

The Graduate School of Education
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.....

SPECIAL ISSUE

A/r/tography and the Visual Arts

Volume 3 | Issue 1 | 2013

.....

Guest Editors *Rita L. Irwin*
Anita Sinner

Editor
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ABOUT THE E-JOURNAL

The UNESCO Observatory refereed e-journal is based within the Graduate School of Education at The University of Melbourne, Australia. The journal promotes multi-disciplinary research in the Arts and Education and arose out of a recognised need for knowledge sharing in the field. The publication of diverse arts and cultural experiences within a multi-disciplinary context informs the development of future initiatives in this expanding field. There are many instances where the arts work successfully in collaboration with formerly non-traditional partners such as the sciences and health care, and this peer-reviewed journal aims to publish examples of excellence.

Valuable contributions from international researchers are providing evidence of the impact of the arts on individuals, groups and organisations across all sectors of society. The UNESCO Observatory refereed e-journal is a clearing house of research which can be used to support advocacy processes; to improve practice; influence policy making, and benefit the integration of the arts in formal and non-formal educational systems across communities, regions and countries.

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Special Issue: A/r/tography and the Arts

Guest Editors

Rita L. Irwin | Anita Sinner

THEME

To be engaged in the practice of a/r/tography means to inquire in the world through an ongoing process of art making in any art form and writing not separate or illustrative of each other but interconnected and woven through each other to create relational and/or enhanced meanings. A/r/tographical work are often rendered through the methodological concepts of contiguity, living inquiry, openings, metaphor/metonymy, reverberations and excess, which are enacted and presented/performed when a relational aesthetic inquiry condition is envisioned as embodied understandings and exchanges between art and text, and between and among the broadly conceived identities of artist/researcher/teacher. A/r/tography is inherently about self as artist/researcher/teacher yet it is also social when groups or communities of a/r/tographers come together to engage in shared inquiries, act as critical friends, articulate an evolution of research questions, and present their collective evocative/provocative works to others (see <http://m1.cust.educ.ubc.ca/Artography/>).

This special issue of Multi-Disciplinary Research in the Arts invites original creative and scholarly inquiry that engages in critical debates and issues regarding a/r/tographical methodologies; are exemplars of critical approaches to a/r/tographical research; and/or extend the boundaries of inquiry-based research. Contributions are welcome from disciplines across the arts, humanities and social sciences and in a wide range of formats including articles, essays, and artistic interludes, which explore diverse forms of the arts from drama, dance, poetry, narrative, music, visual arts, digital media and more.

The Art-Based Teachers' Professional development in the A/r/tographic Community¹

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to explore the possibilities how teachers are becoming integral professional in the a/r/tographic community. The case of art-based teachers' professional development, CWTM Project, in Taiwan is provided and analyzed.

A/r/tographers, including researcher, artist, and teachers, experienced the circular process of painting, inquiry, and pedagogical practice in the project. In the beginning, a/r/tographic community inquired about the pedagogical visions in relational selves through painting. In the pictures and narrations of a/r/tographers, the metaphor, light, is to express the pedagogical vision of a/r/tographers, which emerge from religious and satisfied living experiences. Besides, being unsatisfied with the educational conditions, a/r/tographers, living in aesthetic/ theoretical/ pedagogical space, redefined the implications of profession and took action to transcend the limitation and dilemma for integrity of professional identities and pedagogical empowerment. The art-based teachers' professional development in the a/r/tographic Community in this case is the "light" of the becoming professional in the challenging educational conditions.

KEYWORDS

a/r/tographic community, art-based educational research, teacher professional development, art-based teacher professional development

THE ART-BASED TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE A/R/TOGRAPHIC COMMUNITY¹

INTRODUCTION

i
I want to thank National Science Council in Taiwan who sponsored the research project, 99-2410-H-656-004-. I appreciate National Academy for Educational Research and Education Bureau of New Taipei City for sustaining the research program. I also extend great gratitude to Shulin Guo and all teachers in the project for their courage and open-minded approach to exploring in the a/r/tographic community. I also want to thank colleagues of the National Academy for Educational Research, Qingshan Wu, Jenwei Zhang, Mingxue Cai, Jinchang Xie, and Xinzhi Lin, for their collaborative support with this project.

