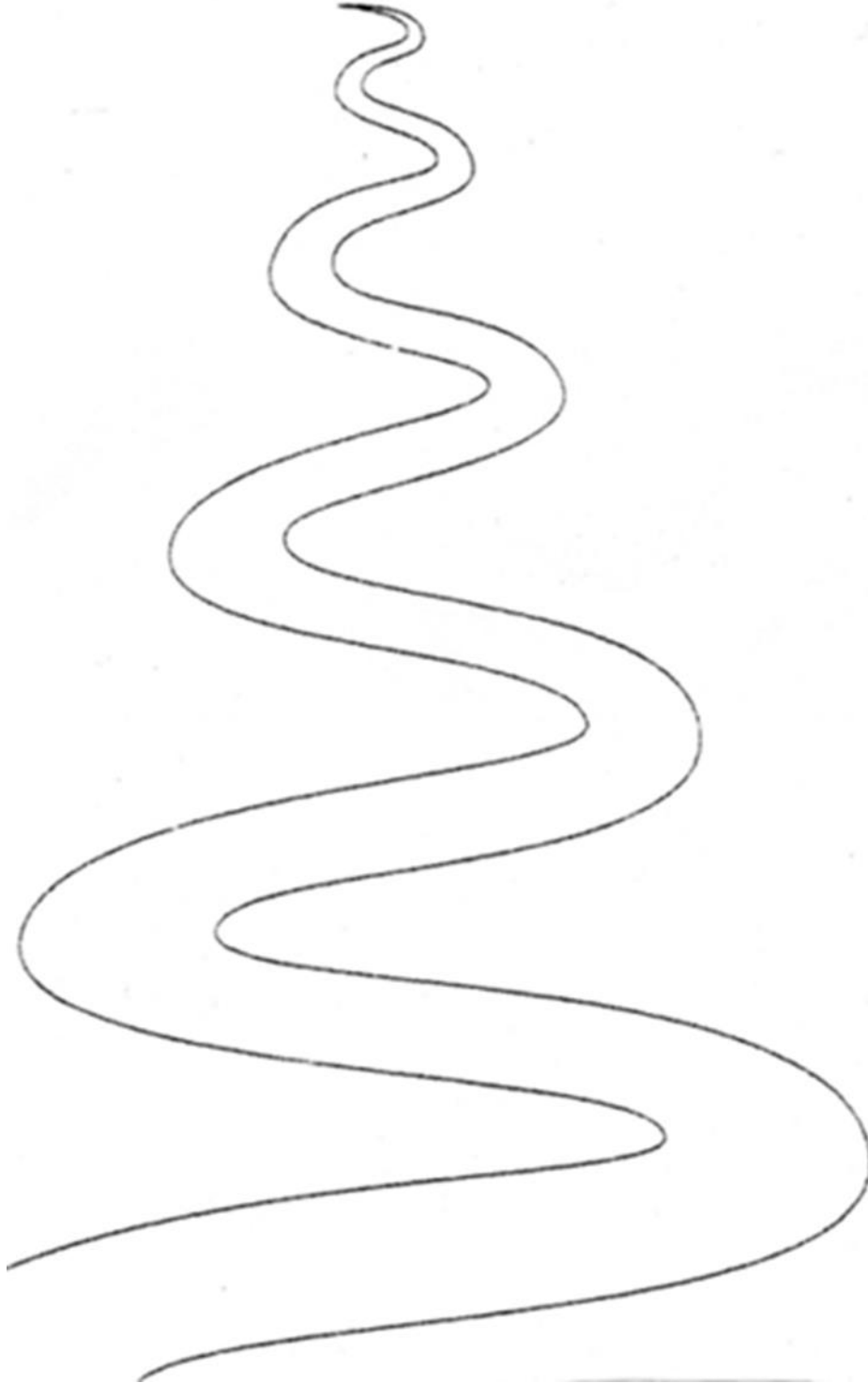
Reference: p.128, Kerchner, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The Netherlands, pp123–135.

A critical moment river journey chart:

Creative Writing River Journey
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name...Date...6-5-9......
Creative Writing Text...This Photo Album Belongs to: SUNDAY ALLEN.

CHILDREN'S LIT NPHL PROJECT

LOTS OF IDEAS/DECIDED ON A PICTURE BOOK — MINIMAL TEXT.

✓ END PAPER SHOWING A JOURNEY OF MATURATION

DECIDED ON PHOTO ALBUM - TELLING A STORY THROUGH PICTURES BUT PHOTOS MET A NUMBER OF NEEDS:
- CONCEAL/REVEAL
- 'PICTURES' BOOK
-

ORIGINALLY CHOSE NO TEXT IDEA — GIFT TO CHILD OF PARENT WHO DIED REAL PHOTOS & DRAWN PART] — Really likes collage. Visual arts major in first degree — really likes to layer images — to take them to places other reality

ORIGINAL PLAN
Start on the cover - pictures of her growing up, SUNDAY's baby book. circular journey from mum's birth → to grandchild's birth. SO MANY Polaroids 80 - 90 POLAROIDS

SAVED IT AS A TREAT
BOUGHT A PHOTO ALBUM THAT LOOKED HOW SHE WANTED IT TO. (BUT IT ONLY HAD 20 PAGES. & IT WAS EXACTLY THE RIGHT SIZE) USED THE ORIGINAL ALBUM COVER AT POINT OF PURCHAS SHAPED STORY TO FIT THE ALBUM. Space around the photos. felt good to touch/soft cover/feel it

HAD HALF THE STORY & HAD STARTED MAKING THE IMAGES BUT REALISED FIRST 9 PICTURES IN HER HEAD. THEN CONSTRUCTED THE COLLAGE OF FIRST 9. (LAID OUT ON BED.

DECIDED TO PUT IN 'CAPTIONS' - pragmatic decision because had to present it to the group. READER (Sam) saw no captions. THE 'GO TO' PERSON. "CRITICAL FRIEND"

WHERE'S THE STORY GOES NEXT → HAD BEEN SAVING VARIOUS SCENARIOS/IMAGES SCENES.

YOU REALISED THE MOTHER & DAUGHTER NEED TO BE SEPARATED - IN TEXTUAL DETAIL, BIG A-HA MOMENT. REALISED THIS CHOICE IS VERY PRACTICAL - FOR TEXT REFERENCE

GOOGLE IMAGE SEARCH Personal/Private journey for Jade Good. Exposed to the image but did not pursue the story. Didn't occur to her/hadn't made that connection.

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

Deadline to present the book to the MPhil class.
Had a choice of:-
fairytale/poetry/novel/picturebook
Saw the presentation of the book as a tester of her book
"Did it generate what Sally had called it to."

NOW - shows it to different people, getting a wide range of responses and looking for ways to improve it.

LAST TWO IMAGES
FINAL IMAGES:
ACCESS TO TWO PICTURES OF CHAIR, ONE ZOOMED IN. LIGHT BACKGROUND. MADE THE GHOSTLY IMAGE POSSIBLE

Teary-eyed in the audience. Perhaps readers were shocked. Looks childish / warm & fuzzy but surprised people by the seriousness. No negative reactions though acknowledged it is a sad story.

SITS ON THE SHELF
Not sure what happens with it yet but thinks the journey of the book is not finished yet.
Not sure whether to send it off yet... it's just waiting, maybe testing it.

320

APPENDIX C—PHASE THREE FOCUS STIMULUS QUESTIONS & POEM

Phase 3 discussion group
EXPERIENCES OF THE CREATIVE RIVER JOURNEY

Name:

Date:

Project:

DISCUSSION TOPIC 1:
What did the application of the Creative River Journey reflective tool, both phase 1 & 2, reveal for you about your own creative practice?

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DISCUSSION TOPIC 2:
What insights did the experience of the Creative River Journey tool provide about the relationship between your creative practice and your other research processes?

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DISCUSSION TOPIC 3:
In your view, how is the Creative River Journey process related to the idea of practice-led research?

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OTHER COMMENTS:
Is there anything else not covered by these above three topics that you would like to discuss and explain?

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FOR AN ARTIST WHO PAINTS TO DANCE MUSIC

She paints her pictures, they trifle with her no longer.
Fully their mistress now, she can transmute
The most unfeeling landscape into art,
Quicken a portrait with more than human heart,
Or make an abstract mishmash seem no stranger
Than any simple scheme of flowers or fruit.

Yet for this perfection put upon her canvas
She seriously admits her debt
To saxophone and clarinet,
For once these make the floorboards tap her feet
She can call down her colours from the stars.
And to the beat
Of irresponsible drums
Trumpets aflare and highly strung guitars
Her brush stroke strums
On paint most deftly, or, as she says,
They make the right accompaniment
                        to what her painting plays.

One dance steps on another, one picture may end
After she paints a hundred dances through;
But such is her mad mystery of touch
That even long before the painting dries
The tumult and her skill's composure blend
Into a masterpiece she knows is true.
Ask her to dance, she scarcely lifts her eyes.
Music's her brandy, and her need so much
That when at times her record player stops,
Hush stills the pulse of palette-knife or brush,
Her vision falters and her slack hand drops.

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APPENDIX D—RUSSYA CONNOR'S ORIGINAL COMPLETED CRJ CHARTS

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name...... RUSSYA CONNOR .... Date 22-8-2011 ......
Artwork/Performance/Text...... WATER ASPECT ......

BEGAN TO THINK OF DIVING AS AN ARTISTIC EXPRESSION.

- KNEW OF CIRQUE DE SOLEIL'S WATER SHOW
- HEARD OF SEVERAL DANCE COMPANY'S [USING WATER]
- DIDO & AENEAS [MTN OPERA BY HENRY PURCELL] HAD A TANK ON STAGE

MASK/SCUBA DIVING EQUIPMENT LIMITS EXPRESSIVENESS.

THOUGHT ABOUT OWN FEELINGS, WHAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO EXPERIENCE ... 'BEING UNDER WATER IS LIBERATING'

REALISED LIMITATIONS OF OWN FREE-DIVING ABILITIES - COULD ONLY STAY UNDERWATER 30 SECS DO

TRAINING IN THE POOL TO GET BREATH LENGTHENED.

BRANCHES OFF INTO 4 EXPRESSIONS
SCUBA DANCE PERFORMANCE
POETIC IMAGE -

DANCE MOVEMENT UNDER WATER... FILMED STORYBOARDED CHOREOGRAPHED LINKAGE OF ALL FOUR IN PERFORMANCE.

POETIC IMAGE
White dressed figure floating above

(Hypno Eater) EXPERIMENTATION WITH MATERIALS IN SCUBA DIVING - PUTTING AIR TANKS IN DIFFERENT POSITIONS

FILMING
How the practical aspects of film i.e. bubbles need to be precise about the image

AERIAL WORK
Lucky in getting an interview & great support.

INTERVIEWING diver & aerial artists - stay the same

How can I translate the experience into something tangible?
How you transport these ideas into a performance for an audience?

AERIAL... now at a PRAGMATIC/PRACTICAL STAGE
WATER
I MOVE INTO CREATIVE CONSOLIDATION STAGE.
Phase END POINT

MIRROR-NEURONS
How do I get people to think/feel what I do?...

