

This is the **Accepted Version** of a paper published in the
journal *Creative Approach to Research*:

Lord, Anne (2012) *The visual arts and qualitative research*. *Creative Approach to Research*, 5 (11). pp. 58-76.

Paper developed from The first Australian Discourse, Power, Resistance (DPR) conference, WILL THE REAL EVIDENCE PLEASE STAND UP: POLITICISING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Lord, Anne 'Qualitative Research in the Creative Arts'

Option: 3. A special edition of Creative Approaches to Research (CAR)

The visual arts have drawn on practice-led research models significantly over the last two decades. Further to the methods of practice and hands-on discovery are issue-based practices that align with qualitative models from social science amongst other disciplines. The artist and artists in a research group become chameleons who adopt data collection strategies, models from the digital computer labs and atelier studios, and inquiry from multi-disciplines.

Alta-modernist and Postmodernist theorists influential for the visual arts in the twenty-first century include: Bourriaud (2002), Deleuze (1994), Gibson (2009) and Pollock (2003). These theorist-arts-writers provide insight for methodologies in visual arts practice aligned with qualitative research. The artists and art work they discuss contribute to a discourse about changing culture and further understanding of flexible methodological structures for new ways of seeing and recognising visual literacy.

In the supervision process for Creative Arts candidates at Honours and postgraduate levels, planning diagrams from Social Sciences are extremely useful to assist in the explanation of how the qualitative methodological process can be developed from within their own practice-led research.

Paper

When we look at an artwork we can learn something about interpretation. My paper provides a background to firstly some major artists and their development of creative projects in practice-led research. Secondly I state how that process could be applied to supervision of undergraduate, Honours and postgraduate students to assist their understanding of how they might develop their own inquiry, specifically in qualitative research. In addition I look at how Honours and postgraduate artists interpret the visual data that has driven their research project. In particular I was interested in how creative arts students would align practice and theory as a basis for synthesizing their *practice-led research* (Sullivan 2005, Duxbury 2007).

Taking some theoretical insight from Bourriaud (2002) through *Relational Aesthetics*, a model for interdisciplinary and multilayered art, he states '... the liveliest factor that is played out on the **chessboard of art** has to do with interactive, user-friendly and relational concepts' (Bourriaud 2002, 8). Examples of this art from Bourriaud extend to Tiravanija and *the land's* (1999) solar powered art providing for communities, with a practical outcome (Plate 1). On the other hand it also encompasses artists where

| reading, for Ann Hamilton (Hamilton cited in Andrews 2006), and conversations, for Susan Hiller (1994) become significant in their creative arts practice.



Plate 1 Rirkrit Tiravanija *the land* (1998 ongoing) and artist group Superflex created Supergas, a biogas system [photograph in Baas and Jacob 2004, 175]

Tiravanija discusses how ‘The Thai artist Prachya Phintong is working with fish farming. So it goes on...without end’ (Rirkrit Tiravanija interviewed by Jacob 2004b, 171).

In another instance of relational practice, artist and author, Ross Gibson (2006) refers to The Long March Project, a community of artists, and states:

... communities are roused to work cohesively for change. Each participant’s sensibility is stirred and then strengthened in a social dramaturgy. ... As the transformations occur with each new project instigated by The Long March Project, something grows in each participant, something that is felt in common with the community hosting the action. The feeling is not contained within each person’s isolated psyche (Gibson 2006, 19).

In Gibson’s essay that he refers to as a ‘brief meditation on how art can engage with the social and political aspects of every day experience,’ (Gibson 2006, 18) he discusses ways for artists to negotiate working towards and exposing various strategies. For me these could be aligned with personal research and supervisory roles in qualitative research. This type of practice is often linked with the artist/s being astute about the explication or research potential for their practice. In 2008 Gibson’s work *Conversation II* brings communication between artist and participant to a new terrain, in place and online. The web link <http://www.bos2008.com/app/biennale/event/132> is part of the archive for the Sydney Biennale. The blog that ensues enables us to contemplate many ideas.



Plate 2 *Ross Gibson, Conversations II, the artist in conversation with visitor as part of his ongoing project for the 16th Biennale of Sydney 2008 at the Art Gallery of New South Wales* Courtesy the artist Photograph: Jenni Carter <http://www.bos2008.com/app/biennale/event/132>
[The little engraving above the artist's head in an image is by Thomas Bock.]

In the installation, Gibson refers to Tommy McRae (1835 – 1901) from the Kwatkwat People and his drawing of squatters; an Aboriginal woman's portrait by Thomas Bock (1790 – 1855) from Sutton Coldfield, UK and the *Rainbow serpent* by indigenous artist Balang Kubarrku (1922 – 2008) from Central Arnhem Land. The connections made by the artist and his audience, draw on the interface of artists and their work. The interplay of images leads us to consider potential interactions at a number of levels. Artists can lead people to interpret images and ideas, however the sobering thought from Gibson's conclusion is in relation to the American constitution and where ideas could have led to actions. The project then allows for more than conversation to take place, it urges actions.

