How Does Collaboration and Joint Authorship Support Young Artists in Building Artistic Agency and Status?

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Abstract

This research-creation sits at the intersection of youth arts, socially engaged art and informal arts pedagogy. It investigates the impact a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has on the development of young artists between the ages of twelve and twenty-something, specifically examining how a united front approach to making and presenting art supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

The site of this investigation is a thirteen-year-old youth-driven, adult and peer mentored artist-run initiative called tbC, based in suburban Melbourne, Australia. I am a founding member of tbC, and this investigation is based on my embedded observations of group methods and practices. Four case study artworks demonstrate how a united front approach to making and presenting art supports young creatives in building artistic agency and status. They include: a publication called *Hoodie Mag*, a public art project called *The Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project,* a digital artwork called *The Art of Conversation,* and a gallery project also called *The Art of Conversation.* Discussion around the fact that tbC is itself a collaborative artwork is included in this investigation.

The data arising from this artistic research is mapped as an ecology of practice and inquiry via a dissertation and companion website. The companion website is this research's creative output. Hyperlinks facilitate a connection between the two sites of knowledge. Together, they provide a fuller understanding of how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. Scholarship around relational art, authorship and the rhizome further support the theorising around this communal model of arts practice and the design of this multimodal submission.

While there is substantial research around programs that engage and support young people, there are fewer examples of research, especially longitudinal, around the practices of young artists and how they can be supported. This investigation addresses this gap and is relevant to self-identifying young artists and those working with them. The significance of this study can be found in how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice positions the young artist as practitioner and the agency and status this positioning builds.

Short Abstracts

This research-creation sits at the intersection of youth arts, socially engaged art and informal arts pedagogy. It investigates the impact a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has on the development of young artists. Four case study artworks examine how a united front approach to making and presenting art supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. The data from these case studies is mapped as an ecology of practice and inquiry within a dissertation and companion website.

(80 words)

This research-creation sits at the intersection of youth arts, socially engaged art and informal arts pedagogy. Four case studies investigate the impact a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has on young artists' development. Data is mapped as an ecology of practice and inquiry within a dissertation and companion website.

(50 words)

Tiffaney Bishop investigated the impact of collaborative arts practice and joint authorship on the development of young artists through a longitudinal case study approach and integrated digital archive, demonstrating how collaboration enables and builds artistic agency and status. This study offers a unique approach to and understanding of youth arts.

(Graduation ceremony 50 words)

Declaration

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It includes this 60,000-word dissertation and a creative output in the form of a companion website. I certify that this research is that of the author alone, except where due acknowledgement has been made. The thesis content has not been submitted as part of any other academic award. It is the result of work carried out since the official commencement date of an approved research candidature.

Tiffaney Bishop, June 2022

Research Ethics

This research is observational and deemed a ‘Minimal Risk Project’ by the Human Ethics Advisory Group at the Victorian College of the Arts, The Faculty of Fine Arts and Music, University of Melbourne. Ethics ID: 1545674. It examines the group methods and practices of a collaborative arts project called tbC. It has not directly solicited the opinions of artist members. Findings emerge from the researcher’s embedded collaborative experience of tbC and reflection on four case study artworks made by the group. Three of the four case study artworks are dialogical. Conversational text about how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status is the material and medium of these works. While not as formal as solicited interview or survey testimony, these dialogical artworks reveal valuable creative knowledge that significantly supports this observational study.

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Introduction

In 2008, five thirteen-year-olds from my community asked me to support them in making and presenting a body of photographic artwork – artwork that would speak to their contemporary experiences and collective identity. As a photographer drawn to social documentation, this request delighted me, and I agreed. What followed was the development of a more than decade-long collaborative arts practice that has supported me, several artist mentors and more than one hundred young creatives in artmaking and presentation. This artistic collaboration is based in suburban Melbourne, Australia and is known by the moniker tbC. It is the site of this investigation.

tbC is a thirteen-year-old youth-driven, adult and peer mentored artist-run initiative. Young members range in age from twelve to twenty-something and self-identify as artists. Examining how collaboration and joint authorship manifests at tbC and how this model of practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status is the main aim and primary focus of this research, as is the theorising around agency and status and the defining of the two terms. tbC's dedicated arts practice, egalitarian governance and informal arts pedagogy potentially support the success of this united front approach to building artistic agency and status and will be a secondary focus of this investigation.

The inspiration for this research comes from studio conversations at tbC about how young artists often feel that their age, experience and perceived lack of expertise restricts the building of artistic agency and status. These conversations routinely culminate in collective declarations that it shouldn't matter if an artist is young and that artistic merit should be viewed through an aesthetic lens rather than a biographical one.

In response to this ongoing dialogue, tbC focuses on collaborative art and joint authorship practices that facilitate a united front approach to making and presenting art, an approach that privileges artworks ahead of the artists' identities. This research examines the proposition that this united front approach liberates young artists from the constraints of their biographies and supports the building of earlier artistic agency and status.

