BECOMING WITHIN ENTANGLED SPACES OF ARTISTIC PRACTICE,

AN ILLUSTRATED AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

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By

BETHANIE IRONS

Dr. Kathleen Unrath, Dissertation Supervisor

May 2019

The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined

the dissertation entitled

BECOMING WITHIN ENTANGLED SPACES OF ARTISTIC PRACTICE,

AN ILLUSTRATED AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Presented by BETHANIE IRONS

A candidate for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY OF LEARNING, TEACHING, AND CURRICULUM–

EMPHASIS IN ART EDUCATION

And hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

_____

Dr. Kathleen Unrath, Chair

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Dr. Amy Ruopp

_____

Dr. Candace R. Kuby

_____

Dr. Josephine M. Stealey

d e d i c a t i o n

I could not have completed this journey without the endless encouragement of my mother, who has always believed I could do anything, and my husband Tony, my best friend, confidant, and source of infinite inspiration. Thank you to Amber and Robin for always making me laugh and for reminding me of what is truly important in life.

a b s t r a c t

Because of the prevalence of social media in contemporary artistic life, it is important that questions be asked and research be conducted to inform our understanding of it and to potentially enhance our relationship with it. The entanglement of more traditional artist spaces with social virtual spaces can have an impact not just on what artists make and how they self-curate, but also how, when, and where learning takes place. The possibilities and complexities of this hybrid space of artistic practice can have a real effect on the lives of creatives. As an artist living in an increasingly digitized world, the implications have extended far beyond my own studio and have impacted the quality of my interactions with others, self-efficacy, and how I learn. This autoethnography examines the impact of hybrid artistic space on the practice of others and what the main concerns are. I then investigate how these concerns are revealed in my own practice. By embedding my experience within the lives of others, I can deeply consider the impact of those concerns in relation to my community of practice. These discoveries are intended to assist in my own development as an artist, researcher, and teacher, but also to provide a more focused portrait of artistic becoming in the twenty-first century.

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i n t r o d u c t i o n

Because of the prevalence of social media in contemporary artistic life, it is important that questions be asked and research be conducted to inform our understanding of it and to potentially enhance our relationship with it. The entanglement of more traditional artist spaces with social virtual spaces can have an impact not just on what artists make and how they self-curate, but also how, when, and where learning takes place. The possibilities and complexities of this hybrid space of artistic practice can have a real effect on the lives of creatives. As an artist living in an increasingly digitized world, the implications have extended far beyond my own studio and have impacted the quality of my interactions with others, self-efficacy, and how I learn. This autoethnography examines the impact of hybrid artistic space on the practice of others and what the main concerns are. I then investigate how these concerns are revealed in my own practice. By embedding my experience within the lives of others, I can deeply consider the impact of those concerns in relation to my community of practice. These discoveries are intended to assist in my own development as an artist, researcher, and teacher, but also to provide a more focused portrait of artistic becoming in the twenty-first century.

In this first chapter, I begin by discussing the purpose of this study and introducing my research questions. Then, I detail my relationship to places of artistic practice, its connection to literacy, and a summary of theories that inform and trouble the research. I end the chapter with a summary of the methodology

that I use to investigate my research questions and data compiled.

p u r p o s e o f s t u d y

Social media is not just a means to share and to converse, but it is a

staple of contemporary life; becoming a large part of the human, every day, lived

experience (McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2017). It is important to conduct

continually evolving research to understand the possibilities and complexities of

new hybrid spaces of artistic practice and to use those new knowings to enhance

relationships with it. Digitized spaces are becoming more popular among artists

and have impacted my own practice. This impact is revealed to me in not just

how or what I make and post, but my relationships with others and how and

when I learn. The entanglement of digital and real-life spaces of practice are

interrogated in this study to arrange an understanding of my own concerns while

situating my experience within the lives of others. These concerns are then used

to further complicate what I know by interrogating the impact hybrid space has.

This includes the influence on my motivation, opportunities for reflection and

experimentation, curation, my connection to others, and what role it all plays in

my artistic process. While this research focuses on my own experience in the

world, I see this research as being applicable to a broad nexus of educational

practices in visual and digital literacies in the twenty-first century.

r e s e a r c h q u e s t i o n s

The data obtained and interpreted in this study interrogates my

relationship with entangled spaces of artistic practice. The aim is to arrange a

clear qualitative understanding of how the entanglement of the artist's studio, exhibition space, and social media impacts my learning and doing. I continually situate my experience within the greater context of other artist's lives. Through reflective writings and illustration, I show my understandings in a way that reaches beyond binaries of space, of bodies, and of thought and embraces rhizomatic relationality. By presenting my own experience, I aim to provide an evolving portrait of how artists may function in an increasingly digitized world. The following research questions are structured around this framework and goal.

m a i n r e s e a r c h q u e s t i o n

How does the entanglement of hybrid artistic space impact my practice as an artist, researcher, and teacher?

s u b q u e s t i o n s

- How does hybrid artistic space impact the studio practice of others and what are the main concerns?
- How do those concerns manifest for me?

These research questions are first investigated through surveys consisting of image and text submissions submitted by artists who I interact with on Instagram. These submissions were made public in an exhibition titled *Friends with Benefits*. This name for this show was chosen because of my initial assumption that the site was of tremendous benefit to users through connection with others. These assumptions, in part, were ruptured in the subsequent interrogation of those submissions and reflection on my own motivations in this study. I organized the

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submissions according to overarching concerns that I interpreted used those themes to interrogate the impact on my own practice. The result is a relational depiction of what it means to be an artist engaged within hybrid artistic spaces.

i l l u s t r a t i o n s

The drawings in this study were inspired by photographs of actual situations, places, and events. They were drawn digitally in the photo editing software Photoshop. Drawing digitally serves as a mediated in-between space; between photograph and event, virtual and tangible, image and text. I used my finger on the trackpad of my laptop (Illustration 1), rendering space in a manner that is analogous to an unfilled coloring book. This aesthetic furthers the notion that this research is about becoming; always in a state of incompleteness, of possibility. Through drawing, I can better understand text. Through text, I can better articulate the nuances in my drawings. I allow text and image to move with and through each other, simultaneously being affected by and affective to one another. This study is my own unique interpretation, and the economical nature of these drawings parse out what I deem to be visually unnecessary to provide a clear, curated manifestation of my own understanding and experience. Because I am an artist, a research, and a teacher, I see art making as valid and necessary in the process of understanding and theorizing. "The intellectual, imaginative and insightful work created by artists and educators as practitioners is grounded in ongoing forms of recursive and reflexive inquiry engaged in theorizing for understanding (Irwin & Springgay, xxii, 2008)." The arts are indeed a form of

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research. In this study, visual information is not only a way in which I make

visible my data and understandings, but it is also an active player in my own

process of making sense.
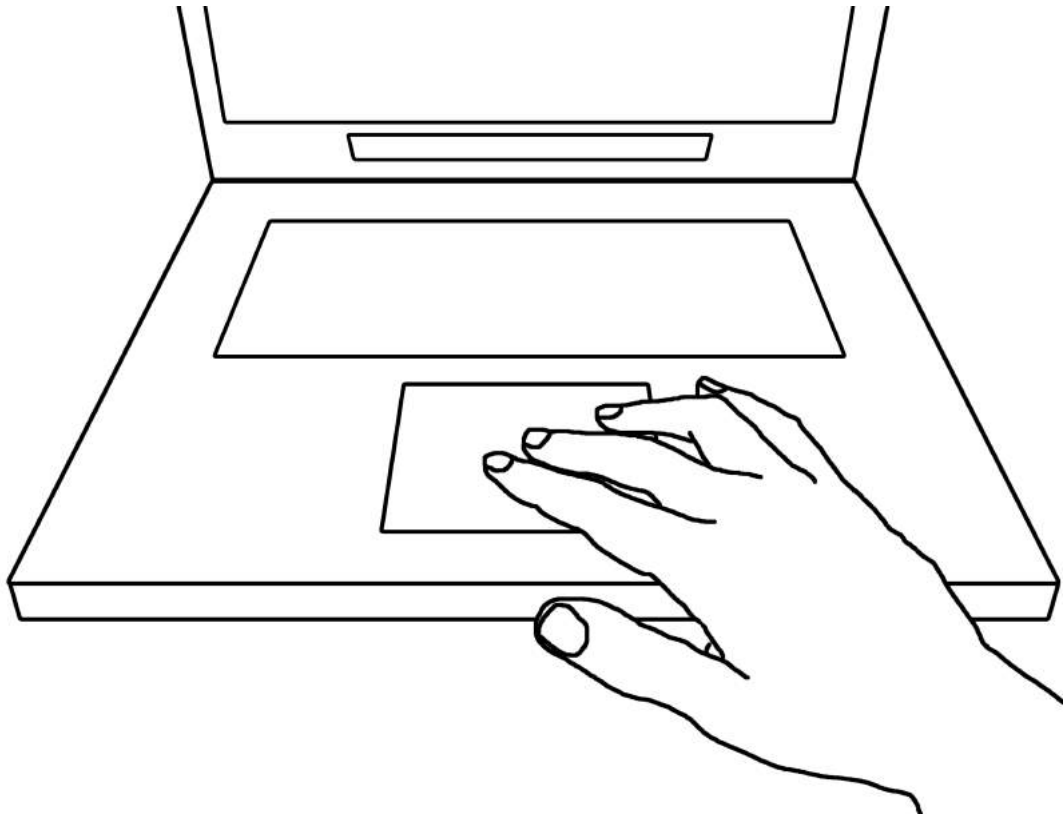
Illustration 1

Drawing digitally serves as a mediated in-between space; between photograph and
event, virtual and tangible, image and text. I render space in a manner that is
analogous to an unfilled coloring book, furthering the notion that this research is about
becoming; always in a state of incompleteness, of possibility.

e n t a n g l e m e n t

I believe that no artwork is made in a vacuum. All art is connected and involved in a process of simultaneously being affected and affective. Although we may momentarily and situationally define boundaries to examine works of art, everything in our visual world is working in an entanglement of images, text, and ideas. The definition of entangle means to twist together, to trouble, to make complicated (Entangle, n.d.). This definition states that entangle is a verb, an action carried out. In this research, I am purposefully engaging in virtual and real-life spaces of artistic practice, twisting them together, complicating my relationships with space and people. As a metaphorical concept, to entangle means objects influence each other, regardless of the distance between them. Thinking with entanglement is useful in the realm of social media, as distance can be great and is nearly dissolved through the mode of information delivery, regardless of the location of participants. People, places, things, and ideas that are entangled are always in relation. I see this entanglement taking on the form of a continuous line drawing (Illustration 2), as there is no beginning and no end. This is useful within this research as social media not only transcends geographical boundaries, but also constraints of time, as all the activity within the digitized social space, regardless of when it was posted, can be seen at any moment. Each visible and conceptual act occurring within the physical and virtual space is connected and happening simultaneously, with and because of one another.

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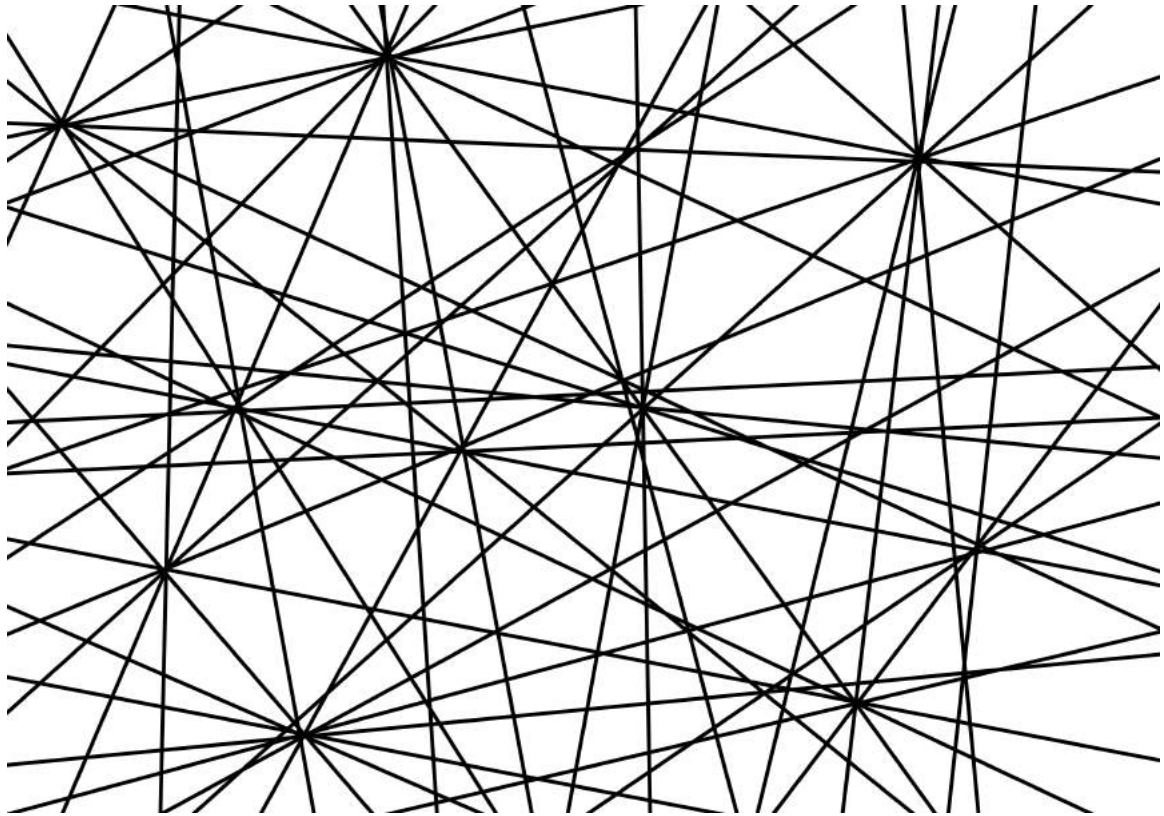
Illustration 2

t h e r h i z o m e

The rhizome takes shapes and moves throughout the entirety of this

research, not only in how data is analyzed, but how my knowings are presented.

The definition of a rhizome is, "a somewhat elongated usually horizontal

subterranean plant stem that produces shoots above and roots below, and is

distinguished from a true root in possessing buds, nodes, and usually scale-like

leaves (Rhizome, n.d.)." Using this visual, metaphorical notion of a rhizome, I

treat the process of research as a continuous, sprouting, rupturing entity

(Illustration 3). This takes shape in spaces of artistic inquiry as well. The sites of

the studio, gallery, and virtual spaces produce a complicated, entangled,

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rhizomatic space. Ideas, actions, and processes are always in a state of making

and unmaking when confronted with new ideas, sprouting new trajectories of

thought. In communal studio settings, the gallery, and on social media, new

ideas are often brought on by others. Being exposed to the images of others can

provide an interruption to an artist's current aesthetic and/or conceptual path. On

the social media site Instagram, this happens though image as well as text.

Hashtags are a way users can thematically categorize their images. Other users

can then click on those hashtags and be brought to (sometimes millions) of other

images that have been categorized similarly. This is rhizomatic in that it provides

multiple trajectories that can be followed, with each hashtag leading to more

images and more hashtags. By continuously confronting the user with new

material, ideas are reconsidered and at times ruptured, sprouting new pathways.

This metaphor of the rhizome is enacted in the digital format of this

dissertation. When images are clicked on, it brings the reader to a website or a

hashtag or image on Instagram. This serves as another entangled, rhizomatic

trajectory for one to follow. The surveys later detailed in this study were

submitted from Instagram users and by clicking on the illustration of the

participant's submission, a reader will be taken to my Instagram page where I

have posted my illustrations. In doing so, readers can see how the image is also

entangled with the feedback of others, serving as another rhizomatic point of

departure. This pushes the static notion of language and of image into more

dynamic, rhizomatic movement with the addition of virtual spaces of inquiry.

Rupture and multiplicity are embraced, always being open to possibility, as the

enormous network of information online is always in flux and growing.
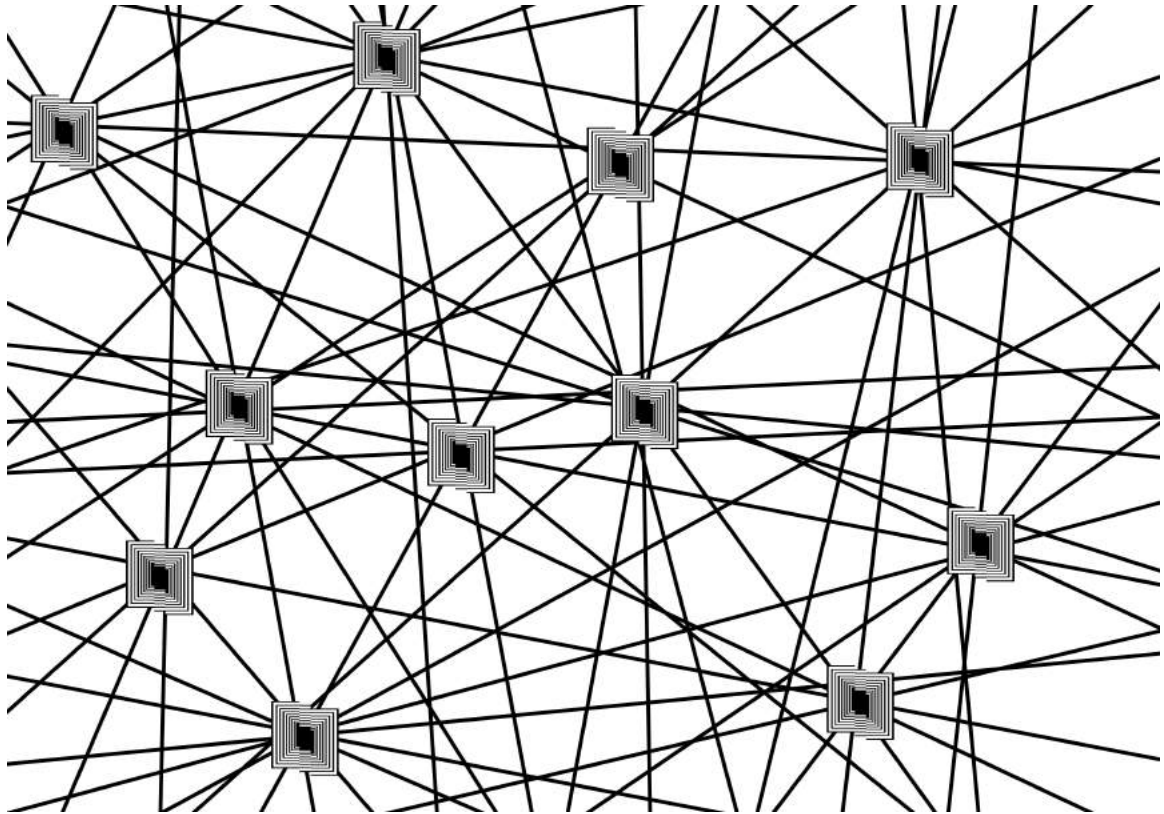
Illustration 3

t h e s t u d i o

The studio is often thought of as a space for artistic play and a space

designated for liberation and freedom of thought (Jacob & Grabner, 2010).

Occasionally, this space serves as a more intimate way to connect with others

through studio visits. It can also be a communal space, providing close proximity

to others pursuing creative undertakings. It has become a space that brings with

it prestige, intrigue, curiosity, and mystery. Littered with work completed,

reconstituted, and discarded, each studio is in a perpetual state of making and

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unmaking. The artist's studio is a place for creating, for dialog, and for display,

but also functions as one of many elements that may reside in one's scope of

My MFA studio
was always
clean. The
canvas curtains
at the entrance,
which later
inspired my use
of materials,
were usually
always open. It
served as a
place of work
and display. It
acted as a
stand-in for my
thought process,
just as the
furniture I
made acted as a
stand in for
instability.
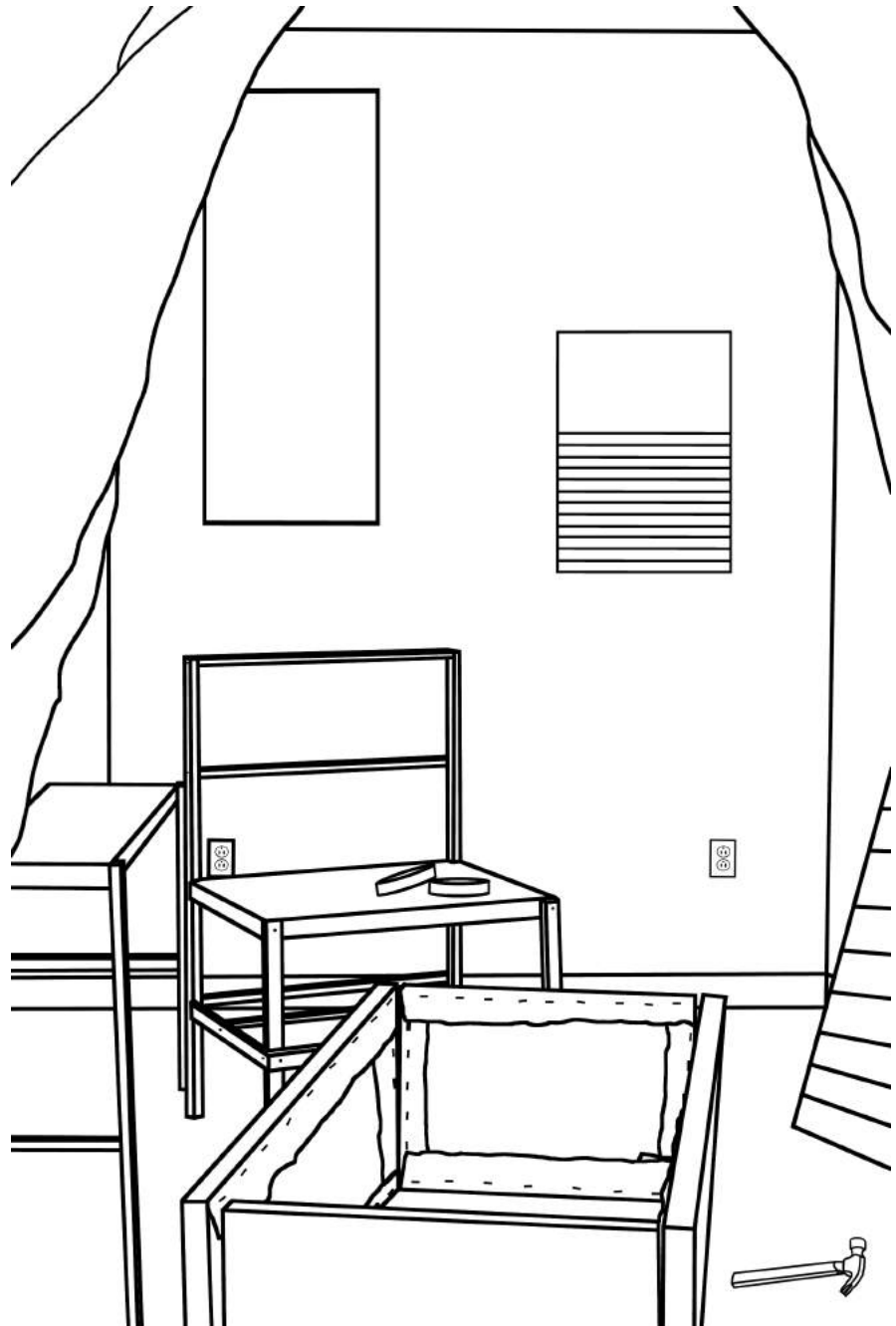
Illustration 4

influence, potentially dictating what type of work may be made.

My own studio has changed dramatically through the years, from the quintessential white cube, to a small office, and currently to my living room coffee table. The changes in space have impacted the work that I have made. When my space gets smaller, my canvas and paper sizes follow suit. When I have a studio with a window and plants around, objects pertaining to nature tend to make their way more frequently into my work. As an MFA student at the University of Missouri from 2011-2014, I was given a studio (Illustration 4) that offered privacy through the addition of canvas curtains. While not fully mindful of the influence of my space, I started working exclusively with raw canvas.

The inherent function and worth of artistic spaces has long been a source of fascination for me and it became a primary area of interest while enrolled in the MFA program in 2013. I had a studio near twenty of my fellow graduate student's studios and felt, for maybe the first time in my life, like I was a part of a community of artists who were engaged and inspired. This, in turn, motivated me to be more engaged with my own practice and led me to make a series of photographs of my peers' studios. Each photo was meant to be a portrait of the artist, represented by the state of their studio. I was interested in how artists set up their space in a manner that they believed was conducive to process and learning. I received approval from each artist before I began the visual documentation and they were aware of my intentions.

Illustration 5

I would often visit my peers' studios. This one seemed to function as an intense space of experimentation, with supplies strewn about and many paintings being worked on at once. The paintings themselves were not as important in my memory as the artist's unique ways of thinking and openness to new ideas and materials.
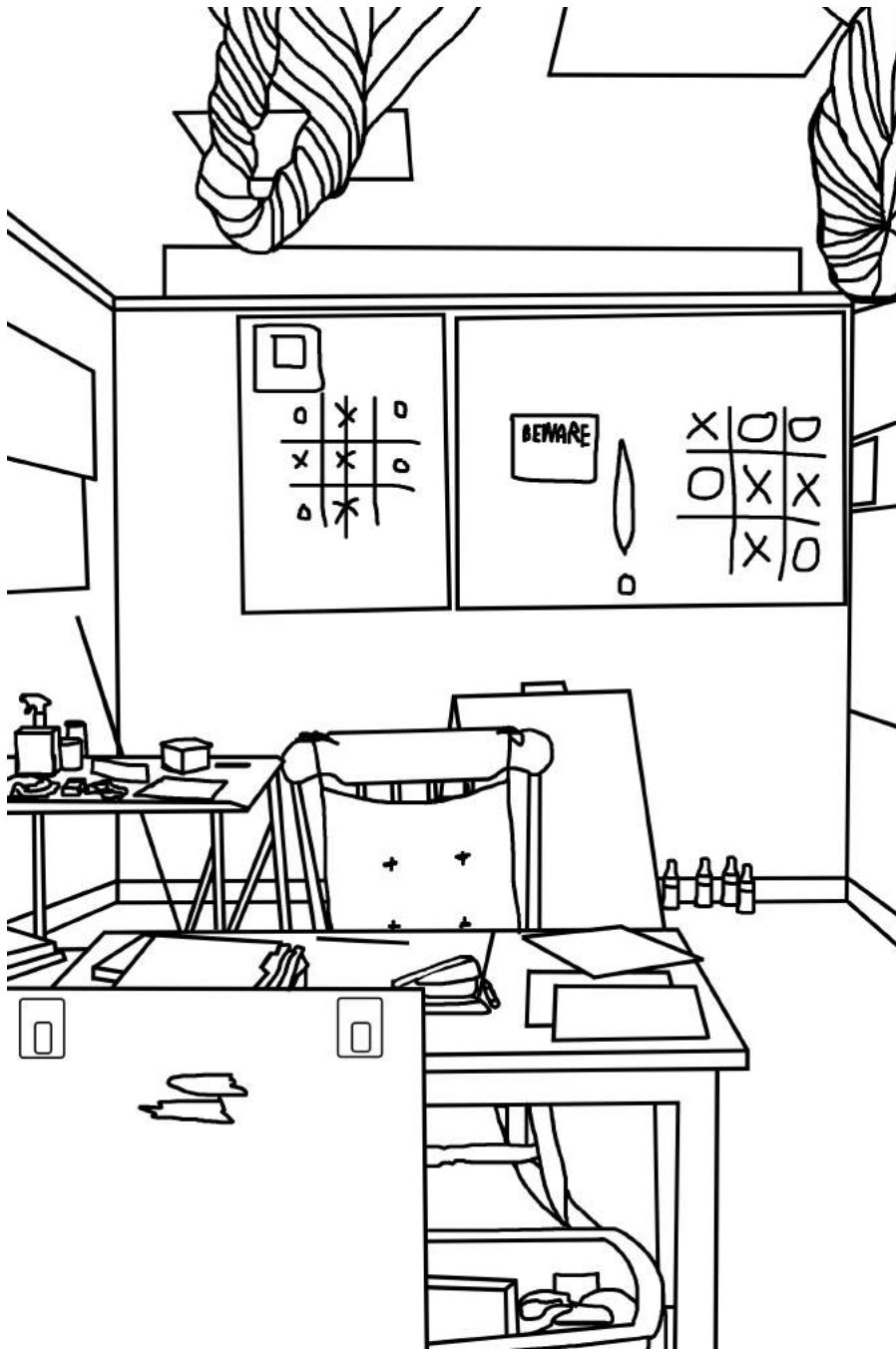
Illustration 6

This studio, directly next to mine, appeared to primarily serve as a place of display and to write. Visitors would often come to talk and the canvas curtains were always lifted and tightly coiled to always allow and encourage entrance and conversation.

While photographing the spaces, my attention first went to the variety of systems being worked within. The studios, all with the same dimensions and beginning as a template, displayed specific ways of utilization, unique to each artist (Illustrations 5 & 6). I interpreted the photos as being visual manifestations of interconnecting networks of principles and abstract concepts by which each artist deemed worthy for their practice. Many studios were messy, some were impeccably clean, and others were relatively bare in their contents. My peers gave me a considered, albeit curated, view into how they function. I considered how the organization of space exposes, and possible predicates, elements of temperament and proclivities regarding media, subject matter, and content.

The use of space has served as a jumping off point for future projects, such as a recent departure from photographing to drawing the studios. But this series brings up an important problem. The photos were an attempt to represent the studio, the artist, and the learning process through an environment that is always in flux. I believe each mindful artistic act becomes an impetus for something else, with previous work being challenged and inspired by occurrences in and out of the studio. The photographs were operating as just one sentence of a novel that is in constant revision. If afforded the time and access, it may have been a more thorough and more truthful series to document the studio and survey the artist's motivations as they transformed their practice.

The way that artists used the spaces given to them was one component of my project, while the sociality of the space was another. Residing in this studio

setting, with many contrasting preferences and personalities in close proximity, was a disruption to my normal artistic practices. A shared space in this capacity was not something I had experienced up until that point. While some of my peers celebrated it as a networking opportunity, others expressed to me that they loathed it for its lack of privacy. As I can recall, emotions were high, as is the nature of graduate school. However, I was fond of my studio neighbors and realized quickly that they would not only provide me with emotional support, but also inspiration and motivation. Those relationships provided a challenge to my preconceived notions of how art should look and be talked about. This became a disruption that I felt furthered my work, as evident in my visual and verbal representations of greater technical and conceptual abilities. The university's decision to provide a communal art making space for MFA students seemed like a calculated, although perhaps only, choice to push students' practice. Had we all constructed our work in more private spaces, it may have resulted in a different outcome.

This kind of an interruption (Illustration 7) to my habitual thought process was, and continues to be, an important part of my practice. When I graduated and no longer had a studio or a strong community of creatives around me, there was a noticeable difference in my overall well-being and in the content of my work. Without the in-between spaces of my ideas being interrogated, my work became simply a conduit of thought. It was only when I was left without outside influences, that I realized just how strong of an impact the communal space had.

ter in
ruption

Interruption has manifested itself most frequently in the tangible and virtual art spaces I have inhabited. The square of the studio/gallery and rectangle of digital screens have functioned as both a propagator and disrupter of content.

Illustration 7

s o c i a l m e d i a

Artistic spaces and contemporary practices should not be addressed

without the inclusion of digital technology, as it has provided affordances to my

own practice that transcends time and space. The phenomenon of digitized

communal spaces has gained popularity at an unprecedented speed, due in part

to the nature of interconnectedness that it promotes (McCay-Peet & Quan-

Haase, 2017). The sociality of sites like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr,

and Pinterest are different from other types of media like newspapers and

television in that it encourages interaction with others. Social interaction, much

like my experience in the community that my MFA studio was a part of, has

become a key factor in how I make meaning, as learning, and art making, does

not only occur inside a fortress of our own thoughts and actions, but also through

modeling and the observation of behaviors and consequences of others

(Bandura, 1986). With this belief that humans learn vicariously, sites like

Instagram are prime areas for arts based research on learning and development.

As artists learn and negotiate the new arrangement of the traditional artist

studio space and virtual social sites of practice and display, the spaces and

people who occupy them have the great potential to impact one another. While

each space offers unique affordances and constraints, there is a misconception

that the online world is in isolation from the rest of our activities. "This kind of

perspective is myopic, however, and disregards how social media and the

phenomena that emerge within it are closely interlinked to other spheres of life.

Perhaps most importantly, social media usage is closely interwoven with everyday life's rhythms and patterns (McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2017, p. 20)." Considering that the spaces and the bodies that reside in them are not in isolation from each other brings the possibility of a networked system in which all components are interacting at once with and because of one another.

This arrangement begins to move and take on forms that are always in the process of being affective and affected, assembled and disassembled, as digital technology and social media are always changing. Complexity in the weave of social phenomena results; a constant making and unmaking that occurs in the process of navigating and negotiating spaces. Space has played a significant role in how, what, and why I have produced artistic works throughout my life. As such, the online and offline spaces of artistic practice can create new possibilities and complexities that deserve to be interrogated and disrupted.

My experiences with various social media platforms and physical spaces of artistic practice has led me to believe that each space offers their own unique way of communicating. So, it is important to unpack each mode further, narrowing the scope to allow for a more robust study. Instagram is the digital platform of interest for this research due to my extensive experience with the site and the its focus on image and text. Instagram certainly privileges images due to its design, but text can and often does accompany the images posted. I have found this to be an optimal platform to exhibit my artistic work, but also a way in which I can communicate through comments and hashtags, creating a synergy of

image and text.

Text takes the shape of being a descriptor, a caption, but it can also make thematic associations more apparent through hashtags (Illustration 8). "By definition, a hashtag is 'a word or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#), used on social media websites and application, especially Twitter, to identify messages on a specific topic' (Laucuka, 2018, p. 57)." When captioning an image with a hashtag, users categorize images which others can see, as any public hashtag is searchable on Instagram's application. Hashtags serve as rhizomatic connections in that they create a link to other images tagged with the same text. This creates a multifaceted fabric, woven with the complexities that move through image and text and connecting seemingly disparate concepts, casting a wide net into the enormous virtual world of 300 million users and counting (Lee, et al, 2015).

It is important to note that, while my scope of influence on Instagram is wide and always increasing, the site does have an algorithm in place that privileges certain accounts. I have access to a huge number of images with the ability to access any profile that is public and can remain in continual contact with those I follow by searching for and then accessing their profile. However, Instagram's algorithm alters what I see on my Instagram feed. This feed is a continually updated stream of images which I can scroll through to see images from users that I follow. Instagram never hides any images from this feed, and if a user continues to scroll through it, they can eventually see every image posted.

Illustration 8

My Instagram profile communicates who I am as an artist, a research, and a teacher through the content I post, including both image and text through hashtags. By using hashtags to accompany my images, I am broadening my audience. Since my profile is public, anyone searching a hashtag I have used can see my image. This broadens their scope of influence and contributes to the rhizomatic nature of the site.

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But the feed is now personalized and what a user sees first is determined by what posts and accounts they engage with the most through likes and comments. Other factors are at play in what appears in this feed. For example, if one follows a high number of other users, there is a decreased probability, due to time constraints, that they can engage with every single user they follow. Because Instagram limits what the initial feed looks like due to previous interactions, those who follow many users may not see a large number of posts. The shift to this algorithm began in 2016 to streamline a user's feed by only showing posts from users they most often interact with and care about. Prior to that, the feed was a chronological placement of images, showing the most recent posts first. This shift has continued to cause users concern, as many want to be sure that they are seeing everything and not just a selection of user's posts. Again, all public images are accessible by searching for hashtags and all images from those a user follows can be accessed by searching for a username. However, the Instagram feed is limiting one's scope of influence to a degree. This algorithm also requires continual interaction for one's images to show up on the feed of others as well. So, one's audience is, in part, determined by the level of interactions. As such, a high number of likes and comments on a diverse number of profiles puts a user's images within multiple realms of influence. Influence, reciprocity, and what this does to work that is made and one's overall motivation, well-being, and opportunities for learning is the focus of my study.

e x h i b i t i o n s p a c e s

Instagram has played a transformative role in my artistic practice but also in the relationships I am building within the worldwide art community. I curate an online-only gallery, PLEAT, using Instagram as a main source of connectivity with other artists. The site has allowed me to network and collaborate with artists around the world and many limitations, mainly geographical and financial, are alleviated because it resides only in the digital space. Since March of 2015, I have been curating two artist's work for each monthly show. To date, I have curated nearly fifty shows with almost one hundred artists.

Artists submit free of charge through the gallery's website (Illustration 9). They submit their name, website address, and an artist statement. I then look through their website and the contents of their Instagram profile and carefully consider both aesthetic and conceptual choices that they are working with. Many times, an artist's Instagram profile acts as another form of a website, but there are many artists who include bits of their daily lives, interweaving their lived experiences with their art (Illustration 10). This paints a much more thorough portrait for me as a curator and allows for me to see what type of work they make, how they go about the process of making art, and what inspires the artist to create. I follow every artist who submits to the gallery, so that they can continually pop up on my Instagram feed and I can be kept up to date with what they are doing. I can more easily make connections with what other artists are doing as well, which is often how I conceptualize shows.

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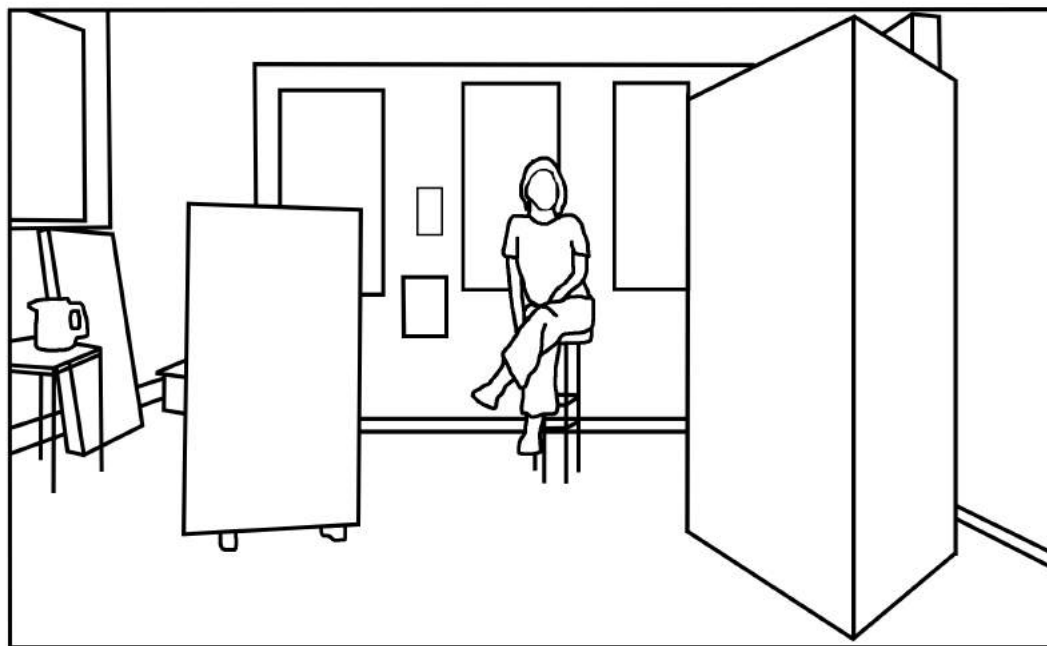
Photo of Gina Hunt, February 2017 featured artist

Illustration 9

Artists submit to have their work considered for PLEAT at pleatgallery.com/submit. The submission page is represented in this illustration, which features an artist who was selected for a past exhibition as she sits in her studio. I chose her studio portrait to put on the submission page because she works in a variety of media, including sculpture, painting, and site-specific work, all of which focus on visual perception. The inclusion of a wide range of media is important to me as a curator. While I am ultimately making the decisions on whose work is featured, I intentionally make curatorial choices that embrace disruption and make visible rhizomatic connections. This can lead to unexpected, innovative conversations between works of art.

The contents of an artist's Instagram profile can show others more about who they are, especially if they include more of their day-to-day lived experiences. Not simply serving as a site where images are collected, there are rhizomatic connections being made visible and interacting all at once. This user is showing a collection of relational moments, with each post serving as a trace of who they are. In this illustration, I am showing the interconnected nature of images, all with the potential to become a part of the artistic process.

Illustration 10

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For each exhibition, it is important to me that work is paired together through unexpected connections. For this show, I chose two artists, Christina Renfer Vogel (left) and Brian Edmonds (right) who both work in the field of painting and whose main conceptual focus is on relationships. However, the concept is carried out in two very different ways. It is through this illumination of disruption that rhizomatic, unexpected conversations may take place.

"I pursue interaction and perception from my role as an observer, occupied by the unremarkable and the relationships that exist within our everyday exchanges."

-Christina Renfer Vogel

"My work is focused on creating an abstract environment. One that is populated by symbols, shapes, lines, positive/negative space, and pattern. It is through the relationship of these objects that a painterly vocabulary emerges."

-Brian Edmonds

Illustration 11

Because I follow on Instagram every artist who submits, I can continually

see what they are making in real time. This adds to the process of curation as an

interconnected weave of artistic work that is continually in flux. As each new

submission comes in, I look back at what has been submitted before and see if

there are unexpected, yet cohesive conversations happening. I initially search

for aesthetic similarities, however, the conceptual motivations evident in the

artist's statements are what solidifies the pairing of each exhibition. For instance,

for the December 2016 show titled *Gatherings*, I chose two artists who work with

the concept of relationships and whose main media is paint (Illustration 11).

However, one artist's work is representational and the other works with non-

objective imagery. By juxtaposing two different ways of representing a concept, I

wanted to allow for a rhizomatic conversation to take place. Through disruption

of binaries, I attempt to facilitate new interpretations. Curation has afforded me a

platform to take different processes or concepts and fit them together in a way

that allows for emergence of new ideas and stimulating dialogue.

The gallery is meant to utilize the affordances of this digitized exhibition

space and to bring artists together in unexpected ways. It also serves to make

the artist's process evident through virtual studio visits that are posted to the blog

(Illustration 12). Each artist is asked to describe their work, their influences, and

what role, if any, social media plays in that weave of experience that is their

practice. The interviews encouraged artists to reflect and to further communicate

artistic intent.

As a part of each exhibition, I ask artists if they would like to participate in a blog post and, if so, to answer four questions about their work. The questions serve as prompts for the artist to describe their work aesthetically and conceptually, detail who they are inspired by, and reflect on how social media may or may not impact their studio practice. The intention is to give insight into the artist's motivations and thought processes while bringing the viewer closer to the artist and their work. Image and text serve as conceptual and perceptual descriptors in the absence of a physical interaction with the work.