In looking at these high profile artists there are creative development skills that undergraduates can relate to, as well as, how to learn from major projects in the visual arts.

These 'mentors' are where the connections can provide new ways to look and thus interpret. In my supervision processes and teaching strategies I refer to the examples of such artists to provide 'mentoring'. In these examples it is the artists and their conceptual work aligned with established researches who assist to recognize increasing potential for research in the visual arts.

In Figure 1, Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) provide a diagram that could lead artists to adopt their own interpretation of Gibson's pursuit of 'how art can engage with the social and political aspects of every day experience'. The writings of art theorists, such as, Gibson and Bourriaud in conjunction with diagrams and methodological strategies from Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy led me to adapt my own diagram for the process and understanding of how the *epistemology, theory and practice* of my work were to be synthesized as my research project.

In the development of my artwork and research I found that my further investigation of the methodology and what this meant to various researchers as they embark on a 'quest' and synthesis of their projects would be significant for postgraduates in the visual arts, and applicable to other creative arts students.

For this investigation into qualitative research projects, I asked creative arts

postgraduate researchers if they had referred to any diagram to contextualize their research methodology, such as that used by Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006). In Figure 1 Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy place Epistemology, as the body of knowledge, at the top. The researcher's chosen epistemology in conjunction with the synthesis of theory and method constitutes Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy's recognition of methodology for qualitative research.

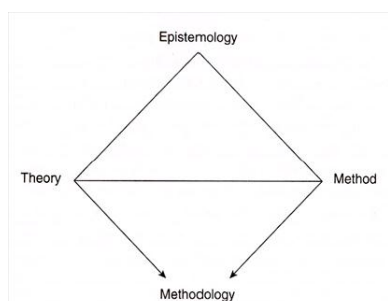


Figure 1 Methodology: A Bridge between Theory and Method (Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2006, 21).

In recognizing how theory and method contribute to a research project the operative word exists in the researchers' *synthesis* of their data. In relation to theory and method this involves reflection on how theory and method are two complex interactive systems *from the researcher's own devising*. It is this synthesis that Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) find, and I concur with them is a bridge.

I identified the methods I would apply to my investigation, through a schematic set of headings I would be able to move forward in positioning my research as practice-led. In Figure 2 emerging ideas in my PhD thesis are demonstrated as a part of this process.

I linked these key areas as firstly, art and ephemera, incorporating shifting icons and Bourriaud's (2002) 'relational aesthetics;' secondly, natural environment and ephemera (in art); and thirdly, spiritual wellbeing and ephemera (in art).

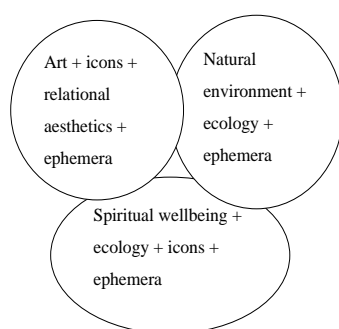


Figure 2 Lord, PhD key areas for synthesis of 'art and ephemera'

In my research and in the supervision process, I demonstrate how the creative practitioner could enhance their projects through selecting vignettes and primary data from artists' voices, significantly the artist's statement, so that this also assisted recognition of their qualitative research strategies. Thus each circle in Figure 1 expands with artists' recorded experiences and research projects, though maintains a focus through 'art and ephemera.' The quest for my understanding of qualitative

research and methodologies emerged as my supervisors discussed the options to me and stated that the methodology was not just a list of what I did or how I did the study.



Plate 3 Anne Lord *impossible bucket*, humus, bark and glue, 2005-2007, an art icon for Figure 1.

In order to make the Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy Figure 1 appropriate to send to some research students, I added questions to ask students if, having seen this figure would they agree or disagree that they are cross-referencing theory and “methods as practice” or “practice-led research”? This was intended to find out if they were deliberately seeing this process as a strategy. In other words I might see if, in the minds of candidates, the process was politicized through theoretical perspectives and qualitative processes.

In relation to my question if they could identify a prescribed methodology for their study, some visual arts candidates were not sure how they were already looking at methodology. However they were consistently amenable to recognizing the poststructuralist strategies to look at representations of gender balance, bringing the voice of a minority from powerlessness to powerful voices, or rewriting history, in their research.

Thus when I asked, if candidates adopted a theoretical perspective, such as post-modernism, that would align with a methodological approach, I also asked if they would be able to identify a *predominant theory* for their research? A small number of postgraduate candidates replied in the affirmative and these theoretical topics ranged from feminism, cultural geography to cultural theory and visual arts discourse.