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PHASE TWO: REFLECTING ON YOUR CHOSEN ARTWORK, PERFORMANCE OR ASPECT OF PRACTICE

The first step is to select a topic – usually an artwork, performance or other aspect of practice - to reflect on that is related to your research project. Here are some examples of topics: a period of development, a particular artwork, a performance, a series of interviews, a chapter, training in a particular skill, a period of reading and writing, a storyboard.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

Describe briefly the topic that you have chosen to reflect on for this river journey task.

choreographing the piece "Blue" for the live dance company; reflecting & incorporating my findings from the underwater research section (experiments; expert interviews, background research, perception)

Was there a reason you chose this particular topic to reflect on?

It the most recent work and the first showing of the performance parts of my PhD. It also includes all the elements of film; dance; underwater experiments) The river journey is used as a closure, & reflecting on the whole process.

What dates did you complete it?

20.11.11 (final performance)
filming completed   17.10
editing   "   16.11
choreography "   19.11

Was there an intended audience for this? (If there is a different long-term audience, e.g., the audience for a work-in-progress is peers, whereas the final performance is for the public, please indicate).

- public audience
- but also includes supervisors & peers

Did you have any set purpose in mind in carrying out or completing this aspect?

The purpose was exploring the "transferability" of experience; creating work for people (dancers) who have a different "physical language" Non of them is a diver or climber. And the material was created out of their physical responses.

1

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name Rensya Connor **Date** 1 Dec 2011
Artwork/Performance/Text BLAU
When was it completed/performed 20-11-70 (20 Nov 2011)

Undo water experients

1 2 expect interviews
3 clarified the elements I wanted to explore in this piece [floating buoancy — wrikth + freedom]

(Started filming I over a period of several months) "ked figure topic" continious

4

5 (live dancers agreed to work order frame was time: 10-12 min Space: Studio A) Betues Plau

1. Translation: which music transport my ideas : pdeed 5 songs to start with

6

7 decision on choreographic hethod "transferability" experience + reception → expression

preparatory aspects completed 8

colla borative

active reheasal process:

9 → dancers reception of Thageo/information + movement experience (web flower deep relaxation) flows? allows?

meeting with editor (describing the expression of our dea) centred with editor experiencing the filming 10

11 dances add their ideas

"script" for 13. editor with misical cues 12 setting structure/ choosing songs
3 rehearsal refined

327

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006), 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in
Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., Reflective Practices in Arts Education,
Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

editore hatcles dances 14

hes adjust nents: to reflect
& hortch

editore
artess
her ideas

collaborative

adjusting edit to
finalzed dance sequence

from 16 first feedback
supervisor:
testing + clarifying the ideas

18 refining
choreography
relating back
to the initial ideas

? performity

dancer with
projection

19

february, 20
giving costumes

21 performance

Note: it is unclear why the reference for this page is upside down. It is possible Russya Connor photocopied
page 1 of the blank CRJ2 chart (minus the heading) and inverted it.

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APPENDIX E—MARK GASSER'S ORIGINAL COMPLETED CRJ CHARTS

Gordon Stevenson
Gerda Stevenson
Siobhan...

J.paget@ecu.edu.au
Jonathan paget   Supervisor.

20 year friendship.
with R.S.

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name.......... Mark Gasser ....Date.....16/12/2010

Artwork/Performance/Text...

1990 - Birmingham Cons ℃
John Humphreys ("hecturer).
asked him to look after Stevenson
on a visit from Scotland.

played for RS then
1994 Summer schools

Drove up to Scotland
communion of Spirit
25/8/1998   received of
music
performance MARJORIE 1998

eel like climbing Everest

5/12/1998 concert on
practiced for 1500 hours
in 3 months / 17 hours a
day. Looked out the window
& saw snow.

1, 5/12/1998.
Birmingham Conservatoire.
performance CO... class
arduous but the view from the
summit was worth it.
STEVENSON SAID:
"Greatest ever performance"

Visiting Professor - Piano Royal Holloway

oct 2002
Carnegie Hall
After Nells
& Wigmore Hall.
2002
Preparing /practicing
hired a practice studio
someone robbed the
company in the building
& he didn't notice.

FAMOUS 2001
Most Academy
of Music.

one week later
I did performance
again.

2001
Shapnells Town Hall

12/2001
Wigmore Hall
LONDON.
Broadcast
live by BBC.

Fly out that night.

my sister said
"Go back to your
ROCK STAR lifestyle"

Phillip Glass
knee 5

WAAPA —
Jonathan (Supervisor)
said expand to
whole R.S. oeuvre
• Marjorie said it
needs to be.

"Play the DSCH at end
of PhD).

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard,
P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The
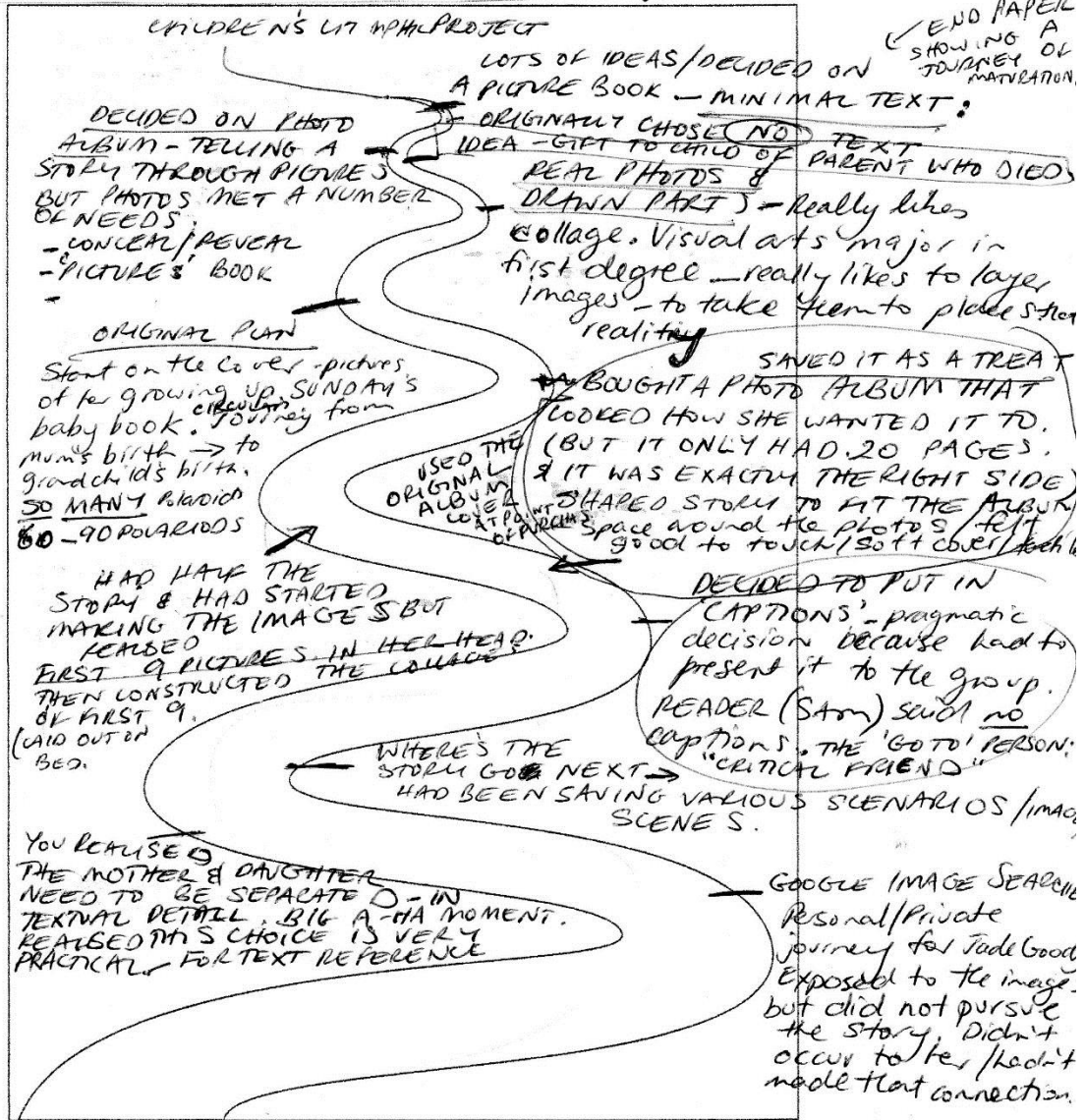Netherlands, pp123-135.   Dr. Steve Pace ... McKay

Pierre
Boulez
'Orientations'

Murray McLoughlin - other DSCH performer.
John Ogden.

plans to play it in
SA   ~5/12/2013   {50 years
Capetown University {exactly since.
                   {its premier in <u>SA</u>
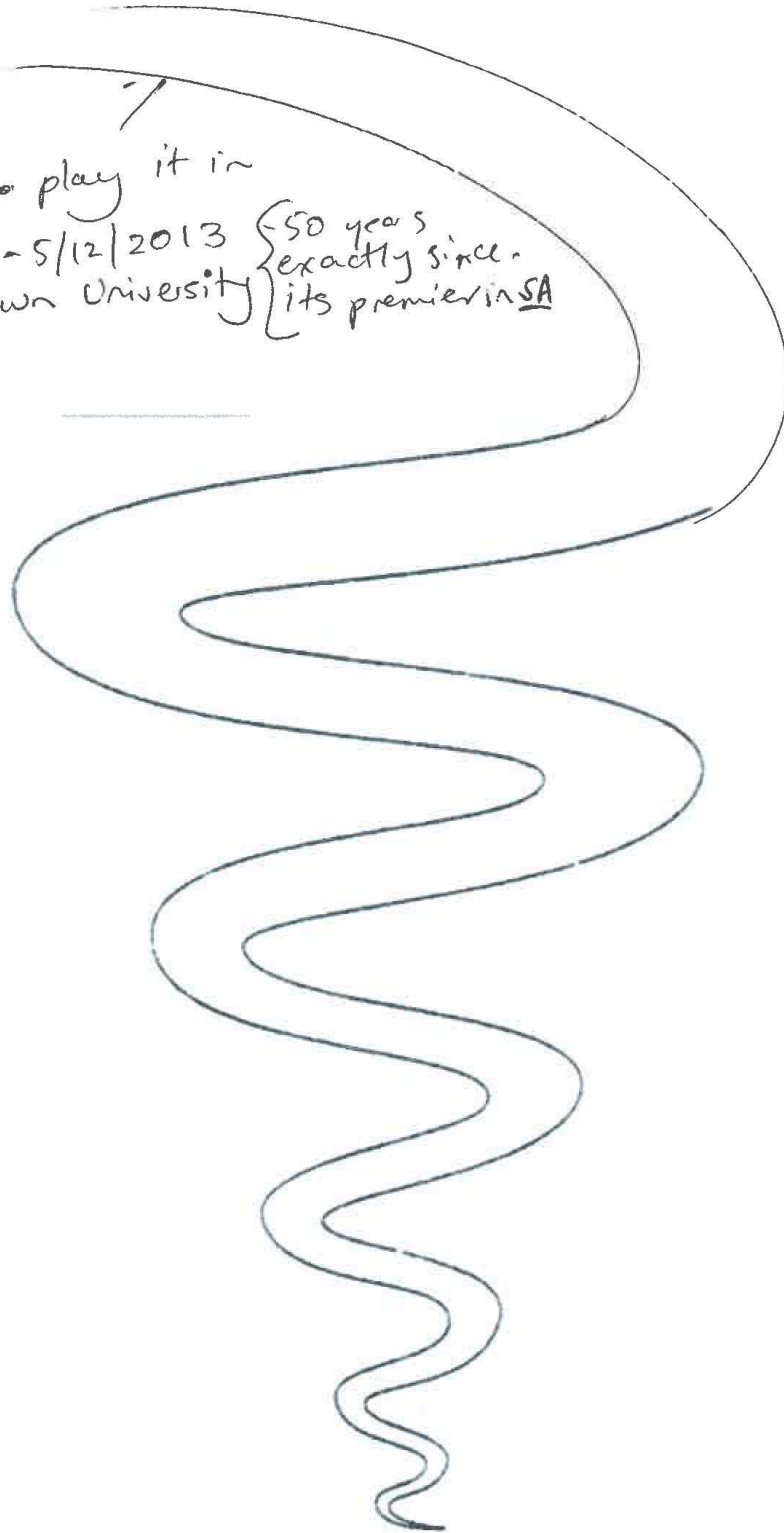
<u>PHASE TWO: REFLECTING ON YOUR CHOSEN ARTWORK, PERFORMANCE OR ASPECT OF PRACTICE</u>