As this is an artistic inquiry, creative expression and academic exposition are intertwined. This multimodal thesis includes this dissertation and a creative outcome in the form of a companion website. The dissertation presents the central theoretical tenets of my investigation. The companion website contributes important experiential, descriptive and case study knowledge on the subject - operating as a digital platform (where online communication, interaction and archiving take place)[1] and a digital portfolio (that electronically presents and examines artistic works and working processes).[2] Hyperlinks appear throughout the dissertation, linking the two sites of knowledge. The linear structure of the dissertation and the non-linear layout of the companion website reflect the hybrid dynamics of my artist-researcher position, mapping an ecology of practice and inquiry via interconnected dialogue and multisensory expression. Together, this dissertation and companion website provide a fuller understanding of how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

Chapter One begins by defining the term youth. It also distinguishes the term youth arts from youth development and studio learning from arts education. This discussion contextualises

[1] "What is Digital Platform," IGI Global Publisher, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/beusin/55829. A comment inspired by this source.
[2] Terry Wiedmer, "Digital Portfolios: Capturing and Demonstrating Skills and Levels of Performance," *Phi Delta Kappan*, 79, no. 8 (April 1998): abstract, https://www.proquest.com/docview/62553652?accountid=12372. A comment inspired by this source.

youth arts as a voluntary, self-directed activity that engages young artists in creative practices and outcomes, as opposed to youth development, which is a more structured activity that reaches out to young people in general through broader education, health and welfare programming. It contextualises studio-based learning as self-organising, informal and driven by practice, as opposed to arts education, which is more formal, school-based and driven by prescribed curriculums. tbC operates outside formal education, health and welfare programming and is specifically interested in advancing young artists artistic agency and status.

A review of the literature around young people has revealed a plethora of research within what academic Reed Larson calls the "burgeoning field of youth development"[3] and what arts educator Jennifer Bott calls "the growing body of research in arts education."[4] In contrast, this review has revealed a distinct lack of research around the benefit and value of dedicated youth arts practice and limited practical examples, especially within the visual and experimental arts. Chapter One builds a case for more dedicated youth arts research and practice by demonstrating the limited instances of both.

Chapter One also examines contradictory youth discourse, which scholar Henry Giroux argues both celebrates and reproaches young people.[5] It critiques what social psychologist Christine Griffin refers to as the common perception of young people as troubled or troubling[6] and the cultural tendency to fear and/or misunderstand young people in general.

[3] Reed W. Larson, "Toward a Psychology of Positive Youth Development," *American Psychologist* 55, no. 1 (2000): 170, https://doi.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2F0003-066X.55.1.170.
[4] Jennifer Bott, CEO's forward to *Education and the Arts Research Overview: A Summary Report Prepared for The Australia Council for the Arts*, by Mary Ann Hunter (Canberra: Australia Council for the Arts, 2005), 4, https://www.ampag.com.au/wapap/Campaign/2-education-EducationAndTheArtsResearchOverview.pdf.
[5] Henry A. Giroux, "Teenage Sexuality, Body Politics, and the Pedagogy of Display," *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 18, no. 3 (1996): 307- 308, https://doi.org/10.1080/1071441960180307.
[6] Christine Griffin, "Imagining New Narratives of Youth, Childhood," *Childhood: A Journal of Global Child Research* 8, no. 2 (2001): 148, https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568201008002002.

It discusses how this fear and misunderstanding of the youth condition stigmatises and marginalises young people. Chapter One further argues that there is a disproportionate focus on the educational and welfare benefits of youth arts practice and that this devalues the intrinsic artistic qualities and benefits of such practice. It also argues that this disproportionate focus interrupts the building of artistic agency and status.

As an artist-researcher, I am a participant and observer, simultaneously engaging in creative and scholarly practices. Chapter Two examines how this embedded and symbiotic relationship methodologically shapes the design, purpose and value of this investigation via what academic Kelly Guyotte refers to as "a rich entanglement of thought, art and language."[7] With the help of theorists like Guyotte, Erin Manning and Brian Massumi, this chapter builds on the theory that artistic practice can be a mode of thinking,[8] revealing valuable implicit knowledge that theorists like Carole Gray, Julian Malins and Shaun McNiff argue only emerges through the actual process of artistic expression.[9] This discussion also highlights the importance of making this implicit knowledge more explicit – something artist-researcher Barbara Bolt argues can be achieved by examining the recurring and evaluative data that emerges from and within creative practice.[10] This chapter further argues that when combined with the discursive space of the dissertation, this recurring and evaluative creative data can lead to the successful explication of implicit knowledge.[11]

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[7] Kelly Guyotte, "Encountering Bodies, Prosthetics, and Bleeding: A Rhizomatic Arts-Based Inquiry," *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology*, 8, no. 3 (2017): 55, https://doi.org/10.7577/rerm.2557.
[8] Erin Manning and Brain Massumi, *Thought in The Act: Passages in The Ecology of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), preface.
[9] Carole Gray and Julian Malins, *Visualising Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004), xi; Shaun McNiff, "Art-Based Research," in *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research,* eds. J. Gary Knowles and Andra L. Cole (California: Sage Publications, 2008), 29; McNiff, "Opportunities and Challenges in Art-Based Research," *Journal of Applied Arts & Health* 3, no. 1 (2012): 5 and 7-8, https://doi.org/10.1386/jaah.3.1.5_1.
[10] Barbara Bolt, "A Performative Paradigm for the Creative Arts?" *Working Papers in Art and Design 5, School of Culture and Communication - Research Publications* (2008), http://hdl.handle.net/11343/29737.
[11] Bolt, "A Non Standard Deviation: Handlability, Praxical Knowledge and Practice Led Research," *Speculation and Innovation: Applying Practice-Led Research in the Creative Industries*, (2006): 12.

The past thirty years have seen the emergence of a range of research methodologies that are specifically aimed at supporting artist-researchers and artistic inquiries. Key examples include arts-based research,[12] practice as research,[13] practice-based research,[14] practice-led research, research-led practice,[15] action research,[16] arts-based action research[17] and research-creation.[18] These differently named but similarly enacted modes of artistic inquiry situate the creative practice within the research activity (or the research practice within the creative activity) and share an underlying understanding that valuable knowledge can be found in extralinguistic experimentation, examination and expression.

https://www.academia.edu/939331/A_Non_Standard_Deviation_handlability_praxical_knowledge_and_practice_led_research. A comment inspired by this source.