In relation to identifying theoretical perspectives and synthesis of data, this was not as straightforward. I experienced a theoretical perspective through Ashton Principal Supervisor, Senior Lecturer Visual Arts, Education at James Cook University, supportive of postmodernist and poststructuralist theory, and Gibson as Associate Supervisor Professor of Contemporary Arts, UNSW assisted my recognition of theory inherent in the visual arts disciplines. In my work and as supervisor for many Creative Arts students, it is apparent that the researcher in creative arts may inadvertently be aware of multiple theories from social science models, cultural theory, feminism and gender studies. The visual arts researcher may be exposed to these models through

arts writers who adopt such theories but also because of the strong emphasis in contemporary art to embed issues as inherently a part of the conceptual development of the contemporary artist. In making inroads to theory relevant for visual artists it became apparent that reiterating theory without synthesis of the data and theoretical perspective left a chasm rather than a bridge.

Though evident in visual arts, in major centers the trait for issue-based art blurs the boundaries between the arts practitioner ~ researchers' projects that merge visual, sound and movement in much contemporary art and creative work. These major projects are crucial for artists to source even if via the internet, and thus there is little room for quantitative models that do not assist the vital, comparative and complex initiatives taken on by creative arts individuals and/or teams. How to write up such projects and find the most assistance from a theoretical perspective as well as a qualitative approach? Recognition of various theoretical approaches and carefully appreciating methodology assists in this role.

In this paper, a significant strategy for research from Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy is to recognize how they distinguish between Qualitative and Quantitative research. This table and my reflection on it contribute to the way I develop my thinking towards a philosophical perspective and the *how* of Methodology. I distinguish between the qualitative and quantitative research models as in the adapted Table 1 (Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2006, 10), to present my qualitative model. My voice is included in blue. Though Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy contribute this information for social science models their work assists my planning, how to document conceptual development and revision of data. My PhD research project on how artists recognize and use 'art and ephemera' was possible through synthesis developed from a progression of inquiry and testing. Though words and phrases such as 'data' and 'codes' did not automatically fit with collections of notes, objects, photocopies, printed ephemera and drawings in artists' visual diaries and journals, the delving into what 'data' can be and how codes can be applied can become part of the spiraling journey of reappraisal and learning. In Table 1, I demonstrate how artists ~ researchers are assured of reflective questioning by the time they have to do this in point 6, 'Analyse Additional Data'. In my quest to bring 'art and ephemera' to a position of regard in the art industry, I was as stated in point 6, 'Explor[ing] further relationship between practice and theory in 'art and change', new artists, exhibitions and catalogue statements, neo-narratives and new memories. Thus when this was ready to be applied to theorizing from writers with postmodernist perspectives, I could 'illuminate discourses in visual arts and related areas.' My recognition of these strategies led to being able to apply art forms from the mundane through to the sacred. This table assisted my recognition of going deeper into layers of questioning and synthesizing that data.

Table 1 My Research Models in blue adapted from Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy

Qualitative Model	Quantitative Model
1. Topical Area ['art and ephemera', archive + anti-archive, artists + change + climate + waste. Reflection on these led to asking a number of 'research' questions.]	1. Formulate a Research Question
2. Analyse Subset of Data [Conceptual development of 'art ephemera', artists' metaphors for environment + recognition of change, issues of waste + anti-commodity]	2. Develop a Hypothesis

3. Generate Codes (Literal to Abstract) [Ways to address the above, Post-structuralist lens, art classifications, ephemera + digital, democratic voices. Identifying Precursors, Models and Mentors from the literature.]	3. Define Variables
4. Re-analyse Data; Analyse Additional Data [Re-classification, new areas of practice, new attitudes and new media, create a Glossary for 'art and ephemera'. Blurring boundaries or cultural difference.]	4. Construct measurement Instrument
5. Memo Notes [Primary data, visual diary, computer diary, journal entries, drawings, art making, digital images, textual devices, memories, autobiography]	5. Coding
6. Analyse Additional Data [Explore further relationship between practice and theory in art and change, new artists, exhibitions and catalogue statements, neo-narratives and new memories. Illuminate discourses in visual arts and related areas.]	6. Sampling (Random Sampling)
7. Refine Codes; Generate Meta-Codes [Refined areas of practice, key artists (mentors) for recent and emerging 'art and ephemera'. Identify new responses to change process as in concern for archive for its own sake as problematic.]	7. Reliability and Validity Checks
8. Analyse Additional Data [Responses from the public and creative industry to 'art and ephemera', audience participation and papers presented.]	8. Statistical Check (if necessary)
9. Embodied Interpretation [Art examples, artists' statements and discourse analysis. Critical theory and Post-structuralist theorizing in relation to contemporary Art. Autobiographic theorising and art praxis.]	9. Calculate Results
10. Representation [Presentation exhibitions / installations of visual art. Document data with visual image + textual devices, as well as visual documentation added to thesis.]	10. Represent Results (typically on charts or graphs)

Though Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) and Mason (1996) place 'Topic' in lieu of 'Research Question' I did formulate a number of my own questions. I considered the influence 'art and ephemera' might have on attitudes to commodity abuse and the conceptual reasons why some artists produced *ephemeral art* rather than *archival art work*.