The first step is to select a topic – usually an artwork, performance or other aspect of practice - to reflect on that is related to your research project. Here are some examples of topics: a period of development, a particular artwork, a performance, a series of interviews, a chapter, training in a particular skill, a period of reading and writing, a storyboard.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

Describe briefly the topic that you have chosen to reflect on for this river journey task.

Ronald Stevenson - complete piano music from the perspective of a performer also played the PASSACAGLIA on DSCH at the Trying the loss and WASPA

Was there a reason you chose this particular topic to reflect on?

I have admired this music for years.

What dates did you complete it?

15ᵗʰ AUG 2017

Was there an intended audience for this? (If there is a different long-term audience, e.g., the audience for a work-in-progress is peers, whereas the final performance is for the public, please indicate).

YES - to further knowledge of this composer/pianist - see review

Did you have any set purpose in mind in carrying out or completing this aspect?

No - just - be get a job.

1

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name.............MARK GASSON............. Date .....25 MAY 2012.....

Artwork/Performance/Text...

When was it completed/performed ....

7th JAN START

2000 WORDS every day:-

VERY HOT — worked all night — 5 days per week :-

HAD TO BE ORGANIZED.

1st (APRIL) ATTIRE rough Copy.

GAVE TO SUPERVISOR

MID MAY START PRACTICE.

1st JULY

OPERA HOUSE

WAAPA

PHD.

3
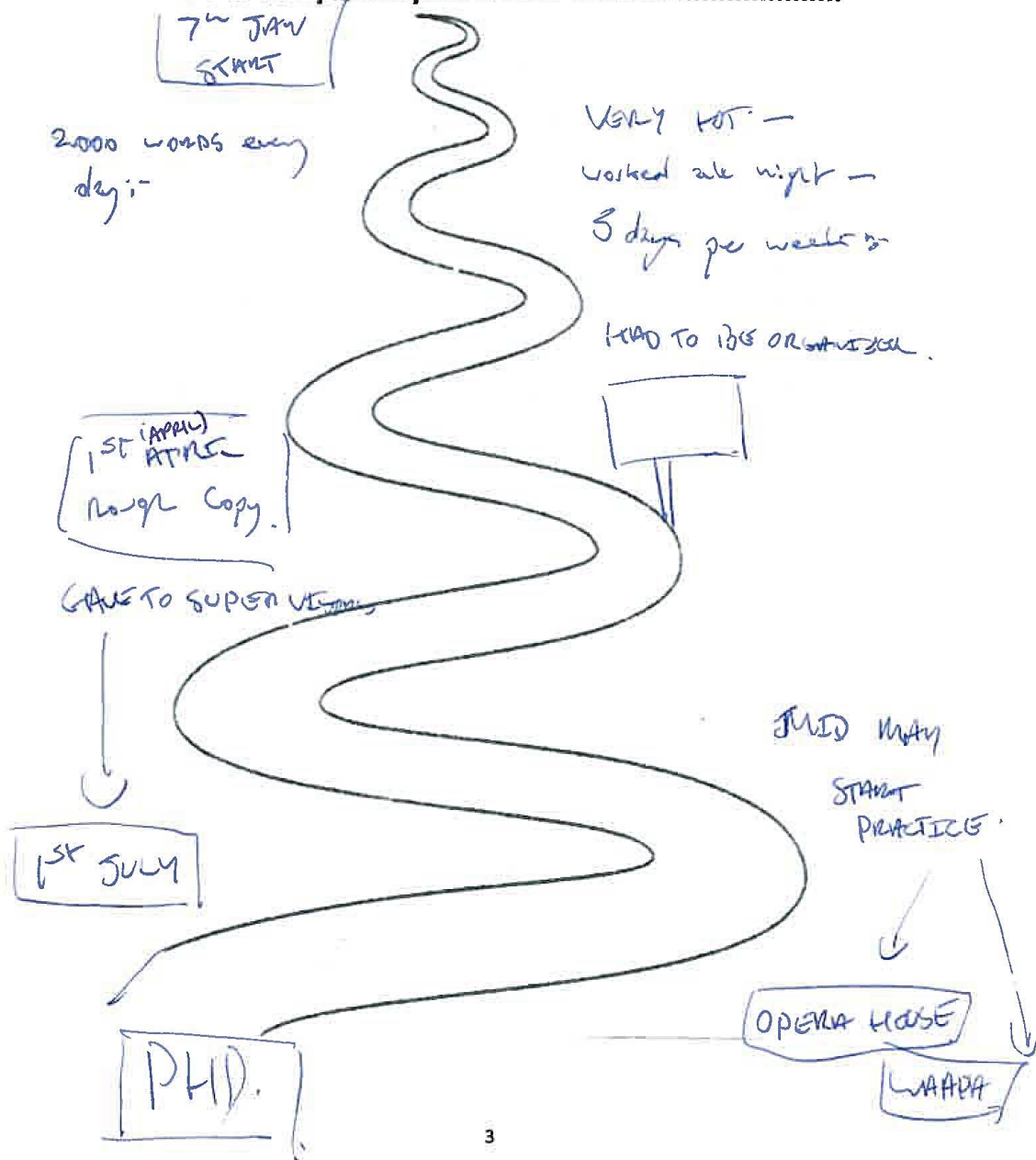
APPENDIX F—JANE DONLIN'S ORIGINAL COMPLETED CRJ CHARTS

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name.......... Jane Donlen ....Date..... 18/3/2011

Artwork/Performance/Text.....................................

Handwritten annotations (top):
Master, had done Giddens
end of nature / end of tradition / Ecological focus / textiles using pollutes

Left side annotations:
- expert practitioner
- textile crafts as mum – knitting/toys (25+ years ago)
- course on weaving 25 years ago @ tafe
- connection to European cultural connection
- commenced PhD 2008 (end)

Giddens / Adorno / Habermas → describing the process provide key turning points
all

"Theory is Key"

MADE LONG WOVEN CLOTH PIECE

Made stitch sample
Colour not right (red & white) redid. blue

Waiting for poetry quote to come (the Ruskin quote?)

Right side / center annotations:
CARD WEAVING PIECE / PhD / connection between the end of nature & the end of tradition.

CHRIS CROUCH supervisor introduced RUSKIN to Jane
"cultural poetry exists in tradition" – "tacit knowledge"
Ruskin first to talk about defilement of nature, damage to humanities - return to craft

has the focus so went back to tradition wear

RUSKIN'S BOOK
There is no wealth but life, famous axiom

MADE CARD WEAVE PIECE WITH RUSKIN QUOTE
Adorno (1940s) Theorist "The Culture Industry"

READING
WRITING
THINKING
↓ NOT JUST
MAKING
SKILL IS IMPORTANT.

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

PHASE TWO: REFLECTING ON YOUR CHOSEN ARTWORK, PERFORMANCE OR ASPECT OF PRACTICE

The first step is to select a topic – usually an artwork, performance or other aspect of practice - to reflect on that is related to your research project. Here are some examples of topics: a period of development, a particular artwork, a performance, a series of interviews, a chapter, training in a particular skill, a period of reading and writing, a storyboard.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

Describe briefly the topic that you have chosen to reflect on for this river journey task.

I am going to reflect on a chapter. It is the first Chapter of my thesis. "On tradition".

Was there a reason you chose this particular topic to reflect on?

2 reasons:
1) This was a particularly challenging aspect of my work, perhaps because it was the first piece of research that I did. 2) I work with traditional textile hand-production processes therefore the understanding of tradition frames the context for my work.

What dates did you complete it?

Very recently, October 2011

Was there an intended audience for this? (If there is a different long-term audience, e.g., the audience for a work-in-progress is peers, whereas the final performance is for the public, please indicate).

Initially the audience is the examiners. Beyond that I hope to publish so eventually the audience will be the public

Did you have any set purpose in mind in carrying out or completing this aspect?

My purpose was to research what tradition really means. Tradition is a complex topic because it has connections to ways of life that are not always understood. Also, traditions need to be understood in the contexts of what we have today: post tradition₁.

Name... JD .... Date ... October 2011 ...
Artwork/Performance/Text/... "On tradition" - FIRST CHAPTER OF THESIS.
When was it completed/performed ... Octob 2011 text it

Interview to review this chart done 13/10/11

I begin the research by collecting + reading texts from critical theory

I work with traditional technique, therefore I need to understand "tradition"

trying to make sense of theoretical understandings

too difficult to deal with, best to work on a practical level with a traditional technique. I begin to make hand loom cloth.

a complex topic very hard to comprehend

hope to gain understanding through making: thinking about a project. Designing patterns, calculating threads. preparing the loom. Dying fibres with plant dye (a lengthy process). Spinning some of the fibres into yarn. Warping, threading, weaving.

there is a lot of technique in the work! And a lot of repetition. It seems, I am doing the same work 'over'. Weaving entails repetition.

this work is very slow to develop. But it has a certain aesthetic quality to it. Must continue. Is monotonous. Is this in contrast to contemporary ideas of freedom?

Back to reading: tradition has certain generic characteristics:
• ritual
• repetition to a connection to a form of mystical truth
• traditions are the collective properties of collectives

traditions need guardians to interpret the truth ⇒

Big movement of understanding

implies a connection to the past.

understanding leads into further questions: what is tradition's connection to the crafts? Has the same characteristics but is removed from ritual!!!

Another big moment of revelation

I start reading craft theory. Need to understand the wider implications of craft:
• has a connection to human values
• is an experience that is often denied in contemporary society
• has been practised for millenia
• has tacit knowledge claims
• in traditional societies contributes to social and economic advancement.