EXHIBITIONS   BLOG   SUBMIT   ABOUT

January 11, 2019

Instagram

Studio Visit: Jennifer Printz
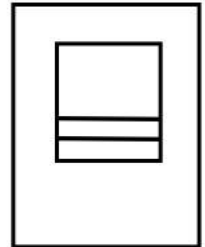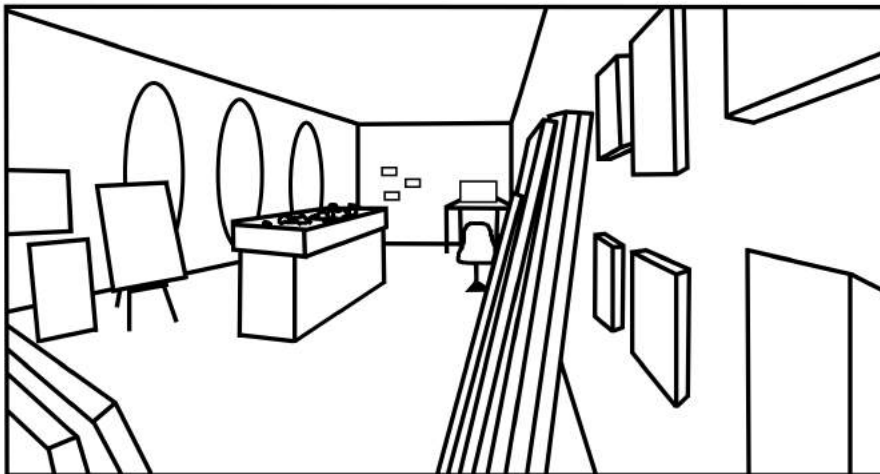
Bethany Johnson "We Live on a Planet Untitled" Collage on Paper

Jennifer Printz is an artist and educator living and working in Roanoke, Virginia. Her work can be seen in PLEAT's January 2019 exhibition as well as jenniferprintz.com.

Please describe your work, both visually and conceptually.

My work is an interplay of drawing, photography, and paper surface. I intentionally select paper surfaces, some of which are antique and others new or handmade, for how they interact with the media in which I am working. The older paper used for the work shown at PLEAT is smooth and feels luxurious under my

Jennifer Printz "Hushed Without Pauses"

Illustration 12

Instagram has given me access to a huge audience, but it is not simply a site to organize images or post images to. It is an active part of a constellation that consists of networks of information and multi-modal means of communication through the collaboration of image and text. Just as in a traditional physical gallery, spaces obtain their meaning from social agreements, which has the potential to change based on context and content (O'Doherty, 2007). A now emerging trend in the art world, thanks to the accessible nature of social media, is for artists to share their practice beyond the finished product, with the experimentation that often only resides in the studio space becoming another place of display. Experimentation and disruption of binaries of good/bad, finished/in-progress is becoming a worthy component of display.

In 1964, artist Lucas Samaras gathered up the contents of his studio-bedroom from his New Jersey apartment. Piece by piece he took the objects that made up his creative space and transplanted them to the Green Gallery in New York City (Illustration 13). In doing so, he was superimposing the private, personal creative space with the public display space (O'Doherty, 2007). Samaras was plugging in the studio space to the space of the gallery, making and unmaking our notions of place, taste, and product. He was also utilizing the medium and the format in which the work was shown to transcend what each space communicates on its own. This communicative performance, perpetuated by space, demonstrated the artist's values and the inherent worth that resides in the act of art making and of display.

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Illustration 13

Samaras' studio-bedroom shows that his life and art are inextricably connected and intertwined. This drawing is largely constructed using continuous contour line, showing that living inquiry such as this is rhizomatic and relational.

a r t

is a
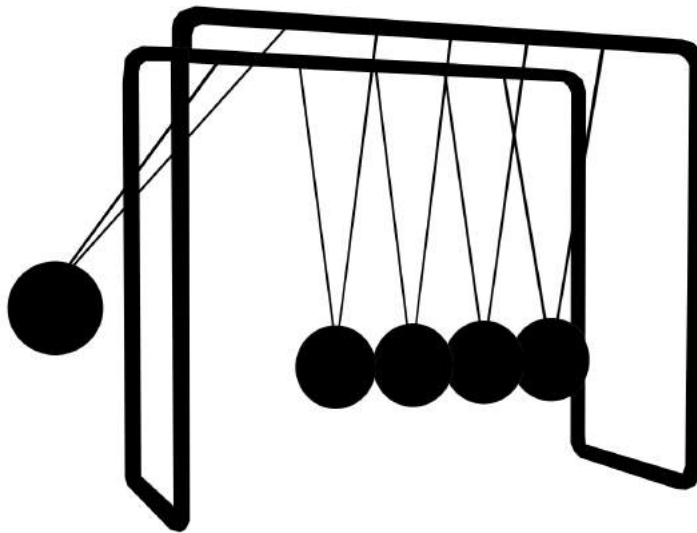
Newton's Cradle serves as a visual metaphor for acts of communication, including art, simultaneously being affective and affected. But what happens in between the cause and effect?

Illustration 14

c o m m

u n i c a

t i v e

a c t

I believe that art is a communicative act with one determinant facilitating another (Illustration 14). However, this act is nonlinear and is relational. Art making is an iterative, communicative series of processes that allow for the in-between spaces of action to become visible. Through sensory experiences, artists tell a story and communicate what they value to the world. The exhibition of the process and product of art making communicates. Whether it be in a studio, a gallery, or a virtual setting, exhibiting art in a deliberate, curated manner, relays a message. Visual literacy is the ability to understand what is being communicated with the ability to decipher ideas through visible actions or images (Visual literacy, n.d.), which is changing due to the shifting landscape of place. The exhibition space does not function as the white cube it once was (O'Doherty, 2007). I cannot remember the last time I have gone to an art gallery without making a photo with my phone to capture that moment in time. Because of the virtual-oriented context I live in, I am in a conversation with space in ways never before possible and it is important to research the communicative aspect of artistic place through the lens of visual and digital literacy.

Visual literacy involves how we process data and make meaning from images by transforming the automatic state of looking and moving further into interpreting and analyzing images. "The visual is a realm of perception in all of its manifestations. Perception certainly involves how people gather and sort data through their eyes, for vision is a data-processing system, not a recording system

(Riddett-Moore & Siegesmund, 2014, p. 103)." While it is a process of

connecting the dots, visual literacy also involves complexities of data gathering

and sorting and allowing text and image to move through each other. This

movement becomes an arrangement of information, plugging in one concept into

another and creating a weave that is constantly overlapping and becoming

simultaneously layered and undone. "Plugging in to produce something new is a

constant, continuous process of making and unmaking. An assemblage isn't a

thing-it is the process of making and unmaking the thing. It is the process of

arranging, organizing, fitting together (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013, p. 1)." Visual

literacy is a system of making sense that is fluid and always changing, marking

unique territory with each new assemblage.

As I collected and interpreted data for this dissertation, I was constantly

making and remaking my story. What was I communicating? Why? To whom?

I often used post-it notes when working through ideas, as I knew that the

process, like art making, would not be linear. This visual serves as a fitting

metaphor for how visual literacy functions. I believe that literacy involves

intensities of movement. This movement creates a complicated weave that is

perpetually and simultaneously becoming more complicated and more focused.

While this study is focused on my own experience with hybrid, entangled artistic

spaces, my goal is to provide a more complicated, but still focus portrait of what

that means. Potentially, this may provide others with a framework for how they

may better understand literacy practices, particularly as the world becomes

increasingly digitized.

Digital literacy is defined as not just being about constructing an understanding of information, but understanding how to effectively use that information through digital means (Buckingham, 2010). Advancements in visual and digital literacy education involves equipping students with the necessary tools to use media effectively and critically. It is important that media be used not merely as a tool, but an instrument that is constantly changing shape and transforming in function. Even outside of educational settings, people "are engaging with these media, not as technologies, but as cultural forms; they are not seeing them primarily as technical tools, but on the contrary as part of their popular culture, and of their everyday lived experience (Buckingham, 2010, p. 29)." The need for means of understanding digital experiences and how to use them effectively is relevant and pressing to our current context and the new generation of learners.

While digital technology does certainly dispense unprecedented access to information, the amount of data available through social media is unfathomable to me and the magnitude changes how I gather, process, and use images and text. The rhizome that is created through all those interwoven components is massive and difficult to navigate without methods to effectively deconstruct information. Enhancements in how digital literacy is taught can have a profound effect on the ability to use information in a way that is informed and crosses previously impeding boundaries. "Culture is visually transmitted and ideological

and electronic messages can easily cross borders that, in the past, were tightly

controlled by geographic location, financial wealth, and language (Smith-Shank,

2004, p. 30)." Although digital technology has created many affordances to what

data we are exposed to and how we are exposed to it, many factors still play a

role in how culture is communicated and received, and by whom.

n e t g e n e r a t i o n

My relationship to technology comes from the perspective of belonging to

the Net Generation. "Born in the 1980s and early 1990s, Net-Geners-also known

as Millennials, Generation Y, the MySpace Generation and Generation M (for

media)-arrived amid the height of the technological revolution (Rosen, 2010, p.

20)." Most Net-Geners have little to no experience living in a world without

technology. I am on the fringe of this, as I bought my first computer and cell

phone in my twenties. While my generation had computers when we were

adolescents, we were just learning about the internet and our PC screens were

still black with green text. The first 22 years of my life were void of technology,

but the past 13 years have been increasingly consumed with it. I am equally

skeptical and fascinated by it and acutely aware of how much it has become

embedded in my daily life. Recently, I was made aware of a function on my

phone that would track time spent on my phone. Each week, a user can receive

a report of the time spent but also how that time was spent. With categories

such as social networking, reading and reference, entertainment, and games,

users can learn more about where and how they devoted their time.

Illustration 15

I was unaware I spent this much time on my phone until I saw these statistics, which continue to challenge me to keep that time to a reasonable limit. With social networking being my most used category, I am very much aware that it is something that I value, but is this too much time spent?

Illustration 16

With this new statistical knowledge, I wonder how my screen time disrupts my in-real-life mindfulness. Am I picking up my phone out of boredom? Out of habit? Is it because of the amount of notifications I receive each day? Do I feel pressured to respond quickly?

The functionality of the screen time report gives a statistical breakdown of media usage and the findings of my weekly summary have continued to horrify me. My most recent weekly usage report revealed that I spent an average of four hours and eight minutes per day on my phone and Instagram occupied eight hours and thirty minutes of my week (Illustration 15). I picked up my phone an average of fifty-six times a day and I received an average of sixty notifications each day (Illustration 16). While this seems like an excessive number of hours spent, I feel the pressure to reduce those statistics. Seeing my students with their heads in their phones immediately before and after class disturbs me, but I know that I have similar habits. My study investigates those concerns and the impact on learning.   I believe that, in between those statistics, is a bigger story.

Since taking more stock of the time I spend on my phone, it is becoming increasingly important to me that my time is spent with intent and in a manner that is more thoughtful and productive. I deleted the email application from my phone with the assumption that I would more mindfully respond to email messages if I were sitting in front of my computer. I try to pick up my phone less during the day and I vowed to open Instagram only three times a day. Nevertheless, the statistics in my screen time report show that I have an ongoing, although complicated, relationship with the content of my phone, evident by the time I invest in it each day. The complexities and possibilities of this relationship is an impetus for the content of this study.

The theoretical framework of this research addresses important factors that contribute to the cycle of learning and how that cycle may be impacted by theories of entanglement, reflection, experience, and influence. The theorists explored align with my ontology and axiology and highlight what is of value to me as an artist, researcher, and teacher. This framework also provides an epistemological grounding to put my own belief system into the context of theory.

e x p e r i e n t i a l l e a r n i n g

Entanglements of space treat objects, spaces, and bodies as inextricably connected to and informing of/with each other. I believe this affords tremendous opportunities for reflection that transforms entanglements into deep learning experiences. As John Dewey (1938) has defined reflection, it is a process of meaning making that emerges out of engaging in a purposeful experience. It is an iterative process that allows for further reflection and growing out of and supporting each new experience. Giving serious thought and consideration to our experiences requires a movement in-between what we already know and what is new to connect experiences and transform our ways of knowing and being in the world. As an artist, reflection has often taken place for me in my studio, through sketchbooks, and now through my online portfolios of work. These spaces have served as important locations for reflection, where I contemplate commonalities and transformative points. I determine what is successful and what is not, my criteria for success, and why the transformation of

concrete experience

reflective observation

abstract conceptualization

active experimentation
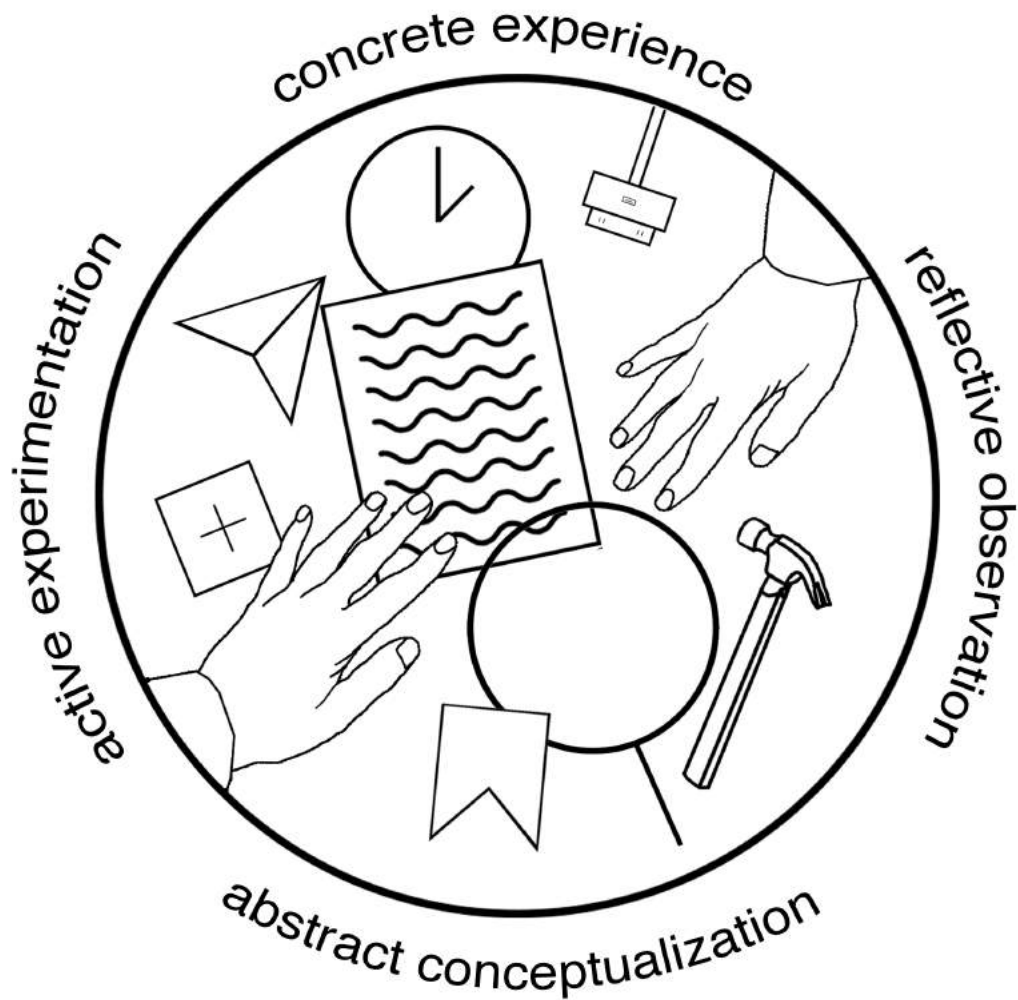
Illustration 17

These 4 stages describe a continual process of doing. The arts are situated in this process inherently due to the hands-on work that is required of media. Kolb is describing how the cycle of learning requires reflection and experimentation.

This can include the making of art but also looking at art, writing about art, and curating art. These are all a doing in constant motion, being affective and affected.

work matters. Reflection is an intentional act of learning (Dewey, 1938) and it fits into a constellation of activities where the rhizome has taken shape for me, resulting in planes of departure and experiences that are active and transformative.

David Kolb's experiential learning theory (Kolb 1984) posits that one gains knowledge in a four-stage cycle of experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Illustration 17). This circular cycle of doing, with each stage being affective to and affected by the next, is a process that facilitates the grasping and then transforming of an experience. In stage one, concrete experience, a new or existing experience, is encountered. In the second stage, reflective observation, the comprehension of the experience is assessed by the individual. Abstract conceptualization occurs in the third stage, as individuals synthesize connections and difference to consider new ideas. Active experimentation takes place in the final stage, when individuals apply their learning to their context. The cycle then continues. According to Kolb, active participation in these four stages, including intense reflection with each stage, can result in an experience that is transformed. Instead of hearing or reading about something, this theory proposes that the most effective way to learn is through active, first-hand experience. This can occur with or without an instructor, making it an appropriate theory to serve as a framework for research about the use of technology outside of the traditional classroom setting.

After spending nearly seven years on Instagram, I noticed this cycle of

learning, through experience and reflection, taking place within my own practice

on a scale and clarity never before experienced solely in my physical studio. I

had more ease in access to my past work as it was all contained within the

squares of my profile and could be retrieved simply by scrolling through my

content, making the progression of concept and technique more distinctly

evident. But I also had the added sociality of Instagram allowing for immediate

feedback carried out through likes, as users can signify approval of an image by

pressing the heart icon. Although this prompted me to reflect on the content of

what I was sharing, how that content was being received, and served as an

impetus for experimentation, this theory does not emphasize how this cycle plays

out in larger social groups. Feedback through social approval or disapproval

within this cycle of learning is detailed in the next section on social cognitive

theory.

<p style="text-align:center">s o c i a l l e a r n i n g</p>

Instagram has provided me with access to an enormous database of

images and people who shared in my love of creative endeavors. Currently, I am

following over a thousand artists on the site. As a result, I can see what type of

feedback an artist is receiving through number of likes and content of comments

on an image. While not always fully aware of the impact that those statistics

have on what I make and post, it is important to contemplate the role that the

sociality of Instagram plays in the learning process.

These considerations brought me to social cognitive theory. This theory,

<p style="text-align:center">43</p>

advanced by psychologist Albert Bandura, posits that humanity learns not only

through rewards and punishments we receive (likes and comments), but also by

observing the rewards and punishments of others (Bandura, 1986). "In the social

cognitive view, people are neither driven by inner forces nor automatically

shaped and controlled by external stimuli. Rather, human functioning is

explained in terms of a model of triadic reciprocality (Bandura, 1986, p. 18)."

Behavior   Cognitive / Personal Factors

Symbolizing Capability
Forethought Capability
Vicarious Capability
Self-Regulatory Capability
Self-Reflective Capability
Human Nature

Environmental Events

Illustration 18

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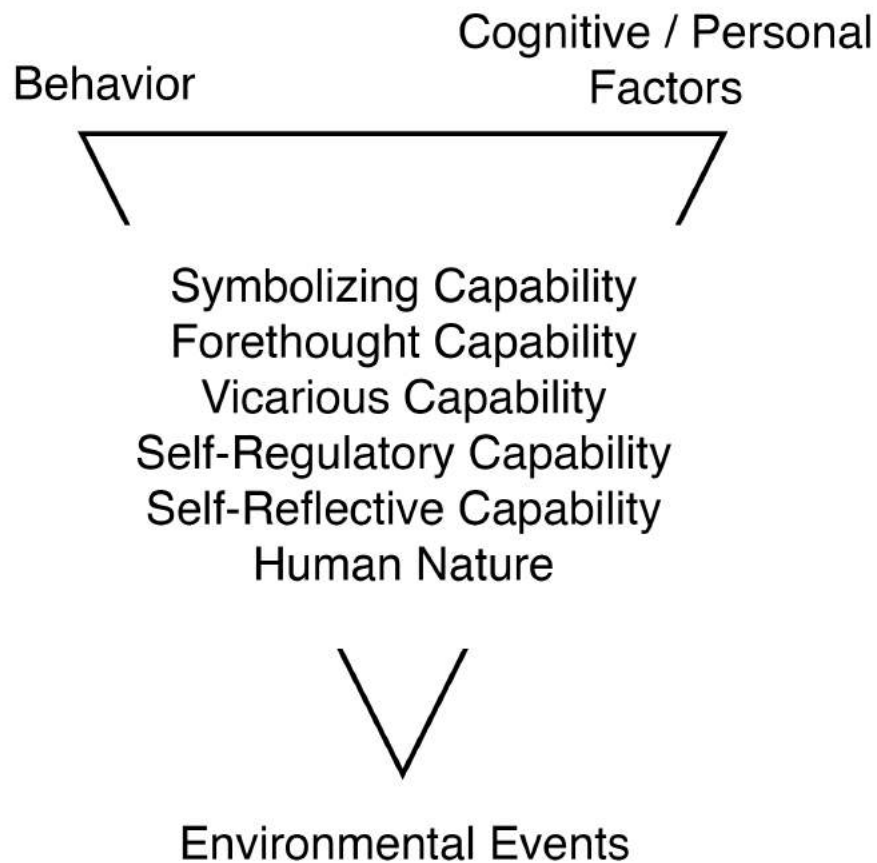
Behavior, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as entanglements and rhizomatic determinants of each other. This triad involves capabilities regarding the use of symbols, regulation of forethought, how learning develops through action and observation, human nature, and a person's ability to self-regulate, self-assess, and self-reflect (Bandura, 1986) (Illustration 18). One's goals are based, in part, on these capabilities, as learning not only considers what is observed, but also the ability to achieve a similar outcome. Essentially, with less time spent on self-doubt, one can spend more time achieving a goal. In my study, it is important to consider the motivational and emotional impacts of learning in order to more effectively and healthily engage with hybrid artistic space.

Bandura stresses the important role that self-efficacy plays in this process. "Perceived self-efficacy helps to account for such diverse phenomena as changes in coping behavior produced by different modes of influence, level of physiological stress reactions, self-regulation of refractory behavior, resignation and despondency to failure experience, self-debilitating effects of proxy control and illusory inefficaciousness, achievement strivings, growth of intrinsic interest, and career pursuits (Bandura, 1982, p. 122)." High self-efficacy often results in successful outcomes due to the effort the individual believes they are capable of and, therefore, exerts for the task at hand. Individuals with low self-efficacy often give up early as they are not confident in their ability to carry out the task. Self-efficacy is a powerful factor in what I make, what I believe I can make, and how I

interact with the functionality of social media. My perceived abilities may impact

my motivation, my performance, my willingness to reflect and experiment, and

how I respond to situations and build relationships. Social cognitive theory

suggests that we learn through observation and imitation but that our own

perceived abilities and how we focus our attention play strong roles in how we

experience, perform, and respond to situations. This is important in social media

research due to the high level of comparison that often takes place and the

urgency for healthy practices within and because of vicarious learning.

Especially relevant to my study, Bandura states that vicarious capability is

important in the analysis of human motivation, thought, and action in that

"virtually all learning phenomena, resulting from direct experience, can occur

vicariously by observing other people's behavior and its consequences for them

(Bandura, 1986, p. 19)." In a communal studio setting and on social media, I

have experienced the impact of learning in this manner, as I witness the social

consequences of what artists make available to the community. Through number

of likes, followers, and content of comments, I am observing what is being

displayed and how that is being received by others (Illustration 19). This theory

stresses observational learning and this is an important aspect of social media

research because what is observed is determined by the scope of influence one

curates by following/friending someone. Who I have chosen to follow is an

important act, as I am making an intentional decision to be influenced by what

those users post. However, as previously mentioned, Instagram curates that

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scope of influence to a degree by selecting what appears on a user's feed due to

previous interactions. The entanglement of influence with what is learned and

made is complicated by Instagram's requirement of reciprocity and continued

engagement.

Using social cognitive theory in my study provides me with a framework

that is intended to help me better understand, predict, and even alter my

behavior. It is a helpful theory when looking at who and what is influencing the

content I create, both in the physical and digital world and why I am making those

decisions. The aim of this study is to understand how I engage with the new

hybrid artistic space to uncover ways in which I may more thoughtfully engage

with it. By understanding my scope of influence and the impact of my

capabilities, I may make more informed decisions that enhance my experiences

to include reflective observation, experimentation, and conceptualization. David

Kolb's experiential learning theory and Bandura's social cognitive theory together

provide a starting point to understanding how I learn, but also the impact of the

sociality of site.

#entanglement   **#reciprocity**

#rhizome   #experimentation

#influence   #feedback

#reflection

Illustration 19

Looking at another artist's work, I take note of what is made and displayed, but my attention is also focused on the feedback received. On Instagram, this takes shape through likes and comments by other users. I often wonder what is special about works that obtain a high amount of positive feedback. Is it a product of smart marketing, is it the effect of Instagram's algorithm, or is it the artist's ability to make work that authentically connects with their audience?

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s u m m a r y o f m e t h o d o l o g y

The method by which I have collected and interpreted data for this study involves the use of text and image. The functionality of Instagram and the focus not only on images, but also on hashtags and comments, led to the importance of the practice-based research methodology used and discussed. The research questions are explored with qualitative methods that I use to examine my own relationship to the problem and locate my experience within the greater context of contemporary life. Through the methodologies discussed, I illuminate entanglements and interrogate what, how, and when I know.

a / r / t o g r a p h y

Qualitative research methods are used to collect and analyze data in this study. Specifically, a/r/tography serves as a fitting methodology by which I collected, disrupted, and explored art images and text. A/r/tography is a practice-based research methodology that finds great potential for inquiry through artmaking and writing (Sullivan, 2004). The identities of the artist, the researcher, and the teacher are in constant relation to one another and work in tandem, resisting modernist categorizations and existing as a post-structural theory of practice that acts as a methodology of situations (Irwin et al., 2006). The situations in this research were not only created but provoked by the rhizomatic environment of a/r/tography. A/r/tography provides a methodological viewpoint by which both physical spaces and digital environments, always entangled, and resulting data are assessed in this research.

The occupation of an a/r/tographer can be seen as one that finds rhythm and makes waves in the sea of information that engulfs our daily lives (Illustration 20). By coalescing practices of art making, teaching, and research, inquiry can be seen not as a static point, but rather a moving periphery that decenters thought and allows for a practice that becomes and unfolds, "performing waves of intensities that create new understandings (Irwin, 2013, p. 199)" (Illustration 20). A/r/tography as a research methodology is a process of learning and doing that is enhanced by looking at the in-between. It is within this space that the artist visually reorganizes experiences, researchers enhance meaning, and teachers perform knowing in a manner that makes meaningful relationships with learners (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004). The richness of connections and complexities can be employed by the movement that echoes and resonates from within that rhizome of the artist, researcher, and teacher identities.

Through a/r/tography, I look deeper at the state of becoming in the process of inquiry. A/r/tography as a methodology is used to collect and generate image and text. The data I received and generated was looked at through the lens of a/r/tography, as it allows for and perpetuates interruptions in normal pathways. The / in the term stress the and, the in-between, the being with, and always becoming. The illustrations used throughout the chapters in this study embrace the nature of a/r/tography as always unfolding and undone and serve as a way to understand and think differently about what I am writing. Employing it has helped me to make recognizable perplexing text through

images and ambiguous images comprehensible through text. Image and text

continually move through and with and because of each other in this study to

create a robust portrait of my experience in the world. It is this evolving,

embodied state of conceptualization that I find my voice in this study as an artist,

a researcher, and a teacher.

Through a/r/tography, I seek to be with this research. "A/r/tography begins

with Being. Perhaps it is all about Being (Irwin, 2008 p. 71)." Being is a being

with. It is not about a singular being, but a community of being with. Through

a/r/tography, I understand that the entanglement of the artist, research, and

teacher is analogous to the entanglement of the researcher and researched.

Although this is an autoethnographic study, I belong to a community of practice

within which I inquire along. "A/r/tography is a living practice, a life creating

experience examining our personal, political and/or professional lives. Its rigor

comes from its continuous reflective and reflexive stance to engagement,

analysis, and learning (Springgay et al., 2018, p. xxix)." It is through my lived

experience and the situating of my experience within the community of practice

that I am embedded, that I embrace my entanglement with others. Through the

use of text and image, I make clear my experience in the world and remain

flexible and open as I interact with the a/r/tographical content from others.
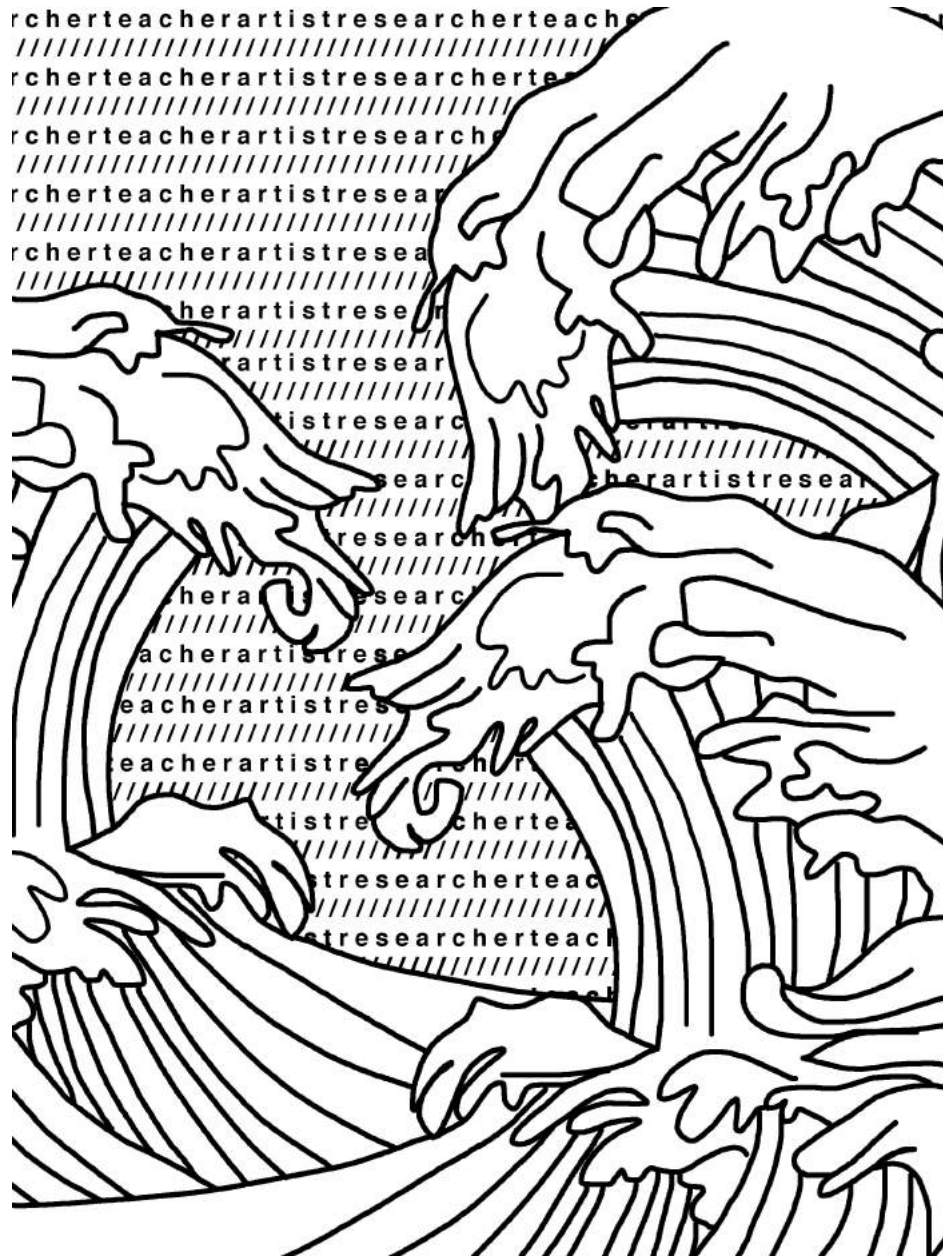
Illustration 20

A/r/tography is relational and embraces the /, the and. The waves of intensities performed, as an effect of disruption on a straight trajectory, do not seek conclusions as inquiry is always in creation and open to transformation.

autoethnography

A/r/tography positions art and graphy as key pieces of data that allow for meaning to emerge in a manner that is embodied and narrative. This situates autoethnography as a complementary component that fits into the rhizome of a/r/tography as living inquiry. "Art practice demonstrates that we cannot stand outside of practice and apply it. Indeed, it is an emerging practice, a living practice (Irwin et al., 2017, p. 37)." Stories act as performances that make visible the experiences that make up our lives. Using a/r/tography as a method by which I give meaning to my experiences, I provide both writing and visual manifestations of my experiences. The experiences of others served as a relational impetus for the interrogation of my thought process.

Autoethnography must always be concerned with performance, process, and analysis (Denzin, 2014). The definition of autoethnography includes the relationship and entanglement of the self and other. "Autoethnography is a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context. It is both a method and a text (Reed-Danahay, 1997, as cited in Denzin, 2014, p. 19)." Writing is a form of performance in that it constructs, enacts, and is reflexive. It shows rather than tells. It is an interpretive event. It is a doing. Process examines the event, how it is experienced and how it fits into someone's life. "Personal narrative has become more prevalent, and perhaps more urgent, in a time of abundance, when many of us are freer to seek a deeper understanding of ourselves and our purpose (Pink, 2012, p. 115)." Understanding our own motivations is especially

crucial now in a time when our culture is looking outward for answers. While a personal account provides one experience in the world, the analysis of that account should look deeply at the context and the lives of others that are involved in constructing that experience. This situates personal narrative within the greater historical framework. In this research, writing and illustration act as a mediation of thought by which I remain reflexive and allow meaningful reality to emerge. I make my experience visible to others, as that experience exists because of others.

Through key markers that ensure rigor, autoethnography can provide a robust perspective that can further inquiry and improve understandings of phenomena. "Analytic autoethnography has five key features. It is ethnographic work in which the researcher (a) is a full member in a research group or setting; (b) uses analytic reflexivity; (c) has a visible narrative presence in the written text; (d) engages in dialogue with informants beyond the self; (e) is committed to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena (Anderson, 2006, as cited in Denzin, 2014, p. 19)." I am embedded in the a/r/tographical community that is Instagram, as I have remained active on the site for over seven years. This engagement served as the impetus for a real-life gallery exhibition, detailed later in this study, which involved a dialogue with others about their experiences on the site. Locating my own experience within that of others, I trouble and illuminate possibilities and complexities within the communal, entangled space we occupy. Throughout this

study, I provide my narrative presence through autoethnographic writing as well as illustrations that were created in the process of collecting data and constructing ways in which to make that data visible.

s u m m a r y

This research seeks to look deeply at my experience as an artist in an increasingly digitized art world. I investigate how my experience fits into the greater context by looking at the new hybrid artistic practice impacts the studio practice of others. I interrogate my own knowings and ways of being in a manner that disrupts binaries of space and materiality, using art and text to relay and interact with my lived experience. The economical, intentional illustrations I have created for this study, in place of photographic evidence, aims to further the concept that this research is always in a state of becoming and being conducted through the filter of my own experience. While rooted in social cognitive theory, I place an emphasis on reflection and vicarious learning. I use a/r/tography and autoethnography as methods by which I collect, think with, and make visible the data. This research seeks to provide a better understanding of how social media impacts my studio practice, including how I experience the entanglements of self and space while engaging in dialogue with others beyond, with, and through myself.

chapter

two

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i n t r o d u c t i o n

Research concerning Instagram as a hybrid space for learning is becoming increasingly pressing due to the prevalence of social media in daily life. While many studies involving technology are quantitative in nature and outcomes-based, more recent literature is qualitative and often disruptive in its theoretical and methodological approach. Since this study is interrogating how social media impacts my own artistic practice, I include literature that looks deeply at the past and current state of the artist's studio and exhibition spaces. I also include literature that addresses digital, social media and how it fits into that entanglement of practice. Also incorporated is research involving experiential, autonomous, and vicarious learning and how that functions within those physical and virtual places. Research focused on digital and social media spans disciplines of art, technology, psychology, business, and science, and this study requires that all disciplines be treated as intertwined. The curated collection of literature I have provided has been written by artists, teachers, and researchers and provides a thorough conceptual framework as I call for binaries to be disrupted and disciplines be treated as inextricably connected. The literature addressed is categorized according to overarching themes, but each piece of literature should be seen as contributing to all parts of this study. Just as the practices discussed in my study are entangled, the literature examined is also regarded as such.

t h e s t u d i o

Much of the research about sites of artistic practice is often associated

with physical space. The literature reviewed in this section provides an overview

of recent publications that speak thoroughly to the topic of the artist's studio

space. This study aims to add to the literature by incorporating the digital space

to provide a more thorough definition of place as it relates to artistic practice in

the twenty-first century.

Artist Daniel Buren defined the artist's studio as being about enclosure, a

limited space that encompasses and frames, a place where the art belongs and

should remain (Jacob & Grabner, 2010). This view of the artist's studio as a

space of boundaries has expanded and is recounted in *The Studio Reader*.

Mary Jane Jacob and Michelle Grabner, both professors at the School of the Art

Institute of Chicago, edited the book, which consists of a collection of writings by

artists, historians, curators and critics (Illustration 21). Each chapter chronicles

different perspectives on studio practice and places it within the greater context

of artist's studios throughout history. The studio is treated as an ever-evolving

place of production that facilitates questions of knowing and being in this place of

practice and how artistic life extends out in to the world. "The postmodern studio,

however, is analogous to bricolage, ad hoc and fractured, no longer the sole site

of artistic enterprise; this shape-shifting studio 'affirms these recognitions and

helps resist the objectification of multiple experiences into narrative systems

which, through patterns of power/knowledge, too often organize difference into

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hierarchy, or essentialize its energies into a cultural formula inflected by linearity'
(Paley, 1995, as cited in Jacob & Grabner, 2010, p. 4)." The dogmatic notions of
what constitutes a studio are challenged in this book and an imaginative,
thought-provoking, multi-faceted view results with the inclusion of
autoethnographic writings of others.

The book itself is categorized by the following chapters: "The Studio as
Resource", "The Studio as Set and Setting", "The Studio as Stage", "The Studio
as Lived-In Space", and "The Studio as Space and Non-Space". The categories
serve as loose guides that allow the reader to have a sense of intent by the
editors, although it is not overt. Of primary interest to this study are the chapters
on "The Studio as Lived-In Space" and "The Studio as Space and Non-Space",
which details how artists intertwine their life and art in compelling ways.

The inclusion of an article by artist Amy Granat paints a portrait of her
space and how she sees it as serving multiple functions. "What the studio has
developed into, in my case, is a meeting place. A looking place. An extra room
in my apartment that is actually not in my apartment at all but two miles down the
road. It is where I have friends come by…A place where we can go, where there
is freedom. There is emptiness and history, acting together. This history, my
memories, they still insert themselves in this space and, for me, that is important
– and not just in art, but in life (Granat, 2010, p. 259)." Granat's account
coincides with my own belief that the studio space does not function solely as a
place for physical making. The acts that are occurring and have occurred are

creating a continually relational symbolic place of practice.

Artist Karl Haendel echoes these statements as well as the validity of activities within that space. "Often, though, much of my studio time is down time – reading the paper, searching the Internet, playing with the cats. But down time in the studio doesn't feel like wasted time, like it does when I am at home; it's a productive wastefulness. And on the occasions when I take an unintentional nap, even if I'm head down on the keyboard, the sleep is more restful than in my own bed. I know it's totally romantic, but I feel an energy in the studio, like the building itself could make art even if I were no longer there (Haendel, 2010, p. 237)." These views of the studio as a site for doing, undoing, and being with are important to my research. They fit into this study by defining the studio as not so much a physical space, but a symbolic space of refuge, of work, of play, and of reflection. It can be a social space, a space to meet and discuss, a place that extends beyond the studio into the greater lived experience of being as an extension of our lives. This corresponds with my belief that our lived experiences should be seen as working in tandem with studio practice.

While this text provides a robust, diverse look at the studio as a site for artistic practice, technology is rarely mentioned. My research is centered on the belief that spaces, virtual and digital, are important entanglements in my experience of being an artist in the twenty-first century. I intend to add to this literature with the inclusion of technology in the nexus of my own practice and, in doing so, expand on the definition and function of today's artist's studio.
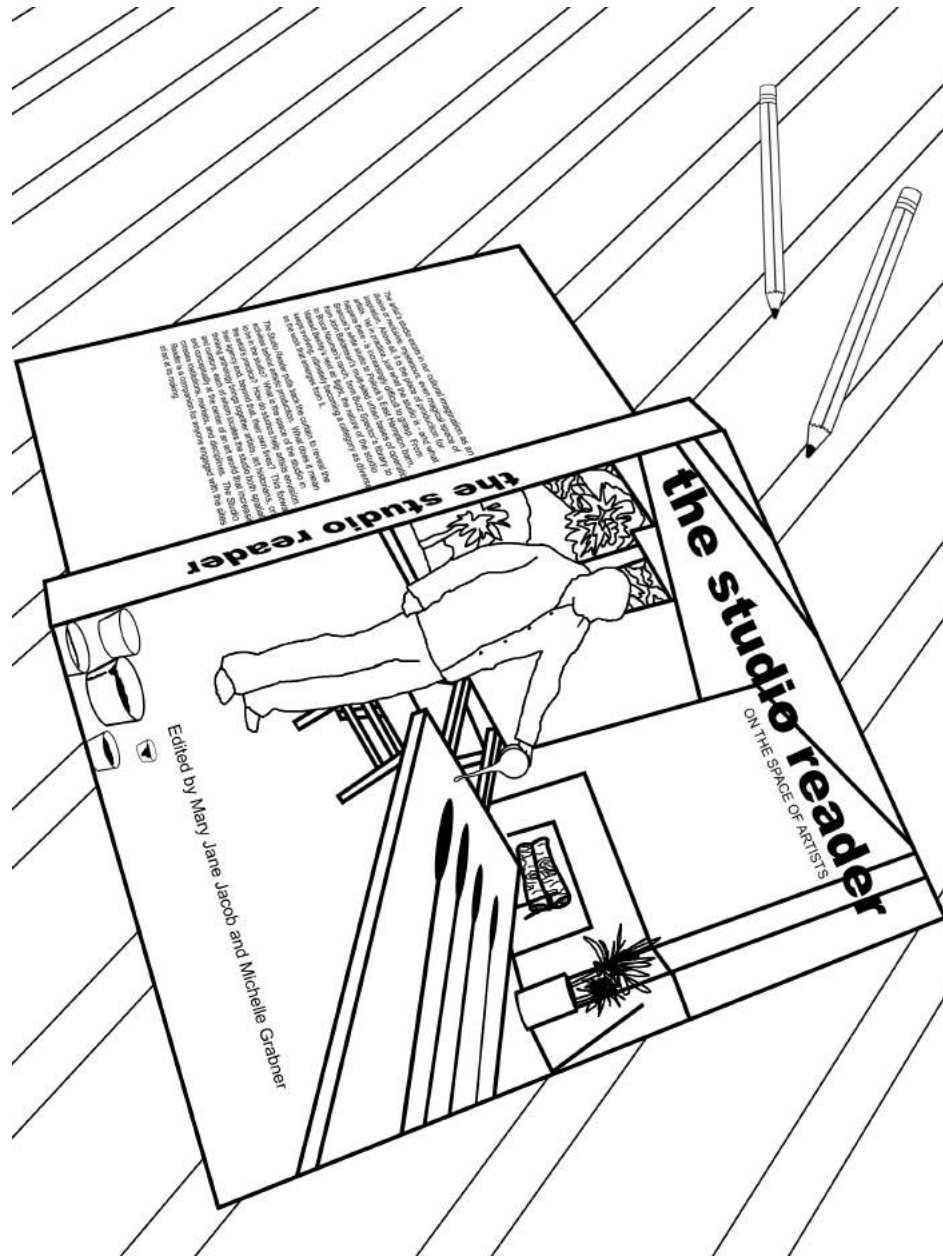
Illustration 21

The book cover features artist Rodney Graham in his living room studio. He is disrupting binaries of space to allow for his living space to be enmeshed with his space of practice. In this drawing, the spaces are flattened and become one with each other, allowing both art and domestic objects to occupy the same space and, potentially, inform one another.