This table assisted my recognition of how contemporary artists, especially high profile artists written about by curators of contemporary art, might also be researchers in their field though often unrecognized. The voices as 'vignettes' in the study provide rich textual data. Table 1 also assists in my recognition of the emerging visual arts practitioner needing to ask similar developmental questions in undergraduate programs, in order to develop a research pathway.

One high profile artist, Wolfgang Laib is a practicing Buddhist and as such his awareness of Buddhist culture shows in actions towards solving ecological crisis. Laib's use of ephemera in the action of materials, such as, pollen is in conjunction with Buddhist philosophical ideals including "letting go". writes:

Laib likes to retreat from worldly affairs. Then he limits his dealings to nature...[his] path toward a meaning of life has led him through many countries and religions – Islam, Buddhism, Christianity – that have influenced and changed his thinking and his attitude to life. The entire

approach to his works is nourished from this intellectual background (Zeller 2005, 7).

Zeller contributes to my understanding that the artist's activity of art making is a part of reflection on life and learning, and also contributing to further understanding.



Plate 4 Wolfgang Laib sieving hazelnut pollen for installation Centre Pompidou Paris 1992 [Photograph Fondation Beyeler Basel 2005 from Lord, PhD thesis u.p.)]

Laib provides new ways for an audience to contemplate ideas, for, as Zeller states, 'Laib's works open depths of experience and lead the gaze in meditation into regions that our civilisation hesitates to accept' (Zeller 2005, 7). Laib and Tiravanija share this concern for ecology and though these high profile artists do not write for qualitative research, they in fact contribute to the encompassing of data collection in this framework. These artists like many concerned with ecological wellbeing provide strong concepts in relation to how they go about a project as in academic and scholarly research.

Referring to such models, I ask students to think about artists they will identify for their own topic, in relation to qualitative experiences. For this paper, and in reference to Table 1, I asked research students: **Would you see this comparison of qualitative and quantitative models relevant to your work?** And, I asked if people could add their own comments. In Hook's response she provided her working methods.

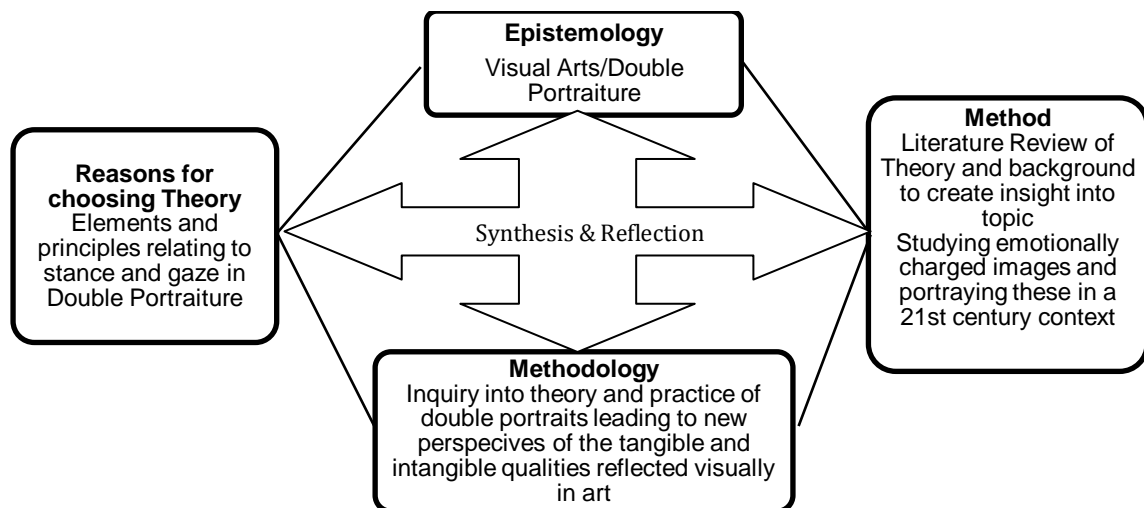


Figure 3 (Hook 2010 Thesis u.p.) Towards a methodology for the double portraiture in contemporary visual art: An earlier version of the four headings was cited in Nagy, Hesse-Biber S. & Leavy, P. (2006)

Sandi Hook celebrates her study with references to the double portrait, in one instance, Hockney's *Le Parc des Sources, Vichy*. In Hook's drawing *Une Vue de Vers Le Bas Dessous* we can also identify Hook's close proximity to the tropics and the Queensland house with underneath studio area. Hook then went on to investigate the journey and interprets Deleuze, (1994, 1988) in reference to "nomad space":

For the nomad, locality is not delimited; the absolute, then, does not appear at a particular place but becomes a nonlimited locality; the coupling of the place and the absolute is achieved not in a centered, oriented globalization or universalization but in an infinite succession of local operations (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.476).