[12] Thomas Barone and Elliot W. Eisner, *Arts Based Research* (California: Sage Publications, 2012).

[13] Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[14] Linda Candy, *Practice Based Research: A Guide*, (Sydney: Creativity & Cognition Studios, University of Technology Sydney, CCS Report: VI.O November, 2006), 1-19, https://www.creativityandcognition.com/resources/PBR%20Guide-1.1-2006.pdf; Candy and Ernest Edmonds, *Interacting: Art, Research and the Creative Practitioner* (Oxfordshire: Libri Publishing, 2011); Gray and Malins, *Visualizing Research.*

[15] Brad Haseman and Daniel Mafe, "Acquiring Know-How: Research Training for Practice-Led Researchers," in *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts*, eds. Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 211-228; Estelle Barrett and Bolt, eds. *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (London: I.B Tauris and Co Ltd., 2010); Smith and Dean, eds. *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

[16] Kurt Lewin, "Action Research and Minority Problems," *Journal of Social Issues* 2, no. 4 (November 1946): 34–46, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1946.tb02295.x.

[17] Timo Jokela, Mirja Hiltunen and Elina Härkönen, "Art-based Action Research – Participatory Art for the North," *International Journal of Education Through Art* 11, no. 3 (2015): 433–448, https://doi.org/10.1386/eta.11.3.433_1; Jokela and Maria Huhmarniemi, "Arts-Based Action Research in the Development Work of Arts and Art Education," in *The Lure of Lapland - A Handbook of Arctic Art and Design*, ed. Glen Coutts, Elina Härkönen, Maria Huhmarniemi and Timo Jokela (Finland: University of Lapland, 2018), 9-25, https://lauda.ulapland.fi/handle/10024/63653; Jokela, Huhmarniemi and Hiltunen, "Art-based Action Research: Participatory Art Education Research for the North," in *Provoking the Field: International Perspectives on Visual Arts PhDs in Education*, ed. Anita Sinner, Rita L. Irwin & Jeff Adams (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2019), 45–56; Jokela, "Arts-based Action Research for Art Education in the North," *The International Journal of Art and Design Education, Special Issue: Visual Art-based Education Research* 38, no. 3 (2019): 599-609, https://doi.org/10.1111/jade.12243; Jokela, "Arts-based Action Research in the North," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods in Education*, ed. George Noblit (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[18] Natalie Loveless, *How to Make Art and the End of the World*: *A Manifesto for Research-Creation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019); Loveless, "Towards a Manifesto on Research-Creation," *Canadian Art Review* 40, no.1 (2015): 52–54, www.jstor.org/stable/24327427; Owen Chapman and Kim Sawchuck, "Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and 'Family Resemblances,'" *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37, no. 1 (2012): 5-26, https://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2489/2298; Manning, "About," SenseLab, accessed March 20, 2019, http://senselab.ca/wp2/about/; Stephanie Springgay and Sarah Truman, *Walking Methodologies in a More-than-Human World: Walking Lab* (London: Routledge 2018).

Chapter Two includes a detailed review of the expanding literature around artistic inquiry, mainly focusing on the nuances found within the above approaches and how this review led to the decision to engage a research-creation methodology for this investigation. An extended discussion focuses on a range of academic viewpoints about research-creation's defining features and its application and potential. This includes the methodology's track record for what Natalie Loveless refers to as the interdisciplinary scope of research-creation,[19] the potential Owen Chapman and Kim Sawchuck see in research-creation's ability to support new media experimentation,[20] the way research-creation supports what Manning describes as the inherent collaboration often found within artistic inquiry,[21] as well as the pedagogical innovation that Loveless and Stephanie Springgay attribute to the methodology.[22]

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's metaphorical concept of the rhizome[23] supports the theorising around the design and presentation of this research-creation. Chapter two demonstrates how the rhizomatic and adventitious nature of tbC's practice has influenced the cross-media format of this research. Concepts like multimodal and multimedia, hypertext and hypermedia will be defined and contextualised - especially in terms of how these cross-referencing tools support this artistic inquiry's horizontal, extralinguistic and multifaceted context and design. The metaphorical concept of the rhizome also supports theorising around tbC's non-hierarchical model of group practice and governance.

[19] Loveless, "Research-Creation and Social Justice," *Kule Research Cluster Project at the Thinking Communities: Celebration of Research in KIAS & Arts Event,*" YouTube, March 1, 2016, video, 4:00, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwfoAXjWCdo.
[20] Chapman and Sawchuk "Research-Creation," 6.
[21] Manning, "Immediations," Erin Manning, accessed March 20, 2019, http://erinmovement.com/immediations.
[22] Loveless, *How to Make Art,* 9-10; Springgay, "About," The Pedagogical Impulse, accessed March 23, 2020, https://thepedagogicalimpulse.com/about-2/.
[23] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

Chapter Three extends tbC's foundation story, which includes discussion around the characteristics that define the group and its *modus operandi*. While the main focus of this research is on tbC's collaborative arts practice and joint authorship model, underpinning the success of this model is a dedicated arts practice, non-hierarchical governance and informal arts pedagogy. Chapter Three examines these key underpinnings before a more detailed examination of the group's collaborative arts and joint authorship model in Chapter Four.

The first part of Chapter Four defines, historicises and contextualises established understandings of collaboration and demonstrates this understanding within the context of tbC's contemporary collaborative arts practice and my inquiry around it. It specifically demonstrates what theorist Claire Bishop describes as the "empowering creativity of collective action and shared ideas"[24] and how this supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. This discussion also speaks to the sites, modes and materials of collaborative arts practice at tbC and their critical role in the journey towards artistic agency and status.