In the book *Studio and Cube: On the Relationship Between Where Art is Made and Where Art is Displayed* (Illustration 22), Brian O'Doherty pulls from his experiences as an artist, art critic, and academic to provide a historical study of the studio as a place but also subject of creation. He details the long history of the studio and posits that it can be seen as an artwork, and thus place of display, in and of itself.

As O'Doherty mentions, the studio became a subject in artworks with Jan van Eyck's painting "Arnolfini Wedding" (1434), as the artist and his easel are reflected in a distant mirror between the matrimonial couple. Velasquez's painting "Las Meninas" (1656) (Illustration 23) shows the back of the artist's canvas in the scene, as if to show the artwork in the making while simultaneously residing within the finished work. The artist becomes the subject through inclusion in the paintings, perhaps making visible the validity and hard-won act of artistic ventures. "In visual art, there is a history of noticing. Or rather a history of making visible what has been seen but not looked at. I suppose the same distinction can be made between hearing and listening. Ideas determine what we see, so new ideas seem to materialize subjects out of thin air. The studio is such a subject (O'Doherty, 2007, p. 10)." In this philosophy, the artist is one who makes the unnoticed, the unimportant, the ignored, visible. This can include the in-between spaces of process and product, what happens between the blank canvas and the exhibition unveiling, the studio as physical place and conceptual place.

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The cover of the book, designed by Dexter Sinister, shows the anti-white-cube; a relational space that situates the studio as a place of display and of creation, a permeable membrane, one that shifts in shape and resists modernist notions of space and hierarchies. I see the geometric form as being in a state that is on the threshold of becoming something else.
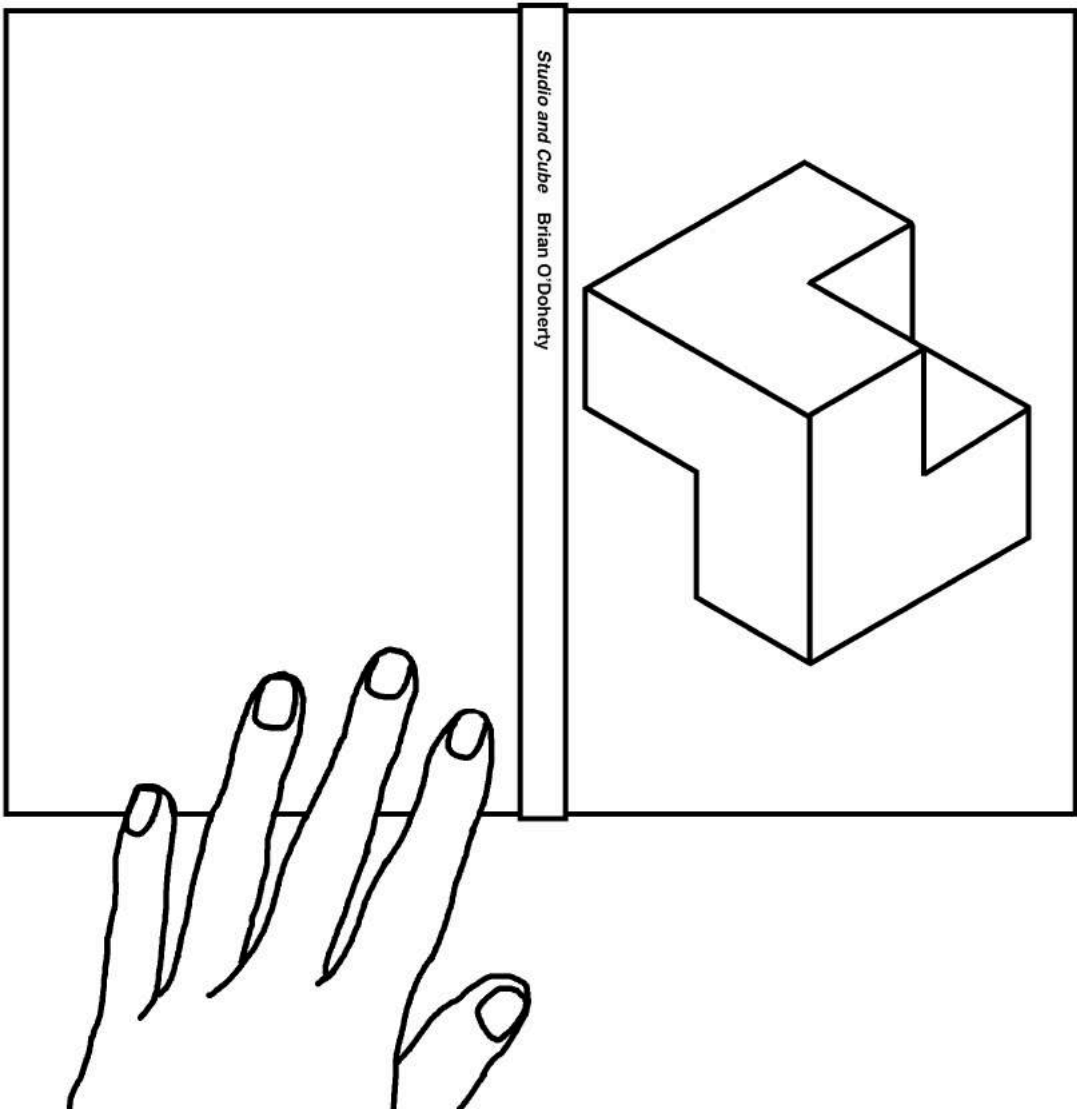
Illustration 22

Illustration 23

Velasquez's "Las Meninas" shows the back of the canvas to the left with the artist behind it, as if he is painting the making of the scene. My illustration is privileging the artist's presence and process in the finished product treats the work and the notion of place as entangled.

The inclusion of the artist and the objects of artistic practice brings the work, often held private in the studio, into the greater state of being with the world. "Every studio has to have some traffic with the outside (O'Doherty, 2007, p. 21)." A potent example of this is the recurring trope of windows in works of art. As O'Doherty mentions, artist Casper David Friedrich's inclusion of the studio window in his works are in opposition to the binaries of inside and outside. Acting as a barrier and as a threshold, the studio window implies a passage between enclosure, as Daniel Buren had described the studio, to the limitlessness of the outside world, as Amy Granat described her space. The studio, in this description, acts as a permeable membrane by and through which ideas, images, spaces, and beings are coalesced and reflected. This is important in my research as I see the artistic acts of doing and of being that reside in the studio space and the acts that occur in our everyday lives, as informed by and because of one another. They are simultaneously being affected and affective. By disrupting the binaries of space, the permeable window that permits all our experiences to be entangled allows for artistic opportunities that are authentic and always in a state of becoming.

O'Doherty dissects the history and meaning inherent in spaces of practice and display and he briefly includes ways in which technology, specifically photography, has had an impact on artist's studio practice. Photography has functioned as a truth teller in art, which is inherent in the medium, although differing degrees of staging can always take part.
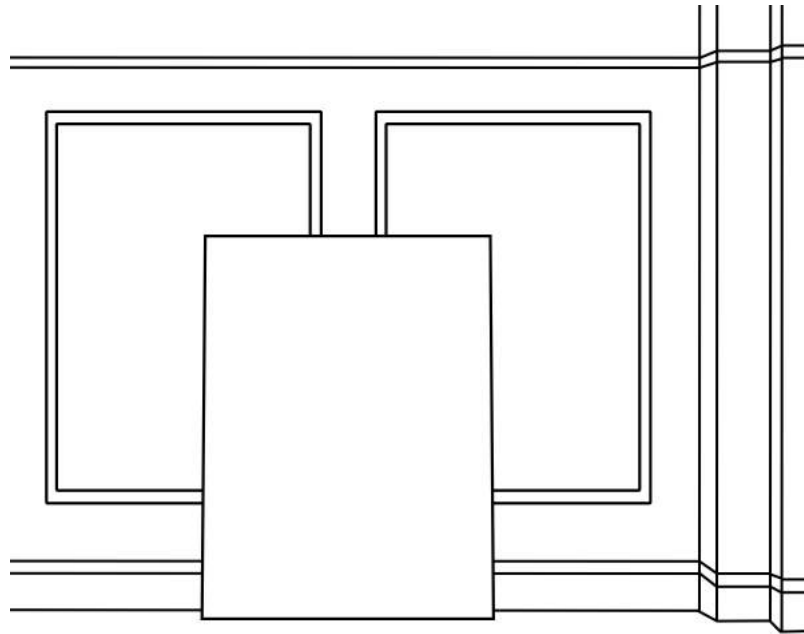
Illustration 24

Lowell Nesbitt's paintings "Studio 1" and "Studio 2" were created in acrylic paint on canvas, nearly life size, around 65"x78" each. Nesbitt's paintings were highly naturalistic, yet boldly economical. These drawings are representations of his paintings of his own studio, showing an unmarked canvas, calm and abbreviated, then the back, showing the underlying construction not normally visible to the public.
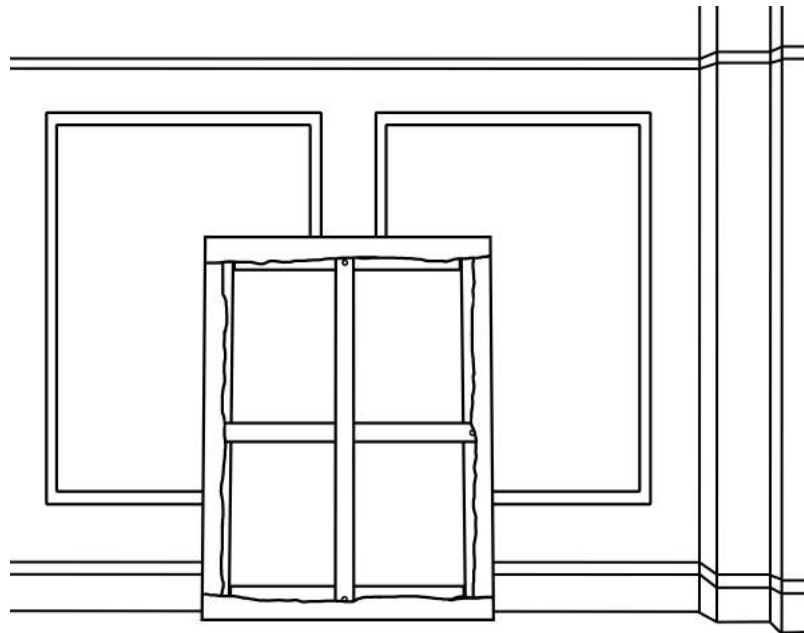
Illustration 25

Artist Lowell Nesbitt, who believed that studios functioned as symbolic portraits of the artists, photographed artist studios, including his own, which he later used as references for paintings (O'Doherty, 2007) (Illustration 24 & 25). The paintings allowed viewers another view of the process of creating art, positioning the place of making as art itself. Nesbitt visited artist Claes Oldenburg's studio "where the mess he recorded was, as in all Nesbitt's work, cleaned up a bit, slightly idealized, but informed by a determination to keep everything exactly in place (O'Doherty, 2007, p. 13)." This notion of the artist and studio being entangled is significant in my research as the studio, in all its forms, is positioned not just as a stand in for the artist but as a medium that acts as the art itself and informs the work being made and how it is viewed. Artistic endeavors make visible the simultaneity of looking out and looking in; an act of showing others what was produced as well as prompting questions of why it matters. My research makes visible my own intentional acts of display, not only in the gallery and the artist's studio, but also in the digital space.

O'Doherty concludes the book by referencing a new anti-white-cube mentality, noting that the studio and gallery were once the mediators of transformation but that new media now occupies that space. "The liaison of these art media with popular culture has brought into the gallery unruly energies which no longer have an investment in the preservation of the classical white space (O'Doherty, 2007, p. 40)." The modernist hierarchy that holds the white cube, as the physical studio and gallery, at its peak has been disrupted.

In my research, Instagram is viewed as a place to display finished work, but also to show the studio space, to elicit conversation, to sell work, and to allow practice to connect with that of others in ways never possible due to space and time constraints of the white cube. My addition to this literature seeks to not only view the physical studio as a permeable window, but the digitized social sites of artistic practice as one as well. The simultaneity of looking out and in, being entangled with physical and virtual space, contributes to the resistance of the binaries of the white cube.

e x h i b i t i o n s p a c e s

My study is focused on Instagram as a place that is entangled with the spaces of creation and display. This section interrogates the exhibition space and how it may transform not only what is shown, but how it is created, and how that relates to sites like Instagram. The inclusion of the following literature provides a background in traditional exhibition spaces and briefly how new media impacts it. I intend to add to this with the theory that these spaces are entangled, rhizomatic, and have the potential to inform one another and work in tandem.

Studio and Cube provides a useful transition to literature that's focused on places of display. "In the midst of this temporal turbulence, artworks in the studio have an alertness, no matter how casually thrown around, that they don't take with them when they leave. In the studio, partly as a consequence of this, they are aesthetically unstable. Accompanied only by the artist (and occasional visitors, assistants, other artists), they are vulnerable to a glance or a change in

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light. They have not yet determined their own value (O'Doherty, 2007, p. 19)."

The exhibition space can be seen as a place where art can have its moment of

worth. O'Doherty states that a trio of forces are at work that not only define the

studio, but influence the place of display. These include the mythology of the

artist and secretive nature of creation, the transfer of this process to the space of

the studio, and ultimately to the place where art is displayed (O'Doherty, 2007).

By adding the element of the digitized space of Instagram to the discourse, I am

enhancing the already rich history of the studio and the gallery by considering

how virtual space impacts physical space.

   Research involving the use of Instagram as a support to the aesthetic

experience in a gallery or museum has become more prevalent in the past

decade. Most recent was a study published in *Australian Art Education* titled

"Instagram and Art Gallery Visitors: Aesthetic experience, space, sharing, and

implications for educators." In this study, researcher Adam Suess sought to

uncover how Instagram's functionality and capabilities extended meaningful

visual gallery encounters. "The research project, which was informed by spatial

theory, found that the use of Instagram at the gallery engaged visitors in a

manner that transcended the physical space and extended their aesthetic

experience. This finding if significant for arts educators seeking to engage

students through social media during visits to art exhibitions (Suess, 2018, p.

107)." The study stresses that "there is almost a complete absence of any

significant study examining visitor spatial practices associated with the use of

Instagram (Suess, 2018, p. 110)" and that framing it within spatial theory, a theory built on the effects of distance, either physical or ideological (Spatial theory, n.d.) is a useful start. Using Henri Lefebvre's theory of space and social relations "frames the whole activity in movement, and connects Instagramming to spatial theory through highlighting how imagined (conceived) spatial practices become lived experience (Lefebvre, 1991 in Suess, 2018, p. 116)." The findings of this study posit that documenting an experience in the art gallery through Instagram extends our experience and the here-and-now of space. This provides a forum for exploration of new ways of interpreting works of art, as what visitors value is shown through what is photographed. I often find myself interacting with exhibitions by documenting my experience with my phone and my experiences resonate with the findings of this study. A recent rise in made-for-Instagram exhibitions such as The Museum of Ice Cream and The Color Factory take into account that the way we are interacting with exhibition spaces is changing. This study is a robust illustration of how Instagram can be used at an art gallery to facilitate learning and assist museum educators with planning for the use of space and movement. However, the research does not uncover the curatorial possibilities of Instagram as a gallery itself and what the new territory within those connections can produces. Instead of seeing the exhibition space and Instagram as two separate entities, I am positing that my own experiences have led me to believe that there is real potential in treating the spaces as entangled.
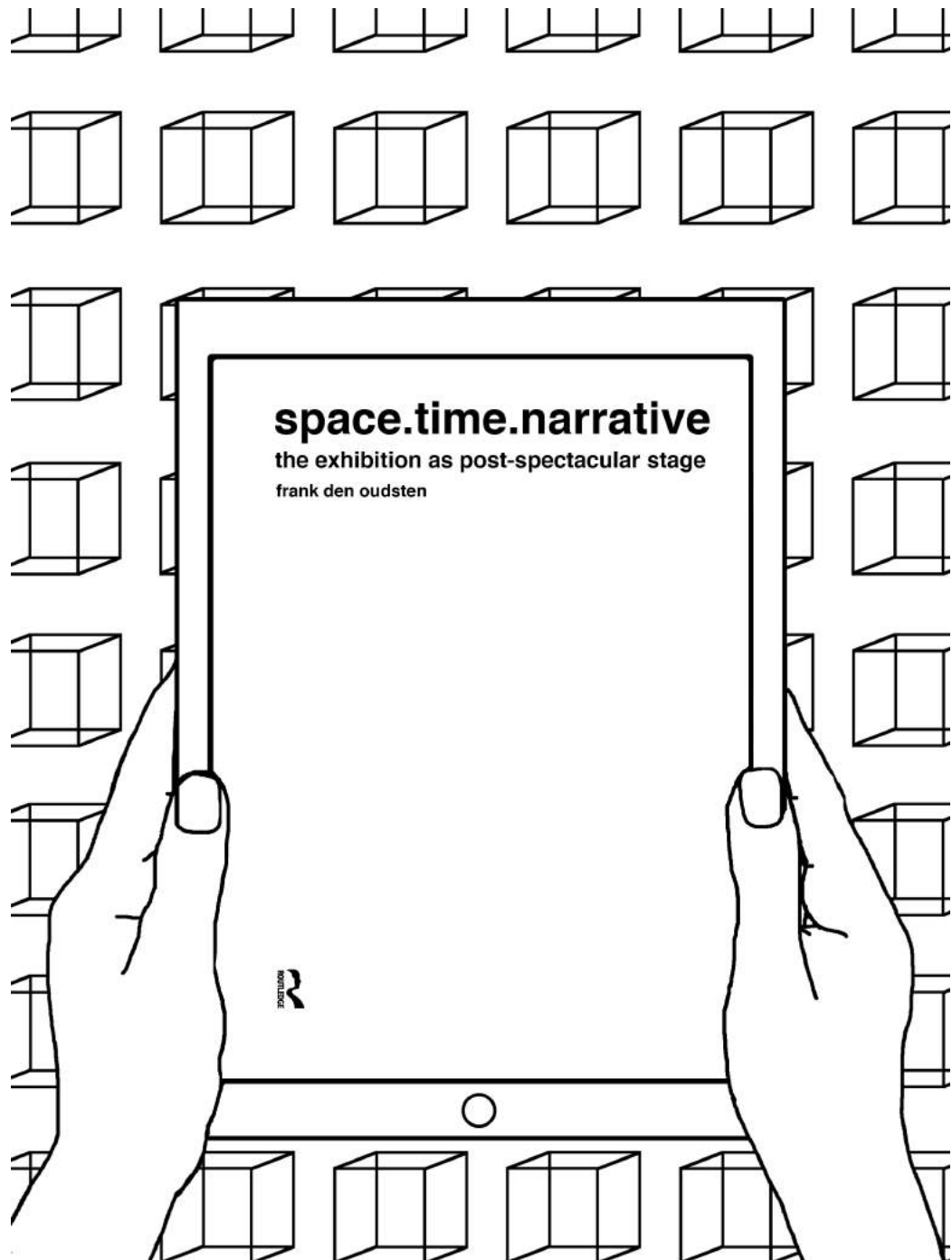
Illustration 26

space.time.narrative goes beyond the white cube to elicit questions of space, both virtual and physical, allowing digitized spaces to become a place of display, not just a means to interact with the physical exhibition experience.

The exhibition space can be a middle ground that separates the past and the present, the art historians/artists and the public, the experience of everyday objects and those that are extra-ordinary. *space.time.narrative: the exhibition as post-spectacular stage* (Illustration 26) by Frank den Oudsten, a designer, writer, and teacher, disrupts these binaries. He considers how the exhibition space can be utilized in a manner that resists the white cube and considers how the virtual exhibition space is an exhibition experience itself.

The book begins by featuring the artist Peter Greenaway's 2010 multimedia installation titled "The Tulse Luper Suitcases." The installation featured ninety-two suitcases accompanied by hours of film detailing the contents of the suitcases and the travels of fictional character Tulse Luper (Illustration 27). Each suitcase encompasses Tulse Luper's travels and his attempt to collect everything in the world that he deemed important, resulting in an elaborate, meaningful display. Through physical objects, film, and computer-manipulated imagery, Greenaway entangles the physical space of the exhibition, the fictionalized lived experience of an individual, and the digital realm. Greenaway was simultaneously extending the staged gallery space into the digital realm and bringing the digital realm of film into the here and now. Greenaway's exhibition acts as a vision of events to come. Like the packed suitcases that encompass the important objects and ideas of a person's life, image sharing sites like Instagram act as a way to collect and to exhibit, while also in a continuous state of being packed and unpacked.

Marcel Duchamp made a similar conceptual gesture which preceded

Greenaway's suitcases. Duchamp was a French-American artist who was

associated with the Dada movement, which consisted of artists who rejected the

illusion of reason that came with modernist society in the early twentieth century.

The art of this movement employed a variety of media and included conceptual

work, poetry, and performance. "Dada artists felt the war called into question

every aspect of a society capable of starting and then prolonging it – including its

art. Their aim was to destroy traditional values in art and to create a new art to

replace the old (Dada, n.d.)." This revolutionized the trajectory of art making and

disrupted binaries of place and accessibility of the arts. Duchamp created a

series of boxes, with each box unfolding to reveal works of art, acting as a

portable museum (Illustration 28). "Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise*, or box in a

suitcase, is a portable miniature monograph including sixty-nine reproductions of

the artist's own work. Between 1935 and 1940, he created a deluxe edition of

twenty boxes, each in a brown leather carrying case but with slight variations in

design and content (Museum as Muse, Duchamp, n.d.)". These deluxe edition

boxes contained reproductions of famous works of art, such as a cheap print of

the *Mona Lisa* on which Duchamp added a facial hair. He also included an

original work of his own in each box. With this combination of original and

reproduced works of art, Duchamp was addressing the importance of originality

in an increasingly industrialized society. It blurs the line between handmade

works and readymades, which are objects found and re-presented as works of

art. Duchamp's famous re-purposing of a urinal in the work *Fountain*, also found in his museum boxes, is widely considered to be the most famous readymade. Blurring material boundaries and definitions has relevance within my research due to the quick, intangible, and imitative environment of social media. While Instagram has great affordances by resisting binaries of place, the absence of physicality is lost and thus should never replace the in-person experience of art. Instagram also allows for unprecedented access to works of art but can have a detrimental impact on artistic practice due to the high level of comparison and imitation that may take effect. The question resides in how virtual space can be used in a manner that allows for a healthy amount of replication. Imitation is inevitable and, according to Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986), it is a vital part of the learning process. Virtual exhibition spaces also hold the power to extend and enhance the physical experience in the studio and in the gallery. By not looking at each space as separate, but working in tandem and with each other, binaries of place can be disrupted.

#space

#time

#narrative

The suitcases in Greenaway's series act as an autobiography, with each of the ninety-two cases containing an object to represent the world, selected by the fictional character. While the contents were things that existed in the real world (the rainbow, a gun, a dead rabbit), they had metaphorical weight. The rainbow served as God's promise not to flood the world again, a gun as a symbol of aggression, destruction, and greed, a fly symbolizing fear and potential disease.

Case #12   The Rainbow
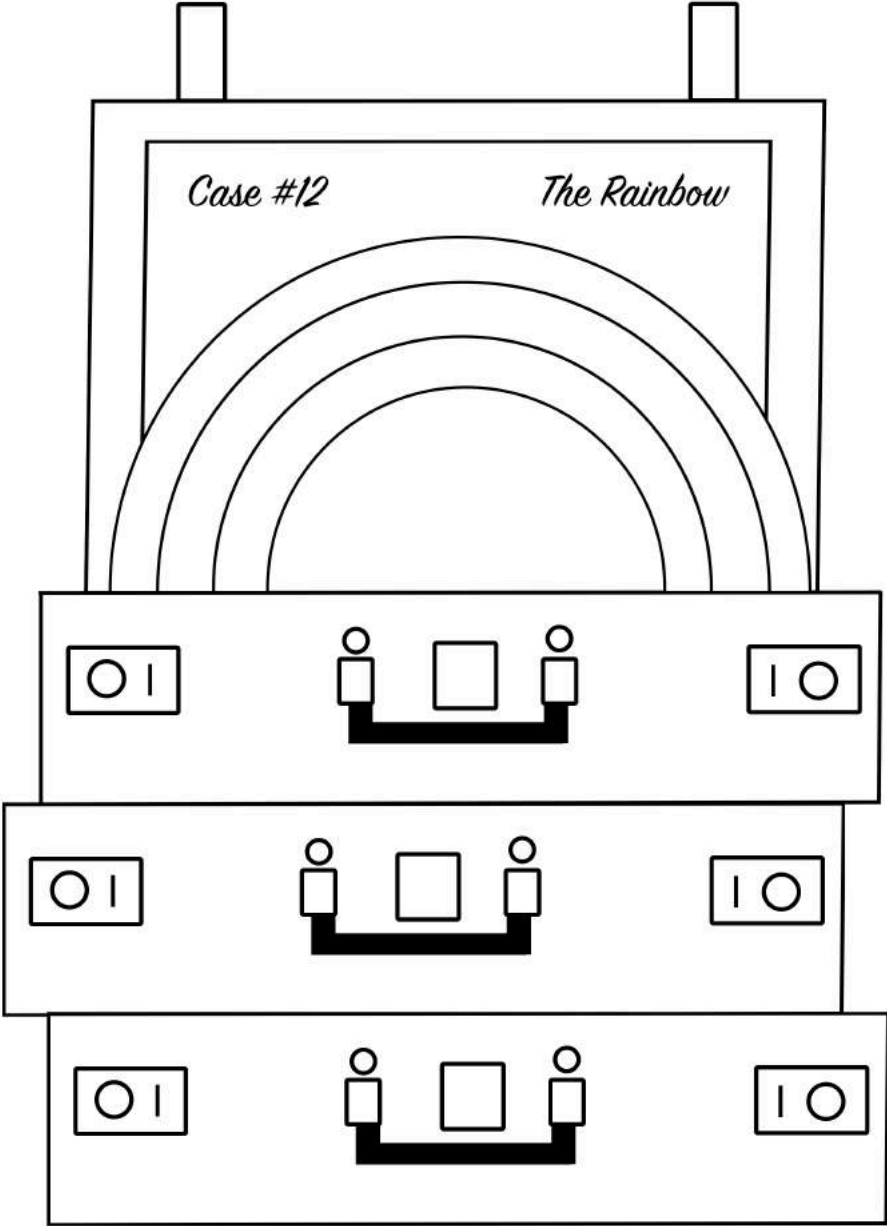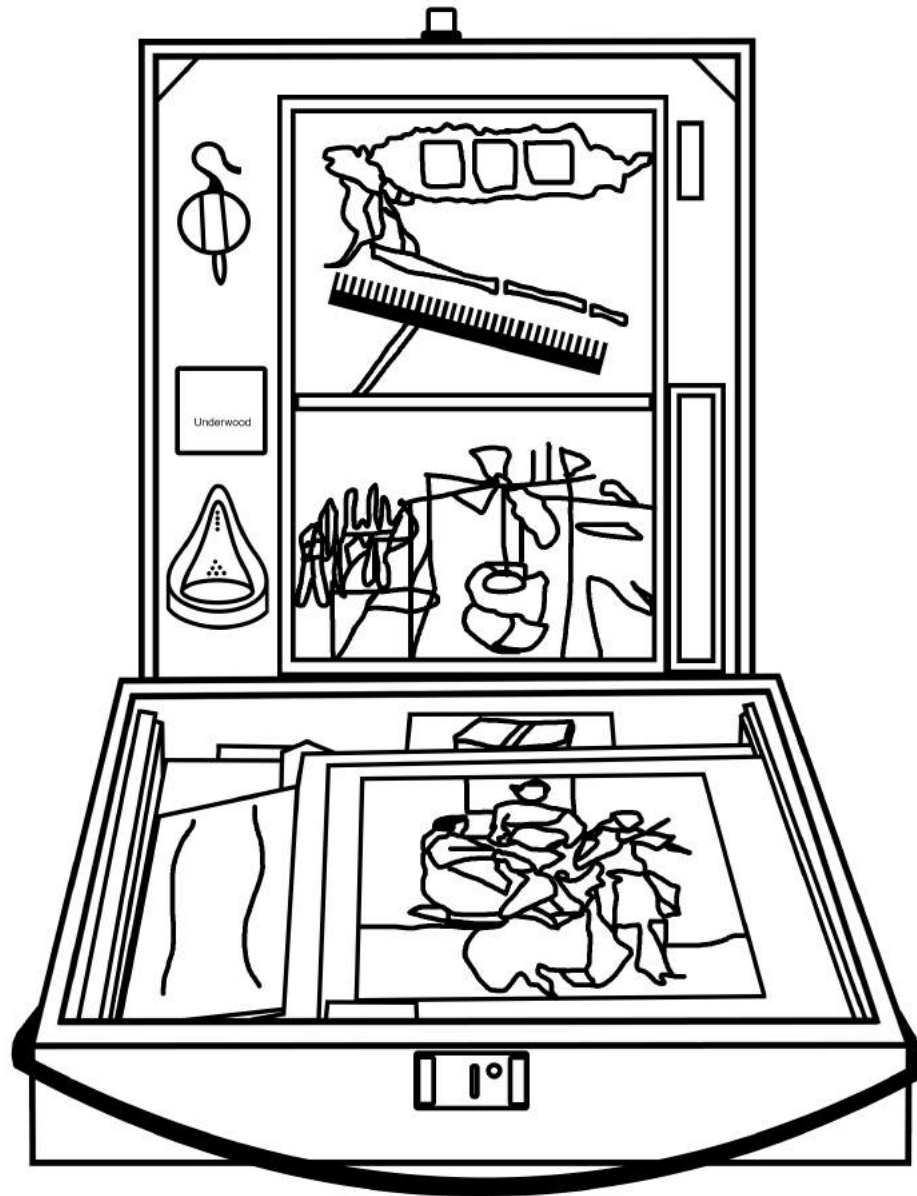
Illustration 27

Illustration 28

Duchamp's boxes, acting as exhibition spaces, extended the idea of the portability of space by troubling the very nature of accessibility. While the boxes serve to make available works of art that were once confined to the studio or gallery, issues of authenticity are at stake. This illustration shows Duchamp's inclusion of reproductions, including a miniature version of his famous piece *Fountain* as well as original works.

While the white cube of the gallery and the studio as exhibition space captures moments in time, the virtual realm of space allows for transcendence of moments. By showing an openness and an evolution and, perhaps, a more telling portrait of the artist, their artwork, and their process, artists can showcase what they deem important within their journey. Exhibitions are inherently hybrid compounds that consist of a multitude of sensory experiences. "An exhibition…is materially composed of space, light, colour, objects, text, sound, audio-visual and interactive media, in an infinite number of variants (den Oudsten, 2016, p. 14)." Exhibitions demand a high level of transdisciplinary entanglements of sensory elements. But perhaps more importantly, exhibitions are concerned with the complexities of implications, culture, context, concept, and identity. The current culture in which I live is one in which digitized spaces are becoming more a part of the collective lived experience and it is becoming more necessary to take that into account when sharing work.

The scenographer, a term den Oudsten often uses when referring to the entanglement of artist/researcher/curator as meaning-maker, takes on many roles. "The scenographer thus turns into an author whose skills lie in another area: where the syntax of the exhibition medium sustains the semantics of scenography (den Oudsten, 2016, p. 14)." The meaning of space is taken on by the scenographer and, in turn, they realize unique meaning within that space. The intertwined author-designer connects disparate elements to transform, but this act is evolving with social media. The scenographer becomes a relational

medium within the nexus of space. The scenographer is now one who is perpetually in the process of making meaning that pulses in constant relation with the world. This is an important part of my research, as the meaning-making capacities of artist as curator manifest on a daily basis through virtual exhibitions of work.

The literature continues by discussing how technological innovation has the capacity to rapidly change society. The linguist Marshall McLuhan, who coined the term "The Medium is the Message" argued that it is not the technology itself that causes transformation, but the social impacts within the contexts it is introduced (den Oudsten, 2016). McLuhan also maintained that focusing on content alone or form alone was not sufficient, as both the transmitter and receiver have the potential to be transformed through content and device/space working in tandem. This is relevant to my research as I am interested in the social impact; the consequence of the introduction of spaces like Instagram in my own artistic life. Does it affect what is made? How it is made? How I exhibit what is made? I believe that each space carries with it its own unique set of affordances and constraints; whether it be the power balance that occurs in white cube of the exhibition space, or the absence of tangible sensory experiences of the digital space. Because this research is not seeing those spaces as being separated, each space carries with it the problems of the other. With every communicative act comes miscommunication, with every space comes constraints, with every act of display comes performance.

The literature covered in this section is a thorough portrait of the evolving state of the exhibition space and its relationship with new media experiences. My study aims to address specifics with how Instagram impacts my own practice as it is embedded within this knowledge of evolving places of display and creation. By treating spaces as entangled and continually in flux, I interrogate the binary structures of place and how that relates to a more thorough and thoughtful engagement with social media and my own studio practice. Building on museum education research as it relates to movement and extending the gallery experience to daily life, I seek to provide an autoethnographic account of how physical and virtual places of artistic practice impact my own engagement and learning.

s o c i a l m e d i a

This section focuses on the affordances and constraints of social media and literature that illuminates motivational factors for its use. While there are many quantitative studies that have researched Instagram users, they are primarily focused on aspects of motivation to financially benefit marketers and influencers and use statistics such as likes, followers, and number of reposts to gage significance. In the publication *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, researchers published an article that looked at user's motivations and attitudes toward Instagram. "Pictures Speak Louder than Words: Motivations for Using Instagram", aimed to provide a general idea of who Instagram users are and why they use the site. The researchers uncovered

motives through key actions and attitudes expressed about Instagram use. "The results suggest that Instagram users have five primary social and psychological motives: social interaction, archiving, self-expression, escapism, and peeking (Lee et al., 2015, p. 552)." In this research, they are positing that users are there to express themselves, as a place to collect their photos, and to have a level of social presence, although voyeurism may be part of it. While this provides a generalized baseline of data for motivation, the ideal audience for this study appears to be those interested in how the site can be used as a marketing tool. While motivations are certainly important in my study, the five social and psychological traits detailed in this research will be interrogated further to study the in-between spaces of my own impulses and provocations. Building on this work, my study will use participant data as an impetus for probing how my own motivations and concerns.

Lee Humphreys is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication at Cornell University and recently published *The Qualified Self: Social Media and the Accounting of Everyday Life* (Illustration 29). As the title alludes to, Humphreys provides a qualitative study on how social media users construct and exhibit "the self" through digitized spaces. Documenting our lives is nothing new and, historically, we have always done this to some degree. Humphreys argues that social media is another form of a work of art, a photo album, a catalog by which we share our lives. Treating digital media not as a distraction, but as another mode by which humans account for their everyday

lived experiences, is significant to my research and aligns with my own experiences on Instagram.

Marshall McLuhan argued, as previously stated, it is not the technology itself that causes transformation, but the social impacts within the contexts it is introduced. Humphreys echoes these statements as she posits that the importance lies in "what people do with media rather than focusing on the media technologies themselves (Humphreys, 2018, p. 9)." The qualified self that Humphreys refers to puts an emphasis on knowing, being with, and improving the conditions of the self through technology. Rather than focused on narcissistic acts of sharing, Humphreys posits that looking at social media through a qualitative lens actually puts more of a focus on being with. The traces left via social media show our relationship to ourselves and to others. "The qualified self is a qualified version of the self which is based on the qualities and qualification of the media traces created by oneself and others. While the quantified self is more self-focused, the qualified self is more other-focused – both in audience and content (Humphreys, 2018, p. 24)." The acknowledgement of others and seeing oneself as embedded in that greater context is how I am orienting my position as both a researcher and the researched in this study. By viewing oneself as inextricable from the greater context, the collaborative nature of social media echoes Albert Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, positing that learning takes place vicariously.

Humphreys contends that the qualified self on social media is continuously

relational. It leaves traces of who we were, are, and who we may be which

positions sites like Instagram as optimal spaces that can facilitate reflection. As

John Dewey (1938) has defined reflection, it is a process of meaning making that

emerges out of engaging in a purposeful experience and it is an iterative

process. This allows for further reflection, a rhizome that grows out of and

supports each new experience. With each new image posted, there is power in

that space to be transformative to our lives and Humphreys has developed

practices that enhance that potential. Humphreys uses the term "media

accounting", which refers to the act of leaving traces of ourselves on social

media. Through media accounting, our sense of self and how we make sense of

the world is developed through what we create and share with others. This

reiterates David Kolb's experiential learning theory (Kolb 1984), which posits that

one gains knowledge through grasping and then transforming an experience

through a cycle of experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization, and active

experimentation. It also relates to Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory

(Bandura, 1986) that we learn vicariously. There are four important media

accounting practices that Humphreys discusses in this literature: sharing the

everyday, performing identity work, remembrancing, and reckoning. These four

components are detailed in the following paragraphs and serve as a navigation

tool for my research.

  #sharingtheeveryday   #identitywork   #remembrancing   #reckoning
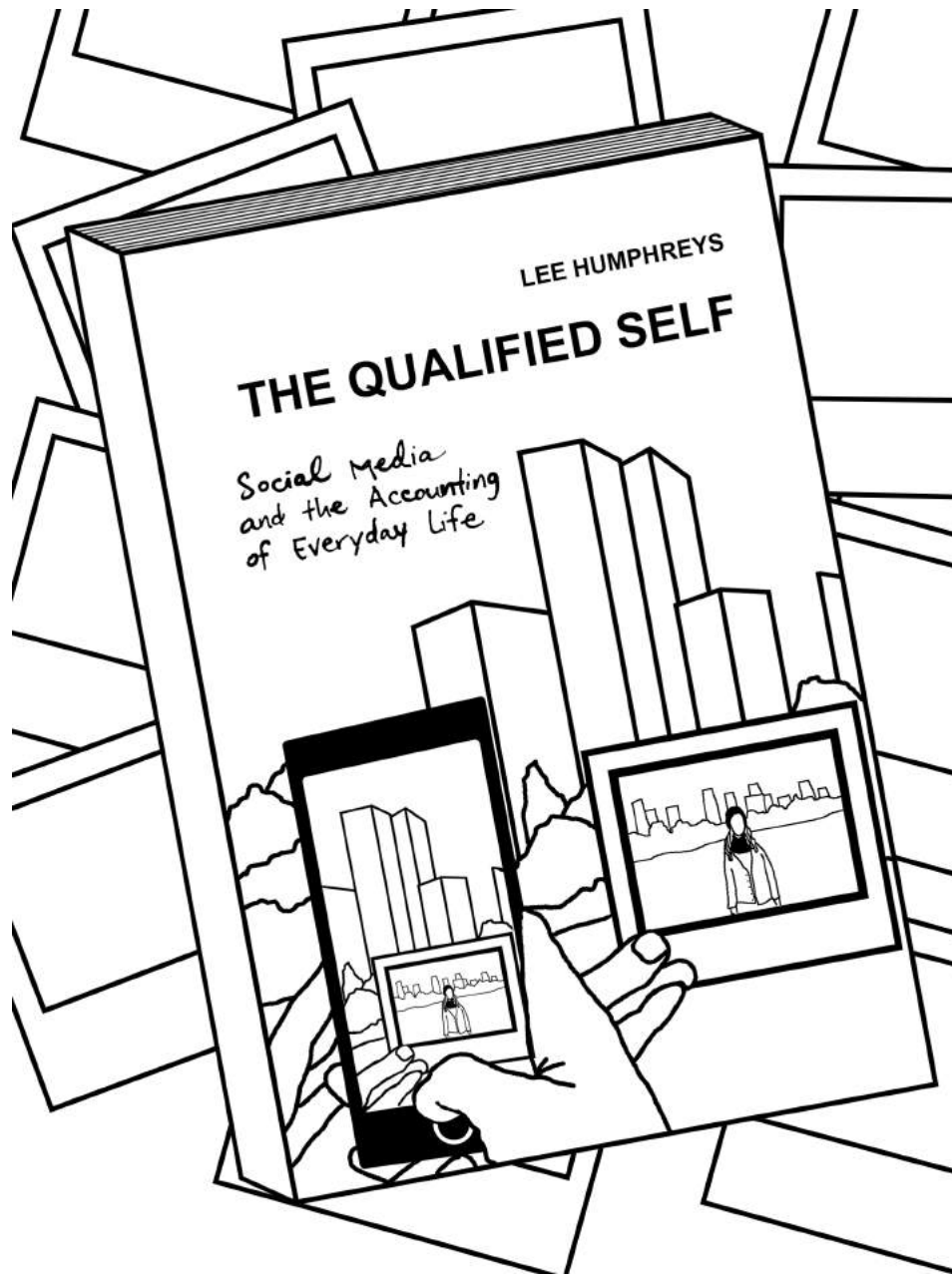
Illustration 29

Humphreys argues that the importance of social media lies in the act of creating and sharing. By sharing our versions of the world, we can make sense of it and of ourselves. The book cover, re-presented in this illustration, shows the evolving nature of creation and sharing and its connection to the history of photography and humanities natural predisposition to share. Social media serves as another avenue by which humanity interacts with the inherent need to make meaning by recording and sharing.

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First, Humphreys argues that sharing of everyday, seemingly mundane tasks is important as it reflects the values of the one who is posting. The objects and events that make up our daily lives reveal routines and behaviors that are central to how we live and blurs the boundaries of public and private, allowing for a true entanglement of space, time, and content. In order to capture the big events in our lives, Humphreys states that we must also document the becoming, the in-progress to give a more truthful view of what is occurring within that process, thus leading to more opportunity for reflection, feedback, and experimentation. "Media accounting transforms everyday activities into something that can be consumed at another point in time and potentially by others. Its ritualistic documentation is a form of cultural performance that is evidence of a broader social order (Humphreys, 2018, p. 35)." This situates the practices on social media as a change agent in the enmeshing of the public space with the private space and the self with the other, but also to perpetuate and change social norms.