Researchers such as, Hook, who took on a journey in 2011 prior to and in effect for her candidature for postgraduate studies, can accept "local operations" as a way of seeing how the local contests the universal. This contest is shown with her use of the tropics in a composition that responds to Hockney's *Le Parc des Sources, Vichy* (1970).

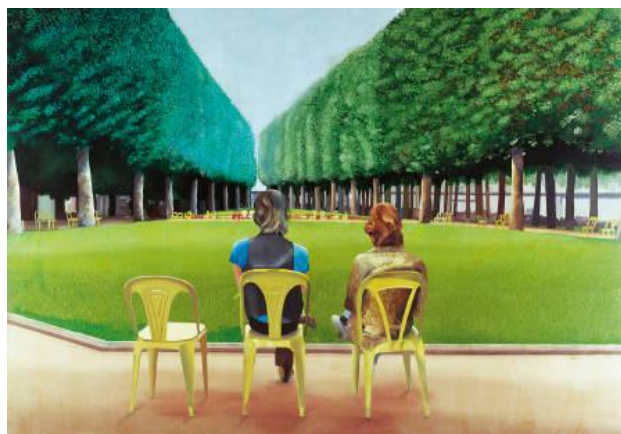


Plate 5 David Hockney *Le Parc des Sources, Vichy* 1970 214 x 305 cm

Hook found that the methods I proposed to identify her topic and theoretical approach were appropriate for her work. Though her work had for a number of years as a part-time student been on various pathways in order to look for a key topic and relevant theory, the timing for our meeting and my presentation of this strategy to her, assisted Hook to finish in the same year we started working together as candidate and supervisor.

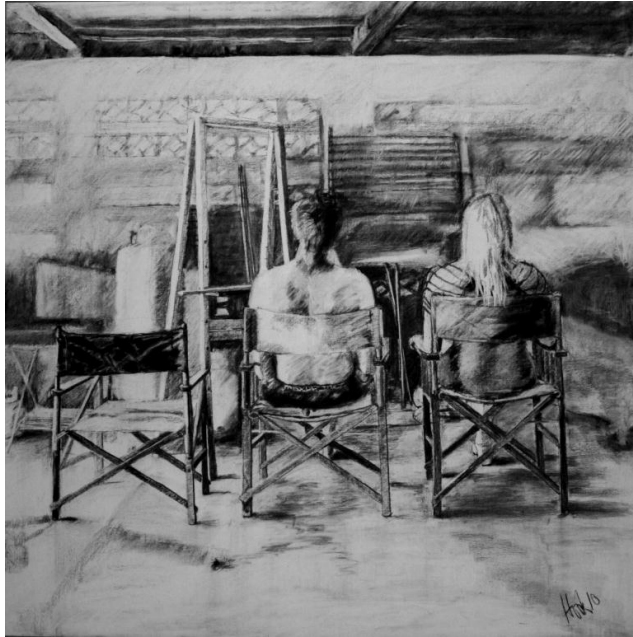


Plate 6 Sandi Hook *Une Vue de Vers Le Bas Dessous*, 2010, Charcoal on canvas 120 x 120 cm

Theorists

In developing my understanding of the arts and research practices for the creative arts, Sullivan (2005), Thompson (2006) and Duxbury (2007) assist to construct confidence for practice-led research. It was important to build understanding in the area after hearing many people question the capacity for artists to ‘undertake research’. Lendon (2001) for instance, discussed how artists often left their practice as “mute research,” in that they did not develop an argument sufficiently or create a context for their practice.

In the 1990s, general strategies were offered to candidates, for instance my early visual arts research in 1996 for Master of Visual Arts (MVA, GU), adopted a heuristic model:

My research makes use of a **heuristic** model designed to discover the processes, which have produced art practice with close links to problem solving in ecology. My approach makes use of the classical tool of analytical reductionism, which

aims to create a conceptual clarification of complex phenomena. I realise that this methodology can only provide a *model* or modelling of such phenomena and hence, although this study employs empirical data, it should not be taken as being a definitive or totalised account of the data. My analysis is an interpretation of art practice in Australia and overseas that is of use in my process of understanding my own work in terms of a conceptual framework (Lord 1996 u.p.).