Teachers are the key figures in the education reform. During the process, teachers always are asked to take up challenges and continuously to reflect in such complicated contexts. Studies on policies of teachers' professional development in Taiwan proposed that the self-awareness of identities and integrity are the key factors for teachers to become professional (Huang, 2005; Ou, 2010).

By analyzing narrations of teachers, Hung (2011) found out that facing the dilemma of limited resources and the pressure from bureaucratic demands, teachers usually puzzled and stuck with the professional autonomy and the regulative requests. Teachers, who work for the requirements of educational policies and parents, may endeavor to suppress their fatigue so that their passionate devotion to teaching is thus fading away little by little. How are teachers able to build up their own passion in life-long learning and to take back the integrity of their own identities and to transcend the above-mentioned dilemma? How the policy makers and educational experts coordinate with teachers, resulting in not only "know-how" but also "understand-why/how/can," becomes more and more important. On the way to the education reform, we usually tend to renew curricula, revise textbooks, restructure school systems, but we are seldom concerned about the identities of teachers. Only if the body and mind of teachers are integrated, teachers can inquire of themselves as teachers, explore the relations between inner value and the exterior world, realize who I am as a teacher, and then distinguish the correlation among teachers and students, colleagues, parents and school administrators.

Proposing the integrity of being teachers, Palmer(2007) indicated only when one is more familiar with what is happening inside as one should do, the more surefooted teaching and living becomes. Therefore, he explored the inner landscape of teaching from three paths: intellectual, emotional, and spiritual for wholeness.

By intellectual I mean the way we think about teaching and learning...by emotional I mean the way we and our students feel as we teach and learn...by spiritual I mean a longing that animates love and work. (Palmer, 2007, P.5)

How do teachers “live” in a world of wholeness of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual to seek for self-awareness and integration? In Chinese, the world “世界” is composed of two characters. The character ‘世’ means the continuous processing of time and generation and ‘界’ is the segmented, confined domain. The identities of teachers are ever-merging and co-creative as a whole in the space-time continuum. If one gets used to dwelling in definitive space-time and take it for granted, how can one live in an endless merging of wholeness of the world and transcend the either/or? From the perspectives of Greene’s aesthetic experiences provoked by arts and Aoki’s third spaces, Irwin stated the space of artist-researcher-teachers studying in a/r/tography stimulates reflection, creativity, and self-acknowledgement, and also provokes questioning, wondering, and wandering in living. The space of a/r/tography is also the world(世界), which is important to those who are suffering from the discrete professional identities and are struggling to transcend the current limited education conditions for activating the teaching passion in living.

Nowadays in Taiwan, teachers are encouraged to improve themselves by doing action research and being regularized by the policy of evaluation for professional development etc. The appeal for a better educational performance and complaints about the overload pressure from the existing educational system never stop. Education reforms will never stop. The change of school system and teachers’ professional development will become the critical factor to improve students’ learning. Becoming a professional teacher, Moore (2007) suggested cultivating the reflectivity in complicated context and then to waken the dull consciousness and light up the inactive mind. Education is a public and personal practice at the same time. In the a/r/tographic community, a/r/tographers can work individually and also collaboratively for re-searching in artistic and pedagogical practice, which is an inspiring way to become an integral professional.

A/R/TOGRAPHERS IN ART-BASED TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The word "Art" is coined basically from the root "*ar-*" meaning "to fit together or join". Art is not only an artistic work, but a process of exploring and working. Dewey(1934/1980, p.214) differentiated a product of art from a work of art. A work of art is open to an aesthetic experience which is to combine cooperative successive, accumulative, and developing experiences with a product of art, a painting, a poem, or a performance, etc. According to Dewey (1934/1980, p.71), a work of art comes from the need for expression. What is expressed in it is an intimate union of present existence with the value that past experiences have incorporated in personality, and the expression in an artistic work integrates artist's aesthetic experience coming from his/her intellects, feelings, and practices in life. The philosophy of aesthetic experience may inspire those who search for the meaning in life and deeply enquiry who they are and whom they will be. Irwin (2004, p.31) worked on a/r/tographic practice which can create an imaginative turn, and which also can theorize or explain phenomena through aesthetic experience by integrating knowing, doing, and making. Hung (2010), who inspired by the methodology of a/r/tography, proposed the art-based teachers' professional development for researching the identity and body-mind integration in aesthetic experience.