The second part of Chapter Four defines, historicises and contextualises the concept of authorship and how joint authorship supports tbC's united front approach to building artistic agency and status for young artists. Stéphane Mallarmé's philosophy around the authorless text/artwork speaking for itself,[25] Roland Barthes' philosophy around the inherently collaborative and social nature of authorship[26] and Michel Foucault's philosophy around

[24] Claire Bishop, ed. *Participation: Documents of Contemporary Art* (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2006), 179.
[25] Stéphane Mallarmé, *Divagations*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2007).
[26] Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," originally published, *Aspen* no. 5–6, (1967), 144. A comment Barthes made in relation to surrealism.

how the function of authorship affects the way we view, value and validate texts/artworks[27] help theorise the way tbC's joint authorship practice presents young artists and their work through an aesthetic lens (rather than a biographical one) and how this directly supports the development of artistic agency and status.

Chapter Four includes a comparative analysis of other collaborative arts and joint authorship practices, such as New York City's Tim Rollins and The Kids of Survival (K.O.S.) and Dublin's Rialto Youth Project.

It is important to note upfront that although this investigation focuses on the power a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has in developing artistic agency and status for a group of young artists, this focus doesn't invalidate or ignore the individual artist. Chapter Four includes a discussion around how tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice simultaneously build collective and individual artistic agency and status by developing skills, experience and confidence within both the group and the individual.

Chapter Four concludes by addressing recurrent challenges to the democratic nature of group practice and the persistent figure of the individual author, as well as the tension I have found in presenting solo-authored research about a collaborative and jointly authored practice. While tbC artists are not co-authors of this research, they are co-creators of the work and practices being examined. My respect for the impact this collaborative environment has had on this research is expressed in more detail in Chapter Five. This respect is also reflected in how I often refer to 'my' experience of tbC via the first-person plural pronoun 'we'.

[27] Michel Foucault, "What is an Author," first presented as a paper in the *Bulletin de la Societe Francaise de Philosophie* 63, no. 3 (1969): 126. https://www.d.umn.edu/~cstroupe/handouts/8906/What_is_an_author_foucault%20.pdf.

This research-creation uses the case study as an "in-action"[28] method of data collection, reflection, and analysis. Chapter Five presents four case study artworks that illustrate tbC's united front approach to making and presenting art and the success this approach has in building artistic agency and status. tbC's key operating characteristics (collaborative arts practice and joint authorship, a dedicated arts focus, non-hierarchical governance and informal arts pedagogy) act as analytical frameworks for this examination. Again, while the main focus of this investigation is on how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice enables a group of young artists as practitioners and how this model of practice builds artistic agency and status, references to the way a dedicated arts practice, egalitarian governance and informal arts pedagogy support this building of artistic agency and status are interwoven throughout the case study examination. Although not as formal as solicited interviews or surveys, these case studies reveal valuable experiential knowledge, which is validated through embedded experience, deep reflection and a critical analysis of recurring and evaluative data.

Three of the four case study artworks are dialogical,[29] engaging what social practice artist Joseph Beuys describes as "interdisciplinary and participatory processes in which thought, speech and discussion are core 'materials.'"[30] The knowledge contained within these dialogical artworks and the in-practice discussions that supported their making and presentation constitute valuable artistic data. This dissertation links the reader to the

[28] Donald Schon, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books 2008).
[29] Kester describes dialogical art as a discursive aesthetic based on conversation, dialogical exchange and the social and relational experiences such exchange creates. Grant H Kester, "Dialogical Aesthetics: A Critical Framework for Littoral Art," *Variant* 9 (1999/2000): 3, http://www.variant.org.uk/9texts/KesterSupplement.html; Also see, Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Kester, *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Kester, "Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially Engaged Art," in *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, eds. Zoya Kocur and Simon Leung (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 153-165.
[30] "Exchange Values: Social Sculpture Research Unit," Social Sculpture Research Unit at Oxford Brookes University, accessed June 10, 2019, http://exchange-values.org/shelley-sacksssru/ssru/.

companion website where these dialogical artworks and in-practice discussions are creatively housed to provide a fuller understanding of how this united front approach to making and presenting art succeeds in supporting young artists in building artistic agency and status.[31]

The decision to employ a case study data-gathering method also stems from the fact that many members of tbC are under eighteen years of age. Most of these young artists also engage with the project independently of their parents. This makes seeking consent for formal data collection (via interviews and surveys) complex. Chapters Four and Five explain how this observational research manages consent issues while benefiting from the valuable creative data tbC's practice reveals.[32]

The significance of this research is demonstrated via its contribution of an aspirational model of collaborative youth arts practice and its contribution to the scholarship around such practice. It is hoped that this research will encourage other youth arts projects and even ambitious teachers and classrooms to explore and experiment with collaborative arts practice in a similar way.

This investigation also highlights limited (longitudinal) research around dedicated youth arts practice and the benefits and value of such practice, with the aim of inspiring others to contribute to expanding the research in this area.

[31] This in-practice knowledge and dialogical artwork has been in the public domain for years, without consequence.

[32] Underpinning tbC's collaborative practice is an informed consent model, defined by tacit but conscious agreement negotiated through durational practice. Studio conversations and self-regulated governance are at the heart of this consent model. There has been no issue with this consent model during tbC's thirteen years of practice.

The four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation include:

1. *Hoodie Mag*: A collaboratively made and jointly authored youth arts publishing project that combines literary, visual, interactive, and digital creations in a group presentation. *Hoodie Mag* is published in both a printed format (as a book) and an electronic format (as a website) and has been in development since 2010. This case study focuses on the 2017 edition and examines the artistic agency and status achieved through a collaborative and jointly authored publishing practice.