Increased exposure to theoretical perspectives since 1996 and further awareness through publication involving curatorial scholarship facilitates the increased opportunities and ways that I can demonstrate to candidates how various perspectives could contribute to a qualitative model.

Further Humanities projects suggest Hermeneutics. In a model from Rennie (2000) he states that ‘Hermeneutics has been defined [and he refers to Ricoeur as the] ... “theory of the operation of standing in its relation to the interpretation of text” ’ (Ricoeur 1978, p.141 cited in Rennie (2000). Further, Rennie (2000; 482) says he has: ... brought out into the open the realism and relativism intrinsic to the grounded theory method, and [has] challenged that neither Glaser’s (1992) nor Strauss’s (1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994) current methodologies adequately address the tension between them.

Rennie states that

... in order for this tension to be reconciled with the subject matter addressed by the grounded theory method and with the procedures constituting the latter, it is necessary to view it as a form of hermeneutics.

Correspondingly Rennie has:

... drawn on phenomenology, C.S. Pierce’s theory of inference, philosophical hermeneutics and pragmatism in support of the notion that the grounded theory method amounts to a union of hermeneutics and method, or methodological hermeneutics (Rennie, 1998a, 1998b, 1999; cf. Corbin, 1998; Madill, Jordan, & Shirley, 2000).

In my work with candidates their postgraduate practice and theorizing emerge from their background in hands-on creative practice, though driven by deep learning in a specific topic. The topic for a creative artist is, by the nature of their creative practice, subjective. In the contemporary visual arts genre, it is linked to issue-based art that is closely related to a concern showing awareness of current issues. The issue or concern can be elaborated through visual literacy and supported by factual work in, for instance, human sciences and / or environmental sciences. Thus both practice-led and inquiry, such as, the **hermeneutic model** can be part of the creative artist’s research model. I provide some examples of postgraduate models in issue-based and practice-led research, as these can be inclusive of each other.

Participants qualitative research and relative methodological premise

Jill O’Sullivan (2011) in her thesis on Chorography, cites Ptolemy’s reference that chorography ‘deals with the nature rather than the size of the lands,’ and that it

secures a “likeness” ‘but not to the same extent [as geography] for determining relative positions’.

In relation to her practice-led research O’Sullivan provides a Figure for explaining the methods used and theories applied to develop her methodology and states: ‘The first annotation, *Lived Experience*, refers to the deep personal affinity and knowledge of North-West Queensland that is central to the ideas developed in the works’ (O’Sullivan 2011 thesis u.p.).