3

Now that I have gained an actual experience of making, I am in a better position to understand the theoretical underpinnings. I am particularly interested in the relation between tradition's mystical truths and craft's tacit knowledge.

this is my key area: mystical truths and tacit knowledge. Is this the realm of poetry? Is this what I am looking for? Where are the guardians?

(HABERMAS)
Now I begin to read extensively about the aesthetic-expressive capacity of tradition. Where has the poetry emerged from? From a mythological understanding of the world.

How do traditions sustain themselves? → through traded knowledge from the past in one → form of generation to another →

tradition is an ambiguous affair. Has been contrasted with modernity. Some Dichotomies: T

reactionary	progressive
fixed	innovative
subjective	objective
irrational	rational
superstitious	science
personal, closed, centred	impersonal open de-centred

Why then is craft often devalued?

a big insight! because craft knowledge is passed on along with social values and norms. tacit knowledge is learned from doing and from the master not from books!!

Is this the loss of poetry?

What to do?

critical theory informs that the Enlightenment thinkers debunked the mythological understandings of the world. It was superstitious, irrational nonsense.

craft theory informs that machine made replaced the hand made. Craft was economically unviable.

my work is set in the post-traditional context. It is not informed by tradition but by reflexivity.

reflexive action:
On the basis of new understandings, (obtained from reading = social renewal and from the actual experience of making) I continue with the act of trade. The traditional crafts have certain aesthetic — expressive capacities that still have value to society at large, to socio-cultural development and personal experience.

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

4
chapter completed :) — woohoo

APPENDIX G—SUE GIRAK'S ORIGINAL COMPLETED CRJ CHARTS

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name........................ SG .... Date.... 23-6-2011

Artwork/Performance/Text........................ The Empty Promise ....

B.A. Turning point...
looking at environmental
issues. Piece of work -
SHIBORI - 5 DEGREES/STORM
PIECE +

WENT TO A TALK BY
A PROF TALK ON ENV. SUSTAINABILITY
MENTIONED FOOTPRINT SO SHE
WORD.
LOOKED AT HER OWN FOOTPRINT

LIFE-DEFINING-MOMENT
building own home - had toy
feeling
done the right thing,
guilty.   2007
DID RETAIL
THERAPY - ARTWORK
2008 MED (VIS ARTS).
Straight into that but too
overwhelming. Took some
time out
Elaborated Julia Werr
2008
TUTORING - ARTS EDUCATION
Visual Arts. UNIT
- Team teaching

WORKSHOP AT
ECU - saw
woman passionate
about Remida
www.REmidaWa.com

HAD TO THINK OF
RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR
MEd (VISARTS) - wanted to do
Something on Remida, Something
on how it transformed her own
practice & thinking.
WANTED TO TEST OUT
THE IMPACT FOR
TAUGHT KIDS.

THEORY
Pulled Books
out of the library
ARTMAKING
WITH MEANING
(Teaching Meaning
in Art-making)
SR Walker (2001)
So useful bought a copy herself

FRIENDS COMMENTS ABOUT USING
NON-ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY
MATERIALS USED IN THE PROCESS.

MADE A BIG
ANOTHER WORK - BIG WORK
USING SAFETY PINS &
MAGAZINES ABOUT HOUSE
BLUEPRINTS / BIG FAT FOOTPRINTS
3RD YEAR BA (VIS ARTS)

THEORY
CLIVE HAMILTON'S WORK
"AFFLUENZA" → heard about it,
read it & felt own guilt about
building large house in
CITY BEACH +

TOOK TEACHING JOB - PRIMARY SCHOOL
ART TEACHER. 6 month secondment,
LIFE-DEFINING MOMENT →
saw the exhibition the teacher
was offered & this was
her in.

WORKING PART-TIME ON
A VERY LIMITED BUDGET
AS AN ART TEACHER
Went into REMIDA

VOLUNTEERED @ REMIDA
& helped them move & the actual
physical act of moving & packing
the materials. (material thinking)
(LOOK FOR
REMIDA WEBSITE
- REGGIO EMELIA)

ReMida
style
FORMULATED PRINCIPLES & TAUGHT THESE
TO THE KIDS; 'HUMANITIES IMPACT ON THE
ENVIRONMENT."
Proposed an Andy Goldsworthy-oriented
project

1

WENT BACK TO CLASS. RETHOUGHT
HER PROCESS & response
to that book Artmaking

RESEARCH PROPOSAL APPLIED:
10 week project, incl visit to art gallery
Remida, then artmaking & art exhibition
Using Creative Problem Solving
Model THEORY (BATES)

SERENDIPITY
Sustainability day
held at the school.

THE OUTCOME
was disappointing
like social studies
projects.

CHANGE IN THE
WAY SHE TAUGHT
ART: focus in
the kids, rather
than her own
imposed concept.

KNEE JERK TEACHER'S REACTION
Destroyed the kids' spontaneous
artworks.

GAVE UP TEACHING
the school's operation clashed
with her own philosophy.

WENT BACK TO
MA... BITING THE
BULLET & focusing
on her own art process.
Made a new work,
building of (200) Retail Therapy
FRIEND GAVE HER
PERMISSION TO REVISIT
AN "OLD" WORK.

SHOPPING BAGS FROM
FLYWIRE... artist/friend said
they were passé

Made THE EMPTY PROMISE
Literally boxes of nothing
found cellophane packaging that
had been discarded at Remida

BOXES WERE
DIFFERENT. FLIMSY CELLOPHANE
BOXES DIDN'T HAVE THE SAME
MATERIALITY. 20 BAGS =
20 HANGERS.

CURRENTLY PUT OWN
WORK IN FOR Visualisation
for the Research.

1) QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW TO
SHOW THE WORK. Thinking
about light & shadow this
Reggio Emilio concepts/philosophy
2) Questions about context.

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education*, Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

Retail Therapy Artwork
embodied Affluenza
consumerist notion

2

Creative Problem Solving
Model
Jane BATES
Becoming an Art Teacher (2000)

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Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name.................................... Sue Grak .... Date.... 4/11/2011 ....

Artwork/Performance/Text.................... The Empty Promise ....

Sue did not use chart for phase 2 reflection process.
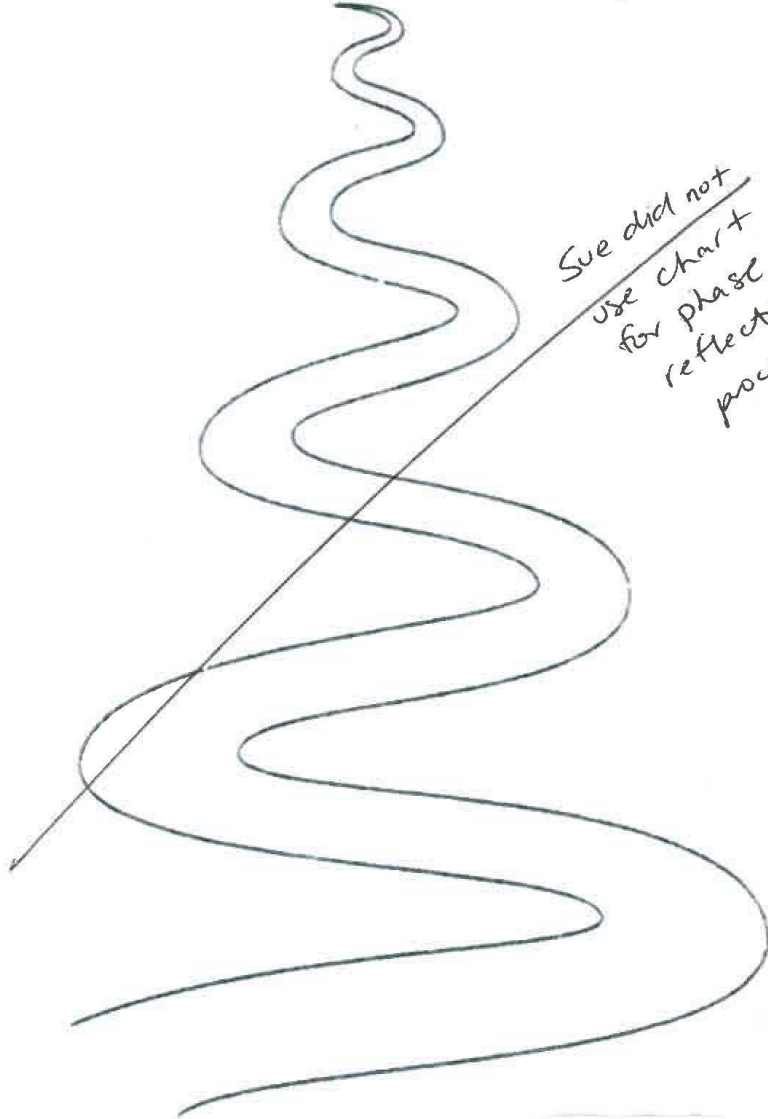
SUE GIRAK—CRJ 2—VERBATIM REPRINT OF HER CRJ DIARY

<u>PHASE TWO: REFLECTING ON YOUR CHOSEN ARTWORK, PERFORMANCE OR ASPECT OF PRACTICE</u>
Describe briefly the topic that you have chosen to reflect on for this river journey task.
I have chosen to reflect on two things:
1. *how materials influence how I make an artwork;*
2. *and what I am trying to communicate to the viewer with that particular artwork.*
The material I am discussing is a set of torsos found at the REmida Creative Recycling Centre and how I have decided to use them to comment on my topic 'humanity's impact on the environment.'

Was there a reason you chose this particular topic to reflect on?
I have chosen to reflect on this topic because I am experiencing difficulty committing to a particular idea. With so many possibilities in mind I have been able to bring myself to actually making a piece.

What dates did you complete it?
I still haven't completed the work but I have decided how I am going to use the torsos in my artwork. I am now at the stage of making prototypes.

Was there an intended audience for this? (If there is a different long-term audience, e.g., the audience for a work-in-progress is peers, whereas the final performance is for the public, please indicate).
The intended audiences for the finished piece are primarily my examiners and after the examination process the artwork will be displayed along with others as a part of a solo exhibition, open to the public.

Did you have any set purpose in mind in carrying out or completing this aspect?
The purpose of completing this aspect of the artwork is to be able to have a strong message behind the artwork that relates to my research and theory.

Critical moments
I have decided to include a mix of diary entries and reflections. Most of my critical moments occur during my conversations with others and some of those conversations have been digitally recorded, so you have a transcript of those recordings.

<u>1. FINDING THE FIRST MANNEQUIN</u>
(Dairy entry)
There is a torso (mannequin) at REmida. A volunteer at REmida was going to take it home and put it in his garden but then he thought the better of it and decided to leave it. So I took the opportunity and have taken it home. I have a couple of ideas; cover it with gold leaf (as if it had been touched by King Midas) and hang a necklace over it or paint it with a beautiful pattern, possibly floral or eucalyptus leaves.

(Conversation)
I think the common thread has to be the statement from my students that relates it back to my research project. A group of students produced a piece of artwork. The meaning behind their work was, as people we destroy the environment and then try to improve on the environment by trying to fix up our mistakes but it's just never the same.

