

**Title**

**The *Creative Art Journey*: An artist facilitator's autoethnographic exploration of the specificities of place, culture, and tradition through workshop-led extra-curricular art learning in Wales.**

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## DECLARATION

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## **Abstract**

The thesis explores the dynamic between the artist as facilitator and participants in extracurricular art workshops. A personal perspective examines whether the Welsh context allows for more creative freedom in undertaking art workshops. The thesis emphasises the role of the artist facilitator in autoethnographic remembering the collaboration with participants in art processes and their benefits. Exploring teaching and learning both from history and contemporary practices forms a foundation from which to question the learning processes of the art workshop. Exploring language and culture focusses on the importance of these to Wales and the inclusion of these in art workshops. This research discovers that creative freedom within the learning AND teaching environment is the key process in a two-way collaboration.

The theoretical framework underpinning this research utilises a mixed method qualitative approach, including focusing on the self in autoethnography, art making in practice-based research, place in psychogeography and past art workshops in reflective case studies. This is undertaken through personal narratives, making new art, and remembering. Art, culture, language, and the regional positioning of the workshop are important and reveal a vitality where the facilitator and participants develop new skills, information, a collaborative creative memory, and a changed perspective. Art both in the imagination and as artefacts, help to embed information from the past in the present and into the future. The workshop is fleeting but the impact lasts. The research demonstrates the need to examine the position of facilitator and participants in art workshops in Wales with a focus on the liberation of creativity and imagination. This thesis is presented in English, but the research process has been undertaken bilingually, and some use of Welsh is presented alongside English interpretations.

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## Hypothesis

This thesis develops a general hypothesis regarding the collaboration of an established artist facilitator in art-based workshops with young participants. I argue that there is something more to the process than the delivery or teaching of new skills, or a 'fun' extracurricular activity, and that there is something essential in collaborative processes that helps to form fully rounded individuals through art participation. Furthermore, it is my assertion that the language, culture, traditions, and sensibilities of a particular region (educational, social as well as contemporary and historical) are central to the experience of learning through art. As a Welsh artist I believe that the historical non-conformist history of my own region is of vital importance in contributing to the planning and facilitating of the art workshop and that this consideration, along with the factors listed above, needs to be considered and incorporated into all aspects of the learning experience. Through my own experience as an artist facilitator my objective is to provide evidence in support of these assertions, as well as a context for other regions of the world that emphasises and assimilates the 'local' through specific arts-based workshops that are separate and lie outside of the curriculum.

To produce a specific contribution to arts learning and facilitation, I will throughout the thesis prove this hypothesis through my own experiential knowledge, as well as the analysis of evidence from theoretical perspectives, pedagogical papers, policy documents and the application of research methods. I aim to prove that basing both an art practice and an arts workshop learning experience around the attributes and issues of a local culture can be qualitatively beneficial in enabling children and young adults to 'be' in the world through their own specificities and differences.

## Introduction

*“Yn unol â ffrwd yr Addysg Anghydfurfiol oedd wedi eu magu, cydymaddysgwyr oeddynt; athrawon a wyddai nad ‘gwitho i’w le rhywbeth nad oedd yno’ oedd eu gwaith ond ‘arwain allan’ y gallu, y dychymyg, y creadigrwydd sydd eisioes yn bod ‘yn enaid y myfyriwr’.” (Lewis, 2015, p. 98)*

(In accordance with the stream of Nonconformist Education, that had nurtured them, they were co-educators; teachers who knew that their work was not ‘to push into place something that wasn’t there’ but rather to ‘draw out’ the ability, the imagination, the creativity that already exists in the ‘being of the student’.)

*A Creative Art Journey* offers a unique learning experience in extracurricular art workshops that develops a vitality of creativity and imagination in collaborative art making. The motivation for this investigation is instigated from my Welsh context as artist facilitator which provides a distinguishing cultural perspective and presents a contemporary study of art workshops led by an artist using the Welsh language. This Welsh context is a distinctive impetus since language, culture, community and collaboration are vital features of the introspective position formed in this research, to capture an impression of what it means to be a Welsh artist working in art workshops in Wales.

This investigation is presented through the lens of a Welsh visual artist who has worked within art practices in mid Wales since 1996, and longer in other locations. This position formed an interest that led to the necessity to examine these past extra-curricular art workshops investigating the value of learning in the collaborative art experience. A personal archive provides valuable material to reflect on art workshops to analyse the nature of creativity, imagination and making art. During my art career attempts have been made to address the value of the collaborative art workshop and what this means to both the facilitator and participants, this research provides an opportunity to explore these questions. Through this investigation, reflectively exploring myself to comprehend the purpose and value of making art with participants, in collaborative creative learning process, forms a catalyst for this investigation. From the many past art workshops four have been selected, for this

research, as reflective case studies, this selection provides scope to analyse the art workshops from different settings and perspectives.

To provide an important original contribution the examining of contemporary Welsh language art workshops from my perspective as an artist facilitator to include the language, culture and traditions of Wales is integral to this research. This context requires the consideration of a cultural history, such as the impact and legacy of the non-conformist tradition where teaching and learning was reciprocal and teachers were co-educators in drawing out the ability, imagination, and creativity that already exists within all (Lewis, 2015, p. 98) participants. It is important to note that traditionally in Welsh the word for both teaching and learning is “*dysgu*” (Yhnell, 2023) which means that both the facilitator and participant learn from each other and with each other.

In reflecting on my position as an artist facilitator working with others in art workshops using creativity and imagination in art processes I consider:

Why do people make art? And why should we teach students to make it? At the root of it, we make art to make sense of things, to give meaning to our existence. When we express ourselves through making art, we create something tangible to look at, hold, reflect on, [and] feel... (Anderton, 2005, p. 31).

The aims of this research are to examine the impact of the learning journey, to assess the purpose of the art workshop and to reflect on the artist as facilitator and participant as learner using visual stimuli over time. To investigate and reflect on the interaction of these art workshop in Wales “*Cymru*”, using the Welsh language “*Cymraeg*”. To offer a foundational document to be utilised by others as an approach for extra-curricular collaborative art engagement and further research.

The aims and objectives of this research are to explore the making of art, in a learning context, from the Welsh perspective. To examine literature to provide insight into teaching and learning, creativity and extracurricular art processes. To consider myself as a collaborative facilitator working with participants in art

activities. To introspectively reflect on past art workshops. To make a personal art practice to explore creative processes from my perspective as a facilitator. To ascertain the value in art practice and visual stimuli using autoethnography, practice-based research, and case study methods. To apply psychogeography as a method which distinguishes this investigation to Wales “*Cymru*”. These objectives have been considered, interpreted, both in literature and in the application of methods in this thesis.

These aims and objectives are discussed across distinct chapters, commencing with reviewing literature which provides an underpinning systematic academic framework. The literature review is divided into, education, learning and teaching, education in Wales (Historical 1600-1969), education Policy and Curriculum Development in Wales (2013 - 23), culture, language, creativity in learning, facilitating the *Creative Art Journey* and place. Additionally, the practice-based research method connects theory to practice in art making, to locate this research in Wales.

Examining literature reveals an extensive focus on education and creativity in education from many theoretical perspectives to include journal articles, essays, and research projects. Additionally, for the Wales perspective, current developing policy documentation associated to the *Curriculum for Wales (Gov.Wales., 2022)* provide invaluable information related to creative learning, the Welsh language and a cultural significance included in education. This limited literature provides the prospect to research the Wales context, its language, culture and historical non-conforming, “*Addysg Anghydfurfiol*” (Lewis, 2015, p. 98), principles which have an unintended vestige in the Welsh art workshop. Furthermore, when examining the engagement of the facilitator and participants, in extracurricular learning, literature is sparse. Few articles and artist led books provide some insight but none from the Wales perspective. These elements demonstrate an opportunity to explore the collaboration of the Welsh speaking artist in art workshops in Wales, using non-traditional approaches in non-traditional settings.

Reviewing literature provides scope to examine practices of teaching and learning both in exploring historical information and contemporary developments. These aspects provide broad evidence, specific to Wales, ranging from a Sunday school education in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century to the developments in the Welsh curriculum from 2013 onwards. Additionally, creativity and imagination from the perspective of contemporary art practitioners, educationalists and writers are considered. This research provides a unique opportunity to understand the participative collaboration in the Welsh art workshop, where there is little available research. The current lack of theoretical information available is developing as the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales., 2022) develops, especially with the associated engagement of art practitioners within curriculum delivery. The inclusion of creativity and the arts in the Welsh curriculum provides a framework against which to argue for an extracurricular art learning engagement, in an opposing context. This research does not otherwise argue for or against educational processes but instead argues for extracurricular art workshops involving an artist facilitator in Wales using the Welsh language. The application of insights from literature and methods supports this premise.

Prior empirical knowledge and past involvement in the arts resulted in an associated interest in the development of the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales., 2022). This led to me being engaged, in 2018-2019, to provide Commissioning Expertise for the Visual Art, in relation to this curriculum development, focussing on the *Area of Learning and Experience of the Expressive Arts* (Beynon, PowerPoint 2019) (Appendix A). This meant examining the approaches that had been developed by cross curricular arts teachers alongside the *Welsh Government* and the *Welsh Arts Council*. As a commissioning expert my role was to provide an external view on the curriculum. I noted the positive development of the arts within education, especially the inclusion of creativity, the importance of Wales and to making global connections. This also meant that a much-needed gap in teaching about the arts in Wales could be addressed. During the exploration of the paperwork, I noted a concern in relation to the use of creativity across the curriculum including the role that the arts play in enhancing cross-curricular delivery, leading to the potential negative effect this could have on the arts. My view was that creativity and the arts

are not interchangeable, determining that creativity should be given a definition and be integrated into the whole curriculum, with all subject areas providing the creative impetus to enhance the curriculum.

The research processes of this introspective investigation include a reflective consideration of myself, an artist as facilitator, working in extracurricular art workshops in a Welsh context of creativity where art workshops develop individual and collaborative learning. The mixed method conceptual framework evolved as the research developed to form an appropriate bespoke interaction for me as an artist. In this respect, case studies and practice-based research, progressed to include autoethnography and psychogeography, all of which became interwoven throughout. Autoethnography is the first of the four methods and is 'a highly personal process' allowing the exploration and reflection of the personal and professional socio-cultural context (Chang, 2013, p. 107). '[M]emories', (Giorgio, 2013, p. 406) of past art workshops provide valuable insights when examining the collaboration of facilitator with participants. A further aspect of autoethnography is that 'data can be gathered in a variety of ways, recollecting, collecting artefacts..., analysing self' (Chang, 2013, p. 113), using these to undertake a new personal art practice to recall past art workshops involvement as a facilitator.

Practice-based research is the second method and involved connecting theory to practise to form a detailed analytical study using 'visual images in research and representation [which] is becoming more frequently written about and more rigorously theorised' (Pink, 2013, p. 31) in research. Making and deconstructing this new work instigates an analytical reflective thinking '... embedded in the research process...[and] research questions arise from the process of practice' (Candy and Edmonds, 2018, p. 63), to formulate discussions and arguments. Practice involved using different art processes culminating in making diagrams to analyse and synthesise remembering, which in turn was a catalyst to explore the value of art, learning, creativity and imagination. These visual artefacts, as physical objects act as memory prompts to form a new personal living theory (Whitehead, 2009, p. 87). Analysing practice then reflectively deconstructing the personal engagement, as

facilitator, develops an idea of learning in the collaborative art workshop, specifically from the Welsh context.

The third method of psychogeography 'has a role in the work of artists' (Overall, 2015, p. 2) and places this research in Wales, where the exploration of culture and language is key. A functional aspect of psychogeography (Debord, 1955) is to wander where the 'flâneuse' (Elkin, 2016, p. 23) offers this role for this research. This method is presented from the perspective of my own experiential knowledge and practice as an artist and facilitator in Wales. Psychogeography encompasses the vitality of place and uniqueness of the Welsh creative engagement with others.

The final method is reflective case studies, to include a selected four past art workshops. This method draws on creativity, imagination and process to build an investigative context to analyse learning in these art workshops. This '... collective case, [is] intended to capture (Stake, 1995 in Hyett, et al., 2014, p. 2) the artist collaboration with participants, to include the value of learning through making art in art in the art workshop. Underpinning this research and the selected art workshops is Wales and the Welsh language, which connect young participants to the local community and in exploring culture and linguistic matters develop knowledge and a sense of belonging. This cultural aspect is questioned to examine whether collaboration nurtures belonging or "*perthyn*" through the participant's own specificities and differences forming a lasting impact through involvement in the art workshop. These underlying questions and concepts result in exploring issues around the principles and ideas of the importance of art processes for all involved. And to question whether they have an impact on the creative memory following an art workshop.

The four case studies are selected from past workshops, concentrating on participants under the age of 13, providing a range of distinctive examples. The first case study is *Murlun y Bont. 2005-2008* which was a series of art workshop engagement over time. This project involved participants from a Welsh primary school who engaged with ownership of the art process to devise, develop and design a mural as public art. The young participants and facilitator worked with the

local community to explore history, engaging with storytelling. Additionally, I as a visual artist collaborated with the participants, the community and the school along the length of the project. These provide the distinctive contribution of this project.

The second case study is *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach, 1997-2014)*. This was an annual 5-week multi-disciplinary project where several arts processes were undertaken in parallel and in rotation. This project provided multiple co-creative processes involving collaboration with participants and with multiple other facilitators who provided different skills in arts engagement. These workshops provided a broad scope of opportunities for participants to work with familiar and unfamiliar arts projects. The art workshop aspect of this project, facilitated by me, provided the participants with opportunity to initially 'think through making' (Ingold, 2013, p. 6), which then developed to produce art objects connected to the other arts processes, for example theatre backdrops, films, animations, props and so on. The conclusion of this project was a Welsh performative exhibition to an audience, presenting the products of the engagement, to include for example art exhibitions and theatre productions. Creative collaboration was vital along the length of this project.

The third case study *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project (2011)* was a Welsh whole school workshop in which all the pupils participated to produce individual and collaborative art. Each class undertook different working processes and engaged with the teachers on associated curricular activities to include for example mathematics, geography and history. The main theme of this project was the story of a circus elephant from 1884 who had died from drinking water poisoned with lead. This project provides the potential to analyse the collaborative art engagement held in a school with an artist facilitator who does not engage with curriculum delivery.

The final case study *Paper Boats (Tosta, 2016)* is an example of a workshop that was co-creative, where the work produced was included in a wider international, minority languages project and exhibited in different countries. This project was not intrinsically art based but contributed to a large art piece, which none of the participants saw, as it was exhibited in another country. Participants collaborated

with the facilitator to make paper boats through cutting and folding paper following strict directions, this involved creative thinking, following directions in “*Cymraeg*” Welsh and making. The workshop is included as it demonstrates surprising outcomes from process led practice within a collaborative activity. It also provided a distinctive learning opportunity for the facilitator (myself), as what was perceived to be an uninteresting activity proved to be surprisingly fulfilling for all involved.

These four case studies contribute to the methodological framework and provide differing opportunities to explore collaborative art practice. Notably, the aim of each of the selected workshops was to participate in art, with no intention for measured assessment according to teaching and learning structures of an academic system. They each contribute a distinctive process that have been analysed in the application of the case study method with an associated analysis undertaken in practice-based research. The four methods of autoethnography, practice-based research, psychogeography and case studies function in relation to each other throughout this investigation. Additionally, place, the Welsh language, collaborative art making, facilitation, participants, workshops are all considered in each method from my perspective. The applications of these methods provide insights, through analysis and evaluation, to consider the main research concepts. These methods and the investigation of literature serve to capture the involvement of facilitator and participant in art workshops. These are interwoven to align theory to practice both in research and in making art to form the fundamental framework for this investigation.

Investigating myself in relation to others, in this autoethnographic research, emphasises the importance of the anonymity especially of others, to ‘take ethics seriously: they must worry about how they implicate and represent themselves, others, and the happenings of a group’ (Adams and Herrmann, 2020, p. 3). It is sometimes difficult to illustrate a point without giving away who the subject is, this research considers ethical issues and to include measures to not reveal the identity of young participants. The use of photographs of workshops with participants were also considered and images have been excluded.

A significant element of this research is considered through both Welsh and English, where Welsh is the language used in the past art workshops and English is the main language of this thesis, but Welsh has not been excluded. Language is an interesting, complex inclusion in this research as sometimes specific terms in one language may not have the same meaning in another or a term may need to be described rather than translated. Where Welsh terminology is included, it is mostly translated or interpreted for this thesis. Examples of terminology borrowed from another language, that are commonly used in English, are for example, the German word “*angst*” meaning ‘a feeling of extreme anxiety and unhappiness’ (*Angst*, no date) or the Danish word “*hygge*” which can be explained as a ‘quality of cosiness (feeling warm, comfortable, and safe) that comes from doing simple things’ (*Hygge*, no date). Interestingly we could directly translate “*hygge*” to the Welsh word “*Cwtch*” a term that has a common understanding to English speakers in Wales at least. This consideration on words borrowed from another language identifies the complexity of translating words where not one word can be used for the meaning, so the foreign word is borrowed. An example is a word used extensively in this thesis “*dysgu*” (Yhnell, 2023) which can mean to simultaneously and reciprocally teach and learn.

To provide clarity and context, defining specific terminology used aids to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. A significant amount of the research process has been accomplished using the Welsh language, engaging with available Welsh literature, information, and personal recollection. Where translations are used, the English interpretation are presented first followed by the original Welsh quotation presented in italics and double quotation marks. It is deemed important to include the original Welsh language for personal authenticity as interpreting or translating can occasionally change the nuance of the meaning. Accordingly, a glossary of both English and Welsh terminology providing a contextualisation of any specific meaning, to include explanations where necessary, is provided in a glossary of terms in appendix B and C. Where relevant and appropriate definitions of terminology are presented in the body of writing.

A phrase used extensively in this research is *Creative Art Journey*. This embodies the involvement of a facilitator with participants in art workshop, and functions to differentiate the experience from the traditional teaching and learning theories of classroom delivery. This phrase captures the process with clarity and is devised to hold a plethora of information central to past workshops. It is a means of encompassing the collaborative engagement where learning is vital. An in-depth analysis of the *Creative Art Journey* establishes a mode to understand the art workshop process, of commencing with information, through a desire to make art and continuing until the project ends. The workshops can be implemented in a single or a series of workshops to generally embrace involvement with participants, other facilitators and sometimes community. But always includes the art process in individual or collaborative making.

This phrase also embraces creativity and imagination which are closely aligned in the workshops and the examples selected as reflective case studies. Imagination is how ideas are devised, and creativity is the process by which these ideas are developed into practice. Creativity and imagination enable a consideration of ideas to bring to the process of making, they are ambiguous, their direction arbitrary, they can be daunting, difficult to navigate and can involve risk in that what is devised may not be successful or fulfil the need of the process. Nevertheless, the unknown part of the journey, the part that enables the direction to change and for individuality to occur, is an exciting element of making art.

The *Creative Art Journey* is a prevalent strand throughout the research and is associated to the positive extracurricular “Collaborative learning” [which] is an umbrella term for a variety of ... approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or students and teachers together...’ (Smith & MacGregor 1993) focussing on the participants input to the project. In this learning engagement the participants can ‘center [sic] on their learning style strengths’ (Rodgers, M., et al., 2006) (In Laal & Laal, 2012, p. 494) to ‘develop interpersonal skills [which] is as important as the learning itself. [Furthermore,] [t]he development of social skills in group work-learning to cooperate – is [also] key’ (Smith & MacGregor 1993). In collaborative extracurricular activities ‘[I]earning is conceived of as something a

learner does, not something that is done to the learner. [Participants] do not passively accept knowledge from the teacher or curriculum' (Laal & Laal, 2012, p. 493) as would be the case in a traditional teaching and learning process of the classroom which 'are compounded by the traditional structures [of the school system] ... which continue to perpetuate the teacher-centered [sic], transmission-of-information...' (Smith & MacGregor 1993). Collaboration is dynamic and inclusive in the *Creative Art Journey*, providing a different experience for the learner and facilitator to that of the curriculum led education. Following from this discussion on the key themes and questions the outline structure of the thesis will be presented to demonstrate how the framework is ordered.

The thesis is presented in distinct chapters ending in an appendix of associated content. The chapters are literature review, methodology, the application of the methodological approaches to include, autoethnography, practice-based research, case studies and finally the concluding chapter presenting the research insights and recommendations. Within this structure there is capacity to distinctly and systematically articulate the arguments and hypothesis of this research in a clear representation of its direction. A distinguishing commitment is offered for the originality of the research in this Wales based view of art workshops in extracurricular engagement.

The literature review presents an in-depth study of sources to include information pertinent to education both from the historical and contemporary position, matters surrounding the Welsh language and culture, historical and contemporary information on education in Wales, most notably the developments in the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales., 2022), from policy related documentation. Literature provides expert supporting information, with a concluding consideration of creativity in learning and facilitating in the *Creative Art Journey*, to identify research gaps and to argue for the value of the extracurricular art workshops. The opportunity to make connections of theory especially educational theory and philosophy of teaching and learning provides an extensive range of information to formulate new ways to consider learning. On the other hand, exploring the development of art workshops in relation to education and community activity

proves challenging but, nevertheless, provides the opportunity to widen the research beyond the available literature.

Secondly, the methodological approaches provide authoritative justification associated to the theoretical framework. Autoethnography places myself in the research and how I think and do creativity in the art workshop. Practice-based research considers the collaborative art workshops in connecting theoretical information to making and analysing art. Psychogeography surveys the value of place to situate Wales firmly in this research. Finally, in reflective case studies an in-depth examination and analysis of creativity is undertaken to consider the participants.

The concluding section brings together the findings of the research providing validity to this investigation. The recommendations, also included in this final chapter, explore further research possibilities and opportunities. The final aspect of the thesis is the appendix, which includes associated information relevant to the research and wider material too extensive for inclusion in the writing. Included are evidence of my engagement as commissioning expert for the Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales, a glossary of terminology, example of planning art workshops, an example of autoethnographic writing in Welsh, selected online resources produced by me for school age groups, permissions and digitised folios of practice-based work.

These sections form the structure of the thesis to present developments, findings and values in exploring insights from literature and in applying methods. The structure provides capacity to examine the process of cultivating learning and curiosity in the collaborative art workshop, using reflective autoethnographic methods to offer significant knowledge to a meaningful self-investigation. Additionally, exploring education, culture, community and language provide catalysts from which to build insights. This introduction sets out the motivations of this research and provides an overview of the original contribution of an under researched area of the Welsh art workshop engagement of facilitator with participants in collaborative learning. It is evident that not much has been written

about art workshops in general with little written about the art workshop in Wales in Welsh, therefore this investigation fills a research need for developing new knowledge through looking at my experience in facilitating art workshops in the past.

To reinforce this investigation, literature and methods have focused on the facilitation of workshop collaboration with participants, where creativity and imagination have been vital. Reflective case studies strengthen the rationale for the *Creative Art Journey* for manifestation learning and making art in workshops. The ensuing literature review commences this thesis with a comprehensive survey of the contextual framework, from available relevant literature, to include an analysis of information from current and historical sources. Language, culture and education, to include modes of teaching and learning is investigated, concluding in offering definitions of vital terminology. Literature offers a broad range of material but is refined to consider the facilitation of art workshops, Wales and the Welsh language.

## **Chapter 1: Literature Review**

This chapter explores a range of publications, to include academic sources, analysis of evidence from pedagogical and policy papers, in an analytical literature review. These are divided into key sections to include an overview of teaching and learning approaches, historical aspects of education in Wales, educational curriculum reform in Wales and educational principles in respect to how children learn. This chapter culminates in a review of creativity in learning, the facilitation of art workshops in the *Creative Art Journey* and finally the location of this research in place.

To begin the review the historical philosophy of education provides insight into different ways of education, investigated in the works of Paulo Freire a 'Brazilian educator' (Freire, 2005, p. 29), John Dewey 'the pragmatist thinker most closely associated with the philosophy of education' (Winch and Gingell, 1999, p. 180), John Ruskin an English 'teacher and theorist' of education (Hicks, 1974, p. 57) and Raymond Williams, author, academic, cultural theorist, literary critic, public

intellectual (O'Brien, 2021). For contemporary thinking in education, where art and creativity are key, the work of *Bob and Roberta Smith* otherwise known as Patrick Brill, an artist and activist who wants to make *All Schools Art Schools* (*Bob and Roberta Smith*, 2020, p. 12) and Ken Robinson author advisor (*About sir Ken Robinson*, 2021) who focusses on creativity and imagination in education (Robinson & Robinson, 2022, pp. 4-6). *Bob and Roberta Smith* and Robinson offer a different way of thinking about education in schools or formal settings, providing insights from which to develop an individualistic approach, to consider learning.

To set the context for collaborative learning which 'is both socially and intellectually involving' (Smith & MacGregor 1993, p. 2), a brief overview of education in Wales including the struggle for the right to education in the Welsh language, has been undertaken. This presents the collaborative teaching and learning methods of the community led schooling systems, from the 1600s, in the Sunday schools and the circulating schools, using the *Welsh Bible* which was translated in 1588 (Jones and Roderick, 2003, p. 8). This establishes the place for '[t]he Welsh word "*dysgu*" (pronounced "dusk-ee), in this thesis, which means both 'to teach and to learn' (Yhnell, 2023) offering a powerful argument for Welsh language collaborative learning, developed from this historical context.

To provide an emphasis on current developments in Welsh education, examining policy documents highlight valuable foundational information to focus on creativity in education. From 2013 the preliminary stages of the development of the new curriculum in Wales, *An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales* (Smith, 2013), is the first report reviewed in this thesis, resulted in arts practitioners working in schools to develop a more creative approach to teaching and learning. The second report, *Successful Futures Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (Donaldson, 2015) builds on Smith's report of 2013 but develops the educational principles of delivery, engagement and assessment. These policy reports provide invaluable insight into the importance of arts in education where creativity, the arts, Wales and the Welsh language are central and significant developments for education in Wales. The establishment of the *Curriculum for Wales* (*Gov.Wales*,

2023a) from 2023 means that academic publications focused on education, is a developing field of study, but there is much research still to be undertaken in this area. Whilst these policy documents focus on curriculum development, which differs from the noncurricular aim of this research, they serve to fill the gap to focus on creativity, where limited academic literature in relation to the noncurricular art workshop is available.

To further embed Welsh delivery and the engagement of cultural investigation in the art workshops, the context of culture and community has been investigated. Publications by the cultural theorist Raymond Williams provide a historical, regional focus, also for contemporary knowledge Professor Mererid Hopwood who ‘has spent her career in the fields of languages, literature, education and the arts’ (*Prof Mererid Hopwood, 2023*) provides information on the Welsh language. Euros Lewis is also a vital thinker in relation to this research, he and I have collaborated on many projects over my career, most notably for this research, the arts project *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)*. His writing enables a focus on creativity, imagination, and collaboration explored in his book *Theatr a Chymdeithas* (Lewis, 2015), loosely translated as theatre in wider society and in its community, in this case *Theatr Felin-fach* near Aberaeron, Wales. For Lewis society and community means everyone and does not exclude. He is also interested in the Welsh language, its history and place in contemporary society. The *Theatr Felin-fach* (theatre) stage is not a space set aside for performers...it is an open space for creative making...totally “*Nid gofod a neilltiwyd ar gyfer perfformwyr yw llwyfan Felin-fach...lle agored ar gyfer creu...yn ei chyfanrwydd*”<sup>1</sup> (Lewis, 2015, p. 8). *Theatr Felin-Fach* has been a central location in my career, having this one book to refer to is valuable.

The nature of this research means that exploring academic sources beyond Wales is beneficial in widening information, as academic writing about the engagement methods in art workshops is sparse and less available from the Welsh language

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<sup>1</sup> Where translations are used in the thesis, the English interpretation will be presented first followed by the original Welsh quotation presented in italics and double quotation marks.

and Wales context. The foundational investigation was undertaken in surveying formal educational methods where academic literature about curriculum led approaches is abundant. The motivation for this research is to investigate creative learning in collaborative art workshops with an artist facilitator and young participants. Two publications provide appropriate focus for these aspects of the research. The first by Anne Harding, *Magic Moments* (Harding, 2005) and the second by Lucy Neal, *Playing for Time making art as if the world mattered* (Neal, 2015). Both offer relevant material on making art in communities, with communities, in schools and in collaboration with the child as a frequent co-creator. The age range of the past workshops, presented as case studies in this research is 3- to 13-year-olds, which coincides with the age of the child receiving formal education. Relating to this, academic literature has mainly explored this age range, but exploration beyond these limits has also been undertaken, for example in relation to lifelong learning and extracurricular activities.

This introduction provides an overview of the key topics of discussion, the literature that contribute to this thesis, the gaps in research pertinent to my research topic, the artist facilitator of art workshops working with participants in Wales in the Welsh language. This chapter is divided into seven sections, beginning with presenting an appraisal of literature related to formal aspects of education, historical and contemporary education in Wales, literature related to the most recent changes in the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales, 2023a). An overview of Welsh language and culture is presented before concluding the review with creative engagement within education in schools, leading to the creative facilitation of the Welsh art workshop and ending in considering place. This literature review investigates information to provide a foundational position from which I can site this research.

## **Education, Learning and Teaching**

This section surveys literature in relation to education, learning and teaching, providing a foundational knowledge for the research, against which to determine the learning approaches of the extracurricular artist led workshops. The understanding of education process aids in providing a framework from which to explore the way

that teaching and learning is generally undertaken. Though I have a PGCE in post-16 education, I had not focussed on contemporary and historical principles of teaching and learning in schools for under 16-year-olds, prior to this research. This may also be the case for other arts practitioners who deliver workshops, which proposes an area for further research as is not undertaken by me in this research.

The availability of literature in relation to different modes of teaching and learning is broad. This research is not a critical survey of education and does not value nor discount its importance. The research advocates maintaining extracurricular art activities that the young participant can undertake in addition to formal education. The intention of this chapter is to place definitions of educational terms into this research to be able to demonstrate the difficulty in defining methods of learning in art workshops, within the confines of educational theory. These definitions also aid in demonstrating that the practice does not only stem from a point of being educated, rather the art workshops have been developed by art practitioners through creative methods as a means for learning.

Exploring how the child learns has been undertaken by reviewing educational philosophy and theory in pedagogical publications. To commence this review, it is useful to provide some definitions for education, teaching and learning. 'There is remarkably little agreement' (Inglis and Aers, 2008, p. 72) about what education is and what it ought to be, education has been influenced by the 'many philosophers who have written about it' ... [and others who] 'argued for a much freer, more playful and happier kind of education'. Through history defining education or giving 'it order is to fix a fight between' different philosophical thinking (ibid., p. 74), it can also be stated that, '[t]he notion of education has taxed the minds of philosophers...' and the complexities of the historical associations further adds to the difficulty in defining "education" (Sharp, et al., 2009, p. 3). Furthermore:

The word 'education' may be derived from one of two Latin words or perhaps, from both. These are *educere*, which means 'to lead out' or 'to train' and *educare* which means 'to train' or 'to nourish' (Winch & Gingell, 1999, p. 70, original emphasis).

Leading and training are powerful expressions in terms of education, but I believe for the *Creative Art Journey*, nourishing would be the best term to use.

'Defining education should be easy especially as everyone has undertaken some or many sorts of educational processes, 'education' most commonly summons up memories of going to school. We went there to be educated...' (Ingold, 2018, p. 1). Furthermore, to 'ask anyone what "education" means the answers are likely to be varied, as the term "education" ... relates to the ideas of "schooling", "learning" and "training"'. (Inglis and Aers, 2008, p. 74), or to the 'process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or college' (*Education*, no date). Furthermore, those being 'educated' believe that they understand the 'systematic' process being undertaken in terms of the knowledge they are receiving, this understanding 'enables individuals to determine their own education on leaving a schooling system that they may believe has failed them.' (Sharp, et al., 2009, p. 3). Education can also be described as having:

A necessary implication that something valuable or worthwhile is going on... it involves the acquisition of a body of knowledge and understanding which surpasses mere skill, know-how or the collection of information...the processes of education involve at least some understanding of what is being learnt and what is required in the learning... (Winch and Gingell, 1999, pp. 70-71).

Furthermore, education can be defined 'as 'upbringing'...[or]... 'a preparation for adult life'...' (ibid., p. 74) and that '[t]he practice of education and the institution of the school, in short seem joined at the hip. You cannot apparently have one without the other.' (Ingold, 2018, p. 1). The current education system of schooling 'was designed, conceived and structured for a different age' during the enlightenment of the 18th century for the development of intellectual knowledge, and in the industrial age of the 19th century for the economic circumstance in that education should be free for all (Robinson, 2010, 1.50-2.10). Education is simply understood as a system undertaken at an early age, normally delivered by a teacher in a school for the development of knowledge.

Similarly to education, teaching and learning are complex to define and are offered here together as one relies on the other within an education system as Dewey in 1933 offers:

There is the same exact equation between teaching and learning that there is between selling and buying. The only way to increase the learning of pupils is to augment the quantity and quality of real teaching. Since learning is something that the pupil has to do himself and for himself, the initiative lies with the learner. The teacher is a guide and director; he steers the boat, but the energy that propels it must come from those who are learning. (Winch and Gingell, 1999, p. 232).

Teaching and learning involve a delivery by a teacher, learning by the pupil, which 'is fundamental to education' (ibid., p. 74). In a school system, learning happens in the classroom with a teacher delivering and 'If learning has taken place' this needs to be ascertained and is normally achieved 'through a form of assessment in which the learner is asked to demonstrate her skill or knowledge.' (ibid., p. 133). This school education generally falls into the formal education category which 'consists of learning that occurs within an organised and structured context' (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004) where a child works on a subject area, with a teacher and assessment occurs at the beginning, during and at the end of learning.

On the other hand, learning, outside of education can occur in other ways and 'can also take place without any teaching. Those who are self-taught, for example, have not needed any other person other than themselves to enable them to learn.' Learning can also be understood as 'a permanent or lasting change in knowledge, skill or attitude which is the result of experience rather than through maturation' (ibid., 1999, p. 132; Gordon and Lawton, 2004, p. 136). Literature demonstrates that learning does not only occur in the classroom, but also occurs throughout life, and that the general understanding of this type of learning differs slightly from that in school. Raymond Williams 'educational thinker' and 'a literary critic... inventor of the interdisciplinary field known as 'cultural studies', recognised the differences between the informal and community-based education undertaken as a child and young man in Wales, 'and the 'official,' elite education ...(of) English schooling and higher education'. Williams insisted that 'education was ordinary,' and was a means

through which people of all ages could both immerse themselves in a common culture and refine and sharpen that culture against their own individual experiences.’ (Cole, 2008). Williams as an advocate of the collaborative learning system, undertaken by him as a child, in a ‘common culture’ (ibid.) that developed every individual from a collective place.

Correspondingly, Freire, ‘one of the most influential philosophers of education of the twentieth century’ (Díaz, no date) believed that education ‘should not involve one person acting on another, but rather people working with each other’ (Jarvis, 2004, p. 118) in a two-way dialogue of the educator and the learner where ‘the teacher teaches the learners, who learn and teach the teacher as well’ (Jarvis, 2010, p. 188). Like Williams who believed that education ‘cut both ways’, that both the educator and the learner ‘would ‘meet as equals’ in the classroom and share fully in the process of democratic learning.’ (Cole, 2008). In the Welsh language the word for both teaching and learning is “*dysgu*”, both the teacher and the pupil learn from each other, ‘[t]hrough teaching we learn and through learning we can teach’ (Yhnell, 2023), this means that ‘[w]e are all learners and need to see learning through the eyes of our students’ (Coles, 2014, p. 27). The non-curriculum-based activity of art workshops have an affinity to these principles and with the philosophy of Freire (Jarvis, 2004, p. 119) who believed in the ability of the human being to reflect on learning and experience which he called ‘praxis’...’ (Smith, 1997, 2002). In a co-creative process, it is vital for the facilitator to work with the participant to develop creativity in an individualistic contribution that is truthful to the participant’s way of working.

To further explore a deeper foundational consideration of teaching, learning and education approaches, these can be categorised into distinct types of approaches that are classified as formal, informal, non-formal or experiential. Firstly, formal education is ‘...the ‘highly institutionalized chronologically graded and hierarchically structured “educational system”’, running from primary school through to university’ (Coombs et al., 1974, p. 8) this ‘...consists of learning that occurs within an organised and structured context’ (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004, p. 71). Secondly, ‘informal education is learning from daily life activities ... as experiential learning...

accidental learning... not structured ... does not lead to certification...' (ibid., p. 71) it is '...interaction or conversation and in conversation everything is unpredictable.' (Jeffs & Smith, 2005, p. 77). Thirdly, non-formal education is '...any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system...' (Coombs et al., 1974, p. 8) which occurs 'in planned activities that are not explicitly designated as learning, but which contain an important learning element' (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004, p. 71). Finally, experiential learning '...is not sponsored by some formal educational institution ... It is learning that is achieved through ...everyday experience' (Smith, 2001, 2010). This provides an overview of generally accepted education, teaching and learning approaches. Of these, informal and experiential offer the most relevance to creative learning in the art workshop, but do not fully offer accurate educational approaches in that engagement. These two approaches are discussed in greater detail to provide background information against which to consider extracurricular creative learning.

Firstly, informal learning, according to Freire, 'is a dialogical' educational process 'rather than a curricula form'. He believes that informal education occurs in collaboration with the educator rather than in bringing a pre-created set of processes to the learning environment (Smith, 1997, 2002). In addition, informal education is a:

lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment-from family and neighbours, from work and play, from the marketplace, the library and the mass media... (Fordham, 1993).

In these terms, informal learning is a process undertaken by an individual throughout life without an educator nor visiting a specific place. Learning 'and knowledge' are achieved in daily activities related to work, family, or leisure in different forms and settings, such as in workplaces or in communities. They are 'lifelong' or 'life-wide' (Singh, 2015, p. 19), 'accidental' or 'non-intentional' (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004, p. 71) and linked to life experiences.

Informal learning 'takes place without being organised' (Jeffs & Smith, 2005, pp. 8-9) offering no structure in terms of a curriculum, '...does not lead to certification' and occurs in an 'incidental' or 'random' way (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004, p. 71). The learner learns from everything that they do, in all situations without direction or any necessary interaction with others. This definition of informal learning does not explain the process of the art workshop where facilitation takes place. At the time of engagement, the extracurricular art workshop is a part of and a means to, but not the aim of lifelong learning. It is up to all the participants and the facilitator to take their learning into their future knowledge or not, thereby building a lifelong learning portfolio.

Secondly, experiential learning, a theory developed by David Kolb, the chair of *Experience Based Learning Systems (EBLS)*, (Kolb, 2020) where 'education ... occurs as a direct participation in the events of life' (Houle, 1980, p. 221). Kolb believes that learning not only occurs within 'formal educational institutions but by people themselves. It is learning that is achieved through reflection upon everyday experience and is the way that most of us do our learning' (Smith, 2001, 2010). The process of learning happens 'continuously' and is 'formed and re-formed' (Kolb, 1984, p. 26; EBLS, 2020). Experience leads to doing, adapting, thinking and reflecting leading back to or from each other enabling old ideas to be modified (EBLS, 2020). The 'cycle doesn't just repeat it evolves....' And in the experiential process 'assessment should be holistic' where 'learners should demonstrate knowledge and skills in a real-life context' (EBLS, 2019). The cyclical nature of experiential learning means that learning is continuous, happens through life and can have a profound educational impact on the learner. This also means that 'learning outcome is not an endpoint but simply a resting point of an ongoing learning process' (EBLS, 2020). This is a reflective cycle with no real starting point or end point.

Kolb also believes that teaching and learning should start with what the learner already knows and that 'the effective teacher activates prior knowledge ... [beginning with ... experiences allows the learner to re-examine and modify their previous sense-making in the light of new ideas' (Kolb and Kolb, 2013, pp. 20-21).

Some of the ideas brought to the learning environment can be 'crude and incorrect' and it is the educator's role to 'not only to implant new ideas but also to dispose of or modify old ones' (Kolb, 1984, p. 28). These ideas of modifying and disposal seem to me to be unsympathetic to the learning process and imply that the educator needs to control the process of learning, otherwise modification cannot occur. The continuous process of experiential learning is an essential correlation with the art workshop where exploring ideas after the project has ended can follow. But other elements of the process such as modification, disposal and transmission do not intentionally happen but are an inevitable, accidental outcome of any involvement in art activities. This notion that all learners bring something to the learning environment is also relevant, especially in relation to collaborative art practices.

As seen from the above overview the terms education and learning seem to be 'interchangeable' where there is often 'confusion' in the terminology used '...but there are crucial differences. *Learning* is the process of acquiring new skills and understanding. *Education* is an organised system of learning.' Furthermore, 'children love to learn, they do it naturally; [but] may have a hard time with education...' (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, p. 39, original emphasis). Additionally, '...we often mistake the term *teaching* for *telling*. Teachers tell their students stuff far too often rather than letting them learn it' (Coles, 2014, p. 63, original emphasis). For the art workshop process, under consideration in this research, it has been vital to enable learning to take place rather than telling the participants what to do or how to do it. Though the above educational, teaching and learning processes provide some relevance to learning through making art, for example the process of the art workshop contributes to the lifelong and a cyclical experiential learning where every individual accumulates learning or develops knowledge that has been innately gained. On the other hand, the above educational approaches and formal learning of the classroom with front-loaded delivery and assessment of teaching and learning by educators and assessors has no relevance in the creative art workshop. The *Creative Art Journey* involved collaborating on ideas to develop creative thinking and making in creative outcomes.

An in-depth study of approaches to education, as set out by the above definitions, is beyond the scope of this research, however, it has been important to present various models of education, which adopt different approaches to teaching and learning, within the curriculum led approach, to offer various perspectives against which to comprehend the collaborative art workshop process. Teaching and learning in schools are meant to deliver a formal education where structures and policy provide a framework to normalise delivery and outcome. These also aid in maintaining order within which children can be educated and achieve recognised end of schooling results for future employment '[a]t school, students are still expected to follow a curriculum which has been laid down in advance and, to progress through measurable stages from initiation to completion'. (Ingold, 2018, p. 12). Within the school system, the assessment of learning is vital, Paulo Freire argued that education 'involves "banking" – with the educator making "deposits" in the educatee'. (Smith, 1997, 2002). In a school system the student develops knowledge based on a curriculum where 'grades express the degree of conformity achieved' (Krenn, 2005, p. 76) through many kinds of assessment towards final certification.

In the art workshop learning 'is valuable because it ignites the spirit of curiosity, not because it will give us a certificate' (*Bob and Roberta Smith*, 2020, p. 144). The workshop also has no official banking of knowledge and no recognised authoritative certification at the end. On considering the learning approaches of the workshop, it is evident that 'it is difficult to make a clear distinction between formal and informal learning as there is often a crossover between the two' (McGivney, 1999, p. 1, cited in Colley et al., 2022, p. 33). This led to the questioning the teaching and learning approaches undertaken in workshops and the instinctive and diverse mixing and adapting of these to suit the situation, group, or environment.

This brief overview of education provides a general framework from which to explore learning approaches used in extracurricular activities. These principles of teaching, learning and assessment do not fully align to the art workshop nor to the approaches used by the artist where learning through innovative and adaptive methods dominate. The approaches of the art workshop offer a creative synthesis

between the formal aspects of school education and the informal context (Lewis, 2015, p. 101). Of these approaches, informal and experiential learning provide the most relevant styles of learning, where the participant and facilitator bring with them already learnt ways of working and which also contributes to their lifelong learning skills. Whilst the research developed away from these early explorations of educational philosophy, nevertheless the more rigid approaches to teaching and learning have remained within the research, to provide a framework for the way that young participants learn.

This research is focussed on a Welsh perspective of extracurricular art activity; therefore, education, teaching and learning will be further explored with a particular focus on the history of education in Wales. It is beneficial to look back to provide a regional understanding of the process of “*dysgu*”, of the collaborative teaching and learning within the historical schooling system in Wales, and to consider the impact this has on the contemporary collaborative learning of the art workshop.

### **Education In Wales (Historical 1600-1969)**

Exploring the history of education in Wales demonstrates the importance of the Welsh language and associated community aspects which were central to the schooling systems, from the 1600s onwards. Education during this time enabled a large number of the population in Wales, of all ages, to be able to read in Welsh and has continued to evolve since this time. Education in Wales has developed in interesting ways, from being associated with religion of the Church, delivered in Sunday schools of the Welsh chapels and in circulating schools through the 1600s and 1700s (*Education in Wales 1*, no date) to becoming regulated by ‘Welsh Board for Education in 1907’ (*History of devolution*, 2020), interestingly, it was not until 1969 that the school leaving age was raised to 16 (*Education in Wales 2*, no date). The earlier schooling systems, mainly taught using the *Welsh Bible* (Clement, 1959b), meant that the Welsh language was central to the education process. Elements from history explored, include four prominent historical, education advocates including the clergy, Stephen Hughes (1662? - 1688), Griffith Jones (1683 - 1761) and Thomas Charles (1755 - 1814) and Bridget Bevan, better known

as Madam Bevan (1698 - 1779). Also considered is the development of government supported schooling which led to England administered inspections and consequently to a report of the state of education in Wales in the Blue Books 1847 (*National Library of Wales*, no date). These aspects of educational development will be briefly presented to provide a background to educational processes in Wales, the importance of community, collaborative education and of “*dysgu*”.

In the mid-1600s Stephen Hughes, a ‘nonconformist minister and publisher’ (Roberts, 2004) was interested in publishing literature, especially related to religion and was instrumental in ‘the publication of Welsh books for the use of the peasantry’ (Williams, 1959). Additionally, in translating, writing and publishing books in the Welsh language (Morgan, 2022, 38:00 – 46:00), he was ‘one of the men who began to convert the masses in Wales into conservers of the Welsh language.’ (Williams, 1959). For the people of Wales, at this time, ‘both the language and experience of...formal education was entirely alien’ (Jones & Roderick, 2003, p. 17), for Hughes a passion for literature and religion led him to embrace the challenge to teach the people to read, through publishing and distributing Welsh books. Hughes, in association with Thomas Gouge, an English ‘nonconformist divine and philanthropist’ set up the *Welsh Trust* in 1675 ‘to teach the poor Welsh children to read and write English’ (Clement, 1959c) delivering the three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic), available through both *The Welsh Trust* and *SPCK* of 1699 (Jenkins, 2022, 29:30 - 30:46). Gouge and other financial supporters ‘from outside, particularly from London’ (Jones & Roderick, 2003, p. 33) viewed their support of education in Wales as missionary work and for this reason freely distributed the *Welsh Bible* to pacify parents as they were unhappy with the English only education offered to their children (ibid.). In 1670 Hughes noted that the stock of the *Welsh Bible* was low, with the financial support of Gouge he secured the publishing of 8,000 copies for sale at a very reasonable cost with 1,000 copies free to the poor (Morgan, 2022, 50:00- 51:54). Although education at this time was delivered in English only, Hughes was influential in producing Welsh language publications to develop literacy skills in the Welsh population.

In the late 1600s and early 1700s, as stated above, there were no schools and no teaching through the medium of Welsh. This was to change with the development of ‘...the circulating schools of Griffith Jones (1683-1761)’. These schools travelled to various locations in Wales: ‘the schools were held for three months in the same place, usually in the winter months when farm work was slack’. Jones was a cleric and educational reformer (Clement, 1959b). This education in the circulating schools demonstrates the ability to educate the population, the importance of religion, of learning language and of community:

Between 1731 and 1771 Griffith Jones’s Circulating Schools managed to teach half of Wales to read. In the space of forty years, around 200,000 people had attended his three-month schooling programmes; including men, women and children. This was quite a feat as they were not government funded. (Jones, E.H, 2020).

The circulating schools, held in religious buildings, provided an extraordinary achievement in developing literacy in half the population in Wales, of all ages, in a brief period and ‘were among the most important educational experiments anywhere in Europe in the eighteenth century’. (Jones & Roderick, 2003, p. 39). The situation in Wales, at the time, was that there was no political governance, no Welsh schools, the wealthy wanted to reduce the Welshness of society to “*di-Cymreigio*” and were anti Welsh. The bishops had the same beliefs, likening the language to ‘gobbling of geese’ (Jenkins, 2022, 25:00 – 25:53). Jones in opposition to these beliefs managed, over a six-week to a three-month period of the circulating schools, to offer education for free. To teach seven-year-old children to seventy-year-old adults to read and learn the alphabet for the first time which caused old women to cry, “*hen wragedd yn llefain y glaw*”, as they hadn’t been able to do this as children, 50 years earlier (Jenkins, 2022, 41:28 – 45:11). This powerful way of going against the beliefs of the wealthy and church leaders could not have been easy but provided, for my forebears, the ability to be educated in their own language no matter their age.

Griffith Jones died in 1761; he bequeathed money to his friend Bridget Bevan to continue this work. The circulating schools were remarkably successful until her

death in 1779. Under Bevan's guidance in 1773 '242 schools and 13,205 pupils were the most flourishing in the history of the movement.' (Clement, 1959a). Prior to her work with the circulating schools, Bevan had an early association, through her father, with the *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK)* schools (White, 2022) who distributed the *Welsh Bible* freely to all parts of Wales (Jenkins, 2022, 30:57 – 30:58). Under her direction in the circulating schools a further 125,000 people of Wales were taught to read, leading to a documented total of 325,000 at a time when the Welsh population was 450,000. Welsh was the main language of the circulating schools at this time, though English was used in the more Anglicised parts of Wales. This was a great achievement through 'substantial voluntary effort to provide the mass of Welsh people with a basic literacy' (Jones & Roderick, 2003 p. 31) and for Welsh Education in Wales. The circulating schools ended at her death due to a family dispute in relation to her will, her bequeathed money was eventually released 30 years after her death and placed in trust for education (White, 2022). The number of the Welsh population educated to read and be educated through the circulating school system was vast due to the determination of named individuals as seen above.

With no circulating schools organised during the late 1700s (White, 2022) the association of 'Nonconformist chapels and educational activities' (Owen, no date) formed a vital correlation between education and the Welsh language, notably in the Sunday schools organised by the Methodist cleric Thomas Charles (Roberts, 1959, Aron, 2022), financially supported through funds raised by the Methodist chapels. Charles noted that many children and young people could not read, due to the gap formed by no circulating schools, he understood that to be able to develop religious knowledge reading was essential. Teaching of reading was undertaken on Sunday afternoon using the *Welsh Bible* and other religious publications, 'the Welsh Sunday schools ... continued to cater for adults as well as children and, of course, were held in the Welsh language – crucial to their success.' (Jones & Roderick, 2003, p. 43). Charles made a significant difference to the literacy of Wales and by 1881 half a million, 34% of the Welsh population attended Sunday school (Aron, 2022), demonstrating the importance of non-conformist religion in developing communal learning, using the Welsh language and the bible in community settings.

The 19th century saw an increase in industrial population and social unrest, 'while the great majority of the people of Wales in the eighteenth century had been Welsh-speaking, that was no longer the case in several parts of the country by the end of the nineteenth' (Jones & Roderick, 2003, p. 57). Societal governed schools also increased, two societies became vital in delivering education: *The National Society* was established in 1811 to set up schools where children of the poor would be taught the Anglican religion, and *The British and Foreign Society* was established in 1814 to promote non-sectarian education (*Education in Wales 3*, no date). These are often perceived as 'a link between the charity-school movements of the previous century and the state system of elementary education which now seems an inevitable consequence of the 1870 Education Act' (Jones & Roderick 2003, p. 51). Therefore, as society became more industrial education also developed.

The social unrest of the 1830s and 1840s was a concern to central government, who believed 'that a principal underlying cause was the deplorable state of education, and, in particular, the ignorance of the English language among Welsh people' (Jones & Roderick, 2003, p. 57), and reading and writing in Welsh was disadvantageous to the population. By 1847 there was 'an embryonic state system of elementary education in England and Wales ... which received some grant from the government' and consequently 'became subject to government inspection'. These aspects of the tumultuous 19th century form a setting for the 1847 *Report of the Commissioners into the State of Education in Wales*. (Jones & Roderick, 2003, p. 51). Industrialisation in Wales saw a growing, moving population where views from outside had an impact on Welsh society, education, and in particular education in the Welsh language.

In 1847 the government commissioned '*Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*', was later referred to as '*The Blue Books*', or in Welsh as the *Treachery of the Blue Books* "*Brad y Llyfrau Gleision*" where 'three [English] commissioners visited every part of Wales collecting evidence and statistics' (*National Library of Wales*, no date). In their report they stated that 'The Welsh language is a vast drawback to Wales and a manifold barrier to the moral

progress of the people. It is not easy to overestimate its evil effects' (Lingen, et al., 1847, p. 66). This has influenced Welsh education, the Welsh people and has had a continuous societal impact that have not always been beneficial most notable for the Welsh language:

One of the inevitable results of the report was its effect on the nation's mind and psyche. It was at this time that ordinary Welsh people began to believe that they could only improve themselves socially through education and the ability to speak and communicate in English (*National Library of Wales*, no date).

This inspection of education therefore has had a lasting effect on the consciousness of a nation where the belief of the Welsh people in their ability to be educated, to a high standard, in their own language, in their own country has been affected. Since the mid-1800s these historical attitudes and beliefs derived from such reports have gravely impacted perceptions of the Welsh language.

This brief overview of the history of education in Wales does not provide an in-depth study but demonstrates a confidence to educate and to be educated in Welsh through the determination and engagement, mostly of religious and non-conformist ministers and their associates. The Sunday schools and the circulating schools provided education through reading the *Welsh Bible* where education was not exclusive to the child. The Welsh language had a significant role in religious education and was fundamental for the education system for all ages. The inspection of 1847 published in *The Blue Books* has had a lasting detrimental effect on the Welsh people's ability to be educated in their own language. For this research, this general overview of early education in Wales demonstrates the positive and negative impacts on education, on the Welsh language and its legacy to this day. It also benefits in demonstrating the methods of reciprocal learning through "dysgu" in the use of the *Welsh Bible* which was used by everyone who attended these schooling systems, to learn to read in Welsh. These communal, reciprocal learning methods, in these religious settings, provided a similar approach to that used in the contemporary extracurricular art workshops of this research with art and creativity replacing religion and reading, all involved in the art workshops

have a voice. In addition to this historical survey of education in Wales, the examination of contemporary developments and policy documentation for the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales, 2023a), provides literature with a specific linguistic, regional and creative focus beneficial for this research.

### **Education Policy and Curriculum Development in Wales (2013-23)**

During the survey of educational literature, it became evident that the development of the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales., 2022) and the associated policy papers provided valuable literature for some related aspects of this research, both in English and in Welsh. Since 2013 there has been a focus on reforming and developing the *Curriculum for Wales* (ibid.) which provides a unique, pupil centred approach to education where Wales and the Welsh language, as well as creativity and 'creative learning across the curriculum' are central elements, to enable the learner to become 'an enterprising, creative contributor, ready to play a full part in life and work' (*A guide to the new Curriculum for Wales*, no date). Exploring policy related to the curriculum, during the research, has been especially relevant due to the close connection to the creative arts community in Wales and the involvement of the Welsh Arts Council:

We believe that creativity matters, and we want to see the creative skills of learners developed across the school curriculum. Making these opportunities available to students from all backgrounds is a priority for us. (*Creative learning through the arts*, no date).

These developments provide 'a unique opportunity to ensure that the next generations of learners in Wales grow to be healthy, creative, enterprising, ambitious, knowledgeable about Wales and the world' (Hopwood, 2019), the arts have been and continue to be central within this structure at the time of writing.

It is not new for creative process to be central to the education system. An example of this was the *Foundation Phase* for children up to 7 years old where children learnt through play. 'It encourages children to be creative, imaginative and makes learning more enjoyable and more effective'. Children were encouraged to explore

the world, 'concepts and share ideas for solving problems' and to explore how things work through 'practical activities' (Gov.Wales, 2017). In the *Curriculum for Wales* education 'is a continuum of learning for children from 3 to 16 years of age. There will no longer be 'phases' or 'stages,' with all children learning along the same continuum.' (*Curriculum for Wales*, 2022, 2023). The foundation phase no longer exists and education for early years learners follows the principles of the curriculum. It can be argued that the freedom of creative approaches may be difficult for teachers who need to 'work within a system that inhibits the freedom they require to make autonomous decisions and truly create the positive impact they are capable of' (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, p. xxiv). Although, The *Curriculum for Wales* allows for 'creative' and 'imaginative' aspects as integral skills, and approaches to learning, in a pupil focussed approach (Hwb, 2022), the assessment of learning remains an essential aspect of the process and due to the formality of the education process, the freedom of creative expression may have limited capacity for the learner to develop.

The policy documents to be considered here are firstly *An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales* (Smith, 2013), which had an impact on arts and education that led to further development in *Successful Futures Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (Donaldson, 2015) and finally *Creative Learning Through the Arts* (Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Gov., no date). These documents, as secondary sources for this thesis, provide insight to approaches in teaching and learning, especially with a focus on Wales, the Welsh language and creativity in education.

The first policy paper, *An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales* (Smith, 2013), focusses mostly on the arts to include the arts in the classroom, and has relevance for this research. This report was written whilst Dai Smith was the Chair of the Arts Council of Wales, he was therefore closely affiliated to the arts in Wales at the time of writing.

Creativity and the relationship to the arts is central to this report: 'Creativity or being open to the acquisition of new knowledge and innovative skills, will shape our world like no other force imaginable' (Smith, 2013, p. 6). Smith understood the importance of the creative process, allowing creative freedom for learning across the curriculum. Smith highlights the importance of creative practice for good education and the linking of art practitioners with schools: 'This review is the first to look in depth at the inter-relationship between the arts and education sectors in Wales'. (ibid., p. 33), as such was ground-breaking in its objective and in demonstrating the impact that a connection between the arts and education can make.