2. *Blacksmiths Ways Graffiti and Street Art Project*: A collaboratively made and jointly authored public art project created in a semi-anonymous way by means of the pseudonym.[33] This case study focuses on the 2017 iteration of this project and examines the artistic agency and status achieved through a collaborative and jointly authored public arts practice.

3. *The Art of Conversation (Digital)*: A collaboratively made and jointly authored dialogical artwork that engages the public in conversation with tbC artists via interactive digital technology. Anyone can scan the artwork (with a free app) and engage in a creative discussion. Conversation starters come from tbC's social and studio spaces. The wider public adds to these conversations by interacting with the artwork. This case study focuses on tbC's 2017 version of *The Art of Conversation (Digital)*. It examines the artistic agency and status achieved through a collaborative and jointly authored practice that is socially engaged and digitally augmented.

4. *The Art of Conversation (Gallery)*: A collaboratively made and jointly authored exhibition project. Works take the form of 2D prints on paper that contain fine mesh-like layers of text (and sometimes accompanying imagery). These works present colloquial and visual dialogue about young artists, tbC's group practices and the collective building of artistic agency and status. This dialogue originates from tbC's social and studio spaces and practices and the work is authored and presented as a group conversation. This case study focuses on tbC's 2017 exhibition of *The Art of Conversation (Gallery)*. It examines the artistic agency and status achieved through a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice within the gallery space.

[33] A pseudonym is a fictious name used by an author or artist wanting to obscure their real identity. See, *Oxford English Dictionary*, "Pseudonym," Version 11.7. 712 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

Chapter One

Establishing the Field as Youth Arts

"For the young aspiring artist, the life path that leads to the professional world is poorly marked and strewn with obstacles."[34]

This chapter begins by defining the term youth, followed by three concise discussions that narrow the field within which this investigation sits.

Social researchers Alan France and Christine Griffin describe youth as a universal period of transition from childhood to adulthood, often referred to as the developmental stage of adolescence.[35] Adolescence is the period of life when a child develops into an adult – a state or process of growing up.[36] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare describes **y**outh as "a period of rapid emotional, physical and intellectual transition, where young people progress from dependent children to independent adults."[37]

The United Nations classifies youth as young people between fifteen and twenty-four.[38] Key youth organisations, institutions, events and reports in Australia classify youth as young

[34] William Charland, "The Youth Arts Apprenticeship Movement: A New Twist on an Historical Practice," *Art Education* 58, no. 5 (2005): 39, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00043125.2005.11651560.
[35] Alan France, "Young People," Sandy Fraser, Vicky Lewis, Sharon Ding, Mary Kellett and Chris Robinson eds. in *Doing Research With Children and Young People* (UK: Sage Publications: 2004), 175-190; Griffin, *Representations of Youth* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993).
[36] Merriam Webster dictionary, accessed May 3, 2021, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/adolescence.
[37] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Young Australians: Their Health and Wellbeing 2007 – Part 1* (Canberra: Australian Government, 2017), 1, https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/288c1939-a365-433d-a0a1-c7a4e1a83e99/yathaw07-c01.pdf.aspx.
[38] "Definition of Youth," *United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs*, accessed November 3, 2018, https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf.

people between twelve and twenty-five.[39] tbC classifies its young artist members as between twelve and twenty-something, progressing creative practices and career pathways.

By examining tbC's youth arts model, this research investigates how a dedicated and collaborative arts practice supports young artists in building the artistic agency and status required to progress these creative practices and careers. Before closely examining how this model of dedicated and collaborative arts practice does this, I will contextualise the field in which this practice and research are situated.

The first discussion establishes the distinction this research makes between youth arts and youth development, studio learning and arts education, and how conflating these terms is problematic for young artists seeking artistic agency and status. A range of academic views and comparative examples are presented and discussed.

The second discussion explains how the stigma of contradictory and deficit youth discourse interrupts the development of artistic agency and status.

The third demonstrates the gap in longitudinal research around youth arts practice and the argument that this leaves the field under-explored and, by default, undervalued.

[39] See for example, Australian Government. *National Strategy for Young Australians* (Canberra: Australian Government, 2010), 2, https://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Australia_2010_National_Youth_Strategy.pdf; Australia Council for the Arts, *Arts Participation Survey* (Canberra: Australian Government, 2009, 2013, 2017), https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/news/media-centre/media-releases/connecting-australians-the-national-arts-participation-survey/; "About us," Youth Central. State Government of Victoria, accessed 4 May 2019, https://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/; "Are you 12 to 25?," Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, accessed 20 June 2019, https://www.yacvic.org.au/; "Age Standard," Australian Bureau of Statistics, published March 11, 2014, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/age-standard/latest-release; "National Youth Week," Youth Coalition of the ACT, accessed 3 August 2019, https://www.youthcoalition.net/national-youth-week/.

Distinguishing youth arts/youth development, studio learning/arts education

Following my more than decade-long collaborative arts practice with young creatives and an extensive review of the theoretical field, I have come to understand youth arts as a practice and activity that focuses on young artists and the establishment of their artistic careers. A practice the National Youth Council of Ireland describes as voluntary, self-directed and specifically focused on creative expression and artistic intent.[40]

I have come to understand youth development[41] as a practice and activity that focuses on young people in general and their health and wellbeing. A practice that arts educator Anna Hickey-Moody notes is not always voluntary and is commonly distinguished by organised participation.[42] The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria points out that youth development focuses on a young person's overall development and their involvement in society in general.[43] The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria further notes that while youth development activities encourage young people to participate in decision-making processes on issues that affect them, these issues are generally centred around ideas of community citizenship, education, health and personal development.[44] The result of my review of the literature around youth engagement in general has led me to conclude that even when youth development programs are arts-centred, artistic goals are secondary to health and welfare