So it's almost like – how do you make a body more perfect? What do you do? I mean the torso is not a real body and I'm trying to make it beautiful. But it's just a torso. How do I try to improve on that and try to improve on nature, I don't know – Without it looking tacky, I don't want things to look kitsch and tacky and this is the thing with the material, you can make things look like junk stuck together. I don't want it to look like junk stuck together I want it to be absolutely beautiful objects.

It's getting that thread and that idea and going through the process and making it look beautiful – the thread that runs through everything I do is potential. The potential of the materials, of the people, of the ideas, of creativity – it's always about potential. The potential of creativity from the materials comes from me because I give it the potential because you might throw it in the bin but I might see potential in their so it comes from me. It comes from me because I must recognise the inner beauty of it. I recognise the inner beauty by first of all I give it value and respect and even though it is an inanimate object I respect that object because it doesn't deserve to be chucked away if it's got some us, and I give it value because it could go into landfill but rather than it go into landfill I'm giving it a new life. So one of the volunteers was going to take it [torso] and just stick it in his garden and he said oh no that looks a bit kitsch so as soon as he said he was going to take it I thought oh bugger I wish I could have got it and then he goes 'no, no, no' and I said 'do you want it? Because I'll take it if you don't want it.'

But I don't want to start hoarding everything to save everything. I want to look it and its beauty and the thing I like about this one [torso] compared to others is that it actually has a pose like you would for a sculpture. It's got a pose that I would like to draw. So I could put it on a pedestal and I could just leave it there on the pedestal and have a set of charcoal drawings of the torso in different in lights and different positions using the light and things like that. I could do that because I don't have to make something from it.

2. UNDERGRADUATE IDEA
My friend said the idea of putting gold leaf on a torso was too simple and I needed to think about the idea a bit more. She suggested I painted the sea just like Julie Silvester's images but I wouldn't because the sea doesn't resonate with me in the same way as it does with Julie. I need to find out what resonates with me. When I do then my work has more substance. I'll have to think a lot more that try to work on my initial ideas. I know I am looking at aesthetics but there needs to be more to it.

With the mannequin idea – my friend challenged me and I think that's what I appreciate from her. She challenged me and said that torso was just a very basic idea. It's been done before a lot of times she said. She said you've got to push it further and you've go to extend

it and I don't know how to do these things and I don't know what strategies to take and I don't know whether it's just the process of having to just get out and draw it and look at it and research it or maybe I want something in my head straight away without actually working for it and I know when I work for something it'll happen but I want something almost instantaneous.

I was overwhelmed by her criticism because I thought I had an idea and that was one piece ticked off the box and I thought Oh NO, it really is babyish. I knew it myself a bit. When I've been challenged by my friends and I take their advice my work is better. I'm in conflict with myself because I do like a challenge but I don't like a challenge because I know it means some work and I suppose I'm a bit afraid to start. So I go to REmida and I collect materials and I and I bring them home and I've got stuff and I'm thinking Oh God, why aren't I making things? Why is it that hard? Maybe it's because I don't have a theme in mind or an idea mind or I don't know. I want things to look beautiful but if you have an exhibition it all has to tie in together so I need that common thread.

3. DOING WHAT I WANT TO DO
I was desperately trying to work out how I could use the torsos in my exhibition. Another idea was to spray paint them a glossy white and then superimpose magnified images of REMIDA onto the torsos e.g. glitter from the Christmas decorations or I was going to take the patterns from some of the gold frames I got from REMIDA last week.

I was being challenged again, this time by my supervisor. Basically he told that I should make art work with more meaning and substance and I really shouldn't be afraid to be political with my work.

I'm going back to the idea of Humanity's Impact on the Environment. It is the same challenge I set the children but within that theme I want to explore the REMIDA principles

- *To understand the true value and respect for the environment through the creative process*
- *Create respect for discarded things*
  - *The discarded object is beautiful / a treasure*
  - *Materials should be exhibited in a way that gives them value*

4 . FIVE MASS EXTINCTIONS
I just WOKE UP. I didn't even know there were 5 mass extinctions and why I've got these five bodies or anything like that.

At 5 o'clock this morning – I woke up and it was almost like a start and I kept thinking about what my supervisor was saying about 5 stages and he wants me to do stuff and I almost resented the fact I'm being told what I should be doing with my artwork, projecting this and doing this and doing that. In a way there was a bit of resentment and I don't like to be told how to do things so I went to be thinking, I don't want to project rubbish on those images [I meant torsos]. I don't want to have digital projections of rubbish tips that just isn't   's what I'm talking about. I'm looking at REmida and I'm looking at the discarded object and I want the discarded object to look beautiful and I kept thinking that and then he kept talking

about these 5 stages, maybe we could look at 5 different types of waste so he wasn't really clear either so I woke up and I thought, Oh maybe I can look at stuff that's extinct and mass extinctions so I woke up and went straight to the computer and just wrote in mass extinction so I looked on the 1ˢᵗ thing that was Wikipedia and it said 5 major mass extinctions in the world and I thought Oh my God there's 5 of them and I was thinking my friend wants to use some mannequins from REmida for her workshops and I was thinking do I start hoarding or do I start getting some more or how many do I need and I am thinking to myself no I have 5 and 5 is enough. There is no need to have any more and I'll do with what I've got because there is no point getting greedy about stuff so I thought whatever it is I will work with the 5 and so I couldn't believe these 5 things and then I started thinking about these – when I've spoken and done work before I always comment on other people and what they do and it's always not me, not me, not me I'm always pointing my finger at people and I've got to be really careful about that because I'm living in this big house and our water consumption is over the top compared to our suburb because I've got girls that have long showers and I use the dryer when I could use the natural sun and I'm quite wasteful and I thought I can't be too preachy. I keep talking about all these things but my behaviours don't change so then I thought well I need to be a bit more introspective about it. If we are looking at mass extinctions then surely we need to start looking at our own footprint again and what is it that we've done so that when I started thinking of looking at all the local areas that we've lived and since European settlement what is our impact and I could talk about all of Australia or I could talk about all of Western Australia or all of Perth and then I thought maybe I should be more specific and look at our family and where have we travelled on this Earth and what have we done and it made me think about when years and years and years ago my parents bought a property to build and office block and it was out in bushland at that point but now it's suburbia and all I could think of, I must have been 12, well now that you've bought Dad you can keep it save it for all the animals and he's like, don't be ridiculous I'm not spending all that money on that land to just leave it there so they built these office blocks, what was bushland which was pretty scrubby, now it's got offices and grass an manicured gardens so I started thinking Far Out, my father's made this big point of building up that dream of making himself better and he's building but there's been a lot of destruction in that way and I'm part of that destruction and that legacy because when he's gone that will be handed over to me [and siblings] an I'm going to pass that on to my children as well so that was a bit scary and I think of all the things that they've done like when my mother 1ˢᵗ came to Australia they were farmers so they changed the land by changing the plants that they were growing and my father has just been buying, he buys virgin land and then builds buildings on it. He wants to make his mark but not think of what was past and all these marks are new marks. They've never lived in a house that they have bought; they've always just built places. Obviously what my parents have and what they do passes on to you and there is that legacy of wanting things new and that wastefulness and I don't think they understand that wastefulness because they came from such poverty but I've still got that but we don't have that poverty anymore in where we live but it has an impact. The message I want to share is potential – everyone realising their potential and not wasting the possibilities by using the materials available.

20th March, 2011 (diary entry)
5 Mass Extinctions – working title
The torso found at REMIDA will represent Gaia – mother earth.
I'm going to paint them a luminous white – my canvas, purity
And I'm going to produce 5 cloaks each representing a time of mass extinction.
I'm not too sure what each one will look like at the moment but right now I'm looking at the
'non-fusiline foraminifer'.

So I'm going to go right back to the very beginning. So what I've done is I've found these female forms and I've looked at them and I want to put my work into context because I want to look at humanity's impact on the environment. And so using the female forms I was thinking that we're at this stage of a mass extinction and there were five before this day and the last one was millions and millions of years ago so I was thinking alright to put this work into context and to be a starting point for my exhibition I'll talk about the mass extinctions that have happened before and show that what's happening now is only a cycle in the Earth's life cycle as such. So what I thought I would do is to paint these mannequins really, really white and glossy so that it wasn't the mannequins that we were looking at but cloaks. Cloaks what covered the Earth at the time and I was going to put these mannequins on pedestals and then have them at various heights and have these long flowing, very flimsy looking cloaks that had aspects of each stage of extinction and turn it into a pattern so there maybe leaf patterns from leaves of prehistoric times or fossilised patterns. So I was looking very much at the pattern. So I started collecting and looking at all different from those times and started experimenting with fabric. And when I started to look at it all I could think of was these cloaks apart from being majorly labour intensive are just going to look like pieces of fabric that I can get from a fabric store. Because one of the fabric stores I went to sells bridal fabric and it's all embroidered and thought this is not going to look any different from bridal embroidered fabric that has flowers on there. So that was one critical moment like where I thought I'm not going to do this. Well not so much a critical moment but a decision. The decision was I'm not going to be going down this track. I had already worked out that the work was going to be in context just maybe through my visual diary. I didn't have to be so literal and talk about this being a stage of extinction where we are right now.

5.. CHANGING MY MIND
When I started looking at materials all I could see were patterns and for me that wasn't enough to make a significant statement so now that's out. It was important to think about it and to think about the context in which I am placing my work but the minute I decided to use extinction as my starting point I lost sight at what I wanted to explore - potential and I don't want a negative message to be the central theme of my work.

I've not worked on that first idea of that extinction phase because the more I think about it for me it was just thinking about it that I needed to think about. When I looked at materials all I was going to do was make patterned material and to me that wasn't going to be a statement so that's out. It was important to think about it and to think where I'm outing my work but the minute I put that on to my work, he's grasped in to that thinking this is the central theme of my work and I don't want that to be the central theme of my work. I want the central theme of my work – what is it? Do we think differently about the environment when we are in the process of making art with recycled material? Or what happens to the

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way we think when we are in the process of making art with recycled materials? How does that affect our thinking about the environment and environmental sustainability? That's the whole crux of my thesis it's got nothing to do with how much is in global warming so if I had that one bit I want it gone.

Even thought about the Gaia and the 5 major extinctions before us and was planning to produce a number of capes to represent each phase of extinction I could not bring myself to produce anything. I think it's because I needed to think about where I am coming from in this process. Placing my artwork into a context but I had resolved it before I had even made the artwork just like Group 5 did with their mobile (reflecting on my research project). The process of thinking was important rather than the production of a final object/ artefact. By thinking about where I am coming from I could then think about where I am now.