Within the report Smith links creativity to forging cognitive processes which enable learning across a broad range of subjects, it is evident that Smith believes the connection between the arts and education is essential to the future wellbeing of Wales: 'schooling will increasingly become the basis of a creative society, of a creative economy and a creative culture.' (ibid., p. 6). Furthermore, 'arts in education is the best instrument we (potentially) possess for a small nation's (confident) future' children and young people will inevitably benefit from these developments through creativity and through the arts within education (ibid., p. 50). Smith connects art and creativity with enabling children to grow to be rounded individuals of the future.

The central themes and argument of this report is of fundamental value to the importance of creative learning in schools to the arts in their wider sense and to art, specifically with the recommendation for their utilisation in the new curriculum introduced in Wales from 2022. Smith's report provided vital information and associations to wider thinking in relation to art and creativity in education of value to this research. The report also formed a foundation from which aspects were then further developed by Professor Graham Donaldson in 2015.

The second policy paper for review is the *Successful Futures Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (Donaldson, 2015) report provides some background information pertinent to the changes occurring in education in Wales. The focus of the report and its recommendations are aimed at

education, but it also has a direct impact on arts practitioners who have been involved in creative engagement in schools as recommended initially by Dai Smith (2013). A programme was developed called the *All Wales Arts and Education Programme* which enabled 'schools to draw on the knowledge and practice of artists, arts and cultural organisations to improve and complement teaching across the curriculum.' (*Arts Wales*, 2018) thereby utilising the skills of the art practitioner within the classroom.

The inclusion of the Welsh language in the curriculum is recommended, stating that 'the Welsh language be retained as a compulsory part of the school curriculum 3–16.' Furthermore, '[t]he cultural, cognitive and practical benefits of learning Welsh as a living language provide a strong case for its inclusion as a compulsory element in the school curriculum' (Donaldson, 2015, p. 58). The inclusion of the Welsh language in the school curriculum till the age of 16 is highly relevant to this research.

Donaldson underpins a profound change in the curriculum in Wales as evident from the title ...*Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (Donaldson, 2015) focusing on the whole curriculum where creativity presents a 'radical and wide-ranging' (ibid., p. 1) influence on the education principles of all young people till the age of 16. This wider curriculum focus uses creativity and the arts to support education and has shifted from creativity to curriculum focus, in this report, as opposed to *An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales* (Smith, 2013) report, where the arts and creativity were central.

These two policy papers instigate the curriculum change in Wales, they demonstrate the importance of the Welsh language, the culture in which education is sited and Wales themed ideas within the curriculum. These elements have also been central themes for the case studies presented in chapter 6 of this thesis. Whilst these policy papers are intended for formal education and this thesis advocates the importance of extracurricular art workshops, it is interesting to note that the policy documents turn to the art world, through engagement with the *Arts*

*Council of Wales* and in citing arts practitioners in the papers. Both these papers advocate for a more person centred, comprehensive approach to teaching, learning and assessment, but one of the weaknesses is that creativity is never defined and is strongly implied that creativity comes from the arts. Engagement with the arts has been, and continues to be at the time of writing, strongly aligned to the curriculum, both within the school structure and in bringing arts practitioners into the school. Whilst this is an innovative approach in the UK, placing creativity centrally in the curriculum, it would be highly beneficial to define what creativity is and the role that the Arts play in delivery across the curriculum. The third policy *Creative Learning Through the Arts* (*Arts Council of Wales* and *Welsh Gov.*, no date) presents on this aspect of the curriculum development to provide a further focus to this research.

The third report develops the possibility of putting ‘...the arts at the core of our education system’ (ibid., p. 5). The report proposes a closer working with art practitioners, organisations and artists to work with teachers in schools (ibid., p. 7). The positive discussion of the inclusion of the arts, as a core to education, is interwoven by aspects such as using ‘...creative teaching and learning and arts activity to tackle lack of aspiration and low levels of engagement and achievement amongst disadvantaged learners’ (ibid., p. 6) but whilst this development is beneficial, I believe that all aspects of the curriculum should have the same aspirational potential for creativity as the arts.

Other developments presented in this report include the use of ‘arts champions’ (ibid., p. 18) and for the *Welsh Government* and the *Arts Council of Wales* to collaborate to provide ‘continuing professional development (CPD)’. This is intended to ‘address the needs both of teachers and of arts practitioners and support the national priorities of improving standards of literacy and numeracy and of narrowing the attainment gap’ (ibid., p. 19). This implies that arts practitioners, with teachers, need to develop skills in teaching and learning within the educational context to improve the literacy and numeracy standards of pupils in schools in using the arts to narrow ‘the attainment gap’ (ibid.). Arts practitioners therefore need to use the arts to fill gaps in educational delivery.

An aspect of the report that can seem confusing is seen in such statements as 'arts and creative learning' (ibid., p. 13) and 'creative teaching methodology is "core" to educational practice' while the report also aims 'to include creativity, alongside numeracy and literacy as a core theme across all the subject disciplines and in both primary and secondary education' (ibid., p. 19). Whilst these aspirations can be perceived as beneficial developments within an education system, the report does not offer a distinction between the arts and creativity, both appear to be interchangeable. This has an implication for delivery of the curriculum as the definition of creativity and of the arts are interchangeable and therefore confusing. In the Curriculum for Wales the arts are used to enrich educational delivery, whilst in many respects this is an exciting development it is also of concern that the capacity for the freedom of arts expression could be diminished. This report, therefore, becomes less relevant for this research where the examination of the freedom of engagement in the arts in extracurricular collaboration is fundamental.

It is also stated in the report that the arts and creative approaches are used to support the wider curriculum by placing 'the arts at the core of our education system' (ibid., p. 5.), though the report does not expand on what the education system is, it does state that '[b]y engaging the arts and creative approaches to raise standards in literacy and numeracy we will support schools in implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework' (ibid., p. 6). Like the previous policy papers, it would have been beneficial, in this report, to have made a distinction between the arts and creativity which would have benefited the report in the consequent curriculum delivery. In providing a distinction it could be argued, that using creativity and creative approaches, rather than the arts for creative delivery, could be more beneficial to the curriculum.

Traditionally education systems include science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) in this new curriculum, rather than using the arts to deliver creative approaches in teaching and learning, including the arts in the whole curriculum, to be supported by other creative approaches from science, technology, engineering, the ARTS and maths (STEAM) which '...gives teachers the tools to employ project-based learning that will encourage students and children to form collaborative

methods and understandings of the five fields of learning.’ (*What is STEAM Education?* no date). This is an interesting area to explore beyond the confines of this research but is certainly an area that would benefit the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales., 2023a) and the delivery of creativity in the classroom.

Excluding arts subjects in STEM provides a restricted knowledge base for learners to take with them to the workplace. Carwyn Jones, the First Minister for Wales stated in a guidance document for schools in March 2012:

Science, technology, mathematics and engineering are the bedrock for innovation in business and industry and the Welsh Government will continue to push forward links between these and education – helping young people get a real grasp of the real world of work. (*Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government*, 2012, p. 2).

The real world that James advocates, offers a narrow focus on subject areas, it is hard to conceive of young people being in this real world without the inclusion of an arts education, in addition to the sciences. This report also states that ‘It is also essential that learners understand how the science, technology and mathematics they study at school, can adequately prepare and equip them to take part in the many rich and varied career pathways in STEM’ (ibid., p. 8) but this does not consider diversity in thinking and individualistic differences. Including the arts in STEM ‘prepares students not only for technical positions, but also for careers in which creativity and interdisciplinarity are crucial. This method encourages flexibility [to] tackle the most complex global challenges.’ (Study Mind, nd.) Including the arts in education then becomes crucial and beneficial for learners to have a more holistic education to take with them to their future works place which will also develop a more rounded workforce.

To highlight the complexities of the curriculum, a review of *Evaluation of the Creative Learning through the Arts programme: report 4* (interim evaluation) (Griffiths & Powel, 2022) found that the ‘obstacle’ to analysing the *Lead Creative Schools Scheme and Creative Learning Through the Arts* (Arts Council for Wales, 2022) is ‘the inconsistency of delivery...’ each ‘...project is unique, involving

different artists, projects, and cohorts of learners; therefore, comparability is limited (Griffiths & Powel, 2022). This inconsistency makes examining the process of delivery and development within a curriculum difficult but also raises some interesting questions about creative learning and about learning through the arts in schools in Wales. These reports have led to the reform of educational processes and these curriculum changes are monitored for development in further documentation, reports and structures. These are available as updated versions on the *Welsh Governments* website (Gov.Wales, 2023). Additionally, information is available, about the curriculum for learners and those supporting learners. These reports have been signposted here as examples of the complexity of utilising creativity and the arts in a curriculum-based system.

In relation to this research a relevant aspect now part of The *Curriculum for Wales* is that one of the four main purposes for the learner is to be an 'ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world' (*Developing a vision for curriculum design*, 2022). Wales now a central purpose of the curriculum is an important development for education in Wales. Another aspect of the development of education is that that the Expressive Arts is one of the 'six Areas of Learning and Experience' (Gov.Wales, 2022) along with health and wellbeing, language, science and technology, humanities, and mathematics. This curriculum reform is an 'exciting new era for education in Wales' (Jeremy Miles cited in Gov.Wales, 2022). For this thesis, from a personal perspective, placing the arts and Wales at the core of a curriculum is additionally exciting.

Evident in the above policy documents is the significance of considering and placing the arts, creativity, and the Welsh language as central themes for inclusion in the curriculum. Whilst all the reports focus on the importance of the Welsh language it is Dai Smith (2013) that discusses the arts and the associated creative ways of learning in relation to the engagement within a schoolings system. This report also provides an approach that resonates clearly for this research.

The further reports concentrate more on teaching, learning, assessment, and curriculum delivery to include using the arts for attainment purposes. The

development of *The Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales., 2023a), from a personal viewpoint, contains some complex issues in relation to the distinction between the arts and creativity, nevertheless, this is an exciting development for education in Wales. Whilst examining the policy documentation has provided invaluable information for this research, the documentation became secondary sources, as at the time of writing, the arts and creativity were complexly combined with the lack of distinction between them providing confusion for me as an artist facilitator and for the delivery of the arts to young participants. At the time of undertaking the research, no evident definition for creativity and no distinction between creative learning and creativity across the curriculum has been provided. These aspects, therefore, require deeper scrutiny outside the time and limitations of this research. Nevertheless, the policy documents provide information in relation to Wales, the Welsh language, culture and creativity that are beneficial in providing preliminary information for this investigation.

## **Culture and Language**

Culture and language have been fundamental during my career as an artist and art workshop facilitator. Aspects of these have been discussed in chapter 2, practice-based research and in the reflective case studies, in chapter 6 and as a strand throughout this thesis. Placing culture and language in this research provides a unique emphasis for art workshop facilitation and participation. The interrelationship of culture and language form a fundamental correlation underpinning this research.

An exploration of culture, language and related theory has been undertaken, with an abridged version presented in this thesis. These aspects have not been explored from a cultural theory perspective but from my artist's view that provides the distinctive perspective of this research. The element of culture that is personally understood comes from being a Welsh speaking person who lives in Wales, in a culture that belongs to Wales, this sense of belonging merits wider theoretical engagement in this thesis. 'Culture' is said to be one of the two or three most complex words in the English language' (Eagleton, 2000, p. 1). Added to this complexity, within the bilingual context there are many words to explain culture. In

Welsh, culture can be translated as “*magwraeth*”, “*magu*” (of rearing), “*meithriniad*”, “*meithrin*” (upbringing), and “*diwylliant*” (of mind etc): (*Geiriadur yr Academi*, no date). “*Diwylliant*” would certainly be the most used translation of culture into Welsh. But using the word culture or “*diwylliant*” within language can be interpreted in different contexts (Lewis, 2015, p. 263) within the purpose of the conversation or use.

When looking at one’s own culture it is also beneficial to explore wider information as culture is complex and culture is ‘dynamic’ (*TEDx Providence*, 2017, 1.17). Raymond Two Hawks Watson who is ‘an Artist, Community Activist, Educator, Cultural Practitioner’ (Watson, no date) states, that if he asked for a definition of culture, he would get many different responses. He goes on to define the notion of culture by quoting Geert Hofstede, from 1997, that culture is ‘whatever you may have that’s acquired by groups of people over generations’ (*TEDx Providence*, 2017, 1.19-1.52) but from his specific background, states that culture shapes our thoughts, behaviours, and imagination. It provides energy, empowerment, inspiration, knowledge, and diversity. Political and economic rights depend on social and cultural contexts. (Ibid. 5:37- 6:05) this occurs through daily activities, the way that people live and interact. In relation to Wales, Welsh culture or “*diwylliant Cymreig*” belongs to, and has been shared over generations, to the people of Wales. Also to note that through history, the way the people of Wales have viewed themselves has been different to how they have been viewed by others:

In relation to the country as far back as 383CE the people ‘... called their land ‘Cymru’, and themselves first ‘Brythoniaid’ and then ‘Cymry’ ‘(comrades)’ although the invaders mostly Saxon origin- referred to them dismissively as ‘Welsh’ (a foreign, Romanised people)’ (Thomas, 2021, p. 7).

Culture is complex and can be viewed differently by those from within and outside that culture.

Looking in on a culture does not enable an understanding of that culture. For a non-Welsh person, it is necessary to place 'culture' in its context to make its apartness and definitiveness visible and understandable; “*felly i berson di-Gymraeg, rhaid yw*

*gosod 'diwylliant' yn ei gyd-destun er mwyn gwneud ei arwahanrwydd a'i benodoldeb yn weladwy ac yn ddealladwy.*" (Lewis, 2015, p. 265). In Wales culture or "*diwylliant*" means the specific Welsh way of living "*ffordd benodol Gymreig o fyw*" (Lewis, 2015, p. 256) and in a broader sense culture is connected to 'every aspect of social and individual life: our attitudes, our outlook, our ethics, our sense of morality; the everyday choices we make as people and as communities.' (Smith, 2020). Simply translating the word culture to "*diwylliant*" is not enough, culture is cultivated by someone else "*canys diwyllio rhywun arall a wna culture*" (Lewis, 2015, p. 268). Furthermore 'culture, or more appropriately, cultures, are nebulous, elusive, and always in process: they cannot be straightforwardly defined or pinned down' (Smith, 2020). Therefore, to understand culture or "*diwylliant*" it needs to be explored and understood within the context of the place that it belongs, in this case Wales "*Cymru*".

The culture of Wales is not always connected to the Welsh language. For example, Michael Sheen, actor and activist (*Michael Sheen*, 2019), is not a Welsh speaker, but is an advocate for Wales and being Welsh. Prior to presenting the annual Raymond Williams lecture in 2017, Sheen returned his OBE (Order of the British Empire) he realised that he could not give a lecture, say what he wanted to say about the history of Wales and keep his OBE. The realisation of exploring the past of Wales "*Cymru*" for the lecture meant that he began to understand his 'difference' and the importance of that difference not only to himself, but to the suppressed nation that he was born into. Furthermore, Sheen states that he had to leave Wales to appreciate that he was different, that he sounded different, and it took him many years to appreciate this. (*Learning and Work Institute Wales*, 2017). Sometimes leaving enables the understanding and an appreciation of the difference of cultural, language and upbringing.

Similarly to Sheen, Meredydd Evans (known as Merêd), who was a Professor of Philosophy, writer, performer and an advocate for the Welsh language and culture states that:

After leaving my home community and going outside ... that's when you begin to look back and you begin to realise that there are pressures that threaten your very existence, and I saw myself that you have to struggle consciously for your identity not because you are better than anybody else or because your culture is any more great- that's not it. It just happens to be yours and you make sense of your life in terms of that culture and it is that basic. -Meredydd Evans 2008 (*Smithsonian Folklife*, 2013, 1.08-2.02).

Unlike Sheen and Evans, when I left Wales “*Cymru*”, I already understood my cultural upbringing and my belonging, but what I did discover was that I needed my language and culture to be who I am. I appreciated my difference during my upbringing and adolescence, like Raymond Williams ‘...once I got away, and thought about it, it didn't really fit properly.’ (Williams, 1998, p. 97). When I returned to Wales, I began to embark on providing an education that included an understanding of the Welsh language, culture and more specifically their importance to art practice.

I have spent my career being a cultural arts ambassador, an ‘artist’ and to some extent an activist, this has been an important, underlying aspect of this research and the work that I have undertaken is that culture ‘impacts every aspect of our livelihood’ (*TEDx Providence*, 2017, 6.03-6.04), ‘[c]ultural activity is complex, plural, and even contradictory; this is part of its significance and value.’ (Smith, 2020). In the arts workshop, as discussed in the selected reflective case studies presented in chapter 6, exploring the past to appreciate and inform the art activities in the present has been fundamental and significant.

I was brought up in a bilingual family in a bilingual community in Wales and the cultural variations of living in a modern town were exciting, ‘Every person carries within him- or herself patterns of thinking, feeling,’ (Hofstede, et al., 2010, p. 4). My culture was as important to me as a child as it is today. My connection to the past through my upbringing made me rooted to place, ‘to grow up in that family was to see the shaping of minds...the emergence of different language and ideas...’ (Williams, 1998, p. 94) and to grow within cultural variations and activism was formative. The fight for my cultural heritage, for my language was prevalent in my daily life, even during my primary education when my mother, alongside the parents of another 16 children, established a Welsh primary school where I moved to from

nursery education at the age of 3, to pursue a Welsh education until the age of 11. It is within such complexities and individuality that Raymond Williams declares that 'Culture is Ordinary in every society and in every mind' it is common within groups of people but also individual within the mind of a person (Williams, 1998, p. 93). My culture and language were formative, even though both Welsh and English were the language of my childhood home, that for me is 'ordinary,' (ibid., 1998, p. 91) nevertheless I always spoke Welsh.

When I lived away from Wales, I realised the importance of the Welsh language and my cultural upbringing. I had always known this, but the possibility of the early career success as an artist away from that culture and the Welsh language, was not appealing. Welsh is something that I use every day of my life, 'the boundaries of my language mean the boundaries of my world' (Hopwood Hay Festival, 2020, 11.58-12.02) which provides a conduit to life and culture "*diwyllian*". Within Wales this is not always ordinary, not everyone has the same involvement with my culture and language, however, there are connections, there are meetings (*Cymraeg*, 2020), and in these connections, language provides meaning:

This is how you 'make sense of the world of people, objects and events, and how you are able to express a complex thought about those things to other people, or communicate about them through language in ways which other people are able to understand. (Hall, 1997, pp. 16-17).

It is through language that 'sharing' happens that belonging occurs and that the story is shared: 'Language is context, sharing a language is sharing a memory' (Hopwood *Hay Festival*, 2020, 22.11-22.16). Additionally, sharing a language with a community of speakers is synonymous with sharing significant aspects of the same culture and, furthermore, the same identity – "*bod rhannu iaith â chymuned o siaradwyr gyfystyr â rhannu agweddau arwyddocaol o'r un diwylliant ac, ymhellach, yr un hunaniaeth*". (Hopwood, 2017, p. 75). The Welsh language is an indigenous language of the British Isles, it is a minority language in a minority culture, both loaded terminology in relation to language and culture. I never really think of my language and culture in this way, they are for me 'ordinary' (Williams, 1998, p. 93) and significant.

Both the English and Welsh languages have been used throughout my research, with Welsh included in this thesis to ‘celebrate the richness of the variety of culture’ (*Smithsonian Folklife*, 2013, 2.39-2.44). Meredydd Evans in an interview in 2008 discussed how language is an inseparable part of cultural identity. He stated that the biggest threat to the Welsh language is the English language and ‘why not, we live right next to the most powerful language in the world’ (ibid., 0.49-0.53). Welsh speakers seem to constantly live with that threat, where ‘[t]he political power of one language tends to deaden everything else...’ (ibid., 0.59-1.00) an overpowering dominant linguistic and cultural force that is ever present ‘I think the idea that speaking one language will solve problems is baloney. People quarrel in one language, ...[and] are as kind and as generous in many languages as we are in one’ (ibid., 2.07-2.36). Language then is powerful; it is political, and it is cultural. Nevertheless, using two languages adds richness and complexity to this research, again Hopwood offers:

that having two languages is not simply a case of having two sets of labels for the same set of things, which is perhaps what a monolingual mindset has tended to persuade us to believe. After all I can use ‘seat’ and ‘chair’, two labels for the same thing in the same language. Having two languages is more like having... two windows on the world where each window offers a different perspective... (Hopwood *Hay Festival*, 2020, 12:42- 13:21).

The use of both languages in this research, as in my everyday life, contributes to the divergent knowledge that enriches this research placing it firmly in Wales.

Language, like culture, is a difficult term to explain:

... we all talk with it, but only a few talk about it and even here in Wales where many of us talk quite a lot about it, we don't seem to stop to ask, so what is it? (Hopwood *Hay Festival*, 2020, 4.22-4.51).

Hopwood explores the notion of *What's Wales in Welsh?* she states that language is many things, including ‘communication’. Additionally, language ‘...transacts, it conveys, it suggests...it imagines, it thinks. Because there is a relationship... [b]etween language and thought.’ (ibid., 10.53-11.07). Being bilingual and using two

languages simultaneously means that thinking can occur in both languages. And yet bilingualism is a futile effort unless biculturalism is its companion, “*Ymdrech ofer yw dwyieithrwydd oni bai bod dauddiwylliannedd yn gywely iddo.*” (Lewis, 2015, p. 265). ‘Yr iaith Gymraeg the Welsh language has always been at the heart of Welsh identity it is part of what makes us stand out ... we are a bilingual nation. Welsh is very much part of how we live’ (*Cymraeg*, 2020). Both Welsh and English are used by Welsh speakers:

In Wales, there are two official languages : one has been rooted in the country for about fifteen centuries, but is now spoken by about 20 percent of the population, and the other which has been part of the country's official life for about five hundred years and has grown over a relatively short period of about one hundred and fifty years to become the main language of 80 percent of the population.

*“Yng Nghymru, fel sy’n hysbys i’r darllenydd, ceir dwy iaith gyfath o ran statws swyddogol: y naill wedi ei gwreiddio yn y wlad ers rhyw bymtheg canrif a mwy, ond a siaredir bellach gan gwrta 20 cant o’r boblogaeth, a’r llall sydd wedi bod yn rhan o fywyd swyddogol y wlad ers rhyw bum can mlynedd ac sydd wedi tyfu dros gyfnod cymharol fyr o ryw gant a hanner o flynyddoedd i ddod yn brif iaith 80 y cant o’r boblogaeth.”* (Hopwood, 2017, p. 74).

Furthermore, when considering these different elements of two languages, in the art workshop situation there is the added use of the more universally used visual language that relates to imagination and creativity in the *Creative Art Journey*.

Similarly to language and culture, the word for the country Wales in Welsh, “*Cymru*”, does not directly translate from the English, the meaning of the word Wales ‘is traced back to the sense of foreign or other, this is clearly a label given to us by somebody else, you don’t call yourself foreign if you’re at home’ (Hopwood *Hay Festival*, 2020, 25.48-25.55). Furthermore, the word “*Cymru*” has two components ‘com and brogos ...com meaning together and brogos broadly meaning a piece of land.’ Therefore, the word “*Cymru*” refers to a ‘patch’ of land that is shared together by the Welsh people “*Y Cymry*”. The notion of sharing provides a distinct cultural value to how people see themselves; this becomes embedded from history. ‘Being Welsh is not a question of who was here first but what was here first and who is

sharing it here now, sharing the story....' It is also 'the together land, ... it's inclusive and embracing' (ibid., 26.08-26.38). 'Culture is Ordinary: this is where we must start' (Williams, 1998, p. 94), everyone is a part of an ordinary and familiar culture which may differ from others associated with them or may be the same. These aspects of belonging, of being together, of sharing, are something innately important to my practice as a facilitator; coming together to co-create is intensely vital for the shared memory of the past. Language, culture, the history of Wales and storytelling have been central elements in my past collaborative art workshops and consequentially to this research. Two contemporary National educational and political developments that define Wales as a modern and confident culture are the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales, 2023a) and the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2023). These are fundamentally beneficial in providing integrity for the Welsh cultural and language context presented in this thesis.

*The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* is unique in the world. 'In 2015, Nikhil Seth (Former Head of Sustainable Development at the United Nations) said; 'We hope that what Wales is doing today the world will do tomorrow. Action, more than words, is the hope for our current and future generations.' (*The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales*, no date). The goals in the act concentrate on Wales as a starting point for everything and everywhere else, prosperity, resilience, society, health, global responsibility, communities and of importance for this research is the focus on language and culture:

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language- A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation. (*Essentials Guide*, 2021).

In the same way, The *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales, 2023a) encourages Wales to be viewed within the global context, to 'reflect the diversity of perspectives, values and identities that shape their locality and Wales and develop understanding of the wider world' (*Welsh Government*, 2020). The importance of embedding

culture and language into educational policy in Wales, within contemporary Welsh society, are inspiring developments for the future of a small nation.

The *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales, 2023a) is presented in both Welsh and English, however, the only Welsh word to be used in the English version is “*Cynefin*” which is another of those words that is special to the Welsh language and is presented in the curriculum, in both languages with a description provided by Mererid Hopwood (Griffiths, H. 2022):

The curriculum does, however, place great emphasis on the local area, or what it calls *Cynefin*. According to the new curriculum, *Cynefin* is defined as: “the place where we feel we belong, where the people and landscape around us are familiar, and the sights and sounds are reassuringly recognisable. Though often translated as ‘habitat,’ *cynefin* is not just a place in a physical or geographical sense: it is the historic, cultural, and social place which has shaped and continues to shape the community which inhabits it. (Jones, I.M., 2020)

*“Ystyr cynefin “Dyma’r man y teimlwn ein bod yn perthyn iddo, lle mae’r bobl a’r dirwedd o’n cwmpas yn gyfarwydd, a lle mae’r golygfeydd a’r seiniau yn gysurus o hawdd eu hadnabod. Nid dim ond man yn yr ystyr ffisegol neu ddaearyddol ydyw, serch hynny: dyma’r lleoliad hanesyddol, diwylliannol a chymdeithasol sydd wedi ffurfio ac sy’n parhau i ffurfio’r gymuned sy’n trigo yno” (Golwg, 2023, p. 26).*

“*Cynefin*” is also connected to “*diwylliant*” (culture) in that it too is related to history, community and to Wales. The inclusion of only one Welsh word in the English version of the curriculum is difficult to comprehend, when part of the fundamental structure of the curriculum is the language and culture of Wales.

In conclusion, this exploration of the complexity of language and culture has been presented through a selection of various academic ideas. The distinctive inclusion of culture and language in this research provides a specific focus on Welsh culture “*diwylliant Cymreig*”. The exploration here has been intentionally focussed on “*Cymru*” Wales and “*Cymraeg*” Welsh language as these are the elements that are significant to this research. Equally as complex to define, is creativity in learning in the *Creative Art Journey* of the art workshop, which differs from the previously

discussed philosophical and theoretical way that the child learns, in formal, informal, non-formal and experiential education principles.

## **Creativity in Learning**

In relation to creativity in learning the examination of the work of Ken Robinson who proposed a less rigid, more creative approach to learning and *Bob and Roberta Smith* who advocates that 'All schools should be Art schools'

(*Bobandrobertasmith.co.uk*, 2018), both provide a suitable academic framework for this research. In addition, Anna Harding presented artist perspectives to collaborative workshops in *Magic Moments* (Harding, 2005) and Lucy Neal in *Playing for Time* (Neal, 2015) presents multiple creative viewpoints to making change through the arts, in relation to transition or sustainability and Tim Ingold in *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* explores '[t]hinking through making' (Ingold, 2013, p. 6) and the importance of the practitioners interacting with materials which is relevant to the art workshop process of this research.

Additionally, in *Anthropology as/and Education* Ingold (2018) argues for alternative, creative approaches to mainstream agendas. Whilst these are contemporary contributions it is also possible to consider different approaches to learning through history. John Dewey in *Democracy and Education* (1916) rejected a 'cultural apartheid where the arts were removed from educating but science and technology were not' and Herbert Read in *Education Through Art* (1943) values a societal remodelling with 'an education system with art at its centre, collapsing the disciplinary divides' (Allen, 2011, p. 15). This demonstrates that the arts and creative methods in education have been considered a valuable method of learning.

For the nineteenth century art critic, social reformer and educator John Ruskin, '[t]he desire to learn through doing was the motive', in a lecture at the Saint Martin's School of Art in 1857 he claimed that drawing 'enabled [students] to say and to see what they could not otherwise say or see,' and enabled 'them to learn certain lessons which they could not otherwise learn' (Atwood, 2008). Through drawing the learner:

obtained a power of the eye and a power of the mind wholly different from that known to any other discipline” ... Ray Haslam points out that “the education of sight was for Ruskin a far more complex thing than simply the training of sense perception— ‘intellectual lens and moral retina. (ibid., 2008).

The dual process of looking and drawing was the central teaching objective and for Ruskin, the process of drawing did not exist merely as an activity but also as a way of seeing. ‘Within an educational context’ looking and drawing ‘could become a powerful tool for learning in general, ... Thus, Ruskin connects the act of seeing clearly to education,’ and states that some children will benefit from education and thrive whilst others will be unhappy and underachieve (Atwood, 2008). Ruskin also states that education ‘... does not mean teaching ... to know what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave’ (Hicks, 1974, p. 67). In one of his letters ‘94 of Fors’ Ruskin states that the role of the educator ‘... is painful, continual, and difficult work; to be done by kindness and by watching, by warning, by precept, and by praise, — but above all — by example’ (Atwood, 2008). This aspect of teaching where in addition to delivering information, guiding and collaboration is undertaken to alter and develop behaviour, additionally this is a dual participation of the teacher and learner to develop and grow through looking and doing.

In school education, argues Andy Penaluna<sup>2</sup>, we gradually educate the creativity out of children as we measure pupils against standards where standards ‘means the same’ (*TEDxSwansea*, 2016, 1.45-1.46). ‘The joy of working with creative people’ is that ideas are ‘unexpected’ (ibid., 8.45-8.56). This is difficult to measure and is therefore problematic for education. We could ask our pupils to have lots of ideas and to explain why and what they could do in the future with these ideas, like asking ‘an entrepreneur to pitch (an idea or a product) when they pitch the thing doesn’t

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<sup>2</sup> Andy Penaluna ‘is an expert at the United Nations in Geneva - where he supervised ‘for innovation’ curriculum development for 37 developing countries. He writes for the European Commission and helped to develop their ‘EntreComp’ framework. He also led the development of entrepreneurial teaching and learning modalities for 8 countries in South East Europe and writes for the OECD on developing entrepreneurial schools and colleges as well as developing HE level creativity. Funded by the World Bank, he led a team in what is believed to be the world’s first compulsory school curriculum for innovation and entrepreneurship (in Macedonia - FYROM).’ (HEA 2018)

exist' (ibid., 11.03-11.06). Furthermore, '[c]reative minds often challenge what they are told and seek out the problems that sit behind problems; they do not commence by taking problems at face value, they question the questioning.' (Penaluna et al, 2014 p. 363). The mould of formal education needs to be broken to finish with measurements and to reward the ability to create things in unusual ways. In Wales there is a courageous attempt to break this mould to embed creativity in education.

Creativity and creative learning have been central to the development of The *Curriculum for Wales* since the Dai Smith report in 2013 to becoming operational in September 2022 and '[f]rom September 2026, all learners aged 3-16 will be following the *Curriculum for Wales*' (Education Wales, 2024). Connecting arts practitioners and creative processes to education has been developed through numerous art and creative projects: 'joint Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales plan to ensure real improvement in the way that arts and education sectors work together to deliver important benefits for learners and their schools' (Hwb, 2015). One process that remained key until 2024 was the *Lead Creative Schools Scheme* which provided 'the opportunity to explore creative approaches to teaching and learning with the support of Creative Agents and Creative Practitioners' (Arts Council for Wales, 2022) working closely with schools the Arts Council for Wales and the arts community.

The development of connections between creativity and education, with the 'intention ... to make arts in education more widespread in the mainstream educational system to develop creativity' (Smith, 2013, p. 17) is seen as a means to develop a fulfilling education for the child. One of the main characteristics of creativity is being able to see things in new ways "*Un o nodweddion pennaf creadigrwydd yw medru gweld pethau mewn ffyrdd Newydd*" (Hopwood, 2017, p. 83) and creativity is needed by all those who break new ground, be they scientists or humanists, inventors or administrators "*mae ei angen ar bawb sy'n torri tir newydd, boed yn wyddonwyr neu'n ddyniaethwyr, yn ddyfeiswyr neu'n weinyddwyr*" (ibid., p. 84). Whilst creative thinking and learning are useful attributes to include in education, as can be seen above, these are elements that are not inclusive to the

arts but are equally provided by other subject areas such as sciences and equally should be used to benefit the whole curriculum.

In *An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales*, (Smith, 2013) Ken Robinson's definition of creativity is presented, stating that creativity is often associated with the arts but also that 'everyone has creative capacities; creativity is possible in whatever you do, and it can require great discipline and many different skills' (Ken Robinson, 2013, cited in Smith, 2013, p. 12). However, in *Successful Futures Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* the words 'creative', 'creativity' and 'creatively' are used many times, both in association with the arts' 'creative expression', 'creative processes' and in relation to ways of working 'creative thinking', 'creative contributors', 'creative development', to 'release the creativity and energy of teachers'. Additionally, it is stated that 'creativity relies heavily on access to high-quality authentic information from a range of subject disciplines that act as a catalyst for innovation.' (Donaldson, 2015, pp. 28- 66). But Donaldson never offers a definition for creativity, which I believe can lead to confusion and therefore to the possibility of creativity and the arts having a plethora of meanings.

Donaldson's creativity belongs in 'discourses that drive many elements of the STEAM (STEM plus Arts) agenda where the arts are often conceived as valuable in humanising, expanding and improving engagement in the sciences' (Trowsdale, et.al, 2024) where the arts, as creativity, support the STEM curriculum rather than being included, the arts continue to be an addition. Trowsdale, et.al, 2024 state that 'The Curriculum for Wales may be a space for such work, advocating cross-curricula designs, embracing learning areas which combine subjects and address real-world issues' (ibid.) the design of the curriculum and evidently the perception by others is that creativity and the arts will support cross curricular delivery rather than the arts being stand-alone subject also supported by creativity.

Robinson states that 'there are various myths about creativity. One is that only special people are creative; another is that creativity is just about the arts.' He also defines creativity as 'the process of having original ideas that have value.'

Furthermore, 'it includes three key terms to note: process, originality and value.' (Robinson and Robinson, 2022 p. 5). He powerfully states that creativity does not belong to the arts but that 'creative capacities' belong in all areas of work and life, that is to everyone. Creativity in a schooling system also bring challenges as '[e]ducation systems fear embracing creativity as it threatens the long established relationship between teacher and student and the way classrooms function'. (Ranjan & Gabora, 2013. p. 11), this fear leads teachers to remain within familiar teaching and learning systems.

The association of the arts and arts practitioners within schools, through such schemes as the *Lead Creative Schools (Arts Council for Wales, 2020)* could be counterintuitive, since they could be in 'danger of being swamped with bureaucratic regulation' (Harding, 2005, p. 6). The assessment of creativity is difficult to measure and when the arts are delivered and managed, through authoritative processes, in establishments such as schools there is a further risk that:

creative freedom is buried within preordained targets and output-based evaluation, while in schools, emphasis on testing and accountability have had the unfortunate effect of stamping out activity which cannot be easily and quantitatively measured and accessed. (ibid., 2005, p. 6).

Ken Robinson called for a more creative approach to learning in schools, stating that '[m]y contention is that creativity now is as important in education as literacy, and we should treat it with the same status', (Robinson, 2006, 3:17- 3:30), furthermore, 'we shouldn't talk about specific subjects being creative, subjects like science can be just as creative as art but only if our students have the freedom to create their own learning and ... to be inventive' (Coles, 2014, p. 136). Creativity then involves creative approaches to ways of working, thinking and problem solving in all subject areas including the arts. 'Question: should creativity be assessed? Answer: No.' (ibid., p. 152), yet this is what a curriculum led approach demands.

Smith (2013, p. 12), through referring to Ken Robinson, in his report, demonstrates an understanding of the value of creativity in learning. Robinson also states that 'the real driver of creativity is an appetite for discovery and a passion for the work itself'

(Robinson, 2015). Phil Okwedy, a storyteller, who had been involved in the early development of the *Lead Creative School Scheme* as a primary school teacher, later took the opportunity to stop teaching to focus on the creative aspect of storytelling. Okwedy stated that in 2023 the *Lead Creative School Scheme* is 'like little islands...grafted on [to education] ... and not embedded' in the curriculum, though an advocate of the scheme, he critically implies that the scheme is only as good as the teacher or the school that engages with the creative practitioner involved in delivering the creative activity (Douglas, 2023b, 39.24-43.10). This critical approach is a significant development of arts practitioners questioning their role and creative engagement in the curriculum.

There is a potential negative impact of artists working in schools and delivering arts projects whilst being fully involved in education delivery. These artists may not be qualified teachers, they may not be familiar with curriculum content, and as stated by Okwedy, the engagement is hard to monitor (Douglas, 2023b). Additionally, the artist engagement in the education process could be detrimental to creative expression suppressing creative practice and individualistic development:

Artists employed to work in these situations often feel frustrated at their inability to make an impact under such constraints and soon get fed up with being used as a slave like sticking plaster in short-term politically driven interventions rather than being allowed to engage in more profound ways or on their own terms. (Harding, 2005, p. 7).

On the other hand, some artists could be empowered, or 'oblivious' (Harding, 2005, p. 7) or fit into the educationally driven delivery of arts processes, within the curriculum model in schools which can then negate the freedom of creative processes. These are elements that have, in this research, contributed to the process of considering my art workshop engagement both within schools and community settings where less rigid constraints enable creativity in arts practice to thrive.

Creativity should have freedom to flourish outside the confinements of the narrow walls of the schools as well as within, it makes a difference that creative workshops

take place outside of school within community settings. According to Lewis (2015, p. 99) education cannot be compressed between the narrow walls of the school, neither can it be compressed to a specific age: the most important foundation for education, he states, is the “*cymdogaeth*”, this Welsh word conveys something a single English word cannot and broadly means the society, community, or neighbourhood in which the person lives. From the artist’s perspective when undertaking a creative project within an educational setting there is a constraint in delivery, a strict structure, and an overly cluttered space. The walls are covered with information and pupil work, which can be distracting, there is often a hierarchical environment that governs the learning of pupils. Whereas, outside of school, there can be a freedom in the outcome of the process undertaken with the participants. This is reviewed, below, in the publications by Anna Harding, Lucy Neal and Tim Ingold.

Creative activities and workshops are explored in *Magic Moments* (Harding, 2005) and *Playing for Time* (Neal, 2015). Both Harding and Neal present artist-led activities, offered in diverse ways and in different settings - this includes school settings. Both volumes are deliberated around the artist voice, to include other practitioners and academics. These are presented as narratives of their experiences: ‘when artists and young people come together on a project something really special can happen’ (Harding, 2005, Back cover). Harding presents artists and projects from the 1960s till 2005 whereas Neal focusses more on contemporary projects including sixty-four arts practitioners. Both Harding and Neal contribute to the writing throughout, as well as to bringing the volumes together.

In *Magic Moments*, Anna Harding, who is an art practitioner, curator, and teacher (Harding, no date) is particularly interested in the artists perspective of projects presented from different ‘arenas’, schools, engagement with ‘young people moving beyond school’ in ‘museums and galleries settings’ (Harding, 2005, pp. 4-5). In addition, and applicable to this research are the questions that Harding had in mind in the development of the book:

What were the motivations behind it? What was unique or special about the context in which the project took place? ... What were the key dynamics pertinent to its success or failure...? What can we identify of value? (ibid., p. 5).

Central to these questions were artists and young people. These types of questions accompanied by questioning the collaborative Welsh art workshop, involving artist with young participants, in Wales, have been important provocations for this research. Harding presents the artist's perspective with a focus on various kinds of art engagement:

...to make visible some of the many artists who have achieved profound levels of engagement with young people in projects which often made a difference to the lives of both young people and artists... (ibid., p. 7).

Harding also presents young peoples' perspectives throughout but states that 'these are unfortunately often poorly documented or overlooked, which makes this work suffer from an over-reliance on a narrow range of adult perspectives.' (ibid., p. 4). Likewise, in this research which is autoethnographic and reflective, the practical and theoretical exploration is presented from my personal perspective. There is evidently scope for wider research to be undertaken from the young participants' perspective which would be a valuable addition to knowledge.

Whilst Anna Harding mostly focusses on English and wider international based projects, Lucy Neal (2015) has a distinct perspective where many of the advisers, contributors and activists use the arts to bring about change, include Wales and on occasions the Welsh language in their activities. 'Lucy Neal is an artist producer, writer, broadcaster, celebrant and community activist.' (maryneal.org, no date) who, in *Playing for Time* explores 'the pivotal role that artists play in rethinking the future' (Neal, 2015, Back cover). Central to her volume is collaboration and considering the future through narrative and storytelling with the arts and 'transition' as central aspect in the written contributions presented in this volume. 'Transition' in this sense is about coming together to make a change for the future (*Transition Network*, 2003). Neal (2015, p. 8) states that 'transition fosters 'intrinsic' cultural values that transcend self-interest' where exploring change is undertaken through the arts. Neal

proposes a series of principles to include 'intention, ignition, facilitate, Hold Space, connect, collaborate and change' also the 'principles' of 'working with community' and 'working from commonality' (Neal, 2015, pp. 81-91). These 'principles' have also been central to the art workshops undertaken by me over time, in 'personal and collective creativity connecting to social, moral and ecological responsibility' (ibid., p. 9) and in developing ideas through arts activity. The arts have a powerful way to engage that can bring people together to consider the past, in their present art activities.

Another theme prevalent throughout *Playing for Time* (Neal, 2015) is this idea of narrative and storytelling. Neal proposes various kinds of narrative pertinent to the aims of this volume but of relevance to this research are 'communal narrative... the shared narrative of collaboration and co-creation' where the 'arts and culture are at their best- building bridges, empathy and understanding.' The other form of narrative is the 'personal narrative' which brings a biographical element that is 'central to who we are and how we act.' For Neal, the readers 'bring stories to the narrative of change of your own which help it flourish...' (Neal, 2015, p12). Like Neal, in the art projects presented in the case studies in chapter 6, the individual narrative and the personal stories are intertwined with history, culture and language to foster change. This change then develops future narratives that did not exist before the project took place.

*Playing for Time making art as if the world mattered* (Neal, 2015) is an incredibly important idea. In this book, which '...has been co-authored by 64 artists, creators and agents of change' (ibid., p. 10), Neal has collaborated with and facilitated a place for artists to express and to write about their projects. Co-creation with other arts facilitators and participants has been central to the workshops undertaken by me over time as has making art as if Wales 'mattered' as if the Welsh language 'mattered' (ibid.). In collaboration much more can be achieved with others that can be achieved alone (ibid., p. 90), the conversation is wider, ideas can be discussed, ideas can be pondered, the journey can be altered but most importantly creativity can grow and develop. Discussion, collaboration, and narrative, in collaboration, are powerful.

Tim Ingold's '*thinks through making*' (Ingold 2013, p. 6 original emphasis) is explored and questioned through the main practices as listed in the title *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (Ingold, 2013) he claims that to know and to understand comes from 'self- discovery' and that 'by watching, listening and feeling ... that we learn' (ibid., p. 1). Ingold in '*the art of inquiry*' (ibid., p. 6 original emphasis) considers 'making ... *as growth*. This is to place the maker from the outset as a participant in amongst the world of active material' (ibid., p. 21 original emphasis). The book further explores the human interactions with materials to form change in the materials (ibid., p. 99) and that this is a continuous process in the workshop. *Additionally, in Anthropology as/and Education* (Ingold, 2018) Ingold argues against a 'strong sense of education', that fills the capacity [of culture]' (ibid., p. 80) that is beyond the school system 'an education that delivers an established curriculum towards pre-determined outcomes can hardly be said to be open-ended' (ibid., p. 59) the comparison is made to anthropology where it is not the aim to reach a solution but rather to 'reveal paths along which it [social-life] can keep going'. (ibid., p. 58). These ideas align to the findings of this research where outside the confines of the curriculum system in which standards and assessment can restrict creativity, the extracurricular art workshop enables and excitement of being creative and a freedom of expression through making art. Furthermore, the developments of creativity in the *Curriculum for Wales* provides an outstanding potential for development and undoubtedly will warrant much research of development and progress.

Creative learning is explored in these publications in diverse ways, to include in curriculum led schools, as extracurricular activities in schools and community settings. Both Harding and Neal present a wide range of arts activities from different arts practitioner's perspectives, propose diverse ways to explore learning. Tim Ingold explores making, critiques formal schooling system, without discounting it, as a means for education and offers an open-ended possibility for learning. Creative learning is powerful for fostering change, yet when the arts and creative activities are undertaken outside of school the facilitator, in co-creative processes with participants, has more creative freedom with no threat from the authoritative,

quantitative assessment of curriculum led processes that are tied to outcomes that dominate a schooling system.

### **Facilitating the *Creative Art Journey***

The literature already discussed provides invaluable information in terms of methods of teaching and learning, education and creative learning. Whilst there is adequate literature on the previously defined formal, informal, non-formal and experiential learning, these do not provide an accurate definition for the processes undertaken in art workshops, relevant to this research. Literature pertinent to the art workshop is limited in relation to Wales and is further restricted in the Welsh language. In this thesis, examination is undertaken through an autoethnographic reflection of the collaborative engagement between artist as facilitator with participants in a specific selection of past art workshops. The intention is not to speak for others, the participants and other facilitators, but it is to include them in the heuristic approach in examining the *Creative Art Journey* undertaken in practice.

As this research uses both English and Welsh, it is beneficial for this thesis to provide definitions of terminology especially due to the unregulated and scarcity of literature on collaborative art workshops outside of formal settings. The importance of the inclusion of the two languages, is that past workshops, and those selected as reflective case studies, were undertaken using the Welsh language, whereas the language for authoring this thesis is English. In addition to the glossary in appendix B and C, some focussed overview of terms related to the art workshop will be presented here, in addition to what has previously been discussed in this chapter. The focus on this section will be the participant, facilitator, collaboration, ambiguity, the art workshop, the *Creative Art Journey*, creativity, imagination, art and space. None of these aspects will be discussed extensively but, nevertheless, will provide a focus for clarity for this research.

Firstly, definitions for the term participant which is widely used in relation to arts activity. *Tate* offers that '[p]articipatory art is a term that describes a form of art that directly engages the audience in the creative process so that they become

participants in the event' (*Tate*, no date. a) and in relation to art workshops, this would be a group of individuals who take part in an art activity with a facilitator. Additionally, it is important that a young person, as participant, 'can contribute' to make their voice heard and can 'share their thoughts and ideas' it is also important for the participant to work 'with and from an inquiry mindset.' (Brown, 2023). In this sense, the facilitator is also a participant, committed to sharing and developing creativity in others. The facilitator 'needs to create a culture where anything is possible', where young participants have the freedom to express and develop ideas and work, '[w]e think we understand the rules when we become adults but what we really experience is a narrowing of the imagination' (Coles, 2014, p. 39), the adult as participant can also learn in the art workshop engagement.

An artist facilitator is usually trained or experienced in art but 'generally do not think of themselves as teachers and largely have little knowledge of education theory... they are co-learners rather than experts' (Harding, 2005, pp. 7-8), in education. They work with participants in 'guiding the process, ... and activating ... learning' (Brown, 2021) using an art engagement to do so. The facilitator provides a 'neutrality' and 'helps a group explore an issue, come to agreement, or make informed choices' (Robson and Woods, 2015, p. 3) and facilitates a wealth of opportunities, in the art workshop, as opposed to teaching and learning where 'students are still being taught in predefined, controllable, and testable ways' (Craft et al., 2014, p. 18-19 in Nørgård & Paaskesen, 2016, p. 6) in the school classroom. There is an unpredictability in facilitating the art workshop where '...much will need improvising and intuiting with a willingness to respond to what's needed, often without prior specialised knowledge' (Neal, 2015, p. 85). This enables the art process to develop without 'restrictions' (Coles, 2014, p. 41) for ideas to grow using creativity and imagination for making and interacting. An art workshop, with young participants, provides a valuable, collaborative *Creative Art Journey* where the facilitator is a 'translator or go-between' (Neal, 2015, p. 85) who supports and guides the participants to develop their contributions without preconceived ideas. Facilitation 'is what I do, this is my practice, to design and facilitate creative participatory process that let our imagination lead, journeys that invite people to experience'. (Neal, 2015, p. 448), in the collaborative *Creative Art Journey*.

In collaborative art practice, the experienced artist facilitator can enable a valuable workshop experience where ‘the outcome of the activity should be that learning has occurred...’ (Jarvis, 2010, p. 145). Additionally, this engagement can develop ‘meaning’ and ‘knowledge’, in ‘creative environments where participants find themselves engaged in discourse between equals, together on a journey of investigation’ (Harding, 2005, p8). In the art workshop ‘one of our strongest assets is to build on the work of others...’ (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, p. 8), and for collaboration to be effective there needs to be ‘mutual trust, mutual benefit, mutual respect’ (Harding, 2005, p. 8). Collaboration with participants, also means that individuality is nurtured, Faisal Abdu’ Allah states ‘I’m not here as a teacher, I’m here to enable them to access [their] imagination’. ... I tell them that I do not have a monopoly on knowledge, or creativity.’ (Allah, 2005, p. 36), the participants can contribute as much, if not more, than the facilitator in an unpredictable collaborative process.

The uncertainty of the *Creative Art Journey* is about ‘tolerating ambiguity’ (*TEDx Talks*, 2014, 10:52-10:53). It is the not knowing or the unthinking and the acceptance for the process to go wrong (Coles, 2014, p. 140) or to fail that makes the art workshop a vibrant experience. Frances McGarry, PhD, a retired schoolteacher, recalls that ‘perhaps, the most valuable skill was to have the freedom to fail: to understand that risk makes us learn how to be all that we can be’ (*OECD Insights Blog*, 2013). Tolerating ambiguity and failing, within the art workshop, is an exciting, challenging, and chaotic process: ‘we want chaos not control’ but it is in this way that learning takes place (Coles, 2014, pp. 147-150). The art workshop can develop the skills of working together to value ambiguity this can be achieved by combining processes, to merge ideas, collaborate creatively, to think critically requiring ‘the ability to imagine, to try out, and to fail as well as to fabulate and reflect creatively together with others...’ (Nørgård, R. T. & Paaskesen, R. B. 2016, p. 22). Art and creative practice can contribute to this, but art cannot do this alone:

co-participation in a shared social environment. It is in the correspondence with others in answering to them, not in the receipt of what is handed down - the each of us comes into our own as a person with a singular and recognisable voice. (Ingold, 2018, pp. 5-6).

In the collaborative art workshop, the facilitator and participant are on an uncertain *Creative Art Journey* together to engage with and respect all contributions to the project. The freedom to fail is a vital skill to develop in the *Creative Art Journey*, this happens through a process of having a loose plan or no plan and a certainty in not knowing where the journey will lead.

Similarly, it can be difficult to find appropriate academic definitions of another commonly used art term, workshop. This could be defined as 'a meeting in which people learn about a subject by discussing it or doing activities relating to it.' (Workshop, no date). Or a space or an event where a group of participants get together to do an art activity, undertaking a collaborative, co-creative, 'communal narrative' (Neal, 2015, p. 12) or an individual outcome. The art workshop involves different elements, the first being the physical aspects of the materials and equipment used, the second, the context and content. The artist Faisal Abdu' Allah undertakes workshops with different ages in community settings, he states, the participants 'all brought ingredients to the project,' there is a need to be 'simplifying the rationale so that the younger kids can plug in, but the outcomes of the young children are just as accomplished if not more so that the older people' (Allah, 2005, p. 37). In terms of this research, an art workshop is undertaken with an artist that facilitates the art processes, working with participants to produce art. The art workshop often does not have formal educational aims and objectives and no requirement to be academically assessed, nor answerable to some higher organisation through inspection and is not confined to age. The art process is as vital, if not more vital than the outcome 'the task is not to produce a product, but rather to participate in a process, an exercise of responding to each other's work or engaging in analysis and meaning-making.' (Smith & MacGregor 1993, p. 3), with 'no rules' (Hegarty, 2014, pp. 3-9) in the creative and imaginative processes undertaken. The outcome in art workshops is often unexpected and unknown at the start of the workshop, and the *Creative Art Journey* is one of discovery where

creativity and imagination (Robinson and Robinson, 2022) create freedom for art expression,

The overarching approach of the art workshops is closely aligned and facilitated by me as a practising artist, where structures are fluid, processes are adaptive and responsive to the developing art practice within the art workshop. The collaborative *Creative Art Journey* provides a learning potential for creative freedom where participants 'transcend the limits of the individual world of 'I' and build a shared story that has meaning and can inspire the wider community with a sense of what can happen...' (Neal, 2015, p. 87). They gather, work through, and develop ideas to art approaches in creative processes. The journey will depend on many factors, for example, the initial aim, the skills of the facilitator, the skills and age of the participants, the confines of the space or location of the activity. During a *Creative Art Journey* 'there is an element of transformation: of materials, of ideas or of people' (Graham et al., 2015), where reflection and learning cause unexpected change to occur and it is up to all involved to trust in this change. I would call this creativity.

Creativity deserves a privileged space in this research. Much is written about creativity and literature provides different opinions, dictionaries different definitions but there is little doubt that creativity is complicated and therefore complex to define. Creativity is fundamental to this research as it has been the focus of the *Creative Art Journey* in past workshops undertaken by me. Definitions on creativity are offered here as condensed ideas. Firstly, Ken Robinson states that 'we all have different creative capabilities,' which 'is a function of intelligence and so creativity is possible in any activity which actively engages human intelligence' (*TEDx Talks*, 2015, 0:27- 1.04). Similarly, David Keeling an actor, drummer, magician, stand-up comedian, and a committed educationalist (Gilbert, 2006, p. vii) states that '...creativity is naturally present in all of us' (ibid., p. 13). Additionally, Sir John Hegarty, advertiser and creative director, states that 'there are many ways of defining creativity, but the one I like the best is 'the expression of self'. It is a definition that captures my belief that were all creative' (Hegarty, 2014, p. 11). Additionally, different metaphors can be used to describe creativity: 'expression,

production, revolution, life, and intelligence and reconstruction. All ... capture something of the nature of creativity and all refer to aspects of our doing, but ... are about being' (Jarvis, 2010, pp. 121-122). These examples demonstrate the complexity of creativity, in that everyone has the capacity to be creative, to use creativity associated with intellectual engagement which can be life changing for all the participants and the facilitator.

The difficulty in defining creativity at one point led Runco (2014) to suggest abandoning the term, he states 'a few years ago I suggested that everyone avoided the term creativity altogether. I proposed this as the term is used in so many ways and yet has a great deal of uncertainty'. He goes on to state that he is no longer of this opinion as ambiguity is existent in all sciences, one could add that all art uses creativity and imagination to explore and to 'solve problems' (Runco, 2014, pp. 389-395), and 'Dewey (2010) saw a connection of imagination with reflective thinking' (ibid., p. 392). Furthermore, it is possible for participants to 'be transformed into creative and confident individuals by their interactions with arts projects...' (Banaji, et al., 2010, p. 31). These are cultivated through the freedom of engagement in the arts, enabling discovery, passion, a freedom to take risks and to fail, but then to progress from this point by being active in the process. These in turn relate to developing valuable life skills.

In the classroom, the freedom to fail within any process, including the arts, is challenging for teachers who are 'worried about the control of these activities and the results of their pupils'. Teachers additionally are concerned about 'monitoring and controlling pupils' (Arrezola & Bozalongo, 2014, p. 258), failure and creativity are impossible to manage within such restrictions. Furthermore, in the constraints of an education system '[u]nder this traditionalist regime, creative participation in education ends up being subdued' (Nørgård & Paaskesen, 2016, p. 6) normally delivered in the classroom, which means that '[t]eachers tend to inhibit creativity by focusing on correct responses...[as]...[r]ight answers, after all, tend to be easier to evaluate than creative ones.' (Ranjan & Gabora, 2013, p. 2) as opposed to the freedom of the art workshop where there are never right answers only creative

ones. Creativity is also related to process and especially, in this research, in art process:

it is rare that the final product- be it a piece of art, a scientific discovery...-is conceived in its finished form, more often than not, ideas come half-baked and are chiselled and tweaked, scrapped and thrown away, then resurrected in new forms, before the best outcome is discovered' (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, p. 5).

The creative process involves allowing learning to develop along the *Creative Art Journey* and like any journey this could be a direct route without a change in direction or a route with many changes along the course of the art workshop journey.

Art is one way that creative processes can be used to explore and produce work. Making art can be enjoyable yet challenging:

Why do people make art? ... At the root of it, we make art to make sense of things, to give meaning to our existence. When we express ourselves through making art, we create something tangible to look at, hold, reflect on, feel, and try to understand in our minds and bodies. (Anderson, 2004, p. 31).

In *Key Concepts in Education* art is defined as the 'process whereby one accomplishes an end which one could not envisage to begin with', additionally, art can be defined 'as an answer to a question one has set oneself without being able to foresee what an answer would look like'. In the case of a work of art it also has 'expressive power' and 'imaginative force' (Inglis and Aers, 2008, p. 15). Additionally, 'the point of art and therefore the arts is to discover clarity, richness, and purity of expression. Such discoveries are individual and particular'. (ibid., p. 16). Making art provides a powerful way for self-expression and for self-discovery. For example, in a mural art project the only information available at the beginning could be the size and shape of the wall space to be filled, there may also of the theme for the work. 'The amazing thing about art as a subject is that the answers are not prescribed by the teacher, so the kid comes up with the answers and if a kid comes up with the answers they then believe in the answers' (ICA, 2014). The *Creative Art Journey* undertaken by the facilitator and participants would be to

address questions through the creative process: what shape is the mural going to be? What size is the mural going to be? Do we want to fill the wall? How are we going to address the theme? What colours are we going to use? It will initially be the task of the facilitator to ask these questions, to encourage further questioning and to guide this process with the participants. The artist facilitator evidently has capacity to undertake the task themselves, but that is not the point of the collaborative art workshop process where the outcome will, in all cases, be different when undertaken with participants.