Second, Humphreys states the importance of identity in the social sphere, noting that our identities can situationally change. Performances that showcase identity can give insight into why someone posts certain content and who they chose to include in their sphere of influence. In addition to performance and presentation, social media posts are also a representation of our identity. As Nancy Thumim, an Associate Professor in the School of Media and Communication at the University of Leeds, is quoted in the text, "Performance of

self, presentation of self and self-representations coexist and, of course, are all subject to the process of mediation. However, the precise notion of the representation raises questions about the mediation of a textual object. In this view, when a self-representation is produced it becomes a text that has the potential for subsequent engagement (Humphreys, 2018, p. 52)." These distinctions between performance, presentation, and representation, while intermingled, are important to my research. The use of art and text to represent knowings throughout my study involves the production of an object. Doing this same act on social media, through media accounting, is also a representation. But these representations of the self are a part of a greater social network, according to Humphreys, and becomes a presentation and performance in the act of sharing meaning with others.

Third, Humphreys coins the terms remembrancing, which she defines as an active, reflexive process of memory. While remembering is a reminder, remembrancing is a relational process of connecting, reflecting, and contextualizing our experience. Remembrancing is something that is actively engaged in. This is echoed in David Kolb's experiential learning theory (Kolb 1984) with a cycle of doing in which each stage is affective to and affected by the next. Humphreys cites the work of Annette Kuhn, who calls this memory work. "While memory might seem unconscious, memory work highlights the ways that people purposefully and strategically create media traces to help them remember events and experiences in their lives within particular narratives of the self, the

social context, and the broader cultural environment (Humphreys, 2018, p. 74)." In doing this, the private and public selves and spaces are entangled and simultaneously impact each other. Jose van Dijck used the term "mediated memories" to describe how media plays a role in sharing and reflecting. Media memories convey "the activities and objects we produce and appropriate by means of media technologies, for creating and re-creating a sense of past, present, and future of ourselves in relation to others (Humphreys 2018, p. 74)." van Dijck and Humphreys are both treating media technologies as active participants in shaping memories, not just as a repository for information. Just as I have expressed that Instagram is not just a means to collect, but, just like the physical artist studio, it is a space for developing work and sharing it with others and in that act, there is potential for transformation and emergence of new ideas.

The fourth and final media accounting practice that Humphreys highlights is reckoning. Reckoning is defined as a process of calculation, analysis, and judgement (Reckoning, n.d.). "Reckoning allows us to see things about ourselves and others that we may not be able to in our own lived experiences. Media accounting is not just the recording of activities or experiences, but is fundamentally a reflexive process that can reveal aspects of characteristics of lived events (Humphreys, 2018, p. 91)." The media traces that are left on social media freeze moments in time and allow us to more easily examine the contents of that instant. "Through reckoning, media accounting becomes, what Foucault would call, technologies of the self. They enable self-disciplining, whereby we

use media to better know ourselves so as to 'improve' ourselves toward more

normative expectations or ideals (Humphreys, 2018, p. 92)." Media accounting

acts as a diary of lived experiences, but, as Humphreys states, the practice of

reckoning is based on the evidentiary nature of images, aggregation of

information, and the process of reconciliation that occurs (Humphreys, 2018, p.

92).

The aggregation of images can be extraordinarily valuable to reckoning on

social media. It is through this collection of images, usually over long periods of

time, that we can see change. However, a key component to aggregation is that

it is always in a state of becoming, which is incredibly relevant to my research.

By using illustrations throughout my study, I am stressing that this is one

component of my lived experience that very well may have changed by the time

this study goes out into the world. "It is about interpreting and making sense of

what happened in between posts or, to use Jacques Derrida's term, to

understand the absent trace or 'non-trace.' Simply put, reckoning is making

sense of what is there as well as what is not there in our media accounting

(Humphreys, 2018, p. 100)." As I post images on social media and engage with

the images of others, I come up against difference or images that disrupt my

place in the world. These events jolt me out of my own understandings to

reconcile what I know, what I do not know, and what may need to change.

"Interpreting our previous media traces is fundamentally about reconciling our

sense of selves with our media traces. When we read media accounting of

others we also reconcile the traces with who we know them to be (Humphreys, 2018, p. 102)." Presence is always mediated by absence. Reconciliation calls into question binaries, dualities, and difference and, more importantly, why they matter.

By posting photographs on social media, we are leaving evidentiary traces, even as they may not be truly objective. As previously mentioned, I photographed the studios of my peers in the MFA program as a way to capture the truth of the studio process. However, the contents of some studios had been adjusted, cleaned up, and curated to put the best face of their practice forward. My illustrations of the studios leave another kind of evidentiary trace, drawing what I felt was the most important aspects to the artist, my relationship with them, and to this study. Photographs, just like illustrations, can be interpreted differently depending on who is analyzing. Media, as with art images, are often given the benefit of the doubt, as we generally believe that there is an element of truth to the image. We are also usually aware that images are communicative and that miscommunication can result from the diversity of possible interpretations.

This literature by Humphreys is tremendously helpful to this study in that it provides a large part of my conceptual framework with which I will view my own experiences with social media. Through the process of sharing the everyday, performing identity work, remembrancing, and reckoning, I can make more sense of how I am performing and negotiating the self and engaging with others.

Humphreys is proposing that the significance with social media usage lies within the collective and individual impact. However, she does make clear that sites like Instagram, Pinterest, and Facebook all maintain unique qualities and that each platform offers distinct ways in which media traces are created. Instagram privileges images although captions and hashtags do take part in the enormous net of information pooled on the site. This situates it as a favorable site for artists as images are the focus, but artists can tell viewers more about their art through captions and connect it to the work of others through hashtags. What I find most useful about Humphries study is that she is flipping the narrative on what some may consider to be the age of narcissistic millennials, constantly on their phones, obsessed with their image. She is thoughtfully considering how these acts have taken place throughout history, just through different mediums. What I want to add to this discourse is the specificities that occur in artistic practice. Artists, throughout history, have collected images through portfolios of work and shared their work through galleries and studios. However, it is in social media that I have seen great potential for a relational practice in sharing with others not only work, but a lived experience to enhance educational potential.

v i s u a l + d i g i t a l l i t e r a c y

Artists have always had the unique challenge to navigate the intersection between art and language and art as a language. "One of the most significant issues in art education today is the discourse surrounding visual culture: what it is, where it's located, how it's accessed, and its significance to art education

(Smith-Shank, 2004, p. vii)." Works of art serve as a representation of visual

culture and literacy teaches us how and why these artifacts accumulate culture

information as works are shared across cultures. With the rise of rapid modes of

sharing via social media, the way that we are viewing and responding to works of

art is changing. This calls for more research into how sites like Instagram

change how we communicate and how we might treat the entangled spaces of

artistic practice in the most thoughtful, intentional way.

Artists are no longer bound by the commercial gallery or the elusive

studio. Much like Lucas Samaras did with his studio-bedroom, artists are taking

control of the spaces their work is shown and the way that their work and

persona is perceived. Semiotics is concerned with perception of representations

and how we use that to communicate and create meaning (Smith-Shank, 2004).

Instagram, as a semiotics study, is showing the power that artists have in

building their own value system through art and text. Artists make visible how we

represent the world around us through different modes of communication. This

section interrogates studies on visual and digital literacy and how this is

entangled with lived experiences in the 21st century.

Cal Newport is an associate professor of computer science at Georgetown

University. He studies the theory of distributed systems and how social media

communities engage in communication and how that impacts their relationships

in the real world. His books provide a challenge to my own ways of knowing and

being in an increasingly digitized world. Two books that he has written are

focused on in this section, *Digital Minimalism* (Illustration 30) and *Deep Work*

(Illustration 31).

In *Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World*, Newport

argues that the key to living well in our current social media obsessed society is

to spend less time with technology and more time practicing the nuances of

communication that face-to-face interaction affords and cultivates. In the text, he

provides a multitude of studies that shed light on how social media usage can

impact a person's well-being and in-real-life relationships. Newport highlights a

study that appeared in *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* in 2017. The

study was focused on social isolation and was led by Brian Primack of the

University of Pittsburgh. In the research, Newport states that Primack surveyed

college-aged adults, nineteen to twenty-two, asking participants to gage their

perceived loneliness and time spent within eleven different social media

platforms. The results of this study showed that loneliness increased with the

increase of time spent on social media, even after controlling for several factors,

including gender and relationship status.

Newport also addresses a study that appeared in the *American Journal of

Epidemiology*, also published in 2017. The article was authored by Holly

Shakya, an assistant professor in medicine at the University of California – San

Diego, and Nicholas Christakis, a physician and professor at Yale who studies

sociology. The study not only looks at self-reported well-being, but also looks at

how specific actions lead to different outcomes. For instance, they found, "that if

you increase the amount of likes of links clicked by a standard deviation, mental

health decreases by 5 to 8 percent of a standard deviation (Newport, 2019, p.

140)." By looking closer at the studies and their designs, Newport suggest that

"positive results focused on specific behaviors of social media users, while the

studies that found negative result focused on overall use of these service

(Newport, 2019, p. 140)." However, the point that Newport is centering his

literature on is that the more time humanity devotes to social media, the less time

we devote to in-real-life experiences. As Shakya mentions in her study, "we

have evidence that replacing your real-world relationships with social media use

is detrimental to your well-being (Newport, 2019, p. 141)." This is where this

literature give me pause, as I do not believe that social media should ever

replace our face-to-face communications. It should be used in tandem,

enhancing the affordances of each space, physically and conceptually.

Newport does, however, feature important, recent studies in visual and

digital literacy as he calls for humanity to reclaim conversation in the physical

realm. He argues that there are nuances in real life communicative acts that are

lost in the digitized world. However, he does compromise by stating that if social

media must be used, it should be used with strategies of communication and

connection in mind. He details the philosophy of conversation-centric

communication. "It argues that conversation is the only form of interaction that in

some sense counts toward maintaining a relationship. Anything textual or non-

interactive – basically, all social media, email, text, and instant messaging –

doesn't count as conversation and should instead be categorized as mere connection (Newport, 2019, p. 147)." In this description, connection is seen as a supporter or facilitator of conversation, not an alternative to it. Newport does emphasize that, in his philosophy of digital minimalism, he is not wanting humanity to abandon social media. He does recognize that, although there are sacrifices being made, there are incredible affordances to digitized spaces that allow for improvements to one's social life. Social media can be a convenient way to set up real-life relationships and eliminates geographical constraints to many communicative acts.

  While I do agree with Newport that face-to-face interactions are incredibly valuable to the development and evolution of humanity, he treat spaces as separate. As a result, only physical space can afford the real person-to-person communication that he emphasizes as being important to building relationships with others. I have stressed throughout this study that I see the space of the studio/gallery and the digitized space of Instagram as entangled. As with any entanglement, it brings with it the affordances and constraints that is inherent within each space on its own. I am not proposing that artists only build relationships in the world of Instagram. I am not proposing that artists should not have experiences with materials in their hands or seek out physical galleries to display work. I am proposing that by treating spaces as entangled, it offers a synergistic opportunity for communication, and our perception of it, to evolve.

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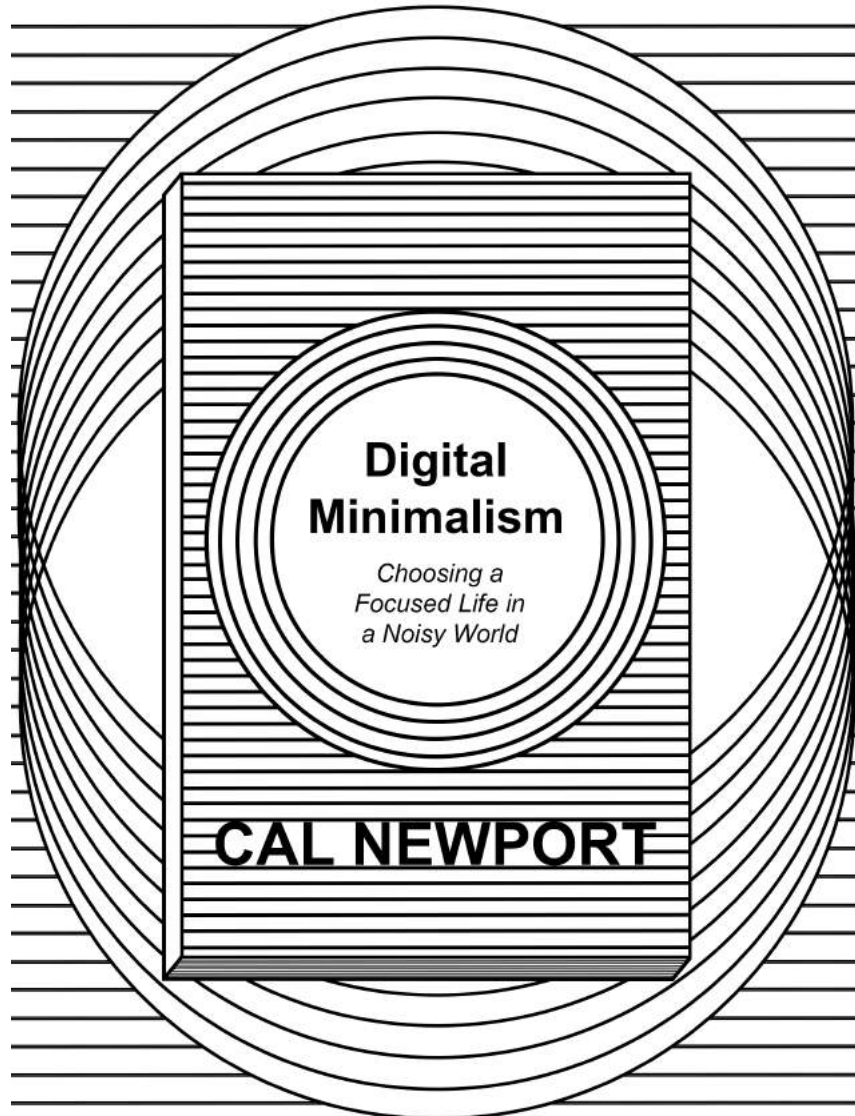
Illustration 30

This literature calls for humanity to take charge of in-real-life and virtual experiences by using social media sparingly. Serving as a guidebook, Newport acknowledges that digitized spaces can connect us to the real world but that we must use it with intent and not allow it to replace our face-to-face communications. This illustration represents Newport's book cover in a centered, controlled, undisturbed environment, my interpretation of how he is suggesting social media be used.

This contributes to how visual and digital literacy is taught and understood in an increasingly digitized world. As Lee Humphreys posits, the actions of social media are those that have been occurring long before the advent of social media.

Newport also wrote *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*, which argues a similar philosophy. He more focuses on the view that digital technologies not only change how we communicate, but also inhibit our ability to focus on tasks that boost cognitive development. This book, like *Digital Minimalism*, acts as a guidebook for readers to follow to not only contend with social media in current society, but in understanding the importance of focus in an increasingly distracted culture. He organizes the book in two parts: the main ideas of deep work and the rules he proposes.

The main idea behind what Newport calls deep work is that it is valuable, it is rare, and it is meaningful. Deep work is work that stimulates cognitive development through focused, deep thinking. Newport posits that digital technology, including texts, emails, and social media, distracts us and should be used under very controlled circumstances. He provides a set of concrete suggestions that encourages humanity to rise from our wired culture and will support deep work in all aspects of our lives. The rules that Newport outlines are to work deeply, embrace boredom, quit social media, and to cease shallow work, each interrogated in more detail in the following paragraphs.
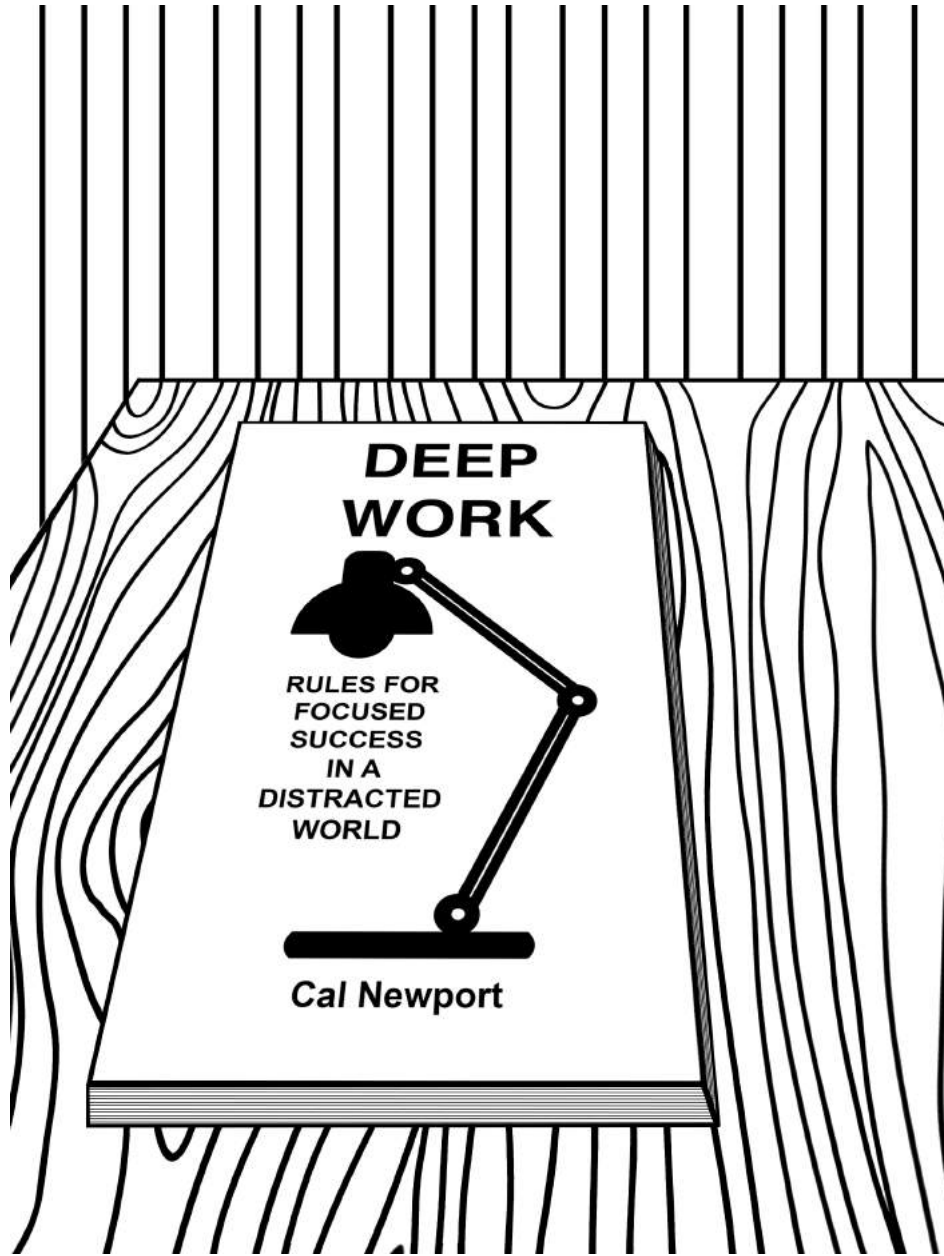
Illustration 31

My illustration representation of this book cover pays particular attention to the lamp, as it is a symbol of illumination and focused attention. The style of lamp that the cover designer chose, in tandem with the book acting as an instructional guide, symbolizes my own relationship to places of practice, particularly the wood shop. Building stretchers for my canvases is often a very specific, mathematical venture that requires intense focus due to the equipment and tasks at hand.

Beginning with how to work deeply, Newport describes the Eudaimonia

Machine, conceptualized by Chicago architect David Dewane. The name comes

from Eudaimonia, Aristotle's concept meaning the epitome of human capability

and flourishment (Keller, 2018). The machine is actually a set of rooms with the

goal of creating a setting in which humans can enter a state of working deeply.

The architecture is a one-story set of five rooms that are placed on after the other

with no hallways, which requires one to travel through each room to get to the

next one. The first room serves as a gallery, which displays all the deep work

that has been produced in the space, acting as an exemplar and perhaps solicits

a form of pressure to produce similarly developed work. The next room is a

coffeehouse which serves drinks, has couches to lounge on, and Wi-Fi

connectivity to encourage curiosity in a stimulating yet relaxed environment. The

third room is the library (Illustration 32), with various analog and digital resources,

and the fourth room is an office space with cubicles designed for what Newport

calls shallow work of gathering and collecting information needed to synthesize in

the future. The final room consists of several smaller, soundproof rooms that

allows for uninterrupted work flow and total and complete opportunity for focus

(Illustration 33). As utopian as Dewane's plans for the Eudaimonia Machine are,

they have importance in Newport's definition of working deeply. Newport calls for

us to create our own environments that cultivate the deepest work possible. He

also emphasizes the importance of rituals and habits that encourage high

productivity and collaboration with others while including downtime to recharge.

The Ready Library gives users access to books that are curated to provoke deep work. This illustration highlights the comfort of the space, with chairs and lighting designed to fully and more intensely provoke deep thinking.

Illustration 32
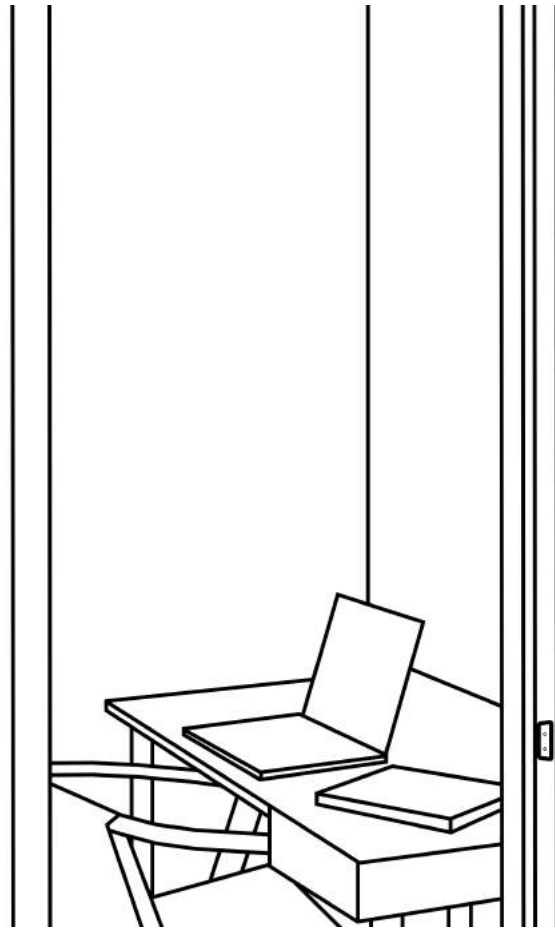
DEEP WORK CHAMBERS

Our best work happens when all the stars align: time, space, focus, and a big idea... Our Deep Work Chambers give you that chance! Yes, we are a store, but you can work here too.

Illustration 33

The Eudaimonia Machine concept was recently carried out in Story, a rotating gallery/shop in Manhattan in 2018. The installation was called Work/Space and allowed Dewane to construct his vision into real space. The Deep Work Chambers give a dedicated space to work, sit, and contemplate ideas; a place free from distractions and minimal in design, as re-presented in this illustration.

The Eudaimonia Machine and the concept of deep work is important to my study, as I believe the power in social media as an entangled artistic space resides in a place of focus and reflection. Referring back to Kolb's experiential learning model (1984), quickly doing anything, in the virtual or real-life space, without active experimentation, conceptualization, and reflection results in an experience that does not allow for the opportunity to absorb knowledge. The Eudaimonia Machine serves as a physical manifestation of what I think most artists do during their studio time. Artists look at the work of others (the first room of the gallery). They take time to relax and reflect (the second room of the coffee shop). Artists do research and look to outside sources for inspiration (the third room of the library). They then carry out otherwise menial tasks, including canvas preparation or ordering supplies (the fourth room of the cubicles). Artists then, eventually, carry out the work with deep focus (the final, soundproof room). These rooms, both the physical manifestation of them and the concept of them, do not have hallways, which coincides with my belief that all of these actions happen at once, with, and because of each other. Although the rooms are separated in Dewan's concept, I see that as a means to organize and not as a suggestion that these rooms/thought processes do not intertwine.

Newport emphasizes that deep work is a learned skill and he calls for humanity to embrace boredom. He states that our culture is wired for distraction and that we must reconfigure our habits to remain focused. There is a movement called the Internet Sabbath that many social media users observe as

a way to detox their minds and habits from social media. As a ritual to rewire

propensity toward distraction, participants dedicate one day a week to living

without digital technology. While the intent of this digital detox is to make

participants aware of what they miss in real life while glued to their screens,

Newport suggests that we instead take breaks from focus. In other words,

instead of dedicating a day out of the week to be free from social media, what

may be more beneficial is to take one day a week to engage with social media,

while the rest of the week is dedicated to focus. Newport suggests that we

schedule specific, short bursts of time out of the week to engage with digital

technology while the rest of the week should be free from it. The importance of

this to my research is not that I don't believe social media can be a distraction.

On the contrary, it dangerously and often rides the line of distraction for me, and I

am constantly trying to find a healthy balance for myself. However, I agree with

Newport that scheduling time is important to engagement with a site like

Instagram because it is a commitment to intent. When scrolling through my feed,

I sometimes find myself liking posts but not looking deeply at them. If used with

more intent, I may more thoughtfully engage with what I see.

Newport then makes a dramatic turn in this book with the suggestion that

we need to quit social media. He gives the example of Baratunde Thurston,

described by some as the most connected man in the world, who conducted an

experiment to see the impact of refraining from digital technology, including email

and social media, for twenty-five days (Newport, 2016). Thurston wrote about his

experience in an article titled "#UnPlug" for *Fast Company* magazine. He details

his experience as being a relatively easy transition. He found himself reaching

out for more face-to-face conversation and becoming less stressed because he

was not constantly seeking out information through digital technology. Thurston

only reengaged with his online experience because much of his career resides in

and relies on digital means of communication. This reinforces Newport's views

that digital technologies distract us from deep work. He states that we must

schedule our lives to allow for short spans of distraction, not short spans of focus.

It also highlights an important concern for anyone whose livelihood depends on

digitized spaces for communication. It just isn't always practical to delete the

online space from our lives. Newport acknowledges this and suggests a

craftsman approach to instead careful curate which tools will bring you the most

success. He states that the craftsman approach to tool selection is a way to,

"Identify the core factors that determine success and happiness in your

professional and personal life. Adopt a tool only if its positive impacts on these

factors substantially outweigh its negative impacts (Newport, 2016, p. 191)." This

suggests that we don't need to have Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, and

Tumblr if it doesn't make efficient sense to our goals. At one point in time, I had

all of the above social media accounts. I felt the pressure to engage in as many

platforms as possible to make my name, my work visible to the outside world.

However, I quickly burned myself out and felt overworked with little payoff.

Instead, I have found that Instagram served its purpose for me as an artist, as

that is the platform that most artists use to show their work. When I could focus

on my Instagram presence alone, without the pressure of engaging on other

platforms, I felt that my communication was more thoughtful and more focused.

In the final section, Newport makes a case for refraining from shallow

work. Newport defines shallow work as "noncognitively demanding, logistical-

style tasks, often performed while distracted. These efforts tend not to create

much new value in the world and are easy to replicate (Newport, 2016, p. 228)."

To refrain from shallow work, Newport suggests that we schedule every minute

of our day. He gives the example of time spent watching television. "In 2013,

the British TV licensing authority surveyed television waters about their habits.

The twenty-five- to thirty-four-year-olds taking the survey estimated that they

spend somewhere between fifteen and sixteen hours per week watching TV

(Newport, 2016, p. 221)." He also states that there is some inherent bias in self-

reporting those numbers. Meters that were placed in those same households

recorded the *actual* time spent watching television, which almost doubled. Our

perceived time spent on any activity is subject to bias and inaccuracy. Newport

argues that, without much thought given to the time spent on tasks, including

social media usage, we are susceptible to an imbalance in deep and shallow

work. Considering my screen time usage that I previously referenced, I had

would have had no idea that I spent that much time on my phone or that I picked

up my phone so much each day. After becoming aware of this, I have

intentionally had to limit my time on my phone, for fear that it would interrupt my

real life in ways that were not meaningful.

While I do not agree with Newport's views of the virtual and physical spaces as separate, and align more with Humphreys philosophy, he does call attention to important concerns with how we interact with the visual and digital world. He provides a thoroughly researched framework of practice that does not have to be agreed with, but must be considered. In Newport's view, scheduling time wisely, reducing distractions, and using a curated selection of media can allow for more thoughtful interactions. By enhancing how we can assess, communicate, and create through real life and digital platforms, we can better teach and understand visual and digital literacy.

c o n c e p t u a l f r a m e w o r k

The literature reviewed in this chapter, combined with my theoretical framework, provides a conceptual framework by which I develop this study and analyze my findings. The framework is detailed in this section by highlighting important points from the literature and how they relate to my theoretical framework. At the end of this section, I also provide a map of the relationships between these ideas and theories.

My study aims to understand how the entanglement of the art studio, gallery, and Instagram impacts my practice. Looking deeply at my own experience as an artist in an increasingly digitized world, I investigate how my experiences fit into the greater context. By disrupting binaries of space, I am entangling the virtual and physical space further and opening up possibilities for

new insights through interrogation of interruptive moments. The literature

reviewed in this chapter makes a case for the entanglement of the studio, the

gallery, and social media. By treating the spaces as entangled, I am calling for

each space to be treated as equally contributing to artistic practice in the twenty-

first century. I am also asserting that social media should never be seen as a

replacement for studio time. Viewing art in a gallery is a worthwhile and

necessary experience, as it contributes to meaning-making skills. Creating work

in the studio and engaging with content online are also equally important acts in

the experience of an artist today. The entanglement of these spaces should be

viewed as a permeable window, allowing a diversity of art processes and

concepts to enter our scope of influence. As a result, this may encourage more

purposeful, reflective thinking practices. The gallery and studio have long

provided us with space for conceptualizing and creating, but social media should

be considered as an equally relevant, educational space.

Intertwined within this literature are important theories that consider both

autonomous and social learning. Drawing on John Dewey's work on reflection,

David Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984) posits that an active, non-linear,

continuous cycle of experience, experimentation, conceptualization, and

purposeful reflection produces an environment conducive to learning. The model

does not require an instructor to be present, so it is appropriately situated within

research concerning online learning. Kolb's theory states that "learning is the

process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience

(Kolb, 1984, p. 38)." The acts of grasping and then transforming experiences take shape on social media, in part, through exposure to the images and feedback of others. Of great importance to this study, however, is what happens in between that process of grasping and transforming. What are the factors that serve as an impetus for, among many other concerns, reflection, motivation, and how we are influenced by others?

Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986) posits that we learn socially through observing the actions and consequences of others. Actions and subsequent consequences that one deems positive will then be imitated. After imitation, one will then either experience some form of reinforcement or punishment, which will then be a deciding factor in whether the imitation should be continued, altered, or abandoned. However, imitation is described in Badura's theory, as it relates to creative modeling, that artists do not simply mimic what has already been done, but they use the ideas of others as a springboard for innovative work. "In most creative endeavors, the requisite knowledge and skills are learned by example and by practice through some form of apprenticeship (Bandura, 1986, p. 104)." With social media research, especially involving creative endeavors, this theory is important to understanding how the continual exposure to images and feedback online might alter what is made. Bandura also notes the importance of curating of one's scope of influence while synthesizing and developing ideas. "When exposed to models who differ in their styles of thinking and behavior, observers rarely pattern their behavior

exclusively after a single source, nor do they adopt all the attributes even of preferred models. Rather, observers combine various aspects of different models into new amalgams that differ from the individual sources (Bandura, 1984, p. 104)." Bandura is suggesting that creative endeavors are not always on a search for similarities, but quite the opposite. Innovation in creative modeling requires a diversity of experiences in order to cultivate unconventionality in works of art.

The learning theories of Bandura and Kolb acknowledge that observation is a key factor to the learning process. Every author whose literature was reviewed in this chapter also note the importance of the observation of phenomenon, followed by a conceptualization of what was observed. These actions have more traditionally taken place in the artist's studio or art gallery. Instagram is also a space where artists can display their work and can observe and connect to others. But it has the added affordance of feedback, ability to curate a scope of influence, and experiment with different ways of connecting to an audience. It is in these entangled spaces of studio, gallery, and online space where I have seen great potential for transformation for me as an artist, a researcher, and a teacher.

By interrogating the concepts covered in the literature reviewed in this chapter, I situate my experiences within previous research and I critically synthesize relevant themes to justify how my study fills a gap in research. While Bandura and Kolb provide significant theories of how learning can occur, it is also

clear to me the importance of considering how the compulsive potential of social media may disrupt that learning process unintentionally and detrimentally. Cal Newport's books call for a minimalistic approach to social media, in an effort to reduce distractions within the learning process. These practices are interrogated further in the data collected and analyzed in my study. However, by focusing on intentionality and creating environments that cultivate deep work, Newport gives a thorough, although at times extreme, framework of practices to allow for social media to occupy our lives in an intentional, highly curated manner. I also incorporate Lee Humphrey's notions that social media activity is an extension of our human need to share and connect with others. By flipping the narrative on what some may consider to be the age of narcissistic millennials, constantly on their phones, obsessed with their image, she is thoughtfully considering how these acts have taken place throughout history, just through different mediums. What I want to add to this discourse is the specificities that occur in artistic practice. Artists, throughout history, have collected images through portfolios of work and shared their work through galleries and studios. However, it is through the addition of social media in the entanglement of artistic space that there is great potential for a relational practice in sharing with others not only work, but a lived experience.

The selected learning theories build a framework for me to examine my own relationship to entangled spaces of artistic practice and how my experience fits into the greater context. This structure guides my research and provides a

theoretical basis for the data collected and analyzed. An illustrated model

(Illustration 34) of how these concepts relate can be found below.

Illustration 34

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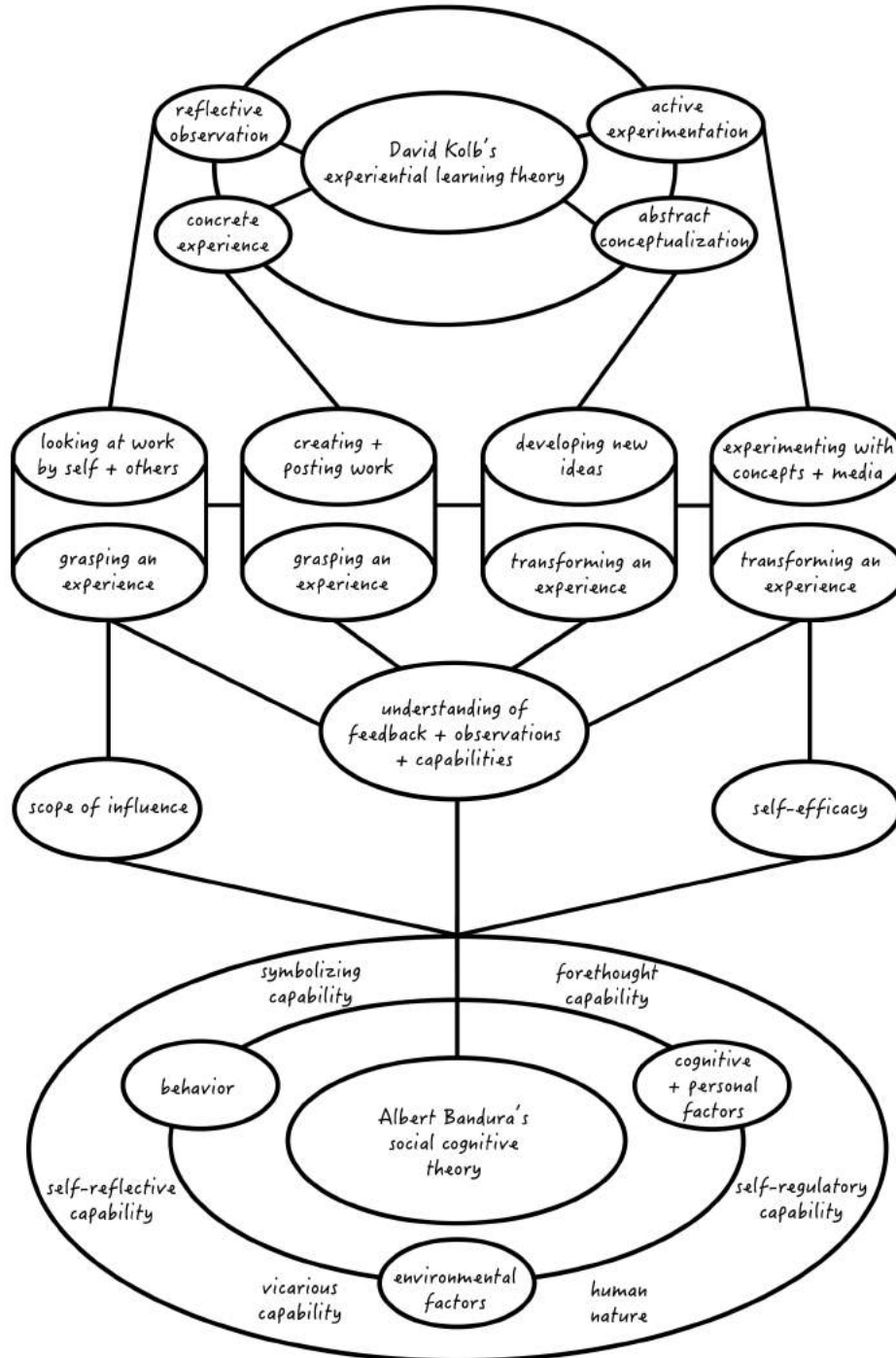
This model shows the 4 components of Kolb's experiential learning theory and how it relates to artistic practices that take place in my engagement with the entangled space of the gallery, studio, and social media. Bandura's social cognitive theory is incorporated to illustrate how I may better understand my own capabilities, what is observed including my scope of influence, and feedback during the process of engaging in those practices. This conceptual framework is illustrated in mind map form to assist in clarity of concepts and connections, but each component should be seen as working together in a reciprocal manner.

Although my study is exploratory and intended to disrupt traditional ways of knowing and being in the world, this conceptual framework provides me with theoretical grounding that I can then trouble. It also serves as one of many points through which I collected and interpreted the data for this study. While this conceptual framework serves as a guide, I acknowledge the /, the and, the multiplicities that are embraced with my chosen methodology. This allows for both structure and disorder to occupy the same space.

s u m m a r y

This literature review covered important topics that relate to my sub questions and ultimately my main research question. This curated collection of studies, along with a selection of learning theories, provides a conceptual framework with which I view and collect data as well as how I might come to conclusions that help me answer my main research question of how social media impacts my studio practice. Using David Dewane's Eudaimonia Machine

concept of a manifestation of relational situations best suited for learning, my

research aims to create an always becoming system. This system identifies the

core concerns that are inherent in artistic practice, but also my relationships with

others and self-efficacy. By considering concepts covered in this literature, the

data I received from others, and investigating my own autoethnographic writings,

I aim to provide a thorough view of my own lived experience while placing it in

the greater context of the lives and research of others.

chapter three

introduction

research questions

research approach

research setting

data collection methods

research sample

data analysis methods

limitations

summary

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introduction

This autoethnographic study examines what hybrid spaces of artistic practice look like and produce, interrogates motivations and attitudes for using Instagram, and investigates the result of disrupting binaries of space and materiality. I aim to provide a clear view of how social media impacts my studio practice by situating it within the greater context that I am deeply embedded. Much research on social media has largely been quantitative, based on broad samples of participant characteristics, and views the site of social media as separate from the physical realm. My study seeks to address research gaps by providing a qualitative account that specifically focuses on the artistic experience with Instagram and treats the space as interconnected with the studio, gallery, and my overall lived experience.

The methodology and overall design of this study is detailed in this chapter. I discuss my research questions, approach, setting, and the demographics of participants, including myself. I then present my research design, including data collection and observation methods, and methods of data analysis. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of my positionality, limitations, and issues of validity.

research questions

My research questions examine and analyze spaces of artistic practice and treat them as interconnected and always in a state of becoming. I believe that spaces and the bodies that occupy them are entangled, communicative, and

meaningful. Each question is investigated with and through image and text,

echoing the importance of the a/r/tographical methodology used to think with,

collect, and analyze data. I look first at how entangled spaces of artistic practice

impacts the practice of others through submissions of text and image from artists,

researchers, and teachers, later used in a public exhibition. I then analyze

concerns that are revealed in my interpretation of those submissions. Finally, I

interrogate those concerns by examining how, when, and where they reveal

themselves in my own practice. This is done with the goal of ultimately

answering how hybrid artistic spaces impact my own practice.

m a i n r e s e a r c h q u e s t i o n

How does the entanglement of hybrid artistic space impact my practice as an

artist, researcher, and teacher?

s u b q u e s t i o n s

- How does hybrid artistic space impact the studio practice of others and

  what are the main concerns?

- How do those concerns manifest for me?

r e s e a r c h a p p r o a c h

This section describes my research approach and methodologies that I

chose to collect and interpret data. I provide a rationale for why these are

suitable for addressing my research questions as I look deeply at the history and

scope of the methodologies discussed. The qualitative nature of my approach is

narrative and always in a state of becoming and should be seen as a relational

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set of methods that work with, through, and because of one another. The

philosophical underpinning of this approach is related to the methods used in

much of the literature I have reviewed and seeks to add to the existing research

in a manner that is exploratory yet rigorous.

Much research on the topic of social media and its role in learning and

development has been quantitative and are often outcomes-based. New ways of

negotiating space, combined with the inherent human desire to share and

connect, requires an approach that is experimental and recognizes that a

researcher's connection to their study is layered, contextual, and relational.

Using a qualitative, arts-based, practice-based approach to research, I am

drawing attention to the interconnectedness of the self to other, spaces of

practice, and sensory experiences that disrupt binaries. This post-structuralist

view is in sharp contrast to the dualisms that have influenced modernist

categorizations and conclusions. "Western thought has been primarily influenced

by Cartesian rationalism which isolates the distinct and autonomous subject,

whose 'vision' of the world is separate and distanced from the object perceived

(Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. 107)." With an arts-based, practice-based research

approach, I am reconfiguring the way in which I think of spaces of artistic

practice, which are normally separated and compartmentalized. Doing so is a

purposeful act of disrupting binaries and complicating my habitual interactions

with space and others in order to emerge with new, more thoughtful ways of

communicating with and questioning the world in which I am immersed.

Modern developments in arts-based research can be seen at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as innovative educators were being influenced by the field of aesthetic development. "As Friedrich Schiller (1802) suggested, aesthetics sought to explore the dimensions of experience that were hidden in the push to impose reason on all levels of human endeavor. For Schiller, aesthetics was a pre-rational understanding that formed the base for the sound and moral application of reason (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 4)." As such, the beginnings of educational theory are rooted in aesthetic experience, which, according to Schiller, provided a philosophical foundation to reason. John Dewey saw the problematic impacts of a stagnant appreciation of formal elements and made a case for humans as active beings that learn through purposeful experiences (Dewey, 1934/1958). In the past few decades, a postmodern shift in thought has blurred the lines between what counts as arts-based research. Dewey's philosophy and the importance of aesthetic qualities reverberate within the educational criticism work of Elliot Eisner. He posits that experiences are not only an impetus for learning, but also an opportunity to illuminate when something is learned. "Arts based research is an approach to research that exploits the capacities of expressive form to capture qualities of life the impact what we know and how we live (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 5)." Not simply an application of methods, Eisner defines arts-based research as "the result of artistically crafting the description of the situation so that it can be seen from another angle (Eisner, 2008, p. 22)." It is through this multiplicity of

perspectives that arts-based research has great potential for emergence of new ideas, being less interested in decisive conclusions and more concerned with raising more stimulating questions than what one started with.