6. A NEW IDEA
(Diary entry)
4th June, 2011

I'm thinking about the mannequins. I've decided against a pessimistic message and want to use them for a positive message. Rather than making capes represent the 5 mass extinctions maybe I could make capes that represent 5 alternative sources of renewable energy.
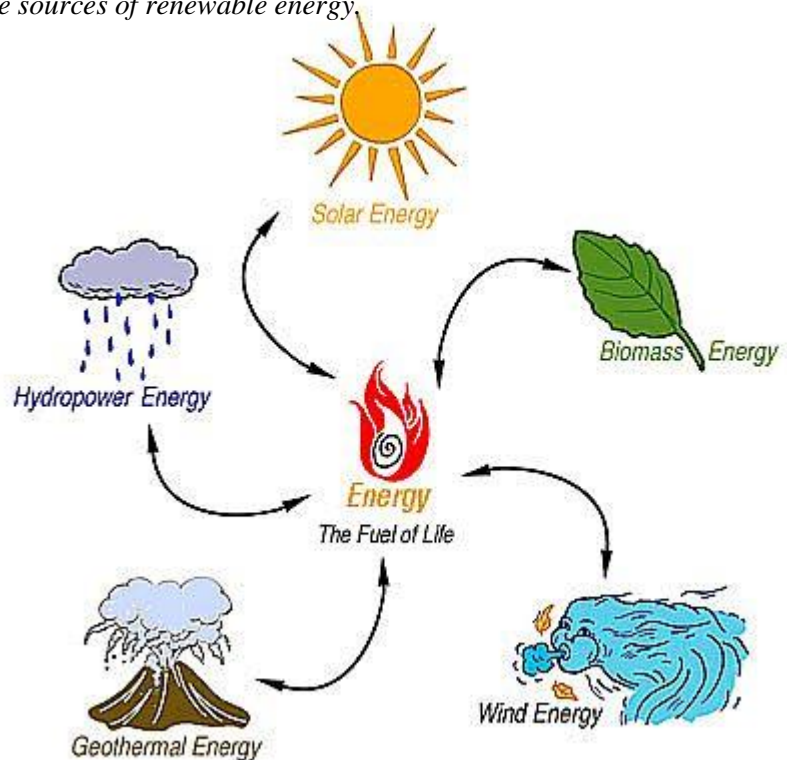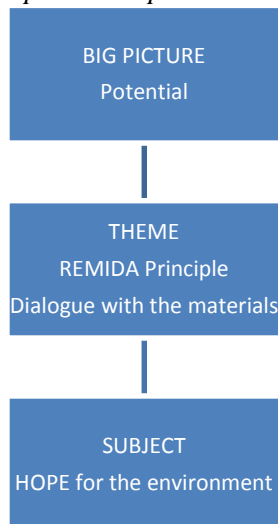
The idea for my first idea was to represent wind energy as a fierce tornado. It wasn't easy giving form and substance to something that you can feel but cannot see.

7. GING OFF ON A TANGENT
And then I've got those bodies but even those bodies, the mannequins, Klaus put some putty on them and them and some of the mannequins didn't hold and so he's got this blue putty stuff and they're actually starting to crack and so that can be something I can work with too. It's really looking at your materials and being guided by the materials. I mean you've got an

idea. You don't start from nothing but it's to have an idea and be guided by the materials so it's quite exciting.

8. *A CHANCE MAEETING*
I had been struggling with my materials and the idea of how to make my tornado torso look powerful while simultaneously being light and airy. I had been knitting some clear cellophane tape but that technique only made the tape look opaque and white. The knitted cylinders I was making looked quite solid. I don't want to see the piece as extinction. I want to see it as a new chance. Not that, we all go, 'Oh crap' but we do something about it. This is an opportunity.   I don't know how I want to communicate that message with the mannequins. I have no idea. It's almost like a block. I don't think the 5 energy sources are working wither. It's still just too literal

So with this internal struggle in mind I went to pick up the girls from school. For some reason I had to get out of the car and when I was walking back to the car I saw one of the art teachers. He asked me how my art was going and what I was doing. The discussion soon turned to my materials. I told him that I had tried folding, knitting and weaving but nothing seemed to work and just out of the blue he asked, 'have you tried heat?'
'No,' I said.

I rushed home and got my heat gun and started experimenting with the cellophane and heat. I was great. The cellophane melted but it didn't give off any toxic fumes and it was easy to handle. So I thought I'd go a bit further. I stated using a torso as a support and noticed that the when melted the cellophane would take the form of the torso. I played with the idea of making invisible torsos and then I thought about invisible clothes on the torso. I began to go back to the idea of the ocean and thought about all the plastic that is actually choking our water ways. My plan was to paint 3 torsos so that they looked like water and dress them in corsets. That was it I thought I now have an idea that I can work on.

9. *POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM*
So where I am right now it I've got a mannequin and I've got some cellophane and I made a corset of the cellophane and I was going to paint the mannequin in like a jewel like water colours.

I found the mannequins and I liked the mannequins and I wanted to use them. I like torsos and the female form. I've drawn those torsos and the female form before in other work because it's not like it's just come out of nowhere because I'm not attracted to male torso. I'm looking at the female form. But I'm now talking to someone from a really feminist view saying that Mother Earth means something else. Now I still want to have that mannequin to represent Earth in someway but I also want to be clear about it so when I'm challenged I talk about it eloquently and articulate it so that it's not just an easy way of going about, just not and easy, I'm not saying easy but just not a slack thing, "Oh here I am I've got a mannequin and then all of a sudden it's Mother Earth". I want to be able to have a bit more depth to the way I have chosen things. If it wasn't a uni course it wouldn't be so important to be able to discuss and justify things but because this is part of my assessment I need to be very clear

on why I've chosen things and why I have made certain decisions. And I don't want to be 'clever', you know – I'm so smart for you that you have to read this here [artist statement] but then again I don't want to be so literal that it's just I suppose lazy.

So I've got these mannequins and I've got Klaus to fix them up because they were all different colours [and made form different materials] so he's painted them some that were this cardboard box, sandy sort of gunky brown colour but it looks quite nice and then I've got some, a couple that are in blue. He's put some blue putty on but the blue putty didn't adhere to the plastic because each one is, even though they're 6 mannequins, female torsos they're all different, some are posture, some are different sizes. Basically they're all the same but they're not. And this blue stuff has just cracked so that looks beautiful as well so I've got these mannequins that I don't know what to do with them.. I've go this corset on one of them. I've got one I've started making out of plastic and then I've got some mannequins out of plastic. I've just heated plastic around them and sort of used them as a mould.

So I thought I was sorted. I had my idea now I just had to do it. That was until my presentation at the postgraduate colloquium in August, 2011. I was displaying my artworks as part of my presentation. Lyndall helped me set up my pieces so that it told the story of my process. I was so confident I was there. By 'there' I mean that I had an idea that I could work on. Not a finished product but something I could work on that made sense to me and didn't feel too preachy.

That was until after the presentation. The feedback from my supervisor and Lyndall was mixed. They were both very impressed with my presentation and how I spoke but it was the use of female form that they were questioning. My supervisor thought the torsos were actually detracting from the work so that I should lose them. I could deal with that. Not a problem but it was something that Lyndall brought up that I hadn't even considered. She was talking about the use of the female form and that I have to know exactly what I want to say and basically be able to stand by my work.

I made me think and I have decided to make the female form using the torso as a mould and then lose it. I want floating torsos that interact with the light to caste shadows on the ground below. I want to say that we should caste a shadow on the earth but not leave a footprint. By the way this last paragraph is another critical moment that I just had while I was writing this very second. I now feel ready to start making.

APPENDIX H—RASHIDA MUPRHY'S ORIGINAL COMPLETED CRJ CHARTS

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name...... R____ M____ ...... Date..... 1 JULY 2011

Artwork/Performance/Text....... The Historian's Daughter

1999.

Masters of Creative Writing
35,000 words - autobiographical
SHORT STORY WRITER
(SUSAN ASH - MASTERS SUPERVISOR)

SUSAN INVITES RASHIDA TO COME & DO THE PhD
- Susan offered her the opportunity for a scholarship.
(2009 Earlier Conversation about the same time)
PHD PROPOSAL
Wanted to know what she was doing. So started writing this 1st chapter (4000 words)
2011 Entered PhD March 1.

CHOICE OF CHARACTER'S NAMES ("magician", "historian")

(2011 - MAR to NOW)
REDRAFTING
4000 words
- removing.

I MET RASHIDA IN A POSTGRAD SEMINAR & mentioned methodology of AUTOETHNOGRAPHY.

PhD READING - more

idea of writing a longer piece, 75,000 words. Just did b. 1st piece,
6 - Vol. day 4
PETER COWAN WRITER CENTRE asked Rashida to get a group of writer/academics to launch the PC SHORT STORY WRITER (2010)
Realised how much she missed this.
2011
WORK MANAGER ALLOWED RASHIDA TO GO FROM FULLTIME TO 1 DAY A WEEK. (2010)

FIRST SENTENCE (This is not the story my father wanted me tell). WHAT DO I WRITE NEXT?

STARTED TRYING TO THINK THROUGH THEORY (TRANSNATIONAL FICTION, "THE UNSPEAKABLE")

READ FOR A YEAR
AZAR NAFISI "READING LOLITA IN TEHRAN". About setting up a book club in post-revolutionary Iran.
Read for a year about all she can about IRAN

SUSAN SAID WE'D MOVED ON FROM POST-COLONALITY TO TRANSNATIONAL

THEORY
still informed by Edward Said
"opened the possibility of what she could do"
"ORIENTALISM" the "CULTURE & IMPERIALISM"

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

SUPPORT OF / HUSBAND...
2 years nagging to do the
PhD & novel writing
Put at start.

WRITING THEORETICALLY &
WRITING THE PROPOSAL has been
very affirming... "reflected back for
RASHIDA key aspects of herself.

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PHASE TWO: REFLECTING ON YOUR CHOSEN ARTWORK, PERFORMANCE OR ASPECT OF PRACTICE

The first step is to select a topic – usually an artwork, performance or other aspect of practice - to reflect on that is related to your research project. Here are some examples of topics: a period of development, a particular artwork, a performance, a series of interviews, a chapter, training in a particular skill, a period of reading and writing, a storyboard.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

Describe briefly the topic that you have chosen to reflect on for this river journey task.

I've chosen Chapter 2 of my novel in progress (The Historian's Daughter) Currently its about 5000 words long + progresses the girl's story in Australia.

chapter

Was there a reason you chose this particular topic to reflect on?

Yes- I'm quite happy with Ch 1, + Ch 2 is supposed to move the story along which it does, I think, although I'm always concerned I'm doing too much telling, not enough showing.

What dates did you complete it?

Between Feb - June this year (2011)

Was there an intended audience for this? (If there is a different long-term audience, e.g., the audience for a work-in-progress is peers, whereas the final performance is for the public, please indicate).

Work in progress - novel to be completed next year hopefully!

Did you have any set purpose in mind in carrying out or completing this aspect?

Yes - the story must be told! I'm convinced of it. Don't know what shape it'll take yet though.

1

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Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name Rashida Murphy **Date** 3/11/2011

Artwork/Performance/Text Chapter 2 (Historian's Daughter)

When was it completed/performed June 2011

PhD Project (Novel in progress)

Chapter 2 emerges out of a jumble of words + ideas.

I decide to introduce new characters and build on existing ones.

Quite shamelessly base the character of 'Anya' on one of my daughter's psychotic school friends - it works! I think.

Wonder if I should keep Anya. I've sort of ditched her but she could be useful later.

Quite happy with the way the characters are developing, their relationships and youthful angsts.

Do I want to be believable or not? Struggling a little with the (tone) of description of some characters*
i.e. Historian and His Women.
The Historian is emerging as a pretty awful character & I'm okay with it surprisingly, because I don't think he's one dimensional.
I need to work out why the Magician loved him though.