For *Bob and Roberta Smith* art is a crucial element in democratic life. Much of their art takes the form of painted signs, 'campaigns are extended art works which include a variety of consciousness raising artefacts.' (*Bob and Roberta Smith*, 2011), using art to bring about change. Art also provides 'open-endedness. An inquiry that is open-ended seeks not to arrive at final solutions' (Ingold, 2019, p. 606) and in this open-endedness, as in the selection of the space for making, that creativity and imagination can thrive. As opposed to the 'rigid, controlling, measuring, and lifeless education' (Nørgård & Paaskesen, 2016, p. 6) of the classroom that cannot be open-ended as it needs to be controlled leading to outcomes.

The space for making art can be anywhere, inside or outside. Virginia Woolf, a British modernist author, critical essayist, publisher, and feminist, said her ideal space for making art 'should always be empty, to be decorated by the current users of the space.' It should be 'a place where all can work together'. She states that this is important as those making art 'would love to learn there, would gladly come there' and that artists 'would teach there, because they would learn' (Allen, 2011, p. 33). Like the space Woolf describes this would relate to the art workshop, ready to be filled by artistic ideas, processes and outcomes, an empty space is ideal for creative artistic development and for making art. The space is 'somewhere to be open to what comes up', somewhere to facilitate creative workshops, which often happen in community settings which may not always be suitable for art activity, for example a chapel vestry with highly polished floors, this type of space needs to be respected and are not always conducive to the art workshop. Within a space, the facilitator 'in

practice... is responsible for focussing the attitude and energies of the group... for making a safe forum' in which art can be made and creativity can be released (Neal, 2015, pp. 389-90). The space is cohabited by the facilitator and participants for the duration of the creative engagement, so 'there is a need to spend time creating an effective environment' and space (Coles, 2014, p. 32) in which creative activities can grow. The artist needs to provide a space for participants, of any age, to participate with freedom of expression through art, where the process is important. The ideal space is one where there are no restrictions, apart from safety, where one does not have to worry about the materials used and this is conducive to making art with creative freedom in a *Creative Art Journey*.

In the *Creative Art Journey*, it has always been an objective to start with something that is already known: 'you are most likely to be creative in an area you already know and care about' (Cleese, 2020, p. 72). It is also important at the beginning to 'concentrate on the individual to build on and strengthen their inherent qualities in order to provide a sturdy flat platform from which they can leap...' (Gilbert, 2006, p. 9) to initially engage in researching historical and cultural information before developing the project. The facilitator navigates these early activities to enable all participants to engage, to contribute and to instigate further collecting of information pertinent to the project.

In the graphic essay presented in *Magic Moments*, Sadler states that the perspective of the child, faced with a creative challenge, can be different to that of the adult. In the example given, a child and an adult look at a cardboard box and cardboard roll the child sees a 'spaceship with optional plasma generator' whereas the adult sees a 'cardboard box and a toilet roll, I wonder who left those there?' This notion is taken a step further stating that creativity can change the perspective of the participant and to be developed in the creative process (Sadler, 2005, p. 68). Sadler goes on to describe another project where the facilitator knew nothing of the area in which the project was undertaken, but the children participants knew the location well:

...and so, over the course of a few days the children taught me about the area in which they lived, from their unique perspective. Having learnt a little from them (and they perhaps from me) we then thought about how they might change their area. (ibid., p. 69).

What this demonstrates, from the artist's perspective, is a trust in the art process and ability to collaborate in an art activity with the participant and that learning is a two-way process within the art workshop. This is also about discovering what pre-existing information or skills that everyone brings to the workshop, (not 'to push into place something that wasn't there' but rather to 'draw out' the ability, the imagination, the creativity that already exists.) "*nad 'gwitho i'w le rhywbeth nad oedd yno' oedd eu gwaith ond 'arwain allan' y gallu, y dychymyg, y creadigrwydd sydd eisioes yn bod*" (Lewis, 2015, p. 98). This represents the radical engagement in University Education in Wales in the Early 20th Century. However, the inclusive and radical nonconformity of the delivery is relevant to the art workshop. The focus on drawing out the creativity and imagination that is already there, resonates with the notion of facilitation and of learning together as in "*dysgu*" (to teach and to learn) in the *Creative Art Journey*, 'we feel differently when we feel a sense of interconnectedness, we make different decisions, we feel responsible for the whole and we feel supported by the whole.' (Neal, 2015, p. 99). This *Creative Art Journey* is co-creative for a limited time, and finally ends, but the journey for the individual continues long after. This autoethnographic research attests to this, my past workshops remain in my memory with some selected as reflective case studies.

The artist can be motivated from the inexperience of beginners that may not be 'bound by conventions' and as they 'engage in original techniques and approaches... creating whatever they feel like' (Bamberger, 2011). This is the reciprocal aspect of the art workshop where the facilitator and participants are stimulated by each other providing renewed inspiration for the *Creative Art Journey*:

I like making art because it can do so many things. It can help you show things you don't know how to say. It can make you laugh! It can help you imagine a different world and it can remind you how beautiful the world already is. It can help you make new discoveries (*Bob and Roberta Smith, 2023*).

From starting with nothing in an art workshop the aspects described here by *Bob and Roberta Smith* are nearly always present, there are also sometimes tears. Creative work is possible in all the various modes of thought and action of which human beings are capable (Robinson, 1996, p. 32). Creative work and art are powerful.

In the creative process, 'conversation' (Jeffs & Smith, 1997, 2005, 2011) and 'dialogue' (Smith, 1997, 2002) are beneficial as when we converse with others we do not know where the interaction will lead, 'in conversation everything is so unpredictable' (Jeffs & Smith, 2005, p. 77) and ambiguous. We do not know at the beginning what the outcome of the conversation will be, the conversation can go well, or it can go badly. Creativity is much like this: 'there's a real lack of clarity during the process' (Cleese, 2020, p. 59), sometimes it works, but sometimes it does not '... if you haven't failed you haven't really tried' (Hegarty, 2014, p. 105). But in all cases learning has happened, 'creativity is about exploration and going where no one has gone before. Just like an explorer, you are hoping to head into uncharted territory' (ibid., p. 52). Being involved in the creative process means that a change has occurred.

The exciting thing about the *Creative Art Journey* is that not one person knows, nor should know what the process and outcome of the journey will be: 'everyone needs a starting point, and everyone requires the bravery to begin at this point in order to move forward' (Gilbert, 2006, p. 11). Everyone needs to be open to different ideas, challenging processes and techniques to encourage the development of creative thinking. Osi Rhys Osmond stated that at the start of making:

the work to me right now is a mystery, I'm trying to do something which is impossible, and I will never succeed, but I'll come to a point where I will abandon it and it will never be finished, it will always be, in a sense, I wouldn't use the word incomplete, but it'll go as far as I can take it and as far as it can take me... (*Maggie's*, 2015, 2:43- 3.10).

This epitomises the *Creative Art Journey* when ideas and decisions are made but it is important not to dull the process with knowing what the outcome will be. It should

surprise, entertain, inspire and should encourage to look at the world in a fresh way (Hegarty, 2014, p. 127). The individual visual experience is vital for ownership of the work and the *Creative Art Journey* should never be predictable.

This outline examines elements of facilitating the *Creative Art Journey* of the co-creative art workshop, to include definitions of terms relating to the participant, facilitator, the space, and the art workshop, vital to this research. The space that art making is undertaken is important and in the ideal world should always be empty and with no restrictions for material use. Creativity, though complex to define, is an essential inclusion in this research, as the freedom to make is key to the process of any art workshop. Additionally, creativity provides the opportunity for ambiguity, where the *Creative Art Journey* does not provide preconceived outcomes in its process. These are central themes of this research, which focusses on me an experienced artist and art facilitator and the process of delivering art workshops with participants and other arts practitioners in co-creative projects in Wales.

## **Place**

Though Wales is the general location of this research the specific location is Ceredigion in Mid Wales which can further be divided to Felin-Fach, Pontrhydfendigaid and Tregaron. These communities provide the sense of place and belonging to histories and contemporary life, at the time of working on the projects offered extensive information for the collaborative participation of the case studies explored in this research. Ceredigion has a population of '71,500 in 2021' with a fall in the percentage of Welsh speakers ... from 47.3% in 2011 to 45.3% in 2021', (*How life has changed in Ceredigion: Census 2021*, 2023) the number of Welsh speakers in the region is still significant and equates to '17.8% of the population' in 2021 (*Welsh language in Wales (Census 2021)*, 2022). Using the Welsh language in extracurricular art workshops can be useful in addressing this decline, by providing vital learning opportunities through art. Ceredigion is mostly a rural society with the large Cardigan Bay coastline along one length and the Cambrian Mountain range along the other. It has market towns and two university

towns of Lampeter and Aberystwyth. The History of Ceredigion and the history of Wales have been the subject of the case studies presented in chapter 6.

Placing this research in Wales and more specifically in Ceredigion, provides a regional and local examination of the impact the arts can have on a community level as well as on the individual. Reciprocally sharing information through “*dysgu*” and using the Welsh language and information about Wales or about specific locations can have a lasting positive impact. Learning occurs in the places in-between to include inter-relationships and a ‘crossover’ (McGivney, 1999, p. 1, cited in Colley et al., 2022, p. 33) of information. Exploring past educational processes in Wales, earlier in this chapter, provides evidence that a collaborative way of working within the reciprocal religious processes of learning together has filtered down to the contemporary methods of the art workshop. The radical educators of the 1700 and 1800 can be compared to the creative thinkers and facilitators of art and arts activities in Ceredigion. The place of these workshops and the communities in which they are sited, provide a wealth of information for the development of creative thinking and making. The workshops, selected as case studies, demonstrate the importance of these communities and their interaction for engaging with creativity and imagination evident in this research through the Psychogeography method discussed both in chapters 2 and 5, demonstrating the vitality of place in this research.

This chapter provides a framework of literature that has informed research. It outlines a context for teaching and learning processes as a catalyst for understanding educational principles to establish against which to consider the art workshop where a facilitator engages with participants. However, there is a limit to the literature available that focuses on the art workshop process and the creative capacities discussed in this chapter, with little evidence of literature available for this type of extracurricular engagement that focusses on Wales and the Welsh language which is currently a developing field of study with the development of the *Curriculum for Wales*. Exploring the history of education in Wales demonstrates the importance of literacy, the Welsh language and the confidence of a country in the engagement of “*dysgu*”. Schooling, in the examples provided, was delivered in the nonconformist

religious settings of the Sunday Schools or circulating Schools through using the Welsh Bible. This reciprocal learning using a specific source is something I believe is akin to the extracurricular art workshops, there is still a need to fight for the ability to use “*Cymraeg*” Welsh and to learn about the past of Wales. “*Dysgu*” is the ideal term to be used in this research for the reciprocal process undertaken in the art workshop.

The negative effect on the Welsh language is demonstrated in the example of the 1847 commissioned ‘*Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, this Treachery of the Blue Books*’” (*National Library of Wales*, no date). This has had a continuous negative impact on the Welsh language ever since. To instigate and cultivate a positive engagement of Welsh language arts activities, is crucial for language and arts empowerment, both for facilitators and participants.

Also explored in this chapter are aspects of teaching and learning processes. The areas covered include traditional teaching, learning and educational principles in the school classroom, contemporary educational policy and curriculum reform in Wales and the relationship between the *Welsh Government* and the *Arts Council of Wales*, educational philosophy with a focus on some key thinkers such as Freire, Ruskin, Raymond Williams and the contemporary education ideas of Ken Robinson, the non-conformist “*Addysg Anghydfurfiol*” (Lewis, 2015, p. 258) education tradition delivered through the Welsh language and non-traditional teaching approaches. Exploring education philosophies and diverse types of education, teaching and learning methods provides a way to consider what the differences and similarities are of the engagement of facilitator with participants in an art workshop. The impetus for this aspect is that the educational processes in schools need to be measured through assessment, whereas creative processes need to have freedom and space to develop within the individual. ‘Creativity is as important in education as literacy .... If you're not prepared to be wrong you won't come up with anything original’ (Robinson, 2006). These aspects provide information to develop a way of thinking about the art workshop, the *Creative Art Journey* and specifically the position of the facilitator in these processes. The contention, from exploring

literature, is that there is a difference, and this will be discussed in the following chapters

The chapter also highlights the lack of research available in relation to the co-creative art workshop experience, especially with a focus on Wales and the Welsh language. The research re-enforces the approaches and philosophies that artists have developed within their practices, in relation to facilitating art workshop, where problem solving, and risk can be taken in 'unexpected' (*TEDxSwansea*, 2016, 8.54) ways. Historically, collaboration and community led education was central to Welsh communities, as has been seen in this chapter, though this is not fully exclusively to Wales nor to the school system, for example Freire (Jarvis, 2004, p. 119) believed in social interaction, collaboration and learning throughout life, additionally, Lewis (2015, p. 98) presents the non-conformist, rebellious all-inclusive university education of the early 20th century. The exploration of literature forms the argument that the enriching power of being creative through art and the importance of extracurricular art activities, create a positive impact on the individual and therefore on society. This is supported by definitions of the key terminology used of this research, for clarity and focus, as meaning can alter depending on their use for example education, teaching, learning and culture. Additionally, to the use of terminology, is the use of two languages, that of Welsh and English where often direct translation of key terms cannot be undertaken.

The contention of this research is to argue for the benefit of extracurricular arts engagement, not to argue for or against education within the structured environment of the schools, 'It would be wrong however to go to the other extreme and, wish for a society without schools.' (Ingold, 2018, p. 6), education is presented to demonstrate ways of teaching, delivery and learning in relation to Wales to call attention to and to explore the ways that art is currently being used in schools to support curriculum led activity. Whilst these developments are beneficial, it is a concern for the long-term impact on art activities in comparison to the creative possibilities of extracurricular art engagement that is not regulated in the same way as delivery in schools. The delivery of the arts in schools is an essential part of the curriculum and using artists in the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales, 2023a) is a

significant and valuable development. However, what is difficult to measure now due to the infancy of this curriculum is whether art delivered in schools will have a beneficial or detrimental effect on imagination and creativity, it will, I believe certainly be beneficial for art learning.

Following this literature review, the focus of the next chapter is on methodology and the theoretical framework that underpins this research. The mixed method approach undertaken, includes autoethnography, practice-based research, psychogeography and reflective case studies. The focus of the research has been on the self, explored through autoethnography, enabling reflection, personal recollection, and narrative responses in research before developing in academic writing in this thesis. Additionally, a focus on myself as artist facilitator is also undertaken in practice, in the exploration of place and in the reflective case studies.

## **Chapter 2: Research Methodology: Placing myself in the research**

The mixed method approach and conceptual framework underpinning this research are presented in this chapter, they are broadly qualitative, interconnected and undertaken in parallel. The four methods include autoethnography, practice-based research, psychogeography and reflective case studies have been utilised to consider the facilitator in the co-creative engagement of the *Creative Art Journey* in the art workshop (workshop). As an artist facilitator, I have been doing workshops since the 1980s and have conducted this research to develop a deeper exploration, to gain an understanding and an appreciation of what was undertaken in these workshops. As an art practice-based researcher, the intention was not to discover ‘...new research tools’ but the intention has been to reveal what was already there through ‘*carving*’ (Leavy, 2015, p. 3, original emphasis) them, and exploring information using practice to give what was there a platform.

The methodological approaches have constantly been in a state of flux, moving fluidly through academic and practical inquiry to include narrative and reflection in undertaking research. My work as an artist and my work as a researcher, though the focus may be different, cannot be separated from each other. The intention has

been to capture the position of the work undertaken as an artist facilitator in extracurricular workshops that includes schools and community settings and to examine these from a Welsh perspective. This research is uniquely underpinned within a cultural context using both the Welsh and English languages in practice and theoretical information.

The methods include autoethnography which enables the research to be explored through a personal view and ways of thinking, working in ‘...a method of self-study in which the researcher is viewed as a viable data source’ (Leavy, 2015, p. 43). Secondly, practice-based research, through using visual arts, drawing and displaying work, enabled seeing ‘things in a different way’ (ibid., p. 302). Both autoethnography and practice-based research have been vital in placing myself at the centre of the research. Thirdly, psychogeography addresses the significance of the location of the research, through ‘the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical’ location, that has an impact on ‘the emotions and behavior of individuals... to their influence on human feelings, and more generally to any situation or conduct that seems to reflect the same spirit of discovery.’ (Debord, 1955) and positions the research in Wales. Finally, in exploring past workshops, presented in four reflective case studies, the facilitator has been researched in relation to the collaborative engagement with participants, utilising autoethnographic remembering ‘where reflection...is the “rich information”’ (Becker and Renger, 2017, p. 139). These four approaches are interwoven throughout the research, practice and writing. Presented below, in a contextual framework, are the four methods, followed by the application of the methods in a narrative autoethnography.

### **Autoethnography**

The first method is autoethnography which permits a focus on me as both researcher and researched. Autoethnography ‘...is not highly structured and relies upon the researcher to determine specific procedures’ (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 198) which has been undertaken through streaming information, without consideration to meticulousness, allowing memories to flow and be reconsidered to be developed with more rigour later. Autoethnography has been appropriate for this

research and for me as a researcher, in that the ambiguous and disorganised process can be likened to making art. As a Welsh visual artist, who has worked on individual and collaborative art projects, the main research themes have centred on narrative and practice; to explore a sense of place and belonging to a Welsh cultural heritage, centralising myself as facilitator and to reflectively consider the participant in art workshops.

As a Welsh speaker working and practising in Wales the 'autobiographical remembering and its interplay with culture' (Brockmeier, 2015, p. ii) and the language of my country is integral as 'a way of giving voice to personal experience to advance sociological understanding' in both an 'intimate and personal' (Wall, 2008, p. 39) approach. This method creates uncertainty, hesitation, doubt, and 'vulnerability' (Muncey, 2010, p. 140) both for the researcher and the research process. Furthermore, the autoethnographer, through 'storytelling' and the 'power of imagination and improvisation' explores a familiar history and culture (Poulos, 2021, p. 37) in a 'journey of self-and-cultural exploration' (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 207) to cultivate a confident certainty. Much of the early autoethnographic narrative and storytelling was undertaken in the Welsh language, which was later developed in English, using both languages was a valuable method for me in personal remembering.

In autoethnography I could examine different approaches and consider my collaborative involvement in past workshops in '...a highly personal process' (Chang, 2013, p. 107) which allowed exploring my personal, professional, and socio-cultural experiences. Whilst undertaking this method 'it is key to keep in mind that the base unit of analysis is you, the author, and the researcher' (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 198). Additionally, '[a]utoethnographers describe and analyze [sic.] personal experience in order to understand cultural experience' (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 197, Malhotra, 2013, p. 3), in this research of the facilitation of art workshops in Wales. Furthermore, '[t]he transforming process is difficult to delineate because there is no one-size-fits-all approach.' Autoethnography involves a personal exploration and '...the intimate ... nature of [this method] can, in fact, make it one of the most challenging qualitative approaches to attempt...' (ibid., p.

39). It is the very nature of this personal approach that makes this research distinctive.

Autoethnography ‘...begins with a personal story,’ (ibid., p. 39), that of me as artist facilitating workshops in Wales. Additionally, ‘data can be gathered in a variety of ways, recollecting, collecting artefacts...analysing self’ (Chang, 2013, p. 113) through exploring a personal archive, reflecting on past workshops, developing a personal art practice and in making new art. The method of autoethnography ‘is writing about (graphy) my story (auto) and making sense of a cultural (ethno)’ experience (James, 2015, p. 106) this writing ‘...can be a very difficult undertaking’ (Wall, 2008, p. 38) as it focusses on personal remembering. This research consolidates myself as an artist and art facilitator, my story, and the culture in which I live and work, these combine to provide an overview of my engagement in the *Creative Art Journey* with participants. Exploring the *Creative Art Journey* through ‘discovery and a process of learning’ (Muncey, 2010, p. 62) of the personal engagement in the workshops, have been remembered and later considered in both theory and practice.

In the analytical autoethnographic writing ‘I am not asking directly ‘how do I improve what I am doing?’ (James, 2015, p. 106), the focus is on what happened in various aspects of the engagement between a facilitator and participants and researching this to provide open-ended questions. In reflectively ‘mining of memories’ through ‘a pathway to a deeper understanding of the human condition’ to be able to investigate ‘individual and collective memory’ then forming an autoethnographic ‘representation’ (Poulos, 2021, p. 27) of what occurred in the past. Remembering is drawn ‘heavily upon personal memory data’ (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 200) and is evidently affected by time, ‘accurate representation of precisely how events unfolded in the past’ (Poulos, 2021, p. 27) is intended, however, the passage of time, since the workshop, can alter perception. Having ‘access to external data, such as photographs, ... and other documents or artifacts that are pertinent [to the] study. ... determine time frames and spark memories’ (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 199) and are beneficial in reflective thinking.

Memory and reflection have been one of the main approaches in this research but '[m]emory is not always a friend of autoethnography; it is sometimes the foe' (Chang, 2008, p. 72), as '[m]emories are a... reconstruction of past events in the present' equally 'memories can be distorted, biased and otherwise altered by changes in perspective and by other events' that occurred subsequently (Muncey, 2010, p. 103). Memory can also reveal 'partial truth and is sometimes unreliable and unpredictable. Memory selects, shapes, limits, and distorts the past.' But memory is also a valuable process as 'personal memory taps into the wealth of information on self.' (Chang, 2008, p. 72), this is the benefit of autoethnography in this research, they are my memories. Despite some limitations memory and reflection have been engaged with looking at myself in relation to social and cultural aspects as workshop facilitator in Wales, in Welsh and in the Welsh context, ("*Cymru*," "*Cymraeg*," "*Cymreig*"). Reflecting on the *Creative Art Journey* through, '... my examination of the narrative fabric of the autobiographical process draws on multiple kinds of case studies and other evidentiary materials' (Brockmeier, 2015, p. ii) where practice and reflection are interconnected through autoethnography.

Narrative is central to remembering and 'involves a variety of senses and mental capacities' (Brockmeier, 2015, p. ii) some narratives are 'more useful than others' (Deitering, 2017, p. 12) in providing insight into personal 'meaning, framed by ... culture' (Muncey, 2010, p. 43) this means that after remembering the narratives need to be filtered for relevance. The process of narrative remembering 'contain the personal story of the author as well as the larger cultural meaning...' (Creswell, 2013, p. 73), and has the facility to 'transcends mere narration of self to engage in cultural analysis and interpretation' (Chang, 2008, p. 43). In this research '[t]heory is connected to story, it can be generated from story, and it works together with story' (ibid., pp. 11-12) this includes myself and Wales therefore '[t]he presence of culture in the narrative is not an afterthought—it should be there from the start', (Deitering, 2017, p. 12) enabling narrative and story to transcend beyond the personal.

The process for undertaking autoethnography, in addition to narratives and undertaking reflective streams of curiousness, developed to retrospectively referring to the academic context to provide 'validity' (Muncey, 2010, p. 5) to the process. In

addition to looking at myself, which 'autoethnographers are uniquely qualified to...' do, to '...access personal data that may be off limit to other research-ers' (Chang, 2013, p. 108), this research also reflects on the workshop participants with some consideration of these 'others' perspectives' (Wall, 2008, p. 5) but only as a part of my story. This exploring of myself and remembering interactions with participants in workshops adds a 'messy' (Muncey, 2010, p. 49) dimension to the research, where I question and aim not to providing answers but to provide opinions and to focus those opinions on myself. The emphasis is on what I have been doing and to capture the distinct aspects of the position of me as facilitator engaging with participants, in a Welsh context.

Autoethnographic writing was undertaken to make connections 'with culture and what is called narrative identity' (Brockmeier, 2015, p. ii) to firmly place this research in Wales, also to engage with contemporary and historic matters in relation to place. Initially this process "over-include[d]" information, which allowed more space to developing 'in writing of the story...' (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p,200). As the initial streaming of recollections developed, it was important to remember 'that the base unit of analysis is [me], the author, and the researcher (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 198) and not the theoretical research that stemmed from it. In autoethnography there was a focus on reflection (Chang, 2013, p. 107) and 'memories', (Giorgio, 2013, p. 406) which involves multiple elements in this 'empowering and compelling method' (Wall, 2008, p. 59). The process of remembering also led to '...investigating [my] topic through the lens of [my] own life story...' and included recollections and '... significant inputs during ... formative years' and how these 'have informed [my] view of the topic' (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 200) this includes art from my childhood plus from more recent art practice, I believe that I cannot be a workshop facilitator without being an artist.

This introduction to autoethnography provides the theory behind the application of this method as will be discussed in the application of autoethnography in chapter 3. The validity of this method, to me as a researcher, empowers the connection to culture, language and to working with others. Looking at me deepens the perception of collaborative practice within the cultural context of Wales which has also been

explored through making art in practice-based research, the next method to be introduced. Thinking, using words and memory in practice have been a consistently focussed way of working which supports the development of writing and theoretical investigation.

### **Practice-based research**

Practice-based research has been undertaken in different studio locations, using diverse processes and methods throughout the research and will be discussed in the application of the method in greater detail in chapter 4. Practice has been used to reflectively investigate workshops through diagrammatic explorations of narrative, sense of place, self, the Welsh language “*Cymraeg*” and Welsh culture “*cymreictod*”. Practical processes have been recorded and documented over the length of the research, culminating in a body of new art. A focus on me as artist and workshop facilitator has been undertaken alongside an in-depth visual investigation of the workshops. The specific nature of the art process and methods used was initially determined through visual exploration using words and images, then considered at various stages until finally evolving to diagrammatic mark making.

Though this practice-based research can have ‘multiple meanings’ it can also be considered as ‘the actual application or use of an idea, belief or method, as opposed to theories relating to it’ (Candy & Edmonds, 2018, p. 64). During practice there has been an explicit engagement with making and thinking, rather than being led by theory, as ‘arts-based methods allow for non-textual techniques to make meaning and analyze [sic.] data that may not be readily available to the researcher by using other text-based method (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 203). Exploring theory came later or in conjunction with practice. Making art involved ‘doing something that extends beyond everyday thinking into actions that may lead to new outcomes’ (ibid., 2018, p. 64), in this case both to new art and theoretical writing.

The value of drawing and the diagram has enabled ‘thinking through making’ (see Ingold, 2013, p. xi) using the materials in the studio to think through drawing. As Osi Rhys Osmond, a Welsh artist, activist and educator states, ‘we draw to think and we

draw as thinking' which consists of 'thought, analysis, documentation, dissemination, investigation, and communication...' the freedom of the drawing process has been beneficial to thinking '...unencumbered by the limits of words' (Smith, 2013, p. 48). The studio processes and diagrams enabled the understanding of what occurred in past workshops, 'the diagram is not merely a simple model that traces similarities between things but is also a generative device that continues working once embodied...' (Zdebik, 2012, p. 5) these diagrams, once made, could be used as tools for analysis, then engaged with theory before developing into writing. This practice-based research aids '...analysis..., creating the space for greater depth. ...' in interpreting information and in remembering, making art provides a way of working things out, and in making sense of the memories (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 203), associated with autoethnography and conceptualisation within writing. Practice-based research allows 'new questions to be asked' or for questions to be 'posed in a different way' (Leavy, 2015, p. 20). Practice enabled deeper creative thinking which leads to analysing information, to question what happened within the workshops and to make connections to theory.

Drawings, in addition to their research function, have value as stand-alone, abstract and diagrammatic images, 'even if the concept of the diagram captures an indiscernible zone of abstraction, this abstraction still needs to be articulated through language' (Zdebik, 2012, p. 18), the diagrams are connected to words and vice versa. Drawing is 'the art of inquiry...' where '... [y]ou try things out and see what happens' (Ingold, 2013, pp. 6-7) or where '[e]very hand-drawn line, then, is the trace of a gesture (ibid., p. 126) drawing is 'anti-totalising, committed to carrying on. In drawing, completion is an asymptote that is never finally reached.' (ibid., p. 127). Drawing then is a means to think, to work through ideas as part of a continuum process in thinking and making where theory and the visual do not function as separate entities. The diagrams were produced by refining the ideas, to then develop them further through reflection and expression as narrative to represent '...the voice of the researcher as narrator of those narratives' (Kyratzis and Green, 1997, p. 17), developed from memories and concepts. This practice-based research utilised 'the value of experience and reflection' (Wall, 2008, p. 59) to aid in

consolidating thinking, to clarify the motivation and function of the past collaborative art workshops.

This practice-based research is based on a '[h]euristic context... when...the subject [who is] engaged in the reflective practice plays at the same time the role of subject who reflects and object who is reflected' (Mortar, 2015, p. 1) on. In the self-reflection of this research, in the studio, the processes involved 'alternating between planning, practical action, reflection, and evaluation' (Jokela & Huhmarniemi. 2019, p. 12) leading to self-discovery in theoretical research and to developing new art. Additionally, '... analysis, interpretation, and representation' (Leavy, 2020, p. 4) are holistic elements, of this inquiry, involving exploring ideas and memory in art practice '...draw[ing] out the meaning-making process and push[ign] it to the forefront (ibid., p. 19) connecting thinking, reading, writing, and making. Using 'the creative arts in order to address research questions in holistic ... ways in which theory and practice intertwined' (ibid., p. 4) was a valuable process. Additionally, these visual research 'practices draw on...visual art... and other mediums...' (ibid., p. 4) to assist in thinking, analysing and developing the research by adapting and evaluating the work conducted in the studio.

The consideration of theory through practice 'provides a means of...' exploring '... work in a personal sense as well as contributing to the wider picture.' (Candy & Edmonds, 2018, p. 63). This was undertaken in 'a configuration of lines ... drawn or written' (Zdebik, 2012, p. 1) mapping, writing, and in art practice as well as wider theoretical engagement. The 'reflective practitioner' (Schön, 2016, p. 296) in using imagination and creativity underpins and 'integrates theory and practice' (Wisker, 2008, p. 255) to understand the research position and to develop a deeper thinking. 'If imagination is the ability to bring to mind things that are not present to our senses, then creativity is the process of putting our imagination to work.' (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, pp. 4-5). Imagination enabled a trust in reflecting through practice-based research, the contemplation of thought processes, the continuous reviewing of making, investigating the self and to develop in theoretical research. Additionally, creativity and making new art, developed these aspects in a nonlinear approach intertwined in theoretical development.

Finding inspiration in ‘theoretical and practical steps’ that inform the art making process (Pink, 2013. p. 29) was vital for the development and the progress of the research. To be immersed in the practical element with ‘no distinction between ‘thinking’ and ‘making’. It’s one movement, it’s one dynamic, it’s one moment – even when this moment is a long one’ (Hirschhorn, 2022) helped to consider questions, to form solutions and work through elements that had not been previously considered. Practice also enabled the writing and theoretical research to develop with focus.

Engagement with making artefacts through ‘creative process’ has been ‘an original investigation undertaken in order to’ explore ‘new knowledge, partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice.’ Furthermore, ‘practice and research’ have been undertaken ‘together’ (Candy & Edmonds, 2018, p. 63). This practice-based methodological approach has not been undertaken in isolation, autoethnography, psychogeography, and case studies, have all been integrated. Practice ‘extends beyond everyday thinking,’ (ibid., p. 64) also extends beyond my personal art practice to lead to using new narratives, in reflection, to consequently refining ideas. In art practice, this ‘personal narrative’ (Neal, 2015, p. 12) engaged in looking at myself in relation to the language and culture of Wales to consolidate research through making and visual narratives.

Through narrative there is an opportunity to create and to develop ideas ‘[t]he key thing about stories is that they provide practitioners with the means to tell of what they know *without* specifying it.’ (Ingold, 2013, p. 110 original emphasis). The narrative does not always have to remain factual, ‘humans’ have the ability to use imagination, ‘it is because of our ability to imagine that ... we create the worlds in which we live’ (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, p. 3). Creativity and imagination can add to the narrative through ‘personal’ and ‘communal narratives’ (Neal, 2015, p. 12). The interesting aspect about storytelling through the arts is that it allows space for wider thinking and to combine different elements in the narrative process, From the starting point of information, whether historical or contemporary, working with art can create the space for openness to analyse and evolve the investigation.

Practice-based research, through making art, embraced narrative as a means for connecting theory to practice. This approach supported the investigation of theoretical concepts in a tangible visual way, thereby enriching and progressing the application of ideas in practical contexts. For me, as a visual thinker, making art is vital to be able to think and to formulate valid connections of theory to theory and theory to practice and in this process to devise the theoretical framework. In addition to exploring theoretical literature and reflective autoethnography, art evolved to visually examine the four case studies, me as workshop facilitator and to contemplate psychogeography in relation to the geographical location of this research.

## **Psychogeography**

Psychogeography metaphorically underpins the notion of place, the importance of Wales, the Welsh language and culture in this research. Psychogeography helps to question whether these have been fundamental, to the *Creative Art Journey*, in the workshops and enabled me as 'flâneur' (Coverley, 2010, p. 11) or 'Flâneuse' (Elkin, 2016, p. 3, D'Souza & McDonough, 2006, p. 3) to wander through the research in an 'act of [auto]biographical wandering' (Pearson, 2010, p. xiv), to explore a sense of place and memory as facilitator of art workshops.

The history of the word Psychogeography 'can be traced back to Paris in the 1950s' (Coverley, 2010, p. 10) especially to 1957 when 'the Lettrists merged with other even less significant groups and the Situationist International was born', the group was led by Debord and the 'playful but harmless activities of the Lettrists soon gave way to a more serious-minded attempt to challenge the bourgeois orthodoxies of the day' (Coverley, 2010, pp. 22-23). In exploring the earlier '*London and the Visionary Tradition*' (Coverley, 2010, pp. 31-56, original emphasis), psychogeography can be traced back to the work of Daniel Defoe in the 1600s and to William Blake 1700s (ibid. p. 16), these earlier traditions later influenced contemporary British psychogeography. 'As a label, psychogeography has been through a repeated cycle of acceptance, rejection and popularisation over the last

sixty or so years' (Overall, 2015, p. 2) and in contemporary practice or usage, has developed from the traditional, the 'term ... has become strangely familiar – strange because, despite the frequency of its usage, no one seems quite able to pin down exactly what it means or where it comes from' (Coverley, 2010, p. 9). It is however associated with walking or aimless wandering in urban places which 'is a vital part of Baudelaire's method' (Jenks and Neves, 2000 p. 7), in this research the aimless wandering as of the flâneur occurred through reflection and mapping these recollections as drawings.

The flâneur, later became synonymous with psychogeography and is 'first identified' in the works of Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin (Coverley, 2010, p. 19). For Baudelaire, the flâneur is 'an aesthete and dandy, wandered the streets and arcades of nineteenth-century Paris looking at and listening to the kaleidoscopic manifestations of the life of a modern city' and '[f]or Benjamin, ... is the primary tool for interpreting modern culture. He is the observer, the witness, the stroller of the commodity-obsessed marketplace' (Seal, 2013), furthermore:

What exactly a flâneur is has never been satisfactorily defined, but among all the versions of the flâneur as everything from a primeval slacker to a silent poet one thing remains constant: the image of an observant and solitary man strolling about Paris. (Solnit, 2001, p. 199).

The flâneur and psychogeography have been associated with the male '... the situationist approach to psychogeographical research retains a masculinist bias.' (Bridger, 2013, p. 286) in which the flâneur is a 'figure of masculine privilege and leisure, with time and money and no immediate responsibilities to claim his attention. (Elkin, 2016, p. 3). There are discussions and literature in relation to questioning the female role in traditional psychogeography (Elkin, 2016; D'Souza & McDonough, 2006) and for the purpose of this research this is noted here as having relevance, but not for wider discussion.

Psychogeography is on the furthest margins of the discipline of geography and has attracted little scholarly attention. (Bonnett, 2013). However, it is a method that is well used 'in a range of cultural contexts and has come to be associated with

creative, intimate and historically attuned explorations of hidden places and narratives of place.’ (Bonnett, 2013). Additionally, ‘...psychogeography is currently outgrowing ‘...its theoretical confines ... to branch off in new and unexpected directions.’ (Coverley, 2010, p. 114) which provides the scope for including this method in this research. Beyond scholarly work ‘[m]uch has been written about psychogeography in recent years, perhaps too much...’ from the underground ‘publications of the 1960s to Will Self’s ...column in the *Independent* [newspaper] from the dandified stroller of the Parisian arcades to Ian Sinclair’s trek around the M25’ (Coverley, 2010, p. 111) motorway. Furthermore, from the 1980s engagement with ‘...the importance of place within popular culture, art and literature.’ (Bonnett, 2013), which is relevant to the core research strands of the making art in workshops to consider culture and place.

Psychogeography ‘is driven by curiosity and a desire to experience place more fully’ (Overall, 2015, p. 3), through wandering, to explore and experience the relationship to places (ibid., p. 2). Some places can ‘affect us more profoundly than others and, for a multitude of reasons, we attach greater significance and develop deeper emotional connections to those places.’ (Jeffrey & Ricardo, 2022, p. 6) in this research the connection to Wales provides a strong emotional and academic application as ‘... place matters and our interaction with place is a fundamental element of our lives’ (Jeffrey & Ricardo, 2022, p. 5). Furthermore, ‘[p]laces may be locations in a very literal sense ... or in a more metaphorical sense .... places are not simply shared circumstances... In places, people ... do things together’. (Zussman, 2004, p. 355). Wales, the culture, language and people have been explored in literature and in the associated practice-based research, through making art and undertaking theoretical research.

This research provides a place for Wales where language culture and people are ‘viewed less as the product of a particular time and place than as the meeting point of several ideas and traditions with interwoven histories’ (Coverley, 2010, p. 11). The relationship to language, culture and the history of Wales forms a ‘passionate’ response so ‘that much of [my] identity is derived from [my] interaction with that place’ (Jeffrey & Ricardo, 2022, p. 7) to additionally consider others within my place.

On the other hand, the diverse ‘...nature of psychogeography means that its influence for a specific group or individual will be vastly different from that of another’ (Richardson, 2015, p. 3). The response that one person has cannot be the same as another, is connected to ‘emotions and behavior [sic]’ (Jeffrey & Ricardo, 2022, p. 8) this includes a broad ‘range of relationships between people ... places’ (Zussman, 2004, p. 355) and the ‘attachment to place is a result of the complex interplay between the historical means (economic foundation) and the ongoing meaning (cultural, emotional significance) of a place (Smith & Cartlidge, 2011, p. 541). Investigating place, people, their relationship to culture and history form a critical function to gain an understanding of the interplay of facilitator with participants in past art workshops.

In this research, different forms of artistic initiatives are associated with psychogeography to ‘include the sites – material, emotional, political and conceptual – of the artwork’s construction, exhibition and documentation, as well as those remembered, dreamed and imagined by the artist...’ (Rendell, 2010, p. 1). This also includes, as in the wider recent ethnographic developments, that of ‘...visual methods such as cognitive (mental) mapping, narrative mapping...’ (Jeffrey & Ricardo, 2022, p. 6). The methodological approaches of ‘[p]sychogeography has a role in the work of artists’ (Overall, 2015, p. 2) and specifically in my wanderings through my history and my culture to investigate the facilitator of the art workshops.

Psychogeography enables the inclusion of the alternative processes of the historic Welsh non-conformist education “*Addysg Anghydfurfiol*” (Lewis, 2015, pp. 101-102) of the 18<sup>th</sup> century circulating and Sunday schools. Additionally, it allows for engaging with an emotional (Debord, 1955) involvement of place (Wales), the Welsh language and culture:

How do different places make us feel and behave? The term psychogeography was invented by the Marxist theorist Guy Debord in 1955 to explore this. Inspired by the French nineteenth century poet and writer Charles Baudelaire’s concept of the *flâneur* – an urban wanderer – Debord suggested playful and inventive ways of navigating the ... environment. (Tate, no date. b).

This suggests a wanderer or an explorer of a physical place, but the emotional wanderer of place and language is a playful exploration within this research.

Wandering through reflection, considered the Welsh language and writing in English, has on occasions been difficult especially as the autoethnographic approach has been about me as a Welsh speaker. All the workshops included as reflective case studies have been undertaken in Welsh, adding another dimension to this research as a wanderer and observer through two languages:

psychogeography is, as the name suggests, the point at which psychology and geography collide, a means of exploring the behavioural impact of urban place. And yet this term is, according to Debord... one with a 'pleasing vagueness' (Coverley, 2010, p. 10).

This vagueness of psychogeography has been useful in locating this research 'by cutting across established routes...' to explore '...those marginal and forgotten areas often overlooked' (ibid., p. 12) by remembering the Welsh workshop undertaken in Wales. This academic vagueness provides the place for my journey through this psychogeography method.

The importance of place is presented with greater and specific meaning in the workshops selected to be examined in the four reflective case studies. Location has been key in some of the workshops and essential to the collecting of narratives and in making art. Whilst in others the location has been key for the situation of the workshop, for example the place that the workshop was undertaken provided specific local meaning for making.

### **Reflective Case Studies**

The final research method is reflective case studies which includes a selection of four past art workshops, this method offers a means to examine the *Creative Art Journey*. An overview of the case studies is presented here and more comprehensively in chapter 6. Reflecting on case studies became a systematic way of 'thinking about one's actions and responses...' to develop an impact on '...future

actions and responses' (Sherwood & Horton-Deutsch, 2012, p. 161) through research. In reflection the actions of both the facilitator and the participants could be remembered, considered and mapped both in written and in visual practice:

A case study is one-way evaluators share information; it is a powerful mechanism to evaluate unique programs, and it excels in offering rich details, gleaned from both qualitative, quantitative, and experimental or observational data. (Becker & Renger, 2017, p. 139).

The case studies enabled the exploration of a 'Practitioner Based Enquiry' – (the facilitator) and a 'developmental discourse' – (the participants) (Murray, 1992, p. 191), this involved reflective explorations to 'catch the complexity and interconnectedness' (Cohen et al., 2011, pp. 558-559) of the creative collaboration in the workshops presented as case studies in chapter 6.

The reflective case study method provides 'experiential knowledge... with narratives and situational descriptions of case activity ...' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 454), captured both in writing and in visual practices. Using case studies does not come without problems, they are open to interpretation where 'both researcher and reader bring ... conceptual structures to a case' (ibid., p. 455). This means that 'there is something to be described and interpreted' (ibid., p. 459). The case studies are 'reflective' (ibid., p. 450) and are drawn from 'experiential knowledge' (ibid., p. 454) they have been carefully selected and edited to be presented here in summary: 'the purpose of a case report is not to represent the world but to represent the case' (ibid., p. 460). These case studies provide a clear and focussed representation of aspects of art workshops undertaken in the past, where I was a facilitator with participants present.

Choosing case studies is undertaken 'to suit the case', the research or the researcher and is an important stage in the process of reflection. Case studies have 'a level of flexibility that is not readily offered by other qualitative approaches' (Hyett et al., 2014, p. 1). Exploring past workshops provide implications beyond the case itself (Zussman, 2004, p. 355), that can be 'an investigation and analysis of a single or collective case,' and are intended '... to capture the complexity of the object of

study (Stake, 1995 cited in Hyett et al., 2014, p. 2). In this research a 'multiple-case study' approach enabled exploring information from a 'set of cases' that 'serve to highlight recurring patterns' (Gagnon, 2009, p. 41) providing the opportunity to explore comparisons. In the exploration of art activities with participants, where self-reflection is central, it was noted in the initial stages of selection that there were many different types of engagements, therefore a multiple-case study approach was considered '... the most appropriate...' (ibid., p. 42) for this research and the art workshops were carefully selected for reflection.

Different styles of reflection were key, in the approaches taken, for exploring the case studies, reflection-in-action was the approach taken in remembering the case studies through practice, 'Donald Schön believed that reflection-in-action made the practitioner into a researcher who was then able to construct new theory from unique cases' (Candy, 2020, p. 234), and in practice new art was made to contemplate past workshops to enable remembering where '... the past is not finished but active in the present. To remember in practice is to re-enter as a correspondent in the process of one's own and other's development'. (Ingold, 2018, p. 28) undertaken in action long after the workshops occurred. Included in this method was self-reflection to consider the individual in collaborative experiences:

We reflect on action, thinking back on what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome. The reflection takes place after the event and draws on knowledge of previous events and their connection to an unexpected event; it includes working out what has to now be done to address this in the future. (Schön 1991, cited in Candy, 2020, p. 18).

Reflection on these workshops involved exploring past engagement (Candy, 2020, p. 18) in a process of developing self-awareness (Katz et al., 2022, p. 2), of learning from experiences, and enhancing personal and professional growth (ibid., p. 12). The researcher needs to be '... aware of how their own positions shape both the kind of information available to them and the ways in which they interpret that information.' (Zussman, 2004, p. 360-361). Self-reflection to consider both past and future where 'all imagining is remembering and remembering is imagining.' (Ingold, 2018, p. 29) of the collaboration with participants in art workshops.

In the process of selecting case studies, it is important to establish 'rules', 'to identify, ... clearly defined criteria,' (Gagnon, 2009, p. 43) and to 'find the most informative cases.' (ibid., p. 44), the selected cases provide a representation of past experiences providing a diverse sample. Additionally, one of 'the greatest challenge facing the researcher who ... use[s] the case method ... is dealing with the many sources of evidence' (ibid., p. 60) which comprise a range of information from 'personal experience' (Zussman, 2004, p. 351) to include '[p]hysical artefacts [which] can take various forms: ... works of art, etc. (Gagnon, 2009, p. 60) from personal archives. This information needs to be captured first and foremost, in a 'rhetorical process' (ibid., p. 80) using 'the 'investigator's creativity and imagination' (ibid., p. 85) who 'should review the evidence at a higher level of abstraction and interpret it to extract the meanings they have deduced from the characteristics and patterns identified ... (ibid., p. 85) and should use only the ones they consider relevant to their study (Yin 2003 cited in Gagnon, 2009, p. 60) from my professional view. The information needs to be explored to 'develop impressions' to then 'summarize them' (Gagnon, 2009, p. 87) before being documented, where '[t]he goal is to write a story' (ibid., p. 101) in '[a] lively descriptive style and vibrant language [which makes] the investigator's experience more vivid and real for readers. (ibid., p. 101). The aim is to present the investigator's deductions, in this case that of the artist facilitator.

The selected case studies are as follows. *Murlun y Bont*. (Beynon, 2000-2008), for 4–11-year-olds was a community and school based, artist led workshop that occurred over time. Secondly, *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach*, 1998-2014) for 11–13-year-olds, was an annual co-creative, multidisciplinary arts workshop, based within a community theatre and included multiple facilitators. Thirdly, *Eliffant Tregaron* (2011) for 3–11-year-olds was an artist led school workshop. These three workshops occurred prior to 2013 when the research began, in addition to these three workshops a fourth case study, *Paper Boats (Tosta*, 2016) for 10–11-year-olds, was included later in the research as a good example of a simple workshop involving simple methods and processes. It involved folding paper into boats and was a small part of a larger international festival. All four case studies form a

fundamental inclusion in this autoethnographic, practice-based research, have been briefly introduced here and will be presented in greater depth in chapter 6. The workshops were undertaken and facilitated with creative freedom and interaction, and it has been beneficial to capture my involvement as a facilitator in these workshops, memory in autoethnography, in art practice, in psychogeography of place and in reflection of case studies, all undertaken in Ceredigion, Mid Wales.

Case studies conclude the overview of the research methods. In Chapters 4, 5 and 6 the methodological approaches have been discussed in greater detail to present the development and application of the four methods; autoethnography, practice-based research, psychogeography and reflective case studies. These applications provide evidence of research and practice, from a personal viewpoint, in association to the relevant theoretical perspectives already presented in the Literature Review and Methodology above.

### **Chapter 3: Autoethnography application: How I think and do art, creativity and workshops**

The autoethnographic interpretive response focusses on my ideas as an artist and facilitator of art workshops, with the understanding that autoethnography involves closely looking at the self. The application of autoethnography includes self-reflection in writing and drawing to provide context and relevance for me as artist facilitator in the process of remembering art workshops. Included in this autoethnography is reflecting on phases in my artistic journey from a child exploring both positive and negative interaction with education, examples of my art that have influenced the development of practice-based research and finally the autoethnographic overview of the facilitator in collaborative art workshops.

Exploring my past educational involvement demonstrates formative experiences to offer a personal way of thinking for this research particularly in relation and as opposed to STEM based curricula as has been adopted in most of the UK (see report *UK Parliament*, 2023). Examples have been selected and scrutinized through autoethnographic thinking which provide concepts of both creative freedom in the

primary education system and an oppression of creativity and imagination in the secondary system. These reflections were not always easy to do, with a decisive consideration of avoiding nostalgia, especially when developing these recollections into academic writing.

To demonstrate the importance of making art, the correlation to personal art practice outside of this research to art in practice-based research is discussed in this chapter. The inclusion of art practice produced outside of this research, demonstrated by examples selected from an extensive portfolio, provide evidence of art engagement that influenced the creative process in practice-based research. This is especially evident at the start of the research where the images were direct developments of my art practice outside of the research, figures 3 and 5, provide evidence of this influence. As the research developed the practice-based aspect became indirectly associated to my art practice and developed to using mapping and diagrammatic processes (figures 7 and 8) for investigating the self. Neither art practice and research are ever far from each other in this research and predominantly became interwoven.

Autoethnography narrative is provided through the personal voice to focus on autobiographical remembering, central in the process is me as both an artist and art workshop facilitator. It involves writing about my story (“auto”) to interpret (“graphy”) the Welsh language and culture (“ethno”) (Adams, Ellis, & Jones, 2017, p. 1) in which I live, work and where the workshops took place. Autoethnography cannot be undertaken without reflection. Theoretical engagement discussed in earlier chapters and connection to wider information, provide context, meaning and clarity to the intended message leading to a deeper understanding of the intent and direction of the writing. Autoethnographies ‘are highly personalized accounts that draw upon the experience of the author/researcher for the purposes of extending ... understanding’ (Sparkes, 2000, p. 21) they ‘focus on ... personal experiences’ and are undertaken ‘primarily alone to complete the research process, including writing’ (Chang, 2013, p. 111). Additionally, in this research method ‘at least the author can say “I” with authority and can respond immediately to any questions that arise from the story’

(Muncey, 2005, p. 10). These autoethnographies challenge the self to present a reality in raw and daunting process, written in the first person.

One of the initial challenges was to undertake autoethnographic remembering during the COVID-19 pandemic, which started in 2020, this situation provided both challenges and research opportunities. A pandemic brings with it difficult emotions, where life is disrupted by having to contend with new skills for new ways of communicating, working, researching, as well as new ways of living in a very closed world. The challenges of not being able to undertake planned live workshops led to a change in the art workshop delivery methods and to successfully developing several online workshops that proved to be beneficial and have some impact since, examples of these online resources are in appendix H. This also meant that the planned research exploration of art workshops could not be undertaken, and this had to change to use the reflective case studies method instead. The opportunities brought about by the pandemic enabled greater development and focus on the research, as well as greater first-hand access to research information, for example, many of the experts that I had already explored were now closely available online, where they had not been previously and have not been subsequently. Also, new directions in practice could develop, as will be discussed in practice-based research in chapter 4.

A difficult aspect of autoethnography was the thinking and writing about myself using only the English language, however, once I considered this and decided to use both Welsh and English, the process of thinking, remembering, and autoethnographic writing became more fluid and authentic. Just letting the words come in 'an organic, intuitive approach to meaning-making...' (Chang, 2013, p. 116) and considering what I needed to write became easier. The use of both languages, for autoethnography, had potency for 'validity' (Muncey, 2010, p. 5), justification for the focus on me through narrative (Brockmeier, 2015, p. 63; Poulos, 2021, p. 5; Muncey, 2010, p. 43) and 'self-reflexivity' in considering how 'roles impact' on 'interactions' (Poulos, 2021, p. 4) with others. The focus has been on introspection rather than on 'improving' (Whitehead, 2009, p. 88) previous or future practice, although that is the ultimate aim (James, 2015, p. 106), undertaking research will

unavoidably impact future workshops. These autoethnographies have been developed at various stages, starting with a challenging, messy, and chaotic stream of consciousness, which was never intended to appear as a definitive version. The writing was 'on-going self-reflective and self-observational' (Chang, 2013, p. 108) leading to being edited and evaluated before further development and refinement as I became more confident in the reflexive, narrative, process.

Remembering for me is associated to 'hauntology' (Derrida, 1994, p. 10; Gallix, 2011), and this has an impact on autoethnography, my art practice, reflection in-action in practice-based research, and in reflection-on-action of the workshop case studies. These past 'hauntings' (Gallix, 2011) influence the present through narrative and theoretical perspectives 'where the future and past are no longer distinguishable' (Ingold, 2018, p. 29). Jacques Derrida (1994, p. 10) coined the term 'hauntology' in *Spectres of Marx*, the past 'affects and bereaves it in advance, like the ghost it will become, but this is precisely where haunting begins...' in its present '...To haunt... a hauntology' (Derrida, 1994, pp. 201-202). In remembering 'events that are spatially distant become available... instantaneously' (Fisher, 2014, p. 43), the past, the present and the future (Coverley, 2020, p. 17) merging. Additionally, '[g]hosts arrive from the past and appear in the present' (Buse and Scott, 1999, p. 11) but are also 'seriously "out of joint"' (Gallix, 2011). The disjointedness of memory and being haunted by the culture of Wales, with longing or "*hiraeth*" for that past, and longing or "*hiraeth*" for the future had been a continuum thread in practice influencing this research.

Autoethnography reflecting on myself within this story to provide an overview of my varying roles as artist and facilitator and forms a foundation from which to view the reflective case studies, of past art workshops, that will be discussed as individual entities in chapter 6. Applying autoethnography, in this research, begins with an overview of a personal engagement with autoethnographic processes to include how it was undertaken. It was a process that provided vitality in placing me, as researcher, at the core of engagement. Looking at the self was not always a straightforward process but autoethnographic writing is presented in a non-academic style developed from early streams of consciousnesses which has been

maintained to provide authenticity. The self runs as a thread through the research and forms the focus from which the *Creative Art Journey* of the art workshops can be clearly perceived. No aspect of this research can be viewed idiosyncratically, all are connected, and are united not only by the facilitator but also the culture of Wales and the Welsh language.

One of my early memories of painting is presented here to start the autoethnographic journey. The validity of this for this research is that it explores my memory of making art within an education context to being given time and space, or perceived time and space, to make individualistic interpretations using imagination and creativity. I remember painting with my back towards everyone and being engrossed in the freedom of expression. I also remember the joy of telling a story and the sheer pleasure of mixing paint to different consistencies, especially enjoying the thickness of paint. I was about 5 or 6 and for several reasons was obsessed with painting fire. My coat had caught fire on a paraffin heater in a sweet shop during the Whitsunday chapel parade, I was not hurt. On another occasion a girl, a bit older than me, had come down a slide at the local park into a fire that some boys had lit at the bottom, she survived but was severely burnt. A few buildings in the town had caught fire and we went to the playing field to watch them, at which time my mother must have told us about seeing the distant fires of the three-day blitz in Swansea during the second world war, I can still see these scenes in my imagination, though I no longer paint fire but, these drawings and paintings serve to demonstrate the importance of fostering creativity and imagination with freedom of expression in the child.

Studying art at secondary school brings back few pleasant memories for me. The process was oppressive, unimaginative, uninteresting, and unengaging, it was more about method and how to do things rather than using creativity and imagination. Learning was about gaining grades rather than making art, my understanding of this now as an adult is that 'it's quite possible to be authoritarian and dictatorial while doing the arts – and more often than not this will teach children that they should just obey orders or that the arts are about being bossy or snooty'. (Rosen, 2014). I did not achieve well in school as the style of teaching was not expressive enough and

did not suit me. It was not until I lived in Austria and later studied on a foundation course in art and design, that I rediscovered the joy of making art. Education methods do not suit everyone in the same way, some achieve whilst others do not.

My education until the age of 11 was in Welsh and then at secondary school my education was in Welsh and English. Since leaving school none of my education has been undertaken in the Welsh language.

When I was studying art in Cardiff Art School there were no Welsh speaking lecturers, and the exploration of Welsh art was not a possible academic engagement. For my dissertation I wanted to write about Welsh art and arranged a visit a museum in Cardiff, where I was provided with only one book. I was so shocked I did not even open the book and sat contemplating my situation and imagining my future.

I have been on a journey ever since to ensure that Welsh art is taught at university and that all students can consider the art of the country in which they are living and studying. In 2023 all the students that I engage with can write academic essays about Welsh art and can do so in Welsh if they so wish. This has been an enormous change in the past 20 years. Even though English is still the traditional, hierarchical language of arts at higher education in Wales. As a lecturer, an artist and in facilitating workshop, the Welsh language and history of Wales, have been key elements to my practice and engagement.

I am a Welsh speaker and always have been. I do not think that I spoke either Welsh or English first, which were the languages of my childhood home. Both my parents were Welsh and Welsh speakers but mostly spoke English to each other. My father had spent a lot of time living in London and I guess was more comfortable speaking English, though I never spoke English with him. I speak Welsh most of the time. When I have been away from Wales for lengthy periods of time, I miss my language and culture. I experience "*hiraeth*".

In my art practice the sense of place and storytelling through visual representation, including the language and culture of Wales, have been recurrent themes. It is significant to give an autoethnographic view of my art practice as being an artist impacts facilitating art workshops. It is important, that even though some of the themes and ideas of my practice and the workshops are similar, that the participants imagery is not like mine, that the participants develop their individual responses to ideas.

Working as an artist is similar of the process undertaken in workshops with participants, that of having an idea, working on and developing a response to that idea. Some relevant key elements of my art practice are narrative, storytelling, considering the past, using the Welsh Language and culture. It is therefore valid to give a brief overview of some of my art to illustrate these associations. The images included, represent aspects of my cultural engagement, sense of belonging and some current work that directly influenced early visual representations in practice-based research. The inclusion of these images places me in the research.