This multiplicity is the basis for a/r/tography, which acts as both a theoretical underpinning to my research and as a methodology. Functioning as a practice-based research methodology, a/r/tography finds great potential for inquiry through artmaking and writing (Sullivan, 2004). The identities of the artist, the researcher, and the teacher are in constant relation to one another and work in tandem, existing as a post-structural theory of practice that acts as a methodology of situations (Irwin et al., 2006). "A/r/tography resides in this intercorporeal space, and attends to the forms and folds of living bodies. It is a thinking that reflects on interembodiment, on being(s)-in-relation, and communities of practice (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. 108)." Through a/r/tography, I am asserting that my relationship with the communities that comprise the gallery, studio, and digitized spaces of artistic practice are relational and entangled. The situations in this research were not only created but provoked by the rhizomatic and relational environment of a/r/tography. It provides a methodological viewpoint by which both physical spaces and digital environments and the resulting data are assessed in my research.

It is important to me that a/r/tography be used as a methodology of being with. "A/r/tography is a methodology of embodiments, of continuous engagement with the world: one that interrogates yet celebrates meaning. A/r/tography is a

living practice, a life creating experience examining our personal, political and/or professional lives (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxix)." This fluidity within the relationship to the self and to others is imperative due to the social nature of new media. Through the use of art and text, I interrogate the relationality of my artist, researcher, and teacher identities, while always being in relation to my community of practice. In this study, I create methodological situations for inquiry on Instagram, in the studio, and in the exhibition space, knowing that spaces are also in continuous relation. I remain invested to acts of inquiry through art and text, simultaneously celebrating and deeply questioning meaning, dislodging my own habitual ways of interacting with and perceiving the world.

My research uses qualitative forms of data collection such as journal writings (Illustration 35), photo documentation turned into drawings (Illustration 36), and surveys (Illustration 37), while also employing more traditional learning theories. This is done to evolve my research questions and understandings in a manner that is not seeking conclusions, but rather an exegesis. "An exegesis is a critical explanation of the meaning within a work. In the arts, an exegesis is often extended to include any documentation that contextualizes the work and helps to critique or give direction to theoretical ideas (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxix)." By examining my lived experience and how it is entangled with the lives of others, I extend the possibilities of the learning models and concepts used to reveal deeper meaning and provide an explanation as to why that meaning matters.

5/16/2018

Call for en...
website ...n Inst...
several

Illustration 35
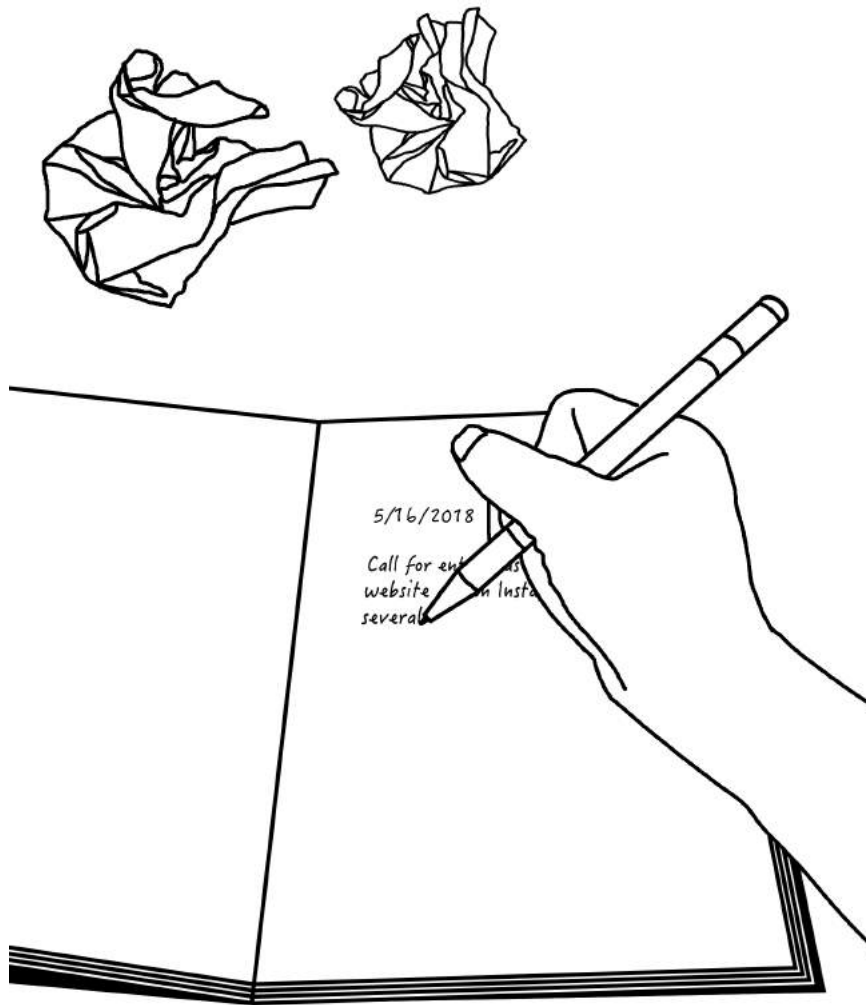
By engaging in journal writing, including image and text, throughout the process of collecting and interpreting data, I am keeping a record of my thought process and rationale. Since this is an autoethnographic study, the writings serve as another piece of data that illuminates and troubles my experience in the world.

The digital drawings created during this study were inspired by photographs of actual situations, places, and events. Using the application Photoshop on my laptop, I drew what I felt were the most important aspects of each photograph. This served as a mediated in-between space; between photograph and event, virtual and tangible, image and text. The choices I made with each drawing were accounted for in my journal writing and detailed in the captions accompanying each image.

Illustration 36

122

ihavefinallyfou
ndmytribethrou
ghinstagrambyd
evelopingacom
munitywithmyfe
llowpilipinxand
apiartistsinolo
ngerfeelalonew
hileiamworking

@drrckzydo
Baltimore, MD

instagramisawo
nderfulplatform
forlaunchingan
dreceivingimag
e-drivenartand
informationitis
alsofunaddictiv
etime-wastinga
ndasadreminde
rthatnothingsu
cceedslikecele
brity

@pictopoesis
New York, NY

Illustration 37

The surveys conducted for the exhibition *Friends with Benefits* include descriptions, in visual and text form, to the question of how social media impacts the participant's studio practice. These interviews allow me to situate my experience within the lives of others. All parties, including myself, are deeply embedded in the entangled space of artistic practice. All respondents are active on Instagram, keep a physical studio space to some degree, and exhibit work in real-life spaces. All submissions are from artists who follow me and who I, in turn, follow as well. They are included in my scope of influence and I in theirs. I positioned the surveys in a manner that relates to the themes discussed in chapter four.

As I embody the roles of the artist, researcher, and teacher, I illuminate the interconnected relationship between and within each role. I allow an openness to let each identity inform one another and coexist. "At its best, a/r/tography encourages the combined creative freedom and risk-taking of the artist with the theory, rigor, and responsibility of the academic researcher, along with the ethics and compassion of the educator. Combining these three roles with the integrity and awareness of what is called for in each area, is a demanding undertaking (Bickel, 2008, p. 136)." I further explain how I embody each role in the following pages. It is important to emphasize that in a/r/tography no one identity is favored. The process of meaning-making through perceptual practices is enhanced by the inclusion of diverse views and experiences. "By emphasizing practice, a shift occurs from questions *who* an artist, researcher, or educator might be or *what* art, research or education is, to *when* is a person an artist, researcher or educator and *when* is an experience art, research or education (Irwin et al., 2006, p. 70)." By interrogating my identities, treating them as interconnected, I am not simply saying that I am an artist, research, and teacher. I describe experiences that illuminated when I became, and continue to become, within those identities.

a r t i s t i d e n t i t y

The artist self is the identity that I am most intimately acquainted with, as I have engaged with art making since childhood. My identity as an artist has given me a distinct, although always changing, role in the world, in the classroom, and

within my community. I find comfort in my sense of self as an artist and practice it with equal parts unease and joy. This identity has guided my educational experiences, as I have both my bachelor's degree and master's degree in fine art, with an emphasis in painting. My definition of what it means to be an artist is one who has dedication to their craft and expertise in creating a balance of conceptual cohesiveness and complexity. Artists are storytellers who allow for a viewer's interpretation to enter the narrative, creating a density and an openness simultaneously. "…although visual imagery is created and the point of production is inextricable bound to the art, visual art inherently opens up multiple meanings that are determined not only by the artist but also the viewer and the context of viewing (both the immediate circumstance and the larger sociohistorical context (Leavy, 2015, p. 224)." This has significance not only to the art making process, but the art viewing process and, subsequently, the power of the arts as a formidable change agent in the world. The interconnectedness of the visual, the viewer, and context makes art a potent vehicle for sharing ideas and contributing to culture. It is through this affordance of the visual that I trouble traditional forms of research and representation of data throughout this study.

Using a/r/tography as a methodology, I am establishing that each identity is connected and relational, but with distinct contributions to the data collection and research process. The artist identity is shown most prominently throughout this study in my representation of visual data. Staring with photographic artifacts of exhibition spaces, surveys, digital screenshots, and journal writing, I illuminate

the most important facets evident in the images, allowing for emergence of new ideas. It is through the interrogation of images themselves in the recreation of them that I seek to complicate my understandings of the phenomenon in question. "The process of creating visual imagery probes below the level of the relational mind and reveals what cannot be known from that perspective alone. Unanticipated connections can be discovered as an image creates relationships among diverse elements of form and experience bring, which these into a new wholeness (Leavy, 2015, p. 255)." Artists are always engaging in inquiry by giving meaning to lived experiences through reflective explorations of the visual. As a/r/tography is a working together of image and text, the artist identity reveals itself by creating visual meaning of, with, and through text.

r e s e a r c h e r i d e n t i t y

While I am relatively new to qualitative research, as it takes form throughout this dissertation, I have long been a researcher to some degree. Art making, in and of itself, is a form of qualitative research through the experimentation and analysis of different methods of technique, materials, and concepts. Research also takes shape artistically through curation, within the process of analyzing works, reflecting on similarities, and illuminating difference to create a clear, although complex, synthesis of ideas. Taking on the role of the researcher in this study was approached with equal parts familiarity and trepidation. In one hand, I grasp on to more traditional research through theories of learning, including the work of Albert Bandura (1986) and David Kolb (1984).

This theoretical and combined conceptual framework has provided me with a jumping off point; a seed that has the potential to sprout roots and rhizomes. The other hand holds an abstract need for disruption, experimentation, and newness. As a researcher, I believe that newness can most organically come from disrupting traditional ways of knowing in the world. "As an approach to inquiry, a/r/tography emerges amidst theoretical underpinning that take up St. Pierre's (1997) call to produce different knowledge and to produce knowledge differently (Pourchier & Holbrook, 2014, p. 111)." It is in this pursuit of deeper meaning, while still embrace the /, the and, that is inherent in a/r/tography, that I allow both traditional theoretical underpinnings and disruptive methodologies to occupy the same space and inform one another in order to produce new knowledge differently.

The goal of a/r/tography is to complicate and intentionally unsettle knowing while also being open to multiple theoretical perspectives (Pourchier & Holbrook, 2014). Through the theoretical positions of embodiment, relationality, and contingency, my researcher identity emerges, and is enmeshed with my artist identity, in this study. Embodiment is defined as making something perceptible by giving it a visual form (Embody, n.d.). The arts are inherently an embodiment of ideas as it is a method to understand the world and relay or complicate those understandings through visual representations. "..a/r/tography conceptualizes knowledge as emerging through the body's senses as it interacts with others and the world (Pourchier & Holbrook, 2014, p. 112)." This

embodiment of the concepts in this research take form most prominently through my illustrations, making concepts, connections, and difference perceivable through the visual.

A/r/tography also asserts that meaning emerges within the in-between spaces that are not immediately perceivable. "Thus, a/r/tography is an approach to inquiry that understands meaning making as relational encounters between bodies and things (Pourchier & Holbrook, 2014, p. 113)." Through relationality, I am constructing and conducting this research by treating spaces, people, identities, and concepts as entanglements that are affective and affected. Because everything is in a relational, situational constellation forever in flux, every bit of my study is seen in a state of becoming. This is relayed in the unfilled coloring book aesthetic of my illustrations, always in an unfinished, undone state. The interconnectedness and relationality of situations that serve as a product and impetus of the a/r/tographical situations in my study, are also contingent on a number of factors. "When knowledge is understood as contingent, research becomes an always unsettled site where findings cannot be named or even desired. Instead, through imagination and conjecture, the work of a/r/tographic research is to provoke, to generate, and to un/do meaning (Pourchier & Holbrook, 2014, p. 113)." This contingency, combined with relationality and embodiment, serve as positions in which I, as a researcher, create an ongoing conversation between images, texts, and the experience of myself and others, all working together.

For the past decade, I have identified myself as an educator in various

contexts, mostly within the college setting with adult learners. I have taught large

300-student auditorium courses and smaller online courses in art history. I have

also taught studio art courses in small university and community college

classrooms, ranging from painting and drawing to three-dimensional art and

senior seminar courses. My identity as a teacher started off with anxiety and

instability, as I was launched into the role as a MFA graduate student at the

University of Missouri with no prior experience. I realized quickly that teaching is

much more than just relaying to others how I work through problems in my own

artwork. It is a situation that is in constant relation with students, involving

different learning styles, skill levels, and a multitude of other factors that can limit

or enhance how and when each student learns. However, I grew certain early on

that this would be a lifelong pursuit of mine and that it was worthy of further

educational pursuits.

After teaching full-time for two years, I applied and was accepted to the

University of Missouri again, this time as a doctoral student in art education.

Having spent the past three years thoroughly engrossed in the program, my

teacher identity has been enhanced, troubled, and has become more multi-

faceted and interconnected with my own art making process. Within

a/r/tography, the teacher identity is enmeshed with the artist and researcher

roles. This has become potent in my own lived experience, as my art is

enhanced through my teaching and research and vice versa. "A/t/ography is one of many emerging forms of inquiry that refer to the arts as a way of re-searching the world to enhance understanding. Yet it goes even further by recognizing the educative potential of teaching and learning as acts of inquiry. Together, the arts and education complement, resist, and echo one another through rhizomatic relations of living inquiry (Irwin et al, 2006, p. 70)." The pursuit of knowledge has reverberated throughout my life and expanded my creative practice and serves as an impetus for the curatorial and autoethnographic endeavors in this study.

During my first year of full-time teaching at a community college, I was responsible for a senior seminar course meant to provide graduating students with tools needed to maintain a successful art practice outside of academia. This class was approached as a collaboration between myself and the student, allowing their future pursuits to dictate, to a degree, the trajectory of the course. The class was small, consisting of five students, and the students were mainly interested in how to be a self-sustaining artist. As such, their primary questions involved how to price, market, and exhibit their work. This inquiry served as the catalyst for PLEAT, the online gallery I had started, which is detailed throughout my study.

Together, my students and I created a website and an Instagram profile and put out a call for submissions. Together, we analyzed the artist statements and images as they came in. This functioned as a way in which students could learn, first-hand, how curators select artists for exhibitions. Embedding this in

David Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984), students were engaged in the cycle of learning. They read through statements and related them to images while experimenting with how those meanings change in relation to the work of others. Together, we illuminated mattering through exhibitions that were unexpected and intended to enhance meaning being made through digitized spaces. Students were working as artists, researchers, and teachers. It was a true collaborative effort that illuminated what students valued in the work of others and, in turn, their own artwork. This curatorial project provided an opportunity for students to see how other artists work and talk about their art, serving as examples by which students refined their own statements and portfolio. It is through this act of curation that I began to find my voice as a teacher. Curatorial endeavors in the classroom function as an embodiment of a/r/tography as a method of data collection and analysis. The artist, researcher, and teacher work together (Illustration 38) to make visible ideas that both complicate and make clear experiences in the world.

This study is intended to provide a map with traces of my experience in the world of entangled artistic spaces as always becoming, in process, and ever expanding. "The metaphor of a map is another image used to describe rhizomes, for maps have only middles, with no beginnings and endings – they are always becoming (Irwin et al., 2006, p. 71)." Binaries, such as separation of space and the self to other, are disrupted throughout this study. This emphasizes that the research can be accessed from multiple entry points and

functions as just one part of an interconnected network, full of possibilities and different perspectives. A/r/tography is a fitting methodology, along with autoethnography, to interrogate these situations, as they are created by, for, and because of the rhizomatic nature of the spaces and experiences in question.

Illustration 38

With the artist, researcher, and teacher identities working together, I embody and make visible my experiences in the world. Utilizing a/r/tography as a method by which I collect and think with data throughout this study, I construct and make visible my experience in the world, as seen in this self-portrait illustration. By utilizing my experiences as an artist, researcher, and teacher, I provide a multi-faceted perspective that looks at the in-between spaces which may not be immediately clear to the outside world.

Because a/r/tography positions art and graphy as key pieces of data that allow for meaning to emerge in a manner that is embodied and narrative, this situates autoethnography as a complementary component that fits into the rhizome of a/r/tography as living inquiry. Using a/r/tography as a method by which I give meaning to my experiences, I provide both writing and visual manifestations to relay my experiences and further elucidate how I interpreted the experiences of others. Autoethnography makes visible a lived experience as it relates to the greater context of being. Through key markers that ensure rigor, including analytic reflexivity, a visible narrative presence in the written text, and engaging in dialogue with informants beyond the self I am showing a "commitment to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena (Anderson, 2006, as cited in Denzin, 2014, p. 19)." Text is a method by which I detail my experiences as appropriate to this study, but the additional layer of images as a form of biographical narrative and dialogue allows for a marriage of a/r/tography and autoethnography. This provides a robust perspective that can further existing inquiry and improve my understanding of the phenomena in question.

Autoethnographic work resides in the in-between spaces of public and private, which is appropriate to this study regarding entanglements of space. To study self in relation to others is a means of personal, professional, academic, artistic, and social development. All forms of development are interwoven together and can produce compelling questions that enhance current research

and ways of knowing and being in the world. While this study is interrogating my

own motivations, capabilities, and relationships, I see it as having potential to

improve learning not just for myself, but for others. "Autobiographical writing is

both transcendent and immanent, both inside and outside, both internal and

external, both personal and public (Leggo, 2008, p. 5)." Through not only writing,

but also art making, I am asserting and claiming my voice in this research and, in

doing so, I am learning, "to journey well in the world by learning to journey well in

words (Leggo, 2008, p. 12)" and through art. I am asserting that this research

approach, looking simultaneously outward and inward, is best suited for my study

as it is a way in which I can enter a dialogue with the greater context. "…by

thinking about my own life, I can enter into the lived experiences of others, all of

us engaging in conversations that contribute to the constitution of understanding

and connection (Leggo, 2008, p. 12)." By using autoethnography and

a/r/tography in tandem as methods by which I collect and think with my data, I

am approaching my study with an openness of possibilities. I actively and

thoroughly interrogating my place in the world and my place within prior research

on learning, artistic development, and well-being.

r e s e a r c h s e t t i n g

This section describes and justifies the spaces that I chose to interrogate

for this study and how they relate to previously mentioned historical, theoretical,

and methodological issues that are relevant to the problem. The research

settings emphasized are not to be seen as being hierarchical, but rather existing

because of and with each other. While there is a chronological series of events discussed, each setting should be treated as actively influencing and being influenced by the other in this study.

<div align="center">t h e s t u d i o</div>

The studio as a site of creation is an important setting in this study, as I am asserting that active experimentation and creation are important components in the cycle of learning. The studio provides a space for thinking, for making, for display, and for discourse. As described throughout this study, a space of creation can be physical, virtual, interstitial, and symbolic. I do place a focus on my own relationship to my current studio belonging in a room with 4 walls, currently serving as an office/maker space, with books occupying as much space as art making materials (illustration 39). However, the studio as a site of synthesis and creation also resides within my computer. Much of my work is made digitally in the design application Photoshop. Creative activity also occurs through Instagram, as I curate my profile and online gallery. The transcendence of physical space and the disruption of the binaries of media and of materiality has catapulted me into new questions of meaning, of making, and of validity. It is through my experiences in the studio, physical and virtual, that I am able to enact my artist/researcher/teacher identities and a relational synthesis of text/image, image/place, and text/place. While looking primarily at my own space of creation, I also look to the spaces of others to situate my experience within the greater artistic context.

Illustration 39

The studio serves as a site of creation, data collection, reflection, disruption, and synthesis. It is a space that is physical, tangible, virtual, and abstract. The studio can be positioned within a real-life artistic community, an office space, online, or a living room floor. It is both place and non-place, concrete and conceptual. The setting of my current studio, illustrated above, and the concept of a studio space is important for its inherent purpose as a site of experimentation, reflection, and of making.

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i n s t a g r a m

Instagram (Illustration 40) is a setting that has obvious importance to this study as it is a site of creation in digitized form. Instagram is not merely a virtual place where one can access images of others and reflect on the images of their own. It is a truly relational space that allows users to enter into the lived experience of others and create rhizomatic connections through image and text. Hashtags insert images into an enormous network of other images through text, available to anyone searching for the same themes. The design of Instagram allows for relatively easy reflection due to the accessibility of past images. Liking and commenting on images gives the user a voice that is then entered into another user's scope of influence. Instagram is increasing in size and intensity every day. It is a site in a continuous state of making and unmaking. It is a site that acts as a million constellations that are constantly being added to and reshaped, with new territories claimed within each new amalgamation. Instagram is positioned in my study as a studio, a place of display, and a site with great possibilities for research. By viewing Instagram as an assemblage of different spaces, I am positing the possibilities of the site reach far beyond being just a digitized mode of display. The use of Instagram is a communicative act in and of itself and it has had a real impact on what I make as an artist. I am exposed to nearly every type of work and process being employed in the current art world. This exposure leads to a degree of inevitable influence and learning through feedback provided to myself and others.

Instagram serves as a virtual site for data collection, communication, display, and experimentation, housed in my mobile phone. It serves as a studio and as a gallery, a communal space and a site for more autonomous learning. It disrupts binaries of space, time, and location. This illustration shows my Instagram feed, which is a continuously updating component of the site where new work from those I follow is displayed. It is here where I can also see feedback from others and where my followers may see and respond to my work.
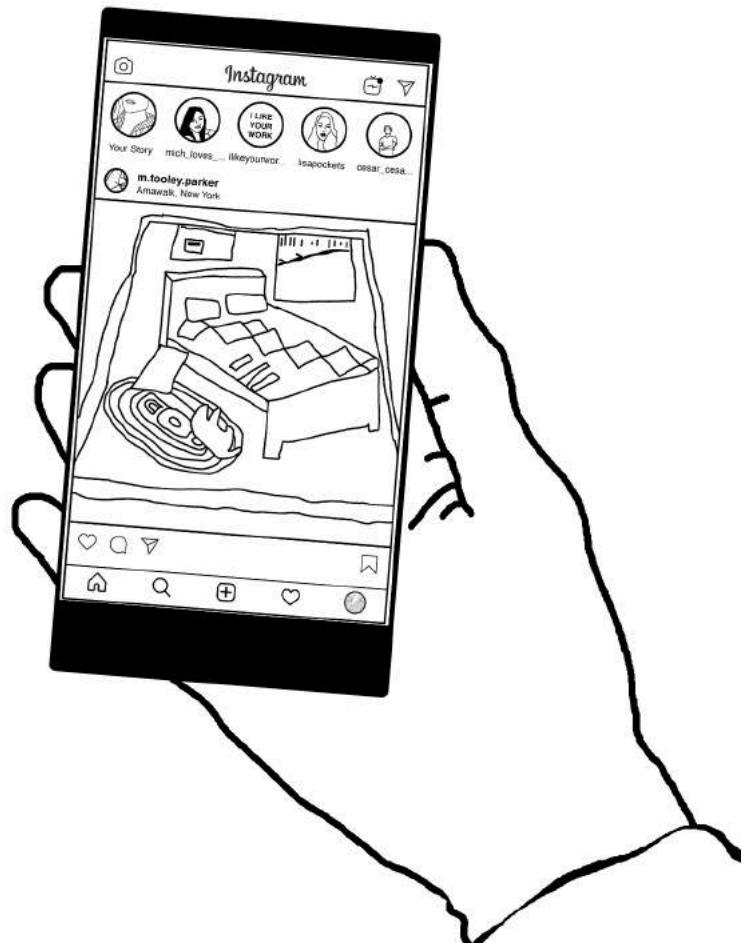
Illustration 40

t h e g a l l e r y

The gallery (Illustration 41) is the third research setting in this study. From

August 20-24, I had an exhibition on view at The George Caleb Bingham Gallery

at the University of Missouri. This exhibition asked for image and text

submissions from participants that described how Instagram impacted their

studio practice. It allowed the space of display, the participants often hidden

studio practice, and social media practice to interact and intertwine with one

another. The gallery site functioned as a place to display data but also served as

the beginnings of how I would organize data for this dissertation. As I sought

some organization to the large amount of information before me, common

concerns began to emerge from the submissions. The gallery space also

became the inspiration for how I analyzed data. The in-between spaces of the

printed submissions revealed the images and text in conversation with each

other. By strategically placing data compiled in pieces of paper hung at eye level

according to themes, I encouraged visitors to move through and in-between the

submissions with purpose. I also placed data in paper form on desks,

encouraging users to sit, reflect, focus, and to make their own rhizomatic

connections. Instagram is seen as a virtual version of display that interacts with

more traditional practices of curation and exhibition. The gallery setting, in the

many forms discussed in this study, is a space to not only show, but to perform

meaning and interact with others.
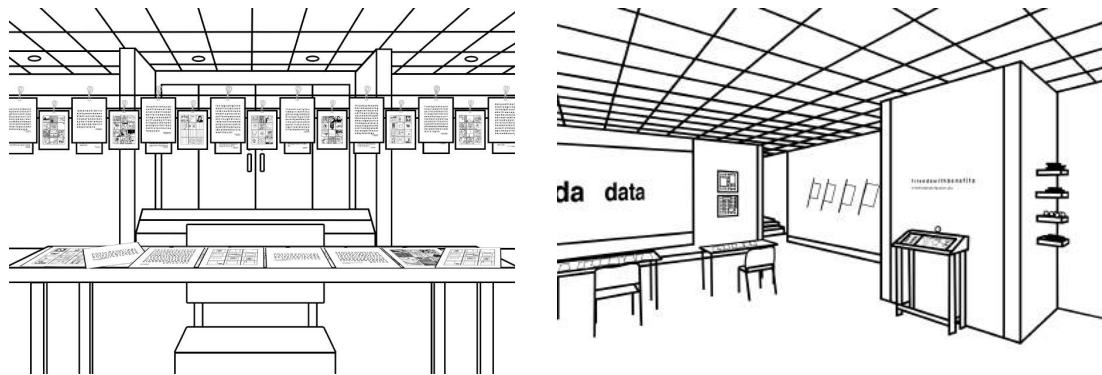
Illustration 41

The physical gallery space and Instagram both serve as site of data organization, display, and collection. In the *Friends with Benefits* exhibition, illustrated here, I strategically placed submissions according to themes. The placement also encouraged viewers to weave through the data and view the submissions as interacting with each other. I encouraged viewers to investigate the in-between spaces of image and text in the paper that was hung and to make their own connections with the paper on desks in the gallery.

d a t a c o l l e c t i o n m e t h o d s

This section details how and why I collected data for this study. Using a/r/tography as a methodology of situations, I purposefully set out to complicate my understandings and embrace the always changing, relational nature of data and space. Each entanglement of space and artistic practice interrogated in this study is "concerned with a relationship between the artwork and its site, that is, how the creation, presentation, and reception of an artwork is situated in the physical conditions of a particular location (Irwin, et al., 2006, 79)." I include methods and procedures used to collect image and text on Instagram, through journal writing, and for a real-life exhibition. The data collection methods detailed in this section were selected with a/r/tography and autoethnography in mind as a way to make visible and artistically craft a thorough description of the phenomena in question.

This research involves the collection of data in the form of surveys and observations. However, the impetus for these methods began in 2015 with artist interviews I conducted through my online gallery, PLEAT. For each show, I curate two artists whose work harbors both reflective and disruptive characteristics of each other, in an effort to expand the conceptual interpretations and possibilities of each body of work. Artist who are selected for shows can participate in a blog post about their work. These interviews provide the artist with four prompts, detailed below. While most artists chose to address all the questions, some choose to only answer some. Participation was voluntary.

- Please describe your work, both visually and conceptually.

- What motivate you in terms of your art practice?

- Who are your influences? What role do they play in your work?

- How has social media impacted your studio practice?

I have conducted seventy-eight artist interviews with seventy-nine artists (one

interview was done with a collaborative art duo), all public and available on the

website's blog, with portions of the interviews featured on Instagram posts

throughout each artist's respective exhibitions. These interviews were a way in

which I collected and presented data to give viewers more insight to each artist's

process and, in turn, more insight into the work being displayed. What was

continually intriguing to me were the answers to the last prompt about social

media, as the gallery is an online-only venture that is facilitated primarily though

Instagram. The responses were varied and ranged from gratitude to disdain of

digitized spaces. These interviews functioned as a pilot study, later used to

design the subsequent exhibition used in my research. By conducting these

interviews, I realized that the last question provided a wealth of data and was

most interesting to what I was wanting to pursue further in this research.

On May 16, 2018, I put out a call for submissions on my Instagram profile

for a public exhibition (Illustration 42). The show would be titled "Friends with

Benefits" and would take place August 20-24, 2018 at the George Caleb

Bingham Gallery at the University of Missouri. The call asked for submissions to

include approximately two hundred characters on how or if social media,

Instagram specifically, has impacted their artistic studio practice (Illustration 43).

I also asked for each submission to include the user's Instagram handle, their

location (city, state, and/or country), and a screenshot of four rows of a user's

Instagram profile that they feel best illustrates or relates to their submitted text. It

was important to me to stress that all submissions would be included in the show,

as I did not want to subject bias, even unintentional, to what was featured in the

exhibition. The call for submissions asked for artists to submit text and image

since I am working within an a/r/tography as a methodology. Looking through the

lens of an artist, a researcher, and a teacher, three distinct but interconnected

lenses, I use these surveys to gain a deeper insight as to how artists conduct

their own practice and inquiry on Instagram.

Because it privileges the use of images and hashtags, I see Instagram as

an optimal site of a/r/tographical research. This took shape in my journal writings

and illustrations, with observation as the data collection method. Text and image

move with and through one another on Instagram and the communal nature of

the site continually puts images and text in relation to the identity of others and of

the self. The images I post on the site demonstrate who I am and what I value.

The rhizomatic possibilities of Instagram are most apparent to me within those in-

between spaces and cycles of thinking/conceptualizing/reflecting and the

experience of sharing with others. This relationality impacts how I learn and

understand and I collected data knowing that it is always in a state of becoming.

The call for entry for this exhibition was posted to my Instagram account, as seen in this illustration. The call was public and accessible to anyone who looked at my profile, whether they followed me or not. It was also accessible to anyone who searched under the hashtags #callforsubmissions, #callforentry, and #callforart. While nearly all the participants already followed me, I connected with ten new artists who submitted as they were forwarded the call for entry by a mutual friend.

Illustration 42
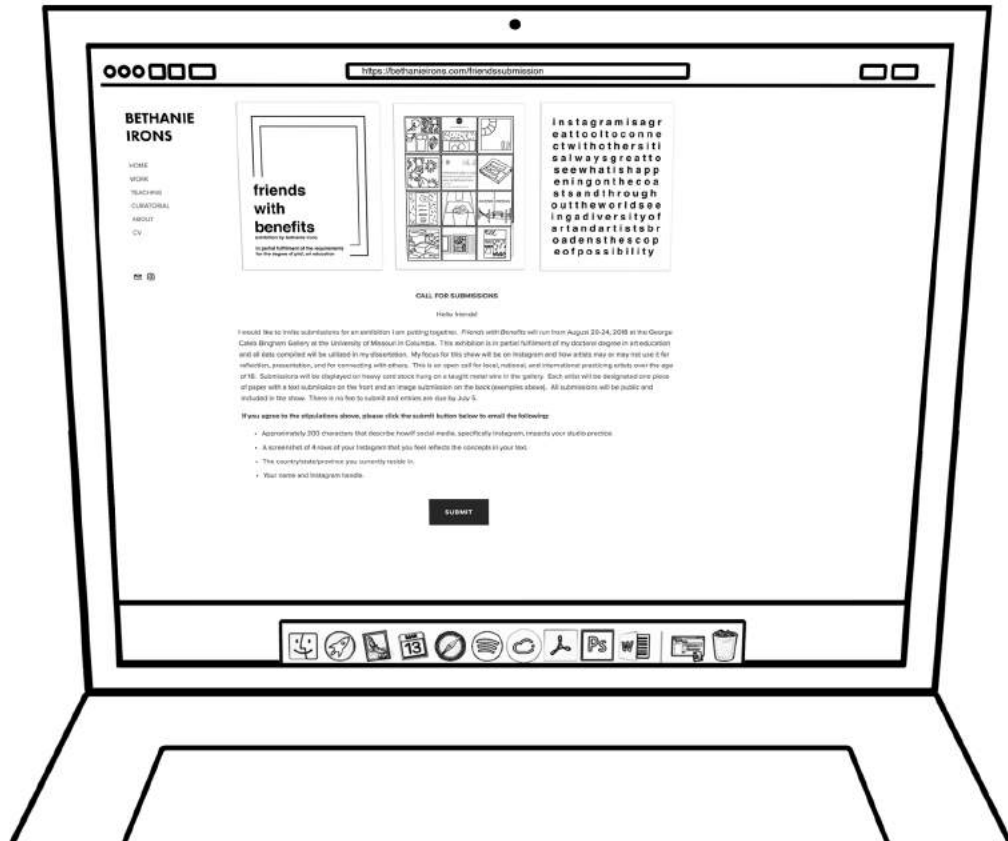
Illustration 43

The call for entry link directed users to a submission page located on my personal art website, illustrated here. This page asked practicing artists over the age of 18 to submit approximately 200 characters about how/if social media impacts their studio practice, along with a visual submission of 4 rows of their Instagram that they felt echoes the text statement. I also asked participants to submit their name, Instagram handle, and their location. I made clear on the submissions site that all submissions would be used and that this data would be public in the exhibition space as well as used in my dissertation.

I also journaled about my observations with autoethnographic writings and illustrations throughout the process of arranging the exhibition and while I focused on my interactions within the entangled spaces of the gallery, studio, and Instagram. This allowed me space for purposeful reflection and required me to slow down my perception and curate the most important details to include in my journal and drawings. I more deeply considered my own understanding of the impact of social media on my artistic development because I was interacting with the experiences of others that were often very different from my own. By illuminating and considering disruptive, ruptured, and rhizomatic moments, my habitual thought processes and beliefs were challenged and either reinforced or changed. Through image and text, both from myself and others who are embedded in an artistic community on Instagram, I collected data that would serve to place my own experience within the lives of others.

Beginning on May 16, 2018, the day that I put out the call for entry for the *Friends with Benefits* show, I began to keep weekly journal entries that were focused on my experience with the exhibition, my own work, and with Instagram, and how it all might fit within this research. These pages are detailed in chapter four and include varying degrees of complexity of thought, ranging from short notes attempting to string together disparate concepts to more fully formed exhibition statements and working abstracts. These journal entries continued throughout writing this dissertation. They are made visible through the illustrations of my journal pages and in the image captions throughout this paper.

A/r/tography and autoethnography are the methodologies that I employ to answer my research questions and the use of text and image, through the exhibition submissions and through my journals, served as fitting and necessary sources of data.

The image and text already supplied on Instagram also became a source of data collected and became a part of my recorded observations. I approached and collected this data through direct interaction with individuals on a one to one basis and through indirect interaction with them in the communal setting of the site. There are several ways in which the site was already collecting it and ways in which I intentionally collected it for the purpose of this study. First, the users that I have chosen to follow and those who have chosen to follow me are available on my Instagram profile. With that information, I can compile and further understand my scope of influence and who I chose to allow in to that persuasive territory. Second, my Instagram profile allows for me to access work that I have made and posted in the past and more easily reflect and make connections and assess my growth. I can also see the number of likes and comments on each image, which provides me with data that can be used to interrogate the impact of feedback. By using hashtags on each image that I post, I am categorizing my images with specific themes that I felt were relevant to my concept. This text gives me further insight into my choices and my intended audience, as hashtags on public profiles such as mine are available to anyone. Hashtags serve as rhizomatic connections to other images but they are also

another way in which I am curating my scope of influence. Representing all this

data from Instagram in my illustrations, as with the rest of the data in this study, I

am further curating and collecting my observational data that is of significance to

this study.

<p align="center">**r e s e a r c h s a m p l e**</p>

As an autoethnographic study, my main research sample is myself,

drawing on my own experience within hybrid, entangled spaces of artistic

practice. However, I also include both virtual and real-life exhibitions that I have

curated to accompany this study. This situates my experience within the greater

social context in which I am embedded. This section explains the sample used

for the exhibition data and provides a rationale for how and why participants were

selected. I also detail pertinent characteristics of the participants.

The sample of my pilot study included seventy-nine participants that

participated in the seventy-eight artist interviews on PLEAT's blog. They are all

adult learners, most of whom have some academic training in the arts, with a

small number being self-taught, per the information publically available on their

websites. Sixty-seven participants are living in the United States, six in the

United Kingdom, two in Canada, two in Australia, one in Germany, and one in the

Philippines. All participants are active in artistic practices and work with a

diverse range of materials, concepts, and forms of representation. I follow all

interview participants on Instagram and they follow me as well.

The blog posts on PLEAT's website served as an impetus for the IRL

<p align="center">148</p>

exhibition *Friends with Benefits* and the sample demographics were similar. In total, I received seventy-seven submissions, including my own. Sixty-five participants are living in the United States, four in the United Kingdom, two in Australia, one in Germany, one in the Philippines, one in Spain, and two in Korea (Illustration 44). All submissions received were from adults, over the age of eighteen, per the submission guidelines. I restricted the sample to adults due to their already established, although always still becoming, artistic practice. Many of the participants have degrees in fine art or are pursuing art degrees, but all are practicing artists. I define the category of practicing artist as one who continually makes work, engages with other works of art, and exhibits work on a consistent, continual basis. Each one of the participants in this exhibition engages with others by sharing their work on Instagram, as I follow all survey participants on the site and they follow me as well. As evident in the image submissions, the aesthetics and concepts represented in the artwork varied drastically, and included naturalistic paintings, abstract sculptures, conceptual photography, to name a few. This speaks to my scope of influence that exists in the entanglement of space and rhizomatic connections that may emerge within that space in which both the participants and I are embedded.

By publishing an open, international call for entry for the exhibition, I aimed to collect data from a wide population of participants. While most participants are located in the United States, there are submissions from six other countries. There is a near equal split in the number of participants who

identify as either male or female. The participants were all those that were active

on Instagram and identified themselves as artists. While this may have produced

bias in the self-reported impact of social media, it was necessary that each

participant was embedded in the online community and that this research

emphasize artistic practice to provide a more focused study. All submissions

were included in the exhibition and this research and I did not exclude any of this

data from my findings. Although bias is still inherent in the fact that all

participants were solicited through Instagram and the submission required that a

participant include their Instagram user name. Because my research focuses on

the entanglements of artistic space, including virtual, participants had to have

internet connectivity in order to submit. Participants also had to self-identify as

an artist, as the call for submissions detailed. This provides a distinct, although

highly curated sample of a particular user characteristic.

As a qualitative study, who I am is significant to the research and I view

the researcher as an active component of the research itself. The choice of the

method of autoethnography was intentional, as I am deeply embedded in and

unable to separate myself from my artistic community of practice. I identify as a

practicing artist who has had relatively positive experiences in the entanglement

of artistic practice that is comprised of the studio, gallery, and Instagram. I

identity as a heterosexual female, am thirty-five years old, and, although I am

technically considered a millennial, I grew up without technology. My age

situates me in a unique position of being equally immersed in and absent from

the world of technology throughout my life. I also have both my bachelor's and master's degrees in studio art and am a doctoral candidate in art education, making me a well-educated participant with an academic perspective on the arts. I have primarily lived in the Midwestern United States and have struggled with access to art museums and galleries, which makes me particularly interested in expanding the definition of sites of artistic practice. These demographics make me who I am and impact my interactions with the world around me and, thus, this research. I believe that the makings of who I am began long before I was born, as the social, economical, and racial constructs that were predetermined by my parents and the culture in which I have lived, afforded me certain opportunities. It has also served as a constraint, specifically geographically and financially, as I have lived in the Midwest and come from a middle-class family. "Many times, a person will act as if he or she made his or her own history, when in fact, he or she was forced to make the history he or she lived (Denzin, 2014, p. 57)." My history, and the history of the population sample in this study, is seen in this light, as a product of their context and always becoming within that context and my experience. "The dividing line between fact and fiction thus becomes blurred in the autobiographical and biographical text, for if an author can make up facts about his or her life, who is to know what is true and what is false? The point is, however…that if an author thinks something existed and believes in its existence, its effects are real (Denzin, 2014, p. 15)." Current, past, and future, histories and identities are forever entangled within context and circumstance to relay my truth.

friendswithbenefits

exhibitionbybethanieirons
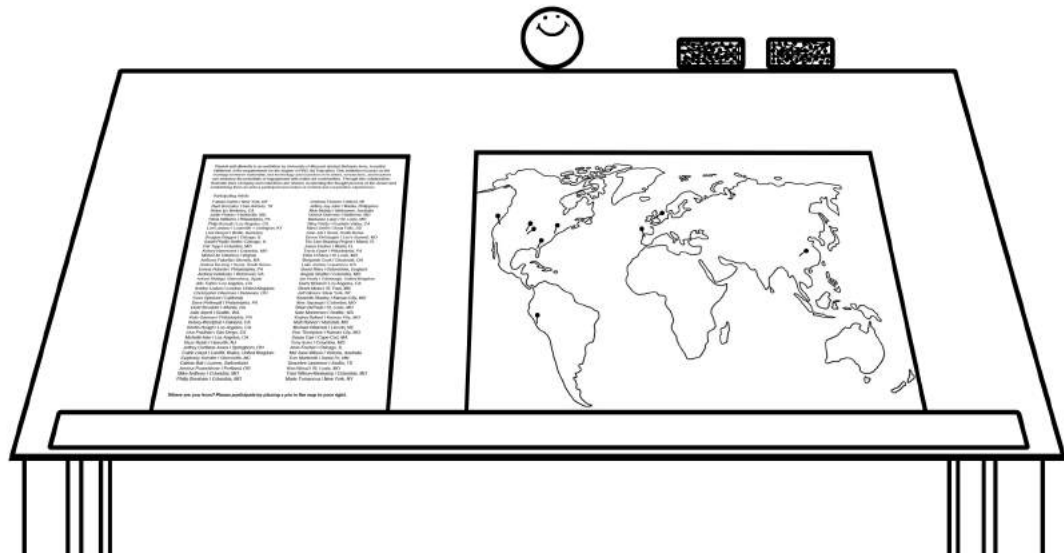
Illustration 44

The participant sample for this study was solicited through a public Instagram post. All submissions were included in the exhibition and subsequent data used for this study. The sample included a near equal number of males and females. Although participants were primarily living in the United States, six other countries are represented. As shown in this illustration, the participant list, including their name and location, was displayed and public at the exhibition. Visitors to the gallery were also invited to place a pin on where they would geographically define where they are from, showing their interconnectedness to the participants in the exhibition.

d a t a a n a l y s i s m e t h o d s

This section describes the methods that I used to analyze the data

obtained from the surveys and my journal writings, illustrations, and

observations. The analysis methods were a reciprocal and continually reflective

process, occurring before, during, and after the collection of data.