We usually have analogy between teachers and artists regarding the artistry of teaching. Teaching can be a journey that teachers and learners rename themselves and their world. "Rename" is to research the name we have and a possible one to have. The trivial, complicated, and repetitive teachers' lives inactivate their wonders to the world and their passions to explore and change themselves. Booth (1997) encouraged those suffering from the dull life to learn the ability of recovery and reflection on the inner mind through art, because it can inspire one aware of the necessity and possibility of change. Allen (1995) had inquired about self through painting for over a decade. She also found that art transgresses the border in mind and releases the consciousness. According to Allen, art is a way of self-inquiry and a way of seeing possibilities in life.

Now the achievement of educational reform should be attributed to the changes of schools and teachers, but any change could be difficult to carry out if teachers feel powerless or think the reformation is unnecessary. The problem is related to the phenomenon of how teachers feel powerless and pessimistic about their jobs. No matter how many resources are invested from government and how the requirements of an educational policy are postulated to help teachers, if policy makers cannot inspire the desire for changes, the above-mentioned investment and requirements will be in vain.

Nowadays, there are more and more artists/researchers/teachers works on self-inquiry into life, especially into professional life. From the perspective of art-based educational research, practitioners enhance understanding of human activities through artistic means and wonder about what the world should and can become (Barone, 2008). In the Handbook of the ARTS in Qualitative Research, there are many artistic forms and projects developed (Knowles & Cole, 2008). Moreover, those on how art is related to research and pedagogy, and what the relationship is among aesthetic, theoretical, and pedagogical perspectives of art-based education is under explored?

ii
Most administrators in elementary school and junior high school in Taiwan are also teachers. They teach and also manage some administrative affairs.

A/r/tography tries to work on these questions. A/r/tography is a methodology that resides in the space of the in-between and in doing so redefines the implications of knowing, researching, and practicing. A/r/tography is also a living practice of art, research, and teaching (Irwin, 2004; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2008). When teachers become a/r/tographers, they are going through the living experiences of artist, researcher, and also teacher. They are trying to theorize their teaching and to apply the pedagogy to their own aesthetic experience. When teachers live as a/r/tographers, they are not only on a quest for answers but encourage new questions in life. Irwin describes the ever-expanding dynamic inquiry in a/r/tography as a rhizome, which spreads out unpredictably and is always emerging. The punctuation “/” used in the word a/r/tography means the “both &- ands” and living in the in-between of the reflective, relational, recursive, and responsive space. Thus, theorizing and practicing become something other than what they were and exist in constant movement toward becoming (Irwin, Beer, Springgay, Grauer, Xiong, & Bickel, 2006; Springgay & Irwin, 2008).

Based on art-based inquiry and a/r/tography, the project, Change the World from -- Start off Teachers' Mind (CWTM), was activated in a Shansha District in New Taipei City of Taiwan to re-search and re-fresh the integrity of becoming professional teachers.

In the process of CWTM Project, researchers held focus groups interviews and concluded two debatable issues. One stated by schools administrators who felt frustrated with the effects of school-based in-service teachers training programs for teachers who are losing passion day by day. The other issue is addressed by teachers who feel exhausted by coping with endless administrative affairs many of which interfered with their teaching. The feeling of powerlessness diminishes or even extinguishes their passion in various programs of professional learning and works. The different understandings for professional learning between administrators and teachers cause some problems in school-based teachers' professional development. These problems give the CWTM Project feedback to design workshops. The title “Change the world” has double meanings; one is to improve the limited conditions, and the other is to change one's position and to live in-between the merging space-time of aesthetic/ theoretical/ pedagogical world.

The CWTM Project is practice-based research through painting. All people involved in the project are a/r/tographers. I am the researcher and also educator of teachers' education. Teachers and administratorsⁱⁱ in Shansha District and the artist, Shulin, were invited to the CWTM Project. We grouped into the a/r/tographic community, people who work with each other for artistic and pedagogical sensibilities and capabilities in ongoing and dialogic forms of research. While working together, a/r/tographers always provoke questions regarding the meanings of works (Sinner, A., Leggo, C., Irwin, R.L., Gouzouasis, P., & Grauer, K., 2006). To dwell in the a/r/tographic community, we are learners who go along with a journey of painting/ inquiry/ pedagogy for becoming passionate professionals and for transcending the limited educational conditions.

iii

The project, CWTM, was conducted for two semesters. We had a workshop in each semester. The first workshop was from April 1, 2011 to 17 June 2011; the second was from 3 September 2011 to 23 December 2011. The paper is written basically on the result of the CWTM workshops.

iv

The workshops are free and open for teachers in the project. We explained the project before inviting teachers. Only those who were willing could join the project.

v

We painted with crayon. The reason is that crayon is easier and cheaper for most teachers and also it is a creative material for a variety of paintings.