I often represent myself and the Welsh language and culture in my art. Below is one of these metaphorical self-portraits in the image *Ar y tu fas - On the outside* (Beynon, 2013) in figure 1 below. The historical custom of the *Mari Lwyd* involves a man cloaked in a white sheet, carrying an adorned horse's skull taken from house to house by a group of men who sing songs to gain admittance to homes to welcome in the new year. "*Mari*" means Mary and "*Lwyd*" means grey. It is a tradition that has survived in some areas and is being resurrected in others (*Trac Cymru*, no date; *Gov.Wales.*, 2023b). I have used the character of the "*Mari Lwyd*" as a narrator or storyteller, to draw the attention of the viewer to the story. The character for me forms a juxtaposition of male and female, providing an opportunity for the representation of the "*Mari Lwyd*" to be everyone - to represent all Welsh people within one character at the same time. Also in this self-portrait is Strata Florida Abbey (a 11<sup>th</sup> century Abbey ruin in Mid Wales). In the image "*Mari Lwyd*" is both on the inside and the outside of the abbey; in the past and in the present, belonging or not belonging. Myth, metaphor, and narrative are used for self-identity, memories and cultural engagement.



Figure 1. Beynon (2013) *Ar y tu fas - On the outside*.

Language, culture, tradition, autobiography, sense of place and belonging have featured as a continuous thread that forms an underlying, yet fluctuating, narrative in my practice. It is also now part of this research. In my more contemporary work the “*Mari Lwyd*,” as the narrator of the story has disappeared and has been replaced by representational objects of crockery and more recently with environmental concerns in relation to trees.

I started to consider the historical value of the objects that were in the family home after my mother died in 2015. She had a corner cupboard ‘*Y cwpwrt cornel*’ which was a difficult piece of furniture to consider and dismantle due to its belonging in my family home and its unknown historical significance to me. A corner cupboard, within a Welsh home, belongs in the front parlour, the grand version of the Welsh dresser that would live in the kitchen ‘*Y Gegin*.’ In my art I considered the cupboard in

relation to the 'Welsh dressers and their panoply of displayed objects [that] deserve to be recognized as a form of popular art central to any concept of Welsh visual culture and tradition' (Vincentelli, 1994, p. 240). Furthermore:

The Welsh dresser appears to operate not merely as a piece of furniture for domestic storage and display but as a focus for the establishment for social meanings associated with gender, domestic well-being and national identity (ibid., p. 229).

The Welsh dresser and its objects constitute a place where language, culture and the heritage of Wales can be hidden in plain sight, only for those in the know to know, 'because the dresser's history and development (from the 18th century onwards) have coincided with moments when there has been a need to affirm Welsh identity (ibid., p. 240). Fig 6 provides an example of a display on a Welsh dresser or in a corner cupboard. These pieces of furniture and all their objects have been passed down from generation to generation, as holders of history, caring and wanting for "*Cymraeg*" and "*cymreictod*" (Welsh language and culture) to survive, through all the difficulties of suppression that the Welsh "*Y Cymry*" have faced.

The corner cupboard and its objects led me to consider hauntology in relation to my art practice. I began to see those objects, the cups and saucers, plates and jugs, as holders of the cultural tradition of Wales and of Welsh culture and of the significance of the female lineage as caretakers of culture and language: 'The female role may be largely custodial, caring for it [the dresser] on behalf of future generations' (Vincentelli, 1994, p. 236). Furthermore, my mother's corner cupboard and her objects became hauntological keepers of activism. Things are identity 'because objects create subjects more than the other way round' furthermore, 'the closer our relationships with objects, the closer our relationships with people' (Miller 2009, p. 287). Through these objects, my mother's objects, I became close to the past generations and closer to my people. The crockery objects, as holders and representations of this narrative, can be seen below in figure 2. The *Gaudy Welsh pattern* of the teapot, milk jug and sugar bowl, so synonymous with Welsh cultural objects, in this image developed in the hand-coloured monoprint where the *Gaudy*

*Welsh Pattern*, has been removed from the objects and is placed as a backdrop for the crockery.

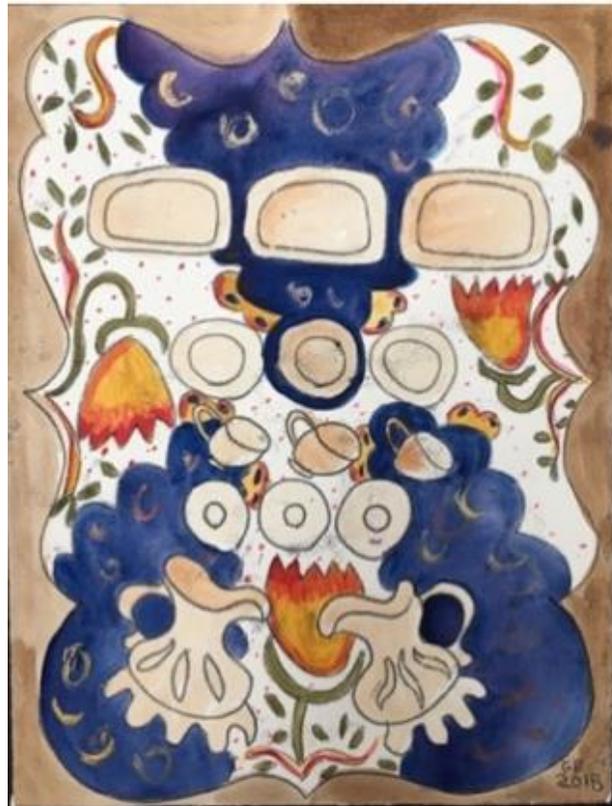


Figure 2. Beynon (2018) *Gaudy Welsh Ar Blat (on a plate)*.

The objects are now empty of their pattern, symbolising a loss of tradition and threat to culture, and represent through narrative and hauntology, a longing for ghosts, they are narrators of the story, of "*Hiraeth*" for the past, through my present and in imagining the future without this sense of belonging to the objects and therefore possibly to culture.

These crockery objects drawings and paintings influenced the practice-based research in 2017-2018 they enabled thinking about the art workshops, the *Creative Art Journey* and to begin the research journey. I started with what I knew. The cups and saucers were used to represent the facilitator and participants in the workshops, as seen in figure 3 below.

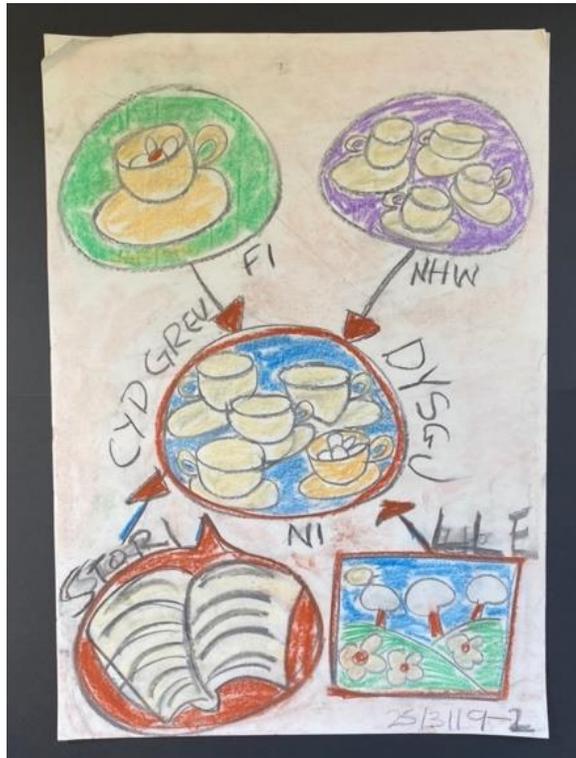


Figure 3. Beynon (2019) *Cyd-greu – Dysgu* 25:3:2019.

This image shows how thinking developed in relation to the use of representational objects, as narrators of thought processes. The drawing had been devised to think about the principal elements of the workshop. The lined book represents the story of the workshop, the landscape represents the location, the single yellow cup and saucer represents me as facilitator and the multiple cups and saucers represents the participants. All feed into the co-creative learning engagement, “*cyd-greu – dysgu*” of the workshop, represented in the middle of the drawing. This image is a good example of how thinking is undertaken through drawing, to reflect and consider the process of the *Creative Art Journey* in the workshops.

My concurrent art practice, not incorporated into the research, had an indirect influence, is associated with more global environmental concerns in exploring trees as belonging to each other, “*perthyn*” and of being interconnected across the world (Simard, 2021, p. 165). Exploring the research of Peter Wohlleben, a German forester and author in *The Hidden Life of Trees* (Wohlleben, 2015) who states that ‘trees form family bands, trees are very social...they care for each other, they try to

support each other to make the forest stable...’ (Goethe-Institut Toronto, 2016) and Dr Suzanne Simard, a Canadian scientist and professor in British Columbia in *Finding the Mother Tree* explores ‘how trees might save us’ (Simard, 2021, p. 6). Both Simard and Wohlleben research the interconnectedness of trees, the young and old as well as the trees that are no longer living: ‘the dead trunk is as indispensable for the cycle of the forest as the living tree. ... now used by other organisms to help feed the offspring of the dead tree’ (Wohlleben, 2017, p. 133). These concepts relate to my art practice and to facilitating workshops which focus on the notion of belonging, “*perthyn*” either to a family, a nation, the world, or the small community that comes together within the workshop.

Figure 4 is an example of the visual representation of this belonging within ‘the wood wide web’ (Simard, 2021, p. 165). It represents the night and day cycle of a continuum of life and of the trees connecting to each other.



Figure 4. Beynon (2021) *Natur Coed - Trees in Nature 2*.

This focuses my work on a more global concept and considers ecology in a wider context. But what remains is a focus on narrative and the consideration of cultural belonging and engagement without exclusion. All trees, no matter what their species, are related across the globe, whether they are dead or alive (Simard, 2021, pp. 3-4). Vitally, the use of colour and mark making in these images was developed

and impacted the work undertaken in practice-based research, seen in figure 13 below (page 123).

As an artist I believe that imagination and creativity are vital and that it is not essential to be able to understand what is happening throughout the art process- 'the most important thing was the thinking you were engaged in as you examined...'. Osmond compares this to physical exercising or as 'press-ups of the brain' (Osmond, 2015, p. 219), the warming up of the imagination through visual means, and not considering the process nor outcome. Understanding may never come, and the acceptance of 'ambiguity which is a component of creative thinking' (Creely et al., 2019, p. 1406) can be a daunting aspect of making art, however, like Osmond I feel that through thinking and with ambiguity that making art can grow in my art practice but is also a vital aspect of the art workshop with participants.

The workshop process stems from the ability of the artist to be creative, to trust in making mistakes and of working in ambiguity (Creely et al., 2019, p. 1406), not from philosophy or the study of education. I am a workshops facilitator because I am a practising artist- Artist ↔ Facilitator, this is vital. Without my art practice I would not be the facilitator that I am. I have been largely self-taught in the delivery of these workshops and developed skills through learning by doing, in a *Creative Art Journey*, with participants. Undertaking a workshop should be different from the activities undertaken by children in schools, there should be a freedom of expression, fun, challenging and provide an open-ended experience. Collaboration with other arts facilitators also provided opportunities to observe working practices and to develop personal judgements of beneficial processes.

The art workshop belongs to creative and imaginative processes, they develop from nothing, void of ideas at the beginning so that a collaborative development of work can be undertaken. The process is as important as the outcome, where aspects of the outcome will be unknown at the start of the project. Materials and fragments of ideas can be sourced, but the *Creative Art Journey* at the start is empty, ready to be filled with creative thinking and imagination. This is fundamental to all art process based on the concept that all can contribute, can be creative and use imagination.

In the art workshop space for creativity, for individuals to develop ideas and produce art pertinent to themselves where the facilitator facilitates these aspects. Individual development an understanding that the direction of the project can, and sometimes must, change is considered in a series of assumptions and principles that form an organisational aspect to the planning and facilitation. However, care should be taken with assumptions, and an open-minded approach should be maintained. Being adaptive to the workshop and participants is key.

## **Assumptions**

Below are examples including but not limited to assumptions and principles which may be made in relation to expectations for the art workshop (see also appendix D):

- Everyone is creative: Creativity does not only exist in the arts but exists in all areas of life. Everyone needs to be creative. Including creativity in projects with young people is vital to develop fulfilled, creative thinkers for the future. Creativity is instinctive.
- It can be done: In an art workshop it is good to start small and to warm up, just like in physical exercise, so that participants and facilitator can start the *Creative Art Journey* together. In warming up the participants can get to know each other and the facilitator. The journey has begun.
- Problems can be overcome: Through getting to know everyone and observing development, a support network can be built. If someone says 'I cannot draw' this can be addressed in the early warm up drawings where a focus on skilled elements can be noted and indicated. The art workshop develops individual approaches to get the best out of everyone, including myself.
- Sometimes it is a risk: Taking a risk is part of the creative process. It involves trust in ambiguity. It is not possible to know the outcome from the first marks made. The journey is a mystery. It is good to think big and to push as far as possible as there is excitement and surprises in the *Creative Art Journey*.
- The non-creative orientated adult or teacher will not understand: Working with non-creative adults or teachers in the art workshop in schools can sometimes pose some issues. Their role can be to manage behaviour, to ensure academic success (beyond the art activity). Sometimes if the non-creative orientated adult interferes, then the creative process cannot take place.

- Creativity is an individual journey: This for me is the most interesting aspect. Being creative, I believe, is a natural process. I aim to find that creativity within the art workshop. I work out how individual creativity and skill can be fostered and used. All individuals bring something with them and can contribute. This can be surprising.
- The output is individual and is not like anybody else's: Even within a co-creative project it is important to enable the individual's output to not be like anybody else's. Individuality is important. I believe that the finished work should not look like mine - unless that is the intention. I believe that the participant should feel an ownership for their finished work.
- Not all have the capacity to believe in the creative process: This is always difficult to manage. Assertions like 'I can't draw' or 'I can't do art' have some sort of response like OK let us try.... Then aim to explore the participant's journey and what they bring to the art workshop. This does not always mean that success is achieved. But the *Creative Art Journey* is nevertheless taken.
- It will not always succeed: This is the risk with a *Creative Art Journey* or with art workshops. If there must be an outcome due to funding or the requirements of the project, then there must be a suitable conclusion. Creativity does not always succeed. This does not mean failure, yet even so failure or perceived failure is a formative learning process.
- There are no rules (Hegarty, 2014, pp. 3-9) to imagination and creativity.

## Principles

Associated to the assumptions are the principles that I aim to incorporate into the art workshop and the *Creative Art Journey*:

- problem solving
- engagement with process
- participants working out of their comfort zone
- believing in ability
- stepping back and observing
- working towards an outcome
- working together
- working individually
- working on creative practice
- individual development
- the *Creative Art Journey* is important
- equality.

These assumptions and principles are aspects that prove useful when planning and considering art workshops, they provide a way of preparing for facilitation (also see Appendix D for a more narrative representation). They are not strict guidelines to be followed, they are not limited, nor do they restrict the creative and imaginative engagement of the facilitator and participants. They do however provide a starting place from which creativity and imagination can grow.

The workshop needs to develop from a fresh point, which is important for all involved who can bring diverse ways of thinking to the engagement. For me, it is always essential that the participant's style, whether collective or individual, is evident in the work and that my style of work does not influence the outcome. There are exceptions, for example, if a group is visiting an exhibition of my work, the participants may be encouraged to look and respond to the work, I would always encourage a deviation from copying my work, but this does not always occur. Ambiguity, at the beginning, prevents the facilitator from having preconceived ideas and enables the participants to have a voice, an opinion and an individual engagement in collaboration. Imagination and creativity are not preconceived and prescribed, but develop from ambiguity, through exploration and process so that participants are enabled to utilise their own ideas in an individualistic approach, throughout the *Creative Art Journey*, to encourage ownership of the work produced, where making art and the possibility of failing are exciting.

For me, this ambiguous start is important, however a workshop cannot occur without planning and preparation is a vital aspect of facilitation which will vary depending on the type of workshop. This planning process involves, but is not limited to these examples, to include initial meetings and discussions to exploring ideas, to know what the project is, if there are funding constraints, money available, expectations, space to be used, available materials and equipment, age of the participants, size of the group, other facilitators' involvement, whether a collaborative approach is required. Planning is vital to ensure that I am prepared, that the space and material are ready for the workshop to include the planning and

a trust in ambiguity. Following planning the workshop can take place and the *Creative Art Journey* can occur.

At the start of a workshop, I will prepare the space and introduce myself but will only provide as much information as is needed and suitable for the workshop, for example, if the workshop is about me as an artist, then I would introduce myself and my practice. If it is about a specific project, then I would introduce what is relevant for the project and provide little information about me. It is also important to get to know the participants, so time can be allowed for this. I will give an overview of the space, the materials, information about the workshop, some expectations, if there is an outcome and the time scale. Once the introductions have been made then it is over to the participants to work. I need to ensure that there is time for process and in that time that experimentation, development, excitement, and discovery can occur. During the time the participants work I will try not to interfere but provide expertise for learning something new and if someone is struggling then I will advise and offer alternative approaches. During the workshop there will be a fluctuation of interacting and observation of work underway, of progress, of teaching or demonstrating skills, of discussion and of showing and sharing work undertaken. The elation and disappointment towards work being made can also be observed and responded to.

I set out to share knowledge and to collaborate in the process of discovery, through the *Creative Art Journey*, which normally means that at the start I aim to discover ways of working together. The participants produce, evaluate and progress, whilst the facilitator observes, guides and suggests. In the initial stages this is normally through drawing. At this stage I will trust, respond and develop with the process. This is the 'press-ups of the brain' (Osmond, 2015, p. 219) stage of the journey. This stage cannot be planned, as creativity and development within these initial stages will determine the development of the work, where quantity and making is far more important than quality. This is the stage of getting to know, of thinking, of responding and of starting the *Creative Art Journey* together. Everyone brings skills and ideas into any given situation; it is about how that interaction works. Often the creative process is working in a state of ambiguity, which is where the magic is. The *Creative*

*Art Journey* is the way of making sense of the process, that can later be developed into art works.

The *Creative Art Journey*, of each project, is distinctive as all involved bring a uniqueness and information from prior learning. The journey will be different each time, but it is vital that individual learning has been achieved. The *Creative Art Journey* is both collaborative and individual, using creativity and imagination in making art. Being a multidisciplinary artist has been beneficial for providing many varied adaptable skills for use in the workshop. I need to respond to the works being undertaken, to the different skills, so that individual development can occur for each participant with respect for individual practice. Witnessing learning occurring as a workshop facilitator and being involved in collaborative creativity in that engagement, has provided exciting and fulfilling experiences. This research has enabled taking a step back to explore the processes undertaken in the art workshop. Aspects of the *Creative Art Journey* that is both exciting and tense is when the participants, whether collectively or individually, start to develop their ideas and processes. They are now in control, it is their journey, their art, this is when creativity starts to take over and they can now take ownership of the work. As a facilitator, this means observing development, valuing judgements made by the participants and being mindful to offer guidance if necessary.

This process of transferring skills is a significant consequence of art practice - making associations with ways of working, with skills both brought into and taken out beyond the workshop, by both the facilitator and participants. Observing and engaging with these lightbulb moments, provides an insight into the journey of making art; they are aspects that will be remembered when the art outcome may be long forgotten, if successful or not. I love this part of workshops: the element of discovery, of learning, of thinking and if these have occurred then I am not too worried about outcome. For me, the *Creative Art Journey* process is as important as the outcome, if not more important. There is a lot to learn in the explorative journey of making art where process leads to new learning at various stages, not only at the end, but it is also important that participants have at least one thing that they are happy with. On the other hand, an outcome may be essential if the art project is

funded, and all involved need to contribute to achieve the best possible outcome. When the workshop comes to an end, the *Creative Art Journey* contributes to the participants transferable skills for life and work beyond the workshop.

To complete this general autoethnographic overview of the workshop I will briefly reflect on a small workshop undertaken in July 2021. It was always intended that in this research art workshops with participants would be undertaken to aid in the reflective process. External events (The Covid-19 Pandemic) did not permit this. However, this short workshop, including adults and children, provided an opportunity to be facilitator and investigator and to immediately reflect on the process. This workshop was planned to explore objects in a small museum and to use printmaking techniques to make art. This is my autoethnographic reflection.

Planning occurred as described above with discussions with the organisers in relation to location, materials and cost. Additionally, I made notes, did trials, considered and adapted the process and collected the materials. In reflecting on this workshop there were no surprises for me in the planning process.

On arrival I set out my materials. As the participants arrived, I made sure everyone had space to work, before I introduced myself and the workshop. I then provided some paper and pencils to start to consider the ideas. As the workshop was next to a small museum, we visited the museum to look at the objects, all participants had time to explore and draw objects that interested them. During the rest of the workshop there was an ebb and flow for me as facilitator, interacting or not interacting, observing process and progression of the work. I provided various kinds of materials for the participants to try, before enabling them to focus on their own choice from what was available.

Elation, disappointment and different emotions were experienced. It was interesting to observe the different emotional responses of the participants, during the workshop I needed to be supportive, to praise and provide an alternative or an additional response to the process if someone was struggling. The negative responses are the hardest to manage. If this happens at the end of the process then

it is difficult to resolve, but there is hopefully a place to resolve disappointment, this was the case during this workshop where a participant felt disappointed by work undertaken, together we were able to achieve a good outcome. When someone is unhappy, I need to self-reflect to check and question whether something else could have been done. I also need to question why the participant was unhappy. There may be external emotional factors that the participants bring with them to the workshop. Respect is important.

In general terms I very rarely undertake any deep evaluation after an art workshop; it is a quick, fleeting self-reflection. Not evaluating workshops fully, for me, means that the next workshop can be a clean start - the ambiguous process and the *Creative Art Journey* can be unimpeded. An evaluation of this workshop revealed some insights that instigated an in-depth reflection on my role in the art workshop. I could also consider the impact of being both researcher and facilitator in the workshop at the same time. For me, the *Creative Art Journey* is something that I and the participants are on together. I concluded that the autoethnographic approach, through reflection, making art and connecting theory to practice appropriately situated this research.

In this autoethnographic overview, including reflections of an art education, art practice and facilitation of art workshops, places me centrally in this research. Reflection in autoethnography reveals a past educational experience of a schooling system that initially enabled but later limited creative growth. Primary education allowed for a freedom of expression whereas after the age of 11 the education process became more prescribed. Additionally, early education was undertaken in Welsh but in higher education this had not been possible. Reflection enables the contemplation of past experiences that were not evident at the time, for example, it is evident that the development of creative and academic engagement was challenging which led to an activism approach to art and education. These have been fundamental to using “*Cymraeg*” Welsh and alternative person-centred approaches to learning and collaborative engagement as an artist facilitator.

This overview of an art practice, creativity and the art workshop has broadly presented foundational information pertinent to the *Creative Art Journey* that is further examined in the application of practice-based research and in the case studies in the following chapters. Reflecting on the facilitator highlights engagement aspects to include planning, working with initial ideas, enabling individual and collaborative developments, to ensure that learning takes place and that if an outcome is needed that this is facilitated, these aspects will be further explored in the reflective case studies in chapter 6. Additionally, practice-based research provides a means to connect theory to practice, to consider the distinct types of *Creative Art Journeys* possible in various kinds of art workshops. These visual explorations enabled a deeper understanding of the creative interaction of facilitator and participants, undertaken in making *diagrammatic drawings* which are discussed in detail in the application of practice-based research next.

#### **Chapter 4: Practice-based research application: How I use art in research**

Drawing techniques evolved in practice as mechanisms to consider the research. Initially to unpick ideas, then to explore theoretical and research concepts and progressing to thinking about past workshops from the perspective of the artist as facilitator. Art practice, for me, is a way of examining ideas and of being playful with theory using empty spaces that include sketchbooks, paper, walls and studios that felt ritualistic, I think from the visual. Studio work can progress slowly providing time to contemplate and to engage with the work, with theory or to just be in the space surrounded by ideas. On the other hand, the work can progress quickly, but this can also mean that 'when something does take place, it may not be immediately clear what it was, or whether it might be important' (Elkins, 2008, p. 5) but having physical objects means that the work can be revisited to be analysed later. Art was made, then the time in the studio spaces ended - leaving the space empty again to be filled by others. Using spaces enabled the continuous visualisation of the research, which made leaving and returning to practice and space for me a dynamic process.

The application of this method has existed throughout the research with three main drawing processes and four practice-based stages. The drawing processes are

**Representational Images, Image Mapping, and Diagrammatic Drawing** these are discussed first, in this thesis, as they were used from the start of the research process and are integrated into the different research stages. The practice-based stages are *Sketchbooks*, *Large-scale studio practice 2019-2020*, *Small-scale lockdown work 2020-2022* and finally, *Studio June 2022*. Additionally, the studio practice of 2022 is further divided into four different in-practice art **Approaches 1-4**. These practice-based research processes, stages and approaches are discussed in this chapter along with selected examples to signify autoethnographic methods of making commencing with the drawing processes.

Drawing had been undertaken in sketchbooks from the start of the research and continued throughout these developed into studio-based drawings at various stages of the research. Whilst working in the studio in 2018 and 2019 I was developing work on a large scale. Both the paper size and the studio space enabled the expansion of ideas from sketch books, aiding the making of visual connections with themes and ideas in the research. At the time, I was working on drawing, mapping, writing and making connections of these to theory and vice versa. As the studio engagement developed, in addition to using sketchbooks, it became apparent that two modes of practice were developing. The first was reflectively considering the art workshops in narrative drawings or representational images, the second was to consider the research through mapping ideas in image mapping and in *diagrammatic drawings*. Through making, deliberation could occur, and reflection in action enabled me to develop as ‘...a researcher in the practice context...not dependent on the categories of established theory and technique but...’ to construct ‘... a new theory’ (Schön, 1991, p. 68), uniquely associated with autoethnography allowing the examination of myself, both in writing and in art practice.

Firstly, **the Representational Images** were made using drawings of recognisable objects of cups and saucers as holders and narrators of information. These drawings were present in the preliminary stages of the practice and had a direct correlation to my concurrent art practice, as discussed in the autoethnographic application above and seen in figures 3 above and 5 below. As an artist it made sense to work and make connections to the visual language of my art practice, ‘[t]he

visual has to be embedded in the narratives of its inception' (Mannay, 2016, p. 1) and to what was already known.



Figure 5. Beynon (2019) *Drawing Hedfan triptych July 2019*.

The representational drawing seen in figure 5 above, which metaphorically considers the notion of being grounded in the saucer, the cups are springing into action and represent the participants of the workshop. The flowers, springing from the cups and pulling the cups along with them demonstrates the ability of the engagement in extracurricular arts activities for the continuing impact of the arts engagement into the participants' (and facilitator as participant) futures. This drawing considers the ability of the workshop to make things happen, to develop ideas and processes. And the encouragement of the participants to fly "Hedfan". This 'movement between ... visual and narrative modes, techniques and approaches is, ..., very much what makes working with creative methods an exciting undertaking' (Mannay, 2016, p. 24) and these drawings were exciting to make. These narratives formed a foundation from which to develop the visual in representational drawings, these early drawings as 'picture[s] denote a physical object' (see Elkins, 2008, p. 4) from which to consider the workshop engagement. They eventually became superfluous being superseded by **Diagrammatic Drawings**, including the wider development of **Image Mapping** where 'memory, ideal, idea, or notion of a picture' (ibid.) could be considered and became more valuable in the research process. These are 'heuristic categories' (ibid.) that aid in the understanding of the use of material objects in the practice-based process.



Below in figure 7 is an example of my mapping process where methodology is deliberated and the inclusion of hauntology considered.

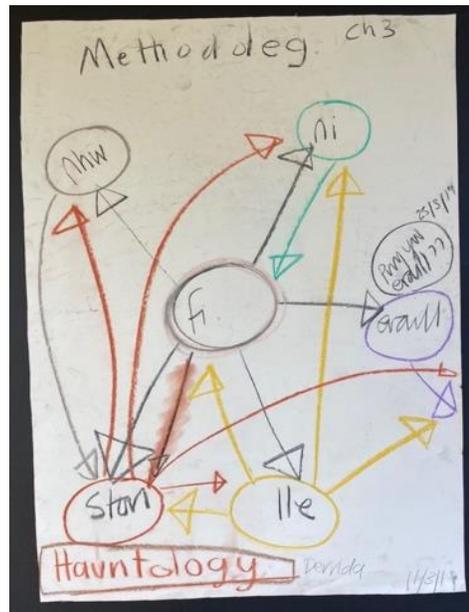


Figure 7. Beynon (2019) *Mapping methodology and theory* 11/3/2019.

The connection of participant and facilitator, location, the interconnectedness of methodological approaches is undertaken through visual questioning, using a combination of English and Welsh words. Central in the image is “fi” (me), from me arrows connect and interconnect to “nhw” (them), “ni” (us), “eraill” (others), “lle” (place), and to the “stori” (story). This represents the participants and facilitator of the collaborative project, connecting these to the notion of hauntology where the past, present, and future (Coverley, 2020, p. 17) all come together. Hauntology, evolved through the research, belongs to my art practice and influenced the early development of research methods. Using two languages enriches meaning and what seems clear in one language is not always clear in the other. The past art workshops were all undertaken in Welsh, on the other hand, this research is undertaken in English with smatterings of Welsh. As seen in figure 7 above, Welsh, English and visual language is used in image mapping to express my thought processes, I appreciate the complexity that focuses on words and the visual to enable the consideration of theory, to organise and deepen the research.

Thirdly, **Diagrammatic Drawing**, which initially commenced in sketchbooks and small trial drawings, and were a continuous developing process of the practice from the beginning. These drawings enabled analytical consideration and focus to develop the exploration of the *Creative Art Journey* of the art workshop. The possibilities of:

Diagrammatic drawing ... to become an international language of thought, analysis, documentation, dissemination, investigation and communication, unencumbered by the limits of words, it can operate at every level of human achievement, from the nursery to the physics lab...the art room has, understandably, hijacked drawing and so it is important that the rest of education embraces and releases the extraordinary possibilities contained in the diagrammatic... Osi Rhys Osmond, (in Smith, 2013, p. 48).

*Diagrammatic drawings* became a key and the most expressive way to visualise the research within this personal visual theory.



Figure 8. Beynon (2023) *Diagrams 2/3/2020*.

Figure 8 shows diagrams, that developed from smaller drawings, to consider the *Creative Art Journey*. In these drawings the shapes are almost amoebic, are visual metaphors where symbols have been used to denote the art activities of the art workshops. The dots represent the person and the lines from the dots represents the activities of the workshop. Diagrams enabled analysis, to form concepts and to deepen the research thinking.

The three drawing processes, discussed above, were key research components during what became four distinct practice-based research stages. I have provided titles for ease of navigation and identification. **Sketchbooks** - the work undertaken in sketchbooks, **Large-scale studio practice 2019-2020**- the work undertaken in the studio space that was generally large scale, **Small-scale lockdown work 2020-2022** - the work undertaken on a small scale and the final stage **Studio June 2022** - work undertaken in the studio to enable the consolidation of these practice stages, in relation to research and theory. This studio process was also repeated in 2023 but did not provide any further research developments but was beneficial in the archival and concluding processes of the practice-based research and will therefore not be discussed separately in this thesis. These stages have been associated with each other in a crossover of art, thinking, making and analytical research, they are discussed below commencing with *Sketchbooks*.

**Sketchbooks** have been a means of giving order to the research, by exploring words and ideas to enable me to think and develop as a researcher. These words as images formed a connection to the work of the artist *Bob and Roberta Smith* who writes letters, uses art, words and activism to present ideas to the public and government alike, for example the large painting, the *Letter to Michael Gove* (*Bob and Roberta Smith*, 2011), the then Secretary of State for Education. The words painted on the canvas begin 'Dear Michael Gove, Art, images, artifacts, songs; culture are the principal means by which Human beings define themselves' (ibid.). The work is not only a letter, but it is also an artwork. His fight for creativity in education made *Bob and Roberta Smith* relevant to this research:

Give a child a piece of paper, a brush and some colour and you put them in control. Children's art is so appealing because they have no problem with being in control of images. As school progresses, poor teaching in some schools, impresses on the child that they are not in control. (*Bob and Roberta Smith*, 2011).

In their work we see this activism of education occurring continuously, providing relevant material to research.

Working in the sketchbooks at the start of the research enabled ‘analytical, thoughtful and philosophical’ (Osmond, 2015, p. 219) processes to develop. As a practically engaged artist, the use of sketchbooks empowered practice to develop in a creative engagement with theory and words. Sketchbooks are a personal, non-precious space for working through and collating ideas in different aspect of the research with the aim of consolidate information. Connecting theory and practice was simplified in sketchbook processes as seen in the example in figure 9 below.

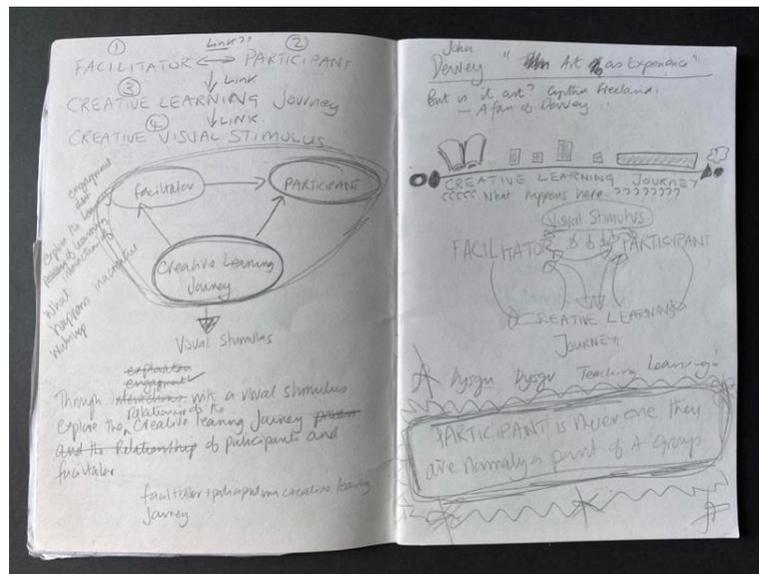


Figure 9. Beynon (2016) *Page from sketchbook.*

As an artist using sketchbooks was familiar and enabled exploring ideas and theory more accessible, less rigid and correlated to creative processes. It felt exploratory. The sketchbooks formed the basis for ‘drawing as thinking’ (Osmond in Smith 2013, p. 48) and ‘[t]hinking through making’ (Ingold, 2013, p. 6) to later developed as large-scale drawings, **Image Mapping** and studio practice. ‘This thinking, this imagining, goes on as much in the hands and fingers as in the head. It is strung out in the lines of practise’ (ibid., p. 128) which was an active and vital process. **Image Mapping** developed from sketchbook ideas to large scale drawings in the studios and enabled conceptual associations of theory and writing to support the advancement of the research.

The **Large-scale studio practice 2019-2020** developed a deeper understanding of theory. In the studio, I worked on large sheets of paper and noted after some weeks that there were two strands of practice developing. Firstly, the representational drawing (figures 3 and 5 above) with objects as narrators of the information, secondly, the mapping and diagram drawings (figures 7 and 8 above) that made connections to the research ideas. I divided the two strands on the studio walls to consider their relevance and concluded that the initial mapping drawings were beneficial for thinking through drawing and instigated an ability to visualise the research, whilst the representational drawings were closely associated with my non-research art practice and were therefore less relevant to the research development. Once this division occurred a more focussed, analytical, and contemplative development of the research could be undertaken. Being surrounded by visual work on the studio walls enabled reasoning in practice associated to theoretical engagement and for writing to develop in the 'slowness of the studio' (Elkins, 2008, p. 4), practice enabled theory and theory enabled practice. This division resulted in increased **Image Mapping** leading eventually to **Diagrammatic Drawing** in a more focussed analytical way, I was no longer distracted by making art I was now researching in practice.

Below in figure 10 is one example selected from many to demonstrate these early mapping methods. Words were particularly important in this. This example considers of the meaning of the word Art - "*Celf*", the connection to autoethnography and other words as well as the relationship of theory and practice seen by the title of the diagram on the top Autoethnography. The other words in this image are in Welsh and provided here both in Welsh and English, starting from the bottom left of the image map are, "*gwneud*" (doing/ making), "*creu*" (creating/ making), "*creadigol*" (creative), "*cynllunio*" (planning), "*darlunio*" (Drawing/ illustration), "*meddwl*" (thinking), "*ysgrifennu*" (writing) as well as the consideration of *arfer* (practice).

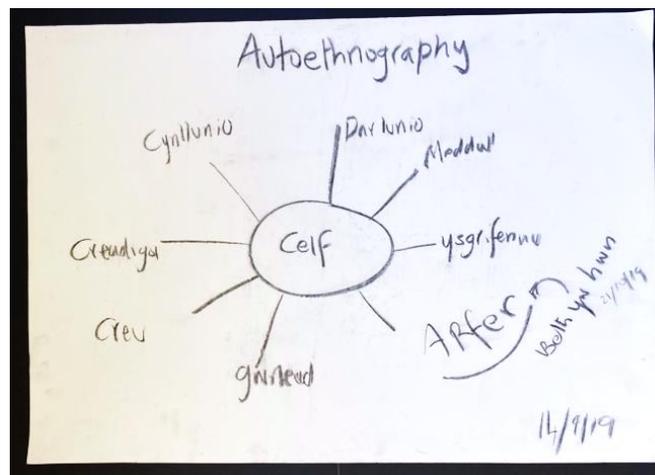


Figure 10. Beynon (2019) *Celf* 14:9:19.

Explored in this image map is meaning, words, concept and the relationship to the workshops and research. The work on the walls of the studio enabled a consideration of process, note taking, further mapping and distilling of ideas, sometimes with more intensity and sometimes less. The work at this stage was developing into wall murals.

The sudden ending of this process in 2020 (COVID-19) meant that a reconsideration of practice needed to be made. It is not unusual in art practice to change direction, and this needed to be embraced, this led to wider contemplation and engagement with theory, that enabled the research to develop in a different direction. No longer having a large studio space meant that the art became smaller, the images and diagrams developed to visualise words and the *Creative Art Journey* of the case studies. These smaller works explored through diagrammatic thinking occurred in the ***Small-scale lockdown work 2020-2022***. The work became more painterly with the use of colour and mark making becoming more prominent. Additionally, making handmade simple concertina books by folding paper, became a device for gathering the images, in one contained space, for the developing narrative.

Additionally, during this time, artists became more accessible as they turned to online platforms to share information. One event was the launch of *Bob and Roberta Smith's* book *You are an Artist* (Bob and Roberta Smith, 2020). I attended

as a researcher and analytical thinker interested in words, the use of words as expression, mark making and drawing as a means of thinking. Attending this event enabled me to intensify my diagrammatic thinking processes. During the book launch, *Bob and Roberta Smith* set drawing tasks which provided me with an opportunity to re-focus on words and mark making, to consider the meaning of the *Creative Art Journey*, whilst reflecting on past workshops. From playing with *Bob and Roberta Smith's* words *Art is your human right* (*Bob and Roberta Smith, 2020*), I deviated to consider the words of my research (figure 11).



Figure 11. Beynon (2020) *Sketchbook Pages: Bob and Roberta Smith event*.

This series of words as drawings, in figure 11, are “*dweud stori*” (storytelling), “*gwneud*” (doing/ making), “*creu*” (creating/ making) and “*dysgu*” (both to teach and to learn). This event provided the opportunity to re-engage with these words that later developed in concertina books, in reflective research.

The concertina books, at this time, were beneficial in envisioning the process of the art workshop using diagrammatic depictions on every page, each one representing a different but related stage in the process, as seen in figure 12 below.



Figure 12. Beynon (2020) *Creative Art Journey: Diagrammatic representation*.

This development in making art, enabled a visual representation of the individuals involved in the *Creative Art Journey*, which could be analysed to understand the process undertaken in the past art workshops. These books used *diagrammatic drawings* as representations of participants and could be revisited and considered many times as the research developed.

The *diagrammatic drawings* developed further during this practice stage with the addition of colour, as seen in figure 13 below.



Figure 13. Beynon (2023) *Colour for individualisation 2021*.

In the above example each circle represents a different participant of a workshop and is painted a different colour to denote this. Additionally, to note, there is a visual correlation in the use of colour to my trees painting Beynon (2021) *Natur Coed - Trees in Nature 2* in figure 4 above (page 103). During this practice stage, theoretical exploration and writing were undertaken in parallel to making art, this included a deeper personal consideration of practice in relation to research and theory in an in-depth autoethnographic process, which has been analysed and presented here.

Autoethnographic contemplation and practice exposed confusion in the *Small-scale lockdown work 2020-2022*. Confusion is ambiguous yet needs to happen as

'creativity is the creation of something out of nothing and that can be scary' (Hegarty, 2014, p. 12), confusion causes anxiety and uncertainty which eventually, through trust in process, develops to more clarity through practice. All the work, to include the practice processes theoretical research and writing, needed to be brought together in one space to contemplate the confusion and to develop the practice and research with more clarity. The opportunity came to use a large studio space in June 2022, where I could evaluate all previous practice and advance the research.

Working in the ***Studio June 2022*** allowed practice to be viewed as one body of work. It became evident that the practice of 2019-2020 was underdeveloped and the practice of 2020-2022 was confused, but more visually appealing and better considered. It was also evident that mess had been a constant companion, and that practice had taken its own course:

Mess needs to be articulated, firstly, because it is there. It is the 'swampy lowlands' identified by Schön (1983). If accounts of research omit descriptions of the messy areas experienced by so many researchers, descriptions of research in practice remain incomplete and do not offer a true and honest picture of the research process. (Cook, 2009, p. 279).

Much of this research has been undertaken in mess, recognising this in the *Studio June 2022* enabled a focus to be given to practice and connecting to theory, to develop research and to create order within the mess. Spending time with the practice and theory was like being in my mind. Deciphering the research and information through the visual, exploring practice and being with my thoughts and ideas was constructive and affirming. Additionally, autoethnographic thinking and writing could be developed from practice, considering past art workshops and note taking, all contributing to further writing beyond the studio time. Order could be brought to the mess by archiving work. Furthermore, connecting theory to writing enabled the research to develop forming clarity in embedding practice in research. This studio time also enabled the analysis of the practice to identify gaps, misconceptions and areas that were no longer relevant.

This was a studio space to consider the progress, direction of practice and research and for documenting and archiving work, which is an interesting phenomenon of the creative process:

...the technical structure of the archiving archive also determines the structure of the archivable content even in its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future. The archivization produces as much as it records the event.' (Derrida, 1995 p. 17).

In this practice stage the opportunity to have everything in one space was advantageous, without it archiving would have been difficult. The archiving process enabled connections to be made, for the visual development of practice, to consider of the use of terminology and their place in the research. An example of these terms are 'creativity and imagination', complex terminologies that needed careful consideration and revisiting. Ken Robinson provides useful definitions for these terms, 'Imagination allows us to envision alternative possibilities, and creativity equips us with the tools to bring them into existence.' Robinson adds further meaning to 'creativity as the process of having original ideas that have value'. (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, p. 5). Being in the studio instigated the notion that the term creativity and imagination should be used in this research as they have been vital in the practice-based process, furthermore, both are intricate notions that were encouraged and fostered in the workshops of the past.

In the research imagination has permitted revisiting the past to 'envision the future... an essential part of being able to shape and build it' and imagination requires creativity to put the imagination 'to work.' (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, pp. 4-5). Creativity 'should never be predictable.' (Hegarty, 2014, p. 127), is necessary for my practice to provide the opportunity of discovery through 'the *power to create something from nothing*' (Mould, 2018, p. 4, original emphasis) and to work through confusion to enable clarity in thought processes. This studio engagement provided 'boundaries of space, and boundaries of time ...and no interruptions' (Cleese, 2021, 14.52-15.12) to come up with the best creative solution for practice and connections to theory which could then be integrated into the research and writing.

Another connection to theory, explored during *Studio June 2022*, was the discovery of the quotations that had been collected and drawn or written in various scales during the research process. During this studio engagement some had been placed on easels, for ease of seeing and analysing, they became powerful holders and presenters of information, an example of these is seen in figure 14 below,



Figure 14. Beynon (2020) *Quotations on easels*.

Some of these quotations are, for example, Margaret Ames who explores the idea of no rules, and no lesson plans “*Nid oes rheolau, nid oes cynllun dysgu.*” (Lewis and Jones, 2013, p. 186); Michael Rosen who states that the arts are a way to ‘investigate and understand the past to present our world’ (*Arts Council England*, 2013, p. 11), and *Bob and Roberta Smith* (2013) ‘*All School Should be Art Schools*’. Placing these quotations on easels formed an opportunity to explore the interconnection of theory and thinkers. They demonstrated that I was already using the writing of other creative practitioners, some of which I had worked with in the past, which negated the requirement to undertake interviews. Quotations are also written on scraps of paper making them portable to form connections with other drawn or written information, influencing the practice-based research progress and writing.

Drawing has been used in many forms and in varying scales. It has provided a means to examine theory similarly to Hirschhorn’ *Maps and Schemas* (Hirschhorn

no date) and to mapping of ideas like David Jones, as in figure 6 above. Additionally, the *diagrammatic drawings* developed a deeper examination of the art workshop process. Furthermore, drawing and later archiving proved to be beneficial in discovering gaps in my thinking, I discovered that up until *Studio June 2022* I had concentrated my reflection almost entirely on one art workshop, that of *Cadw Sŵn*, rather than on all four workshops. This could now be rectified and developed in this studio practice. It was noted that an exploration of myself as facilitator, could also be contemplated and developed in the same diagrammatic ways. Undertaking the practice-based element of the research therefore formed a significant purpose in the thinking process, as well as making the connections to theory in practice.

Reviewing practice and works previously produced also led to further insights, for example the *diagrammatic drawings* that began at the end of the *Large-scale studio practice 2019-2020*, then developed during the *Small-scale lockdown work 2020-2022* could now be contemplated together. The four larger works seen in figure 15 below drawn in March 2020, were the first diagrams to consider the *Creative Art Journey*.



Figure 15. Beynon (2022) *Four drawings 2020*.

These drawings were placed together for the first time and could be moved around to analyse their relationship, exploring what was being conveyed. These four images are significant examples, forming a foundation for the development of the visual in practice-based research. This studio engagement provided the means to consider and collate all the work made and to contemplate the future direction of practice and research including to consider of four case studies. The future path of the visual research was not clear, at this stage, but being in the studio provided the opportunity to engage with and to develop practice. This diagrammatic thinking became a way of developing a personal visual theory in an autoethnographic, practice-based process. Being in the studio, with all aspects of the visual practice, meant that scrutinising and categorising could be undertaken before archiving. Additionally, autoethnographic consideration, contemplating the work made, reading and writing, led to forming wider theoretical connections and making new work in practice.

The slowness of the studio discussed by Elkins (2008) as something painful to watch but being an artist researcher in the studio environment this slowness is vital to progress the work, 'Watching an artist, or making art, nothing may happen for long periods of time, and even when something does take place, it may not be immediately clear what it was, or whether it might be important.' (Elkins 2008 p. 6). During this studio time, with all the work around me it is true that on occasions nothing happened for a long time. Moving from work to work or from book to book meant that thinking could occur. Rather than placing thought at the beginning and the made object as the end, with growth occurring in between, Ingold sees both thinking and making as integral parts of a continuous growth process. This way, 'the idea of a thing grows alongside the thing itself, and so what we find in thinking and in making is not a proliferation of ends but the perpetuity of new beginning', (*Architecture Foundation*, 2020, 25:37 - 26:08). The work could be revisited day after day and developed or not. Additionally in the studio sometimes no physical work whether writing or drawing occurred during every engagement. But being with this work meant that a deep contemplation of the developing research could occur. 'If ideas come more slowly in the studio, maybe the thing to do is wait, and collect insights and concepts that have accumulated over a long interval', (Elkins 2008 p.

6) for me this waiting and being in the space with the work formed profound developments through thinking, doing and being with the things.

Thinking through investigative drawing was further developed to capture the visual research in a body of practice. This culmination of the visual analysis is divided into four distinct approaches, *approach 1 small monochrome drawings*, *approach 2 words*, *approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books*, and *approach 4 larger single fold books*. Each of these approaches were undertaken to deepen the practice that 'depends on the general to create meaning for its investigations of the particular' (Elkins, 2008, p. 3) and to visually explore the four art workshops selected as case studies. Additionally, an autoethnographic process was undertaken to analyse myself as facilitator in the *Creative Art Journey*. A representation of these four approaches is discussed in figures 16-19 below and the folios in appendix G.

***Approach 1 Monochrome drawings*** are diagrams that represent the *Creative Art Journey* of the four workshops and of me as facilitator. In the photograph below: Bottom to top: rows 1-4 represents the four different workshops that have been selected as reflective case studies. Row 5 represents me as facilitator. Read from left to right: Each set of drawings, represents the stages in the workshop process from being an individual with little ideas at the start, through a series of interactions, bursting with ideas, and ending the project taking information away to their future. Finally, in row 6 are what I term as no drawing pages, containing light washes (difficult to see in the photograph) that represent a time before the workshop begins where the participant and facilitator are prepared to explore information and the time when the workshop has ended. These act as metaphors for everyone bringing something into and taking something away beyond the intensity of the workshop. These *diagrammatic drawings* in figure 16 below form a visual representation of visual thinking and analysis, forming a part of a personal visual theory.



Figure 16. Beynon (2022) *Approach 1 & Approach 2*.

**Approach 2 words** is seen in the back row of figure 16 above, these are single fold books and contain words in Welsh “*dysgu*” (teaching and learning), “*Celf*” (art), “*cydwethio*” (collaboration), “*Creu*” (creativity), “*Gwneud*” (making). These Welsh words have been selected as being vital in the *Creative Art Journeys*. The inclusion of these words makes a strong connection to the autoethnographic writing and form a deeper meaning for the workshop process examined in practice.

**Approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books** are 3-D objects that act as metaphorical containers that harness, capture, allowing information to spring out. Figure 17, below, shows the diverse ways that these books can be presented. They can be seen from the front and back, can face up and down, can be open and closed and can be opened and be closed. This sculptural element of these books was a captivating aspect of this visual research, in which these books could become even more representational of the harnessing that occurred within the workshops.



Figure 17. Beynon (2022) *Approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books*.

The drawings and the structure of these books become illustrative of the workshop process. The concertina forms a spring, the springing of information in and out of the workshop and the springing of ideas. This idea of springing has been part of the visual research from the start seen in figure 5 *Drawing Hedfan triptych July 2019* (Beynon, 2019) (page 114 above).

The *Turkish map fold concertina book* forms an opening, a container, a front and back that for me represents the workshop itself as a container of information. There is also a version without the *diagrammatic drawing* but has light washes to represent the stillness before and after the *Creative Art Journey*, a time beyond the collaborative workshop. When unopened the books are lifeless inanimate objects but once open, they develop a life of their own and when placed together form strange relationships as can be seen in figure 17. These books were an intriguing development in the practice-based research and in the art process of this *Studio June 2022* engagement.

***Approach 4 larger single fold books title cover*** these are two-sided single fold books acting as titles for the different case studies seen from the front in figure 18. From left to right ‘*Murlun y Bont*’ (Bont Mural), ‘*Cwch*’ (Tosta paper boats), ‘*Cadw Sŵn*, ‘*Ysgol Eliffant*’- (Eliffant Tregaron project), ‘*Fi*’ (Me).

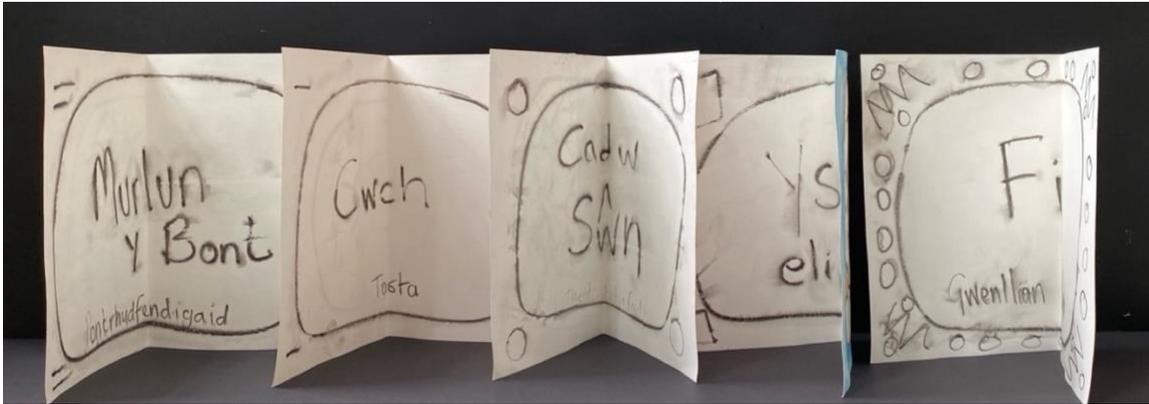


Figure 18. Beynon (2022) *Approach 4 larger single fold books title cover – front.*

Seen from the back of these *books* have a coloured version of the final diagram in the *Approach 1 Monochrome drawings*, the diagram that represents the last stage of the workshop seen in figure 19 below.



Figure 19. Beynon (2022) *Approach 4 larger single fold books title cover – back.*

From left to right ‘*Murlun y Bont*’ (Bont Mural), ‘*Cwch*’ (Tosta paper boats), ‘*Cadw Sŵn*’, ‘*Ysgol Eliffant*’- (Eliffant Tregaron project), ‘*Fi*’ (Me). Practice based research freely enabled the use of a bilingual exploration freely, in contrast to the rigidity academic writing. This was essential to form ideas, develop the research, to consider past art workshops and myself as facilitator as it was in the autoethnographic process.

The four case studies and the role of the facilitator have been captured in these four approaches. Thinking through making forms a deeper understanding of the *Creative Art Journey* and is capturing in the visual. All the diagrams in this contemplative body of work come together to form one story, that of the *Creative Art Journey*. This practice collection functions like game, where it's possible to have different parts connecting to each other, which are equally connected to the whole. The different sections are contained units that contribute to the set and to the collection to tell the story. Each time the collection is revisited it can be contemplated and considered, there is ambiguity in that process, thinking occurs and in the thinking, discoveries are made. The collection is like a set of cards each aspect belong to each other in many and in distinct way and fit into one box. This box symbolically harnesses information, providing a means to revisit ideas, methods, approaches and to potentially add to this collection limitlessly.

The final aspect to consider is that of ***The empty space***, in this research this could be physical, as in the studio, the empty sketchbook or the paper, without any of my art. Or the intangible space of the time before the research or before the art workshop begins. To recall Virginia Woolf, space for making art 'should always be empty and be decorated by the current users of the space.' (Allen, 2011, p. 33). Space is important. Adapting to different spaces during the research also impacted the work especially with regards to scale. A notable adaptation was to have no access to the studio during the pandemic, but creativity enabled the work to develop on a smaller scale and positively impacted the practice-based development.

I went to the studio space to explore my practice, what I discovered was that creativity and researching ideas could be explored through images. The essential aspect here was that practice was vital in gaining awareness of the information in the methods and theory of the research, aiding in exploring the ideas to be developed through writing. Practice aided imagination, creativity for 'me to understand that the only way one can really know things ... is through a process of self-discovery' (Ingold, 2013, p. 1), in developing a thought process in making art to understand my position in the *Creative Art Journey* and as a researcher. The work made in the empty spaces were packed away at each stage and kept for future

reference, to be brought out or recreated, to fill another space, in another way, at another time. The initial stages of this packing away was chaotic and unplanned leading to finally being archived for future consideration alongside this written thesis.

*The empty space* also represents the workshop space for the *Creative Art Journey* where participants and facilitator meet to work. *The empty space* gets filled with ideas, with making, with developing – it is a space to grow and develop through exploration, imagination, creativity and collaboration. There is a fullness to the sharing of information in the workshop process. The workshop ends and the collaborative *Creative Art Journey* is complete, yet the participants and facilitators take something of the process and ideas into their future, they leave changed.

I will conclude this practice-based section with this final image, in figure 20 below a simple folded paper book without any marks on it which also represents *The empty space*. The folds and gaps have been captured in shadows in the photograph. The empty book is ready to be filled, but the folded paper itself in the photograph already demonstrated that there is something there, there is a 3D object that can provide visual intrigue to represent the intangible space.

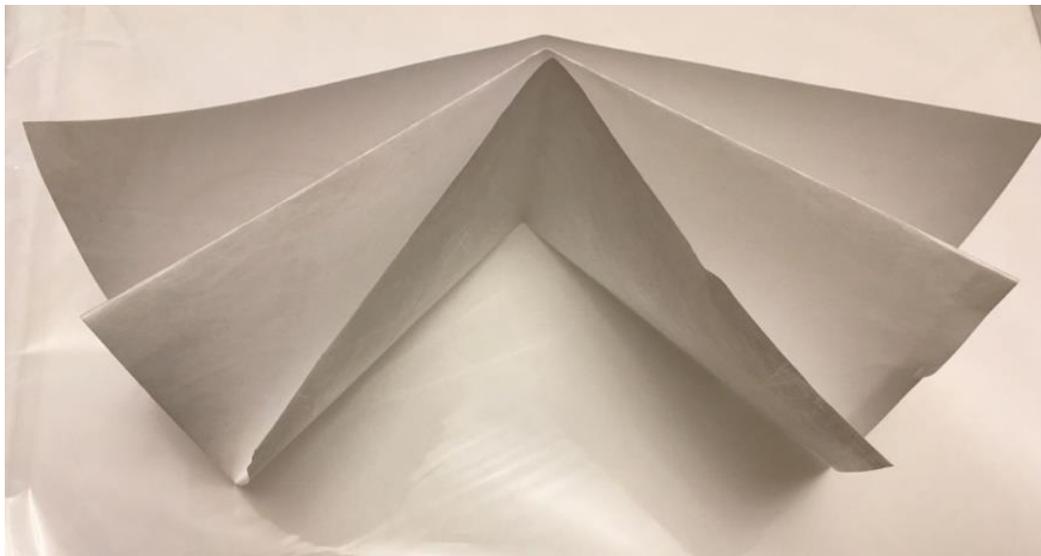


Figure 20. Beynon (2020) *Folds*.