In a world that is increasingly focused on quickness of thought and instant

gratification, thanks, in no small part, to digital technology and social media, it is

important to me that this research embrace methods that disrupt habitual

rhythms of thought. The text submissions I received for the *Friends with Benefits*

exhibition were displayed with a space between each letter (Illustration 45). This

imposes a different rhythm by which the viewer and myself read the data and is a

reflection of the overall analysis of data in this study. By changing the rhythm of

reading and observing, I am calling for more focused attention, contemplation,

and reflection. This also troubles neoliberal research practices that favor the

culture of speed. In the process of analyzing the data for this study, this has

aided me in finding irregular rhythms, patterns, and embracing notions of

becoming. The irregular flow of text is intended to transport the viewer and

myself away from the normative, quick system of reading text, encouraging

agency in finding one's own meaning. Not simply a binary of slow and fast,

presenting text and conducting research in this manner allows for the emergence

of the new by analyzing data in terms of intensities and cadence. "Slow being

defined and practiced potentially only in relation to fast/rapid/efficient limits the

potentialities of rhythm and the ways in which rhythm could be becoming and emerging. Instead, one might imagine and create variations in speed and intensities situating slowness and rhythm in diverse and shifting ontological planes (Koro-Ljungberg & Wells, 2018, p. 146)." The analysis of the data collected in this research resides in this space where the normative rhythm and movement of text, image, and data are disrupted.

While constantly being aware of the habitual ways in which I attempt to understand the world around me, I disrupted my own knowings by incorporating surveys from others. The surveys conducted for the exhibition were analyzed alongside my journal entries. I searched for both commonalities and thoughts that were not affirming of my own. I initially reviewed for emergent themes to organize the submissions. I attempted to avoid generalization, instead focusing on what I saw as the major concerns evident in the text. Then, I illustrated the visual component of the submissions. Using themes I pulled from the text the participant gave, I abstracted the artist's work in a manner that I felt was in communication with the artist's text. It was important to me, however, that I not change the artist's work. They submitted the image and text with intent and I did not want to lose the artist's essence in my illustration. My thought process is further clarified in the captions on each set of illustrations in chapter four.

I used a constant comparative method that allowed for the data and the manner of analysis to continually inform one another. As data came in, it was analyzed, and that analysis informed my desire for subsequent data to be

collected. Although presented in a linear fashion, this process was reciprocal

and in constant movement with and because of the data and evaluation methods,

happing in tandem and simultaneously. Through collecting data in the form of

surveys for the exhibition, I analyzed it and illuminated my interpretation of

importance through my observational journal writings and illustrations. This then

served as an impetus for more data to be compiled and investigated. Because

this research should be seen as always in a state of becoming, saturation was

never fully achieved. Nevertheless, a dissertation must stop somewhere. This

stopping point was determined when I felt that my research questions were

adequately addressed or replaced with more interesting questions that can be

applied to future research.

l i m i t a t i o n s

This section considers the limitations and delimitations of the study.

Limitations, occurring in all type of research, are those aspects of this study that

are largely out of my control, but nevertheless are a threat to the overall validity.

While I provided an open, international call for survey submissions for my

exhibition *Friends with Benefits*, I only received seventy-six submissions.

Because this is a relatively small sample considering that over 300 million people

actively use Instagram, the experiences accounted for are limited and, thus,

should not be taken as generalizable or similar to the experiences of all those

who may use the site. I also collected data from artists who use Instagram, so

the scope of the artist's perspective in the entanglement of artistic places of

practice is limited to those who use the site. As such, artists who use other forms of social media, such as Facebook, Pinterest, and Tumblr, instead of Instagram, are not included in this study. Also of importance, although not entirely under my control, is the audience which my call for submissions reached. It is more probable that an artist may have viewed my call if they followed me or followed someone who shared the post. Although I did use a public hashtag in the Instagram post that detailed the call for submissions, unless a person were search for #callforsubmissions, #callforentry, or #callforart, they may not see it. These factors may have limited and contributed to the number of submissions and the type of participants. As previously mentioned, since I already followed many of the participants on Instagram, their responses may be biased, as they were chosen at some point to be in my scope of influence due to a mutual aesthetic or conceptual choices in artwork.

Delimitations are employed in this study to provide a focused perspective that may more distinctly answer my research questions. The surveys asked participants to answer one question about how social media impacts their studio practice. By providing this boundary, it defined my project's scope. Although the number of submissions may have been limited by the exposure to the call I posted, my research design is not meant to be generalizable to the population of artists or to the population at large who use social media. The surveys allow me focused attention on one specific aspect of the participants lived experience. This focus allowed me to more thoroughly draw out themes which then served to

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embed my experience within the greater context. By analyzing the experiences of others who identify as practicing, adult artists, including and illuminating both sameness and difference, I can more rigorously and honestly interrogate my own motivations as I identify in the same given category as them.

My experiences on Instagram also are limited to my scope of influence, which I curate by following others and Instagram curates, to a degree, through its algorithm. I am also curating my audience, to a degree, through my engagement with others through likes, comments, and hashtags available to the public. These interactions may solicit followers, allowing me to enter into their scope of influence and potentially them into mine. This curated community impacts the likes and comments I receive on the images I post and possibly the efficacy that may be impacted as a result. The users I follow on the site also have an impact on the images that I am exposed to and thus influenced by. Thinking with Bandura (1986) and Kolb's (1984) learning models that make up my conceptual framework, my scope of influence not only has an impact on how I learn and what I make, but my resulting capability and how I interact. The limitations and delimitations that are curated through the use of social media impact my overall attitude toward Instagram and its community, and potentially how I view the entanglement of artistic spaces. While I cannot follow every artist on Instagram due to time constraints, limiting the number of users I follow serves as a delimitation in which I am focusing my attention on that which I most highly value, further detailed in chapter four.

s u m m a r y

This chapter discussed the methodology and overall design of my research, including my research approach, setting, participants, and methods of data collection and analysis. While keeping my research questions always in mind, I discussed how my overall methodology was important and relevant to how I function as an artist, a researcher, and a teacher. By continually including my positionality and thoroughly discussing limitations and ethical concerns, I am approaching this study with rigorous reflexivity. I maintain authenticity in my account of my experience in the world by situating it within the lives of others. The findings discussed in the next chapter use this methodology as a relevant, although disruptive approach, intended to provide a greater understanding of how I might enhance my relationship with this interwoven space of artistic practice to cultivate greater creative development, learning, and well-being.

chapter four

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i n t r o d u c t i o n

This chapter focuses on what I found within and because of the data

collected for this study. I begin by interpreting artist survey responses and

include my journal writings and illustrations as a relational component of my

interpretations. I interrogate themes that emerge and give examples of how,

when, and where the concerns visually and emotionally manifest. This ultimately

assists me in rooting my own experience within the lives of others and deeply

investigating how the entanglement of hybrid artistic space impacts my own

practice as an artist, researcher, and teacher.

For years, artists have practiced the act of purposeful inquiry in their

studio with reflection typically taking place in physical portfolios of work. The

manifestations of this artistic research have traditionally been made available

through exhibitions in galleries and museums. However, due to geographical

and economic constraints, the option to make and/or view works of art through

these two spaces is not always convenient or possible. Sites like Instagram hold

the potential to not only for immediate and continual reflection through the

database of images that a user collects as well as the ability to see works of art

on a continual basis. In my experience, Instagram has not only functioned as an

alternative form of the portfolio and as a site of display, but it also holds the

capacity for rhizomatic connections that contribute to a community of learning.

The site's design allows for a collaborative synergy of image and text from artists

around the world with one's own postings. Each image seen and posted

becomes a part of a giant constellation that is always in a state of becoming and being affective and affected.

The investigations that I have made as an artist, researcher, and teacher using Instagram have proven to be a valuable springboard to my current research interests. There is a wealth of data continually being generated on social media, which has served as both a blessing and a curse for me. The huge amount of information available on Instagram has been challenging to harness and focus on. While I follow over a thousand users and have a nearly equal number of users following me, to be able to deeply consider every one of those users as qualitative data sources in a thoughtful manner is a feat not possible. As a result, I put out a call for submissions to my exhibition *Friends with Benefits* to obtain data in the form of both image and text from a more focused number of users. All the submissions came from users I follow and who follow me as well, so I reside in their scope of influence and I am in theirs as well.

Starting with my own submission to the show, which I used as an example for the call for entry, I examined the text and images that I had chosen (Illustration 45). The four rows of my Instagram showed work made by me, including shows and publications I was a part of. There was little reference to my private life and no reference to other artists who influenced me. It was mainly a display of work used in a similar manner to a website and told a story of what I wanted to project out into the world. My text submission told a different, although still intertwined, story that focused on that greater context itself. I talked about

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connecting with other artists and how Instagram broadens my scope of influence

with access to the work of others. My images gave little information about how I

was influenced and how my real-life experiences informed the work being

displayed. However, my text showed that I was deeply invested in furthering the

entanglement of real-life and social media life.

instagramisagr
eattooltoconne
ctwithothersiti
salwaysgreatto
seewhatishappe
ningonthecoast
sandthroughout
theworldseeing
adiversityofart
andartistsbroad
ensthescopeofp
ossibility

@bethanie_irons
Columbia, MO

My own submission demonstrates a desire to connect with others through the text I had written, but the images reflected another, although not opposite, story. I see the images and text that I created as still being very much interconnected, as they reveal how conflicted I am in my need to present a shiny facade to the world, without evidence of my process, while also possessing a deep desire to connect with others. As I received other submissions I noticed that many of the users I follow practice an open dialogue about their work and include their work in-progress and the work of others that they are influenced by. I decided to investigate my motivations further through journal writing.

Illustration 45

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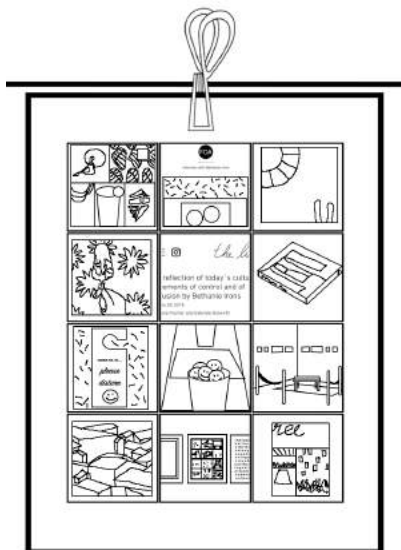
As I began writing in my journal about my submission, I began to realize that my motives were very much focused on feedback received. I began a list of my fears (Illustration 46). I realized that I may be missing out on opportunities for deep connection with others by not allowing empathy for myself. I placed a heavy burden on obtaining a high number of likes, followers, and positive comments. If I did not receive a high quality and quantity of feedback, I would consider it to not be a failure and would delete the post. Rooting my experience within Albert Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, I knew that my own self-efficacy related to my expectation of feedback and how that could have an impact on what I make. The fears I wrote in my journal showed that each fear had a stimulus. Failure could manifest itself through social media in the form of a low number of likes or shame in the public visibility of disapproval. Even further embedded is a fear that I will lose my motivation to make work or that I will make work that is created only to please others. This is one of many ways in which hybrid artistic space entangles with real-life practice. What happens online impacts what happens in the studio and in exhibition spaces, and vice versa. It is not simply a cause and effect situation, but complex, interconnected experiences that impact how, why, and when artistic thinking and learning takes place. By beginning with a general stimulus and then peeling back layers to reveal more significant meaning, I intend to get to the root of my concerns and how those concerns may impact my studio practice.
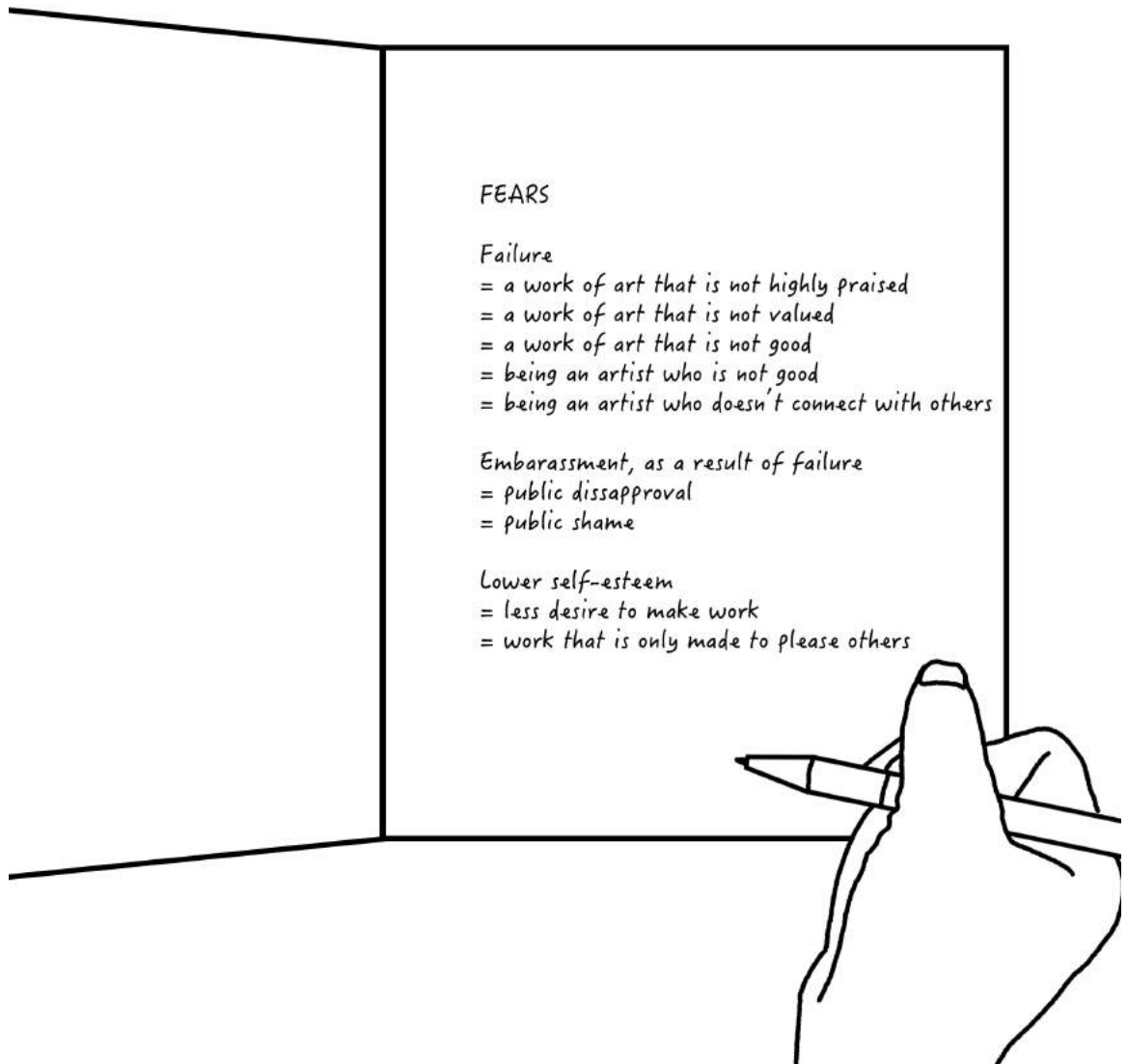
Illustration 46

Through journal writing, I sought to not only detail what was happening in the process of conducting this research, but to also uncover my deeply embedded motivations. This entry demonstrated that I was afraid of failure, but ultimately afraid that failure would detrimentally impact the work that I made.

As each submission to the *Friends with Benefits* show came in, I kept a journal of my interpretations of the images and text each artist submitted. I began to visualize my understandings as residing in the in-between spaces of the submissions, with each artist's work and thoughts informing my own through both similar and opposing viewpoints. My opinions were stretched and became flexible when considering the experience of others. I was confronted with viewpoints that were not always affirming of my own, which served as a starting point in the re-search of my internal value system. Instead of thinking in terms of binaries or of noticing sameness/difference, the mattering of that sameness/difference took priority.

It was important to me that this data be analyzed slowly and with focus. This is the reasoning behind the space between each letter in the text submissions, as I wanted to encourage viewers to think with the data in a deliberate manner. Each submission was carefully considered on its own and in relation to others. As I interpreted intent from each submission, themes began to emerge (Illustrations 47 and 48). These themes then prompted me to group submissions together and use the collective concerns as an impetus for re-searching my own relationship to the entangled space of artistic practice. The themes that emerged were concerned with the following: motivation, reflection, place, research, experimentation, networking and promotion, curation and display, and connection to others. One final theme, it's complicated, grouped together submissions that displayed a love/hate relationship with social media.

Each artist grouped within this theme showed concern for the derogatory impact

of social media on their practice, however, they continue to use Instagram

nevertheless. These themes dictated my organization of the submissions for the

exhibition.
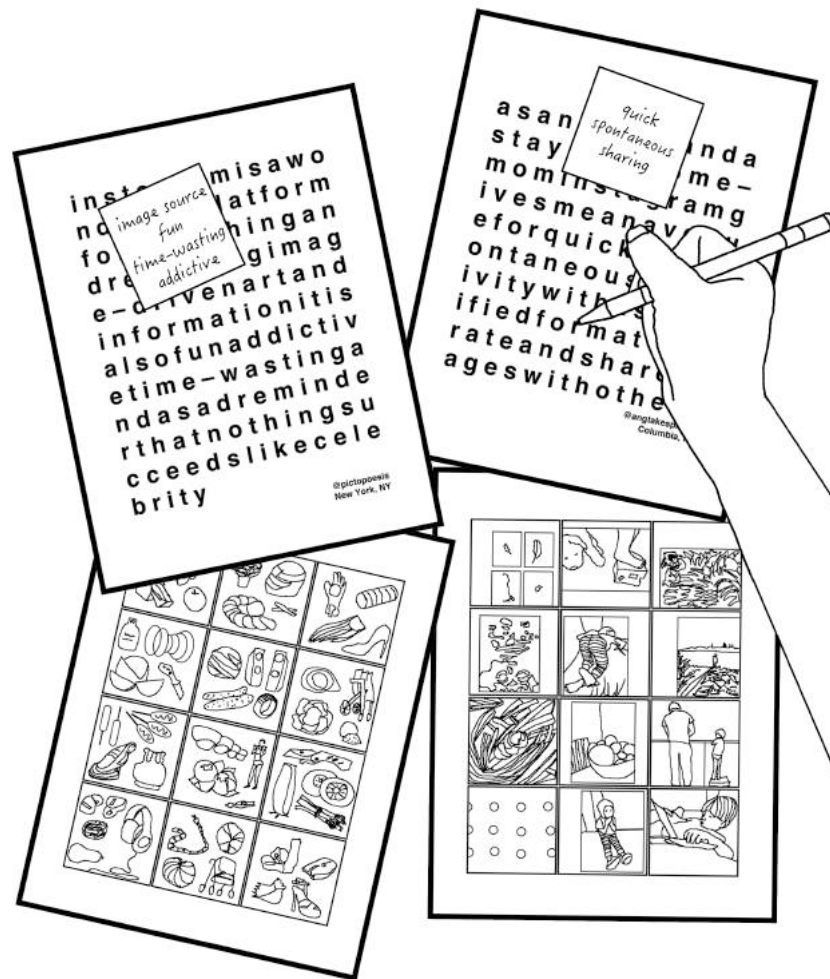
Illustration 47

The process of categorizing images thematically involved me re-reading the
submissions on a continual basis and deeply considering how I interpreted the tone of
the creator's message. I tagged each printed out submission with themes on a post-it
note.

Illustration 48

Much like how I curate PLEAT's exhibitions, I grouped artists whose submissions reflected and/or troubled one another. The goal of this process is not intended to separate submissions into binaries or generalizations, but rather to provide a more focused account of the experience.

The call for submissions asked for both images and text, as a/r/tography is the methodology used for this study. The artist provided captions for each image through their text submission, but I used illustrations to further enact a conversation with the text. As I read through submissions and as I negotiated themes, I considered how the visual elements were in relation with the text. While remaining cognizant of artistic intent, I abstracted and illuminated how the visual and text components related. I did not add any visual content nor did I seek to change the conceptual tone of the submissions. These illustrations were not meant to simply represent the submissions nor were they used to create a more aesthetically pleasing component of this dissertation. Rather, they enacted a state of incompleteness, of possibility. Through drawing, I can better understand text. Through text, I can better articulate the nuances in my drawings. I allow text and image to move with and through each other, simultaneously being affected by and affective to one another. The illustrations serve as another way in which I theorize and make sense of data, embracing my experience and perspective within a community of practice. In this research, writing and illustration act as a mediation of thought by which I remain reflexive and allow meaningful reality to emerge. I make my experience visible to others, as that experience exists because of others. The occupation of an a/r/tographer can be seen as one that finds rhythm and makes waves in the sea of information that engulfs our daily lives. Image and text, virtual and real-life space, creator and viewer, all become an entanglement and a rhizome. These situations are

inextricably connected and actively and continually sprout new lines of flight with each interruption/rupture to habitual thought processes.

For each theme, I also interrogated how the shared concern visually and emotionally manifests for me. My journal writings and illustrations function as another entanglement of conversation; interconnections that are not merely descriptive but are constitutive.   I make meaning through the use of art and text, enacting a relational discourse. My voice emerges within the in-between spaces, as I situate my journal writings and illustrations with, within, and because of the experiences of others. The submissions and the relational conversation that manifested in my journal writings and illustrations served to address my sub questions:

- How does hybrid artistic space impact the studio practice of others and what are the main concerns?
- How do those concerns manifest for me?

The following pages include all survey submissions organized according to major concerns that I interpreted from the image and text submitted. Each submission was printed on one piece of paper, with the text on one side and the images on the other. In order for both sides to be visible and in more clear conversation, I illustrated each submission with the top row displaying the text and the bottom row displaying the images. Each submission interacts with itself and then with others within the grouping. I then provide examples in text and image form of how, when, and where those concerns manifest for me.

afilterarecordk
eeperatoolacon
nection[amotiva
tion]acelebratio
nadisappointme
ntalingeringque
stionasafetynet
ameditationare
assuranceadail
ypracticeaperm
issiongivenapla
cetostay

@katemortt
Seattle, WA

ilookatdozenso
fotherartiswo
rkdailyoninstag
ramitisavaluabl
ereminderthats
omuchispossibl
eforpaintingwhi
ch[canbeverymo
tivating]ondays
whentheworkfe
elsdullorstalle
dout

@afalcetta
Beverly, MA

iamstillfiguring
outwhatroleinst
agramplaysform
easanartistihav
enotusedthepla
tformmuchbutit
hink[ithasmotiv
atedmypractice]
seeingwhatmyp
eersaredoingin
spiresmetobem
orefocused

@briandepauliart
St. Louis, MO

Illustration 49

Here, I am illustrating the significance of outside influences on motivation. Showing one's own work alongside the work of others makes visible the importance of the communal aspect of Instagram in relation to studio practice. Seeing the work of others can inspire greater dedication to one's craft, but it also requires continual management to ensure that comparisons are motivating and not discouraging.

instagramremai
nsaprimaryoutl
etforpublicisin
gmyworkandcon
nectingwitharti
ststhereisacon
sistencytoigwh
ichreaffirmsmy
connectiontoth
eartworldattime
swhenifeeldise
ngaged

@toxtonviews
London, United Kingdom

iseesomucharti
ninstagramever
ydayitgivesmem
otivationandins
pirationitalsok
eepsmyworkbei
ngcurrentitryto
postmyworkaso
ftenasicanitisf
untowatchhowp
eoplereacttomy
artwork

@hukuharri
New York, NY

Illustration 50

Displaying works in-progress, as seen in this illustration, can initiate reactions while in the process of making work. This can motivate by providing a continual connection to a community as a source of feedback. Perception of feedback, however, is complicated and based, in part, on self-efficacy.

Motivation

As I deeply consider how motivation takes shape for me on social media, I first think of feedback I receive. The number of likes on images I post serve as one of many indicators of social dis/approval. A high number of likes on an image increases my confidence and encourages me to continue with that conceptual and visual trajectory. I view this social approval as positive reinforcement; a reward for connecting with my audience. A low number of likes decreases my confidence and acts as negative reinforcement. In order to not achieve that outcome again, I consider changing my work. However, this also inspires me to question why my work may not be connecting with others. Not receiving a desired response pushes me to experiment and serves as a disruption to my habitual thought processes and ways of making work.

Seeing others working/posting on a consistent basis provides motivation to match that level of output. It can be reaffirming to place my images within that network, motivating me to keep active within that community. With access to the creative output of others, including images of in-progress and finished works, I am often inspired to be more focused. Other times, the high level of comparison can lower my confidence and increase self-doubt in my abilities. This usually results in a momentary break from the site, discontinue my use if I feel discouraged to the point of detrimental impacts on my well-being.

Illustration 51

My journal pages show that the amount of likes on my images can have a heavy impact on the work I make in the studio and, in turn, my own motivation. The quality of feedback may motivate me to experiment or continue with a media or process that is well received. I am also motivated to match the level of output by others and feel inspired to be more focused with exposure to artists who show an active artistic practice.

reflection

these are curate
d photographs e
ach **a singular mo**
ment of reflectio
n where light defi
nes itself and tim
e dies forever liv
ing in containers
of organized inti
macy here with o
ut doubt i know i e
x i s t

@kaylan_ame
Kansas City, MO

as a platform it ha
s allowed me to re
ach out to profes
sional artists wo
rking in major art
hubs across the c
ountry & generat
e sincere connec
tions **it is also a v**
aluable tool for s
elf promotion an
d **reflection**

@marcismithstudio
Sioux Falls, SD

Illustration 52

In order to thoughtfully reflect on what is being shown, it is important that artists curate what they are seeing to allow for clarity and focus. This illustration illuminates a thoughtful curation of images that encourages attention and mindfulness.

174
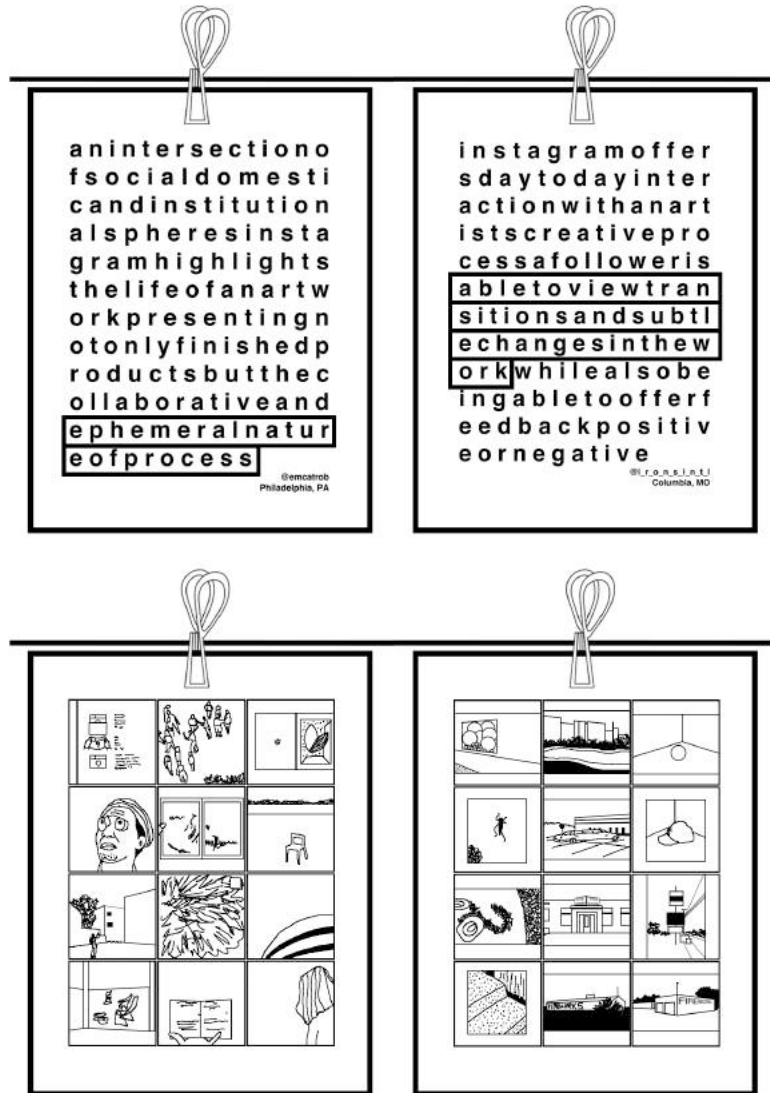
Illustration 53

Reflection is not a linear process. This illustration highlights the possibility of making dynamic connections between and within entanglements of thought/place/material. Places of display, every day events, and works of art can be juxtaposed together and create unexpected connections.

Reflection

Instagram is a truly relational space that has allowed me to enter into the lived experience of others and create rhizomatic connections through image and text. The ability to make sense of the huge network of information requires that I focus and reflect on what they I am seeing. As John Dewey (1938) defined reflection, it is a process of meaning making that emerges out of engaging in a purposeful experience. It also prompts further reflection, a rupture that stimulates growth out of and supporting each new experience.

experience
experimentation
conceptualization
reflection

Relational, active, purposeful reflection is not just looking back on what has been done before. While remembering is a reminder, remembrancing (Humphreys, 2018) is a relational process of connecting, reflecting, and contextualizing my experience. The functionality and design of Instagram has proven useful in my own reflective practices. It mimics and entangles with the artist's studio space and places of display. Because Instagram allows for a collection of images on my profile, I can easily look back at work I have made before. As I am making work in my studio, I look to Instagram to purposefully investigate connections made in the past and how those connections have shifted over time.

Illustration 54

Reflection takes place for me very similarly in the rows of Instagram profiles. There, I am able to collect and look back on images and see what connections were made and how they have shifted over time. This occurs by not only looking at my own work, but the work of others. Rhizomatic connections happening in the studio are made more apparent through the design on Instagram, allowing for more purposeful reflective practices.

176

aimingto connec
tartistsfromallo
vertheglobe for
acollaborativev
irtualgroupexhi
bitionexchangi
ngbeingopenlea
rningandpartici
pating

@the_line_drawing_project
Miami, FL

instagramisitso
wnglobalcreati
vecommunity as
anartistresidin
ginsuburbannor
thernvirginiaiti
sanindispensab
leandlikewisea
naddictivemean
stoseeandshow
work

@mishelanvalenton
Virginia

iuseinstagrama
satooltosharem
yartworkwithfri
endsandpeoplei
donotknowfrom
aroundtheworld
ienjoyseeingth
epersonalmeeta
newtypeofartwo
rldasithelpstoc
hangeourpercep
tionofthings

@nickmullaly
Melbourne, Australia

Illustration 55

This illustration illuminates the interstitial place of Instagram; between real and virtual, across geographical borders. The images show places of display, of making, spaces that are shared, and spaces that resist binaries and categorization.

177

Card 1:
```
ihavealwaysfelt
thatinstagramis
magicalintheuwa
ypeoplefromall
overtheglobear
ebroughttotoge
therforartandco
mmunicatevisu
allylanguageisn
everaproblemar
tisthelanguage
```
@susancarr88
Cape Cod, MA

Card 2:
```
intothevastoce
anofimageswes
ailonthecommo
nplacewemeetm
aybeyouwillnev
erseeagainapie
ceofartasbefore
maybeyouwillne
vertouchitbeca
usewhatisart
```
@inercles
Barcelona, Spain

Card 3:
```
onecannotdenyt
hepowerofshari
ngthecreativep
rocessalsoitist
heonlywayireac
houtbeyondmyo
wnlocationwher
eifeellessconne
ctedtoanyone
```
@herroherroherren
Berkeley, CA

Illustration 56

This illustration emphasizes the importance of Instagram as a common place to meet, making visible the importance of transcending geographical barriers in sharing work with a community beyond one's own location.
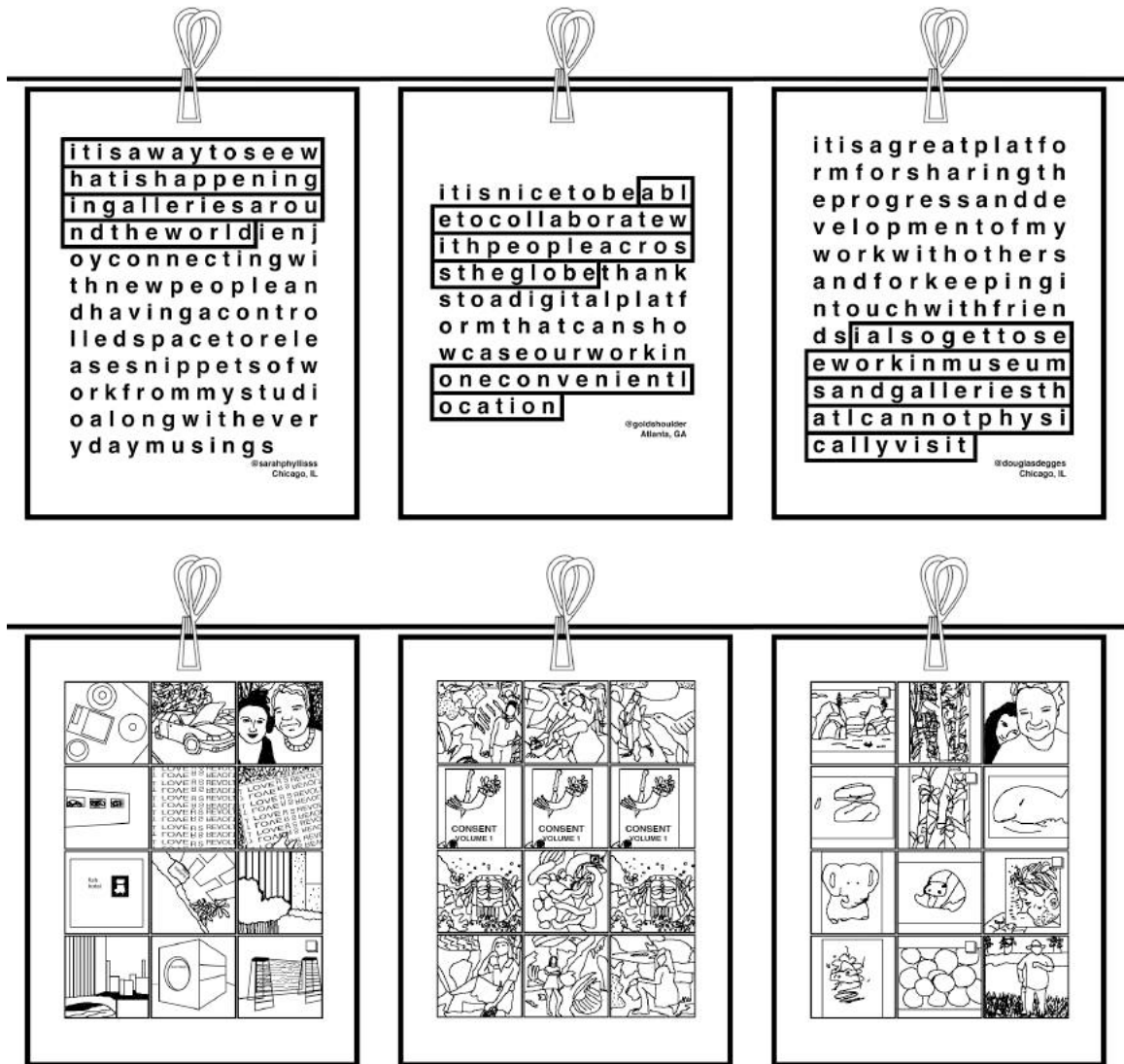
Illustration 57

Instagram bridges geographical gaps in the exposure to works of art. This illustration shows how Instagram can be used to share local exhibitions with a global community, further adding to rhizomatic connections and possibilities.
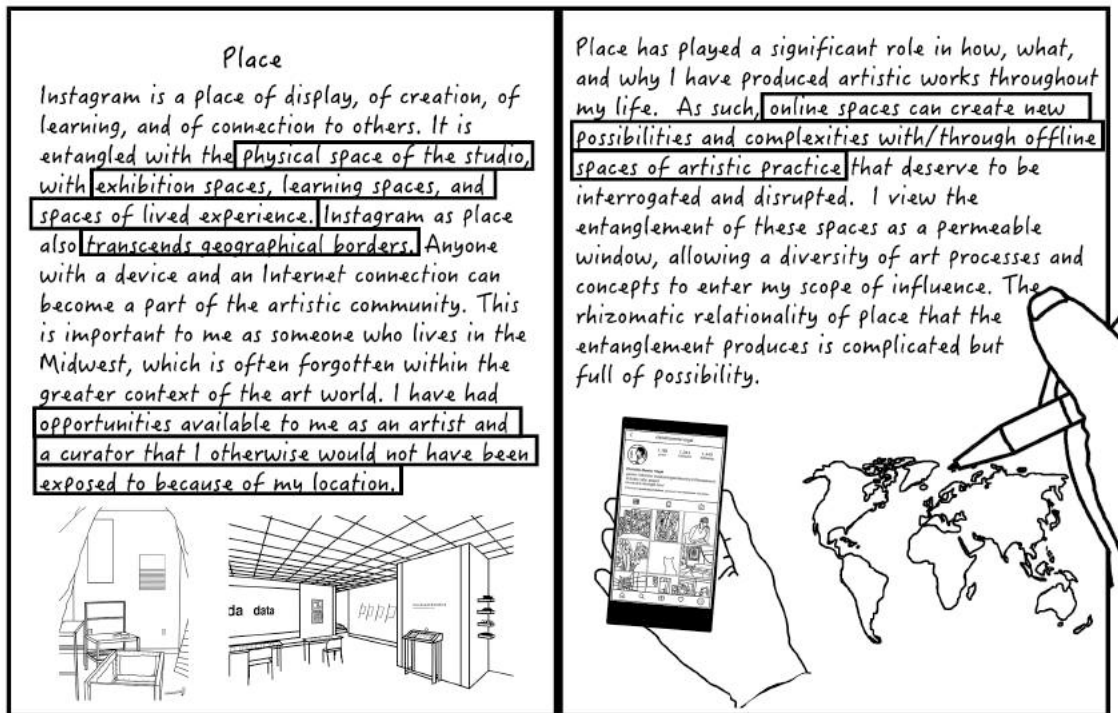
Illustration 58

For me, Instagram serves as a place and non-place as well. My journal entry illustrates that Instagram is a place for display, for learning, for sharing, and for connection with others with and beyond my own location. It has had an impact on what I make, as viewing the work of others is an important aspect of learning, as explained in Bandura's social cognitive theory. But viewing the work of others beyond my own location gives me access to work that is a reflection of different contexts and, as such, it stretches what I believe is possible.

ididnotgotoarts
choolbutinstag
ramhasbecome
myartschoolabo
utayearagoiwas
abletoconnectt
oamentorfromth
eothersideofthe
worldwhohasta
ughtmeeverythi
ngthroughinsta
grammessaging

@christopherleegherman
Delaware, OH

formeinstagram
isbothanobsess
ionandagreatre
searchtoolespe
ciallyforpaintin
gifinditveryple
asingplusitlets
meseewhatshow
sareonthaticoul
dnototherwises
eeorwhatprojec
tsaregoingon

@catrine.b
Luzern, Switzerland

instagramislike
mysketchbookil
ookthroughpast
poststoseewhat
colorpalettesan
dsubjectsihave
beendrawntolat
elyitisalsousef
ulforfindingnew
artists

@devondevaughn
Lee's Summit, MO

Illustration 59

Instagram can be a research tool in how it connects artists to mentors, artists to shows happening outside their location, and how conceptual connections can be relatively easily made through collections of images. The illustration of these submissions emphasizes the impact of others, of virtual access to exhibition sites, and of collections to the research process.

181

instagramhasbe
comemyvisuald
iaryitismyvirtu
alsketchbookan
dithasbecomea
platformthatha
sinspiredmycur
rentpractice
@catrinilwyd
Cardiff, Wales, United Kingdom

instagramfunct
ionsasanonline
sketchbookfori
deasthatIsee/m
akewithmyiphon
e&allowsmetoc
onnecttootherp
hotographers+a
rtistsoutsideof
themidwest
@kelsey.w.hammond
Columbia, MO

instagramisagr
eattoolphotogr
aphingworklets
metakeimagesw
ithmefiltersgiv
emesurprisingr
esultsandseein
gmyworknearpi
cturesfrommyli
fedrawsparallel
sandinformsfut
urepaintings
@aadejong
Seoul, South Korea

Illustration 60

Instagram can be used as a digital form of a sketchbook, making visible and making clear seemingly disparate connections. These submissions displayed a variety of images from daily life juxtaposed next to works of art, showing surprising associations between the lived experience and the impact on what is made.

Re-search

Instagram entangles with the artist studio space and the place of exhibition as a site of intense research. I can see the work of others but also obtain more information about their process. Instagram also makes visible and searchable categories and hashtags that relate image and text through thematic associations. Artists will often attach multiple hashtags to each image posted which can serve as a rhizomatic connection to other images posted with those same themes. This is not only a way for me to see how others conduct artistic research but also informs my own research process and how I want others to view my work. I can also conduct research in the form of themes through what I save to my private collections. Through these collections, I can save data that I feel is pertinent to my process that I may use later in my own work, research, writing, and teaching.

#hashtags   rhizomatic connections

data data data data data data data data data data data data data data data data data data data data data

#identity   #nature

private collections

Illustration 61

Research takes place on Instagram in tandem with exhibition and studio spaces by using both text and image as data sources. By saving images in private collections, I am accumulating visual data that I may use later in a future artwork or research project. I also do research by categorizing my work with hashtags and by searching hashtags to find work from others working under those themes. Text and image are in conversation with each other and create a network of rhizomatic connections that are always expanding, branching out, being disruptive, and creating new trajectories.

instagramissuc
haninterestingp
latformallowing
userstoalterima
ges iloveseeing
otherartistspla
ywithit toshowc
asetheirworkbut
alwaysworryabo
uthowmyworkwo
uldbepresented
totheworld

@jjinthestudio
Seoul, South Korea

instagramforme
isaconnect-ing
tool aportalofpo
ssibilities wher
econnect-ingto
/with/inanimage
basedseaofart
(s)art-ing wond
er/mentwander-
ing aroundgloba
lhost(s)host-in
g wonder(s)

@2Sroots
Columbia, MO

throughinstagr
amiaminteracti
ngwithart&artis
tseveryday&sho
wingmyworkreg
ularlyitinspires
metotrustmyaes
theticinstincts
& tokeepexplori
ngnewwaysofse
eingthinking&w
orking

@jessicapoundstone
Portland, OR

Illustration 62

Having access to filters and ways of creating image collages has created more options for experimentation for the artist of the left. The other two artists also see Instagram as an exploration space, showing the importance of making visible their wonderings and new ways of seeing.