THE COMMUNITY OF A/R/TOGRAPHERS IN CWTM PROJECT

Change the World from --- Start off Teachers' Mind (CWTM) is a part of the main projects of teachers' professional development executed by National Academy for Educational Research, Sanshia District, New Taipei City of Taiwan. The artist, Shulin, who is also an art educator for promoting society of public good, was invited to join the project. The community of a/r/tographers also includes teachers of three junior high schools and three elementary schools. Two CWTM workshops were held on Friday afternoon twice a month in a semesterⁱⁱⁱ. There were 16 teachers in each workshop^{iv}. They were science and mathematics teachers from junior high schools, administrators, grade 1-2 teachers, and art teachers. The community of a/r/tographers co-inquires the identity through the painting of mind. What is the implication of "Painting of Mind"?

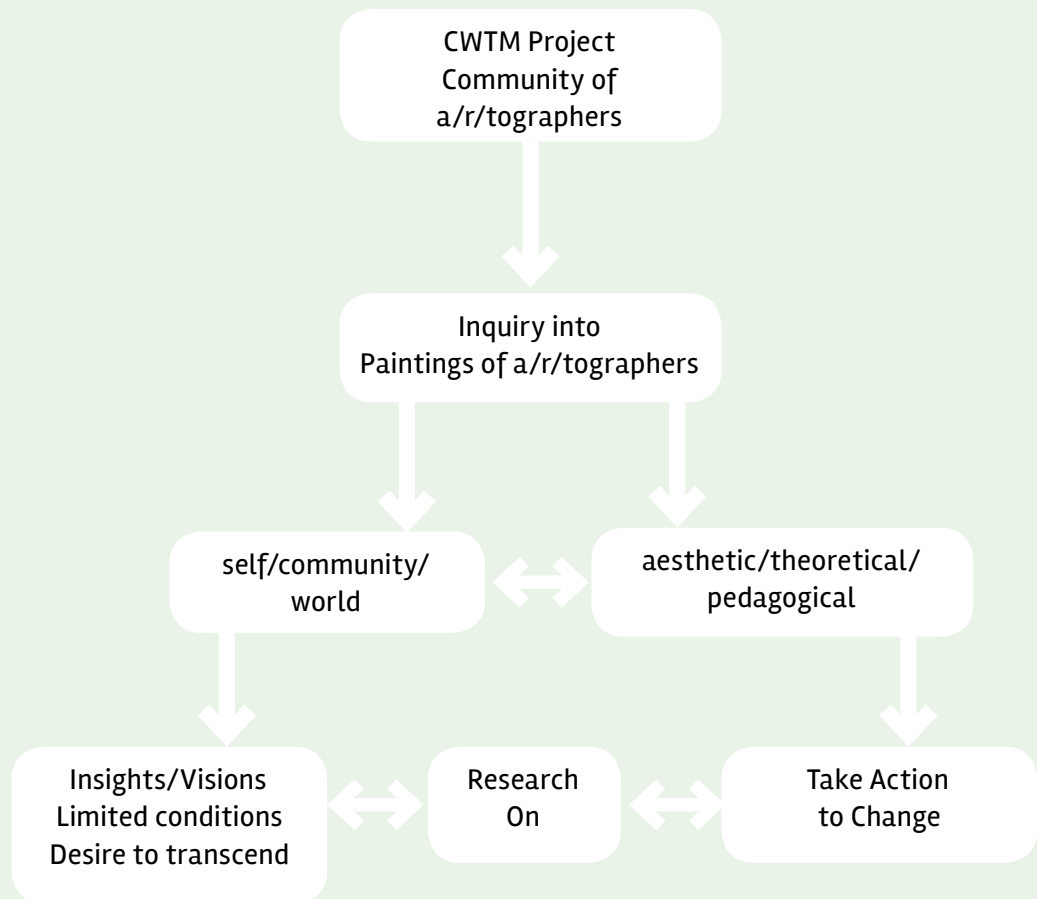
According to the artist Shulin's definition, the painting of mind should be related to the original body-mind integration. If one paints with his/her intuition and free mind, then in the process of painting, one can have a dialogue with his/her mind and further comprehend the meaning of every encounter in life. One can re-connect the relationship with others and with the world. For artists, the 'painting of mind' is to understand the meanings of encounters and, therefore, to be reflective and more energetic.