For me, both this photograph and the book forms a representation of the complexity of the workshop. The folds and the gaps in the paper, captured in the shadows of the photograph, are like the participants, the facilitator, and the space prepared for the workshop process, waiting to be immersed in information to be developed. But like this simple book, there are also complexities present, nobody comes to a workshop with nothing, all can contribute and provide a vital part within the art workshop process. This book formed a basis from which I developed further books – the simple one-page folded books and the more complex *Turkish map fold concertina books*. But this photograph captures the symbolic essence of the people and process involved in the *Creative Art Journey*.

Forming a central theme to the whole research is the practice-based art research and the autoethnographic examination of myself as artist and facilitator in relation to a selection of past art workshops presented in case studies. The studio practice became a vital aspect to enable the discovery of the research process and to make direct and clear connections of theory and practice through the mixed method approach. This practice-based research represents the interconnectedness of the workshops and of the “*dysgu*” both teaching and learning at the same time. The work in the studio ‘... is labor [sic] in many respects, and slowness is one of its principal traits’ (Elkins, 2008, p. 5) this enables a continuum of thought processes beyond the studio time. I found that I could envisage the work in the space mentally when writing where; it generated a direct connection between the research and writing through making and when I left the studio, its ‘slowness’ (ibid. p. 5) continued with me to begin on practice again when I returned. Through creative means, art practice and practice-based research developed in a positive way, from *Sketchbooks*, through *Large-scale studio practice 2019-2020* and *Small-scale lockdown work 2020-2022* and finally in the *Studio June 2022*, to produce an original body of art made up of numerous individual pieces in processes, stages and approaches, all of which tell my story.

Doing practise and doing art form an original approach to this research method. Practise began with what I already knew, in making representational images to illustrate what I was thinking. These images did not fully capture the collaborative

engagement of the *Creative Art Journey*. The slowness of the studio and being with the work enabled a unique understanding of the difference between the representational images and the *diagrammatic drawings*. These drawings also became a unique way of working and developed within the slowness of the studio, where contemplation, making, thinking, doing and reworking could continuously happen. This original way of working is fully unique to me in a process of connecting theory to practise and to reflectively think about the involvement as facilitator in workshops with participants in the past. In this original way of working, I could fully contemplate the *Creative Art Journey* and what this meant within the reflective case studies to also formulate a theory to be able to consider different stages of the workshop process. In the slowness of the studio engagement the '[s]low thoughts cannot be sped up, and thinking slowly is thinking differently.' (Elkins, 2008, p. 6) in this way of working theory developed alongside practice in a way of working that belonged to me. It came together in a thought and making process, made clear for me through the diagrammatic drawing combined with an active sense of hauntology.

The various aspects of the practice-based research process proved beneficial in deepening the context of the research, providing a visual capture of information. Through simplification, complexity could be investigated and comprehended. Researching through visual inquiry enabled the advancement of academic writing, which took place surrounded by drawings. The drawings, which acted as visual memory prompts through which a focus on the four case studies, the participant experience and me as facilitator could ensue. Reflecting on the art workshop engagement enabled the evaluation of the similarities and differences of the methods and processes undertaken. The value of art and creativity could be reflected upon, through an autoethnographic lens, a practice-based inquiry using a first-person voice, where narrative and storytelling feature strongly.

## **Chapter 5: Psychogeography application: How I integrate Cymru, Cymry, Cymraeg, Cymreig**

The application of psychogeography runs as a central narrative throughout the research, beginning and presented in the literature review with examining the

history of education in Wales, exploring contemporary educational changes in Wales and in embracing the locations of workshops in the art workshops of the reflective case studies. Psychogeography has been instrumental in metaphorically connecting the research to place and culture. When thinking about a culture, including people and language, it is difficult to know where to begin, what should be included or excluded. Psychogeography is therefore a snapshot of how I integrate the ethos of 'Cymru' as an active concept within this research.

Exploring how others have adapted psychogeography, language, culture, place, the flâneuse and walking, have provided a means to metaphorically include these aspects throughout the research, in a personal methodological approach. Artists have used the notion of psychogeography to make art. The masculine form of the flâneur has been brought into question, most notably by Lauren Elkin (2016) who explores the role of the female walker from the historical and personal context. It is not unusual for creative practitioners to develop theories for their own purposes, adapting psychogeography is one area that has been used by others to support their creative, art or research practice, where every creative endeavour is a journey of discovery, '*siwrne ddarganfod yw pob ymderch greradigol*' (Lewis, 2015, p. 19).  
In arts practice:

Benjamin's approach illustrated the *author-flaneur* (similar to Baudelaire's *artist-flaneur*): a freely moving persona, navigating through streets and arcades of consumption, mostly producing aesthetic texts and written accounts of his experience. (Psarras, 2018, p. 2).

Even within the early practise of psychogeography these two practitioners, at various times, use theoretical aspects of walking to different ends, one for writing and the other for art.

More recent developments of psychogeography formed an adaptation in its use, In 1997, a group of four performance artists, Stephen Hodge, Simon Persighetti, Phil Smith and Cathy Turner established a group called '*Wrights & Sites*'. In their practice 'their projects gradually morphed into explorations of human responses to cities, landscape and walking.' they formed the term mythogeography a '[o]riginally

a misremembered version of the word psychogeography' they produced 'Mis-Guide[s]' which in 'the form of a guide book or a map' take the walker to different places for contemplation. For this group of performing artists, as their practice evolved so too did mytho-geography. 'By 2004, ... what the term had come to signify is highly suggestive of an attempt to 're-enchant' place' (Overall, 2015, p. 7) for them and their observers or those that engaged with their practice, this placed '...the fictional, fanciful, fragile and personal on equal terms with 'factual', ... Author and walker become partners in ascribing significance to place. (*Wright & Sites*, no date). Furthermore, for these performance artists mytho-geography provided '...a way of seeing and exploring the world' providing a 'combination of pedestrian resistance and magical thinking' (Overall, 2015, p. 7). This long-term evolving project explored to develop psychogeography within an art practice that involved walking alongside the response to place, developing the mythical and imaginative response to location. It not only involved the art practitioners but through the mis-guides encouraged their audience to engage with place also in an imaginative way developed from the factual.

Psarras, (2018, p. 7) who is concerned in creating sound responses to place explores other practitioners who are interested in the metaphor of psychogeography for example 'the work of Francis Alÿs, *The Modern Procession* (2002), ... a work that is audiovisually documented alongside a series of drawings and photographs. (ibid., p. 7), additionally, 'Gordan Savicic and his walking performance *Constraint City* (2008-2010), the artist becomes an 'orchestrator' of the invisible electromagnetic data of the city.' (ibid., p. 8). Psarras, further explores the 'the various ways that the metaphor of 'orchestrator' applies to a contemporary flaneur/flaneuse.' (ibid., p. 9) and the hybrid flâneur who 'curates the sensory qualities of walking (i.e. sonic, tactile) through hybrid constellations of technologies (i.e. audiovisual, locative), socialities and performative methodological frameworks' (ibid., p. 1). 'Metaphors have the potential to unlock the poetics and sensory qualities of ... concepts ... with strong imaginative potential.' (ibid., p. 7) these examples demonstrate the potential for the development of psychogeography, in diverse ways, to respond to location. The hybrid flâneur 'illustrates that something

new is occurring' (ibid., p. 8) it becomes something or someone else that orchestrates responses to location.

The imaginative and metaphorical journey of the 'hybrid flâneur' is used to examine the sense of place in my research. Walking is utilised to some extent, especially in studio practice. Though the prevalence of walking and the engagement with city have not been essential channels of exploration. In this research, I as psychogeographer and hybrid flâneur, take imaginative walks that are largely reflective responses to rural places. It is a journey into an exploration of the history of education in Wales, an emotional response to language and contemporary culture plus autoethnographic remembering.

The relevance of culture in this research is twofold. It is the culture of the self and relationship of self to others, but it is also the integration of the study of culture within art workshops. 'It's hard to resist the conclusion that the word 'culture' is both too broad and too narrow to be greatly useful.' (Eagleton, 2000, p. 32) however, '[c]ulture can be loosely summarized as the complex of values, customs corner beliefs and practices which constitute the way of life of a specific group' and 'is everything which is not genetically transmittable (ibid., p. 34). Though culture is complex it needs to be used in this research to provide an expression of belonging to Wales, as offered by 'Stewart Hall ... culture as the 'lived practices' or 'practical ideologies which enable a society, group or class to experience, define, interpret and make sense of its conditions of existence (ibid.). Culture therefore provides a definition and a distinction within this metaphorical psychogeography of place.

"*Cymru*", "*Cymraeg*" and "*cymreictod*" (Wales, the Welsh language and culture) have been significant elements of the research, from exploring theory, through methodological approaches, the focus of myself in practice and especially as themes in the art workshop case studies. John Davies quotes Walter Benjamin stating nothing that '...has ever happened should be regarded as lost for history...' (in *On the Concept of History*) (Swansea University, 2012). Wales has been at risk of losing its history and language. Being involved with art workshops has enabled facilitator and participants to engage with historical and contemporary information,

to creatively respond in art workshops. Learning about the past and making connections to the present in the workshops has a beneficial impact on the future, where all who have participated can take both information and artefacts away with them. Equally, some artefacts can become community based for societal reminders of historical events (for example *Murlun y Bont* (2005-2008)). The art workshops bring the past into the visual present and for the time of the workshop become something that exists vividly in the imagination.

Additionally, the exploration of the history of education, especially the non-conformist education in Wales, explores the historical, powerful belief in education delivered in “*Cymraeg*” Welsh to develop literacy in the considerable number of the population using the Welsh Bible in the 1600-1900s. This was undertaken mostly by clergy and within the Sunday schools of the Welsh chapels (*Education in Wales 1*, no date). The commissioned report of the *Blue Books* ‘*Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*’ of 1847 was undertaken by three English inspectors (*National Library of Wales*, no date) caused a change in the engagement of the Welsh population with the Welsh language in education, which has had a detrimental effect on the language ever since. This focusses the research on the appreciation of historical negative consequence on the Welsh language, which contributes a foundational significance to the issues in encouraging young participants to use Welsh in their engagement with art.

Language, history and people are not static they are explored and included in this research, through the view of art practice and of an art engagement with others in a *Creative Art Journey*:

Language forms part of the fabric of culture, and, like other aspects of culture, is built up over historical time and also throughout an individual lifetime, undergoing modification in response to myriad stimuli. (Samata, 2014, p. 8).

John Davies, when discussing his book on the History of Wales, stated that the exploration of history alters depending on what questions are asked, (Swansea University, 2012). Likewise, for me, the exploration of culture, through art, enables

the asking of questions and the rethinking of history, as well as the importance of creative independence within a minority culture “...*Pwysigrwydd annibyniaeth greadigol o fewn diwylliant lleiafgrifol....*” (Lewis, 2015, p. 18). By exploring culture, language and the history of Wales through art and in collaborative dialogues with others (in art workshops) the history and culture are no longer lost and stagnant in a static past.

“*Cymraeg*” the Welsh language has been vital in the art workshops and for me as an artist and workshop facilitator, similarly to the Welsh poet Menna Elfyn ‘the whole way I see life is through my Welsh language’ (Fuller, 2002), fostering this in others has been important. In *Murlun y Bont* (2005-2008) and *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* (2011), language was central to making connections to local history, folklore and mythology. Art provided a focus and a purpose for learning and sourcing information and making new visual images in response to discoveries. In *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)* the sourcing of information always started with the contemporary, with what the participants already knew about their society, and the way that they belonged, but associations were always made to the past, to the language, history and cultural heritage of Wales. The art making and remembering processes, in all these projects, contributed to developing a creative memory, both in the cotemporary and historical information discovered, ‘language is a product of culture and the tool to shape it, ‘language effects on memory also reflect the cultural dimension of memory” (Echterhoff 2008 p. 262 quoted in Samata, 2014, p. 61). “*Cymraeg*” Welsh was central to all the workshops selected as case studies, of this research and discussed in more depth in the next chapter.

For me, as an artist and facilitator, the process is about sharing ideas and collaborating in developing these through making, it is about the empowerment of the participants to find enjoyment in finding individual creativity, to widen their visual literacy and to participate in a co-creative journey through exploring art and cultural information in the Welsh language. In making art exploration of different themes can lead to discoveries these can be new to all participants including facilitator. Art enables a way of learning that opens possibilities that might otherwise not be available. In exploring “*cymreictod*” in “*Cymraeg*” (Welsh culture in the Welsh

language) fosters a sense of belonging or “*perthyn*” to the content and context of the art undertaken ‘After all, wanting the language to survive and flourish was only one part of my identity.’ (Elfyn, 2012). Exploring education, both in Wales and further afield and the policy documentation along with the curriculum development in Wales reinforces the importance of Wales and the Welsh language in this research.

The art process and dealing with narratives can also be difficult to navigate, as language creates tension through ‘the narrating subject [who] constructs a sense of self from past recollection and future projection’ (Crites, 1986, p. 155 in Samata, 2014, p. 55). This process can form detachment from immediate experiences, making a sense of identity feel abstract. As a result, a search for context to develop from the discomfort of lacking a coherent personal history, leads the participants through art to ‘invest time in constructing this narrative in order to make a provisional projection of the self into the future.’ (ibid.). Using narrative, through the visual, helps to make sense of a previously unexplored past. ‘The nature of the relationship between the individual and society, or the collective, ...’ (Samata, 2014, p. 103) is something that can be done through art practice in the collaborative art workshop. Furthermore, ‘[t]his thread of the relation of individual to collective is picked up for cultural memory... [and]... ‘collective memory’... (Samata, 2014, p. 104). Welsh history or the importance of Welsh culture has not traditionally been taught in schools, therefore, it is hard to comprehend how a ‘collective memory’ (ibid., p.104) can be obtained, through language, in a Welsh culture. This is a complex notion that exists outside of this thesis, but it is something that I find interesting. In a ‘cultural memory studies perspective in which language can be regarded as much a cultural artefact as literature, its influence not limited to people with complete fluency.’ (Samata, 2014, p. 170). When working on the art workshops the exploring of cultural memory, with both fluent and non-fluent Welsh speakers, to produce new art, in relation to contemporary matters, was important.

“*Y Cymry*” Welsh speakers are generally bilingual or have ‘two tongues’ (Elfyn, 2012), this is an aspect that was also explored in the art workshops the relationships of dual language. The detrimental legacy of the *Blue Books* reports of

1847 and their lasting effect has already been discussed. Welsh people still believe that they will be more successful if they use the English language. Therefore, an appreciation of 'the importance of even a liminal involvement with a language for individuals transitioning or 'living between' languages and cultures can recruit such involvements as positive and productive factors for ... life'. (Samata, 2014, p. 171). In considering that place in-between language and in-between culture it is also worth mentioning translation. As has already been discussed in chapter 1, words in another language do not always have the same meaning. On considering Walter Benjamin's 'metaphor, the translator's *alien* voice calls into the forest to reverberate the source which, in the responding echo, is changed, becoming the half-alien 'uncanny guest'. It can be further considered 'Is the origin then traceable? Not to someone who cannot speak the language of the origin'. (Samata, 2014, p. 95). This metaphor or narrative also raises the question in relation to the participants of the workshop and if they have learnt Welsh and live in a non-Welsh speaking home. That in-between place might well be complex. Menna Elfyn states of her youth:

I spoke Welsh in chapel and at home, ... while English was for school or for playing .... But whenever I spoke one language rather than the other, there was always another 'voice at my side', if I can borrow R. S. Thomas's words. And that voice was later to be recognised not only as *Cymraeg* (Welsh) but also as the voice of a *Cymraes* (Welsh woman). (Elfyn, 2012, p.18 original emphasis).

Through the visual and in Elfyn's case poetry, the connection to language, culture and to find the Welsh person that Elfyn recognises, can be developed through knowledge and understanding and in the in-between place can be explored.

Art and language provide a window into history and in the case of the art workshops, central in this research, the history of specific locations and communities. As individuals, and members of a community, much of our identity is derived from the connections we make with places. (Smith & Aranha, 2020, p. 6). The places of this art workshops selected as case studies for this research are in Ceredigion which is a county in the West of Wales and has mountains along one length and the Sea along another. It has different kind of communities ranging from the rural to the urban as well as a lot of uninhabited areas. The places in Ceredigion

are constantly changing. The decline in the Welsh language is like a retreat to a 'higher ground, as though a flooding has occurred'. This erosion challenges a sense of identity, as Welshness is often linked to the 'cultural energy' of Welsh-speaking rural areas. 'The continual deterioration of linguistic base undermines our estimation of who we really are'. Although this change is gradual and often unnoticed, 'it is clear that the metaphysical butterfly' of cultural identity is slowly diminishing. (Osmond, 2012, pp. 253-254). This decline is a continual threat within the places of Ceredigion and has been a subliminal aspect of the art workshops of this research.

Contemplating the sense of place where rural or urban communities can provide a sense of history and of the people. This is a metaphorical psychogeographical journey through Welsh history and culture of specific areas. 'In its broadest sense, psychogeography is a way of looking at place and our relationship with it.' (Overall, 2015, p. 2). The art projects undertaken here have been 'driven by curiosity and a desire to experience place more fully, on many levels;' this has also led, as for the psychogeographer, to 'question, refuse and occasionally disobey.' (ibid., p. 3). Place and history are constantly changing and the exploring of them can make sense of them. A lot can be learnt through journeys to the past and in those journeys, it is up to the individual what they take with them into the future.

The exploration of history, in this research, can be likened to the role of the city flâneur where the Cymraes (Welsh woman), as flâneuse, wanders through history and contemporary practice to make sense of the place in which art engagement has been undertaken. 'Flânerie, the *flâneur's* activity, involves the observation of people and social types and contexts; a way of reading the city, its population, its spatial configurations whilst also a way of reading and producing texts. (Jenks & Neves, 2000, p. 1, original emphasis). Though the city has no place in this research, the communities, the population, reading and producing texts certainly does. Exploring people happens on diverse levels, firstly in looking through history in the presentation of this thesis, secondly the communities and the history of the communities through narratives have has a compelling place in the themes of the art workshops and thirdly the locations of the workshops. 'We claim our right to disturb the peace, to observe (or not observe) to occupy (or not occupy) and to

organise (or disorganised) space in our own terms'. (Elkin, 2016, p. 288). These narratives are presented on my own terms through the autoethnographic voice.

Interestingly too as with the use of different languages, it is difficult to translate '*Flâneur*' into Welsh to have the same or similar meaning, this is true of translation into English too. Even defining in the original French is difficult, according to Elkin 'Flâneuse [flanne-euhze], noun, from the French. Feminine form of flâneur [flanne-euhr], an idler, a dawdling observer, usually found in cities.' The discussion continues to state that '[t]hat is an imaginary definition. Most French dictionaries don't even include the word.' (Elkin, 2016, p. 7). As discussed previously in this thesis, translating can be complex but also interesting. Flâneur and flâneuse then remain firmly in the original French and bring with them their own meaning, developed through creative processes of associating city walking with writing or making art.

As an end note to the application of psychogeography, although psychogeographical city walking was not the methodology of this work, walking was utilised in undertaking this research, walking to the studios, walking in the studios, walking as thinking and walking to think about the research:

I am a walker.

Walking in the large studio spaces was important.

I needed to walk to make, to walk to think.

Walking in the studio meant that I could step back to see the work.

When I could no longer walk because I was in lock down the work became small and like Xavier de Maistre (2013) the journeys around my room became vital as was the journey from the sofa to the studio.

When I get bogged down by research or writing I walk, and this helps in getting clarity.

I am an urban, a rural and an all-terrain walker.

I walk long distances.

I get psychogeography.

I booked large studios spaces so that I could place the work around the space and then I could make journeys around the work, I could move the work, and I could make connections.

In this research journey there are contradictions.

Walking has many contradictions, it can be fast, slow, mindful, distracted and it can be a good thing to do or not. Everyone walks in different ways and the response as in psychogeography is also complex. In this research journey many contradictions are associated with using psychogeography as a method. This includes the contradictions of the metaphor and the walking, the contradictions of the autoethnographer, the personal response to the methodologies, the contradiction using urban settings instead of the city and of using contemporary and historical Wales. But this is not unusual as is the case for the flâneur:

There are many contradictions built into the idea of the flâneur though we may not realise it when we talk about him. We think we know what we mean but we don't. The same could be said of the flâneuse. (Elkin, 2016, p. 11).

These contradictions and the various creative responses by others to psychogeography allows psychogeography to be positioned firmly in this research, the creative metaphorical response undertaken with the flâneuse as autoethnographer. Language, culture, walking and making art all play a part in this method. But psychogeography does not function alone. The integration and connection to the other methods is essential for effectiveness.

Situating this psychogeographical review in Wales provide a specific geographical location for this research. This includes a review of its history specifically to education, language and culture in a general investigation. This provides a specific review as background information for positioning this research in specific location for the case studies. The emotional engagement of psychogeography comes from an autoethnographical engagement with these locations. Furthermore, this is augmented in the study of self in relation to location, the journey undertaken in this research, to include a personal art practice, research of the art workshops and being a Welsh person. This has been a metaphorical psychogeographical journey

with the hybrid flâneuse through a snapshot or a mini guide of the culture and language of Wales.

## **Chapter 6: Reflective Case Studies application: How I engage with Art workshops**

The fourth and final application of method is reflective case studies. This chapter presents a general summary of key points, pertinent to this research, from four selected art workshops, integrated into an ongoing art practice. Each workshop provides a unique overview with diverse purposes and expectations. These have been selected from a back catalogue, to provide a distinct representation of the creative engagement of facilitator with participants from. This back catalogue includes a range art workshops working from mother and baby groups, young participants, to adults of all ages. However, for this reflective analysis the focus has been narrowed to workshops with participants between the ages of 3 to 13 years old. The criteria for selection were that all were undertaken in the Welsh language, they demonstrated different types of workshops and included themes such as narrative, self, a sense of place, culture, and heritage. A consideration of their differences and their commonality was also important. In common for all four case studies is that all were undertaken in Welsh and explored the cultural heritage of Wales. It needs to be noted that not all the workshops during my career have been undertaken using the Welsh language. However, the principal factors of collaborative art workshops with participants, are the language and culture of Wales in Wales, which have been the most exceptional and distinctive aspects of my engagement. Additionally, the locations of workshops provide the explicitness for this research to include community, schools and extracurricular activities. This overview of art workshops provides examples of activities and ways of working from which the *Creative Art Journey* can be understood through an autoethnographic reflection of the interactions formed in varying time scales of collaboration.

This autoethnographic, reflective case study focus on the art workshops provides a personal perspective, as a facilitator of the work undertaken, where the participants' perspective is viewed as part of my memories. In this reflective process all four

methodological approaches are interwoven and do not function in isolation. Firstly, autoethnography enables a focus on investigating myself as facilitator in the art workshop, practice-based research enabled a deeper understanding of the art workshop to explore the purpose of that engagement, psychogeography provides a sense of place for the research and finally the reflective case studies focus on the art workshop engagement of facilitator with participants. Reflecting on art workshops, using these methods, has enabled an objective approach to positively examine what has been undertaken in the past by remembering workshops through reviewing photographs and personal archives. Reflection is the most valuable aspect where '[a] case is a story or narrative of a real life situation' (Smith, & MacGregor, 1993, p. 3) and forms a basis from which to critically analyse and explore the *Creative Art Journeys*.

Reflection also included making connections to associated literature to provide an academic framework from which to develop a way of thinking about the processes of collaboration in the art workshop. This critical evaluation '[i]n the frame of the postmodern paradigm, [and a] reflective analysis of one's heuristic experience ...[are] .... essential for the validity of the research'. (Mortari, 2015, p. 2) from the facilitators point of view. It is noteworthy to acknowledge that this engagement with literature to include the philosophy of education, as reviewed in this research, was not intentionally applied to the art workshop in the past. However, other facilitators may have brought teaching and learning methods to the workshops, some had been teachers and had engaged in research of different modes of educational principles, but at the time of the art workshops delivery this was not evident to me but may have unintentionally impacted my way of working. Being an artist, being creative and learning through delivering are examples of developing skills to facilitate workshops. An exploration of myself through undertaking an art practice and reflective consideration of the facilitator interaction with participants in art workshops in a *Creative Art Journey* that captures collaborative learning, or "*dysgu*", through arts-based workshop practices from a local and Welsh perspective.

The four case studies are *Murlun y Bont*, (2005-2008) a school and community-based project; *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)* a multi-disciplinary project;

*Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* (2011), a project in a school and finally, *Paper Boats* (Tosta, 2016) with a group of children from a local primary school in an international community festival (An outline plan for *Cadw Sŵn* and *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* can be found in appendix E). These four case studies provide an overview for a broad evidence base to examine the principles, variety and diversity of approaches, within the selected age range and confines of the research. The workshops capture a selected interpretation and like 'many a researcher [!] would like to tell the whole story but of course cannot: the whole story exceeds anyone's knowing or anyone's telling' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 456), there are constraints of time and thesis length within research, which means elements are excluded. The case studies, some of which occurred over time, have been presented from my academic integrity, from a single autoethnographic view, in a much edited and selected format.

### **Case Study 1: *Murlun y Bont* (2005-2008)**

*Murlun y Bont* (2005-2008) was a community and school-based series of art workshops delivered over a period of three years, culminating in a mural designed by school participants. I was the artist facilitator of this project and the school pupils, as participants, were involved in all aspects of the decision-making processes. This was an extracurricular project, held in a school during school time with no curriculum involvement, this unusual engagement warrants the inclusion in this research. This project was based in a small village in Ceredigion where, in a 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries lead mining had been a thriving industry (*Ancient Monuments*, no date), this aspect became the main theme of the mural, though had not been intended at the beginning. There were no initial agendas, nor any preconceived ideas and the themes grew as the local exploration developed through telling stories using the Welsh language, which were then visually developed in drawings, designing and painting a mural. The location of the project was vital for engaging with traditions, especially the Welsh oral tradition of passing information from person to person in intergenerational engagement to include the historic culture of the village.

The *Creative Art Journey* grew in collaboration with the community and participants where all ideas and contributions could be valued and considered along the length of the project. The project was devised on what can be retrospectively considered as ‘Collaborative Learning’ (CL) which ‘...is based upon consensus building through cooperation by group members, in contrast to competition in which individuals best [sic] other group members...’, or to compete against them to be better, or to get better grades. The benefit of the *Murlun y Bont, (2005-2008)* project is that participants could apply different learning methods and art making processes back to ‘the classroom, ... within their families and generally as a way of living with and dealing with other people’ (Panitz, T., 1996 In Laal Marjan & Laal Mozghan, 2012, p. 493), being involved in arts projects such as these, provides beneficial learning for the facilitator and participants, that is more than merely the process or output of the project. This project involved collaboration that included group work, working with the school, the community and a local storytelling festival. Community collaboration, in the initial stages of the project, enabled the collection of information and an appreciation of the past using different story telling processes, to include professional storytellers, experienced local storytellers and members of the community of all ages.

The festival was called “*Gŵyl y Cyfarwydd*” translated as the festival of the familiar, but the Welsh word “*cyfarwydd*” also means a storyteller or most knowledgeable (*Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru*, no date). The aim of the festival was to engage with language and culture in a time when these aspects of Welsh life, especially in rural communities, are in crisis. In small communities in Wales young adults have been leaving to study or work, the population is ageing, and houses bought by people from elsewhere who don’t always want to engage with community life.

...what we are doing is using the cultural ability of belonging and of creating together to improve and to respond positively...to the countryside crisis and the Welsh speaking communities...

“...*beth rydyn ni'n ei wneud yw defnyddio gallu'r diwylliant o berthyn a chreu gyda'n gilydd i wella ac ymateb yn gadarnhaol... i argyfwng cefn gwlad a'r cymunedau Cymraeg eu hiaith...*” (*BBC Cymru*, 2006).

Stories were told in community events and in the school which provided a wealth of local information from which to develop ideas. Collecting stories and documenting these was an aspect of the project that continued beyond the initial “*Gŵyl y Cyfarwydd*” festival. Two local men contributed to the project as compelling and valuable natural storytellers sharing personal stories from memory. These stories connected the teller to the community, spanning contemporary and historical perspectives, to form a vital possibility of community belonging and to deepening the knowledge of cultural heritage.

Storytelling in the school was facilitated by two professional storytellers, Michael Harvey who tells ‘stories from the world’s oral traditions to all ages’ (*Michael Harvey*, no date) and the storyteller and artistic director Euros Lewis (*Lewis*, no date). They empowered all participants to collect stories from members of the community and to tell them in their own voice, to the rest of the school. Being creative and using imagination to craft and develop presentation skills were key in empowering the telling of funny, serious, sad, and engaging stories, in the Welsh oral tradition, which is at risk of being lost due to societal changes. For example, one 11-year-old participant, from a non-Welsh speaking family, discovered an aptitude to tell stories in Welsh with a compelling vibrance to hold the audience. This participant may never have known the ability as a storyteller had they not participated in this project. Telling stories provided a way to focus on remembering, through the length of the project, where participants were encouraged to take notes and sketches as they recalled, this provided a way of filtering the stories, to discover the favourite and important ones to later be developed visually.

Storytelling was further developed through visiting members of the community in their “*cynefin*” (Definition pp. 47- 48) in what can be called, in this research, psychogeography walks around the village. This brought the stories to life for the participants, as the ‘appreciation of the eternal evident in the familiar and unchanging experiences of its inhabitants’ (Coverley, 2006, p. 16), during these walks we visited familiar places, met familiar people and were told stories in the locations that they had occurred, forming an emotional connection to place. These walks provided opportunities to sketch, to take notes and to document the locations

in moving and still images. All participants undertook these village walks which were informative activities, observing and learning about the local community, fostering a sense of belonging through a developing understanding of the heritage of the place. During one walk the discovery of a local collector of old photographs who later provided images that were used to influence the development of the mural. These walks, stories and photographs provided tangible sources from which to develop individual creative responses through imaginative remembering.

One favourite story, worth noting, contained serious, humorous and peculiar elements. In the 1950s a monkey lived on a shed in the village, boys threw sweets at the monkey on their way home from school but one day one of the boys threw stones instead. The monkey broke free from the restraints, chased after the boys and bit the boy, that threw the stones, on the back of his leg. The monkey unfortunately had to be shot and was buried in a lead mining shaft, this burial provided the connection to the lead mining theme of the mural. The boy that was bitten, now an adult and lived away from the village, heard that the story was being retold and returned to the school to share his story and show his scar, ‘... a shared narrative...is a dynamic creativity that can transform...’ (Neal, 2015, p. 12). Seeing the location of the home of the monkey during the walks and meeting the man that was bitten as a boy and seeing the scar, provided a ‘... continuity of experience and interaction between young and old [that] are both important to learning’ (Jarvis, 2010, p. 186), the story became real to the participants and possibly helped to make the other stories real too.

Alongside storytelling and collaboration developing individual images was a vital element of this project. This involved using different processes and methods involving changing materials and scale to challenge the participants ideas of making art. The art process in this project, as is often the case in the workshops that I facilitate, began with making simple small pencil drawings as seen in figure 21 below.



Figure 21. Beynon (2006) *Early drawings for Murlun y Bont by participants.*

These drawings involved remembering the stories, all the participants were encouraged to select and visualise their own story. My task as facilitator, in these early stages, was to assist in collating and organising information collected, and drawings made by the participants. There were also other time management aspects to be undertaken including working with the school and community to arrange visits and workshops. These small drawings progressed to increase in scale for inclusion in the mural. Drawing on a large-scale is not common in schools, and the participants needed to develop skills which took time and practice both for the participants and facilitator. Different techniques and processes were used and one that proved beneficial was to draw with white chalk on black paper. This was successful as it was an unfamiliar process for the participants and needed to be learnt from a fresh perspective, with no preconceived knowing.



Figure 22. Beynon (2007) *Participant drawing.*

Figure 22 above shows an 8-year-old participant working on a white chalk drawing on black paper. The scale of the drawing is evident in the photograph. Making individual drawings developed skills in working on different scales fostering new abilities for future development. Each participant drew imaginative images that were later developed for the collaborative work, but form a powerful sense of belonging, that has a lasting impact on the individual.

As the project developed from the individual drawings, the mural needed to be designed, and it was decided by all that the older school pupils would undertake this task. Discussions and decisions were made through 'CL [Collaborative Learning which is] based on the idea that learning is a naturally social act in which participants talk among themselves. It is through the talk that learning occurs' (Gerlach, J.M., 1994, p. 12 in Laal & Laal, 2012, p. 492), enabling the project and ideas to develop. This involved 'learning and respect for the abilities and contributions of their peers'. (Laal & Laal, 2012, p. 494) and trusting the older participants to design the mural in its final stages. Grouping and sorting the drawings into the selected stories, making challenging decisions in selecting images that best suited to the mural, this meant, for example, that all the monkey images could be placed together. Before developing the drawings to the final mural design as seen in the local village hall in figure 23 below.



Figure 23. Beynon (2007) *Year 6 working on a large scale.*

Using the village hall added another sense of community engagement and curiosity to contributed to a sense of excitement for the project. As a facilitator, at this stage, I supported this group in this difficult decision-making process, helping when needed but refraining from helping when not. Making difficult decisions is inevitable in the *Creative Art Journey*, all participants needed to appreciate this and to understand that not all images could be used. Selection was made on what was appropriate for the design with all work considered and contributed to the process. Documentation of this stage was essential to be shared with all participants which continued to foster the sense of belonging and to avoid disengagement with the project.

The final stages for this group were firstly, to draw the mural to scale, seen in figure 23 above. In the collaborative design, they copied the stories from the selected images and made creative decisions as they developed the large drawing. Secondly, to introduce colour, before tracing the design onto plastic to be traced on the wall. The mural drawing was then taken to the school to show all the participants so that alterations could be made, a vital stage for collaborative ownership of the *Creative Art Journey*. This ended the collaborative element of the project, as due to health and safety matters, the participants were not allowed to paint the mural from the scaffolding. This then became my job to trace the mural from the plastic to the wall before painting, it was important that I transferred the design as accurately as possible as this was not my artwork.

The benefit of cultural and community involvement sustained the Welsh oral tradition in this project and is especially revealed by a young participant of about 7, who had during the project, moved to Wales from England and was unable to speak Welsh. When showing the mural to friends and family they made comments such as, “look mum I painted that “*toill*” (this has no translation but means a ghostly funeral procession seen in Wales to foretell a death) or “that there is a “*golau canwyll*” (a candlelight over someone’s head to indicate their spirit). These are seen bottom right of the middle in figure 24– the coffin and miserable looking person.



The arts are a means by which we can investigate and understand the past and the present, our world and our feelings. We can do this by 'doing' it or by 'spectating' it or both - Michael Rosen (*Arts Council England*, 2013, p. 11).

The participants used practical skills to use oral and visual storytelling to provide large images in a mural so that others could 'spectate' (ibid., p. 11) and imagine the past to tell their own stories, steeped in the oral traditions important to Wales. The importance of this project was and continues to be, to celebrate cultural heritage, oral tradition, art and the Welsh language, using imagination to consider that past in the present.

The process of this project was artist-led by me and other interactions were included to enrich and enliven the project to include community engagement, schoolteachers and professional storytellers. The collaborative nature of this project where all involved worked together to 'help and encourage each other to learn. ... providing one another with feedback, challenging one another's conclusions and reasoning, and perhaps most importantly, ... encouraging one another. (Laal & Laal, 2012, p. 493) these aspects were key to the project success. The role of the artist included project management, co-ordinating external sources, organising, engaging with the community and deciding how to collect and document information before embarking on art making in the *Creative Art Journey*. The time scale of this project meant that those involved in the initial stages of the project may not have had a continuous contribution. However, the ideas of all involved in any aspect of the project influenced or had an impact on the mural. The length of the project afforded time to collate information and ideas, for engagement and development enabled community participation and a sense of belonging to be nurtured. The artist led art workshops involved working with the community to gather information, to explore history both during psychogeography walks and in various storytelling events with the school pupils. These were dynamic, engaging ways of learning about a past that enabled the young participants to develop and work on ideas. Making art based on the stories collected, meant that the participants could engage with and remember the stories told to them. Furthermore, making art was the bond that connected the stories of past to the present and the mural provided information for a future beyond the initial workshops.

Collecting ideas was vital, as facilitator I devised and developed community involvement, where collaboration and the intergenerational engagement in various creative processes to included storytelling and making art were part of the *Creative Art Journey* provided platforms to share memories that were personal, cultural, and belonged to a specific location. The empowerment of others to take part in the process achieved through collaboration and stories developed in the mural which then belonged to the community and can be used as a visual recollection and memorial to the prosperous lead mining past. Engaging with the past meant that learning occurred, and a knowledge of the cultural heritage was fostered. This art project enabled everyone to learn about the rich heritage of the village and provided a means to discover a vast difference from contemporary life. Additionally, the intergenerational engagement meant that something that would have traditionally occurred in this Welsh village could be developed to provide a lasting impact beyond art and storytelling, people of all ages now knew each other. The project fostered a sense of belonging and a memorial to a history in a rural community, used various skills of facilitation to enable and empower creative, collaborative methods in collecting information and using the Welsh language to produce a mural.

### **Case Study 2: *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)***

The second reflective case study is *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)* (*Cadw Sŵn* is loosely translated as making a noise). I was involved in this multi-disciplinary Welsh language project as an artist and facilitator, from its inception in 1997 until 2014. This annual project for ‘young people between 11 and 13 years of age’ (*Theatr Felin-fach*, no date. a) was undertaken once a week, on a Sunday, over a five-week period, involving hundreds of participants. For the benefit of this research, general themes, activities, and processes are presented without specifically focusing on one annual project. To condense many years into one case study is challenging, but the inclusion of *Cadw Sŵn* is fundamental to explore collaborative, co-creative processes with many participants, numerous creative facilitators, Welsh historical themes and contemporary issues. These co-creative

processes culminated in a performative exhibition of work produced over the five-week project.

The combined processes of *Cadw Sŵn* included, though were not limited to, the visual art, set design and making, theatre, film, sound and other technical opportunities, acting, dance, movement, voice work, scripting, writing. The project did not exclude any creative process if there was a possibility of inclusion with expert arts practitioners. *Cadw Sŵn* was led through “*Cymraeg*” Welsh but equally did not exclude involvement by participants who could not speak the language. Collaboration and communication were essential in all aspects of this large project, this meant careful logistical planning and pre-project discussions to ensure space, enough facilitators and participants. Furthermore, there were no authoritative rules and no lesson plans - “*Nid oes rheolau awdurdod, nid oes cynllun dysgu*” (Ames, 2013, p. 186), the openness of the project formed both exciting yet apprehensive perceptions before commencement. Trusting in ambiguity was essential for all involved in *Cadw Sŵn* where the journey was unknown, and collaborative discussions empowered decision making and parity in contribution from everyone.

In *Cadw Sŵn* themes of culture and identity provided material from a Welsh historical perspective and from the contemporary viewpoints of the young participants, explored by diverse age groups (facilitator and participants), including from diverse backgrounds. Cultural consideration was complex and provided scope for examination, within the context and confines of the project, which was both individualistic and communal. Contemporary themes and topics pertinent to the young participants included, for example the use of mobile phones, bullying, fashion and the Welsh language. These could also be connected to Welsh historical themes such as exploring the timeline of the Welsh language, introducing the blue books to consider their lasting effect on contemporary Wales.

Exploring such themes also meant that international connections could be made such as the protest of Rosa Parks and racial unfairness in other cultures to include and enhance the participant’s perspective. Participants considered Rosa Parks’ sitting protest on the bus, she ‘became one of the major symbols of the civil rights

movement after she was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger in 1955'. (CNN, 2018). This example provides the notion of silent yet strong protest of unfairness. The young participants of *Cadw Sŵn* were able to make connections to themselves in relation to contemporary Welsh unfairness. In the words of the young participants (seen in figure 25), 'Tired of always surrendering' "*Wedi Blino Ildio o Hyd*":



Figure 25. Beynon (2012) *Wedi Blino Ildio o Hyd*

This demonstrated the possibilities and power of the arts, which not only develop local and personal ideas, but also makes global connections. Issues were explored in the collaborative series of workshops where everyone's opinions and ideas mattered.

The project process (an example plan is available in Appendix E) began with gathering information from all involved in large group discussions, this aided in setting the themes to be further explored and developed in smaller groups activities. This gathering for large discussions occurred throughout the five weeks both at the start and end of each day, in diverse and inclusive ways. Additionally, collaborative warm up sessions empowered a sense of belonging, making connections, visualising potential of getting to know all facilitators and participants of the project. Following the initial large group discussion the participants were divided into smaller

rotational groups to experience the different creative processes in various arts workshops. For example, in the art workshops which I facilitated, the initial collection of ideas included, simply drawing on paper using words and images. This meant that if a participant was not confident in group discussions, ideas could be explored and presented in less challenging and more individualistic ways. Facilitating included guiding and encouraging individuals to develop ideas, to analyse the drawings with the group, to help form judgements and to aid in presenting new ideas to the whole group.

In art workshops, participants worked on their ideas and through making, themes occur in the visual that might not have occurred in the other creative processes or vice versa. These ideas could then be shared in the large group discussions either by the facilitator or by the participant. Wider discussion could be considered around new themes or ideas that may or may not be developed in the whole project. Whichever was the case no idea was ever discounted without consideration. Facilitating the art aspect of this project meant enabling and empowering the participants to find visual ideas, accepting that ideas may not always succeed which was never known at the start, being part of discussions progressed the development of ideas and processes leading to a performative exhibition.

Small and large group discussions used show and tell opportunities which were factored into the project process. '[b]uilt into cooperative learning work is regular "group processing," a "debriefing" time where students reflect on how they are doing (Smith & MacGregor, 1993, p. 2) at essential key stages. Discussions provided opportunities to collect and present new and developing concepts such as the development of a written script, a new performative scene, ideas for props or a backdrop. These discussions formed the co-creative, co-producing, collaborative way of working that occurred during the entire process up to the performative exhibition, providing a voice and ownership of the project for all participants. They provided a platform for showing work undertaken, providing validity for process, for developing and for celebrating the work together. In these scenarios all were perceived as experts and could take the lead in navigating the process and developing ideas in a knowledge exchange.

As the project came closer to the end, the discussions and expectations focussed more on the presentation which may not have been fully resolved and may not have been polished. There was no assessment unlike in the classroom where teachers can experience ‘tensions, ...[and] downward pressure from high stakes assessment which threatened to undermine creative pedagogies.’ (Craft et al., 2013, p. 3), but there was validation of achievement through a performative exhibition to others. This form of interaction is based on respect and in the development of ideas together.

Collaboration in this project involved working with all participants and multiple other facilitators. Being involved in discussions, listening to opinions, planning and engaging with unfamiliar creative activities like acting, dancing, drama and film meant that all contributed to the decision-making process which formed the co-creative strength of this project. Trust and a calm engagement, in working with others and providing a voice for all was essential:

Empathy lies at the heart of working with commonality and opens people to a breadth and depth of human experience; joy and pain.’ In working with a common aim and developing understanding ‘making space for emotional and intimate narratives ...connecting people...’ and activates ‘...to understand and share the feeling of others. (Neal, 2015, p. 89).

Collaborative practice develops trust and a powerful position from which to explore, make and share art practice as well as to contribute to enhancing the other creative processes of *Cadw Sŵn*. It was vital for the facilitators to meet frequently to discuss developments in cultural and historical connections, to share ideas and processes developed from the co-devised ideas so that they could grow to be shared during the next session for the benefit of the project. This meant that each week the ideas could develop further and the conversations in the regular planning sessions formed a core process that aided in the outcome.

This was an exciting project to work on as the artists, facilitators and participants had no idea of outcome, no idea who would be involved and no preconceived

motives in developing the performative exhibition. There was a strong trust in creative practice which evidently included risk and an uncertainty at the start of the *Creative Art Journey*. Dynamics in co-creative multidisciplinary projects, can be complex or simple, it is never evident at the outset, but it is the dynamics that drives the *Creative Art Journey*. The final output could sometimes be unpolished as the process was reliant on the skills of the participants, their willingness or ability to participate, their readiness to engage with other participants and the facilitators. This was a dynamic process where all contributed to the *Creative Art Journey* together where ownership, a sense of belonging and the history of Wales were key.

Each annual project's aim was to produce work on a specific theme, to develop skills and present these learnt skills to the public in a visual and performative exhibition. The innovative work exhibited included a selection of the process work, for example developmental explorations, visual outputs and short performative pieces. The project pushed boundaries of ideas and ability and provided valuable experiences for all involved. It was important in *Cadw Sŵn*, that the work produced was that of the participants with the facilitators to participate, to help in guiding the process, contribute expert advice and to facilitate the project for beneficial means (for example sourcing materials). The important aspects of this project were the innovative and formative development of creativity. This enabled individual contributions at all stages that was crucial for the development of the *Creative Art Journey*. Collaborative involvement produced collective contributions to the whole project that cultivated a sense of belonging and ownership. Working in "Cymraeg" Welsh empowered all participants to use the language collectively and individually, ensuring a lasting memory of this beyond the project itself. Finally, personal and collective engagement motivated holistic development in the *Creative Art Journey*.

### **Case Study 3: *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project (2011)***

The third reflective case study *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project (2011)* is an example of an art workshop held in a school with a group of participants with no intended association to the academic curriculum, to assessment nor measured according to academic framework to enable a freedom of creativity and art making.

This workshop was an artist-led whole school approach, and took place in 2011, at the time the school had about 80 pupils from the ages of 3 to 11 years old in 4 classes, with some classes being mixed year groups. The location of this project was integral to the visual investigation of socio-cultural knowledge, set in Tregaron, which is a small town in Ceredigion, that had been a thriving market town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, (*Tregaron*, 2024). This art project coincided with two other unrelated projects undertaken in the community. An archaeological dig which attempted to find the remains of the 1884 Tregaron circus elephant buried behind a local hotel and secondly, a community theatre production telling the story of the Tregaron elephant.

This workshop explores a local historical event '[t]he Tregaron Elephant has long had its place in local folklore - a beast that died while on tour rumoured to be buried behind the town's Talbot Hotel' (*BBC News*, 2011), a young circus elephant died in 1848 having drunk lead-laden water from a stream; this is a well-documented factual event, but the location of its burial is rich with folklore. This local story includes community remembrance passed down through the oral story telling tradition often including humour, tragedy and nostalgia, 'the tradition of telling stories has remained very much alive in Wales....' (Gwyndaf, no date). During this project the participants not only learnt about local history they were also empowered to add their own art impressions. This aided in learning and developing local knowledge through art, enabling the participants to share their knowledge both visually and orally. Local learning is embedded in the familiar rather than in a curriculum that is nationally organised for delivery in the classroom. The participants have far more familiarity in the process of learning and can contribute to a two-way dialogue with members of their own community on a story that is familiar.

The key aspects of the *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* (2011) were visual and oral communication, to explore the historical stories specific to the local community and to form new personal stories in a visual format. This collaborative art journey brought the community, teachers, pupils as participants and the artist as facilitator together contributing in diverse ways. The community provided material for the project such as press cuttings and other documentation of the 1884 event, telling stories in the oral tradition of passing information from one generation to the next.

The teachers were invited to form a curriculum involvement, if they felt that this was relevant, for example, making connections to maths, geography, history and literacy. Pupils, as participants, could make connections to the class work if they wanted but their main aim was to make art in response to different aspects of the elephant story, the artist as facilitator ensured that each pupil, as participant, had a productive art experience, using creativity and imagination, regardless of curriculum involvement. This provided two different learning opportunities for participants/pupils, firstly the curriculum led teaching and learning method, secondly the creative learning of the art workshop. These two methods ran in parallel with both offering an impact on the other in unrecorded ways. But in the art project I as facilitator could refer to what the participants were learning with the teacher, and they could contribute that knowledge to the art project.

Making art workshops relevant to the curriculum can sometimes be a challenge, especially if the teachers have few art skills or don't see themselves as being creative. They often like to be led in their engagement or can be hesitant in involvement and sometimes pass the role onto another member of staff: 'Successful arts activities often involve professional artists. For successful implementation, professional training of teachers is needed on how to effectively integrate the arts activities ... in the classroom' (See and Kokotsaki, 2015, p. 4). The differences between curriculum delivery of art practice and the art process are generally that curriculum delivery can be restrictive, needs similar outcomes from all who participate, is controlling, studious, and leads to assessment, '... we push our kids to study what's easy to test not what's important to learn' (Dintersmith, 2021, 6:36:53-54). Because creativity and imagination are ambiguous and difficult to test, they are consequently complex in their relationship to curriculum delivery:

Teachers claim to value creativity, but to hold negative attitudes toward, and show little tolerance of, attributes associated with creativity, such as risk taking, impulsivity, and independence (Beghetto, 2006; Fasko, 2001; Runco, 2003; Westby & Dawson, 1995) (Ranjan & Gabora, 2012, p. 3).

What I brought to the classroom context, through the workshop, was an art practice that was individual, collaborative, free, sometimes disappointing, exciting, not

assessed, not limiting, the process was as important as the outcome, and ‘what is great for a student is a challenge that invites creativity’ (Dintersmith, 2021, 6:36:39-40), this was encouraged and enabled in this project. All the participants were challenged to explore the story of the elephant, to relate this through creative thinking, making local connections, using the Welsh language, learning about the meaning and relationship of the elephant story to the community and especially to make art.

It is also beneficial in some art projects to look at professional artists. For this project the work of two artists were used as inspiration for some classes and to provide a local connection. Firstly, the work of the local, nationally known artist, Ogwyn Davies was used for inspiration for his use of words in his:

Surface texture and an earthy palette play an important part here, emulating that of an excavated on an archaeological dig [sic]. He shows a mastery in calligraphy using different styles of lettering that convey different authors (Aberystwyth Art Centre, 2022).

Exploring the work of Davies provided a specific local connection, the artist lived in the town at the time of the project until his death in 2015 and was a nationally exhibiting artist for over ‘sixty years’ (*RCA Conway*, no date). His art provided a connection to Tregaron and to Wales as well as to his art practices, especially mixed media that the participants could respond to his art in developing their own making. Secondly, the work of the artist Brian Graham was explored for his interest ‘in land and landscape’ (Mullins, 2008, p. 45) and ‘in the relationship between art, artefacts’ (ibid., p. 107), his work at the time was also influenced by archaeology. For this project making connections to the practice of art practitioners was essential to be able to engage the participants in developing and devising their own way of working, to expand knowledge.

A brief description of the activities of each of the four classes is presented to demonstrate the whole school approach (an example plan is available in Appendix E). Class four was years 5 and 6, 9–11-year-old pupils, class three was year 4, 8–9-year-old pupils, class two was years 1 and 2, 5–7-year-old pupils and the reception

class “*dosbarth derbyn*” 3–5-year-old pupils. Each class undertook different art activities, closely discussed with the staff and developed alongside curriculum themes studied at the time. The participants explored maps, geography and travel, they looked at old photographs to imagine the town of the past by also exploring the town of the present, they studied and contemplated the story of the elephant that came with the circus in 1848 and sadly died in the town. They also imagined the final journey of the elephant after it had drunk the contaminated water before dying, to then supposedly being buried behind the Talbot Hotel in the town. Through facts, imagination could be used to explore narrative and historical event became alive in the minds of each participant and visually expressed in the art produced. The specific Welsh theme and Welsh language use of this project sited this project in its place, in Tregaron.

Firstly, in class four some of the pupils had been involved in the other associated workshops, a community theatre event with large-scale puppets devised to tell the story of the Tregaron elephant that were used in a street possession and an archaeological dig to search for the remains of the elephant supposedly buried behind the Talbot Hotel in Tregaron. The participants involved with the archaeological dig related that their most exciting finds were some dog bones and a bullet, but no elephant remains. Remembering, reporting these other projects, looking at contemporary and old photographs and short films all inspired the art process. Each participant, in class 4, developed their own image. Collaboration occurred in the exploration of ideas and in the sharing of information, but the making was individual, making textural mixed media works as seen in figure 26. These involved including words and letters, influenced by Davies’ art practice and textures using sand and paint influenced by the mixed media approaches of both Davies and Graham. The participants considered the archaeological dig and included paintings of bones, the date of the elephant’s demise and collaged fragments of found objects like those uncovered during the dig, but these fragments were sourced from elsewhere.



Figure 26. Beynon (2011) *Class 4 archaeology related works*.

The participants from this class also produced and directed a diary room video which included the historical story of the elephant, the story of the drama production and the archaeological dig. Furthermore, the curriculum engagement led by the teacher involved exploring maps, geography, mathematics, oral history and through this art projects connections from local stories to the wider curriculum could be developed.

In class three, the participants were also introduced to the art of Ogwyn Davies and Brian Graham for the texture and techniques in the application of mixed media. The themes were focussed on the final journey and resting place of the elephant. For example, they considered the landscape, the stream from which it drank the water and the reason for lead in the water due to the industrious lead mining in the area at the time. They considered the route of the elephant's final journey and what it might have seen on its way to its final resting place in the town. Figure 27 below shows an example of the narrative work producing a snapshot of the elephant on its journey. Each participant did this in a different way and decided to include words influenced by Ogwyn Davies as seen in the images below.

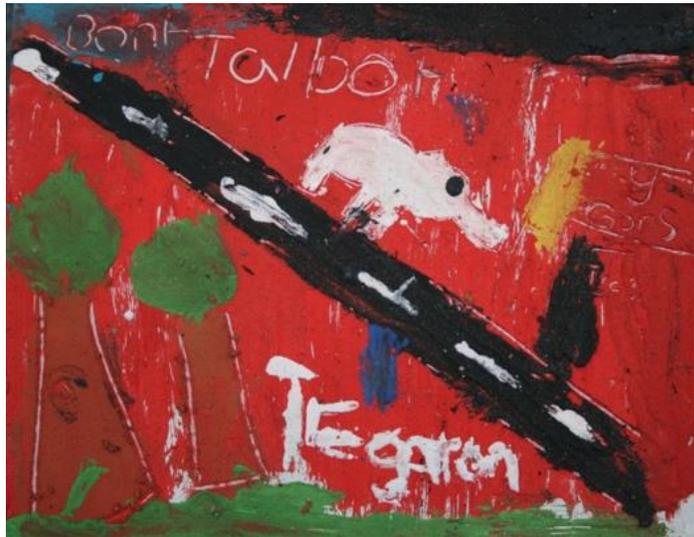


Figure 27. Beynon (2011) *Class 3 the elephant's journey*.

This workshop involved individual output in an art produced image. The process of collaborative working involved discussions, looking at art, complex thought processes, imagination, and the exploration of history. With the teacher, the pupils explored history, geography, and science, which helped to enrich the art experience by providing wider knowledge that did not interfere with the art process, providing cross curricular working. The wealth of local information from the participants own experience was valuable in this workshop, they knew their area well they understood the landscape and knew the exact stream that the elephant had drunk from. The local information made the art process easier, exciting and inspired the creative and imaginative processes in individualised artworks.

Class two looked at maps exploring the purpose of maps and why they are important. They looked at various types of maps before making individual imaginary maps in pencil with a focus on the local area. The participants also did a psychogeographical walk from the school to the local Talbot Hotel, where the elephant is supposedly buried, undertaking drawings and making notes whilst exploring the town and considering the past, what might have changed or stayed the same and drawing maps as they went. These aspects, the individual imaginary maps the exploration of factual maps were later collaboratively developed through

drawing and painting, to devise large maps that represented the elephant's final journey. The image in figure 28, demonstrate some aspect of the process.



Figure 28. Beynon (2012) *Class 2 mapping a journey*.

The participants were actively involved in making work both individually and working together to produce imaginative, energetic drawings and paintings. The participants were inspired by the mixed media work of Davies and Graham that influenced their making process, looking at the work of others contributed to developing skills and other ways of working. The associated teacher led work involved geography and learning about maps, again providing a cross curricular approach that could motivate creativity.

The final class is “*dosbarth derbyn*” (reception class), which included the youngest participants of this project. The focus was on storytelling where the story of the elephant, the circus, the tragic end and the historical period of 1848 was narrated to them. After telling the story and looking at old photographs the participants were encouraged to consider and make drawings of the circus including the animals, as well as to think about the elephant. Additionally in classroom activities, with the teachers, the pupils participated in a role play of the circus, the animals, wore clothes and other paraphernalia associated to Tregaron in 1848 which aided in the

participants' consideration of this historical event and the difference to contemporary society.

This workshop demonstrates the occasional risk of cross curricular working where the project moves away from the artist facilitator with interference from the school involvement. In preparation for the art project the class had been looking at and learning about the patchwork elephant *Elfed* (McKee, 2002). This is a well-known children's series of stories translated from the English *Elmer the Patchwork Elephant* (Elmer, 2023) unfortunately this story took the participants away from the local story. It was, therefore, inevitable that both elephant stories would become intermixed, and in the art workshops the patchwork elephant dominated the images. Whilst these patchwork elephant drawings were fun and demonstrated the participants ability to make connections, nevertheless this distracted from the creativity and imagination of art making. In my facilitation of the project, I decided to encourage the class to consider the sick or dead elephant and what this meant to them and to the circus, the teachers and classroom assistants were uncomfortable by this decision, but the creative art process and the imagination of the participants needed to be released for the project to be individually meaningful. This was a risk, but it enabled the participants to consider the Tregaron elephant, who died in the circus in 1848, rather than the patchwork elephant from the story books. The participants were empowered to produced interesting and exciting individualistic outcomes that became less literal in charcoal drawings and developed into copper embossing which formed commemorative images of the Tregaron elephant. The school and teachers were happy with the outcomes and surprised at the imagination of the participants. The creative risk worked, with the outcomes filled with imagination and creativity in considering the historical event.