Illustration 63

As I illustrated these submissions, I considered how artists are using Instagram as an experimental space. This shows the importance of the display functionality of Instagram to the exploration process, showing a wide array of compositions that are meant to present and interact with coincidental connections.
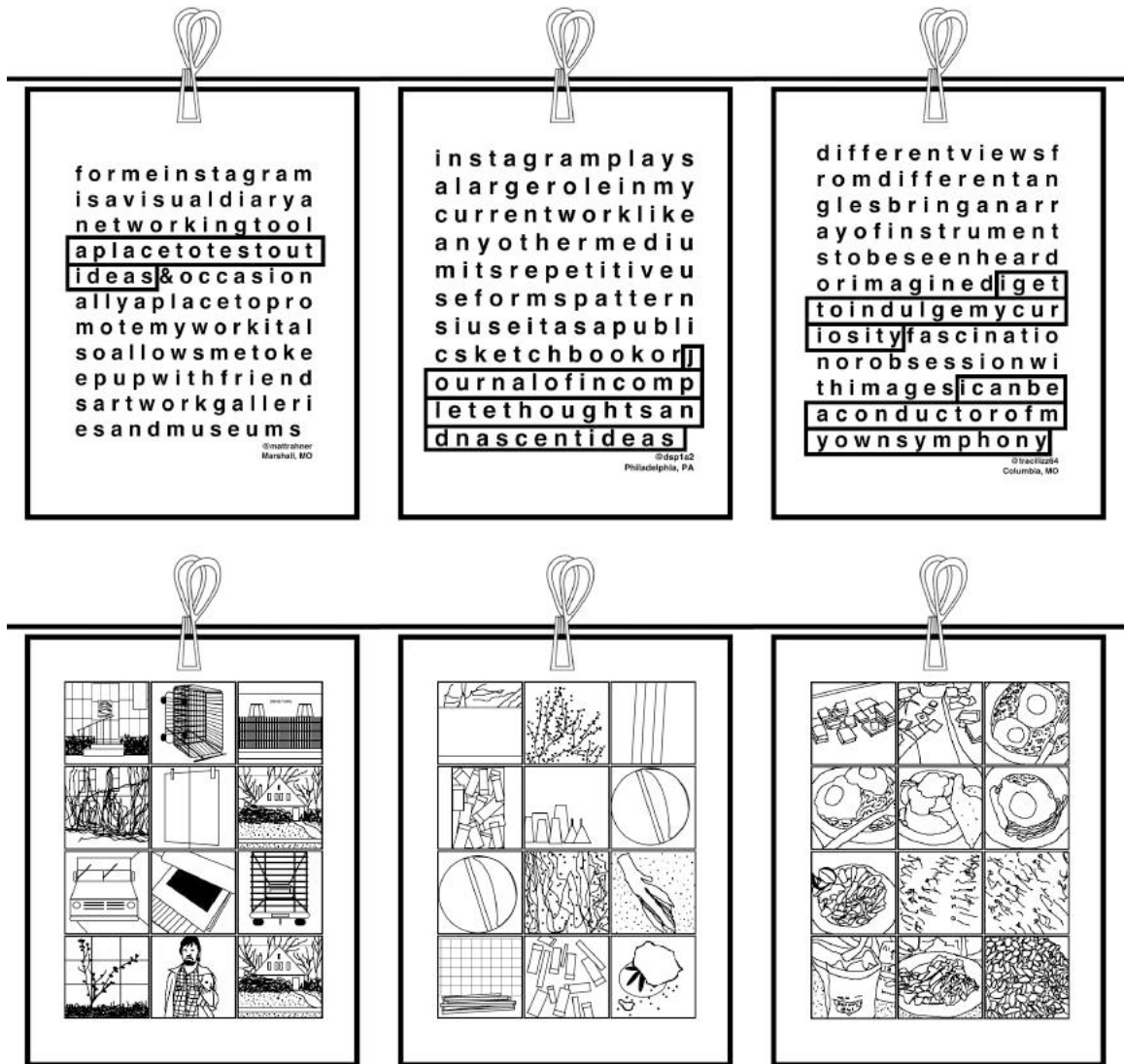
Illustration 64

I realized when looking at these image and text submissions that what these artists were doing was an act of bravery. They are using Instagram as a place to not just display work that is in its highest state, but as a journal, a sketchbook, a testing ground. They use the site in continual conversation with the exploration process of the studio and include snapshots of their daily lives and illuminate curiosity.

186

Experimentation

Instagram serves as a site as experimentation and that I can post images and get a better feel for how they may connect or not to others. I can also see how other artists experiment with work how they work through ideas and how they conceptualize their experiences in often innovative ways.

I don't use filters or other image altering functionalities, but I do use Instagram as a site where I can make visible my curiosity. I can make connections and try out new ideas to see where they fit in to those connections. I can more easily see how images might be in conversation in a physical exhibition. I can see how my audience reacts to work...but I know that feedback cannot be the only determinent.

Keep looking, keep wondering, keep curious.
Allow myself to be vulnerable.

experimentation is
necessary to the cycle of learning

Illustration 65

Experimentation is a necessary component of David Kolb's experiential learning theory. It is a way to make curiosities visible so that transformation can occur. I do this through my profile, posting and then gaging reactions and how they fit into my other work. I also look at how this takes shape in the profiles of others and how they embody their wonderings. I feel that experimentation is an act of bravery. With exploration comes incompleteness and it is difficult for me to be vulnerable on such a public forum.
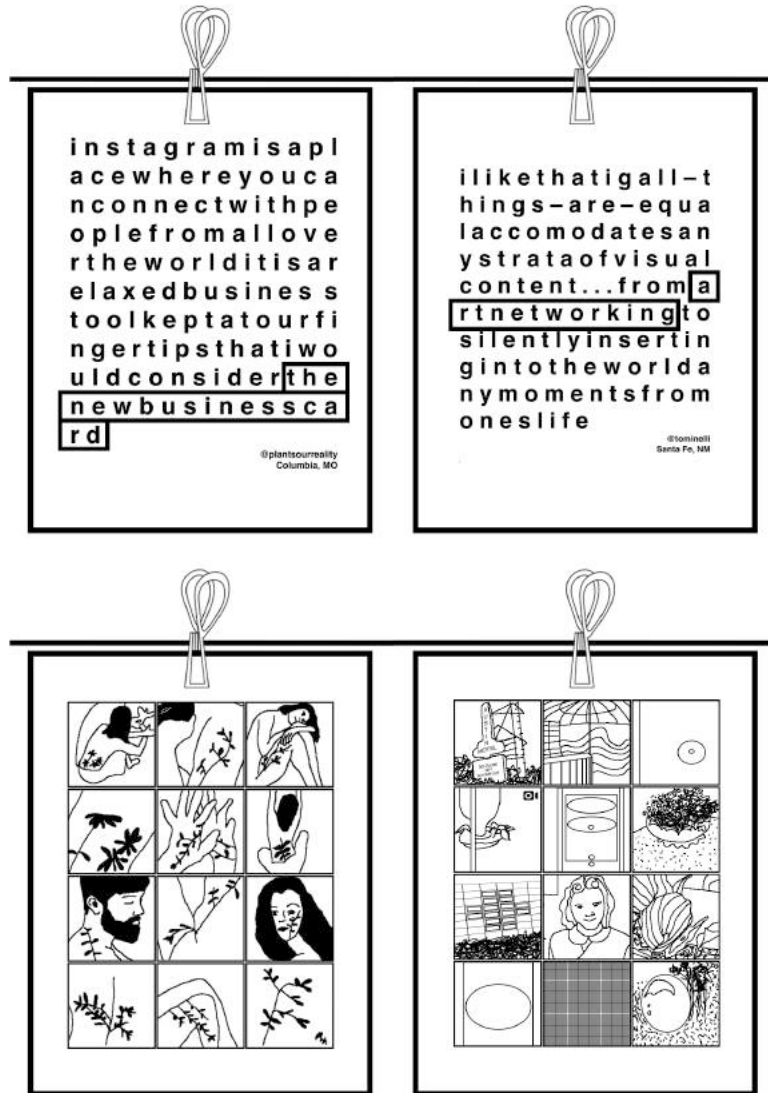
Illustration 66

Instagram acts as a business card in that it inserts artist's work into the greater art community in a relatively quick and effective way. However, unlike a business card, it allows for an always shifting and transforming practice to be made visible. These submissions give an audience a curated look at the artist's work, similar to a website.

instagramisagr
eat platform tob
uildadigitalcom
munity followin
gartistscanstar
tfriendshipstha
t canleadtomany
opportunities su
chasexhibition
sitisaworldwhe
reemergingarti
stscanflourish
@lilgoopy
Lincoln, NE

instagramisane
wmediumwaitin
gtobeharnessed
and changingthe
landscapeofart
practice itisasp
aceofmasscreat
ivityand networ
kingforpeoplea
roundtheworld
@rileyseal
Fountain Valley, CA

instagramhashe
lpedmetobecom
emoreimpactful
withexposureto
myartworkalsoi
amableto conne
ctwithawideran
geofpeopleandg
alleriesthatlco
uldnotreachoth
erwise
@thefirst_r
Kansas City, MO

Illustration 67

The connection to a world-wide audience through Instagram can allow for greater opportunities. Because an artist's work is gaining continual exposure on the site, they are continually being inserted into the networking realm of curators, gallery owners, and art buyers. As I illustrated these submissions, I noticed the artists often showed their work in exhibition settings, furthering their use of the site for promotion.

iuseinstagrama
sawaytosharem
yworktheworkof
otherartistsand
topromoteexhib
itionsitisavalua
bletoolwhichca
nbeusedtoreaff
irmexistingcon
nectionsinthear
tworldaswellas
makingnewones

@idenyer
Berlin, Germany

instagramgives
artistsadirecto
utlettoshareasel
landshowtheira
rtworkprocessa
ndinspiration

@werkin_artistraulgonzalez
San Antonio, TX

instagramislike
ashorthandweb
siteicaneasilys
harewhatihavem
adewiththeworl
dinrealtimewith
outtheneedforp
eopletocheckba
ckinforupdatesi
tremovesth*clu
tteroftraditiona
lbrowsing

@pgdesignmake
Columbia, MO

Illustration 68

These artists displayed their work in gallery and real-life settings. In doing so, this emphasizes the functionality of Instagram in promoting exhibitions and displaying one's work in a manner intended to increase connection to an audience.
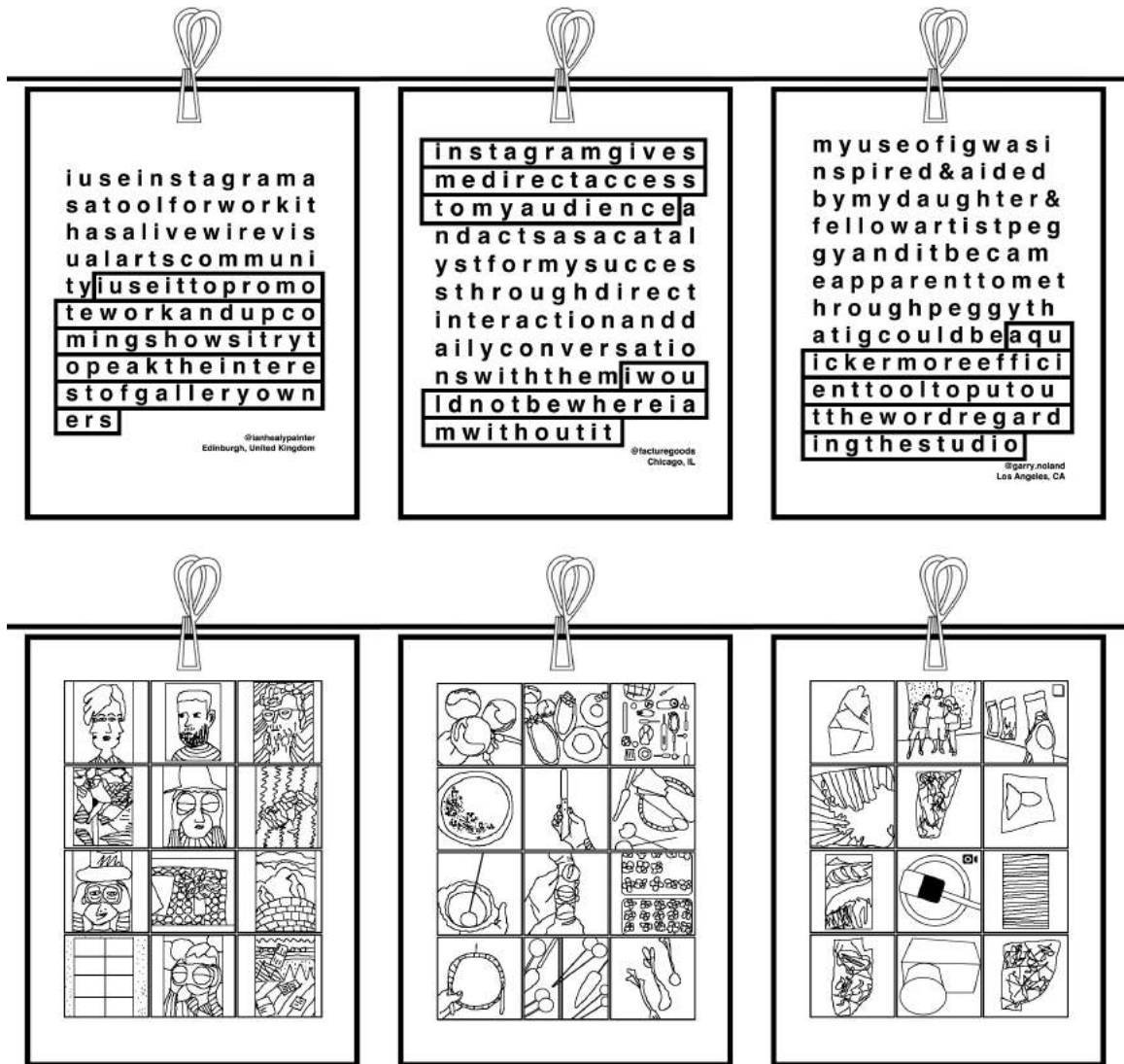
Illustration 69

Instagram continually puts an artist's work within various scopes of influence. Whether it be art patrons, gallery owners, or friends and family, Instagram is a powerful tool to get the word out about what artists are doing. By showing work in completed and in-progress states, in the gallery and in the studio, these artists are showing the desire to connect with their audience on a deeper level.
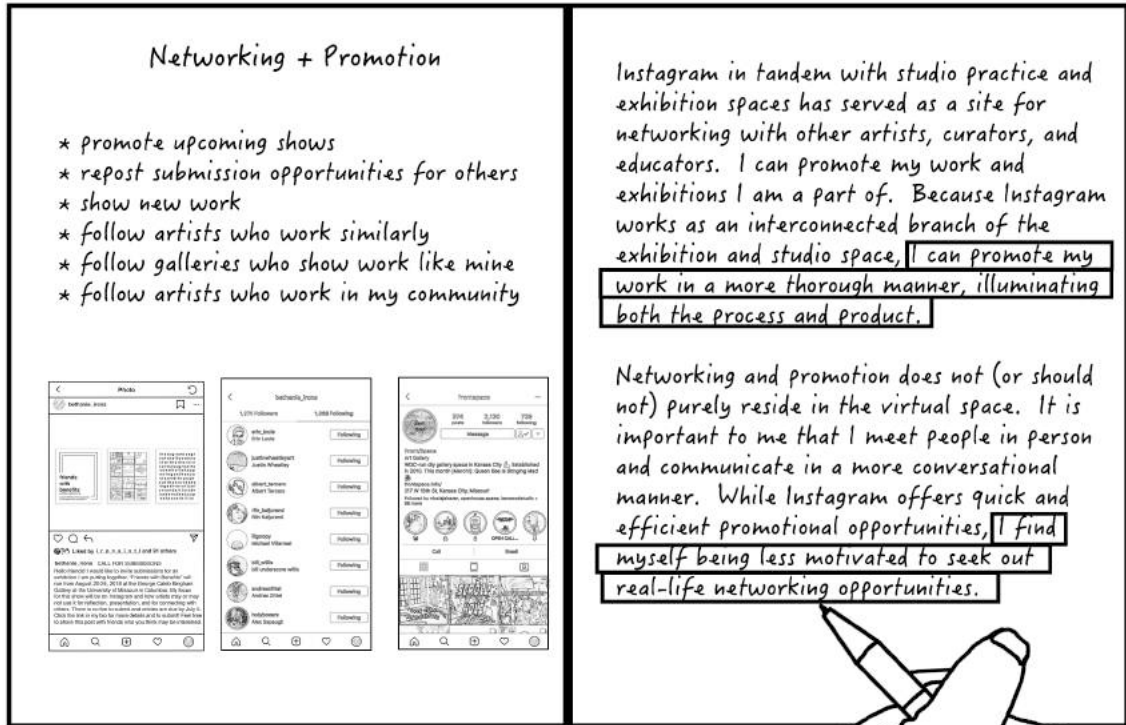
Illustration 70

This illustration of my journal shows the ways in which networking and promotion manifest in my practice, through what I post and who I follow. Instagram has afforded me opportunities for exhibitions and to sell work that exist because of my connections on the site. Without Instagram, my work would not be as seen by as many. However, I find myself becoming less motivated to push myself to go to shows and make real-life connections. I understand that face-to-face communication is meaningful and that those networking opportunities are equally important, but it is something that I continue to struggle with.

instagramisane
wtoolusedtomer
geimagesandte
xts tocreatecura
tednarratives ab
outlifetodayins
tagramisanewfo
rmofmediationt
hatexistssquar
elyinthemiddle
ofwhatwecallth
erealworld

@benjamincookart
Cincinnati, OH

rememberhowgo
oditfelttomakea
pieceofartshow
ittoyourmoman
dtheyposteditо
nthefridgeforal
Itosee instagra
mistheimproved
versionofmoms
fridgewithmore
spacetodisplay
onescreations

@arlolnes
Los Angeles, CA

Illustration 71

As I illustrated these submissions, I considered the artist's purposeful display of work.
Instagram becomes a place to display works, ala "mom's fridge", but also a creator of
meaning in and of itself. Each artist creates a story with images, whether it be in the
physical or virtual exhibition space.

Card 1 (@biz_lukic, Lawrence, KS):
```
Ihaveaparticula
raffinityforthei
ggriddisplayiti
sreminiscentof
acontactsheeto
rlight-tableand
itprovidesaspa
cethatcanjuxta
poseandcombin
eimagesinunpla
nnedandprovoc
ativeways
```

Card 2 (@mintymich, Los Angeles, CA):
```
withasimplesea
rchofahashtagli
ke#selfcarepeo
plewhoarecurio
uscanseewhatih
avetoshareitgiv
esmetheplatfor
mtodisplaywhat
selfcaremeansf
ormeandhowmy
arthelpsmyment
alhealth
```

Card 3 (@derek_august_, St. Paul, MN):
```
instagramtonav
igateartistican
dsocialisolatio
ninstagramasar
unninggalleryin
stagramasanae
stheticjournali
nstagramtofurt
hervisualdialog
ueinstagramtog
augescenicmov
ement
```

Illustration 72

These artists displayed the importance of the functionality of Instagram as a place of display as a running gallery and a place to demonstrate meaning. The artist on the left also noted that the display is not always planned and can lead to surprising connections when not heavily curated.

194

ipostjokevideo
sattemptingtofo
rmempathythro
ughhumorthemi
llennialtrendof
beingfunnyonli
nehasgivenmea
platformtonoto
nlybeanartistan
dcuratorbutalso
beagoofy22yea
roldkid

@luxurytrash2.0
Philadelphia, PA

iuseinstagrama
saplatformtosh
owcasemyproce
ssinspiration&f
inishedworksit
helpsmeconnec
t&keepuptodate
withotherartist
s&friends&open
sadialogueabou
tmywork&thewo
rkofothers

@stan_kenly
Kansas City, MO

instagramisare
sourcetocreate
avisualdialogue
aboutissuesimp
ortanttosociety
formethisisprim
arilyaboutecon
omicinequality
andgentrificati
on

@epiphanysk
Greenville, NC

Illustration 73

On Instagram, any artist can be a curator. This illustration shows the artist's intent of creating a cohesive, purposeful visual dialogue. By juxtaposing images from their lived experience with their art, artists can create a conversation with their audience that is more nuanced.
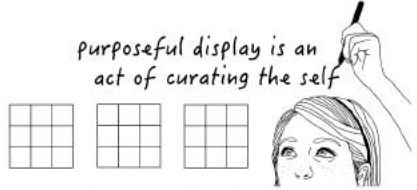
Curation + Display

Curation: the action or process of selecting and organizing the items in a collection. On Instagram, I select what will be shown and I consider how images communicate. Each post is a purposeful narrative.

Display: a performance or to make prominent something which can be easily seen. I find the format of the site to be like a gallery setting. It provides a clean space to organize my concept.

purposeful display is an act of curating the self

As an entanglement with the studio space, I can position finished work and in-progress works side by side, being equally important components and worthy of contemplation. As a place of display, I can not only reflect on/with images posted, but the act of display becomes an assertion and creator of meaning itself. By intentionally displaying work, I am curating and making decisions, which adds to meaning.
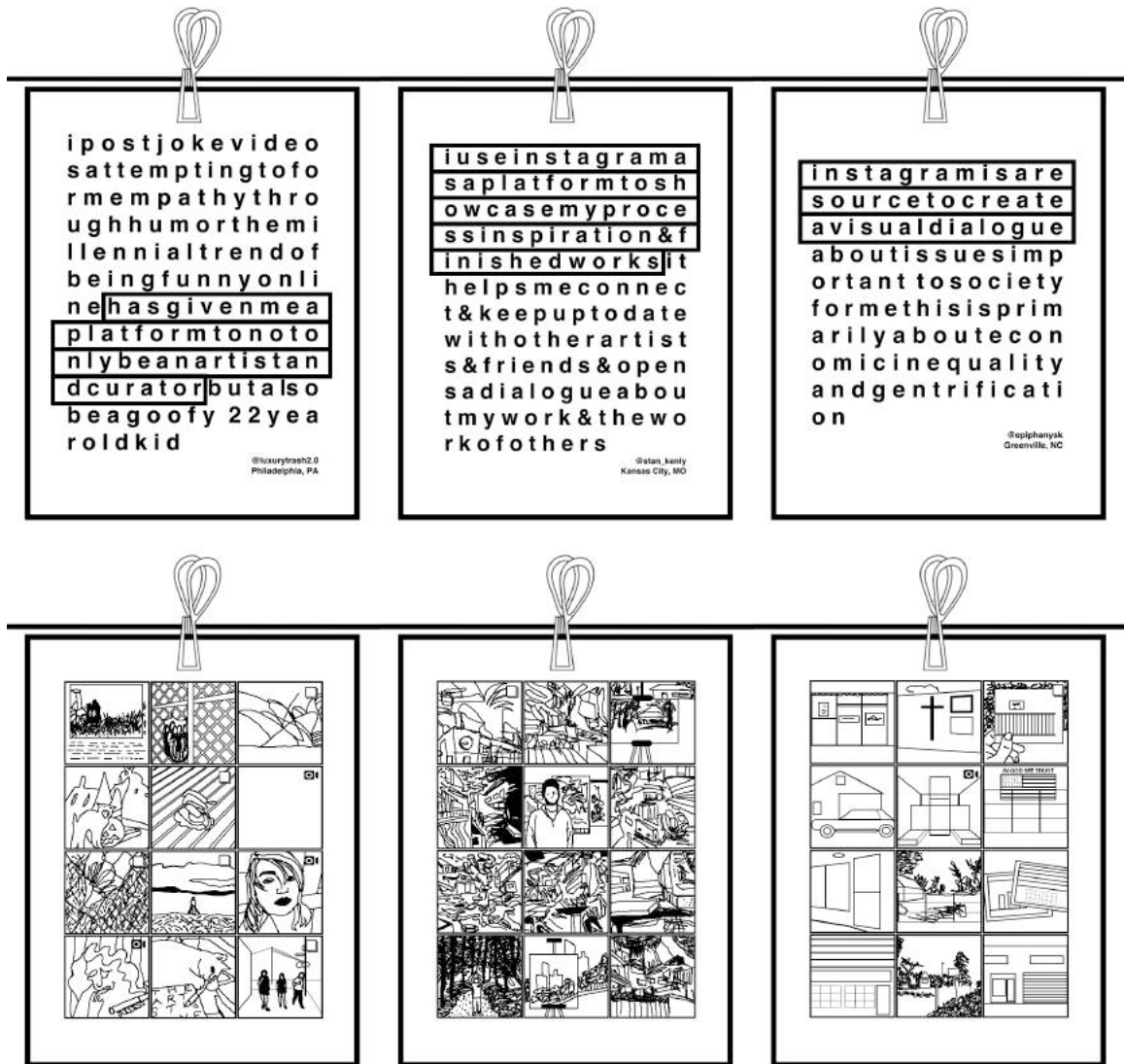
How does this contribute to my practice?
What is being communicated?
Who is my audience?

Illustration 74

The display of my work on Instagram is not without intense thought and purpose. I post with the intention of making visible my conceptual concerns, but perhaps what I post is too curated. By asking myself not only what is being communicated and to whom, but also how my posts contribute to my thinking, I might use the site to interact with my practice instead of just display it.

196

dmsandtimeline
storiesgivemea
llthefeelscantm
akeittoanopeni
ngcheckoutsom
eonestimelinew
antaskypestudi
ovisitslideintot
hemdms instaha
sreallyhelpedm
eputmyselfoutt
hereandconnect
@chelseaaf1
Detroit, MI

ithinkinstagram
isagreatplatfor
mtohelpyoureac
habroaderaudie
nce itisahandyt
oolwhereicansh
aremyvisionsas
anartistanddisc
overotherartist
saswell
@jjarin_
Manila, Philippines

asanartistanda
stay-at-home-
mominstagramg
ivesmeanavenu
eforquickandsp
ontaneouscreat
ivitywithasimpl
ifiedformattocu
rateand shareim
ageswithothers
@angtakesphotos
Columbia, MO

Illustration 75

As I read through these artist's statements, I began to see how their real-life practice was extended by the use of Instagram. Because of geographical barriers, the site can allow artists access to an enormous database of images and to insert their images within that fabric. I wanted to highlight the collaborative, connective intent within my illustrations by emphasizing people and context evident in the work submitted.
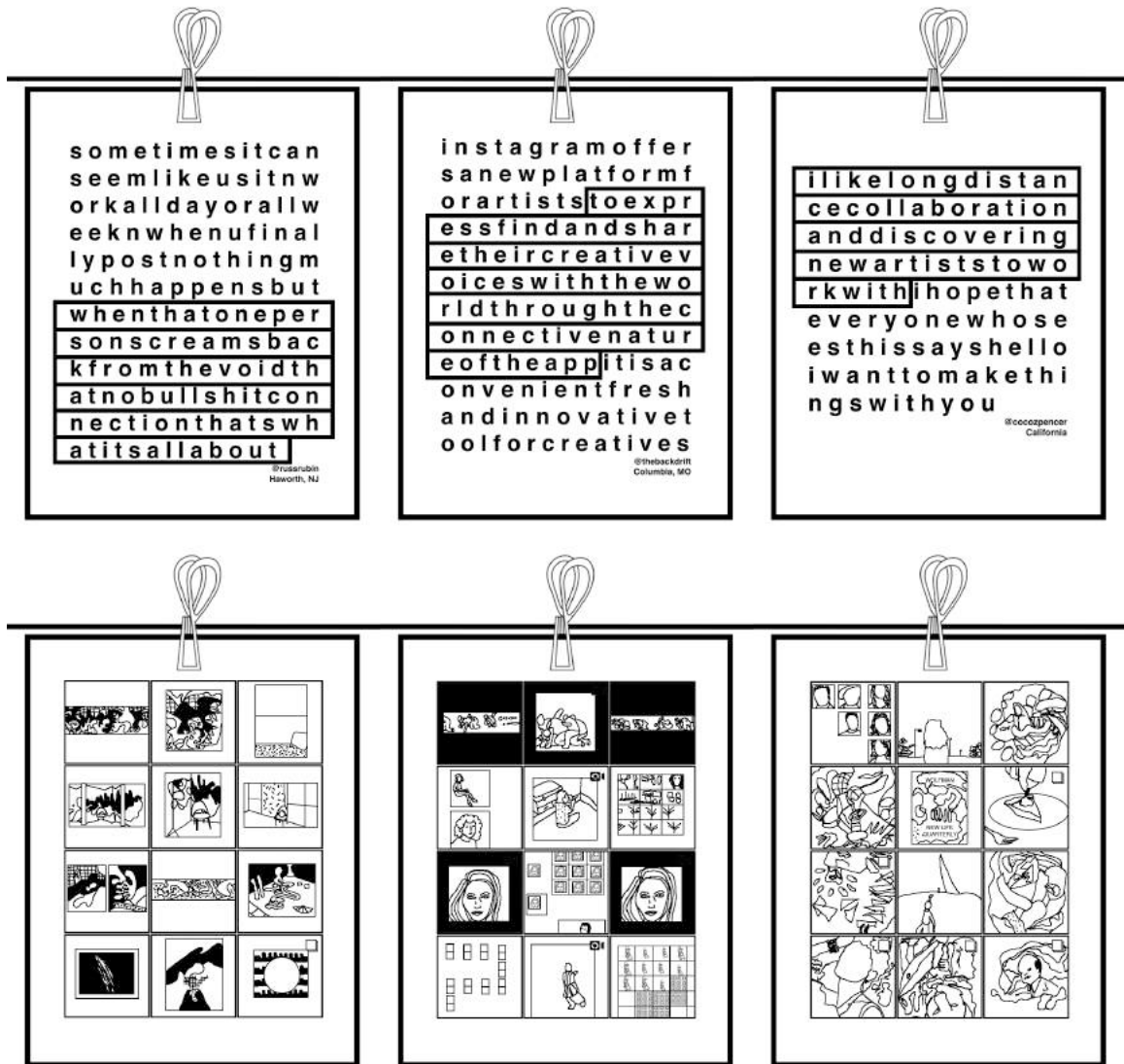
Illustration 76

The connectivity to others can be incredibly validating for an artist's practice. I find tremendous value in sharing my work so that I am not just in conversation with myself, but that I am a part of a greater fabric of meaning making with others. I emphasized the collaborative aspect in these illustrations, illuminating the contextual, human aspects manifested in the artist's work.
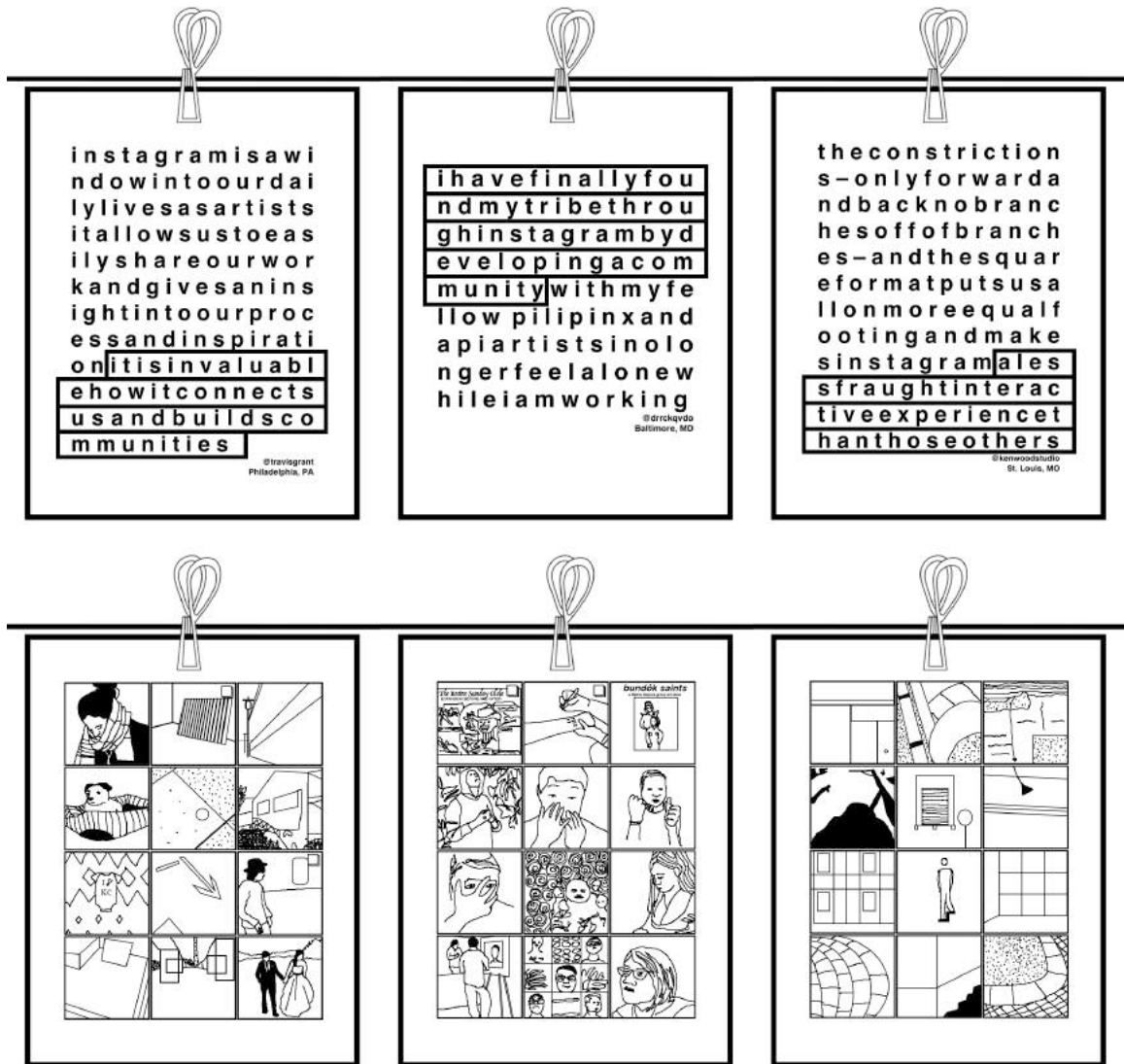
Illustration 77

Instagram has become more of a community for me than my real-life community. In my geographical location, there are not too many artists working with the same conceptual and technical concerns that I am. I illustrated theses submissions to highlight the importance of community, both physical and virtual. I have felt less alone in my own practice because I feel like I am a part of a tribe of like-minded individuals.

igallowsmetobe
apartofanintell
ectuallydiverse
andstimulating
conversation

@jeffreycortlandjones
Springboro, OH

iuseigtostayco
nnectedwithinm
yartscommunity
itisagreattoolto
seewhatmyartfr
iendsaremaking
andwhattheyare
uptoitisalsogre
attokeepthemup
datedonwhatiam
workingon

@meljanewilson
Victoria, Australia

inspirationscon
nectionscollab
orationsitiswon
derfultohavesu
chaquickandeff
ectivewayofloo
kingatotherpeo
plesportfoliosa
nditisfuntocrea
temyown

@joanafischerartist
Miami Beach, FL

Illustration 78

These submissions stressed the importance of seeing the work of others. By being exposed to a diversity of techniques and concepts, I feel as though my practice has been pushed to be more focused but also more experimental. I illustrated the visual components with this influence in mind, emphasizing moments of human connection and the reposting of other people's work.

Connection

Instagram has initiated and sustained connections that I otherwise may not have been able to make due to my location. Because I live in the Midwest and because I do not have the financial means to travel on a consistent basis, I rely on Instagram to bridge the gap. This connection to others not only widens my scope of influence, but it makes me feel as though I am a part of a community. In my current location I often feel isolated as my work is very different from the work that is typically made here. With exposure to work similar to mine, I feel a sense of belonging.

The studio can be a lonely place. Digital spaces give me necessary connections to the outside world. This access to artists and images provides influence and support.

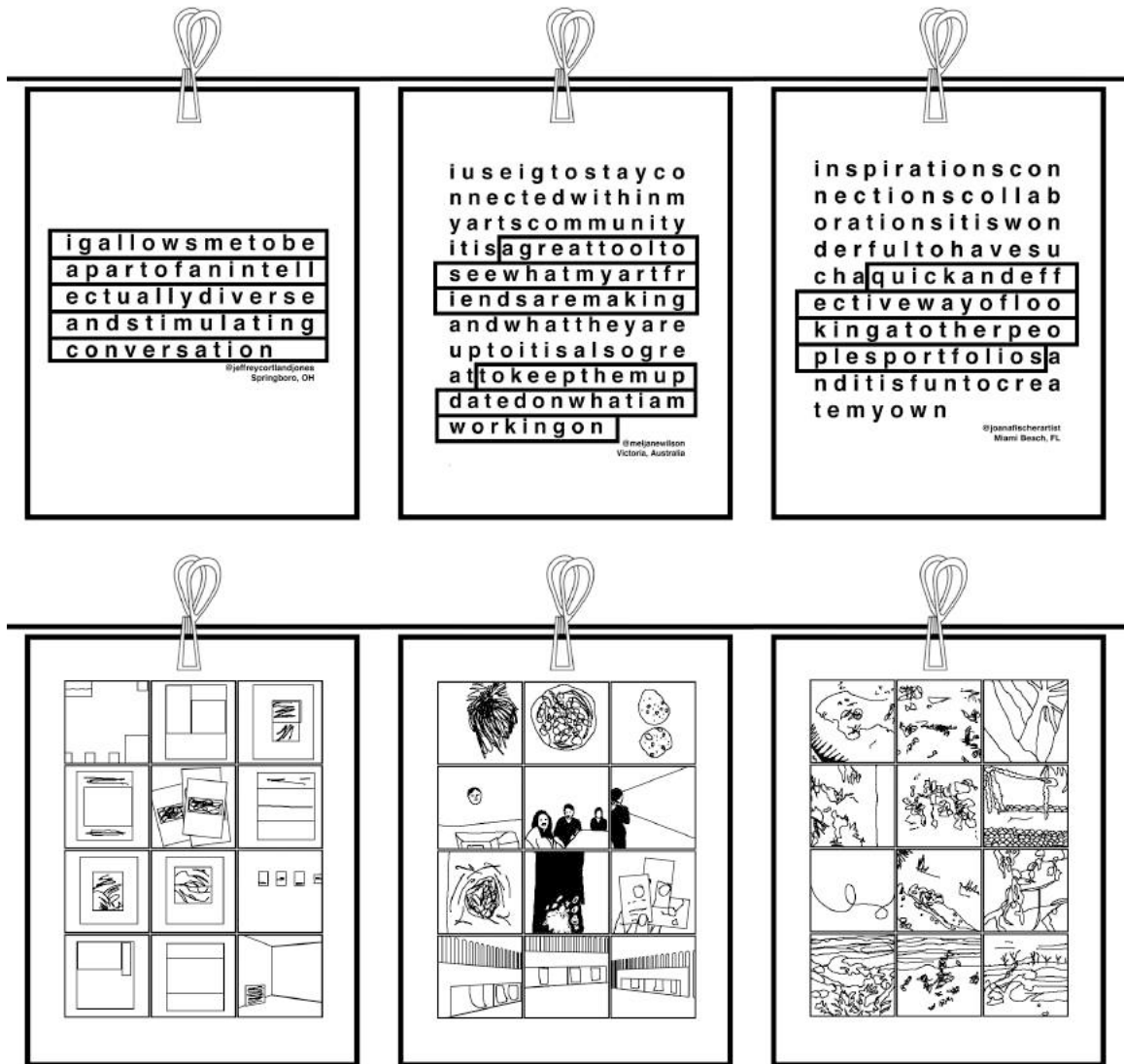Connections are affirmations that what I am doing is accepted, is current, and that it matters.

All images are connected in an interwoven fabric of space. They simultaneously affect and are affected.

Connections to be seen. Connections to converse. Connections to engage.

Illustration 79

Instagram is a communication tool. It is not meant to only communicate out through display, but the interactive component (and algorithm) encourages connections and dialogue. My journal illustrates that the studio can be a lonely place for me if I do not have connection to others. Connections make me feel less isolated in my location and feel as though I belong to a community. These connections serve as affirmations that what I am doing matters. The connective functionality of Instagram can increase my self-efficacy and motivate me to continue to produce and experiment with my work.

instagramisane
ndlessportaltha
ttransformscon
sideredelement
sofonepersonsl
ifeintoanotherp
ersonspastimei
tiskindofthewil
dwestofimageb
asedapps

@mnightshyamalan69
St. Louis, MO

ourlivesareinun
datedwithimage
sstagedandfilte
redfuelinganinv
isibleundercurr
entofcontrolma
skedbythemyth
ofthedemocrati
zationofcontent
distribution

@teriterusso
Louisville & Lexington, KY

asanartistiama
wareofwhatimag
eryiamattracted
toandtherefore
whichproductsi
ambeinginfluen
cedbyoninstagr
ammyworksatiri
zesthecultureth
atsurroundsthi
scycleofdesiret
hatiamapartof

@_emoshea
St. Louis, MO

Illustration 80

These submissions show that relationships with Instagram can be complicated. There is an undercurrent of control that resides on the site. This includes the algorithm and subsequent insertion of advertisements by Instagram, turning the site into a data collection machine. I highlighted ads in my illustration of the submissions, echoing the underlying company strategies and how that impacts the way I interact with the site.