The process of project painting is a cycle of painting, self-inquiry, and reflection on practice. There are three aspects in the CWTM project, insight to self, self / community, and self/ world. In the aspect of "insight to self", we, a/r/tographers, inquired about who we are in pedagogy through painting. In the self/community, we painted vision of the community in which we live. Thus the self/world refers to the desire for change in the mind.

At the beginning, we discussed the notions of self, self /community, and self/ world, and then painted freely with crayon^v. After finishing the painting, we exhibited our paintings and shared thoughts with each other.

In the process of the workshop, we had a focus group interview with artist and teachers. What insights are produced in the CWTM project? The framework of research is illustrated as follows.

Figure 1
Framework of
the Research



CWTM PROJECT OF A/R/TOGRAPHERS: PAINTING OF MIND

Who am I? The Insight of the relation of self/community/world

Who am I? This is the first question in the workshop. What do I look like in the eyes of myself and students? We choose drawing papers and crayons and then paint quietly and freely. From mind to paper, by colors, lines, and dots, imaginations are released in wordless paintings. Who am I? Bustling in and out of their families and the schools, teachers identified their identities as transformers. The distorted image, figure 2, triggered our inquiries by means of the metaphors created from the image of a big mouth, an open eye, a love shape heart, and four hands. Who am I? What am I looking for? Where shall I go? In the personal space, painting is a tool for the inquiry about self. Moreover, community of a/r/tographers is the space of public practice. Teachers narrated pedagogical experiences.

I feel I am lonely in school? We are very busy in endless work and with no passion in our jobs again. (06 May 2011, Teacher Tong)

I found most of my students of junior high school feel lonely at home. They usually bury themselves in the virtual on-line world after school. (09 December 2011, Teacher Lijuan)

The feeling of loneliness distorts the good intentions of teaching and learning, so that everything around alienates the self/community/world and also disrupts teachers' wholeness of living.

Figure 2
A Diary of Transformer
(Teacher Lijuan)



*Day in and day out
Racing on the running way of time
Roles acting one by one
Be cautious and keep sound
If got lost, for poor performance I would cry.
Watch the definite direction forward
Step firmly
Follow the rapid rhythm*

*Hold on and never stop.
Go! Go! Go!
Where is our destination?*

--by Lijuan

Figure 3
Look at Myself
(Teacher Jlin)



*Living in the world chaotic,
Running lonely in the dusk,
Myself
Always keep running
Twilight and starlight.*

--by Jlin

A/r/tography provokes questioning, wondering, and wandering and provides knowledge, teaching, and learning from multiple perspectives (Irwin,2004). When we, a/r/tographers, asked questions of ourselves and others, we listened to and have learned from each other. This is an uncharted journey for emerging questions and answers. I shared my experiences of a/r/tography and started the rhizomatic journey of living.