The copper embossing seen in figure 29 below is a good example of an image of the dead elephant lying on the ground with its legs up to the sun. What was interesting during the activity was that some of the participants drew the alive elephant in the day and the dead elephant in the night. Also, some put the dead elephant on top of the ground, whilst some, like the image below, put the elephant underground.



Figure 29. Beynon (2011) *Eliffant Tregaron - Dead Elephant*.

Once creativity was released, the images became more exciting, individual and imaginative, enabling the participants to work with sophisticated thought processes and expression, through imagination. The elephants also became their own elephants rather than a copy of another's creative visualisation. As a facilitator, taking this risk was challenging as it could have been a problem had it not worked, but using creativity, imagination and working with ambiguity are vital elements of art practice, which needs to be encouraged in art workshops.

The different methods and structures of this whole school project were devised and developed initially with the teachers, with a consideration of the curriculum, to then develop away from the curriculum to work collaboratively with the pupils or participants to 'become immediate practitioners, [R]ich contexts challenge students to practice and develop higher order reasoning...'. (Smith & MacGregor, 1993, p. 1). The participants could take ownership of decisions and work as collaborative, creative practitioners in the workshop process. For each class the methods used needed to be suitable to the age group and a consideration of this needed to be undertaken by me as facilitator in the first session and then in collaboration or a dialogue with the participants throughout each workshop session.

Participants ought to be allowed freedom of expression, and the judgement of that expression should be undertaken with care. For example, the older participants

could relate their involvement with archaeology and to make connections to their own practice as well as to take charge of information and processes, 'to think well as individuals we must learn to think well collectively; that is, we must learn to converse well' (Bruffee, 1996, p. 88 in Laal & Laal, 2012, p. 493). Collaboration and feedback are vital in any art process and discussing ideas at different stages helps to develop both communal and individual thinking. It is also important to 'transfer control over the learning process . . . , [by] letting students know help is available, but without imposing this help' (van Leeuwen & Janssen, 2019, p. 84), this enables the development of creative freedom and an ownership in making. In class 2 the learners were younger 5–7-year-old pupils but had more of a freedom of expression and an eagerness to work together. They worked with the artist in groups 'to accomplish a common goal. (Laal Marjan & Laal Mozghan, 2012, p. 493) in a Collaborative Learning process to produce maps of the geographical journey of the elephant. The final class were the younger participants in this project, though play was a vital process in the then foundation phase of education, the teachers were more prescriptive in what they wanted the pupils to do. For me this was difficult to navigate and needed consideration of the teacher requirements as well as creative boldness from my perspective to change the course of the information provided to the participants. These youngest participants needed a freedom of expression which was achieved by imagining empathy for the sick and dead elephant, which released imagination and the ability in the child to tell a visual story in individually engaged art.

In a school-based project, the artist should not be the teacher but a marginal co-creator in the *Creative Art Journey*, 'to focus on the creative process rather than just on the creative product when we want to foster creativity'. (Ranjan, & Gabora, 2012, p. 11) in participants. The artist is there to guide, direct and to move the project along enabling all to produce art as individuals and as collaborator. The strength of this project, for participants, was working with Welsh culture and language, using words and art to explore an historical event to gain a deeper understanding of the history of their town. The examples presented demonstrate that art practice developed creativity and imagination through exploring knowledge which can be learnt collaboratively but develop individually. Additionally, knowledge can be

effectively developed in cross curricular activities, but care should be taken in not allowing classroom learning to dominate the art process, as in the example of the younger participants. There is a risk, when working in a school that other subject areas can take over as they are less messy, easier to manage or deemed more important. An artist in a school-based project should be slightly controversial, a bit off beat, a bit risky in the decision-making processes to enable participant engagement with art processes. Art provides a mean to learn, to think creatively and to develop imaginative thinking based on factual information. This Elephant story is well known locally, but for the participants spending time with the story, through exploring the historical events and to creatively making art fosters a deeper contemplative learning and understanding of what occurred in the past.

#### **Case Study 4: *Paper Boats* (Tosta, 2016)**

The fourth and final reflective case study is *Paper Boats* (Tosta, 2016). This is an example of a workshop that is not led through imagination and creativity but is process-led and skill based. For the facilitator and the participants of this workshop the contribution of the work produced was included in a wider context that became part of a large-scale artwork, as part of an international project. This workshop has been included due to its simplicity, to demonstrate the importance of process and that art making is not always creative. The workshop also demonstrates surprising outcomes from process led practice within a collaborative activity and is an anomaly in this research. This was a short workshop that lasted a few hours, it was not devised by me as facilitator, and it could be argued that this workshop did not involve any art practice but rather used practical making processes. Nevertheless, the workshop was delivered by me as an artist and fostered in me an understanding of simple processes that possibly had not been fully appreciated prior to this workshop.

*Tosta* (2016) was a large international project to 'celebrate the language and culture of seven Celtic and European countries – The Basque Country, Galicia, Scotland, Ireland, Fryslân, Cornwall and Wales.' The project travelled to the different countries 'with the aim to raise awareness of (the use of) minority languages' (*Golden Tree*

*Productions*, 2017) and each place involved local artistic experiences, held in pop-up festivals to celebrate 'linguistic and cultural diversity' (*West Wales Chronicle*, 2016). The Wales aspect of the festival was held in *Theatr Felin-fach* which 'works with communities, schools and organisations to develop and create artistic, participatory and exciting opportunities through drama, dance, theatre and digital media' (*Theatr Felin-fach*, no date. b) in Mid Wales. "Cymraeg" and "cymreictod" (Welsh language and culture) provide central aspects of this project as were the languages and cultures of the other countries. The folded-paper boats element of the project was devised by the organisers to unite the different countries as well as a representational vessel for carrying information from place to place. All the folded-paper boats became part of a large artwork, a 'flotilla' that travelled in a shipping container to all the festivals in the project (*Golden Tree Productions*, 2017). Interestingly neither I nor the participants saw this final work.

The paper boat project was a very prescribed workshop, that of folding paper to make boats according to a specific plan. There was to be no deviation from the plan and the boats needed to be produced in the prescribed way, even though there are other methods of folding paper to make boats. During the *Tosta* (2016) festival at *Theatr Felin-fach* there were various kinds of workshops on offer to participants and the paper boat exercise was available specifically for 8-11 years old participants who attended from a school in year groups, with teachers available to support. I had been asked to organise the art workshop activities, and I chose other artists to do, what I perceived to be more exciting art workshops, whilst I did the paper folding with the schools which I thought was less artistic.

Prior to the workshop I had assumed that this was going to be an uninteresting task for participants and with this in mind I undertook to plan various kinds of paper folding activities in addition to the paper boats. I planned to make paper planes and paper waterbombs as well as paper boats of assorted sizes and in different styles. However, I was wrong in my assumption. For the participants this was, surprisingly, an exciting and fulfilling workshop, 'The child's immersion...can escape what sometimes we cannot see as adults...' (Cannatella, 2008, p. 61). All learnt new skills such as cutting a rectangular piece of paper to make a square by folding and

tearing, using scissors, following both oral and written instructions, helping each other to understand the instructions and repeating the activity which helped in remembering. It was a revelation for me that most of the participants had not undertaken such an activity before. What occurred in this workshop was a 'dialogue' through instruction and a 'feedback loop' between the participant and facilitator and the aim or the process of the dialogue was inclusivity (*Bob and Roberta Smith*, 2020, p. 13). This was a skills-based project with the outcome specifically focused on folding paper, to make boats to a specific plan with no intention in the developments of ideas nor further input from the facilitator nor the participants and therefore did not include imagination, creativity or a 'heuristic' (Mortari, 2015, p. 6) process in terms of trial and error. There was only one way to fold the paper to make these boats.

During the workshop activity the participants worked as individuals and collaborated in making the boats. There was no need to fall back on the other paper folding activities that I had planned, as the boat folding was enough 'whilst often unable to contain themselves children discern through art that paper...can astonishingly prise open a vision...' (Cannatella, 2008, p. 61). The fun, excitement and achievement of this simple workshop was evident during the activity and in the photographs examined consequently. An aspect that was used was to play around with scale and whilst this broke away from the intention of the activity the paper folding adhered to the strict plan.

What I learnt from this workshop, was not to assume that what can be perceived as a simple task is not necessarily uninteresting. Additionally, that even the simplest of tasks can be fun and carry an enormous sense of achievement and an opportunity for learning. Often, it's forgotten that the school curriculum cannot cover everything and the teachers that supported this workshop were astounded by the participants' enjoyment, what they found difficult in the task, what they could and couldn't do and what assumed skills the participants should have brought to the activity but sometimes didn't, for example many found using scissors difficult and nearly all the participants didn't know how to turn a rectangular piece of paper into a square through folding and tearing. These were surprising discoveries, and for me as a

workshop facilitator also somewhat worrying. I would have expected children in this age group to have been able to undertake these tasks.

Another element evident in this workshop was that some of the participants found it difficult to follow the boat folding instructions. This was less surprising, but nevertheless, for both me and the teachers something to be aware of. The instructions were delivered in Welsh with visual demonstrations, this may have been a factor in their understanding, but this wasn't analysed. There were children that either already knew how to make paper boats or who could pick up the skills quickly and developed an independent approach to the project. This can sometimes be difficult for a workshop facilitator as it can be challenging to keep the participants engaged and prevent them from standing out or becoming uninterested. In this workshop these participants were able to help the other participants by reminding and showing them the process as well as being prolific in their making.

Therefore, from what I thought would be a very uninteresting or unexciting task for the participants and for myself as a facilitator turned out to be full of discoveries and learning new skills within the art journey that was also exciting and fulfilling. This was a substantial lesson for me to never assume that everybody can do even the simplest of tasks, like using scissors or folding paper to make a square, and to bring these skills to art workshops. This was a workshop in which all who participated learnt new skills that are essential, transferable for art practice and life. The skills learnt by the participants in this project could be taken back to the school and I believe that the lack of skills noted by the teachers had a lasting impact on them as it has on me. The teachers and I discussed at length during the workshop our observations of the things we thought the children should have been able to do. In highlighting this lack of skills it is hard to know what impact this had on the teachers, beyond the project, but for me as a facilitator of workshops this has meant that I have not taken anything for granted. Practical skills are essential to making art and since this project, ensuring that young can use essential skills is never assumed.

Additionally, other art workshops and other artists were involved in *Tosta* (2016), 'at the core of the project was an artist exchange programme' (*Golden Tree*

*Productions*, 2017). The Welsh resident artist was Luned Rhys Parri, who is a North Wales based artist working in mixed media and in her art, 'motion, playfulness and memory [which] entwine to make for something fresh and fierce and undoubtedly Welsh' (*Oriel Plas Glyn-Y-Weddw Arts Centre*, 2023). Parri makes three-dimensional mixed media art works that explore people within a Welsh cultural context and the Welsh language is central to her practice. Parri undertook a residency in one of the other minority language countries of the project and the work made was exhibited at Theatre Felin-fach. Parri also facilitated an art workshop, during the *Tosta* Wales project, at the same time as me. In this workshop, participants were making all kinds of objects and figures out of paper in response to Parri's art.

Some of the participants from the paper boat workshop also did the art workshop with Parri. This formed interesting developments through the participants imagination and creativity, as seen in figure 30 below. The participants placed the characters made with Parri into the paper boats, creating a visual narrative, combining ideas and the assemblage of objects uniting previously unconnected elements.



Figure 30. Beynon (2016) *Tosta*.

The participants were engaging with art practice, thus creating for themselves an imaginative and creative interaction that was not guided or directed by anybody, nor was this development an objective of the *Tosta* (2016) project. The boat now

became an object of potential and of voyage. This was an exciting and unexpected development of a simple paper boat-making activity where in combining both workshop tasks, made the process more imaginative and developmental. This was an important workshop for lessons learnt, not only by the participants but also by me as artist and a facilitator, and by the teachers involved, therefore finds a deserving place in this research.

I am still amazed at the success of this project which developed for me the understanding that not all processes need to be complex to be successful. We all had fun in this project, I recollect a lot of laughing and talking during making, as well as the excitement of the discovery of being able to make the boats. Culture and language were integral to this project as the intention of the *Tosta* (2016) international project was to celebrate minority languages through the arts. The folded-paper boat was used in the project as a representational cultural carrier of information from one festival to the other six countries and the participants were naturally involved in the whole process. The overarching project was also exciting with different types of celebrations during the festival as well as live music. And in the Welsh finale works from the already visited countries were united for a short time. The festival then continued to travel and grow till its conclusion, which sadly I did not attend. The *Creative Art Journey* embedded language and culture into making and the narrative of the boat, as holder of culture and language, could be shared during making. A lot was learnt during this project by all including me as facilitator, the young participants and the teachers to uncover surprises and discoveries art has a good way of exposing. I learnt the lesson of not always believing in my assumptions.

These four case studies offer a broad representation of past facilitated art projects and focus on the specific age range of 3 to 13-year-old participants. The reflective case studies deconstruct the art workshops through a close consideration of processes, collaborative practices and the *Creative Art Journey* to explore culture and working with communities in “*Cymraeg*” (Welsh). Learning occurs in these workshops which belong to a specific region in Wales and through narratives steer the art engagement to make global connections. Additionally, engaging with history,

making contemporary connections or exploring history through the contemporary lens through art provide a distinctive experience for all participants, including facilitator. In Welsh schools the history of Wales has not traditionally nor currently been taught (though the *Curriculum for Wales* is addressing this), therefore these workshops provide a vital educational contribution. The four workshops provide opportunities for engaging with imagination and creative practices, making and doing to foster a sense of ownership and provide vital models of learning that are key to all the projects.

The four methodological approaches, form a means by which the four case studies can be explored and deconstructed. Autoethnography firmly places the self in the research but also provides the connection to community. Practice-based research enables a deeper understanding of the process of the workshops and making art in the *Creative Art Journey*. The locations, culture and language are connected through psychogeography and finally the case studies enable reflective analysis. These methodologies form the essential components crucial to the research framework. By analysing these components in turn, the interrelationship that shapes the discussion is investigated which not only contributes to the robustness of the study but also ensures that the findings are based on a solid theoretical and empirical foundation.

## **Chapter 7: Insights**

This concluding chapter demonstrates the originality of this research, presenting the insights led from both literature and practical methods, leading to findings and recommendations. Literature, mixed methods and interdisciplinary approaches explore the collaboration between facilitator and participants in art workshops, which involve community, language, culture and '*dysgu*', the reciprocal means by which learning occurs. Fundamental to this research is learning, thinking through making (Ingold, 2013, p. 6) and the relationship of imagination and creativity in art workshops, in Wales, within a Welsh context. The extracurricular art workshops, whether delivered in schools or in community settings, help to form fully rounded individuals through the learning context, to be centred in their own place, where

independence and creative thinking are discovered. If these experiences were valued in all learning, then the societal impact would naturally benefit from varied and diverse perspectives and creative outlooks adaptive to different situations. The participants collaborate with the facilitator to make art, to develop skills, to advance ways of thinking and to explore culture all leading to a changed perspective.

The theoretical framework has driven and directed the research, demonstrating the complexity of associating extracurricular engagement to established teaching and learning theories. Investigating theories of education was fundamental, especially at the commencement of the research, to determine the position of the art workshop within these theories but ultimately to demonstrate their distinctive approach. Broadening from the history and philosophy of education to investigating artists and thinkers establishes that creativity and imagination provide a fundamental platform to theorise the concept of art workshops. The literature about education also determines the role of the facilitator in collaboration with participants as being different from that of the teacher. Furthermore, literature associated to Wales based creative engagement and language concepts provide a correlation to the collaborative learning of the art workshop.

Literature-led insights emphasise the value of investigating the past to comprehend parallels to contemporary extracurricular activity, for example, the collaborative learning from the Welsh Bible within religious led schools. This also offers the value of “*Cymraeg*” (Welsh Language) and the power of learning about the past in using the native, threatened, language in extracurricular activities, as affirmation of our place in the world. Furthermore, investigating contemporary policy documents for the developments of the *Curriculum for Wales* have been included to demonstrate that extracurricular art activities provide a different experience to the education principles of teaching, learning and assessment. Additionally, creativity and imagination have pivotal roles in this research to support this hypothesis. Associated to this theoretical analysis, as an artist researcher it has been vital to have undertaken a parallel and associated art practice to steer the research.

The application of the research methods demonstrates that art making cultivates individuality and that individual ways of working is beneficial in enabling young participants to 'be' in the world through their own distinctiveness. Respecting individuality is fundamental for the facilitator, when collaborating with participants, to develop distinct ways of working using creativity and imagination that initiates a freedom in thinking and doing to foster change. Exploring past Wales based collaborative art workshops from the perspective of the facilitator, demonstrates the benefits for the participants to become confident in their ideas, can contribute to the process of making art and to have fun. The research determines that for facilitating art workshops it is vital that to be creative with others, one must be creative oneself. The importance of creativity and imagination, in taking part in collaborative art making, is embodied in the *Creative Art Journey*, a journey that at the beginning is unknown to then develop through thinking and then to making art.

The position of the artist is significant in this investigation and explores facilitating art workshops through autoethnography, in empirical data gathering and in a deep analysis of self as artist and art facilitator. Making art 'to allow knowledge to grow from the crucible of a practical and observational engagement.' (Ingold, 2013, p. 6) develops a deep analysis and reflection of past art workshops using practice-based research. The importance of place, language and community is examined using psychogeography, to provide an emphasis to the sense of place, Wales. Reflective case studies provide a focus on selected workshops and process of collaboratively making art. Additionally, investigating the collaborative engagement demonstrates the value of the *Creative Art Journey*, to include learning, developing confidence, independence in individual creativity in enjoyable but challenging art processes, to develop and improve skills with creative freedom in art processes.

Considering literature and method-led insights result in recommendations that present opportunities to develop a broader and more extensive examination of aspects of the key findings that are beyond the confines of this study. There is significant work to be undertaken to examine the value of arts in education to support creativity across the curriculum. These recommendations are discussed and present opportunities for wider development for the key findings of this research

and aspects, especially regarding education and the art workshop engagement, to be investigated further. The insights of this research are presented below in literature and method-led insights, culminating with recommendations and conclusion.

### **Literature-led insights**

The range of literature reviewed and presented in chapter 1 provide a sound foundation for a broad view to support the developing thinking in this research. Theories and philosophy of education provide sources against which to develop thinking, in relation to the art workshop, to comprehend what the facilitator and participants do. The academic engagement delivers a wide range of information, to develop the research arguments, to demonstrate that the extracurricular art workshop provides something special for the learning potential.

Reviewing literature provides opportunity to consider historical and contemporary theory and documentation applicable to art, education and pertinent to education in Wales. Exploring policy and other information in relation to the changes and developments of the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales. 2022) provides relevant research documentation, however, as the research progressed, it became evident that the developments of the curriculum and this research were no longer aligned. This change occurred as the curriculum was not ready for delivery until September 2022 and to explore that development, with results to benefit this research, became less possible. Nevertheless, the inclusion of creativity, art practice, the Welsh language and culture in the *Curriculum for Wales* (ibid.), remained key sources of information.

Highlighted from literature is that there is limited academic writing about art workshops in Wales in Welsh, unfortunately, this thesis does not yet fill this void but provides future potential to do this. However, the literature and research gap have been partially filled by the policy documentation and conferences of the developmental stages of the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales. 2022). These have provided invaluable sources of information, especially in relation to creativity. The

report *An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales* (Smith, 2013) explores the importance of the arts and creativity within schools. As the curriculum develops so too does this academic engagement and research. Additionally, theoretical sources about the art workshop, in the wider context, are also limited and yet art workshops are undertaken by art practitioners with participants extensively. The sources available have been immeasurably beneficial to this research. Firstly Neal (2015) connects creative workshops to transition, sustainability and discusses the involvement of arts practitioners in creative thinking and arts projects. In this edited collection Neal engages with arts practitioners with their narratives presented alongside her ideas. Similarly, Harding (2005) collects a series of essays by arts practitioners who present arts practices in different settings to include the community and schools. Both these volumes provide relevant yet limited information for this research.

Other artists and thinkers discuss making art and the endeavour for the vitality of art and creativity. The artist and activist *Bob and Roberta Smith* want all schools to be art schools (*Bob and Roberta Smith, 2020, p. 12*), who has recently written useful books, for example, *You Are an Artist: Bob and Roberta Smith* (*Bob and Roberta Smith, 2020*) to encourage and develop creative practice through making art. *Bob and Roberta Smith* value the importance of the freedom that art schools provide students to be creative and want art to be more prominent within education. Another key advocate for creativity and imagination in education is Ken Robinson, who in his many books and talks presents his opinions with humour, though these are not art focused. Following his death in 2020 his legacy continues, with *The Creative Revolution* foundation based on his thoughts and ideas (*sirkenrobinson.com, no date*). Robinson's ideas provided invaluable definitions for creativity and imagination that enabled their use in this research. Additionally, from the Welsh context Mererid Hopwood provides sources pertinent to the Welsh language and culture, whilst Euros Lewis (2015) wants more community engaged creativity, especially that of Welsh theatre-based projects. These sources provide evidence for this research to some degree; however, the emphasis tend to be on education and creativity in relation to education in the classroom rather than on extracurricular visual or art focused activities.

Educational theory, philosophy and academic definitions of formal, informal, non-formal, experiential education and learning fail to provide an adequate clarification for *The Creative Art Journey*. Within the art workshop, there are different unintentional ways of learning that develop and engage with creativity, imagination, process and develop 'original ideas that have value' (Robinson and Robinson, 2022, p. 5) this concept of original ideas is what Robinson believes should exist in the classroom but which I believe already exists in extracurricular art activities. Furthermore, the *Creative Art Journey* is different to classroom education, which is mostly delivered in schools, normally connected to a curriculum and the rules of a prescribed structure which is closely governed both within the school and externally by inspectors. The assessment of learning associated with the lesson aims and objectives, programme plans and the accreditation of teaching and learning where a teacher prescribes the content, and the pupils deliver work as intended normally to achieve certain goals. On the other hand, the *Creative Art Journey*, of the extracurricular art activity is also about attainment but in terms of improving skills and knowledge, in association with individual learning based on original ideas and practice. The purpose is to learn, develop and to produce art where all that is produced becomes important and vital to the learning process within that journey.

Using "*Cymraeg*", the Welsh language, provides a unique view on a way of working, that connects to the collaborative learning process of "*dysgu*", as developed in the religious establishment in the 1800s in Wales, where teaching and learning means the same, as discussed in the literature review of chapter 1. "*Dysgu*" presents prospects for collaboration in learning, where everybody involved works on the same project together. For me this concept of collaborative learning provides an exciting means of working with the unknown, much as I do as an artist. I have no ideas where a project that I have started might lead. This is also true of the collaborative art workshops examined in this research the journey begins with words, questions, small drawings or an instigation of an idea then along the way twists and turns to always surprising and individual outcomes. Additionally in the workshops examined learning took place in the Welsh context of language, culture and community that develops an impartiality to learning for all.

A finding in this research is that the aim of the art workshop is for participants to undertake art without creative 'rules' (Hegarty, 2014, pp. 3-9), without constraint in the ideas of the individual to develop ways of working, using their own imagination and creativity. It is imperative that all participants of art workshops can develop individually, not to copy work or to present work in a certain style, influenced by the facilitator. Their creativity, imagination and work are important. Furthermore, artists that are not connected to working with the curriculum, are vital in providing art workshops in which making art, creativity and imagination can flourish without restrictions. From my empirical experience I apprehend that art, creativity, imagination, artists and art workshops are important and this concept is also shared by Hirschhorn:

I think that art is universal. Universality means Equality, Justice, Truth, the Other, the One World. Art – because it's art – can provoke a dialogue or confrontation directly, from one to one. Therefore, I think that each human being can get in touch with art, each human being can be transformed by the power of art. I believe that art is the way to reinvent the world. (Hirschhorn, 2015).

Art, creativity, and imagination are all difficult to define but being involved in making art with participants of all ages and seeing creativity and imagination at work, their meaning becomes visible and easy to understand, no definitions are needed within the workshop process. Within the workshop a transformation happens, learning occurs, and creativity and imagination are fully visible.

Other significant realisations developed from exploring the art workshops is the vitality that a sense of place offers and leads to a sense of self in relation to the places explored. This also forms a sense of belonging and the sense of a place in the world or 'a kind of historical consciousness that exposes the psychic connectivity of landscapes [or knowledge of place] both urban and rural' (Coverley, 2006, p. 16) and fosters the development of cultural identity. Working with and getting to know local people is sometimes difficult to do in contemporary society, these art workshops have provided the opportunity for this connection. Furthermore, these art workshops also provide the opportunity from learning about the local to make global connections for example connecting contemporary Welsh cultural

inequality to learning about Rosa Parks' stance against her inequality as explored in one of the *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)* workshops discussed in chapter 6.

Insights from reviewing literature presents findings, developments and the relevance of key aspects at various stages. This examination provides opportunities to both deepen the investigation and to verify knowledge. In examining the broad range of sources to include historical and contemporary information this helped in identifying gaps, emerging concepts and to advance knowledge and ideas. In exploring literature, the synthesis of information forms a means to build on previous scholarly information, as well as to propose future potential research. Exploring literature provides a sound foundation from which to draw conclusions. Alongside academic reading and writing and the literature- led insights the application of methods provided scope to broaden, intensify and enrich the research process.

### **Method-led insights**

This research, as previously discussed, has been realised through a mixed method approach and in the application of autoethnography, practice-based research, psychogeography and reflective case studies. This broad methods approach suited the creative and practical engagement of this research establishing the means to form the relationship of practice and theory. This also supported the investigation of the impact of creativity and imagination in the processes undertaken in the collaborative art workshops. The different methods enabled multiple perspectives to explore questions about the value of art, creativity, imagination, the purpose of art workshops and the collaboration of the facilitator with participants.

Reflection is a key aspect in this research, undertaken and presented in in the application of all four methods. This led to analytically examining the art workshop engagement in the selected case studies, from a personal perspective. Additionally, reflection and making art in practice-based research forms a means to be with information to develop knowledge. In the application of the research methods, drawing, socio cultural positioning and interactions with others address the vitality of

the *Creative Art Journey* for collaborative learning. Furthermore, reflecting on “Cymru” Wales and using “*Cymraeg*” Welsh offer a vitality and importance in art workshops to foster habits of participation in and responsibility to the larger community. (Smith & MacGregor 1993, p. 2), to collaboratively learn about the history of their community. The participants enthusiastic engagement evidently contrasts to the passive learning often experienced in the classroom. In the art workshop a sense of belonging is fostered through an active and creative way of learning, in a collaborative and engaging environment. The participant’s joy of learning is developed in this engagement that also develops a lasting and enriching learning experience. Working together means that the participants were not recipients of knowledge and information but actively contributed to their learning, to that of their peers, and to me as an artist facilitator, everyone belonged to the workshop.

The application of the four methods is discussed, in this research, to analyse the key findings in turn. Autoethnography presents discoveries of the self, reflecting on aspects beyond the research that influence discovered through autoethnographic remembering. Practice-based research was vital in undertaking art providing scope to think through making, to visually refine research methods and ideas leading to a deep reflection of the processes used in past art workshops. Psychogeography firmly places this research, in “*Cymru*” (Wales), in specific Welsh communities and the vitality that those community connections, in “*Cymraeg*” (the Welsh Language), offer the *Creative Art Journey* and learning practises. Finally reflecting on a selection of past art workshops provides a wealth of information from previously unexamined workshops.

Autoethnography is an appropriate method for this research as it allows creativity and innovation in thinking to provide empirical data collection in observing the self. This places the facilitator centrally in the research, allowing reflecting on past art workshops from a personal perspective. The process has been important in exploring the *Creative Art Journey* and to examine a personal involvement as facilitator. Autoethnography empowered a deeper analysis of the personal influence of art, to include some early childhood memories and of a failed education

engagement in being taught art in secondary school. Additionally, included in this method, is the analysis and examples of personal art making, beyond the research and the influence this has on various stages of practice-based research.

Analysis and reflection empower a deeper exploration of personal thoughts, ideas and project engagement which includes process, outcome, culture, and language. 'All autoethnographies need to start with personal experience and reflection and somehow use the personal to illuminate the larger culture' (Schroeder, 2017, p. 322). Interpretation and exploration provide a means to look at what happened and to present this truthfully or as truthfully as memory allows, from a personal point of view. Interpretation '[c]an change the way in which people frame their experiences and position themselves in relation to them' (Willing, 2017, p. 282), to focus on the self in relation to others, specifically the participants and on the processes of past art workshops. Furthermore, interpreting information provides a suitable process where conclusions can remain open for further and deeper interpretation at another time.

Investigating the self was not always easy and continues to pose challenges. Thinking and "engage[ing] in rigorous self-reflection—typically referred to as "reflexivity"—in order to identify and interrogate the intersections between the self and social life' (Adams, Ellis & Jones, 2017, p. 1) took a lot of reading and many versions of writing including free thinking, making notes, focussing on the work of others to finally writing a theoretically led version. 'The transforming process is difficult to delineate because there is no one-size-fits-all approach' (Chang, 2013, p. 116), though self-analysis was challenging, this aided in being with the self to consider others. This thinking has focussed on the facilitator with a contemplation of other facilitators, specifically making connections to their writing. Additionally, the consideration of participants, in relation to self, could also be studied in the autoethnographic process that developed further in practice and in the case studies. Reflection provides a means to understand the collaboration of the facilitator with participants.

Self-reflection, as artist and facilitator, deepened the understanding of process and collaboration leading to discounting well-established teaching and learning principles as presented in the literature review. It became evident that learning is the most important aspect of past workshops, both the facilitator and participants learn and more importantly learn together. Through this method, learning has been recognised as a key aspect of the art workshops where process is vital and output, though needed in the process, is not the key aim. Process leads to personal fulfilment that can build self-esteem, when working in community settings, where a sense of belonging and connections are formed. Furthermore, exploring Robinson, *Bob and Roberta Smith* and Hirschhorn form the appreciation of the use of imagination and creativity, this was acknowledgment for the actualisation that these are important processes in both research and in making art. One of the main characteristics of creativity is being able to see things in new ways, “*Un o nodweddion pennaf creadigrwydd yw medru gweld pethau mewn ffyrdd newydd*” (Hopwood, 2017, p. 83). It is therefore imperative that learning, creativity and imagination are fostered in the art workshop, and that agency is provided for participants to use their creativity and imagination to learn and to make art in the *Creative Art Journey*.

Childhood art memories formed a means to focus on aspects of education that were both empowering for me as a young child and then stifling as a teenager. The creativity and imagination present in reflecting on my earliest works have a lasting memory and feeling of creative freedom. These works have been influential in my practice as an artist in undertaking this research, especially in contemplating the participants. Reflecting on aspects of personal art practice has also been essential to demonstrate firstly that I am an artist and secondly how this influenced and inspired aspects of the research, initially through visual storytelling, then later in the use of colour. Using hauntology in my art practice empowers me to think about the past, its effect on the present and then how these impact possibilities in the future. Hauntology (Coverley, 2020, p. 17) is explored through narrative and some correlation can be made to processes undertaken in the art workshops. Artists are not afraid to challenge thinking and autoethnography challenged me to develop the confidence to make changes and to change direction whilst researching.

Additionally, recognising opportunities, being open to developing new ideas and themes inspire the advancement and progression of the research.

Reflecting has been a constructive means to develop knowledge and to focus on what was already known in a deeper analysis of thought. Analysing the use of Welsh culture and language demonstrates their importance in art workshop for community engagement. Collaborative learning through making art provides valuable means for gaining information, to make 'something new with the information and ideas. These acts ... creating something new-are crucial to learning' (Smith & MacGregor 1993, p. 1), form a way to share and carry information to the future, to challenge historical significance in terms of the sense of place and belonging. Using oral traditions, in art workshops, have been valuable in providing a means for intergenerational engagement and of sharing information. Using storytelling, both oral and visual, empowers participants to discover new potential for future growth and understanding of their place in the world. This also cultivates their sense of self, to gain confidence and insights that will nurture them into their future.

Leveraging on autoethnographic thinking and writing engages with deeper analysis demonstrates that what I had undertaken in past art workshops was a worthwhile process. Furthermore, the vitality of reflection in analysing the self as artist and facilitator, in collaborative past workshops and in examining memories, focuses on the influential developments for collaborative working. Additionally, reflecting on Welsh culture, language and community engagement, highlights the importance of empowering participants to develop a sense of belonging through art. This sense of belonging has been analysed through the application of psychogeography to further explored and consider the facilitator and participant in practice-based research and in reflective case studies.

The practice-based method has been a fundamental art making process during the length of the research. Images from practice appear in a visual format as analytical samples through this thesis. Art practice provided a vital means for developing analytical thought processes where 'the drawing is not the visible shadow of a

mental event; *it is a process of thinking, not the projection of thought*' (Ingold, 2013, p. 128 original emphasis), leading to defining research purposes and to focus the self in examining the collaborative art workshop. Each stage of this method presented distinct challenges and opportunities, providing multiple possibilities to consider the research question using theoretical rigour. Using art, to capture information alongside reading and academic writing, formed a means to use practice analytically. Furthermore, this method enabled the use of a bilingual exploration without restriction, as opposed to the requirement of the use of the English language in academic reading and writing.

The visual process evolved from working in sketchbooks to engaging with different drawing stages, working in studio spaces and culminating in producing a new body of art that explored and analysed the *Creative Art Journey*. Using sketchbooks to contextualise words and mapping ideas provided a familiar way of working, that continued throughout, to capture information that later developed in other means, both written and in art. Analysing art influenced the direction of the research, for example, initially it was noted that two distinct themes developed. Firstly, representational drawings were closely aligned to images of my art practice which was deviating away from the purpose of the research. Whilst the second body of work engaged with mapping practices. This variance revealed that the representational drawings were leaning towards illustration and image making, whereas image mapping cultivated an analytical and abstract practice. This divergence raised critical questions about the direction of the practice that was analysed on the studio walls. The decision to discontinue the representational drawings in favour of the mapping process was a conceptual shift. This change provided a means for deeper analysis of the research question beyond the familiar art making process.

Another change in direction of the work was instigated by the abrupt halt of the practice process due to vacating the studio space during the pandemic. Whilst this was initially challenging, ultimately this enabled the research practice to develop on a smaller scale. This change highlighted the fundamental possibilities, through creative processes, to profoundly change direction to benefit the research. Practice

became more intense, using diagrams as a means for thinking, making and using words as images which developed in simple concertina books to enable the consideration of the art workshop journeys. This was a turning point in the research and a deeper analysis of the *Creative Art Journey* could now be undertaken in practice alongside theoretical knowledge.

This new process provided a way to connect theory to practise through drawing, using words as drawings, alongside academic engagement. Additionally, mapping words developed into making analytical associations both in the research process and in contemplating the art workshops. Likewise, quotations as drawings become a means of seeing and analysing academic information as physical objects in studio spaces. Making art to consider theory, provided a way to practically navigate each stage of the theoretical development, the drawings and diagrams, as physical objects, provided a means to intellectually retain the information. Having the information visible on the studio walls meant that re-engaging with the research was made possible at each stage of the investigative development.

Using studio spaces became another integral aspect of the research journey. Firstly, to provide spaces to make work and secondly, as a means of analysing the work already done. Studio spaces also provided the possibility for being both still and active with the art practice as research. The stillness of being in the creative moment and contemplating the past, in active making, 'can be described as the mutually inclusive, co-creative, receptive-responsive relationship between intangible spatial stillness and energetic motion in the being' (Rayner, 2022), this describes both my engagement with practice and with others in a *Creative Art Journey*. Stillness is vital for creativity and imagination, but motion is vital for making. The studio spaces meant that all the work could be seen together in displays for analysis, for making connections, for discussion with others and for developing the thesis writing. Analysing 'making and viewing' (*Arts Council England*, 2013, p. 11) led to further making which had an impact on the research development, this was vital to be able to question, synthesise and document learning in the art workshops as well as to consider developing concepts.

The practice-based research developed to finally making a collection of art, that included *diagrammatic drawings* and artist books, as selected artefacts, on paper. These focused and reflected on the *Creative Art Journey* as a way of contemplating the facilitator and participants in art workshops. In reaching and devising the final collection of *diagrammatic drawings*, trial pieces were explored, this meant exploring ways of working, use of materials, testing the books' functionality, the use of colour and mark making. All these aspects were familiar to my art process and practice which were adapted and developed through making art as research. Working creatively on scraps of paper connected theory to practice and made theoretical information relevant to me as an artist.

To demonstrate the process and the analysis that can be made from the drawings, examples are provided below in figures 31, 32, and 33 all are presented in relation to the *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* (2011) workshop but are similar work has also been made for the other three case studies and for the facilitator, all of which contribute to the final collection. Examples of these images have already been provided in chapter 4 but are reiterated here to provide the concluding concepts.

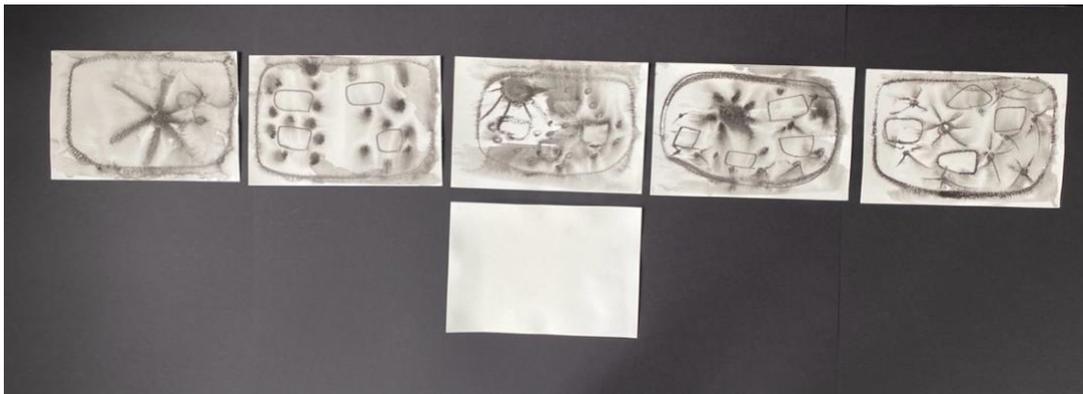


Figure 31. Beynon (2023) *Eliffant Tregaron stages*.

The six components of figure 31 above are abstracts that capture junctures in the *Creative Art Journey*. The bottom component comprises a gentle wash which captures the stage before the workshop begins and after the workshop ends, in these stages no one is engaged with the workshop but inevitably have information that is brought to and taken away, before and after participation. The top row from

left to right represent the dynamic of the workshop process that can be revisited to think about the journey. The first represents the facilitator before the workshop begins, represented as a large dot with lines originating from it to demonstrate creativity and imagination, being full of ideas and excitement for the collaborative process. The second diagram is the classroom of *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* (2011), the participants, represented as small dots, are around tables in a non-dynamic space. In the third image the facilitator is now in the space and starts to influence the environment, the tables are moved which is further developed in the fourth image, the facilitator during these stages is a vital force in the process and is therefore larger than the others. The smaller dots now have lines coming from them which demonstrated the development of creativity, imagination and making in the workshop. The final image in the top row signifies that all in the space are equal, the tables have again moved, and all are active in the process.

A further use of diagrams to demonstrate the *Creative Art Journey* was developed in *Turkish map fold concertina books*. Below are examples showing the inside, the outside and the closed book in figures 32 and 33.



Figure 32. Beynon (2023) *Eliffant Tregaron* inside and of the book.

Both the inside and the outside of the book, seen in figure 32 above, present the diagrammatic representation of the workshop engagement. The two lines, on the left, signifies the information the facilitator and participants bring to the workshop which may or may not become relevant. The inside centre of the book (top image) has four images that are like the images in figure 31, this is the workshop contained centrally as the book opens the information is revealed to be read or analysed by the viewer. The outside centre of the book (bottom image) represents the participant (all participants). Colour has been added to the book to demonstrate a further progression of ideas, to represent the dynamic of the workshop process and the vitality of learning. On the right of the book a flower springs from the book to represent growth and development springing from the workshop, something is taken away by everyone, facilitator and all participants alike.

The final aspect of the book that presents information is the closed book seen in figure 33, on the left the front and right the back. The two lines are again visible leading to a point, representing the journey. The point represents the individual which moves out of the book, moving beyond the art workshop. On the left, a glimpse of the flower that is not revealed until the book is opened.



Figure 33. Beynon (2023) *Eliffant Tregaron* closed book back and front.

A book is united by its covers and pages which are also separate entities. These *Turkish map fold concertina books*, in this simple form, enables a story of a workshop to be told. Additionally, placing diagrams in books means that the journey of the creative art workshop can be contained and revealed by closing and opening the book. The example presented above is one of five collections one to represent each of the four workshops and the fifth to consider the involvement of the facilitator. The diagrams and books also form folios, presented in appendix G which are also physically archived which can be revisited beyond the research.

These drawings and books aid the theorising process of the selected case studies to consider:

‘inclusional . . . [which] is a simple shift in the way we frame reality, from absolutely fixed to relationally dynamic. This shift arises from perceiving space and boundaries as connective, reflective and co-creative’. (Rayner, 2004 cited in Whitehead, 2009, p. 87).

The collection functions like a game or a set of cards, where distinct parts are connected to each other and to the whole this then tells the story of the case study. Surprisingly this practice has led to forming a personal theory through making art as ‘In living theories *individuals generate their own explanations* of their educational influences in their own learning’ (Whitehead, 2009, p. 87 original emphasis). The art made, as part of this research, became active and a way of analysing information using images, artefacts, reading and writing to form develop and progress conceptual thinking.

Practice focuses the attention on the self and participants in art workshops, concluding that collaboration is dynamic, vital, creative and transformative for all. This way of forming a theory also strengthens the belief in creativity and imagination for future art workshops as have evidently been in the past as seen demonstrated clearly in this research. As a researcher and for the development of this research, each stage of thinking and making art was vital for developing concepts. Having pieces of work that contained drawings, diagrams, words, maps as physical paraphernalia meant that the research could progress without being inhibited. The

artworks, as physical objects, can be revisited as entities and holders of information. Practice-based research has been a fundamental process for the research journey for forming a way of contemplation, analytical art making and of including “*Cymru*” Wales and “*Cymraeg*” (the Welsh language).

Psychogeography, the third methodological approach uniquely sites this research in specific places, forming the distinctive opportunity to explore art workshops that engage with “*Cymraeg*” (the Welsh language) and culture. The selected case studies are firmly placed in Welsh communities and provide the exceptional possibilities for facilitator and participants to engage with the history of these locations, whilst working with people to build knowledge and a sense of belonging to that place. Connecting with community in intergenerational collecting of information for use in art workshops ‘may usefully be viewed less as the product of a particular time and place than as the meeting point of a number of ideas and traditions with interwoven histories’ (Coverley, 2006, p. 11), forming a bond through location or place to a past that can continue. Making art and learning about the past forms a personal or public memory archive that has an impact to the future. Working with others forms a significant possibility to engage with different age groups to provide specific correlation to the oral tradition of storytelling and passing information from one generation to another. These are specificities of Wales and traditional Welsh communities, that are evidently under threat from globalisation. Capturing this information in art workshops can be shared back to the community whether in exhibitions, arts performances or especially in public artworks, such as murals, where the storytelling possibilities can endure way beyond the art workshop itself. Additionally, art made by participants that remain visible in the community long after the workshop interaction, like the mural of *Murlun y Bont* (2005-2008), contribute to communal memory, a sense of belonging to the art and the history depicted, not only by the makers but also by all who view the work whether they had been involved in the process or not.

Place is examined in the metaphorical psychogeographical journey of the hybrid flâneuse in a creative imaginative and playful way to site Wales securely in this research. Furthermore, connections to other arts practices that engage with

geographical locations, in creative and analytical ways, developed the creative application of psychogeography as a method to be used by me. These are discussed in more detail in the application of psychogeography in chapter 5, they are for example, Lauren Elkin's (2016) *Flâneuse*, Wrights & Sites' 'mytho-geography' (Overall, 2015, p. 7), the more traditional processes of Walter Benjamin and to contemporary Wales with Menna Elfyn who sees the whole of life through her Welsh language (Fuller, 2002). Like Elfyn I place myself in this research viewed through my geographical location and my Welsh language. These also connect to the art workshops which fundamentally enable learning through enjoyment, to reach understanding, to then presenting this in art making.

The reflective case study method focuses on four art workshops in highly edited formats, that has developed to highlight the elements that have an impact on the *Creative Art Journey*. The case studies are presented in chapter 6 as a narrative understanding and in selecting diverse processes for specific reasons, for example *Paper Boats* (Tosta, 2016) demonstrates that an arts facilitator can learn, this has been a fundamental discovery of this research. Analysing case studies demonstrates that art workshops provide resources to engage with people, places, their history, and the future in ways that are meaningful to all involved, to include the facilitator, the participants and the community. All the case studies demonstrate that collaborative learning and using "Cymraeg" and "cymreictod" (Welsh language and culture) provide distinguishing components in this research. Additionally, the art produced in workshops remain in the memory, as undertaking this research demonstrates. Common to all the case studies is using "Cymraeg" (Welsh), historical and contemporary matters which distinctively place this research in Wales. These establish that the language, culture, traditions and sensibilities of Wales are central to the experience of learning through art, both in the workshops and in this research.

The selected workshops were chosen to demonstrate collaborative ways of working with participants and the use of the Welsh language and Welsh themes to make art. The case studies also offer opportunities to understand these aspects in different ways. Furthermore, each case study developed the potential for engaging with

global issues but starting from the local. The most fundamental aspect of the analysis of these workshops is that learning occurs rather than the educational process of teaching and learning. Moreover, learning from the local rather than the prescriptive education of a centralised curriculum cultivates a natural and specific perception of place and language, from a deep-rooted cultural connection. The case studies explored what had occurred in the past in art workshops with participants under the age of 13. In addition to the autoethnographic exploration of myself, as artist and facilitator, the case studies *Murlun y Bont* (2005-2008), *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* (2011), *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)* and *Paper Boats (Tosta, 2016)* are discussed in chapter 6 and a final brief analysis of each presented below.

*Murlun y Bont* (2005-2008), as an artist led project involved collaboration in many ways to include working with a school, the community and a storytelling festival (*Gŵyl y Cyfarwydd*). Collaborative practices were essential in all the undertakings of this project which occurred over several years. The project culminated in a mural that tells the story of thriving 19<sup>th</sup> century lead mining in the village location. Intergenerational knowledge gathering and co-creative processes were the successes of this project and through these “*Cymraeg*” (the Welsh language) was invaluable in sharing stories and cultural information. The past became alive in the imagination of the participants who used creativity to develop visual outputs to represent history. The mural provides a legacy of the participant’s work. Furthermore, it provides a visual means through which the past becomes alive as well as a memorial for a community that once existed.

*Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)* the most complex of the projects, explored in this research, involving multiple facilitators, various kinds of arts processes and occurred over many years. This project provides a means to analyse the *Creative Art Journey* in relation to facilitation, learning, engaging with contemporary Welsh culture, making connections of Welsh history and to global issues. A key aspect of the project was that everyone contributed, with a freedom of expression, to any aspect of the engagement using multiple creative processes. Furthermore, collaboration and using “*Cymraeg*” (the Welsh language) were

important, this did not exclude non-Welsh speakers to participate as creativity and the different arts processes of this project provided ways of inclusion. Additionally, undertaking ways of thinking, doing or making in this project provided valuable learning potentials for participants and facilitators, leading to producing collaborative and individual work in different arts processes. A *Creative Art Journey* provides collaborative discussions and ways of working where ‘for me as much as for the [participants], the ... journey upon which we were embarked together, with no knowing what we might discover’ (Ingold, 2013, p. 14) led to addressing challenges and opportunities. *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach 1997-2014)* was a complex, yet exciting project to work on, that provided endless creative and imaginative possibilities for all involved in the journey.

*Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project (2011)* explored a local story of a circus elephant from 1884 in a schools-based project involving all the pupils. As a facilitator of this project a prior school visit to speak with the teachers focused on the Tregaron Elephant story, associated local archaeological dig and theatre production and highlighted current curriculum activity. These directed the project where teachers provided curriculum activities separately from the art workshop, led by me as artist facilitator, to the benefit of cross curricular engagement. When working on an art project in a school it is easy to assume that all pupils wish to take part, however, this may not be the case. A child is in school because they must be there, they are not there by choice. Equally, there is often not an opt out of the art activity and if there is, it is often to catch up on classroom work which the child may also not wish to do. This is problematic if a participant does not enjoy art activities. In these situations, the facilitator needs to find a way of engaging with the participant so that a creative way forward can be achieved. An example is noted during archival research of photographs where a young participant discovers that charcoal is made of burnt wood. The photograph (not included) shows the awe and wonder on the child’s face. This kind of knowledge engagement increases the participant’s awareness and curiosity, making connections to science as well as the curiosity for charcoal’s use as a drawing material.

The classroom environment can also be restrictive with no freedom for movement or to rearrange the space in a suitable format for the art activity. The pupils tend to behave in a certain way and to sit behind a desk, the classroom space, full of teaching and learning paraphernalia, can be distracting and the 'environment and setting [negatively] influence creative thinking and behaviour' (Runcon, 2014, p. 182), as not associated to the art activity, as seen in figure 34.



Figure 34. Beynon (2011) *Me in the classroom environment*.

The classroom is a static environment where it is difficult to move around in its limited space, with a conformity of behaviour and school rules. On the other hand, in a workshop outside of a classroom, participants have more freedom to explore diverse ways in spaces for working, work at their own pace which enable more energy in making and thinking. These out of school spaces are also not without restriction, for example making a mess with paint can be problematic.

In the school environment the best scenario for successful delivery of art workshops, such as *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* (2011), is collaboration in devising the project with the staff of the school and a clear understanding of the various roles before collaborating with the pupils as participants. For an artist, the focus needs to be on art practice, to work with creativity and imagination which are used to foster individualistic thinking, art processes, methods, and outputs. It is useful to be familiar with work already undertaken in the classroom including the themes and educational activities already underway as they may or may not be beneficial for the art engagement. However, it is also beneficial to avoid curriculum

engagement to prevent the art workshops being linked to attainment, assessment and a measured output, otherwise there is a risk of stifling creativity, imagination and individual development. This is evident in this project, provided in the example where the younger children and teachers became fixated by the patchwork elephant story that they were already familiar with. Once the participants were encouraged to move away from that story to focus on empathy for the sick and dying Tregaron elephant, imagination, creativity and a narrative approach was developed to produce exciting individual outputs.

An assumption of working in a school is that the school is supportive of the process as in this elephant project. However, the school may find the art process disruptive, messy, or even an interference to the curriculum delivery. Occasionally, working with teachers can be restrictive as they need to focus 'correct responses, reproduction of knowledge, and obedience and passivity in class' the notion that 'creativity in the classroom could lead to chaos' (Ranjan & Gabora 2013, p. 11), is challenging for some but it is just this chaos and mess that can encourage imagination creativity and individual thinking. In these scenarios the teachers try to stifle the process and contain ideas bringing the child/children back to the curriculum. This can be difficult for an artist to negotiate as the art workshop is being undertaken in the teacher's space. They know their pupils and understand the class dynamics 'power lies in structures, in organisation of space and the structuring of time, ...it effects us' (Krenn, 2005, p. 75), whilst these elements might be essential to effective learning in the classroom, a more creative and free approach is beneficial to art practice.

*Paper Boats* (Tosta, 2016) the simplest of the four workshops and included in the research due to the simplicity of process but complexity of learning and from the perspective of the facilitator proves that learning takes place at any stage of a career. The appreciation from this workshop is that there should never be an assumption that participants have the necessary skills to undertake the processes, for example folding and cutting a square piece of paper from a rectangle. Furthermore, given freedom with processes, young participants will use creativity and imagination to make art. This is revealed by children who independently combined a boat from one workshop, with a figurative work made in another, to

develop their personal narrative to a new artwork. This workshop was a reminder that the facilitator needs to be prepared for different eventualities, for example in having other options available like making other paper folded objects, though these weren't needed in this workshop. Furthermore, the facilitator must trust in the process, to not be precious about all that is planned and to be prepared to let the process lead. Not doing all that is planned can be as beneficial as doing more than is planned as making art can benefit from a little or a lot.

The case study method, of reflecting on past workshops proves to be the best way to analyse the collaborative *Creative Art Journey*. Engaging with autoethnographic remembering as opposed to facilitating live workshops was the correct method for this research. In the initial stages of the research selecting workshops from a large back catalogue, of working with all age groups, was challenging. One of the initial aims of the research had been to research a selection of workshops representing different ages. However, both reflecting on past art workshops in the practice-based research and autoethnographic remembering revealed the best workshops to research. Furthermore, focussing on the under 13 age group of these four workshops, provided the opportunity to research commonalities and differences.

Exploring the selected workshops, as case studies, provides a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences of the collaborative facilitator -participant engagement. Each of the workshops provided different ways of working but what became evident was the similarities that the *Creative Art Journey* offered. The significance and vitality of collaborative art making, learning and working with communities, history, "*Cymraeg*" (the Welsh language) and "*Cymreictod*" (Welsh culture) became apparent. All the participants brought ideas, different experiences, local knowledge and learning to the art workshops which involved collaboration in sharing ideas in process and art making. Additionally, the artist facilitator contributes relevant information, make connections, contributes practical process-based skills, expertise, guidance and direction for the art practices undertaken.

Inductive reasoning and generalised findings determine that in the art workshop creativity and imagination are essential. The workshop is about learning, where all

individuals contribute, and all individuals have an impact on the *Creative Art Journey*. Collaborating with the facilitator and with each other offer challenges and opportunities to develop ways of working and learning. In these art workshops the value and relevance of each contributor's opinion is recognised, as well as in considering and appreciating significant ideas that contribute vitally to the art process. Furthermore, these art workshops provide a means for the facilitator, the participants, the community and everyone involved to develop and learn collaboratively through ways of thinking and making in art. The aim of the workshop is to develop and share knowledge and to empower participants to develop their expertise and individuality. Therefore, a key finding of this research is that the vital aspect of the art workshop is learning, which means that all involved in the workshop to include facilitator and participants are on a *Creative Art Journey* to learn together.

## **Conclusion**

Reviewing literature and methodological approaches disclose developments, adaptations, and changes to the initial research aims and objectives. The Welsh language, culture and the artist as facilitator remained key components from the initiation of the research. An original aim was to focus more on the participants but as the research developed through autoethnographic, practice-based, reflective research methods and as the theoretical engagement developed, deepened and broadened, the position of the facilitator became more prominent. This does not mean that the participants were not considered, but it means that the intended collaboration with participants, in real time art workshops, did not occur. Applying reflective case studies as a methodological approach was highly effective as it enabled the research to focus on the specificities of the selected workshops. Applying case studies as an approach demonstrates a change from the original aim, where practical investigation with participants as research subjects and respondents was intended. It became evident through the process of selection and analysis that it was a better method to reflect on past workshops, from the

autoethnographic perspective, rather than from the participant as subject in undertaking workshops with me as researcher undertaking live analytical research.

It is inevitable for research to change and develop over time, it '...is like driving a car at night. You can see only as far as your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way' (E.L. Doctorow in Schiff, 1989, p. 54) this has been the case for practice, reading and writing a constant journey of discovery. Furthermore, external aspects of the global pandemic, additionally impacted the research goals. These changes were undertaken to the benefit of the research, though were initially challenging due to the sudden and unintended change. The most significant development was to undertake a reflective autoethnographic investigation and to focus on the function of the artist facilitator in art workshops. This development had an impact on some other aspects of the purposes, for example, renouncing education principles of teaching and learning to focussing on learning to include creativity and imagination. The developments of the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales, 2022) provided exciting and valuable documentation, but ultimately these proved to be too early in the delivery of the curriculum to be entirely valuable for this research.

Literature available for the developmental stages and implementation of the *Curriculum for Wales* (Gov.Wales, 2022) began to steer the research away from the main purpose of examining the extracurricular art workshop and the position of the facilitator. The information and policy documents investigated provide curriculum focussed insights to teaching and learning, the development of creativity across the curriculum and to the employment of arts practitioners with teachers in schools. This was not the correct application for the importance of creative learning in extracurricular art workshop. Engaging with researching education and creativity in learning provided the opportunity in 2019 for myself to work as a critical expert on the *What Matters approach* (*Curriculum for Wales Blog* (1), 2018) focusing on the *Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience (AoLEs)* (*Curriculum for Wales Blog*(2), 2018, *Welsh Government*, 2017), to contribute to the discussion in the development of the curriculum and arts engagement with schools. This role included the delivery of a report and responses to the developing curriculum and

recommendations for the expressive arts in curriculum delivery. These developments and associated documents provide valuable information for centralising “*Cymru*” Wales and “*Cymraeg*” Welsh and creativity in teaching and learning were adaptable to this research. Additionally, this institutional investigation offered educational perspectives against which to argue for collaborative learning in extracurricular art workshops, without any curriculum involvement.

An initial aim had been to undertake art workshops with participants who would in turn contribute to the research process in producing art and learning journals as subjects. It became clear that to be both a workshop facilitator and a researcher posed challenges that may have distracted me from the aims of this research:

We must distinguish here between participant and nonparticipant observation. In non-participant observation, the researcher observes from the outside without becoming directly involved. In participant observation, the researcher shares the lives, activities and feelings of the subjects in the context of the situation he or she wants to analyze [sic]. (Aktouf 1987 in Gagnon, 2009, p. 42).

Being an observer and a facilitator at the same time would have been complex for me to manage as ‘investigators unconsciously become part of the group ... they are studying, which may affect their objectivity .... [and] may become focused on the participant role, at the expense of the observer role’. (Gagnon, 2009, p. 42). A small art workshop undertaken in 2021 provided opportunity to test this hypothesis, it was proved difficult for me to concentrate on both elements. In the workshop, art was more important than research and the workshops certainly would have been different had research been equally as important. It became clear that undertaking a workshop with participants and analysing the art process risked collecting false information. The important aspects of the workshop are that the facilitator and participants attend to be involved in art. This evaluation ascertains that the decision to focus on the facilitator was appropriate for this research, with no observation of participants as research subjects. This does not mean that to be facilitator and a researcher within an art workshop will not be the correct approach for other researchers.