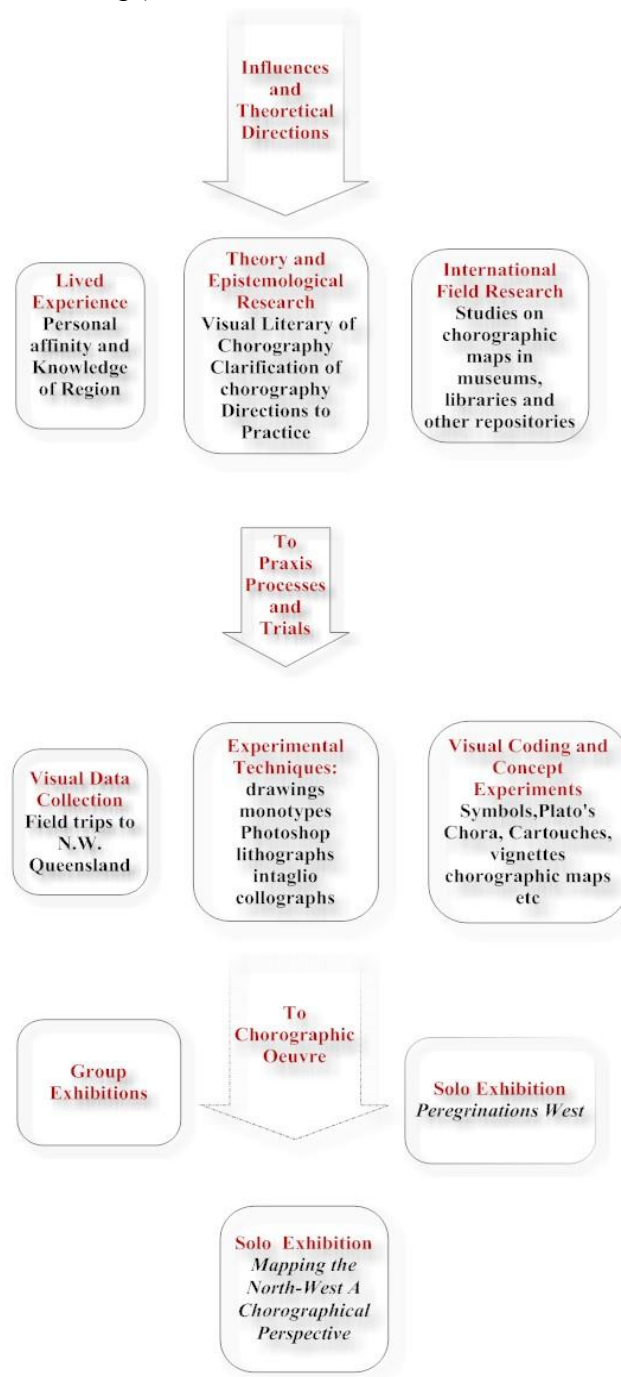


Figure 4 Work Flow for Praxis (O’Sullivan 2011 thesis u.p.)

Jill O'Sullivan's first row of annotation refers to the T O Maps that she has diligently sourced from libraries in England and Europe.



Plate 7 Jill O'Sullivan's reference to *Hereford Mappa Mundi* c.1290

O'Sullivan, in addition to sourcing these maps for her study created strong links to the region of north Queensland and in particular to the torrid zone of north west Queensland. Jill O'Sullivan collected references from photography to large relief prints in order to identify the location and influences for her research project.

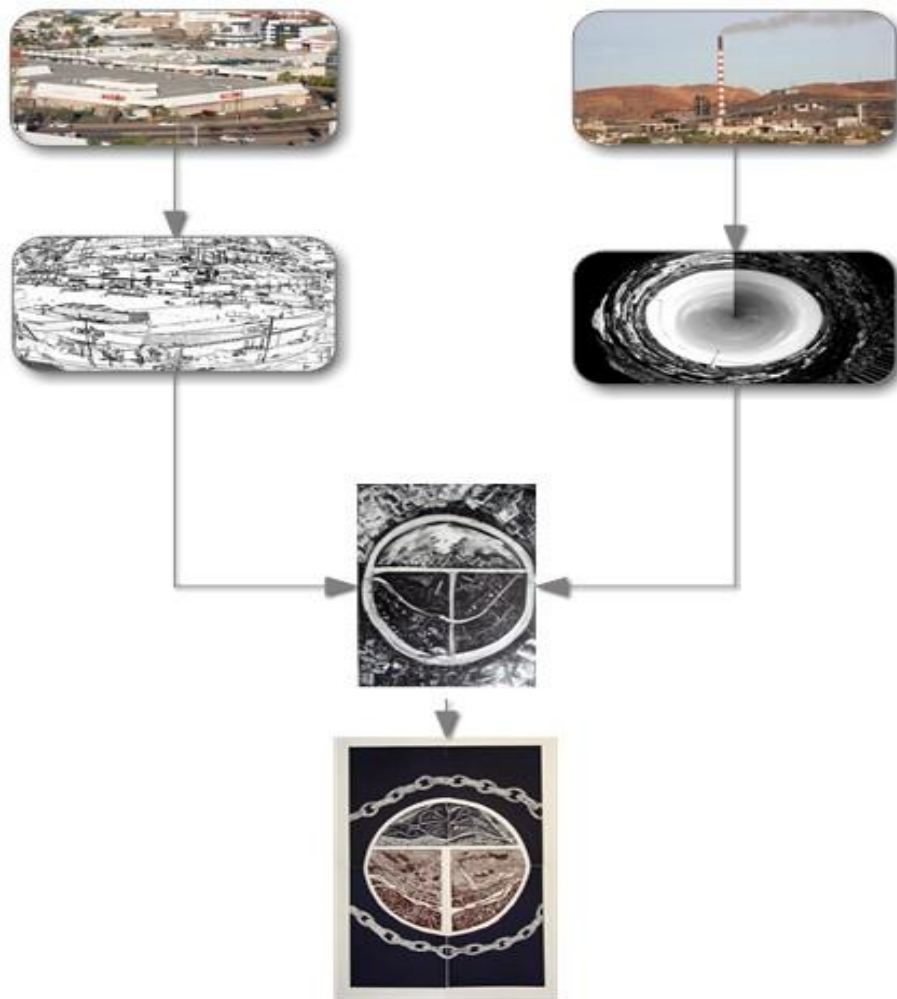


Plate 8 Field Documentation to Final Output: Jill O’Sullivan’s artwork and influences from chorography



Plate 9 Diagrammatic T-O map, 12th Century Etymologies, author: Isodore, Saint, Bishop of Seville

O’Sullivan cites Ptolemy to claim her qualitative approach where ‘chorography has need of topography and no one can be a chorographer unless he is also skilled in drawing (Ptolemy 149 AD, cited in Lukermann 1961:194). In other words her practice-led research and theoretical perspective are synchronized through visual

literacy and carefully chosen examples from chorography, as well as citing cultural geographers.