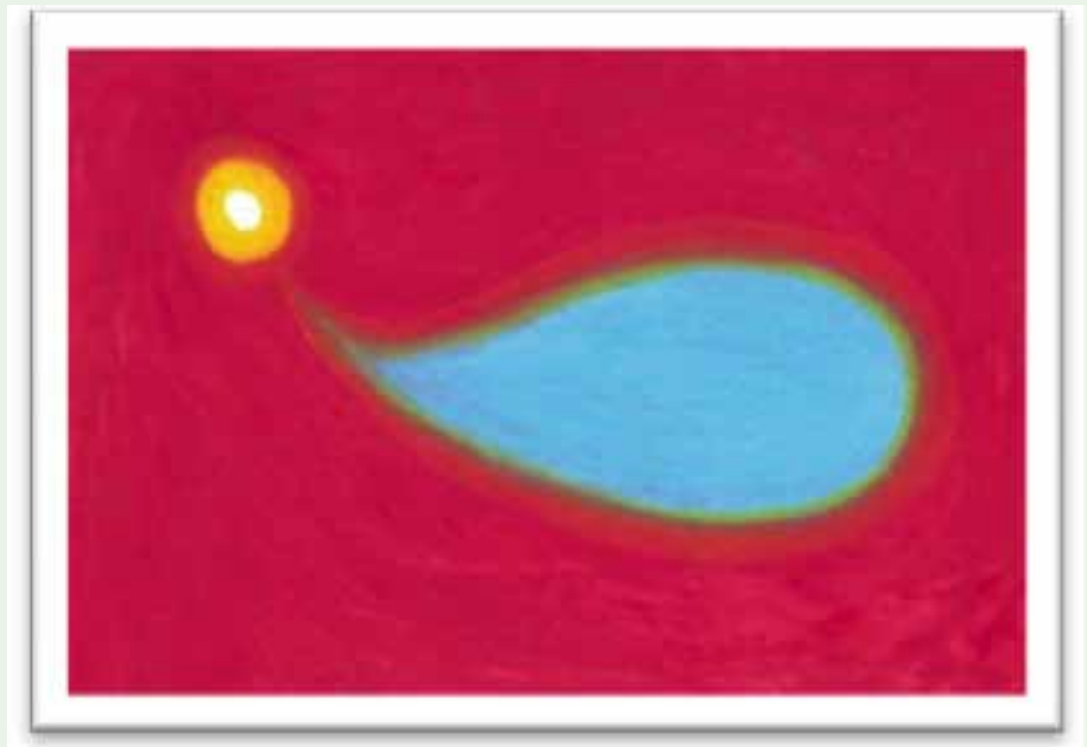
Figure 4
Uncharted Journey
Yungshan



*In the uncharted journey,
Desire and anxiety hid,
Crayon out the inner world
Floating unconsciously, spinning inwardly,
Encounter you unexpectedly,
In the uncharted world.
We chart and shine
In this wondering land.*

--by Yungshan (Researcher)

Figure 5
An Exclamation Mark
(Artist Shulin)



*With
Exclamation Mark
A pure land, I am looking for.
I wonder where the way leads to ?
Better? Worse?
To explore like a newborn
Re-listening, re-learning, re-understanding
This world brandnew.*

--by Shulin

Painting is the way to confront and inquire into self. (29 April 2012, Teacher Yilong)
A/r/tographers live in the dynamic and transformative world and always keep on questioning. Art can serve as a way of knowing and understanding. In humanities, understanding is the body/mind/spirit interactive resonance of I-Thou (Lin, 2009). Connected to the self/community/world, one (with emotions, will, beliefs, and values), will gradually acquire his/her subjectivity only if imagination is released and dwells with meanings in the world. "Who am I?" We questioned and clarified those suppressed or unconscious thoughts successively in the process of painting, reflecting, sharing, and interpreting. As above, if teachers were transformers, who are always kept running in countless contests and feel lonely in the daily living, how could teachers transcend the dilemmas and have the integrity of professional identities?

BECOMING THE WHOLENESS: THE VISIONS OF MIND

In the second stage, we explore the visions of the ideal world in our mind. We found the metaphor, light, is expressed in many of the paintings.

Figure 6
Light (paintings collage)