Interviews with other facilitators was also intended but as the empirical methodology of autoethnography and practice-based research became more prevalent, these interviews became less essential. Additionally, in practice-based research, specifically in drawing quotations as art diagrams, demonstrated that the views of other facilitators, through their writing, was already being used in the research process. For example, the writing of Euros Lewis (2015) and Margaret Ames (Jones and Lewis, 2013, pp. 181-200) who had been some of my past collaborative facilitators, additionally, Ann Harding, (2005) and Lucy Neal (2015) provided sufficient relevant information for the requirements of this research.

Another aim that changed was to develop the research from practice led to research led. Whilst practice has been undertaken throughout the research the purpose of making art changed and developed to become more analytical and research focused. These aspects changed due to the natural progression of the practice-based research. The nature of art practice, especially over a long period of time, develops, responding to the work that has already been undertaken, '[a]rt is a tool to keep the concentration focused on what counts ..., on what is essential...'. (Hirschhorn, 2015), in practice and in creative and artistic changes. The ultimate direction of practice produced a body of art that became effective both as art and for the research but in this research as a means of analysing what had occurred in the past workshops in the *Creative Art Journey*. The developments and changes in the research proved to be advantageous to widen information and develop expertise. As the emphasis on the facilitator evolved, this provided a distinctive focus for a deeper understanding of the facilitation of art workshops from an empirical perspective. Deep autoethnographic reflection offers valuable insights to cultivate creativity, imagination and learning in extracurricular art collaboration.

Developing from this research are possibilities for further and wider investigations by others. This autoethnographic, practice-based research and discoveries of the potential in collaborative art workshops, to develop creativity and imagination. provides various opportunities and recommendations for development. The importance of this research demonstrates that it is vital for a facilitator to be an artist to collaborate with participants in art workshops. Additionally, the collaborative

process where everybody works together, emphasises that everybody's voice is fundamental. Furthermore, undertaking these workshops in “*Cymraeg*” (the Welsh language) is uniquely explored in this research and merits further deeper analysis, by others, for its vitality in creative processes. Exploring and learning about Welsh culture within communities with the people of those places, is beneficial for the participants sense of their place in the world and belonging. The research discovers and suggests that there are aspects that warrant further exploration by policymakers, educators, artists, facilitators and researchers.

Corroborating the importance of creative freedom in facilitating art workshops has been proved to be beneficial for both the facilitator and participants of art workshops in Wales. It is my contention that arts led workshops that provide creative freedom in making art must continue, it is vital that funding is available to continue to support these extracurricular arts activities with artists as facilitators. There is a place for artists to work in schools and to engage with the curriculum, this is important, but research needs to be undertaken to establish the benefits and impact of this for the artist, the school pupils, the teachers and the curriculum. There is also a need to examine whether artists need specific training for delivering art within schools that feed the curriculum. Artist led projects are vital for participants of all ages and it is often favourable that these do not comply to targets, assessment, and regulated structures of delivery. Additionally, although exploring adult art workshops was not done in this research, there is scope here for research to be undertaken, especially as there is often a change in policy where accreditation of lifelong learning is governed by funding. In my experience, many adult classes that once were a social way of learning are now accredited by universities. Therefore, a recommendation is that substantial investment needs to be provided for extracurricular art workshops for participants of all ages.

Deeply analysing art workshops demonstrates the importance of creativity and imagination and the facilitation of these workshops by artists. This develops from the work of Harding (2005), Neal (2015) and the artist *Bob and Roberta Smith* who champion creative and artistic approaches for people. This analysis advocates that investigation needs to be undertaken to explore the history of art and community

workshops and the reasons behind artists becoming workshop facilitators, whilst not being trained to do so. The finding that little evidence is available regarding these factors would be advantageous for validating the benefits of extracurricular art workshops with artists as facilitators.

Two case studies in this research presented facilitated collaboration in schools. These case studies demonstrated the creative freedom, with some planning or discussions with school staff. The enriching power of being creative through art has a positive impact on the individual and on learning, where unpredictability and 'unexpected' (*TEDxSwansea*, 2016, 8.54) ways are valued and no measurement and assessment of delivery, process and outcome occurs. Reviewing the *Curriculum for Wales* (*Gov.Wales*, 2022) policy documents, to provide supporting information, unfortunately demonstrates that art engagement undertaken with arts practitioners and teachers is wholly aligned to curriculum delivery to provide creativity across the curriculum. In this case art practitioners, with teachers, must conform to educational processes of planning, targets, inspection and assessment of delivery and outcomes, making the creative process potentially predictable for participants and artist alike. Assessing the positive or negative impact of this engagement is beyond the scope of this research but needs to be undertaken as part of the review of curriculum delivery, no evidence of this is evident at the time of writing. This highlights a need to explore the engagement of arts practitioners in schools to ascertain the advantages and disadvantages of this to the art practitioner, to the teachers, the curriculum and moreover to the pupils. It is advantageous to undertake this task in Wales as arts practitioners are working closely with schools delivering the arts across the curriculum.

Traditionally the contemporary teaching and learning focus in education is STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths based). Additionally, information is available in relation to STEAM based education, thereby including the arts into STEM. The Areas of Learning (AoL) of the curriculum for Wales addresses this lack of arts focus in the usual curriculum to some degree, these AoLS are 'Expressive arts, Health and well-being, Humanities, Languages, literacy and communication, Mathematics and numeracy, Science and technology' (*Hwb*, 2022 b) these six areas

of learning firmly place the arts and humanities in the curriculum. However, as this research explores extracurricular arts collaboration, the wider curricular impact of arts and science in STEM or STEAM warrants further investigation by other researchers, policy makers and assessors of education. It is enough here to identify both STEM and to a lesser extent STEAM, as hegemonic concepts that the arts workshops can push quietly and productively against and hopefully adding supplementary value to the learning experience.

This association of the arts with the curriculum needs to be explored by arts practitioners and arts organisations to form an understanding and the value of the arts within education rather than merely from the pedagogical perspective. One notable aspect that needs to be examined, from the art perspective, is the assessment of creativity and the assessment of art, which inevitably needs to be undertaken within education at all levels. If art and creativity are assessed, then these need to be delivered to pupils in schools so that they can be attained and measured, which according to the findings of this research, restricts the freedom of imagination and creative expression, processes and practice. Additionally, the curriculum and arts practitioners working together in schools leads to the question of the impact this may have on the role of the artist facilitator as discussed in this thesis. The recommendation of this research, therefore, is for the arts community in Wales to examine the use of arts in education, not focusing on education, but on the impact this has on art practice, on artist and the school pupils as participants.

Whilst these above recommendations can be undertaken by others, additionally, this research provides potential to develop aspects of the research myself. Firstly, to mentor early career artists to facilitate art workshops, to ensure creative freedom for delivery in community settings. To organise and attend symposiums and conferences around the topics of this research and recommendations with other experienced artist facilitators. Sharing good practice within the arts in Wales, and further afield, is something that has scope for expansion. This can be shared with the arts community but additionally within further and higher education of students training to be teachers and arts students who wish to facilitating workshops.

The findings of this research also offer the potential of sharing the discoveries in Welsh, developing elements of the thesis in Welsh by me is an aspect to be considered. Related to this is the potential to produce bilingual teaching and learning resources. Limited Welsh language resources are available for use by artists, teachers and those interested in undertaking art activities with creative freedom. Some online resources have already been developed by me, and an example is provided in appendix H, however, finding suitable platforms and distribution for such resources can be challenging. Also highlighted are the benefits of undertaking art activities in the Welsh language, exploring Welsh culture and historical information. These provide valuable means to learn, to deepen experiential information, and contribute to developing a sense of belonging.

The collaborative learning of the facilitator, participants and community in art workshops, forms a sense of belonging and "*Cymraeg*" (the Welsh language) contributes to that and to the originality of this research. Making art in workshops engages facilitator and participants in practical processes that use skill, information and dialogic inquiry to develop knowledge. In looking to past workshop activity that develops a form of thinking that is material, inclusive and productive, not only in practice but also in developing ways of learning about the world. Global connections can be made, through exploring ideas, and applied by participants and facilitator to thinking and making. Learning in art workshops provides a collaborative process that is an autonomous form of working where commitment to process, and deliberating through doing and making art, rather than focusing on the output, is central. Investigating "*Cymru*" and "*cymreictod*" in "*Cymraeg*" (Wales and Welsh culture in the Welsh language) enables sharing 'these things ...to see the world from within the same conceptual map and to make sense of it through the same language systems' (Hall. 1997, p. 22), forming a sense of belonging "*perthyn*" in the collaborative art workshop, thereby linking place and education in productive collaboration. The context of making art, exploring "*Cymru*" (Wales), the attributes and issues of a local culture, is beneficial in enabling young participants and the community to develop knowledge and a sense of understanding. This knowledge and collaboration foster belonging or "*perthyn*" through their own specificities and

differences that has a lasting impact through involvement in the *Creative Art Journey* of the art workshop.

To conclude, in response to the thesis hypothesis and question, of how does art practice support and develop collaborative learning in art workshops in Wales. Placing the self in the research demonstrates that making art was essential to understanding creativity and the significance of the artist facilitator. I establish through making my own art, in response to theoretical investigation and analysing case studies, that the term *Creative Art Journey* is valuable to embody the extracurricular learning collaboration. As an artist and facilitator, exploring local culture is an enriching process and when collaborating with participants has agency beyond the immediate interaction in the workshop. Furthermore, engaging with theory, writing about myself, and making a parallel art practice all have value to focus on a close analysis of creativity, collaboration with participants, myself as researcher, artist and facilitator.

Analysing evidence from theoretical perspectives, pedagogical papers and policy documents provide a firm contention that art workshops enable learning both for participants and the established art facilitator. Reviewing historical and contemporary literature and thinkers validates creativity and imagination by providing theoretical information against which to build the argument for art workshops, art thinking and extracurricular collaboration. Evidence has been amassed in investigating theory and philosophy of education and the principles of learning, specifically the development of the *Curriculum for Wales 2022* (Gov.Wales., 2023a) to examine the associated connections of the centrality of Wales, the Welsh language and arts engagement in the curriculum. The different kinds of educational paradigms have been investigated and develop the opportunity to consider the extracurricular, alternative, ways of learning that do not fit effectively into the philosophy of education. In facilitation, the art expert initially leads and as the workshop progresses all who participate can engage in collaboration, whether the output is individual as in *Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project* (2011), public as in *Murlun y Bont* (2005-2008), or collaborative as in *Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felin-fach*

1997-2014) these three case study examples establish that the facilitator is as much a collaborator in the workshop as the participants.

Systematically scrutinizing the application of the four methods aids in data capture, analysis and in testing the hypothesis, aims and objectives of the research. The four methods provide a means to consider these in diverse ways, using a deep discourse in autoethnographic writing to consider myself as a participant-facilitator, to examine the workshop process in familiar and new ways of making art to express thinking in practice-based research, to provide validity of placing this research in Wales in examining the engagement of Welsh culture and language in psychogeography, and to analyse past workshops providing a deeper comprehension of the *Creative Art Journey* in reflective case studies. In these methods, connecting theory and practice provide a platform for exploring, collecting information and working through ideas which then instigate a new art practice to be analysed during making and subsequently in art objects. Making art deepens and progresses the research and is beneficial for both the research and the researcher. Furthermore, through making art and connecting theory to practice the theoretical investigation deepens.

Scoping historical and contemporary education in Wales establishes the word “*dysgu*” (simultaneously teaching and learning) to epitomise the learning process of the *Creative Art Journey* and clarifies the unique position of the facilitator in collaborative art workshops. This research forms a deeper insight into the workshop process in which participants collaborating with the facilitator is fundamental for the success of the *Creative Art Journey*. Making art is powerful and it is evident that learning occurs in the collaborative process. Being creative and using imagination is crucial for ‘[i]nclusionality’ (Rayner, 2004 cited in Whitehead, 2009, p. 87) and “*dysgu*” and to an individual sense of belonging both to the workshop and of the work made. To demonstrate the importance of learning, the workshop, *Paper Boats* (Tosta, 2016) is an example of a simple activity of folding paper to make boats. The sense of achievement and enjoyment in folding paper for making, in this short workshop, continues to have a lasting impact on me as facilitator. This workshop called into question my assumptions and ideas in engaging with art workshops and

aided in establishing that to be open to change, ambiguity, to adapt process and to be accepting and prepared for the unexpected, can be valuable for the participants and especially for the artist facilitator. These are components of creativity.

A firm finding of this research is that learning (as opposed to teaching and learning with its inherited biased priority) is the key philosophical approach in the art workshop, experienced through creativity and imagination. Reviewing pedagogical approaches provides evidence that the *Creative Art Journey* does not fully conform to accepted educational principles. Reviewing writing by artists, thinkers and creatives demonstrates the wealth of information in the limited availability of theoretical sources. Ken Robinson with a focus on education argues for more creativity in the classroom, it should be noted that this does not mean art. The argument for *Bob and Roberta Smith's* that all schools should be art schools (*Bob and Roberta Smith, 2020, p. 12*) is their unique position. Additionally, sources relating to the art workshop process have been investigated, with a specific focus provided from two volumes by Anne Harding (2005) and Lucy Neal (2015). Moreover, there are few academic sources that explore the art workshop in Wales written in Welsh, Euros Lewis (2015) provides collaborative community theatre engagement. Whilst this research does not address this void, there is scope for future development in this field.

Art has capacity to engage others, and the new art made in practice-based research has capacity for future use to share discoveries from experiential knowledge. The *Turkish map fold concertina books* act as holders of information and like any book or artwork can be read and interpreted, the information holds ambiguity, which is important as this aids in thinking and in contemplating. This collection can also be exhibited, developed and expanded, as it forms a personal theory that can be used practically, to present and decipher information to act as visual memory prompts relating to this research. This has potential for use in arts practitioner symposiums to discuss the opportunities and challenges of delivering arts workshops in different settings and to share good practice. This also has potential when mentoring others to be facilitators of art workshops, with the ethos of creativity and imagination at the core, sharing the importance of creativity, imagination and freedom in making art

with no restrictions. Additionally developing online self-directed learning resources to highlight these benefits is a further development of this research.

Throughout this research I have struggled with use of language when discussing and presenting the concept of the Welsh language, the Welsh people, Welsh culture. I have toyed with the idea of excluding the word Welsh from this written document, however, I don't think that the time is quite right to do this. I hope that in future other researchers and writers will have the freedom to be able to express themselves as we should be as Cymraeg, Y Cymry, Cymreictod a Chymru now presented here out of their inverted commas and italics. The time is not quite right for me to do this in this thesis.

Cymraeg, Cymru, Y Cymry and Cymreictod plus art will be fundamental in my future art workshops, as it has been in the past. I will support and engage others to undertake these elements of inclusion in art workshops. I aim to mentor others to produce a specific contribution to arts learning that engages with creativity, imagination and the risk, excitement and enjoyment that these provide in making art. Finally, I aim to develop ways of discussing or presenting this thesis and findings in Cymraeg to fill the void in research for Y Cymry. It is important for me to continue to engage with art workshops based on the attributes and issues of a local culture, specifically with the culture and language in and of Cymru.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A: Commissioning Expertise for Visual Art



Figure 1. Screen shot Google search for Commissioning Expertise for Visual Art



Figure ii. Screen shot of Welsh PowerPoint Commissioning Expertise for Visual Art

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Figure i. Beynon, G. PowerPoint (2019) 'Maes Dysgu a Phrofiad y Celfyddydau Mynegiannol.' *Llywodraeth Cymru*. Available at <https://www.llyw.cymru/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/celfyddydau-mynegiannol-v2.ppt> (Accessed: January 25 2025)

Figure ii. Gwenllian Beynon (2019) *Maes Dysgu a Phrofiad y Celfyddydau Mynegiannol* Available at: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/17735895/> (Accessed: January 25 2025)

## Appendix B: Glossary

This glossary of both English and Welsh terminology provides a contextualisation of any specific meaning, to include personal views and definitions where necessary (definitions are referenced). This is set out with English first, as this thesis has been written in English however, some of the terminology used would have come from the Welsh as the art workshops included in this thesis were undertaken in Welsh.

The glossary is set out in English alphabetical order to include key themes derived from this research.

This glossary has two purposes:

1. to provide clarity for the thesis
2. when this thesis or aspects of this thesis is translated or transcribed, a consideration of terminology has already been undertaken.

<b>Glossary of Terms/ Terminoleg</b>		
<b>English</b>	<b>Welsh</b>	<b>Meaning and or definition A mixture of my meanings and dictionary or definitions from other sources Sources have been referenced.</b>
<b>Art / Celf</b>		
Art	<i>Celf</i>	Art is the process of making using creativity and imagination leading to an outcome in any art process.  “The expression or application of creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting, drawing, or sculpture, producing works...”( Art, no date)
Artist	<i>Artist</i>	A person who uses creativity and imagination to make art.
Art practitioner	<i>Ymarferydd celf</i>	A person who uses creativity and imagination to make art.
Body of artwork	<i>Corf o waith celf</i>	A collection of art works
Practice	<i>Arfer</i>	The process of making art  ‘The actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as

		opposed to the theory or principles of it; performance, execution, achievement' (Practice no date)
Process	<i>Proses</i>	The act of making a body of artwork.  "A continuous and regular action or succession of actions occurring or performed in a definite manner..." (Process, no date)
<b>Art workshop / Gweithdy Celf</b>		
Art workshop/ Workshop	<i>Gweithdy Celf/ Gweithdy</i>	workshop which can be defined as 'a meeting in which people learn about a subject by discussing it or doing activities relating to it.' (Workshop, no date). The <b>art workshop</b> can be defined as a space or an event where a group of participants get together to undertake an art activity, undertaking a collaborative, co-creative and 'communal narrative' (Neal, 2015, p.12) this could be towards an individual or collaborative outcome.  There are no complexities in the translation of the use of the word in " <i>gweithdy</i> " in Welsh it has a very similar meaning.
Artefacts	<i>Arteffactau</i>	An art object.  'An object made or modified by human workmanship, as opposed to one formed by natural processes.' (Artefacts no date)
Co-creative	<i>Cyd creu</i>	Being creative together.
Collaborative	<i>Cydweithio</i>	Working together.  'Characterized by, based upon, or produced in collaboration; co-operative.' (Collaborative no date)
Creative learning	<i>Dysgu greadigol</i>	Learning through using creative skills. This means using imagination as well as practical art processes to learn through

		making, thinking and viewing. (Rosen 2013)
Facilitator	<i>Hwylusydd</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst I would call myself a facilitator in English.</li> <li>• I would not call myself a “<i>Hwylusydd</i>” in Welsh.</li> <li>• I actually just call myself an artist in Welsh and any wider defining term is not needed.</li> <li>• It seems like there is more of a need to have a formal definition in English.</li> <li>• The role of the arts facilitator is to enable the art activity to take place.</li> <li>• To empower the participants to make art.</li> <li>• To empower individuality.</li> <li>• To engage with creativity and imagination.</li> <li>• To struggle.</li> <li>• To have fun.</li> </ul>
Failure	<i>Methu</i>	<p>Failure is a good place to go in the creative and art process- it does not mean that something hasn't been achieved, it means that a point has been reached where something else can be developed. It's a challenging and exciting part of making art.</p> <p>'The fact of failing to effect one's purpose.' (failure, no date)</p>
Participant Participants	<p><i>Cyfrannog (cyfranogion), Cyfranogwr (cyfranogwyr), Cyfranogwraig</i></p> <p><i>Participate - cymryd rhan / Mynychwr</i></p>	<p>The term participant though used widely in relation to arts activity definitions of the term seem to be limited.</p> <p>A participant in this research is a young person taking part in an art activity being involved in making art This can be collaborative or individual. In relation to working with the art practitioner as facilitator they are collaborating in the making of art</p>

		<p>and this is to enable the participant to achieve their best work at the time of the workshop.</p> <p>Translating the term is complex. The translation implies a contributor. A better term may be <i>mynychwr</i> which means to take part.</p>
Space	<i>Gofod</i>	<p>A place where the art workshop can take place.</p> <p>'Physical extent or area;' (Space, no date)</p>
<b>Education/ Addysg</b>		
Circulating schools	<i>Ysgolion cylchol</i>	' these schools travelled to various locations in Wales staying for a short period of time 'The schools were held for three months in the same place, usually in the winter months when farm work was slack' (Clement, 1959b). 1700s
Education	<i>Addysg</i>	a necessary implication that something valuable or worthwhile is going on... it "involves the acquisition of a body of knowledge and understanding which surpasses mere skill, know-how or the collection of information...the processes of education involve at least some understanding of what is being learnt and what is required in the learning..." (Winch and Gingell, 1999, pp.70-71).
Experiential Education	<i>Addysg Profiadwaith</i>	'...is not sponsored by some formal educational institution ... It is learning that is achieved through ...everyday experience'. (Smith, 2001, 2010).
Formal education	<i>Addysg Ffurfiol</i>	is '...the 'highly institutionalized chronologically graded and hierarchically structured "educational system"', running from primary school through to university (Coombs et al., 1974, p.8) and '...consists of learning

		that occurs within an organised and structured context' (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004, p. 71).
Historical non-conformist education	<i>"Addysg anghydfurfiol"</i>	<p>Translation (In accordance with the stream of Nonconformist Education, that was nurtured, they were co-educators; teachers who knew that their work was not 'to push into place something that wasn't there' but rather to 'draw out' the ability, the imagination, the creativity that already exists in the 'being of the student' - every student.)</p> <p><i>Yn unol â ffrwd yr Addysg Anghydfurfiol oedd wedi eu magu, cydymaddysgwyr oeddynt; athrawon a wyddai nad 'gwitho i'w le rhywbeth nad oedd yno' oedd eu gwaith ond 'arwain allan' y gallu, y dychymyg, y creadigrwydd sydd eisioes yn bod 'yn enaid y myfyriwr' - pob myfyriwr. (Lewis, 2015, p.98)</i></p>
Informal education	<i>Addysg Anffurfiol</i>	<p>informal education is learning from daily life activities ... accidental learning... not structured ... does not lead to certification...'</p> <p>(Colardyn &amp; Bjornavold 2004 p.71) it is '...interaction or conversation and in conversation everything is unpredictable.' (Jeffs &amp; Smith, 2005, p.77)</p>
Learning	<i>Dysgu</i>	'To acquire knowledge of (a subject) or skill in (an art, etc.) as a result of study, experience...' <p>(Learning, no date)</p>
Non formal Education	<i>Addysg Anghydfurfiol</i>	non-formal education is '...any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on

		outside the framework of the formal system...' (Coombs et al. 1974, p.8) furthermore, 'in planned activities that are not explicitly designated as learning, but which contain an important learning element.' (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004, p.71)
School	<i>Ysgol</i>	'An establishment or institution for the formal education of children or young people.' (School, no date)
Sunday School	<i>Ysgol Sul</i>	A gathering of people on a Sunday in the chapel coming together to learning to read from the <i>Welsh Bible</i> . 1600s
Teaching	<i>Addysgu</i>	A term devised for policy purposes so that a distinction could be made between teaching and learning. The reality for me is that there should be no distinction. We should use " <i>Dysgu</i> "
Teaching	<i>Dysgu</i>	'To communicate knowledge; to act as a teacher; to give instruction' (Teaching, no date)
Teaching and learning	<i>Dysgu</i>	There is the same exact equation between teaching and learning that there is between selling and buying. The only way to increase the learning of pupils is to augment the quantity and quality of real teaching. Since learning is something that the pupil has to do himself and for himself, the initiative lies with the learner. The teacher is a guide and director; he steers the boat, but the energy that propels it must come from those who are learning. (Winch and Gingell, 1999, p.232)
<b>Research/ Ymchwil</b>		
Case studies	<i>Astudiaeth achos</i>	'A [method] of research into the development of a particular... group, or situation...' (Case studies, no date)
Creative Art Journey	<i>Taith Greadigol Celf</i>	The process of a collaborative art activity in an art workshop with participants and a facilitator or

		<p>facilitators can be explained as a creative art journey, a phrase developed to capture the notion of collaborative teaching and learning within an art workshop. (This term does, or variations of the term as art or creative learning journey seem to be used in educational aspects in relation to art education in schools to demonstrate the curriculum journeys of art and design pupils (<a href="https://www.twinkl.co.uk/teaching-wiki/learning-journey">https://www.twinkl.co.uk/teaching-wiki/learning-journey</a> - though that is not the intention in this research). The journey of creative learning, can be further explained as a process of gathering ideas, working through ideas and developing ideas to potential art outcomes with 'no rules' (Hegarty, 2014, pp.6-9), and will depend on many factors for example the initial aim of the journey, the skills of the facilitator, the skills and age of the participants and the location and confines of the workshop. During a journey of creative learning, the path can change. Reflection and learning in the art workshops can cause a different and sometimes unexpected change in the direction of the journey and it is up to all involved to trust in this change. I would call this creativity.</p> <p>the creative art journey, a term used to incorporate the various aspects of the interaction between an art practitioner as facilitator, with participants, in art workshops</p> <p>is a phrase that has been developed to describe the creative engagement between the art practitioner as facilitator and participants in an art workshop. It</p>
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		refers to the journey of the art engagement through creativity, imagination and making art.
Hauntology	Possibly could use “ <i>Hiraeth</i> ” but this is not quite right as this means a longing for something.	In hauntology ‘events that are spatially distant become available... instantaneously’ (Fisher, 2014, p.43), the past, the present and the future (Coverley, 2020, p.17)
Multi-disciplinary arts project	<i>Prosiect celf amlddysgyblaethol</i>	Using different art or arts processes.
Psychogeography	<i>Seicodaearyddiaeth</i>	‘The study of the influence of geographical environment on the mind, behaviour’ (Psychogeography, no date). In this research how Wales and the culture of Wales, both from contemporary and historical perspectives has an impact.
<b>General</b>		
Ambiguity	<i>Amwyster</i>	the fact or quality of having different possible meanings; capacity for being interpreted...’ (Ambiguity, no date) indifferent ways
Creative	<i>Creadigol</i>	creativity involves imagination that enable a consideration of ideas to bring to the process of making
No English word	<i>Cynefin</i>	The curriculum does, however, place great emphasis on the local area, or what it calls Cynefin. According to the new curriculum, Cynefin is defined as: “the place where we feel we belong, where the people and landscape around us are familiar, and the sights and sounds are reassuringly recognisable. Though often translated as ‘habitat,’ cynefin is not just a place in a physical or geographical sense: it is the historic, cultural, and social place which has shaped and continues to shape the community which inhabits it. (Jones, 2020b)

		“Ystyr cynefin “Dyma’r man y teimlwn ein bod yn perthyn iddo, lle mae’r bobl a’r dirwedd o’n cwmpas yn gyfarwydd, a lle mae’r golygfeydd a’r seiniau yn gysurus o hawdd eu hadnabod. Nid dim ond man yn yr ystyr ffisegol neu ddaearyddol ydyw, serch hynny: dyma’r lleoliad hanesyddol, diwylliannol a chymdeithasol sydd wedi ffurfio ac sy’n parhau i ffurfio’r gymuned sy’n trigo yno” (Golwg, 2023, p.26)
Culture(al)	<i>Diwylliant</i>	‘Of, belonging to, or relating to the culture of a particular society, people, or period’. (Cultural, no date)
Wales	<i>Cymru</i>	The country
Welsh	<i>Cymry</i>	The people
Welsh	<i>Cymraeg</i>	The language
Welsh	<i>Cymreig</i>	Belonging to Wales or of Wales
Welsh culture	<i>Diwylliant Cymreig</i>	‘Of, belonging to, or relating to the culture of a particular society, people, or period’. (Cultural, no date) Belonging to the Welsh culture or to the culture of Wales

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## Appendix C: Glossary of practice-based terms

Glossary of Terms practice-based research and new theory

Term	Example	Description
Approach	<p><b><i>Approach 1 Monochrome drawings</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Approach 2 Words</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Approach 4 Larger single fold books title cover</i></b></p>	The sections of personal visual theory
Diagrams	Diagrams	The dots and dashes no objects
Drawing techniques	Representational images. Diagrams Image mapping	
Image mapping	Image mapping.	The drawings that have bubbles and writing
Objects as narrators	Representational images. <i>Turkish map fold concertina books</i> <i>Single fold books</i>	The cups and saucers. Physical art objects
Parts	<p><i>Sketchbooks</i></p> <p><i>Large scale studio practice 2019-2020</i></p> <p><i>Small-scale lockdown work 2020-2022</i></p> <p><i>Studio June 2022</i></p>	These are the distinctive parts of the practice-based research that can be discussed.
Paper	<i>In the art practice</i>	The use of the kinds of paper used for the art processes was explored and determined through experimentation. The types of paper used needed to work with the art processes, the types of dry and wet drawing materials. As

		well as in the physical making of the art objects.
Personal visual theory	Research archive <i>Folios</i> 1 Image mapping and representational drawing final 2 Quotations 3 Trial pieces 4 Diagrammatic drawing	The visual theory that I developed that included Art objects produced and the way of associating thinking to these.
Representational images	Representational images.	Images using recognisable objects, such as cups and saucers and other visual representations were metaphorical narratives for the workshop engagement.
Scale	Of the artwork	The scale of the art objects was explored. The art needed to work together. The art objects needed to function (e.g. if the books were too small, they became irrelevant if too large they didn't function).
Single fold books		One paper folded in half with art on the front and the back
Trial pieces	Trial pieces	The pieces made along the way that were developmental and formed a foundation for the personal visual theory
<i>Turkish map fold concertina books</i>	<i>Turkish map fold concertina books</i>	These are a combination of a Turkish map fold book which is folded in a specific way from a square of paper this is joined by 2 concertina books. These combined, form a book that contains information and can be opened and closed. For me they became holders of information that are dynamic.

## Appendix D: Assumptions, principles and planning art workshops

- Everyone is creative:  
Creativity does not only exist in the arts but exists in all areas of life. Everyone need to be creative. Including creativity in projects with young people is vital to develop fulfilled, creative thinkers for the future. Creativity is instinctive.
- It can be done:  
In an art workshop it's good to start small and to warming up, just like in physical exercise, so that participants and facilitator can start the creative art journey together. In warming up the participants can get to know each other and the facilitator. The Journey has begun.
- The problems can be overcome:  
Through getting to know everyone and observing development, a support network can be built. If someone says 'I cannot draw' then in the early warm up drawings a focus on proficient elements is done. The art workshop develops individual approaches to get the best out of everyone, including myself.
- It is sometimes a risk:  
Taking a risk is part of the creative process. It involves trust in ambiguity. It is not possible to know the outcome from the first marks made. The journey is a mystery. It is good to think big and to push as far as possible as there is excitement and surprises in the creative art journey.
- The non-creative orientated adult or teacher will not understand:  
Working with non-creative orientated adults or teachers in the art workshop, sometimes in schools can pose some issues. I aim to be equal with the participants. The teacher or another non-creative orientated adult, has a different role to manage the behaviour, to control the workshop, to ensure academic succeed, to assess. In these aspects the creative process is difficult to find. If teachers or another non-creative orientated adult interfere, then the creative process cannot take place.
- Creativity is an individual journey:  
This is an element that for me is the most interesting. Being creative I believe is a natural process. I aim to find that creativity within the art workshop. I work out how individual creativity and skill can be fostered and used. All individuals bring something with them and can contribute. This can be surprising.
- The output is individual and is not like anybody else:  
Even within a co-creative project it is important to enable the individual's output to not be like anybody else's. Individuality is important. I believe that the finished work should not look like mine- unless that is the intention. I believe that the participant should feel an ownership for their finished work.
- Not all have the capacity to believe in the creative process:

This is always difficult to manage. Terms like 'I can't draw,' 'I can't do art.' have some sort of response like OK let us try.... Then aim to explore the participant's journey and what they bring to the art workshop. This does not always mean that success is achieved. But the creative art journey is nevertheless taken.

- It will not always succeed:  
This is the risk with a creative art journey or with art workshops. If there must be an outcome due to funding or the requirements of the project, then there must be a suitable conclusion. Creativity does not always succeed. This does not mean failure.

Associated to assumptions are the principles that I aim to incorporate into the art workshop, and the creative art journey, to enable:

- problem solving
- engagement with process
- participants to working out of their comfort zone
- believing in ability
- a review of the creative art journey during the entire process
- stepping back occasionally
- working towards an outcome
- working together
- creative practice
- individual development
- the creative art journey is important.

### **Planning an art workshop full version.**

Above are my assumptions and principles for undertaking art workshops with participants. In this research a selection of art workshops has been made so that a focus on the different types of art workshops can be reflected on in some detail. Throughout the research remembering has been a vital aspect and has been undertaken through focusing on the interplay of art practice and engagement with participants and presented in the reflective case studies in greater detail in chapter 3. This autoethnographic general remembering, of my role in the creative art journey in which I focus on different stages of the art workshops to include planning and process.

For me, the planning of workshops and being prepared is a vital aspect of facilitation, utilising different methods depending on the type of workshop. Planning will always take place prior to any workshop. Often this involves meetings and discussing initial ideas with others and if there are other facilitators involved, then all facilitators would need to meet before the workshops, to explore ideas and to see what expertise is available for the workshop and to structure the workshops within the time constraints.

In the planning phase It is important to know what the project is, if there are any funding constraints, the money available, the expectations, the space to be used, the constraints of the space, available materials and equipment, others involved, the age of the participants, the size of the group, other facilitators involvement and a collaborative approach, the time constraints, the ordering of materials. Planning for workshops is essential in preparation for the art workshop but can be fluid, within the constraints of the project, especially if a workshop is delivered over time.

In a collaborative workshop, that runs over several weeks or longer, once the engagement has begun then it is important that the participants are involved in further planning. The participants can have an impact on the progression of the workshop. Planning can be continuous and with frequent meetings of the facilitators and participants to discuss progress and to plan the next stages. All members of the project can have equal say in creative art journey. Each participant has as strong a voice as the facilitator in co-creative art workshops.

After the initial meeting I think about the workshop often. I will visit unfamiliar workshop locations if that is possible or required. There may also be further meetings or discussions of the content of the workshop and a consideration and ordering of materials.

A few days before the workshop I bring all the plans together and I will

- review the notes made,
- make new notes,
- gather the materials together,
- try out art processes,
- make more art,
- adapt the process if needed,
- think about the location and group,
- make more notes,
- pack everything together ready to go,
- consider contingency processes if things do not go to plan,
- consider different eventualities,
- be prepared to respond to the workshop participants,

The thinking does not stop here I will continue to think at the start and during the workshop I will revisit the notes and make sure I am clear in my mind in what I am doing – these may not be looked at again and are not intentionally keep - I will keep the trial pieces but only haphazardly. This then becomes an archive, of sorts, that I will come across every now and again in the future.

I will arrive early for the workshop, to familiarise myself with the location, to set everything up and make sure the space is suitably arranged for the planned, art workshop. I will put the materials in a central location, at the edge the space. I control these materials as they are valuable. I have found that materials can be used indiscriminately, in a workshop and can quickly be used up. I point out this location and explain the value of the materials and that care needs to be taken with their use. Also, if materials are shared, like one pot of paint, then these need to be

taken from the space and brought back to the space. I do tend to control materials to ensure considered use. But if the materials are enabling a release of creativity, then this is something I would observe and foster.

As participants arrive, I will welcome and talk with the participants and allow space to get to know people. I will introduce myself but will only provide as much information as is needed and suitable for the art workshop, for example, if the workshop is about me as an art practitioner, then I would introduce myself and my practice. If it is about a specific project, then I would introduce what is relevant for the project. If the art workshop is not about me at all, then I would just say that I am an artist and I will be facilitating this workshop- I am not important in that scenario. Sometimes it is also important to get to know the participants, so time can be allowed for this. But sometimes there is no time for this and just general introductions are made.

Planning is vital to ensure that there are enough materials. That I am prepared for the art workshop and that the space is ready for the workshop. Following planning the workshop can take place and the creative art journey process can occur.

In an art workshop the creative art journey is distinctive as all involved bring a uniqueness to each project. There are methods that are useful for the workshop process, and these are adapted and developed in different ways in different workshop. Being a multidisciplinary artist is beneficial for providing many varied skills for use in the art in the workshop. The planning of the initial process is important to the engagement in the art workshop and my trust in my abilities to be spontaneous within the workshop is essential. I need to respond to the works being undertaken, so that individual development can occur for each participant, to include in co-creative workshops.

At the start of the workshop, I will give an overview of the space, the materials, information about the workshop, some expectations, if there is an outcome and the time scale. I will give a focused introduction for me using the Welsh language from the start is important. Once the introductions have been made then it is over to the participants to work. I need to ensure that there is time for process and in that time that experimentation, development, excitement, and discovery can occur for the participants.

During the time the participants work I will try not to interfere too much however if someone is struggling then I will advise and offer alternative approaches. Prior to the workshop I will have considered alternatives and have a variety of materials suitable for alternative approaches. During the workshop as a facilitator there will be a fluctuation of interacting and observation of work underway, of progress, the elation of something, the disappointment of something and the feelings towards work within the art workshop.

I set out to share knowledge and to collaborate in the process of discovery through the creative art journey, this normally means that at the start I aim to discover ways of working together. The participants produce, evaluate and progress, whilst the facilitator observes, guides, and suggests. In the early stages this is normally

though drawing and normally with a pencil. At this stage I will trust in the process respond to the process and develop with the process. This is the 'press-ups of the brain' (Osmond, 2015, p.219) stage of the journey, I liken it to warming up before exercise. This stage cannot be planned as creativity and development within these early stages of the workshop will determine the development of the work. This is the warmup stage of the process where quantity and doing is far more important than quality. This is the stage of getting to know, of thinking of responding and of starting. This is the start of the creative art journey that all involved are on together - the participant and the facilitator. Everyone brings skills and ideas into any given situation and it is about how that interaction works. Often in the creative process in the art workshop there is working in a state of ambiguity- there needs to be a trust in that ambiguous process, as in ambiguity is where the magic is. The creative art journey is the way of making sense of the process to a place of understanding that can later be developed into art works.

During the workshop I need to

- be supportive,
- suggest alternative process or method,
- suggest alternative responses to the process,
- utilise critical judgement,
- praise the work undertaken,
- be positive,
- be adaptive,
- trust myself,
- trust the participants.
- make sure that I keep to time.

Respect is an important part of the art workshop, respect for ability, for understanding, for feelings and for the development of the individual practice within the creative art journey.

I find that during workshop some self-discovery occurs but also memorable discoveries that can be taken back into life. I believe that in process and through thinking that creativity occurs. For example, in an art workshop in Summer 2021 one of the young participants was able to make a connection to a storytelling process that they had learnt in school that they could develop into the art activity and one of the adult participants was able to make a connection to her teaching process and could take ideas back to their role as a university lecturer in an academic subject not related to art. This process of transferring skills is an interesting outcome of art practice - making associations to other ways of working and taking the skills outside of the workshop.

For me as facilitator observing these lightbulb moments happening through process in thinking and through making, provide more of an insight to the journey of making art and I believe will provide memorable insights to take into the participants' future, they are elements that will be remembered when the art outcome may be long forgotten if successful or not. The lightbulb moments do not occur in the outcome but occur on the journey to outcome. I love this element of art workshops the

element of discovery, of learning, of thinking and if this has occurred then I am not too worried about outcome. For me, the creative art journey process is as important as the outcome, if not more important. There is a lot to learn within the process, in the explorative journey and the discovery that can happen through art and making. Process is vital as the discoveries are unknown at the start of the process, both for the facilitator and participants.

I will always round off a workshop in some way and this would be different in different situations or with different age groups but often participants like to see what others have done. A show and tell both during a workshop and at the end of a workshop is a valuable part of the creative art journey.

As a facilitator I have worked on multidisciplinary, co-creative projects where the processes on offer to the participants are varied and where show and tell is vital for the progression and outcome of the art project. These have included though were not limited to, dance drama voice film making scripting, art. These kinds of multidisciplinary projects can be complex and take a lot of very careful planning. One such project was *Cadw Sŵn*, an annual project for 11–15-year-old participants that occurred over 5 weeks with an exhibition of the work undertaken at the end.

The process of this project was to gather information from a starting point of not information and to work from almost nothing to something. All participants were involved in the decision making from the fact-finding initial stages to the eventual performative exhibition. Nobody knew where this journey was going to go in the project decision-making was vital and process was where decisions were made, where editing occurred and where everyone had a say.

The process for this project was that everyone came together at the beginning and did some performative warming up movement exercises- it was vital for process that everyone got to know everyone else. All participants then split into groups to work, in a rotation, with different facilitators and different arts processes with the aim of gathering information and to discover themes that the youth participants were concerned with. At the end of the first day all groups united into one large group (and there could be about 100 participants in this *Cadw Sŵn*). This show and tell sessions formed the co-creative core producing collaborative discussion that needed to occur during the whole process up to the performative exhibition to provide a voice for all participants and an ownership for the project.

Dynamics in co-creative multidisciplinary projects, can be complex, or they can be simple it is never evident at the outset. But the dynamics is what drives the creative art journey. The final output can sometimes be rough and unpolished and is reliant on the skills of the participants their willingness to be a part of the process and their readiness to engage with the facilitators as well as to engage with bringing information to the project. It is a dynamic process where all are on a creative art journey together.

For me as facilitator within such a project. I must be mindful of all participants and the other facilitators. Collaboration and having a voice for all is vitally important, within such a project I need to manage the art workshops and to help the

participants to find the ideas. The participants need to work on the ideas, also as the first day progresses some themes might be occurring that can be brought from the other arts methods to be visually explored. The first day is a day of making connections of empowering ownership and visualising potential. Ownership for this project was key.

As this project ran over 5 weeks the process involved developed and both the participants and facilitators could take ideas away with them to think more deeply about them. This meant that each week ideas could develop further and the process of coming together that occurred regularly during the workshop sessions formed a core process that aided in the outcome.

The outcome of *Cadw Sŵn* was always preformation and visually based with a performative exhibition of work at the end. The work exhibited at the end always showed a selection and sometimes, if space allows, all the process is shown as work of the participants was always the most important.

Outcome also varies according to the kind of workshops undertaken, sometimes outcome is important and is essential as in *Cadw Sŵn*. If the whole workshop is creative with a display of that creativity meant for the end of the creative art journey, then the process or elements of the process can act as the outcome for display. This is where process is as important as outcome. On the other hand, an outcome may be essential if the art project is to work with participants to make a commemorative work to celebrate a specific occasion, then an outcome is essential.

Sometimes the participant of the project, involving the facilitators, will decide on an outcome for example a certain prop for a performance, pieces of work needed for an exhibition, work needed for a competition- this is not a definitive list. For me as a facilitator sometimes the outcome is less important than process, certainly in relation to the creative art journey and the learning and engagement that happens in that journey. I always aim, during the process that the participants to have at least one thing that they are happy with and often this occurs.

For me as a facilitator the outcome is sometimes difficult, and I believe in art that outcome leads to another process and then to another outcome and so it goes on, one thing leads to the next. In an art workshop this cannot be the case as the workshop inevitably comes to an end, but I hope that in the process of the creative art journey the participants have developed a questioning attitude that can lead to transferable skills for life and work beyond the workshop.

To complete this general autoethnographic overview of the art workshop I will briefly reflect on a small workshop undertaken in July 2021 as it was always intended that towards the end of the doctoral research, I would undertake a workshop on which to aid in the reflective process. External events did not permit this process; however, I was able to undertake a very short workshop with a mixed age group including adults and children. This provided a brief opportunity with the aim to observe an art workshop during facilitation and to then immediately reflect on the process.

Planning occurred as described above with discussions with the organisers in relation to location materials and cost. Additionally, I made notes, trials, consider and adapted the process and collected the materials. In reflecting about this workshop there were no surprises for me in the planning process.

Prior to the art workshop, I had a feeling of insecurity, nervousness, and uncertainty of the unknown and during the workshop there was feelings of excitement, disappointment, insecurity, and joy of making and exploring in the creative art journey.

On arrival I set out my materials. As the participants arrived, I made sure everyone had space to work before I introduced myself and the workshop. I then provided some paper and pencils to start to consider the ideas, as the workshop was next to a small museum, we visited the museum to look at the objects there, all participants had space and time to explore and draw the objects or to focus on elements of the objects. They were encouraged to consider their own interests. Additionally, I had brought some associated old objects from my archive in case someone needed added ideas or inspiration.

During the rest of the workshop there was an ebb and flow for me as facilitator, interacting or not interacting and the observation process and progression of the work. I also provided different kinds of materials, at the start of the workshop for the participants to try. Before enabling them to focus on their own choice from what was available.

The elation of something the disappointment of something and the feelings involved outcome during the workshop I need to be supportive I need to praise for work and need to provide an alternative or an additional response to the process I need to make sure that I keep to time. Respect is an important part of the process respect for ability and for understanding for age for feelings and so on. I was always shadow of a loner I will always. It was interesting, in the workshop, to observe the different emotional responses of the participants. Some very strong. The negative responses are the hardest to manage as if someone is really disappointed with the work they have undertaken, and this disappointment happens at the end of the process then it is very difficult to work with this. If it happens during the workshop then often, as in this workshop one of the young participants was really upset by their work, but after some time out and probably some self-reflection, they were able to turn this around for themselves, and together we explored other processes that they were happier with their use and outcome.

When someone is unhappy, I also need to explore some self- reflection, I need to check myself and question whether there was something else that I could have done. I also need to question why the participant was unhappy. There may have been some other external aspects that the participant brought with them to the workshop. But nevertheless, I also need to question:

- was there something else that I could have done?
- why was the participant at the workshop?

- why were they not happy?
- what was the work like?
- was it me or was it them?

though, disappointing I must consider that this is not always my fault if I will have provided alternatives. If I consider this the reasons are behind this may be

- the participant does not want to be there in a school group for example,
- the participant may have high expectations,
- the participants may not like making art.
- the participant may have some issues outside of the workshop

At the end of this workshop, I undertook some self-reflection and evaluation and thinking about the work undertaken. I very rarely undertake any deep evaluation of workshops; it is often a quick, fleeting self-reflection. I think that not evaluating workshops fully means that the next workshop can be a clean start- the ambiguous process and the creative art journey can be unimpeded.

Evaluating this workshop was something that needed to be undertaken in relation to the research to discover whether I could have been both facilitator and a researcher at the same time, through the evaluation I discovered that it would have been very difficult for me to be both the facilitator and researcher of the workshop. The most important aspect of the art workshop is that the facilitator is present and gives undivided attention throughout, had I been facilitator, participant, and researcher of an art workshop, I concluded that neither aspect would have had my full attention- I would have become really confused. To conclude this evaluation, therefore, is to ascertain that the decision made for this research to become an autoethnographic, practice-based, reflective, case study research was appropriate with no direct observation or participation within the research process.

Exploring autoethnography in this chapter and writing the reflection in chapter 3. raises ethical questions that need to be considered throughout the research but especially in reflection. It is sometimes difficult to illustrate a point without giving away who you are talking about. It is such a shame not to use photographs to highlight points as some photographs demonstrate the child's wonder at discovery- I have explored the blurring of faces but the photograph then becomes meaningless, some images have been used in this way but generally photographs of others have been excluded. I believe this to be the correct action even though the children had been in the projects a long time ago I do not think that it is ethical to include these images even though the children are now adults. At the time of taking the photographs permission was had for the photographs to be taken and to be used in different ways however permission was never granted for the photographs to be used in research.

When writing and autoethnography sometimes it is possible to form a composite character (Ellis. 1999, p.681), though I considered this approach at one time to enable more specific representation of the participant's, perspective in the

autoethnographic reflective engagement, as the autoethnography progressed it became clear that a self-focus was the best approach. The focus is on me.

At the start of the research, I knew that I wanted to reflect on the past workshops to try to gain an understanding of what had been undertaken but I had no idea what journey that would take. This is very similar to being an artist- sometimes working in the studio needs to be ambiguous, it is not known what the art journey will be and what direction it will take. My art is built on past work, either undertaken in sketchbooks or in the studio itself, I often see a repetition of something or a reoccurrence of something. Sometimes art is sparked by something new by a story, a film, or a lecture something that sparks an interest. Initially when working in the art studio on my research my instinct was to focus on my practice on my ideas and in this respect the work was about storytelling about memory and about culture. I was making work at the time in relation to the Welsh dresser and about the objects found on the Welsh dresser and these cups and crockery and the willow pattern were initially used to consider the research into past workshops.

As most of the workshops that I have undertaken have been delivered in Welsh it has always been important that nobody is excluded as long as they understood that the Welsh language led. This never seemed to have caused any issues or problems known to me. On the other hand, if the main language of the art workshop has not been led through the Welsh language, then I will always include some Welsh in the process and if there are Welsh speakers then I will speak Welsh with them.

I believe that to be an artist is an important aspect of the process of art practice. This is about me working in collaboration with others as a facilitator in art workshops with participants. This aspect will be explored further in practice-based research.

## **Reference list**

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## Appendix E: Plans for Cadw Sŵn & Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project

### Outline plan for Cadw Sŵn

A broad example a retrospective programme plan of how the 5 weeks were organised.

<p><b>Examples of the types of arts processes this was not limited but was determined by the availability of Welsh speaking arts practitioners as facilitators.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Dance</li> <li>• Drama</li> <li>• Performance</li> <li>• Set making</li> <li>• Set design</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Costume</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Filming</li> <li>• Photography</li> <li>• Voice</li> </ul>
<p><b>Example Themes</b> (these would be different in every year of the project/ workshops)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural / heritage</li> <li>• Historical aspect</li> <li>• Important to associate to youth culture</li> <li>• What was of concern to the participants</li> <li>• What was exciting</li> <li>• Themes were discussed in large groups and in smaller groups</li> </ul>
<p>Occurred in every weekly session</p>	<p><b>Start of day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large group activity/ warm up</li> <li>• Divide into sub groups</li> </ul> <p><b>Middle of day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large group activity/ warm up</li> <li>• Divide into sub groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>End of day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large group activity/ to close the day</li> <li>• Feedback/ show and tell session to all participants and facilitators, sharing ideas developed throughout the day</li> <li>• Performance</li> <li>• Demonstrations</li> <li>• Presenting the artwork produced</li> <li>• Showing films</li> </ul>
<p>Occurred after every weekly session</p>	<p>Facilitators to discuss the ideas and all works done during the day.</p>

(Facilitators discussion/ reflection/ evaluation/ development	And to reflect on all aspects of the session's development. Consider the next session. Consider any requests from participants in terms of ideas materials and so on. Do we (facilitators) need to action something that has been requested?	
<b>Example Session</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>What</b>
Day 1	The intention of this session was to gather information based on the themes from discussions. The facilitators worked from their expertise with the aim by the end of the day to have gathered as much information as possible through creative engagement with the young participants.	<p><b>Start of the day</b></p> <p><b>During the day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all the participants rotated and were involved in all the workshops available with all the facilitators</li> <li>• for example, art, drama, movement, technical workshops.</li> </ul> <p><b>Middle of day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large group activity/ warm up</li> <li>• Divide into subgroups.</li> </ul> <p><b>End of day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large group activity/ to close the day</li> <li>• Feedback/ show and tell session to all participants and facilitators, sharing ideas developed throughout the day</li> <li>• Performance</li> <li>• Demonstrations</li> <li>• Presenting the artwork produced</li> <li>• Showing films</li> </ul>
Day 2	This session builds on the first session, but the facilitator will have explored the information collected in the first session. In terms of art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme</li> <li>• ideas collected</li> <li>• Requirements of the performative exhibition explored</li> </ul>

	<p>there was a sorting of ideas into categories before working again with the participants on the development of the ideas. The intention to begin to develop ideas into work and to start focus the ideas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The desires of the participants</li> <li>• The desires of all facilitators</li> </ul> <p>Examples of creative processes undertaken in the past</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theatre Set</li> <li>• Installations</li> <li>• Exhibitions</li> <li>• Props</li> <li>• Interaction with the Audience</li> <li>• Film</li> <li>• Animation</li> </ul>
Day 3	Continuation of session 2 but to develop a deeper focus on the creative work produced. To remain explorative	
Day 4	Continuation of session 2 and 3 aim to have completed working with the subgroups	
Day 5	To work with participants who select to remain within certain subgroups. The aim of this session is to put the finishing touches to the artistic processes undertaken.	
<p>Performative exhibition all participants involved All arts practitioners to facilitate and support.</p>		

### Example Art subgroup workshops

After start of day activities and discussions all participants divided into groups to rotate around each subgroup.

All participants and facilitators would be involved in start of day, mid-day and end

Day	Aim	How
Day 1 Workshop Repeated 4 times	To work on ideas To develop ideas visually To discuss ideas with the smaller group To show and share ideas at the end of the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drawing</li> <li>• Working quickly</li> <li>• Using simple processes</li> <li>• Focussing on ideas rather than art methods and processes</li> </ul>
Facilitator at the end of the day to reflect to look at the work undertaken to find common themes or themes that has not yet been presented or discussed also to explore different creative/ art / making skills to consider aspects that could be developed for the performative exhibition. Also, to consider what types of materials might be beneficial for the next week's session		
Day 2 Workshop Repeated 4 times	This week's art workshop would be developed from the previous week and the materials and ideas considered during week 1 would be developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Considering the ideas</b></li> <li>• <b>Developing</b></li> <li>• <b>Condensing</b></li> <li>• <b>Exploring types of art methods to explore</b></li> </ul>
Facilitator at the end of the day to reflect to look at the work undertaken to find common themes or themes that has not yet been presented or discussed also to explore different creative/ art / making skills to consider aspects that could be developed for the performative exhibition. Also, to consider what types of materials might be beneficial for the next week's session		
Day 3 Workshop Repeated 4 times	Development from day 2	<b>Development from day 2</b>
Day 4 Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop work</li> </ul>	

Elective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work on the requirements of the other subgroups if there are any – for example a certain prop might be needed.</li> <li>• To focus on developing art</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exploring work already undertaken by all participants.</b></li> <li>• <b>Discussion with other facilitators and participants for requirements</b></li> <li>• <b>Working with the participants that had elected to do art on the work to be produced,</b></li> </ul>
Day 5 Workshop Elective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop work</li> <li>• To work on the requirements of the other subgroups if there are any – for example a certain prop might be needed.</li> <li>• To focus on developing art</li> <li>• To decide on what aspect of the art workshop would be used in the performative exhibition</li> <li>• To decide which other developmental work could be exhibited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Numbers who had elected art could vary there could be a small or a large group and this would determine the possibility of the type, scale and amount of art that could be made</b></li> </ul>

**Performative exhibition**

This would vary in each annual *Cadw Sŵn* project for example

- Large scale set designing and making
- Making Small props
- Devising found or available objects as props
- Painting
- Drawing
- Painting backdrops

Aspects of the work may have been used within the performative elements of the exhibition whilst other aspects would be displayed as in an art exhibition  
Each *Cadw Sŵn* project would have a different Creative art journey and a different type of Performative exhibition at the end  
The above demonstrated a general overview example of the project.

My role as art practitioner was to facilitate the creative art journey and to work with participants on the work produced.

## Outline plan for Prosiect Eliffant Tregaron Project

A broad retrospective programme plan for Eliffant Tregaron

Themes and inspiration	Process undertaken	Art Outcome
<b>Class 4 - years 5 and 6</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archaeology</li> <li>• Drama</li> <li>• Ogwyn Davies (local artist)</li> <li>• Bryan Graham (artist involved in archaeology)</li> <li>• History</li> <li>• Story</li> <li>• Considering found fragments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed media</li> <li>• Found objects</li> <li>• Colour</li> <li>• Words</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Looked at artist</li> <li>• Remembered archaeology</li> <li>• Considered the drama</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Mixed media work</li> <li>• Produced a video diary film about the elephant</li> <li>• Studies artists</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum engagement from the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Looked at artist</li> <li>• Archaeology</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> </ul>	
<b>Class 3 - year 4</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• map making</li> <li>• Ogwyn Davies (local artist)</li> <li>• Bryan Graham (artist involved in archaeology)</li> <li>• Journey</li> <li>• Story of the elephant</li> <li>• Measurements</li> <li>• Words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used information collected on their walks and from the maps</li> <li>• Mixed media</li> <li>• Colour</li> <li>• Words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual mixed media images</li> <li>• Studies artists</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• curriculum engagement from the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Looked at Maps</li> <li>• Looked at local history</li> <li>• Walked through the town to retrace the elephant's last journey</li> <li>• Documented the journey</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> <li>• Writing</li> <li>• Note taking</li> </ul>	
<b>Class 2 - years 2 and 3</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The elephant's journey</li> <li>• Map making</li> <li>• Bryan Graham (artist)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drew the journey of the elephant based on facts and local knowledge of the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual imaginary maps in pencil</li> <li>• Studies artists</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed this into imaginary mapping by looking at aerial photographs</li> <li>• Used internet-based maps</li> <li>• Used atlases</li> <li>• Discussion about the purpose of maps</li> <li>• Drew with pencils</li> <li>• Worked individually</li> <li>• Worked collaboratively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual imaginary maps in pencil</li> <li>• group map of the journey on the elephant</li> <li>• incorporating the individual imaginary maps into the group work.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• curriculum engagement from the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• geography</li> <li>• maths</li> <li>• history</li> <li>• maps</li> <li>• Study of local area</li> </ul>	
<b>Class 1 Foundation and year 1</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listened to the story of the Tregaron elephant</li> <li>• to look at photographs taken of Tregaron about 1848 – the time the elephant visited Tregaron</li> <li>• looked at archival photographs of elephants in the Sea in Aberystwyth</li> <li>• Considered the elephant’s final journey to Tregaron</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• storytelling</li> <li>• visualisation</li> <li>• imagining the elephant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produced charcoal drawings</li> <li>• Produced copper embossing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• foundation phase involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explored the story</li> <li>• produced a play</li> <li>• looked at history</li> <li>• worked creatively</li> <li>• used imagination</li> </ul>	

## **Appendix F: Welsh autoethnography**

This is an example of where I used the Welsh language to start the autoethnographic process. This made thinking about the self easier and therefore the process of undertaking autoethnographic research. This is presented with grammatical errors as it is a stream of consciousness.