Sullivan in her research aims to ‘instate chorographic visual literacy as a relevant descriptor for modern interpretation of place to offer a sound and innovative direction to both visual and theoretical outcomes of the creative research[er’s] art practice’ (O’Sullivan u. p. thesis 2011).

In order to elaborate on her perspective differently from quantitative research, O’Sullivan writes,

Ptolemy reasons that geography represents the whole of the known world, and uses a *quantitative* approach. [Cultural geographers] Casey (2002), Cosgrove (2004), and Dilke (1984) concur that Ptolemy categorically stated that chorography describes a *qualitative* identity of individual places or a region. (O’Sullivan 2011 u.p., pp. 24-25) [italics added by Lord].

This candidate has aligned her work with the way many visual artists might, like a social science researcher, adopt theory and quantitative methods to investigate literature beyond the visual arts discipline. Though her practice-led research is one way of working, the applied qualitative approach is necessary to encompass the field.

Similarly with visual artist Laurel McKenzie’s research, the varying perspectives of feminism assist her work in practice, and provide substantial background for the way many prominent women have been lost from history. Some of these losses can be substantial visual imagery that can be guessed through glimpses of fragments such as the ancient Egyptian Queen Hatsheput. McKenzie subsequently creates visual interpretations, as well as, a new perspective for re-writing into history some forgotten female figures. This synthesis of re-imagined creative arts practice is also aligned with feminist writings and historical accounts of women.



Plate 10 Laurel McKenzie, digital study for reimagining *Hatshepsut*

McKenzie refers to water as wavy lines in all her work for this series. In addition to water as a life-source and the woman as nurturer, the tools often associated with women, such as buttons for sewing have also been employed in creating the visual richness for the women's textured clothing.

In my comparative approach for this paper, I have looked at PhD candidate, Jan Daly's work with her varying perspectives of postmodern views of multiculturalism. Daly asks what does this mean in Australian showcasing of artists and their work from multicultural backgrounds? Categories emerge for her study as to expatriates, as well as artists from mixed marriages, and those who are working with imagery and subjects from within their own culture, but also others who are influenced by cultures other than their original place / nationality. Daly is not alone as Jin Sha, curator for the exhibition *Zhongjian: Midway* <<http://www.townsville.qld.gov.au/facilities/galleries/perctucker/Pages/default.aspx>> reveals the mesh of 'associations and influences that operate in our trans-cultural world'. The exhibition rationale is timely for Daly and a qualitative approach. Curator Jin Sha asks questions by presenting artists' work from various categories based on where an artist lives and how they work in relation to their adopted culture or place of origin.

Daly asks through her research, how does Australian policy promote or deny access to the arts industry and representation of multi-cultural artwork, specifically Asian artwork? In her own work this questioning involves the way an audience interprets cues from Asian iconography or ideology in this country, Australia, that knows these icons through mass production of commercialized images and misappropriated placement.



Plate 11 Jan Daly 2010, catalogue images and text for exhibition *Imbrication*.

Government and fiscal policy or priorities may be part of this equation, however the creative arts person is looking at qualitative processes and methods, to arrive at some of the outcomes for the research topic. In the words of some science researchers this qualitative approach may be a more difficult and convoluted method than the qualitative method. In my mind it is essential as a meaningful method to approach the richness and complexity of many cultures in a region.

Thus rather than being a problematic approach it becomes an ongoing reevaluation of the topic through an extended literature review. It allows the research quest to remain open for the duration of the enquiry. Ashton in her careful probing of the questions I put to myself for 'Art and Ephemera', urged me to work in this way. Nagy Hesse

Biber and Leavy provide in Table 1, ten areas of re-evaluation and thus build confidence to work in this way, as the topic can be invigorated by ongoing query.

In contrast to Jin Sha's curatorial approach that looks at a region or culture as a descriptor, the curators of the Surrealism exhibition at GoMA in Brisbane do not try to equate region with cultural heritage, rather they use complexity to present the concepts behind the evolving surrealist movements from early 1900 to the present 2011. The diversity in this model possibly accepts as a given the multi-cultural potential of a region, such as Europe.

In the way a subject seen outside of the rigorous context of research may be presented as incoherent or out of context, the image presented outside the perspective of a topic, issue and theory can be "chocolate-box" art, or even as researcher Brown (1995) states, as pornographic when it is not contextualised by the frame. In other words, overcoming mute research is not just writing about the process, but being able to present through synthesis of the process, the material and the technique, as well as, to find ways of presenting these ideas visually to the reader ~ audience. In this way, the interpretation in art, an idea that I started this paper with emerges as part of the communication between artists and audiences, artwork and reader. It brings the creative practitioner, as well as their audience, ways to interpret things and facts.

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