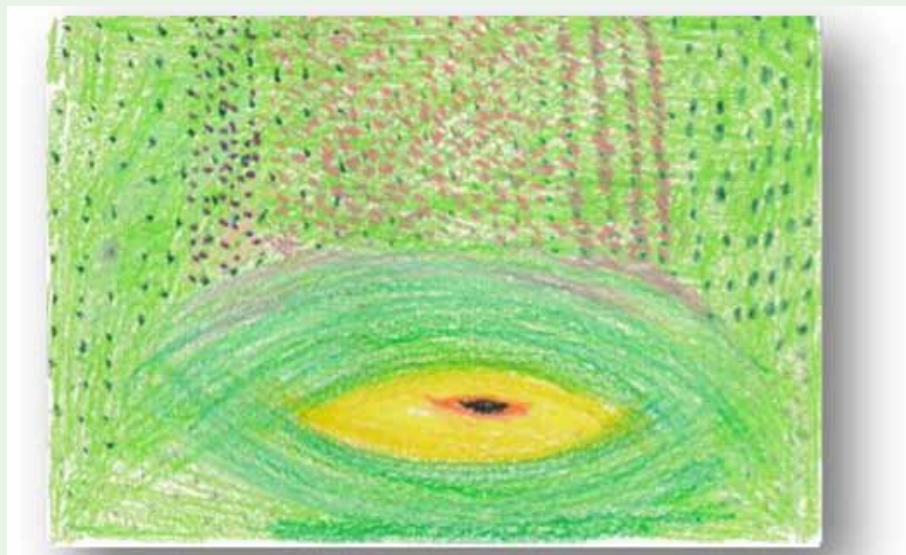


iv
The image circle
“Round” implies
perfect and reunion
in Chinese culture.

Lost in the varicolored world, I look for light and hope. (Ingya)Everything is interconnected. Round^{iv} is the heaven, the earth, the human beings, and the shining world. (Showmay)

All living creatures are equal and co-existent in love. The place I look for is growing with pink flowers and green meadow. I feel the halo of Buddha enveloping me and comforting me. That is my wish to love everyone like Buddha. (Jiamay)

Figure 7
The Eye of Buddha
(Teacher Jiamay)



One teacher reflected that the topic teachers concern about in pedagogical life is mostly related to materials, teaching technologies, objectives, evaluation, and achievements. We live in a clockwork curriculum as Gough (2002, p.3) described. We seldom look inside ourselves as well as outside. We live in a simplified world. The significant words such as “individual” or “student-centered curriculum” become abstract concepts when we give up exploring the internal experiences in existential situations. Pinar and Grumet (2006) again claimed the inquiry into “Currere,” which traces the intentionality back to its sources and helps teachers and students devote their energies to academic or school work. What is the intentionality of art/research/teaching?

Sunshine, beams, and halo of Buddha are metaphors of inner visions of teachers. One teacher noted that “light makes me warm, comfortable, and energetic; moreover, it leads me to transcend what difficulties I confront and what disturbs me.” The spiritual experiences come from religion and happy memories in life. The stories of religious experiences, families, students, friends in life inspire and bring out teachers’ internal world and then project to external realities. These stories of one’s life are moments of the spiritual of transformation and transcendence of the present forms of behavior. Huebner (2001:166-167) claimed these moments might be explained as growth, education, insight, intuition, or power. He also explained the spiritual is the vitality or power of life to make transcendence possible. Painting is a way to inquire into the spiritual by a/r/tographers. When we picture our visions, we are shining and dancing in the blurred space wondering what we could become.

Figure 8
Dancing in the Blurred
Space (Yungshan)



A teacher shared her painting “hole” and pointed out that she saw the richness and moreness of students’ mind after she learned to be open to students. Those holes are unknown if unexplored. We never know what are hided in the holes. However, a “hole” is also an invitation to experience the transforming moment; and this is an a/r/tographical moment to inquire about the hidden internal realities.

Figure 9
Holes (Teacher
Showjen)



BECOMING INTEGRITY: LIVING IN AESTHETIC/ THEORETICAL/ PEDAGOGICAL

Good teaching cannot be reduced to merely practice repetitively and technically; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher. (Pamler, 2007, p.10) Identity is always moving in a complex intersection of the inner and outer forces from self, family and society. Inquiring about identity is to clarify the diverse forces that make up my life. We, a/r/tographers, explore who we are and what visions we have in the painting/reflection/practice process. Artist, Shulin, exhibited her works in her book "The Heart Of Creation" (Guo, 2011). Painting is the pathway of life. When we are dotting on the paper, a new world comes into being. With the adding of dots and lines, an artist is bound for a new journey to re-search the life in new ways. Arts, like visual arts, music, dance, poetry etc., are aesthetic forms by which we are able to experience and to influence our internal life. Eisner(2001) pointed out the aesthetic is motivated by our need to give orders to our world, which is to make that world hang together , to put things in balance, and to create harmony sought in all aspects of life.

For teachers, learning to inquire as artists and as researchers is to cultivate the abilities of sensibility, perception, and imagination. In the CWTM Project, we were regressive to inner experiences and then progressive to outer reality in the community of a/r/tographers.