I felt really self-conscious writing this as it was the 'Australia' chapter. Ch. 1 had flowed + I was happy with it.

How to make this flow as well? I try to remember what Perth looked/felt like when I first saw it 26 years ago.

*Strongest memory that emerged was how empty + clean Perth was - so decide to begin the chapter with this image!

This was slow - read about Perth, the Hills, went back, revised distanced myself, looked at it again.

I seem to be writing from an outsider POV. Why is this? I don't want this to feel so foreign. I realise that I write best about a landscape when I leave it temporarily. Holiday in Oct might help? I'll definitely revise, re-write, edit.

(SEPT)
Freefall Workshop with Barbara - lots of aha moments - lots of doubts about the construction of this chapter now.

Freefall Workshop – Lots of soul searching – rather dark writing emerges – I like it – but the novel has a different voice. Do I change the novel or do I write in 2 different voices?

Much more aware after freefall – do I sound bitchy about certain characters in this chapter? Still doing a lot of telling – not enough showing.

Really need to slow the narrative down somewhat – show through dialogue rather than internal monologue.

This chapter contains fragments of a fictitious diary (unconsciously autoethnographic) now that I know this I can strengthen the unconscious moments. (It's okay to write like this)

(daughter)

Share doubts with Sabah. She thinks the novel is fine & I shouldn't mix up the 2 narratives – her advice – write freefall – and write the novel – they can be 2 different projects.

Revise and re-invent some scenes to slow them down. Need to show this to the Writers Group to see what they think.

May be good idea – Parallel Writing Projects – one can inform the other?

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education*, Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.
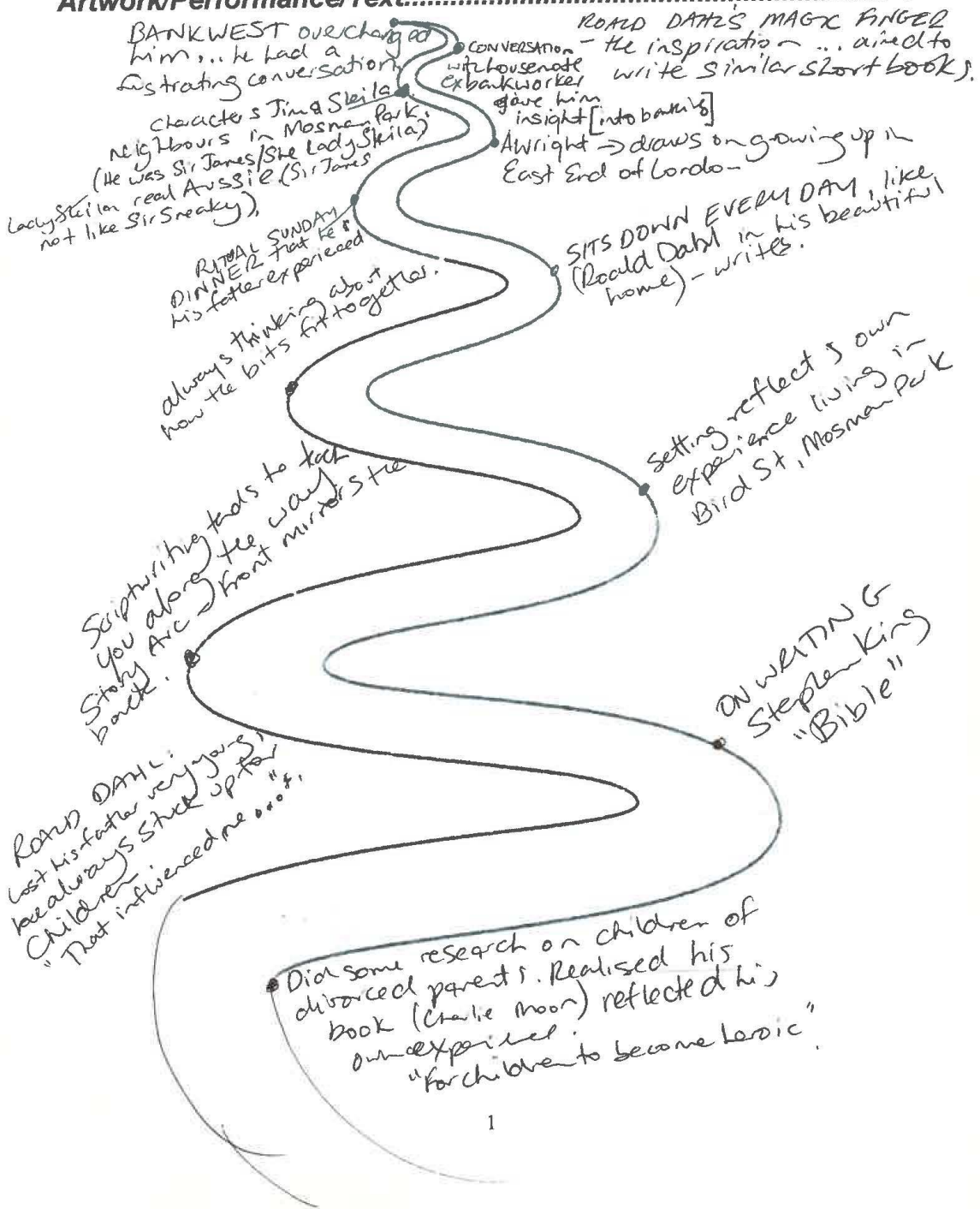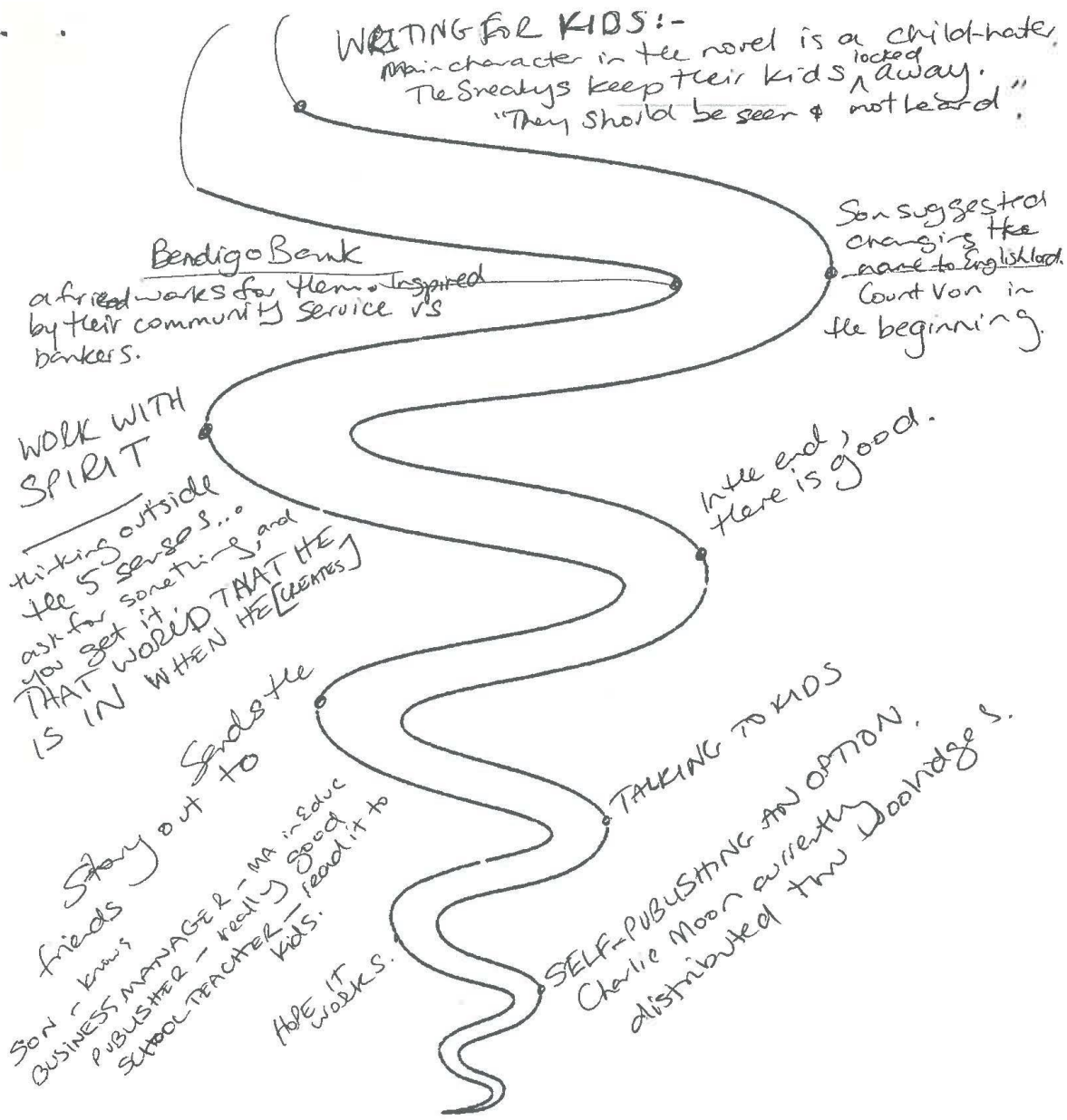
Researcher's note
1) As I was writing this 'river journey' chart she started having a dialogue with herself about what she is capable of
2) Realised that she can do both — the freefall emotional unloading — the more organized academic writing process

4

APPENDIX I—MARTIN MEADER'S ORIGINAL COMPLETED CRJ CHARTS

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name...... *Martin Meader* ......Date...... 3-3-2011 ......

Artwork/Performance/Text...... TWENTY FOUR CARROTS .

BANKWEST overcharged him... he had a frustrating conversation

CONVERSATION with housemate ex bank worker gave him insight [into banking]

ROALD DAHL'S MAGIC FINGER — the inspiration ... aimed to write similar short books.

Characters Jim & Sheila neighbours in Mosman Park (He was Sir James) (She Lady Sheila) Lady Sheila real Aussie (Sir James not like Sir Sneaky),

AWright → draws on growing up in East End of London —

RITUAL SUNDAY DINNER that he & his father experienced

SITS DOWN EVERY DAY, like (Roald Dahl in his beautiful home) — writes.

always thinking about how the bits fit together.

Setting reflects own experience living in Bird St, Mosman Park

Scriptwriting tools to take you along the way. Story Arc. Front mirrors the back.

ON WRITING Stephen King "Bible"

ROALD DAHL: lost his father very young & because always stuck up for children. "That influenced me ...",

Did some research on children of divorced parents. Realised his book (Charlie Moon) reflected his own experience. "for children to become heroic".

1

WRITING FOR KIDS:-
Main character in the novel is a child-hater.
The Sneakys keep their kids locked away.
"They should be seen & not heard".

Bendigo Bank
a friend works for them. Inspired
by their community service v's
bankers.

WORK WITH
SPIRIT

thinking outside
the 5 senses...
ask for something and
you get it. WORLD THAT HE
THAT WORLD THAT HE [CREATES]
IS IN WHEN HE

Story out to
friends

Send the
to

Son - knows
BUSINESS MANAGER - MA in Educ
PUBLISHER - really good to
SCHOOL TEACHER - read it to
kids.