[40] "Youth Arts," National Youth Council of Ireland, accessed August 3, 2019, https://www.youth.ie/programmes/youth-arts/.
[41] Similar terms for youth development include youth engagement, mainly used in Australia; and youth participation, youth governance, youth voice and youth empowerment, mainly used in North America. See for example, "Principles of Positive Youth Development," ACT for Youth Centre of Excellence USA, accessed October 2, 2020, http://actforyouth.net/youth_development/development/; Stephen F. Hamilton, Mary Agnes Hamilton and Karen Pittman, eds. "Principles for Youth Development," in *The Youth Development Handbook: Coming of Age in American Communities* (California: Sage Publications, 2004), 10; John Muncie, Gordon Hughes and Eugene McLaughlin, eds. *Youth Justice: Critical Readings* (California: Sage Publications, 2002).
[42] Anna Hickey-Moody, *Youth Arts and Education: Reassembling Subjectivity through Affect* (Abingdon: Taylor Francis, 2013), 3.
[43] "Youth Participation," Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, accessed October 27, 2018, https://www.yacvic.org.au/training-and-resources/youth-participation/.
[44] Ibid.

goals. This developmental focus even characterises many youth arts practices. In contrast, tbC's youth arts model has a dedicated arts focus that explicitly advances creative practices and pathways.

In a similar vein, I have come to understand arts education as a school-based pedagogy driven by a prescribed curriculum. Like youth development, it is more formal, structured and adult-led. In contrast, I have come to understand studio-based learning as a voluntary, self-organising, informal and often collaborative activity focused on the development of creative practices and pathways. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) Institute for Lifelong Learning supports this understanding, describing studio-based learning as a practice outside formal organisational or institutional settings.[45] Educator William Charland notes that studio-based learning is also often rooted in apprenticeship models or mentoring relationships.[46] Educational philosophers Franz Cizek and John Dewey describe studio-based learning as self-directed[47] and learner-centred experiences.[48] Linguist Shirley Brice Heath and educator David Kolb respectively describe studio-based learning as creative[49] and experiential.[50] Educator and philosopher Paulo Freire describes informal learning environments, like that of the artist's studio, as having less structured curricula, where dialogue and conversation innately guide cooperative activities

[45] "Promoting Lifelong Learning for All," United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Institute for Lifelong Learning, accessed October 14, 2019, https://uil.unesco.org/.
[46] William Charland, "The Youth Arts Apprenticeship Movement," 40-41.
[47] Peter Smith, "Franz Cizek: The Patriarch," *Art Education* 38, no. 2 (1985): 28 – 31, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00043125.1985.11649668.
[48] A system of instruction based on a student's individual choices, interests, needs, abilities, learning styles and educational goals that encourages students to construct meaning and understanding at all stages of the learning process. As noted in Kaya Yilmaz, "Democracy through Learner-Centered Education: A Turkish Perspective," *International Review of Education* 55, no. 1 (2009): 23, 2020, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40270107. Also see, John Dewey, *Democracy and Educations: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916).
[49] Shirley Brice Heath, "Seeing our Way into Learning," *Cambridge Journal of Education* vol 30, no. 1 (2000): 123 and 129, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03057640050005816.
[50] David Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as The Source of Learning and Development* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall 1984), 20.

and outcomes.[51] As already signposted, dialogical practices significantly define tbC's artmaking environment and will continue to be a key discussion point throughout this artistic inquiry.

While the descriptions I have given for youth arts, youth development, studio-based learning and arts education are distinguishable, in practice, they are often conflated and used interchangeably. My research challenges this conflation and confusion, especially the tendency to use youth arts as a mode of redemption and self-improvement.[52] In my experience, one also echoed by Hickey-Moody, confusing or conflating such terms and activities can lead to clichéd representations of youth-as-marginalised or youth-in-need-of-improvement, as well as politically and pedagogically conservative artistic practices and outcomes.[53] Instead of mobilising the arts to save or improve the lives of young people and society as a whole, the model I am embedded in and examining mobilises the benefits dedicated creative goals and activities have on young artists and their artistic practices and careers.

Of course, when connected with youth development and arts education, a youth arts practice can achieve combined aesthetic, educational and social outcomes of value. I am not advocating that these value systems necessarily need to oppose one another. I argue that youth arts practice is overly skewed toward formal educational, social governance and policy goals that associate the practice with improvement, outreach, risk mitigation, and social cohesion.[54] I further argue that an over-emphasis on educational, outreach and/or

[51] Mark Smith, "Paulo Freire and Informal Education," *The Encyclopedia of Pedagogy and Informal Education*, last updated, April 4, 2013, https://infed.org/mobi/paulo-freire-dialogue-praxis-and-education/.
[52] Hickey-Moody, *Youth Arts and Education*, 61.
[53] Ibid. A comment inspired by this source.
[54] Hickey-Moody, *Youth Arts and Education*, 59 and 62.

ameliorative activities and outcomes within youth arts can result in what educator Helen Cahill describes as a fundamentally disabling experience for young artists.[55] tbC artists talk about this disabling experience in the studio and how they often feel stigmatised and marginalised by the health and welfare centred goals of youth development programs and overwhelmed by the formal educational goals of arts pedagogy. This study examines this experience and suggests that if we are to benefit from the creative potential of youth arts practice, we need to work beyond what Cahill refers to as traditional modes of provider/recipient that underpin the majority of youth development programming,[56] arts education and even many youth arts projects. This research aims to present a model of youth arts practice that champions a more autonomous aesthetic for youth arts.