Illustration 81

These submissions also reiterate the negative aspects of marketing and comparison inherent within the site. I emphasized the ads and promotional aspects visually. Instagram can become a trap of validation as it often celebrates what's popular. I have to constantly manage my activities and time spent on the site in order to have a healthy relationship with it.

itconnectsbutal
ienatesonlysho
wingtheshinysu
rfaceandnotthe
deeperstruggle
itisasanitizedvi
ewbutatleast(m
ostly)mediated
byindividuals

@gleeleelswlee
Austin, TX

ilovetheideaofi
nstagrambutitis
alsoadangerous
placewhereidea
s&imageryareso
easilyliftedbec
arefulwhat&whe
nyouputideasou
tthereorfloodth
efeedsonoonec
andenyyouareth
ecreator

@philipkoscak
Los Angeles, CA

ihavealove-and
-haterelationsh
ipwithigitisagr
eattooltoshowy
ourworktoawide
audiencebutiha
tetobeconstantl
ycensoredmyfa
voritepartabout
igishoweasyitis
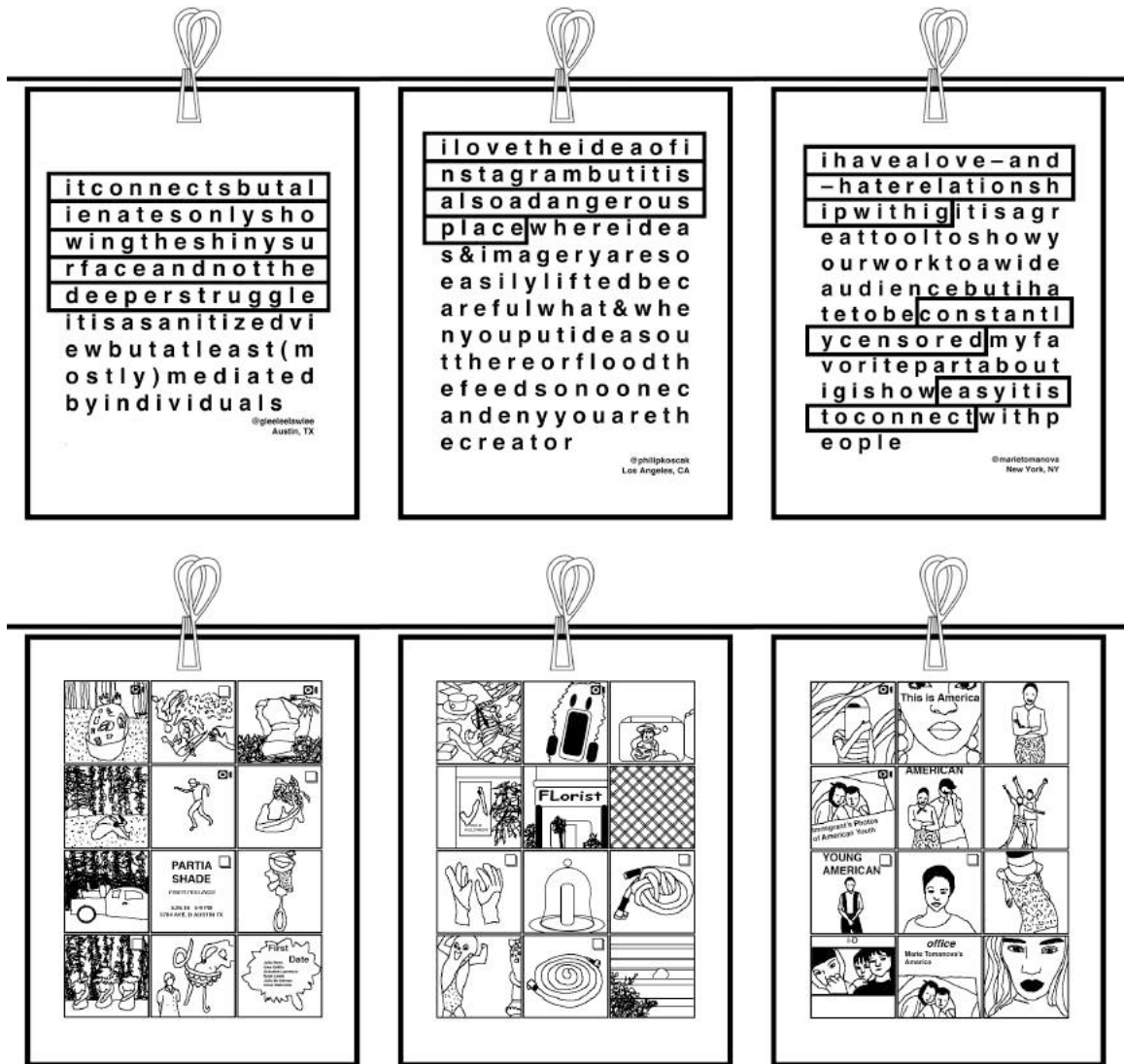toconnectwithp
eople

@marietomanova
New York, NY

Illustration 82

These submissions show a concern for censorship and copyright and the illustrations focus on the messy, troubled aspects of these concerns. Because Instagram makes images so easily accessible to anyone over the age of 13, the company has felt a duty to censor what they deem inappropriate content, such as nudity. I also consider how much I censor my own work, only showing the shiny veneer of practice and not the deeper struggle.
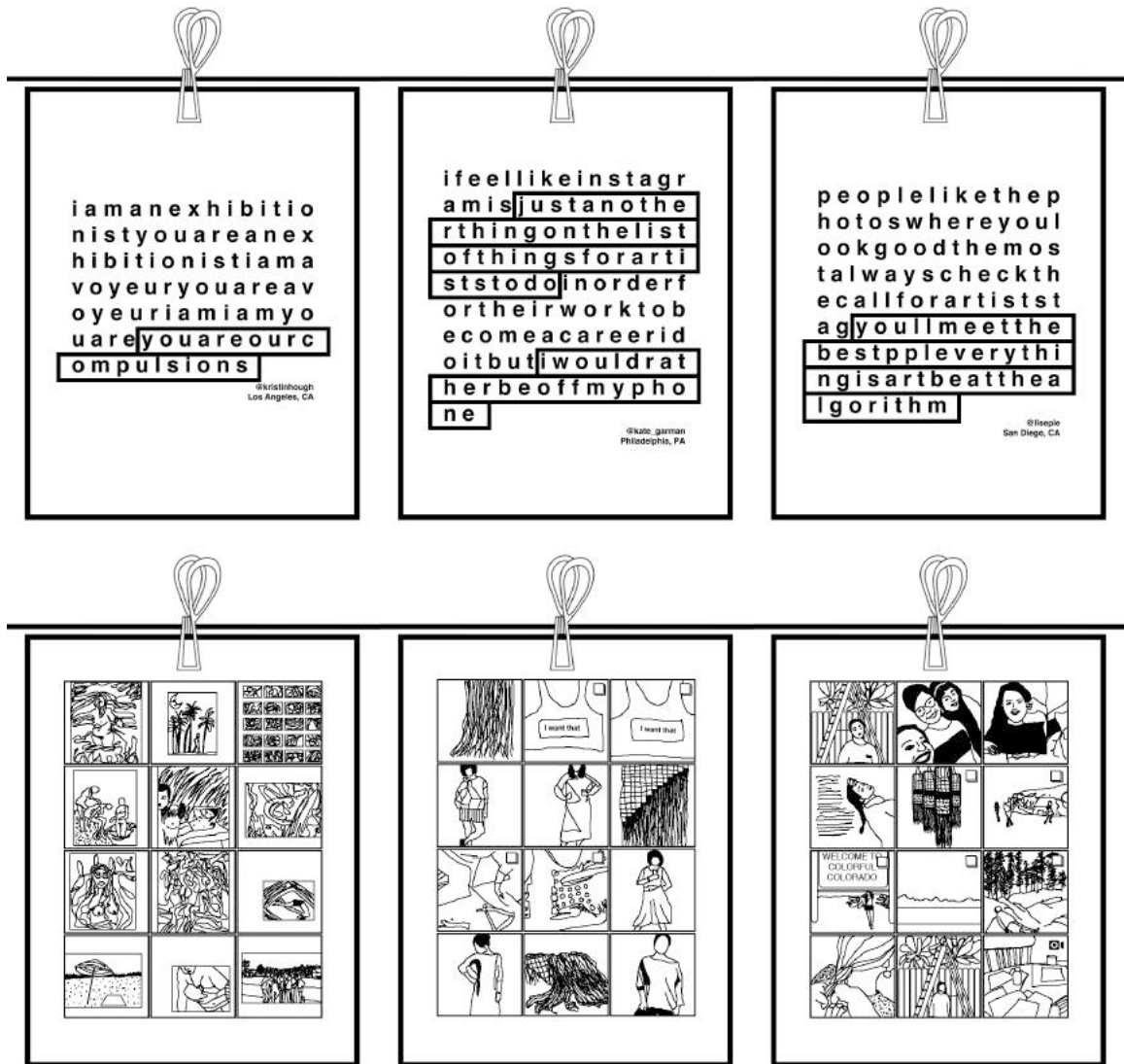
Illustration 83

Although all the submissions in this study are from artists who use Instagram, I too feel conflicted with how and why I use it. I illustrated these submissions to focus on the intent of making connections with others and within/because of what is posted. However, this intent to make connections can very easily become a compulsion to be actively engaged in order to beat the algorithm.

It's Complicated

Instagram affords me the opportunity to transcend my geographical location to quickly and easily display and reflect on my work. I can also conduct research in a unique way through collections. But I still have a complicated relationship with it. Because of the access to millions of images there is a problem with loss of focus. There is also a problem of constant comparison that can lead to lower self-efficacy and self-doubt. The algorithm on Instagram can also discourage focus and thoughtfulness. It requires fast and at times unconsidered engagement with others in an effort to make ones work more visible to the public.

By having to constantly like, comment, and follow others, an external validation trap results. Instagram then becomes a site to only engage with others in an effort to promote one's own agenda.

Why am I using it?
What do I want to accomplish?
How is this impacting my well-being?

When does comparison become detrimental?
How does this impact the work I make?

Do I spend too much time on this?
Do I not spend enough time on it?
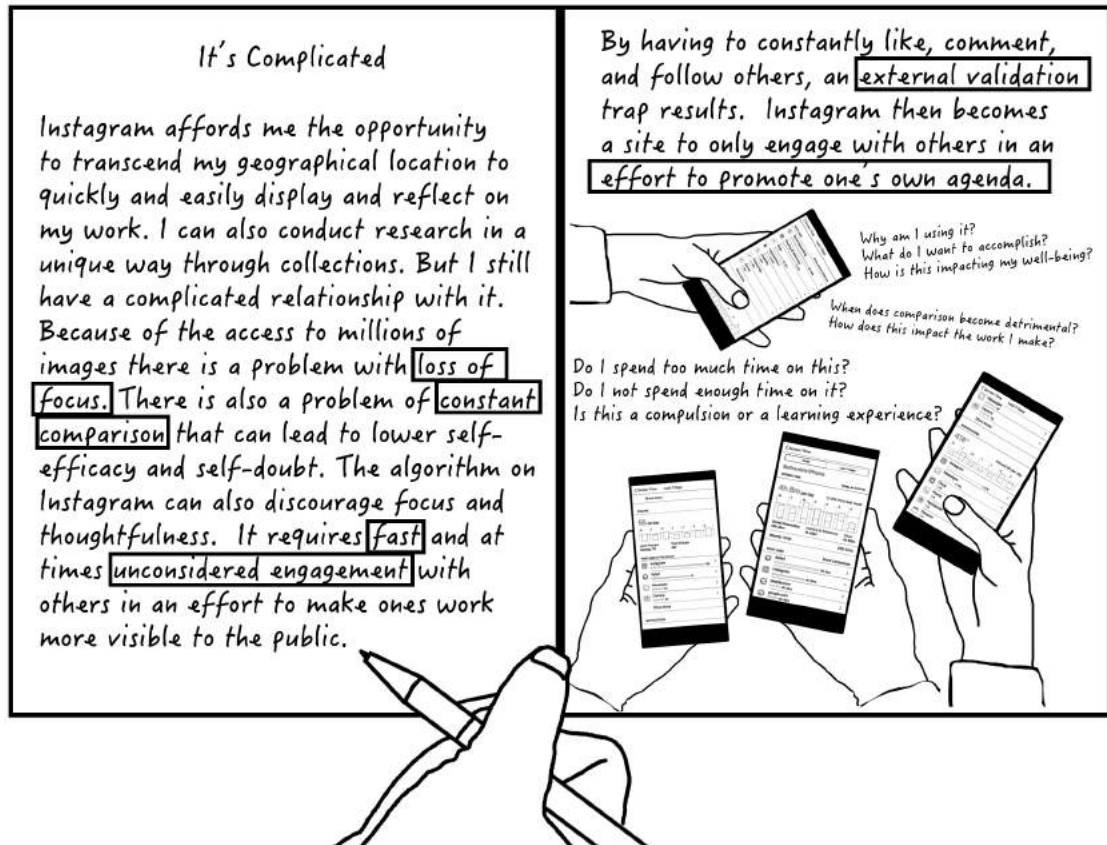Is this a compulsion or a learning experience?

Illustration 84

My relationship with Instagram is complicated. These complications mostly reside in the time I spend on the site and my motives for using it. I want to make connections. I want exposure to the work of others and I want to insert my work into the current context and history of art. But at what cost? By liking the work of others, am I doing it because I want to show support or because I want to better my chances that my work will be seen due to Instagram's algorithm? What if there were no such thing as likes? How might that change things? While I feel like Instagram broadens my scope of possibilities as it extends to my studio practice, the social pressure of active engagement has both positive and negative impacts.

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s u m m a r y

This chapter focused on the data collected for this study and how I interacted with it through text and image. I supplied 77 artist submissions, including my own, that served as an interruption to my habitual thought processes and ways of knowing and being. These pieces of data were interacted with as they ruptured into new pathways, providing in-between moments that influenced deeper self-reflection. The rhizomatic developments that occurred between image and text, from myself and others, penetrated and interrogated meaning. Throughout this chapter, image and text complicated and complemented each other to make sense of the often disorienting experience of the entanglement of the artist's studio, exhibition space, and Instagram. I identified what I deemed significant and constructed a framework with/through both image and text to communicate what the data revealed.

The data helped to answer my sub questions and provides a framework for answer my overall research question, detailed in chapter five. The first sub question asks how hybrid artistic space impacts the studio practice of others and what the main concerns are. The surveys first revealed that the entanglement of virtual and real-life artistic space does have an impact. That impact is revealed in themes that emerged from the text and image submissions. The primary, shared concerns involve motivation, reflection, place, research possibilities, experimentation, networking and promotion, curation and display, and connection to others. Many surveys also revealed that attitudes toward hybrid artistic space

are also complicated and involve concerns about the derogatory impact of time spent and the focus on external validation. Some surveys also revealed negative attitudes about Instagram's algorithm, data collection procedures, and advertisements. There are also concerns surrounding what is posted with the tendency of users to stage their lives instead of providing a more truthful portrait of their experience in the world, both good and bad. Each of the submission responses also showed these impacts through the visual data they provided. By illustrating their submissions, I allowed myself time to focus on what each participant was visually conveying and how that related to their text. This made space for a deeper conversation and revealed to me that hybrid space does have an impact, not only on participant's attitudes, but also through what they post. I pulled out these connections in my drawings, further detailed by captions on each submission grouping.

The second sub question asks how the concerns manifest for me. The concerns that emerged out of the surveys provided a starting point for interrogating my own attitudes and practices. I investigated these themes through journal writings and illustrations, which revealed that hybrid space does have an impact on my practice as an artist, a researcher, and a teacher. I shared in every one of the concerns of the community in which I am embedded. I discovered that the studio, exhibition space, and Instagram were truly entangled and impacted each other and provided interruptions to one another. My journal entries showed that my connection to others through these entangled spaces

provided me with opportunities for reflection, experimentation, and research

through curation and display strategies. Through Instagram, I can further my

ability to connect with others, as virtual place crosses geographical barriers.

Although Instagram provides me with incredible affordances that enhances my

studio and exhibition practice, it also complicates it. The access to an

unprecedented number of images has the detrimental impact of fast,

unconsidered engagement with those images. I constantly compare my work to

the work of others, even more so in real life, because I can also see the feedback

received by others. This has become an impetus for better practices in how I

manage my time on the site. I see myself become more aware of what is

occurring in all spaces and how I am impacted. Ultimately, these discoveries

have implications in how I learn but also how I teach.

In chapter five, I answer the overarching research question of how the

entanglement of hybrid artistic spaces impacts my practice as an artist,

researcher, and teacher. I also elaborate and synthesize my findings in relation

to my conceptual framework and the literature reviewed for this dissertation. I

also include further implications on art practice, research, and education and the

potential for future research.

chapter five

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i n t r o d u c t i o n

This final chapter answers my main research question in the discussion of pertinent discoveries found within the research, implications of those discoveries, and how I synthesized and complicated these new knowings in a real-life exhibition. I analyzed the results of data collected in relation to my conceptual framework and literature review. As this is an autoethnographic study, I am moved to reflect deeply on my own attitudes and motivations. As such, this final chapter gives me an opportunity to reflect further on the study as a whole and how the findings may agree with or contradict with my prior knowings. I conclude with how these discoveries may be applied to future research.

The submissions to the *Friends with Benefits* exhibition served as a starting point to further interrogate my own motivations for using Instagram in tandem with more traditional studio practice. I considered their main concerns and how those concerns manifested visually within the work they submitted. The submissions involved the impacts of social media on what artists make, when they make it, how they build relationships, and where these concerns manifest in real-life. As I illustrated the submissions and reflected in my journal, I saw clear connections to my own practice and how it manifests. While I interrogated my motivations, I built my conceptual framework and literature review and those connections are kept in relation to one another in this chapter. The discoveries covered in the next section provide further analysis and synthesis of my findings as they are embedded within prior research on this topic.

d i s c o v e r i e s

How does the entanglement of hybrid artistic space impact my practice as an artist, researcher, and teacher? The findings of my study answer this question by reinforcing previously held ideas and revealing underlying concerns I had not previously contemplated. I focused on each of the nine themes that emerged out of the submissions to the *Friends with Benefits* exhibition. While I gave each concern dedicated focus, I also realized that each concern was interacting with one another and that they are all part of a weave of practice as interacting determinants of each other. The spaces and bodies that occupy them are entangled. Motivation impacts my willingness to experiment. My knowledge of the research functionality of Instagram impacts my reflective capabilities. My concept of place changes how I interact with others online and in person. The complexities of each concern sprouts rhizomatic connections and can be accessed from multiple perspectives. The tension that results from multiple points of view is held together via these rhizomatic connections. As I moved between disruptive moments, beginnings and endings were irrelevant, as all concerns were revealed as being impact by one another (Illustration 85). The findings of this study showed an embodied practice that resulted from how I live and become with others. My engagements with hybrid spaces of artistic practice were not separate from me, outside of my body, nor was I separate from others. The discoveries further revealed to me that I am always in relation with in my becoming.
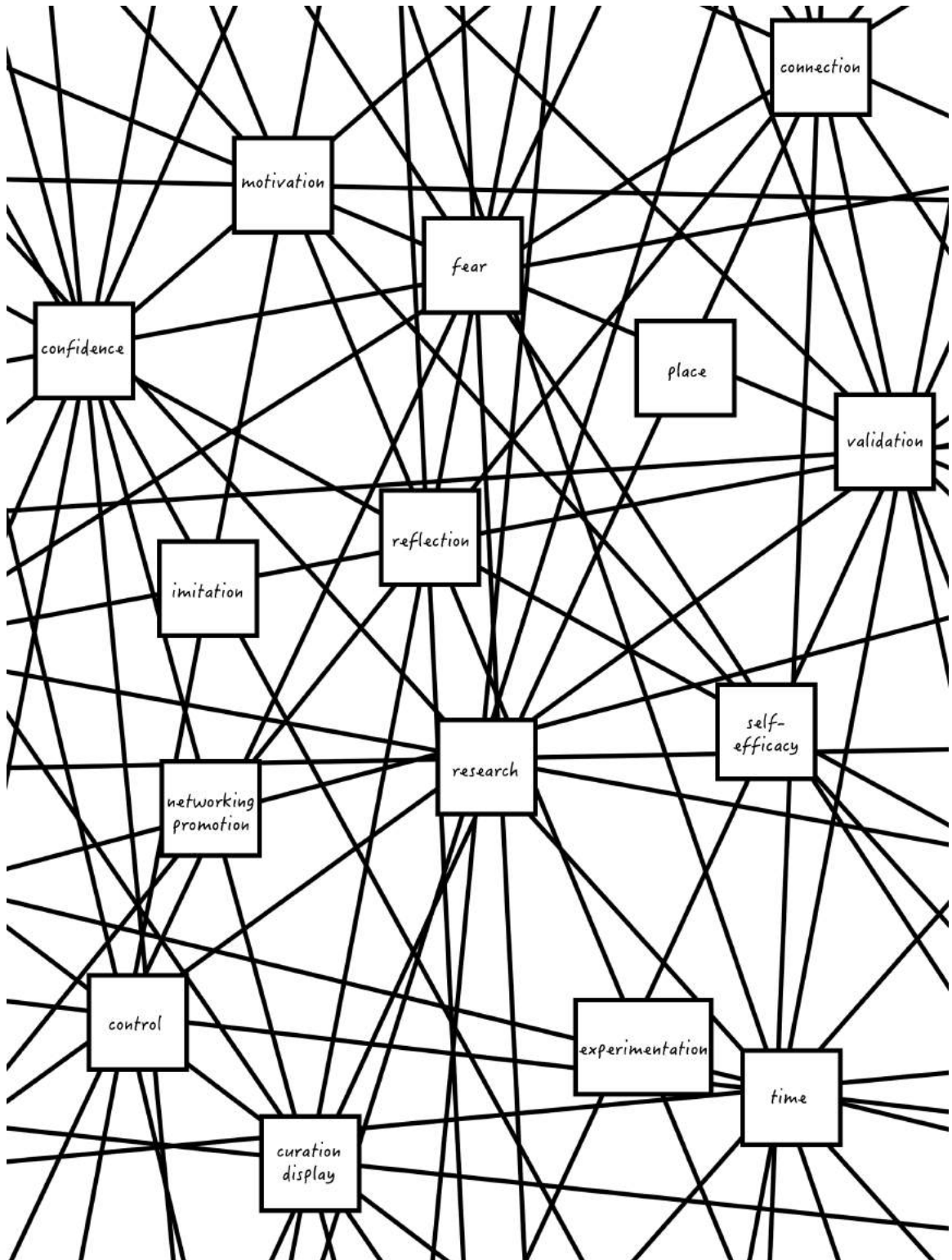
Illustration 85

It is important to note that these discoveries do not provide easy answers, nor does it act as a guidebook to be strictly followed. Because this is an autoethnographic, a/r/tographical study, there is strength in the complexity of one human's experience in relation to others. "The rhizomatic is inherently a pedagogical reminder that hierarchical structure, linear procedures, and repeatable techniques can lack a specific appreciation for individual contextualized learning (Wiebe, et al., 2007, p. 268)." How lives become within the world is often chaotic, situational, and always changing. It is through the tension of the rhizome where meaning is ruptured and openings give way for new knowings. The submissions received for *Friends with Benefits* have created openings for my own reflection and encouraged me to look at the in-between spaces. The result is this dissertation and a real-life exhibition, however I am not attempting to capture an essence of my findings, but rather relations between and within experiences.

As I organized the submissions for the exhibition, I hung them according to themes (Illustration 86). They were hung in rows that allowed each submission to be revealed in the in-between spaces, literally and symbolically. This placement also encouraged viewers to notice the relationality that is inherent within any community, Instagram being no exception. We are simultaneously informing one another and being informed. Concerns of one becomes manifested in concerns of another. This display was meant to make visible the rhizomatic connections and potential for learning and engagement.
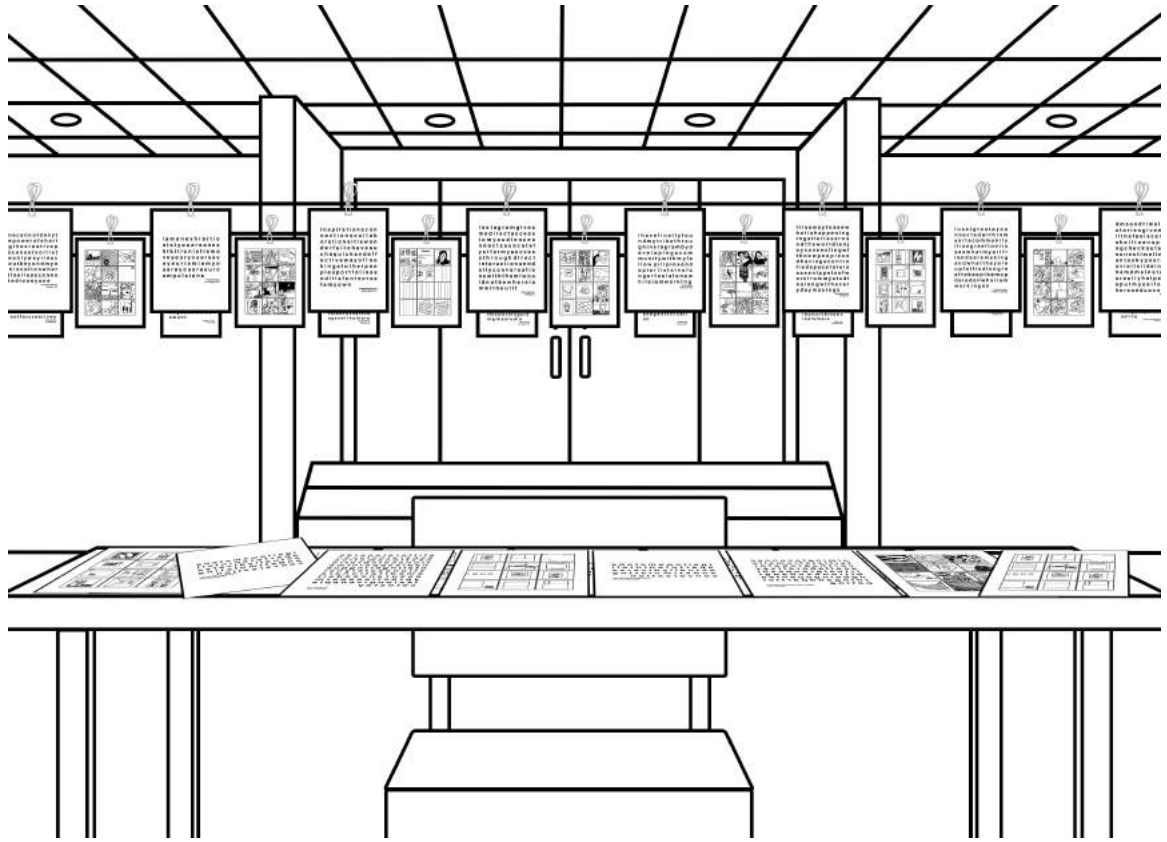
Illustration 86

The submissions were arranged on a wire in three rows containing each of the printed image/text submissions. Each submission was intentionally placed according to themes. By placing alternating rows with images and text facing each other and being visible between each other, the intentional display meant to echo the relational connections that each submission carries for me.

Starting with motivation, this concern primarily manifests in and because of feedback received on Instagram. A high number of likes increases my confidence and gives me reassurance to continue that process and concept. When I post an image that has a low number of likes, I feel a loss in confidence in my abilities. However, it can serve as negative reinforcement by encouraging me to experiment with new paths. My perception of feedback can be understood, in part, with Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986). Bandura states that humanity learns through these rewards and punishments and that our self-efficacy plays a large part in how we perceive and transform feedback. "Perceived self-efficacy helps to account for such diverse phenomena as changes in coping behavior produced by different modes of influence, level of physiological stress reactions, self-regulation of refractory behavior, resignation and despondency to failure experience, self-debilitating effects of proxy control and illusory inefficaciousness, achievement strivings, growth of intrinsic interest, and career pursuits (Bandura, 1982, p. 122)." My motivation is impacted by feedback, but my perception of that feedback can change from day to day based on my current stress level and my ability to subsequently cope. These coping mechanisms are highly dependent on context and are situational.

Feedback received on Instagram has both positive and negative effects on my motivation. While I support experiences that are disruptive to my practice, I must be self-aware enough to reap the potential benefits of that interruption. Seeing others working on a consistent basis gives me motivation to match their

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level of practice. This can quickly become detrimental as well. If I do not feel like I can match a user's level of output, the self-debilitating effects of despondency can take hold. I find David Dewane's concept of the Eudaimonia Machine as a map to be more thoughtfully intertwined with others and with learning. While always being focused on deep work, I should not only reside in the first room of the machine, containing the highest achieving exemplars. I must also give myself space to move through other "rooms" involving relaxation, observation, collection, and focus. When Instagram becomes a site of envy, I am doing my self-efficacy a disservice. Instagram is more than just looking to others to motivate. It has generative possibilities that can become a prime educational "machine" to share tensions and shape our understandings.

What keeps me motivated to keep using Instagram in tandem with my studio practice is also an increasing growth of intrinsic interest due to the perceived positive impacts on my career pursuits. Because many artists I know and admire use Instagram, I am motivated to continue to be a part of that community. "Being with" others on the site is enhanced by the fact that geographical barriers are nearly dissolved. Because it is a virtual site, it is a place and a non-place. It not only shares real-life spaces and situations, but also creates new possibilities and complexities with and through those off-line spaces. What happens in the online realm does not necessarily stay there. I have seen this extension take place in my own exhibition and connection opportunities. Through Instagram's messaging feature, I have been contacted to show and to

sell my work. Most all requests of this nature are from people who I have not met in person. I'm afforded this opportunity to network and promote my work because Instagram is a global space. I am currently mostly using Instagram as a site to promote upcoming shows and to network with artists and galleries who show similar aesthetic and conceptual proclivities. While the site is certainly helpful in reaching a wide audience, I feel as though this makes me less motivated to seek out real-life networking opportunities even though I understand the importance of real-life communications and entanglements of space. Instagram should never be used in place of other experiences.

Connection to others should extend far beyond just networking and promotion. Because Instagram crosses geographical borders, I am able to share images with others and view the work of others that I might not be able to connect with otherwise. Instagram has initiated and sustained connections due to its continually connective nature. I often feel isolated being in the Midwest making the type of work that I make. By seeing others make work that is aesthetically or conceptually similar to mine, I feel a sense of belonging. My current studio is otherwise a lonely place. The inclusion of others in studio practice brings the work, and the artist, into a greater state of being with the world. "Every studio has to have some traffic with the outside (O'Doherty, 2007, p. 21)." Using the metaphor of a permeable window, this continual traffic, both in person and online, is necessary. Connections serve to not only expose us to other works of art but also as affirmations that what we are doing is accepted, is

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current, and that it matters. It is through this every day, rhizomatic process that I see potential for continuously generative opportunities for learning.

The display aspect of Instagram is an important part of promoting and sharing work, but it is also an act of curation. Curation is the process of selecting and organizing items in a collection (Curate, n.d.). When posting images on the site, I am making intentional choices to create a purposeful narrative. By positioning finish work with in-progress works, I can further contemplate the decisions that I am making. Because Instagram is much like a gallery setting, I am exhibiting my work and making choices much like how I would when planning a gallery show. I am communicating to an audience, but also to myself. Past, present, and future selves are entangled and all communicating at once. To make all selves visible it is important that I curate and be purposeful with my narrative but also that I allow for moments of incompleteness to be included in that display. It is through this incompleteness, the in-between, the always becoming, where connections can be made and ruptured. It is in this state that Instagram becomes an educational space.

Inherent in Instagram's design are opportunities for reflection. By collecting images on the site, moments in time can be simultaneously paused and interactive with other moments. This has major benefits to reflection, as images are positioned in relation to one another and users can more easily see transformations of work over time. Harnessing these reflective possibilities on Instagram is imperative due to the quick nature of social media. I often find

myself scrolling through my feed without focusing on what I am seeing. David

Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984) posits that reflection is an opportunity

to absorb knowledge through purposeful experiences. Reflection is an

intentional act of learning (Dewey, 1938) and without that purposeful use of

Instagram, I find myself caught in a trap of mindless scrolling. I can reflect on

work I have done in the past more easily on Instagram than in my studio.

However, the ephemeral moments of process are often lost as I post only

finished work. Instagram may have more educational power if I enacted what

Lee Humphreys termed "sharing the everyday." By sharing seemingly mundane

tasks, I am reflecting the values of my life. The objects and events that make up

my lived experience reveal routines and behaviors that are central to how, what,

and when I know and learn. This is one of many moments in which I can

become within my practice through the affordances and functionality of Instagram

as an entanglement with artistic practice.

Lee Humphreys coined the term remembrancing, which she defines as an

active, reflexive process of memory. Remembrancing is a relation process of

connecting, reflecting, and contextualizing an experience. This is echoed in

Kolb's experiential learning theory. "While memory might seem unconscious,

memory work highlights the ways that people purposefully and strategically

create media traces to help them remember events and experiences in their lives

within particular narrative of the self, the social context, and the broader cultural

environment (Humphreys, 2018, p. 74)." By applying this practice more fully on

Instagram, I can further contextualize my experiences and use the site not just for display, but as an active factor in the cycle of learning.

Another educational component of Instagram is its potential as a research tool. Many submissions from the *Friends with Benefits* exhibition echoed this opportunity, using Instagram much like a sketchbook or a journal. Keeping a journal, as I have experienced in this study, is an act of theorizing. Because it is a place of display, users can easily look back on work that has been done in the past and make rhizomatic connections to work being made in the present. Instagram can also be a site of a/r/tographical research through the use of image and text. Artists often categorize their work with hashtags that are searchable and are continually being added to a rhizomatic network of interconnected and always expanding concepts. I can also assemble data through private collections. These collections are images that I can access later that I have felt could be helpful for my practice.

With all the educative potential of Instagram, I feel as though I am missing out on the site as a place to experiment alongside my experiments in the studio. I see Instagram as an extension and entanglement with spaces of display and spaces of making; portals of possibility to make visible my wonderings. Many survey submissions echoed the importance of exploration and experimentation in the studio and on Instagram. The site allows users to see how others experiment with coincidental connections and conceptual explorations. There are also filters and collage features that allow users to change their images and play with

placement and color. Using Instagram as a journal of incomplete thoughts can also be an avenue to indulge curiosity and can, as one submission states, allow me to be a conductor of my own symphony. Experimentation is a necessary component to Kolb's experiential learning theory. While I do try out new ideas to see how they fit into my work, if I do not get the desired feedback, I would delete a post feeling embarrassed that it wasn't well received. This connects to my self-efficacy, context, and is situational. However, sharing the every day, as Lee Humphreys emphasizes as being significant to media accounting, is essential to making unexpected connections. Allowing myself to be vulnerable in this manner is an important part of experimentation and allowing for my previously held ideals to become ruptured.

Overall, my relationship with Instagram is complicated. This concern is shared as evident in many of the survey submissions. Because of the functionality of the site, images are often staged in a way that disregards the deeper struggle of artistic practice. I am fully guilty of this and feel even though I understand the importance to making visible the whole cycle of learning and how I am being influenced. Because of the immediate and continual feedback given and received, there is a danger of using Instagram as an external validation tool and not for learning. This can result in making work simply to please others. I feel the pressure to engage with others on a quick, continuous, surface-level basis because of Instagram's algorithm. By having to constantly like, comment, and follow others, I often feel trapped when I start engaging with others solely in

an effort to promote my own work and agenda. Instagram requires reciprocal

engagement in order to be inserted into others scope of influence. That

engagement can be a haphazard, self-serving experience.

Cal Newport's strategy of carving out time to focus on the site is worthy of

consideration. As evidenced by my screen time report, I spend hours every day

on Instagram picking up my phone for short periods of time to keep myself

relevant to my audience. In my journal writings, I express that this leads to

greater self-doubt and lower self-efficacy and not contributing to my learning or

development. Newport cites research that echoes the decrease in self-efficacy

and well-being with increased screen time. Dedicating time to focus and engage

in deep work on the site may make my experience on Instagram a more

purposeful one. In turn, I may become more motivated to connect with others on

a deeper level and feel invigorated by the experience. While my relationship with

the site is complex, I do still believe that Instagram offers incredible affordances

for display, experimentation, and reflection. By being more cognizant of my own

concerns, the concerns shared within the community, and how those

experiences are always in relation to one another, I can be more self-aware and

use Instagram with purpose.

i m p l i c a t i o n s

Drawing on my knowledge of artistic practice, research, and teaching, I

am emerging from this study with a better understanding of my own motivations,

but I also believe my new knowings have greater educative implications. The

knowledge revealed throughout this research has the potential to be

transformative for an emerging generation of online learners and for those who

have utilized virtual spaces for years. Of great importance is the educational

potential of this study and this section outlines those implications, including

transferability of the findings to a broader population.

This research is meant to expand on traditional notions of artistic

engagement and context. It is important to me that readers come away with a

better understanding of how Instagram fits into the realm of contemporary art

practice and appreciate the educational opportunities available on the site. I see

Instagram not just as a site to display and promote work, but as a site that is

entangled with more traditional artistic learning spaces. What occurs in the

online realm can have a real impact on what artists make. Their confidence and

motivation can be drastically affected, for better or worse, and perhaps can occur

more dramatically and visibly than in real-life spaces. This study highlights these

issues and presents them as a shared experience. By making visible the positive

and negative consequences, learners might reflect on these impacts in their own

practice. Because Instagram is often used outside of educational settings, it is

important that learners discover best practices for self-regulating their reactions

and engagements. This includes the consequences of online feedback and

impacts of vicarious learning on self-efficacy. Ultimately, this may fit into a

greater structure of practice to help learners "sustain life-long learning, and to

teach students how to appreciate the joy of creativity through self-motivation

(Wiebe et al., 2007, p. 269)." This study gives insight into how others autonomously and collaboratively work through these occurrences and describes the impact of virtual spaces in relation to learning and artistic development.

Research focused on the addition of Instagram into an artist's nexus of practice is thin but emerging. It's important that artists, (and really any learner) consider how this new entanglement of space may impact what, when, and how creativity is learned and practiced. While I am considered a millennial, I did not grow up with technology. Because of this, I understand the importance of tangible, real experiences and often feel conflicted with my online activities. But I have also seen the tremendous benefits of Instagram. What is needed, and what I have discovered by writing this dissertation, is more focus on intention. How might I, as an educator, teach students to live their best life online with purpose, humility, and vulnerability?

As I illustrated the submissions for the *Friends with Benefits* show, I noticed nuances and details I had never before experienced in the artist's work. If I gave this amount of attention to everyone I follow, I imagine how much more I might get out of the site. Cal Newport's ideas of digital minimalism are worthy principles to consider. I agree with Lee Humphreys that sharing is an innate human act and I don't believe it has much to do with any increase in narcissism. However, I feel (and I believe this is echoed from within my culture as a whole) that there is pressure put upon artists to produce at unprecedented rates. Seeing artists who are able produce an enormous amount of work perpetuates

and extends the expectation of output. Where this fits into education is complicated but necessary.

Albert Bandura (1986) posits that we learn socially but that behavioral, environmental, and personal factors, such as confidence in one's own abilities, impact how we respond to feedback. Applying this to my own classroom, I need to consider the importance of incorporating online feedback into the critique process. In doing so, learners may have a more efficient set of conceptual and emotional tools to be able to use online feedback effectively and healthily outside of the classroom. Bandura's theory might also be helpful when considering levels of imitation. On Instagram, I am exposed to a large number of artworks and am saturated with aesthetic and conceptual meaning and practices. While there is great potential for transformation of those ideas, it's important that students learn to innovate, not simply imitate. This will require I also consider enhancements to how I approach appropriation in the classroom.

David Kolb's experiential learning theory states that in order to more deeply learn, one must progress through a cycle of learning involving concrete experience, experimentation, abstract conceptualization, and active reflection. My use of Instagram has thus far missed on the opportunity for Instagram as a space for exploration. As I illustrated works that spoke to the importance of experimentation on the site, I noticed how the artists embodied that intent through what they posted. The moments of incompleteness, of the ephemeral, exposes the in-between moments of what is known and what could

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be. These moments of becoming are significant and are moments I should embrace more as an artist, researcher, and teacher. Through uncertainty, I may encourage new ways of knowing and being in the world.

This study was meant to address gaps in prior research by focusing on the experience of artists. However, I now see it as also belonging to the greater territory of visual and digital literacies. Because Instagram is an image-based application, the implications of its use are ripe for artists but also extend to all users engaged in the site. All the concerns that artists have shared in the data collected can be transferrable to recreational Instagram users and to teachers and researchers in all disciplines. Implications can also extend beyond Instagram into other social media sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest. While there are certain affordances unique to Instagram, such as private collections, the general effects reside beyond the space itself. It becomes an entanglement and an interstitial space that impacts other spaces but also how, when, and why learning and development occur. I see this study extending and transferring on rhizomatic, interdisciplinary, fluctuating planes as it offers one piece of an ever-expanding set of practices in learning and development with hybrid spaces.

f u t u r e r e s e a r c h

Not simply an application of methods, Elliot Eisner defines arts-based research as "the result of artistically crafting the description of the situation so that it can be seen from another angle (Eisner, 2008, p. 22)." It is through this

multiplicity of perspectives that arts-based research has great potential for emergence of new ideas, being less interested in decisive conclusions and more concerned with raising more stimulating questions than what one started with. This research has uncovered some of my more deeply embedded motivations, but brings up more questions than conclusions. I am invested in the entanglement of artistic space and my future research trajectory will further interrogate concerns revealed in this study. The submissions for the *Friends with Benefits* exhibition revealed distinct concerns for artists, including motivation, reflection, place, research, experimentation, networking and promotion, curation and display, and connection to others. Some submissions also showed a complicated relationship with hybrid artistic space and were categorized as such. Any one of these themes could be investigated further and become a robust research study on its own. Below are questions the emerged as a result of the research findings that could serve as future research projects.

- What if there were no "likes" on social media? How might that impact what is posted and created?

- In what ways do hybrid artistic spaces impact motivation?

- How do artists reflect within and because of hybrid artistic space?

- What happens when transcendence of geographical borders gives artists access to more visual data?

- In what ways do artists use Instagram as a research tool used in tandem with more traditional artistic practice?

- Does gender or race play a role in how Instagram is approached as a site for learning?

- How do artists experiment with the functionality of Instagram?

- How does networking and promotion impact the work artists make?

- What are the impacts of purposeful curation through the display of work on Instagram?

- What are the positive and negative impacts of the connectivity of hybrid artistic space?

- How do artists overcome the negative impacts of Instagram as an entanglement of artistic practice?

This dissertation is an autoethnographic study and I believe that method is appropriate to the overarching research question and provides a focused view on a broad subject. However, the above questions might be best interrogated by interviewing a small number of participants and tracking their responses over a relatively long period of time. Perhaps by extending the time frame for data collection, a more nuanced portrait could result with transformations becoming more apparent.

s u m m a r y

This research sought to find entanglements and disruptions that move with and in-between the hybrid spaces of creation, education, and research and its impact on the artistic process. Instagram, the studio, and sites of display were all agents in that motion and were always considered in relation to each other as a

working system. Contemporary art practice has the unique addition of virtual spaces and questions arise as to the impact this new hybridity has on what, how, and when art is made. By highlighting the concerns of artists working with Instagram as a component to their art practice, I interrogated my own motivations. In doing so, I aimed to provide a focused portrait of how Instagram impacts artistic practice, and discovered that the spaces are inextricably entangled and have real consequences. I used autoethnography, through image making and writing, to tell a narrative that emerged within me but is also still deeply connected to my community of practice. This study provided an always becoming construction of practices to assist with more autonomous learning and development for artists and visual learners in the digital age. These findings also have the potential to transfer to other disciplines. Teaching and employing these complexities of digital literacy is more important now than ever before because of its prevalence in contemporary life. It is crucial that learners see the potential of social media as not just a tool or a means to an end, but an agent in the process of learning. By harnessing the transformative potential of social media, I, as an artist, a researcher, and a teacher, can help students transcend the gap between online and offline life and emerge as more self-aware, purposeful learners.

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v i t a

Bethanie Irons was born November 22, 1983 in West Plains, Missouri. She earned a BFA in studio art from the University of South Dakota in 2010, MFA in studio art from the University of Missouri in 2014, and Ph.D. in art education from the University of Missouri in 2019. Her work has been featured in numerous print publications including *New American Paintings* and she has exhibited work internationally. With a focus on higher education, she has taught studio art and art history at various universities and community colleges. Since 2015, she has curated PLEAT, an online-only art gallery, featuring artists from around the world.