HOPE IT
WORKS.

TALKING TO KIDS

Son suggested
changing the
name to English
Count Von in
the beginning.

In the end,
there is good.

SELF-PUBLISHING AN OPTION.
Charlie Moon currently
distributed thru Doonidge s.

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

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CRJ 2

PHASE TWO: REFLECTING ON YOUR CHOSEN ARTWORK, PERFORMANCE OR ASPECT OF PRACTICE

The first step is to select a topic – usually an artwork, performance or other aspect of practice - to reflect on that is related to your research project. Here are some examples of topics: a period of development, a particular artwork, a performance, a series of interviews, a chapter, training in a particular skill, a period of reading and writing, a storyboard.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

Describe briefly the topic that you have chosen to reflect on for this river journey task.

Writing a novel & 4 short stories

Was there a reason you chose this particular topic to reflect on?

Because that's what I'm doing for my PhD

What dates did you complete it?

Not completed —15/2/2012

Was there an intended audience for this? (If there is a different long-term audience, e.g., the audience for a work-in-progress is peers, whereas the final performance is for the public, please indicate).

8-12 age group

Did you have any set purpose in mind in carrying out or completing this aspect?

to get it published

1

Note: Martin Meader had printed out the instructions for CRJ2 on scrap paper. The reverse of his copy of this first instruction page of CRJ2 was part of a musical score (shown in image below). I was struck by the accidental resonances of the lyrics in this musical score with the CRJ idea of rivers and water plus Meader's focus on children's literature. Therefore, it is included below as part of Martin Meader's 2ⁿᵈ CRJ. (Exception to copyright. Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study.).
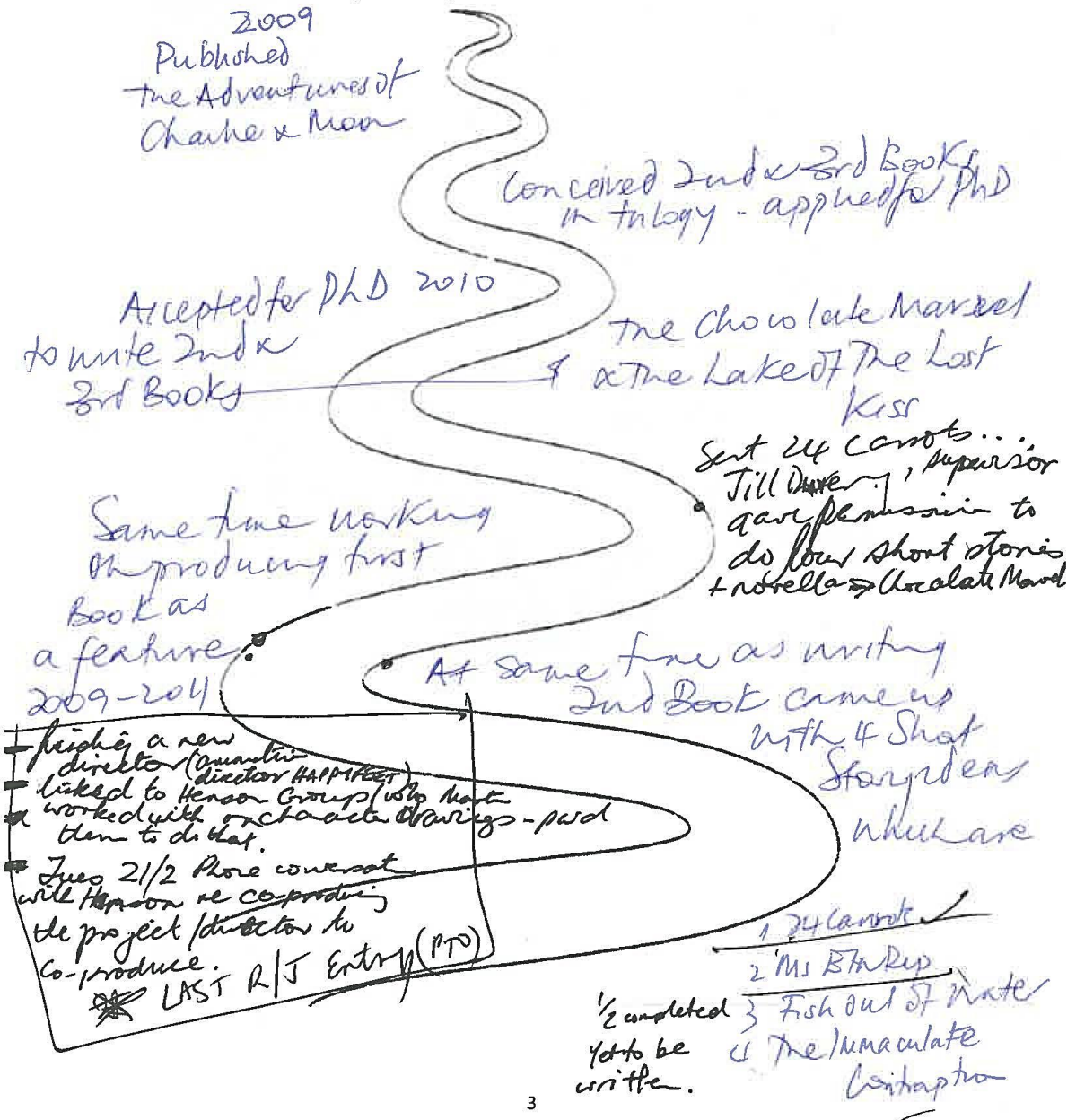
20 years in development.
started in 1993

Creative River Journey: A critical moment river journey chart
(adapted from Kerchener, 2006, p. 128)

Name Martin Meader **Date** 29.11.11
Artwork/Performance/Text The Chocolate Marvel
When was it completed/performed

2009
Published
The Adventures of
Charlie & Moon

Conceived 2nd & 3rd Books
in trilogy - applied for PhD

Accepted for PhD 2010
to write 2nd &
3rd Books

The Chocolate Marvel
& the Lake of the Lost
Kiss

Sent 24 carrots...
Jill Denery, supervisor
gave permission to
do four short stories
+ notella → Chocolate Marvel

Same time working
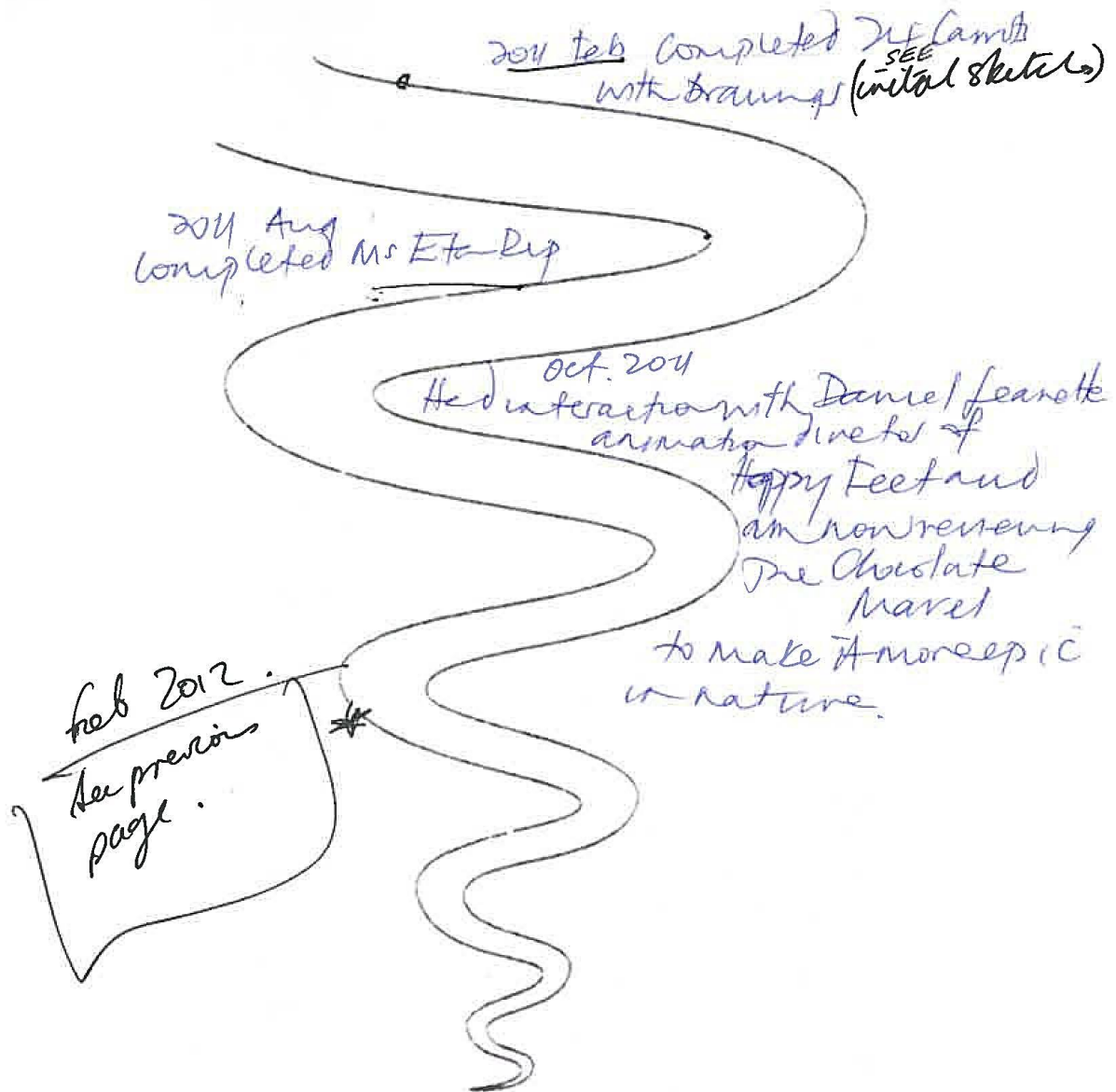on producing first
Book as
a feature.
2009-201?

At same time as writing
2nd Book came up
with 4 Short
Stories
which are

+ found a new
director (animation
director HAPPIFEET)
- linked to Henson Group who have
worked with on character drawings - paid
them to do that.
+ Tues 21/2 Phone conversat
with Henson re co-producing
the project/director to
co-produce.
✳ LAST R/J Entry (PTO)

1 24 carrots
2 Mrs Blakeup
½ completed 3 Fish out of water
Yet to be 4 The Immaculate
written. Contraption

3

2011 Feb Completed *The Lamb* with drawings (initial sketches) SEE

2011 Aug Completed Ms Eta-Rip

Oct. 2011 Had interaction with Daniel/Jeanette animation director of Happy Feet and am now reviewing The Chocolate Marvel to make it more epic in nature.

Feb 2012. See previous page.

Reference: p. 128, Kerchener, J. (2006). 'Tools for developing Reflective Skills', in Burnard, P. and Hennessey, S. Eds., *Reflective Practices in Arts Education,* Springer: The Netherlands, pp123-135.

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