Teacher, Yutong, recalled the process of being a/r/tographer. "In the beginning, we dressed up, spoke, and behaved and confined like the role of a "teacher" in a classroom. However, in the workshop of a/r/tographic community, we are becoming friends gradually. We understood mutually the same situation of happiness, troubles, or depression in our living when we shared and reflected on paintings and experiences we encountered. Something is obviously changing".

Teacher, Ingy, shared how she put the project into action: "I am encouraged in the workshops. What I've learned is most teachers are complaining about school conditions that are getting worse or even corrupt. I decided to give advice to my principal actively. I am brave, right? I told to the principal that I appreciate him for allowing me to attend the CWTM Project and I am more courageous now to share some advice honestly to him in case he would repeat the same mistakes when he works in next school. Now something has changed positively in my school."

Teacher, Yilong, concluded that the CWTM project is like a map to show the directions of the uncharted journey of self-exploration in the dramatic changing era. I never knew I could paint till I overcome the self-limited situation. Now I realize that to change is not difficult. We just need to try it. Teachers are like the hands with power and energy to support students to transcend and shine themselves.

Figure 10
The ability to Change
(Teacher Yilong)



Change

Be calm and quiet, staying at empty space

Release caged self.

Light up the hope

Change the world.

--by Yilong

A/r/tographers are immersed in and express the inner world in the aesthetic moment, that is a way to know themselves in the limited situation and the blurred gap of artist/researcher/teachers. What I love and suffer is no more segmented but transformed to the desire to change integrity in the world. We, artist, researchers, and teachers have learned and seen the mutual insights we shared. Therefore, art is a way to see what we fear or love, what we are depressed about, and suffering from, and then we are able to transcend the limited educational conditions. The light is leading us to escape from the hopeless darkness. When we are able to see, we learn to re-search and re-act to change the world we live in. Ingya advised the principal on school administration. Lijen, Junjie, Jlin, and Showjen started to work on the pedagogical projects to encourage and promote learning of students in their class. The aesthetic/theoretical/pedagogical moment is becoming integrated; and owing to this, a/r/tographers can look for a light of hope and transcend the dilemmas with joy.

Figure 11
The World of Light
(Teacher Pingsi)



CODA

After the end of the CWTM workshops, our paintings have been exhibited among six schools in turn, which are partners of the project. We have invited the president of the National Academy for Educational Research, the deputy director of the Educational Bureau of New Taipei City, principals, parents, teachers, and students to attend the opening ceremony and co-work out a painting “Change, Heart Start.” They interpreted the painting of “Change, Heart Start” as a coordinated world with visions, heart (心), awakening(醒), action(行), and trust(信).

Figure 12
The Painting Exhibition
(5 March, 2012)



Figure 13
Change, Heart
Start (Co-work on
5 March 2012)



*Our heart
Like a pure land,
In the Journey without a chart,
Adventurers we are.
Glowing power radiated
By the circle-light.
The wonderful world is under construction,
By our head and hands
What a vital garden created.
Change!
Always start from
heart.*

--by Shulin & Yungshan

The inquiry through art is a way to see the relation of self/community/world in the aesthetic/theoretical/pedagogical domain. Our mind is like a flowing river always transformed in the evolution with the spatial/ temporal turning. The community of a/r/tographers explores the minds of teachers in limited conditions vis art-based researching. We, artist, researchers, and teachers, share our insights, visions, and actions in the process of inquiry. We seem to enter an aesthetic/ theoretical/ pedagogical space of Palmer's integrity, Hubner's spiritual knowing, and the Pinar and Grumet's currere. When a teacher acts as an artist, as a researcher, his/her mind going along with the source of intentionality, will never dry up. In CWTM Project, teachers' minds are compared to the shining light which brightens darkness with hope and love. The religious spiritual experiences and inspiring stories of life light up the dull mind of teachers. This is a spiritual moment of transformation and transcendence. For the community of a/r/tographers, the inquiry into self/community/world is to cultivate the inner artistic ability to explore self, to confirm the inner desire, to get along with chaos, to picture visions, and then to put ideas into practice. Unsatisfied with the rampant growth of skill-based professional learning, a/r/tographers' quest for insight and visions of mind, also awaken the re-searching for professional learning. To sum up, the CWTM Project is a way to cultivate the inner abilities in aesthetic/theoretical/pedagogical space for becoming an integrated professional teacher.

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