### **Cymraeg- Hunanethnograffeg y stiwdio**

Felly dyma fi yn troi i'r Gymraeg i ysgrifennu'r hunanethnograffeg yma mewn ymgais i lwyddo i'w ysgrifennu- dwi heb lwyddo hyd yn hyn.

Trwy edrych yn ôl ar y gwaith nes i yn y stiwdio rwyf wedi sylweddoli mae dim ond un agwedd o weithdai gwnes arbrofi yn weledol arno, sef y gweithdai yn Theatr Felin-fach. Oes angen i fi arbrofi yn weledol y gweithdai eraill sef y gweithdai yn yr ysgol a'r gweithdai ar brosiect Murlun y Bont yn ogystal â'r broses o weithio ar waith fy hun. Mae angen i fi ystyried beth wnaeth digwydd yn y stiwdio yn yr Elysium a beth oedd pwrpas y gwaith hynny. Pam nes i weithio yn y stiwdio? Beth oedd pwrpas y proses hynny?

Beth yw pwrpas y PhD???

Mae'n bryd nawr i edrych yn ôl ac i edrych ymlaen at ddiwedd y ddoethuriaeth mae hyn yn amser hynod o bwysig a hynod o anodd.

Rwyf wedi penderfynu troi at y Gymraeg i wneud yr autoethnography yma sef y cofio trwy wneud, gan fod yr holl Saesneg yn anodd trwy hunan gofio.

Rwyf yn casáu'r cam deall sy'n dod trwy'r agweddau Seisnigaidd ac rwyf wedi dod i ddeall bod yn anodd i fi dod a phethau i derfyn dim ond yn y Saesneg felly dyma fi yn troi at y Gymraeg am ychydig- gyda'r gobaith bydd hyn yn fy ngalluogi i fynd yn ôl i'r ysgrifennu i orffen.

Dwi ddim yn gwybod beth yw terfyn yr ymchwil, mae'r pandemig yma a'r holl newidiadau sydd wedi bod yn y PhD dros y blynyddoedd- colli mam, plentyn yn tyfu i fynnu, ar holl broblemau sydd yn dod trwy hynny, colli swydd- colli diwylliant fy mhentyndod- byth yn dweud wrth mam fy mod yn gwneud PhD colli cymaint o oruchwylwyr- nes i ddim sylweddoli tan yn ddiweddar bod colli un yn y broses yma wedi bod yn ergyd enfawr i fi i ddod a phethau i derfyn.

Roedd gan un goruchwilydd â dealltwriaeth o Gymreictod ac o'r prosesau rwyf yn trafod, mae'n anodd iawn i fi symud ymlaen trwy hyn i gyd. Mae bron gormod o newidiadau wedi bod a dim sefydlwyd yn y broses o symud ymlaen felly mae angen i fi gymryd rheolaeth.

Nid yw'r autoethnography yn gywir felly mae angen i fi ail wneud rhannaf- rwyf wedi mynd i lawr y trywydd cywir ac wedi ysgrifennu yn debyg i'r reflection  
Mae angen i fi dod a pob dim at ei gilydd ac i wneud fwy o ysgrifennu fel un darn ysgrifenedig enfawr mae hyn yn codi ofn aruthrol arnaf i  
Mae angen i fi wneud fwy o ddarllen, hynny yw darllen cyfoes mae llawer o'r hyn sydd yn cael ei chynnwys yn y gwaith ysgrifenedig erbyn hyn yn hen....  
Mae angen i fi gynllunio terfyn y PhD mae eisiau ffocws arna i fi i ddod a phethau i'r diwedd ond beth yw'r diwedd???

Un sgwrs ges i gydag un goruchwilydd oedd creu llyfr digidol oedd yn cynnwys y gwaith yn y stiwdio i wneud hyn mae angen i fi gynllunio beth yw'r llyfr.  
Penderfynu os taw llyfr yw'r peth gorau  
Mae angen i fi ail feddwl am ble'r oeddwn i gyda'r arddangosfa yn y cyntedd jyst cyn y pandemig

Roeddwn mor gyffroes pryd hynny ond dwi fethu cael y cyffro hynny yn ôl- mae'n hynod o anodd  
Dwi ddim yn gwybod mwyach beth yw pwrpas y ddoethuriaeth er bod hyn wedi bod yn rhywbeth rwyf wedi eisiau gwneud ers nifer fawr o flynyddoedd mae bron yn teimlo yn ddibwrpas erbyn hyn.

PAM?

Gwreiddiau...

“...autoethnography offers a way of giving voice to personal experience to advance sociological understanding... the intimate and personal nature of autoethnography can, in fact, make it one of the most challenging qualitative approaches to attempt...” (Wall, 2008, p. 39)

Trwy edrych yn ôl ydy hyn yn help i edrych ymlaen

Rwyf wedi bod eisiau cymryd yr amser i edrych ar y prosesau mewn gweithdai creadigol ac ystyried eu pwysigrwydd i bawb sydd yn cymryd rhan yn y gweithdy. Mae llawer o gwestiynau yn codi'r holl amser wrth gwrs.

Felly mae angen i fi gofio i edrych ar 'writing story' Sparkes 2000.

Beth yw'r ddoethuriaeth i fi?

Rwyf wedi mentro llawer o wanhaol bethau yn y broses o ymchwilio ac yn teimlo yn bach o fraud ar adegau. Mae wedi bod yn broses hunanol iawn ac yn broses sydd wedi mynd a fi o un man i'r llall heb derfyn ond gyda ffocws a determination anhygof trwy'r amser mae'n bryd i fi ffocysu yn fwy nawr a chael hunanddisgyblaeth o ddod a'r holl beth i'r terfyn....

I bwy mae'r ddoethuriaeth????

Mae angen i fi gofio'r broses o hunan gariad a hunan gofal mae angen hynny arna i nawr. Mae angen i fi rhywsut creu amser i wneud y ddoethuriaeth ac i gael diwrnod cyfan pob wythnos i wneud yr ysgrifennu.

Mae angen i fi ysgrifennu bob dydd fel nad wyf orfod ail gofio trwy'r amser!

Os gallaf gael lefel arall o drefn dros y Nadolig felly efallai gallaf gael rhyw fath o gynllun tuag ag dod a'r ysgrifennu at y diwedd.....

Oes angen diolchiadau yn y ddoethuriaeth? Mae'r rhestr yn enfawr...

Dedication at mam gwnaeth byth gwybod fy mod yn gwneud doethuriaeth- doeddwn ddim am ddweud wrthi nes bod fi'n llwyddo a welodd hi byth o'r diwrnod hynny.  
Felly i chi Iris Beynon.

Sut mae dod a phob dim at ei gilydd- rwyf wedi bod yn darllen Umberto Ego a llawer o'r syniadau sydd ganddo ef- synhwyrol iawn ac rwyf yn teimlo fy mod wedi mentro gyda llawer o'r syniadau hynny –

Creu lle

Cael y llyfrau o'm hamgylch

Trefn

OND

Nid yw fy mywyd na pandemig yn siwtio'r sefyllfa hynny i fi

CHAOS

Felly mae rhaid dod a'r ddoethuriaeth i derfyn mewn chaos trwy chaos a gyda chaos...

Oes 'na theori sydd yn ymwneud a hyn-

Mess needs to be articulated, firstly, because it is there. It is the 'swampy lowlands' identified by Schön (1983). If accounts of research omit descriptions of the messy areas experienced by so many researchers, descriptions of research in practice remain incomplete and do not offer a true and honest picture of the research process. (Cook 2009, p.279)

### **Chaos theory**

Fe fydd rhaid i fi sôn am y mess a chaos yn y cyflwyniad a'r canlyniad gan mae hyn wedi bod yn rhan ganolig i'r holl broses o ddod a phethau at ei gilydd o wneud a hefyd effeithiau personol bywyd ar y broses o ymchwilio.

Mae chaos a mess yn rhan o fod yn greadigol ac yn rhan felly o bob dim dwi'n eu gwneud felly mae angen i fi sôn am hyn.

Felly, trwy edrych yn ôl ar fy hunan mae hynny yn meddwl bod rhaid i fi balu'n ddwfn i gofio ac ystyried yn ddwys.

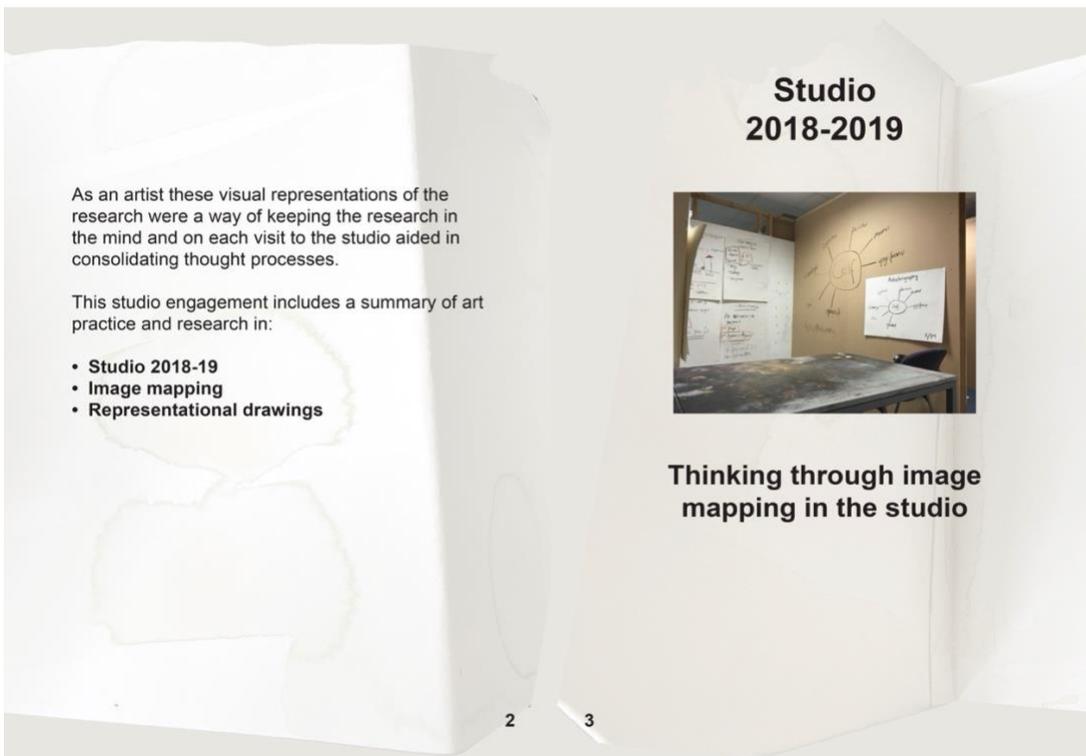
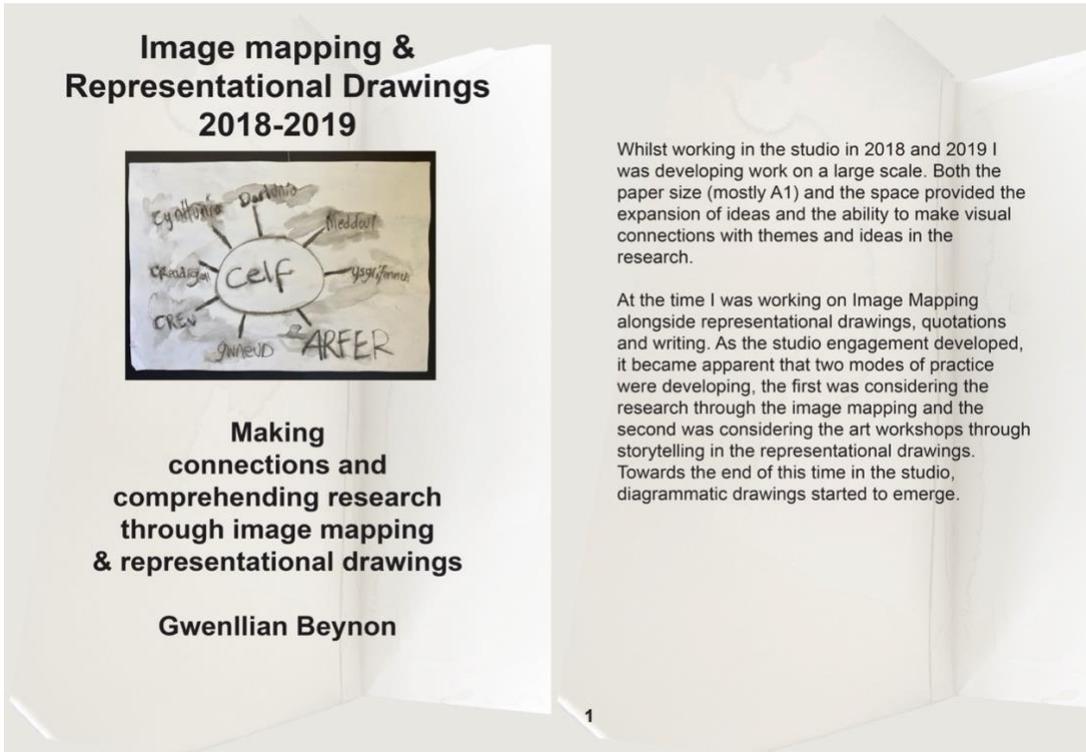
### **Reference list**

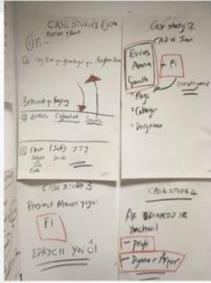
Tina Cook, T. (2009) The purpose of mess in action research: building rigour though a messy turn, *Educational Action Research*, 17:2, pp.277-291, DOI: 10.1080/09650790902914241

Wall, S. (2008) 'Easier Said than Done: Writing an Autoethnography', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods University of Alberta*. pp.38-53. Department of Sociology, University of Alberta Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Available at: [https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/160940690800700103#:~:text=Examples%20of%20this%20emerging%20method,1996\)%2C%20evaluating%20one's%20actions%20](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/160940690800700103#:~:text=Examples%20of%20this%20emerging%20method,1996)%2C%20evaluating%20one's%20actions%20) (Accessed: 24 December 2021).

## Appendix G: Folios

### Folio 1 Image making





Studio shots from 2018 and 2019 demonstrating both the studio space and the scale of the works on the walls. The works, in this way could be moved as the research developed and as theoretical engagement of information was made. For me, as an artist, this was a fundamentally important way of working.

Figures 1, 2, 3 & 4 (Beynon 2018-2019)



4

5

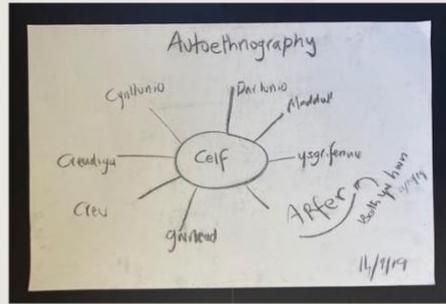


Figure 5. 14/9/19 (Beynon 2019)

Working in the studio provided the opportunity to work on a larger scale:

Figure 5. Explores autoethnography. Centrally is "Celf" (Art) and associated ideas. Making, creating, creative, planning, drawing, thinking, writing and practice with a questioning of what practice is in relation to the research.

Figure 6. The studio space with image mapping on the left and the development of figure 5 to a mural. This was meant to develop further, however access to studio spaces became difficult in 2020 so instead the work developed on a smaller scale.

Figure 7. A closer image of the mural in figure 6.

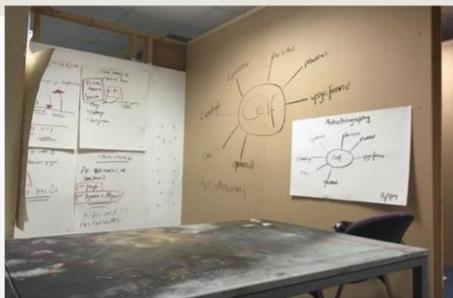


Figure 6. (Beynon 2019)

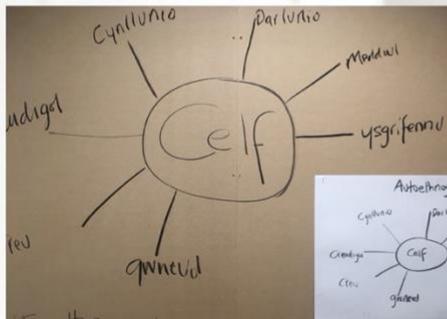


Figure 7. (Beynon 2019)

## Image mapping

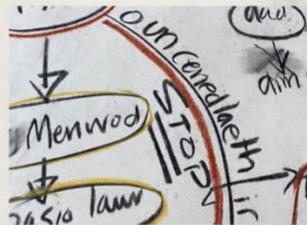


Figure 8. (Beynon 2018)

## Methodology and case studies

6

7



## Case studies- Image mapping

A further contemplation of the selection of the art workshops as case studies was undertaken in 23/9/19 -

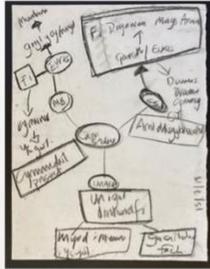


Figure 15. (Beynon 2019)

Figures 15-19. Demonstrate this thinking through drawing. At this point the final case studies have not been selected.

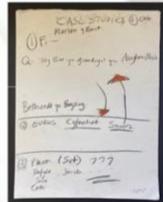
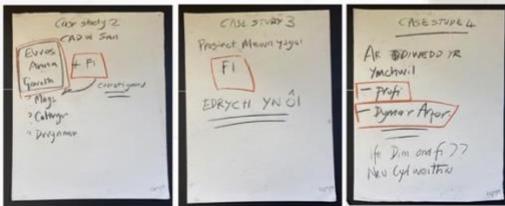


Figure 16. (Beynon 2019)



Figures 17/ 18/ 19. 23/9/19 (Beynon 2019)

## Considering Roles in the art workshop

Each of these images demonstrates a process of thinking through drawing where a consideration of the roles of the participant and the facilitator, in an art workshop, has been undertaken. This first occurred on 13/5/2019 and was reconsidered in 2023. "Arwain" is the word for leading and this has been considered in these images in Figure 15. 13/5/2019

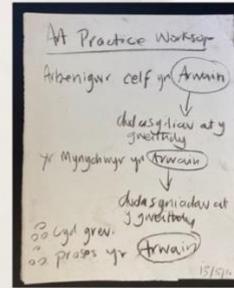


Figure 15. 13/5/2019 (Beynon 2019)

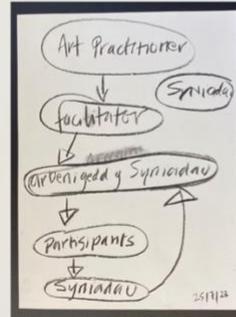


Figure 16. 25/7/2023 (Beynon 2023)

Figure 16. The art practitioner as facilitator is the expert of the ideas who works with participants who become experts and the information then circulates. participants as experts.

Figure 17. Considers "Arwain" - leading. Again the facilitator to the participants but also here the consideration of the process also leading, what is undertaken in the art workshop may restrict or enhance ideas.

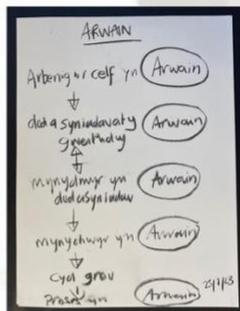


Figure 17. 25/7/2023 (Beynon 2023)

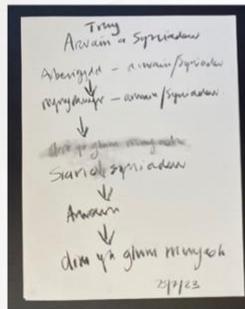


Figure 18. 25/7/2023 (Beynon 2023)

Figure 18. "Arwain" - leading the facilitator leading with ideas, the participants leading, the sharing of information which can also lead or direct the process and the notion that the ideas and process have an element of freedom in their development- "dim yn glwm mwyach" not tied any longer.

## Other image mapping

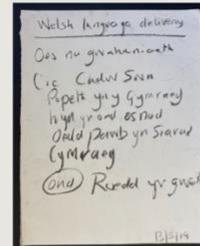


Figure 20. 13/5/19 (Beynon 2019)

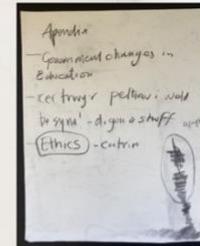


Figure 21. 21/10/19 (Beynon 2019)

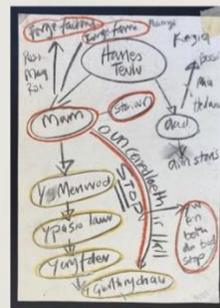


Figure 22. 7/1/19 (Beynon 2019)

Figure 20. Explores the use and importance of the Welsh language.

Figure 21. Starts to consider the appendix of the thesis.

Figure 22. Is interesting as it demonstrated how research can develop along an irrelevant route. This image map explores family history but of note is the word STOP as I caught myself being distracted by areas that were of interest to me in my art practice not associated with the research.

## Sketchbooks- Image mapping

Sketchbooks have been an essential aspect of the development of the research. The mapping of ideas began in the sketchbooks before developing onto the walls of the studio, and continued after the studio engagement ended.

Figures 23 & 24. Two examples of pages from sketchbooks.

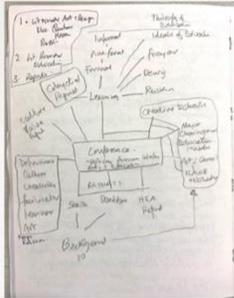


Figure 23. (Beynon 2018)

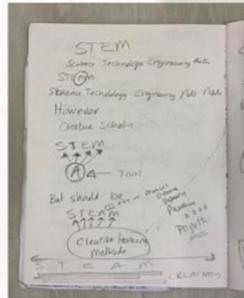


Figure 24. (Beynon 2018)

16

17

## Representational images 2018-2019



Recognisable objects of cups and saucers used as holders and narrators of information

Whilst working in the studio in 2018 and 2019 I was able to develop work on a large scale. Both the paper size (mostly A1) and the space provided the expansion of ideas and the ability to make visual connections with themes and ideas in the research.

At the time I was working on the representational drawings alongside Image Mapping, quotations and writing. As the studio engagement developed, it became apparent that two modes of practice were developing, the first was considering the research through the image mapping and the second was considering the art workshops through storytelling in the representational drawings.

These representational drawings were closely connected to the art practice that I was doing that was not related to the research, evidently as an artist it made sense to work and make connections to the visual language of my art practice and to what is known.

Cups and saucers were used as a representation of the facilitator and of the participant.

The themes that explored were:

Figure 25. Information bursting out of the cup-the cup being the participant or the facilitator.

Figure 26. Cups and saucers stacked on top of each other with information developing from them, exploring more collaborative practice and co-creative engagement.



Figure 25. (Beynon 2018)

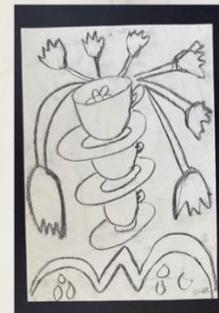


Figure 26. (Beynon 2018)

18

19

**Figure 27.** The cups and saucers stacked on top of each other but no longer connected- in the art workshop the expectation is for each individual to develop as individuals within the activity.

**Figure 28.** The cup act as holder of information, the flower implying the blossoming of ideas.

The cups and saucers and other visual representations were metaphorical narratives for the workshop engagement.



Figure 27. (Beynon 2019)

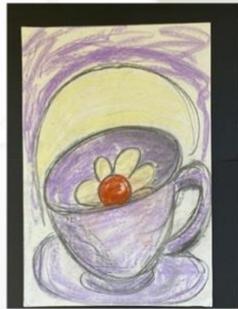


Figure 28. (Beynon 2019)

A further development of the visual metaphor is seen in figures 29 and 30 below.

**Figure 29.** This triptych there are multiple cups and saucers and springing flowers. In the central panel is the word "Hedfan" Welsh for to fly. Metaphorically implying that in the art workshop the aim is for all who participate to develop individual ideas that they can develop with the art and ideas.



Figure 29. (Beynon 2019)

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21



Figure 30. (Beynon 2019)

**Figure 30.** The cup and saucer (participant of facilitator) is flying off the table being pulled by the springing flower (the information developed in the art workshop).

Another aspect that developed in these representational drawings was a more complex narrative connected to the image mapping. The images also became more diagrammatic in attempting to decipher the *Creative Art Journey* in the art workshop. Also, in art making as in the research there needs to be a reconsideration of ideas.

**Figure 31.** The first version of the two drawings shows a reconsideration of the ideas as seen in the crossed-out section of the drawing.

**Figure 32.** The symbolism is the yellow cup and saucer represents the facilitator, the cups in the purple circle the participants, in the centre the participants and facilitator are together, at the bottom the book represents the story and the landscape the place and Welsh culture.



Figure 31. (Beynon 2019)



Figure 32. (Beynon 2019)

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23

Another aspect of art practice is the development of ideas:

**Figure 33.** The cups and saucers (participants and facilitator- no distinction) the arrows the interaction in the art workshop

**Figure 34.** The cups and saucers (participants and facilitator) this time the facilitator delivers then information is passed on and then on and then continues into the future represented by the arrows.



Figure 33. (Beynon 2019)



Figure 34. (Beynon 2019)

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## Autoethnographic interpretation

Practice based research freely enabled the use of a bilingual exploration without restriction- as there inevitably needs to be in the academic writing. this was a vital process for me in forming ideas, in developing the research and in the consideration of past art workshops and myself as facilitator.

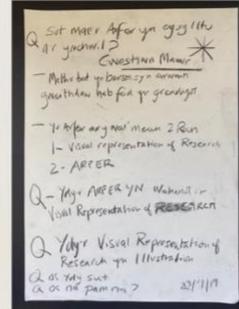


Figure 35. 23/9/19 (Beynon 2019)

In figure 35 which has been written in Welsh is the consideration of practice- what was it that I was doing in the studio in these works on the wall and the realisation that there were 2 streams of making occurring that were separation from each other - the image mapping and the representational drawings.

25

I was able to divide the work into these two distinct parts on the studio walls, for further contemplation, as seen in figure 36 below. It was at this point that the I decided that the representational drawings were no longer contributing to the academic research and that their development were taking the research away from thinking about past art workshops and were developing a new individual art practice that was now distracting. I stopped making the representational drawings at this point and concentrated more on the image mapping which led the diagrammatic drawings that began in the studio in March 2020 as seen in figures 37-41 below.



Figure 36. (Beynon 2018)

26



Figure 37. (Beynon 2020)



Figure 38. (Beynon 2020)



Figure 39. (Beynon 2020)

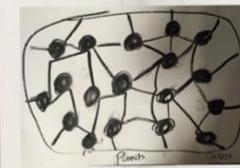


Figure 40. (Beynon 2020)



Figure 41. (Beynon 2020)

27

The studio practice ended at this point. It also saw the end of the image mapping (on a large scale) and the representational drawings.

The diagrammatic images and the use of individual words now became the focus of the practice-based research.

The work on a large scale came to an abrupt halt due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Figure 11. (Beynon 2019)

Published as part of set for PhD



Gwenllian Beynon 2023

Rosen, M. in *Arts Council England (2013) Great Art and Culture for Everyone. 10-year strategic Framework 2010-2020*. Manchester: Arts Council England.

28

29

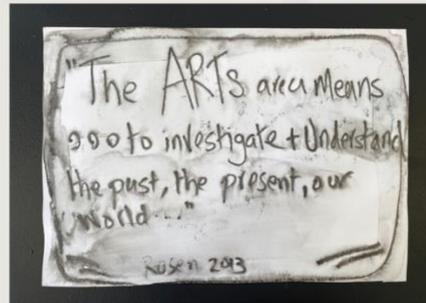
## Folio 2 Quotations

### Quotations

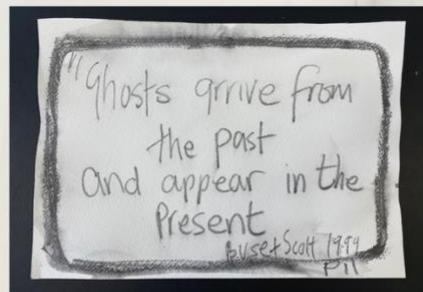


Quotations as drawings became a way of seeing and analysing academic information.

Gwenllian Beynon



Michael Rosen (*Arts Council England, 2013, p.11*)



Buse, P. and Stott, A. (ed.) 1999

1



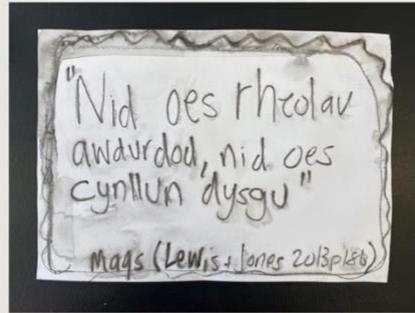
Hegarty, J. 2014

Quotations as drawings became a way of seeing and analysing academic information. As objects placed on the wall of the studio, on easels or as photographs. They became powerful holders, and presenters of information.

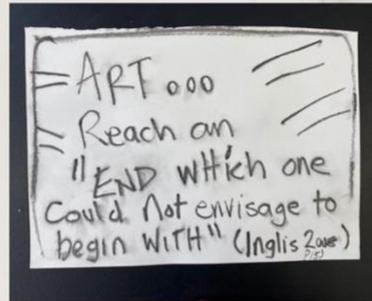
The quotations as drawings were visual representation of theory whilst working on art practice. They could be placed next to other images, as demonstrated here on the easels, and could be moved as the research developed. 'All schools should be art schools' (Bob and Roberta Smith 2013) was one of the early quotes to be turned into an art object in this research.

The quotations presented here are a selection of those used as drawings in this way.

2

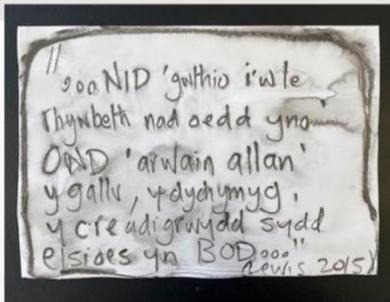


Margaret Ames explores the idea of No rules, and not lesson plans 'Ni does rheolau, nid oes cynllun dysgu.' (Lewis and Jones, 2013, p.186)



Inglis & Aers 2008 p.15

3



'nad 'gwithio i'w le rhywbeth nad oedd yno' oedd eu gwaith ond 'arwain allan' y gallu, y dychymyg, y creadigrwydd sydd eisioes yn bod 'yn enaid y myfyriwr' - pob myfyriwr.' (Lewis, 2015, p.98)

Translation  
(not 'to push into place something that wasn't there' but rather to 'draw out' the ability, the imagination, the creativity that already exists in the 'being of the student' - every student.)

Accessing both Welsh, where available and English information has been vital in this research as seen by the quotation above.

4

## Placing quotations on easels

Studio June 2022



5

Placing quotations in this way provided an opportunity to explore the interconnection of information in theory, the voice of others to my developing ideas and research.



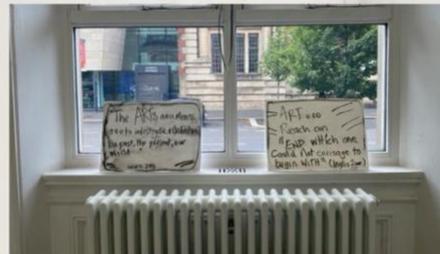
6

## Placing quotations

Studio July 2023



Bob and Roberta Smith 2013



7

I re-visited the studio in 2023 and this time I placed the selected quotations on windowsills. This time they aided as a constant reminder of the work of others, as I archived the practice-based work.



8

## Autoethnographic interpretation

Having quotations available as drawings whilst working in the studio, became a way of seeing and analysing academic information. The quotations were integrated on the walls of the studio spaces with their representational drawings and image mapping and could be easily moved as connections in the research were being made.

Aspects of the quotations could also be used whilst image mapping and drawing and when working in sketchbooks. Quotations could also be used as the theoretical engagement and reading developed.

Quotations became art objects and in the final 2 short studio engagements in June 2022 and in July 2023 some of the quotations were placed on easels and in the windows and remained visually present for the duration of the time in the studio.

9

## References

Ames, M.P. (2013) 'Corff a Chymuned'. Jones, A & Lewis, L. (ed.) *Ysgrifau ar Theatr a Pherfformio*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, pp.181-200.

Arts Council England (2013) *Great Art and Culture for Everyone. 10-year strategic Framework 2010-2020*. Manchester: Arts Council England.

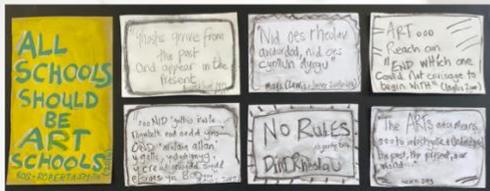
Bob and Roberta Smith (2013) 'All Schools Should be Art Schools.' *Art Party* Available at: <http://bobandrobertasmith.co.uk/art-party-2/>. (Accessed: 24 August 2023).

Buse, P. and Stott, A. (ed.) (1999). "Introduction: A Future for Haunting". *Ghosts: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, History*. pp.1-20. London: Palgrave.

Hegarty, J. (2014) *Hegarty on Creativity There Are No Rules*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Inglis, F. & Aers, L. (2008) *Key Concepts in Education: London: SAGE Publications*.

Lewis, E. (2015) *Theatr a Chymdeithas - Gwreiddiau ac Amgylchfyd Theatr Felin-fach*. Llanrwst: Gwasg Carreg Gwalch.



10

Published as part of set for PhD

Gwenllian Beynon 2023

11

## Folio 3 Trial pieces

### Trial pieces



Developmental trial pieces made throughout the research and formed a foundation for a personal visual theory.

Gwenllian Beynon

Whilst working on the individual art practice as research, trial pieces were undertaken along the way. They contributed to thinking through analytical drawing and in the development of the research.

A selection of these works is presented here, to include:

- Exploration of words in relation to research
- Early diagrammatic drawings
- Testing the use of colour.
- Book exploration

During the on-line book launch, in 2020, of Bob and Roberta Smith's *You are an Artist*, the audience were encouraged to take part in drawing activities, during this time I explored words that Smith shared, developed them as small art works, which were later developed into Welsh.

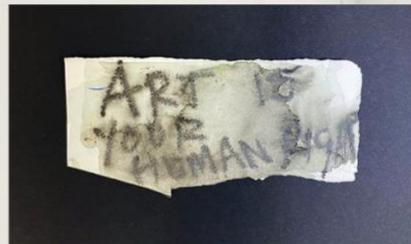


Figure 2. *Art is Your Human Right* - Bob and Roberta Smith (Beynon, 2020)

1



Figure 1. *Art is Your Voice* - Bob and Roberta Smith (Beynon, 2020)



Figure 3. *Self i Bawb* influenced by - Bob and Roberta Smith (Beynon, 2020)

## Early diagrammatic drawings

These diagrammatic drawings are metaphorical representations that explore the individual and the co-creative art journey of participants and facilitator. Using these drawing was a method devised and used to consider and remember the art workshops of the past. And to eventually focus on those selected as case studies.

Figure 4 represents one person. The dot is the person, the lines are ideas that the person has at the start of the journey these are all enclosed in the form and further enclosed by the paper.

Figure 5. demonstrates ideas growing.

Figure 6. others getting involved with the ideas.

Figure 7. collaborating with another (this mostly is the facilitator in the early stages of a workshop).



Figure 4. (Beynon, 2020)

2

3



Figure 5. (Beynon, 2020)

Figure 6. (Beynon, 2020)

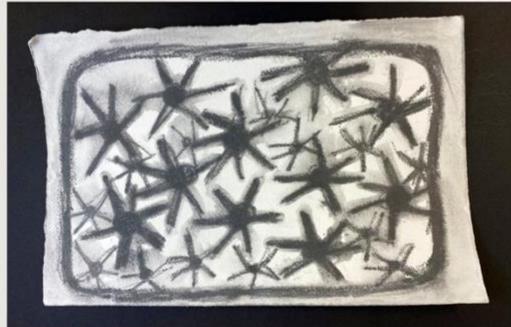
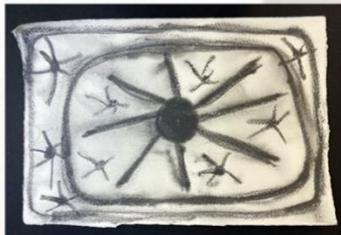


Figure 8. (Beynon, 2020)

Figure 8. Represents the collaborative interaction where all are relating to each other, all are equal and ideas are being shared.

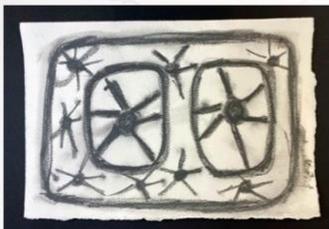


Figure 7. (Beynon, 2020)

4

5

## Testing the use of colour

All the initial stages of the diagrammatic drawings were monochrome. This led to explorations in colour as demonstrated by the selection here.

**Figure 9.** This an image of the collaborative interaction but this time with a coloured border. Different colours were explored.



Figure 9. (Beynon, 2020)

6

**Figure 10.** In this image is the development of the idea and beginning to consider the creative art journey and how colour could be used to represent different aspects of the journey, in this case blue and yellow.



Figure 10. (Beynon, 2020)

7

Colour had mainly been used as borders and it was not until I spent time in the *Studio June 2022* that I considered and explored using colour to represent individuals in the *Creative Art Journey*.

This was something that I had used early in the art practice of the research, in the representational drawings where I used cups and saucers to consider the engagement of facilitator and participant, I used a different colour to represent myself as facilitator.

**Figure 11.** Demonstrates an early exploration of adding colour within the enclosing form.



Figure 11. (Beynon, 2022)

8

## Book explorations

Exploring the *Creative Art Journey*, within the visual practice became central. This began with these small considerations as seen in **figures 12,13 and 14**. Whilst these images were visual appealing, they were not enough to represent the journey. These developed into simple concertina books.



Figure 12. (Beynon, 2020)



Figure 13. (Beynon, 2020)



Figure 14. (Beynon, 2020)

9

The concertina books became a way of visually representing the *Creative Art Journey*. They also became 3D objects that could be viewed in different ways **figures 15, 16 and 17** are early experiments of the concertina books.



Figure 15. (Beynon, 2020)



Figure 16. (Beynon, 2020)



Figure 17. (Beynon, 2020)

As in the example of the diagrammatic drawings above, colour was also added as borders in the concertina books. As seen in **figures 18 and 19** below.

Each page in the concertina book represented a different stage in the *Creative Art Journey* and are a development in thinking from the single page diagrammatic drawings.



Figure 18. (Beynon, 2020)



Figure 19. (Beynon, 2020)

10

11



Figure 20. (Beynon, 2020)

Additionally, the use of words as monochrome books and with colour were also explored in these trial books. The words in **figure 20** are "*Dysgu*" translated from Welsh as to teach and to learn. And in **figure 21** "*Dysgu*" (teach and learn), "*Creu*" (to create) "*Gwneud*" (make) "*Stori*" (story) these words developed from the interaction with *Bob and Roberta Smith*.



Figure 21. (Beynon, 2020)

The final stage of the book development was to explore the combination of the Turkish map book in combination with the concertina books. This was not developed until the *Studio June 2022*. A Turkish map book is a book that is folded in a specific way. The combination of both types of books develops the 3D quality but also the form that contains. The centre of the Turkish map book becomes a holder and in combination with the concertina can be viewed in many ways. This combination book enabled the visualisation of the visual journey to be developed and drawing to be made on both sides of the book.

**Figure 22.** The closed book without any drawing.



Figure 22. (Beynon, 2022)

12

13

Figures 23 and 24 show the back and front of a trial map and concertina book. Within this Autoethnographic research the consideration of the self is a central aspect and the book in these images is a consideration of the self as facilitator. This book is a trial piece from Studio June 2022, the concertina on either side represents the *Creative Art Journey* in and out of the art workshop which is represented in the middle section when open. The back of the book represents the self in the middle and the journey either side. This is a trial piece as the visual information was not quite correct and was then modified with greater consideration.



Figure 23. (Beynon, 2022)



Figure 24. (Beynon, 2022)

14

Figure 25 and 26. The closed Turkish concertina map book shown from either end.



Figure 25. (Beynon, 2022)



Figure 26. (Beynon, 2022)

15

## Autoethnographic interpretation

These selected trial pieces represent the visual exploration of ideas, thinking through making and the visual consideration of the research. As a practical artist undertaking these visual explorations has been vital throughout the research. Working creatively on scraps of paper connected this theoretical research to ways of working in my art practice and made handling theoretical information manageable and relevant to me as an artist.

The drawings presented here are a selection to represent the trials of the visual explorations. These trials for me visually work as stand-alone art pieces, that represent different stages in the thinking process of the research and as physical objects are tactile.

All the work has been archived into folders or archival boxes and are available at the time of writing for viewing.

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PhD



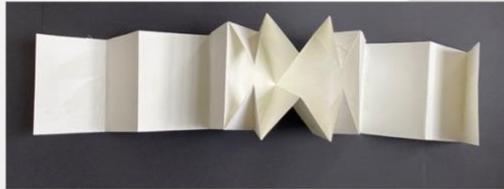
Gwenllian Beynon 2023

16

17

## Folio 4 Diagrammatic drawings

### Diagrammatic drawing and practice-based research



### Exploring the *Creative Art Journey* in practice

Gwenllian Beynon

1

#### Introduction

Exploring practice-based research through art has been undertaken throughout. Art has been a way of examining ideas and of being playful with theory and practice. Eventually, through sketchbooks, image mapping, representational drawings and diagrams, as well as theoretical engagement, elements inform a new body of work that forms a personal visual theory. This body of work is presented here and explores the *Creative Art Journey* of the art workshop with participants and a facilitator.

#### Case studies

***Murlun y Bont, (2005-2008)*** a self-engaged project combining working with a school and in community engagement.

***Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felinfach 1997-2014)*** a collaborative multi-facilitated and multi-disciplinary project.

***Eliffant Tregaron (2011)*** a project in a school.

***Paper Boats (TOSTA, 2016)*** with a school class in an international community festival.

***The Facilitator (Me)*** An art practitioner who facilitates art workshops.

2

#### Approach 1 Monochrome drawings

Diagrams that represent the *Creative Art Journey* in art workshops.

#### Approach 2 words

The inclusion of specific words makes a strong connection to autoethnographic writing and the *Creative Art Journey*.

#### Approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books

These books are 3-D objects that act as metaphorical containers that harness, capture and allow information to spring out.

#### Approach 4 larger single fold books title cover

The single fold books are the title of the different case studies seen from the front and a diagram to represent the workshop at the back.

#### Full collection 2023

All of the above placed together in the case study specific collection.

#### The empty space

Gets filled with ideas with making the empty space is there at the start and the end of workshops and of my practice-based research. The empty space is both metaphorical and actual.

#### White collection

White books and paper with a light wash. These represent the empty space, that is not fully void of ideas both at the start and at the end of the workshops.

#### Autoethnographic interpretation

A self-explored interpretation of the above.

3

#### Approach 1 Monochrome drawings



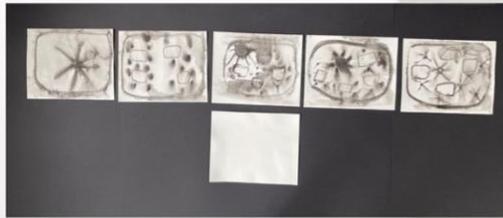
*Murlun y Bont, (2005-2008)*



*Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felinfach 1997-2014)*

4

**Approach 1 Monochrome drawings**



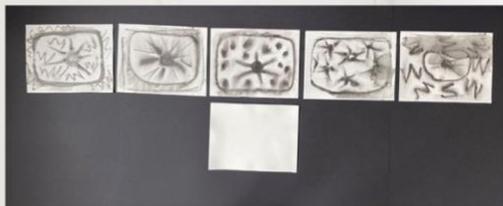
*Eliffant Tregaron (2011)*



*Paper Boats (TOSTA, 2016)*

5

**Approach 1 Monochrome drawings**



*The Facilitator (Me)*



*White paper with wash*

6

**Approach 2 words**



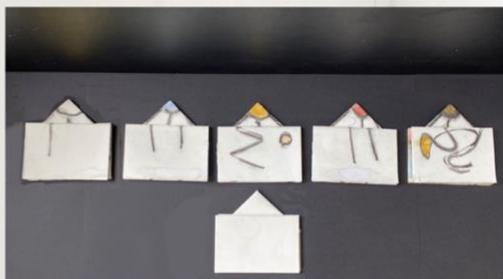
Front / open



Back / closed

7

**Approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books**



Closed



Closed

8

Approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books



Murlun y Bont, (2005-2008)



Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felinfach 1997-2014)

9

Approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books



Eliffant Tregaron (2011)



Paper Boats (TOSTA, 2016)

10

Approach 3 Turkish map fold concertina books



The Facilitator (Me)



White

11

Approach 4 larger single fold books title cover

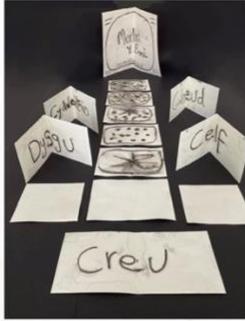


Front / open



Back / closed  
12

Full Collection 2023



Full Collection 2023



Murlun y Bont, (2005-2008)

13



14 Cadw Sŵn (Theatr Felinfach 1997-2014)

Full Collection 2023



Full Collection 2023



Eliffant Tregaron (2011)

15

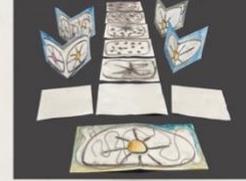


16 Paper Boats (TOSTA, 2016)

Full Collection 2023



Full Collection 2023



The Facilitator (Me)

17



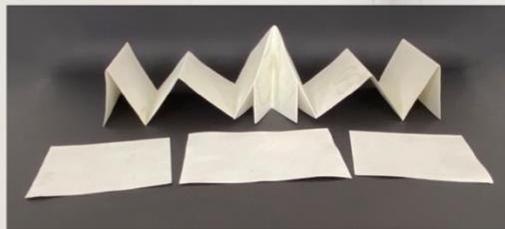
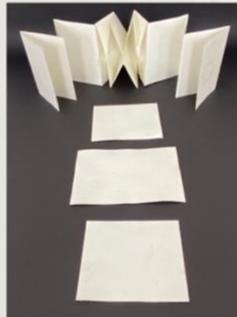
18

White collection



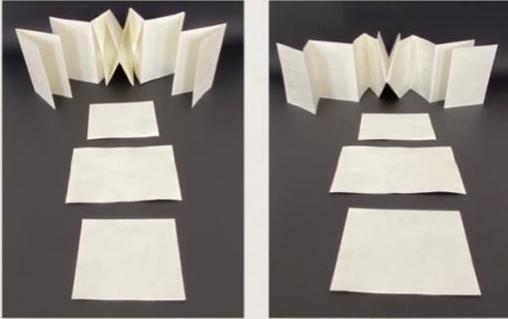
19

White collection

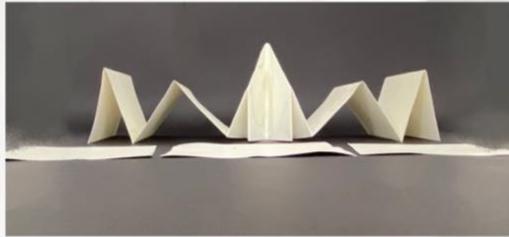
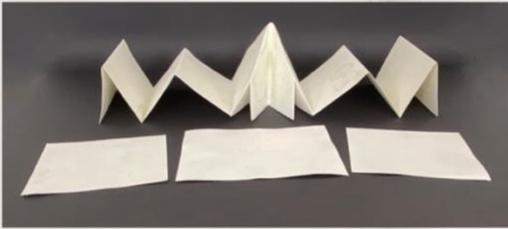
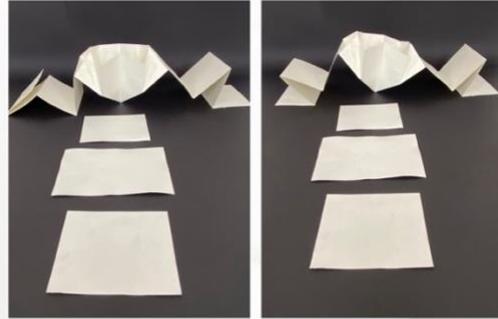


20

White collection



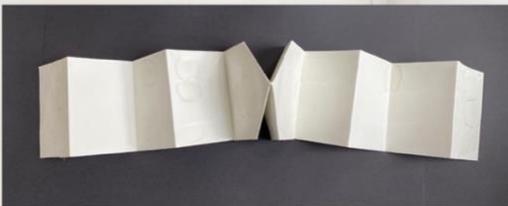
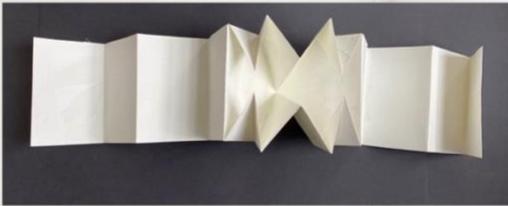
White collection



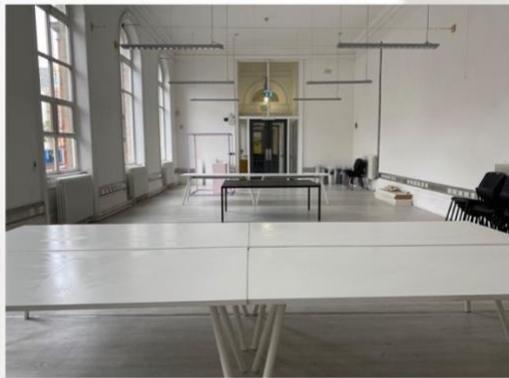
20

21

White collection



The empty space



22

23

## Autoethnographic interpretation

Producing this body of work was contemplative. The collection as a whole, functions as if a game where it's possible to have different parts and each part connect to each other and are connected to the whole. The approaches above are contained units that contribute to the set and then to the collection. Information could be added to this collection limitlessly. The set and the collection tell a story.

Each time the set and the collection are revisited they need to be worked out and contemplated. There is ambiguity and confusion in the process but in that process thinking occurs and, in the thinking, discoveries are made. The collection is like a set of cards each aspect belong to each other in many and in distinct way.

This art practice-based research has been a fundamental process for the research journey and for forming a way of contemplation and thinking through making.

The paper used was important to make the collection work this aided in making the collection tactile and the Turkish map fold concertina books springy and to have movement they are playful just like the *Creative Art Journey*.



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2023

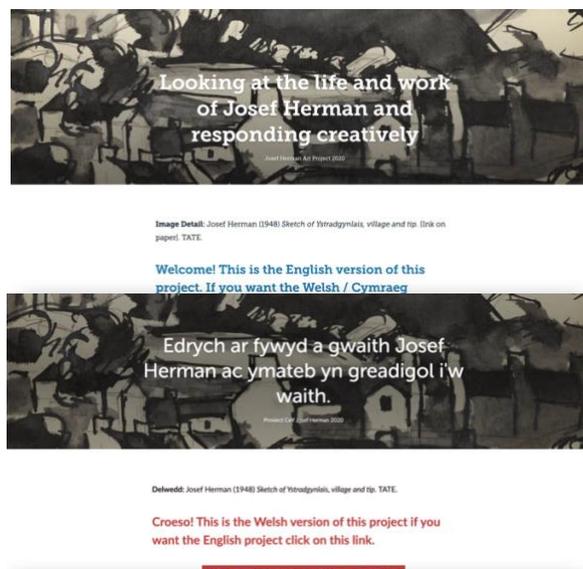
## Appendix H: Online resources

Examples of some Online resources in Welsh and English for Primary and Secondary schools

### Secondary

Josef Herman Art Project 2020 English  
<https://express.adobe.com/page/ja55iNwo64kfm/>

Prosiect Celf Josef Herman 2020 Cymraeg  
<https://express.adobe.com/page/ujeJ54bfFJtnv/>



Beynon (2023) Screen shots

### Primary

Cip olwg ar waith a fywyd yr artist Josef Herman Prosiect Celf Josef Herman 2020 - Cynradd Cymraeg

<https://express.adobe.com/page/bv2BHOq13iS9/>

A brief look at the life and work of the artist Josef Herman. Josef Herman Art Project 2020 - Primary English

<https://express.adobe.com/page/j1Pkc5X0EDVff/>



Picture by Josef Herman (ND) 'Dusk' (Lithograph on paper). JHAFG

**Josef Herman (1911–2000)**



Llun gan Josef Herman (film dyddiad) 'Dusk' (Lithograff ar bapur). SCIH

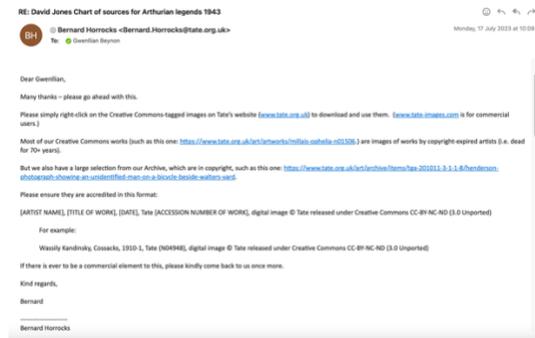
**Josef Herman (1911–2000)**

Beynon (2023) Screen shots

## Appendix I: Copyright permission of e-mail from Tate

Copy of e-mail from Bernard Horrocks Tate re Copyright for David Jones (1943)

### *Chart of sources for Arthurian legends*



### Screen shot of e-mail

#### Information from e-mail - copied.

**From:** Bernard Horrocks <Bernard.Horrocks@tate.org.uk>

**Date:** Monday, 17 July 2023 at 10:09

**To:** Gwenllian Beynon <G.Beynon@uwtsd.ac.uk>

**Subject:** RE: David Jones Chart of sources for Arthurian legends 1943

Dear Gwenllian,

Many thanks – please go ahead with this.

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Most of our Creative Commons works (such as this one: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/millais-ophelia-n01506>.) are images of works by copyright-expired artists (i.e. dead for 70+ years).

But we also have a large selection from our Archive, which are in copyright, such as this one: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/archive/items/tga-201011-3-1-1-8/henderson-photograph-showing-an-unidentified-man-on-a-bicycle-beside-walters-yard>.

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[ARTIST NAME], [TITLE OF WORK], [DATE], Tate [ACCESSION NUMBER OF WORK], digital image © Tate released under Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported)

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Wassily Kandinsky, Cossacks, 1910-1, Tate (N04948), digital image © Tate released under Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported)

If there is ever to be a commercial element to this, please kindly come back to us once more.

Kind regards,

Bernard

-----  
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Head of Intellectual Property  
Tate Gallery  
Legal Dept  
Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4RG  
bernard.horrocks@tate.org.uk  
www.tate.org.uk

he, him, his

**From:** Gwenllian Beynon <G.Beynon@uwtsd.ac.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 July 2023 4:20 PM  
**To:** Creative Commons <Creative.Commons@tate.org.uk>  
**Subject:** David Jones Chart of sources for Arthurian legends 1943

Dear Tate

I am in the process of finalising my PhD at Swansea College of Art, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, and wish to use the below image as an example of creative mapping process. The publication of the PhD will not be for commercial purposes. I have read the creative commons licence and will reference all information as stated. And I assume that this will be acceptable.

The PhD is exploring the engagement of an art facilitator with participants in art workshops in Wales and mapping within practice-based research has been undertaken.

**David Jones**  
**Chart of sources for Arthurian legends**  
**1943**

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<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/archive/items/tga-8222-1-68/jones-chart-of-sources-for-arthurian-legends>

Thanks

Gwen

## Appendix J: Last word

Diolch - thanks to all that have supported in this research

**Dr. Caroline Lohmann-Hanckock**

**Dr. Nicola Welton**

**Dr. Andera Liggins**

**Dr. Catrin Webster**

**Dr. Catriona Ryan**

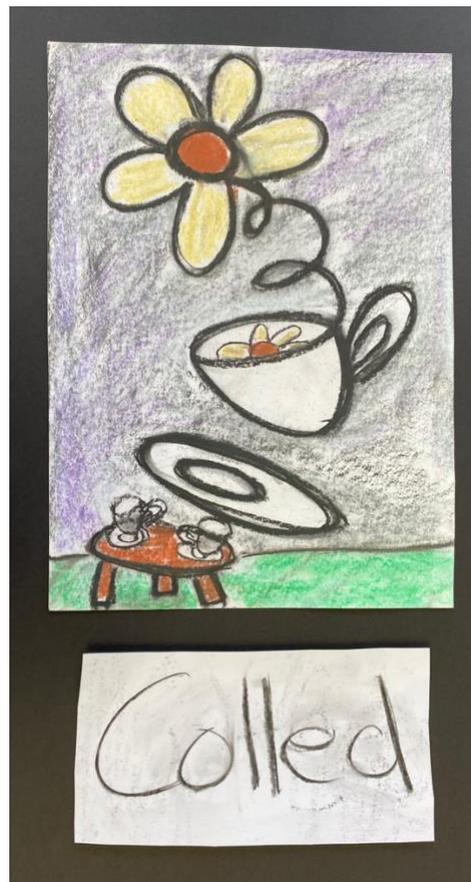
**Dr. Stella Harvey**

**Dr. Mark Cox**

**Dr. Paul Jeff**

**Dr Stella Harvey**

Doing a PhD '...is like driving a car at night. You can see only as far as your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way' E.L. Doctorow (Schiff, 1989, p.54)



Beynon (2019) *Colled* (i mam)

All images in this thesis © Gwenllian Beynon

David Jones (1943) © the estate of David Jones permission granted for PhD from Tate