Philosopher T. J. Diffey's writing around aesthetic autonomy helps me frame this argument for a more autonomous aesthetic for youth arts. Diffey defines aesthetic autonomy as an aesthetic appreciation that is unconditional or intrinsic in character and an experience independent from anything other than itself, measured by the pleasure, delight and enjoyment it brings.[57] Diffey's counter-concept, aesthetic instrumentalism, describes an appreciation for how art fulfils social and/or political functions - measured by the contribution art makes to human welfare.[58] Aesthetic instrumentalism arguably describes a youth development model, one that is more interested in practices that benefit the general health and wellbeing of a person and/or community. tbC's youth arts model corresponds with Diffey's conceptualisation of an aesthetically autonomous practice.

[55] Helen Cahill, "Resisting Risk and Rescue as the Raisin d'etre for Arts Intervention," in *The Arts and Youth at Risk: Global and Local Challenges,* eds. Angela O'Brien and Kate Donelan (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008), 24. A comment inspired by this source.
[56] Ibid., 26.
[57] T. J. Diffey, "Aesthetic Instrumentalism," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 22, no. 4 (1982): 338, https://doi.org/10.1093/bjaesthetics/22.4.337
[58] Ibid.

In further championing the argument for more aesthetic autonomy within the field of youth arts, I also call upon the writings of literary theorist Terry Eagleton. Although Eagleton acknowledges that the discussion around aesthetic autonomy and aesthetic instrumentalism is at times contradictory,[59] he also acknowledges that an autonomous aesthetic practice can be a "genuinely emancipatory force."[60] At tbC, we often talk about the emancipatory concept of an art-for-arts-sake approach to creative practice and how this early nineteenth-century philosophy (and its emphasis on the value of art as separate from didactic, political or utilitarian functions)[61] liberates young artists from the aforementioned marginalisation, stigmatisation and/or amelioration.

While I characterise tbC's arts model as aesthetically autonomous, I haven't overlooked the 'body politic' associated with the group's social action agenda around the building of artistic agency and status. The body politic is an ancient metaphor, originating more than twenty-five centuries ago, connecting notions of the state, society and institutions to the concept of the body, unified by their connected parts.[62] The concept of a body politic is often associated with aesthetic instrumentalism through the functional construction and empowerment of a collective identity.[63] The idea of a unified social purpose or action can be a powerful form of advocacy. I acknowledge that tbC's collaborative approach to the positioning of the young artist is tied to an underlying social action agenda that asserts a new agency and status for young artists. However, the success of tbC's collaborative arts action is primarily the result

[59] Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1990) 28.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Art for Art's Sake," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, January 23, 2015, https://www.britannica.com/topic/art-for-arts-sake.
[62] Joëlle Rollo-Koster, "Body politic," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, October 2, 2017, https://www.britannica.com/topic/body-politic; A.D. Harvey, *Body Politic: Political Metaphor and Political Violence* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007).
[63] Karl Axelsson, "Taste is Not to Conform to the Art, but the Art to the Taste: Aesthetic Instrumentalism and the British Body Politic in the Neoclassical Age," *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* Vol 5, no. 1 (2013): https://doi.org/10.3402/jac.v5i0.21096. A comment inspired by this source.

of a collective and dedicated arts practice that advocates for the intrinsic value of art and aesthetic expression and experience. While the fulfilment of functional or instrumental social values may well be a natural by-product of artistic practice, this is not tbC's primary focus or goal. I refer to the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts' graduate dance company LINK and its 2019 dance suite titled *The Body Politic* as an example of the prioritising of aesthetic autonomy. LINK's artistic director Michael Whaites points out that despite presenting the quasi-political message that "collectively we are powerful,"[64] the intrinsic value of the dance suite is primarily found within its aesthetic expression and experience.[65]

In exploring the aesthetic benefits of a dedicated youth arts practice, I draw on Hickey-Moody's conceptualisation of aesthetic citizenship. While this conceptualisation emerges within the context of arts education,[66] Hickey-Moody's points are relevant to my earlier argument (supported by Cahill) that an over-emphasis on educational, outreach and/or ameliorative activities and outcomes can result in a fundamentally disabling experience for young artists.[67] Hickey-Moody acknowledges that while art practices can mediate young people's experiences of community citizenship, as well as community perceptions of youth in general, the focus on socio-cultural practice and outcomes ahead of aesthetic ones can be disabling and diminish the intrinsic value of a youth arts practice. Hickey-Moody goes as far as to argue that when youth arts practices and programming focus on aesthetic sensibilities ahead of institutionalized forms of social organization,[68] through the dedicated process of making and consuming art, empowering forms of aesthetic citizenship emerge."[69]

[64] Maureen Levy. "Dance: The Body Politc," Seesaw, Western Australia's Art Playground, published Friday 10, May 2019, https://www.seesawmag.com.au/2019/05/dance-the-body-politic.
[65] Ibid
[66] Hickey-Moody, *Youth, Arts and Education*, 16.
[67] Cahill. "Resisting Risk and Rescue," 24. A comment inspired by this source.
[68] Hickey-Moody, *Youth Arts and Education*, 145-149.
[69] Ibid., 122.

This investigation troubles the disproportionate engagement of youth arts as a model of diversion, redemption and/or self-improvement.[70] It presents tbC's collaborative youth arts practice as an example of the independent aesthetic function of youth arts and the emancipatory value aesthetic autonomy delivers. It also demonstrates how the articulation of an autonomous youth arts voice is constituted through the building of aesthetic citizenship.

This focus doesn't negate or refute what former Australia Council for the Arts CEO Tony Grybowski refers to as the essential role the arts play in building social cohesion and healthy, inclusive communities,[71] nor the role formal arts education plays in the lives of young people in general and our wider communities. The distinction this investigation makes is that tbC sees these qualities and benefits as naturally occurring during artistic practice and that they don't always need to be emphasised. These naturally occurring qualities and benefits are echoed in a witty poem written by one of tbC's founding members Jacqui, in which she reflects on the underlying health and welfare benefits naturally associated with tbC's youth arts practice.[72]

Interestingly, a colleague once advised me while I was preparing an arts funding application that tbC doesn't need to do and be everything to all young people.[73] This advice was

[70] Ibid., 61.
[71]Tony Grybowski, The Australia Council for the Arts, *Connecting Australians: The National Arts Participation Survey 2017* (Canberra: Australian Government 2017), 1-2, https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/news/media-centre/media-releases/connecting-australians-the-national-arts-participation-survey/.
[72]As noted earlier, this dissertation not only hyperlinks the reader to the four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation it also hyperlinks the reader to a range of in-practice discussion that has emerged from artmaking at tbC. These in-practice discussions speak directly to the subject of this research. Although not formally solicited, this creative knowledge emerges from the artistic practices and outcomes being investigated and constitutes valuable creative data. This dissertation hyperlinks the reader to the companion website in which these in-practice dialogues are creatively housed. To reiterate, these in-practice dialogues have been in the public domain for years, with no adverse consequences.
[73] Greg Box, former Manager Arts and Culture, Yarra Ranges Council. In conversation with, 2014.

liberating and encouraged tbC to focus on what we were good at – artmaking and presenting. This focus means that instead of serving all young people and their needs in general, tbC can firmly position itself as a youth arts project that supports young artists and their artistic development.

A common sentiment expressed in the studio by tbC artists is that the focus on dedicated arts practice and aesthetic outcomes makes tbC different from other youth (arts) programs and that this is what attracts and sustains their membership – in many cases for several years. Young artists also remark during these regular discussions that they find the focus on their education, health, and wellbeing ahead of their artistic talents and needs annoying. They argue that when engaging in youth arts programs, they prefer to focus on pursuing creative goals and activities that have dedicated artistic intentions and outcomes.

These discussions are documented throughout the companion website that accompanies this dissertation. They are also part of the dialogical content of many artworks made by the group, including three of the four case studies at the centre of this investigation. Rosie's story specifically demonstrates why tbC has actively built a youth arts model with a dedicated arts focus and why it distinguishes itself from outreach, formal education, community arts, and even other youth arts practices.[74]

[74] tbC's community location and youth demographic sometimes results in the assumption that the model should cover both the artistic and general developmental needs of young people. This perception is mainly attributed to the common understanding that community-based art practices are associated with cultural development practices that support both the emotional and aesthetic needs and desires of participants and communities. As noted in "What is Community Arts and Cultural Development?," Australia Council for the Arts, accessed December 19, 2018, https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/artforms/community-arts-and-cultural-development/what-is-community-arts-and-cultural-development-practice/.

Three examples from the youth arts sector further demonstrate the conflation between youth arts, youth development and arts education. This comparative analysis points out that while these examples describe successful arts projects involving young people, not all of these young people are artists, and in each case, the projects conflate the concept of youth arts with youth development and/or arts education.

The Artful Dodges Studio is a twenty-five-year-old Melbourne-based community cultural development program that engages at-risk young people between fifteen and twenty-seven in art and music-making.[75] Although situated within a social service and registered training environment auspiced by Jesuit Social Services, the group strongly emphasises artistic excellence and professional practice.[76] This aligns with tbC's interest in artistic excellence and professional practice. The way young people at Artful Dodgers Studio can freely choose the artistic projects they want to participate in is also comparable to tbC's informal engagement model. Furthermore, like tbC, the Artful Dodgers Studio is not a "linear, stepping-stone model where young people are forced to acquit themselves within strict timelines, defined aspirations or set program choices."[77] However, despite these similarities and the fact that the group's artistic programming and outcomes are sophisticated and respected by the arts community (bringing the work of largely unseen or undervalued artists to the wider public's attention) the model overtly reaches out to and characterises members as at-risk. What also distinguishes the two groups is the fact that tbC's governance is entirely member-driven with no institutional oversight.

[75] "About Us," Artful Dodgers Studio, accessed October 27, 2018, https://artfuldodgers.tv/about-us/.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.

Dublin's Rialto Youth Project is like tbC in that it is a more than decade-long collaborative arts practice committed to the durational and professional development of young people. However, like the Artful Dodgers Studio, the Rialto Youth Project is first and foremostly a community development and youth support program,[78] albeit one with a strong artistic focus (visual and performative). Rialto Youth Project's mission includes the social and cultural development of young people at risk and the communities in which they live. Furthermore, like the Artful Dodgers Studio, Rialto Youth Project's governance is supported by a board of adult directors and a range of community and local youth authorities and services, such as Fatima Mansions (a public housing complex in Rialto, Dublin), Dolphin House (a Dublin council estate) and other forms of regional, city-wide and national affiliations. Rialto Youth Project also offers creative engagement opportunities to young people in general, as opposed to young artists. While tbC also has an interest in social change, the key difference between the two groups is that for Rialto Youth Project, social change practices include broader social, wellbeing and educational goals - whereas, at tbC, social change practices are specifically focused on the development of artistic agency and status.

Tim Rollins and K.O.S. is an over thirty-year-old collaborative arts practice based in New York City. Despite Rollins' sudden death in 2017, the group is still operating, reimagined by a group of founding members as Studio K.O.S. While the group focuses on aesthetic practice and presentation (specifically the visual arts), the welfare and education of K.O.S. members was its founding principle.[79] Rollins, an artist-teacher, initiated the group as a creative after school remedial reading class involving students from a New York City school based in the Bronx. The social and educational inequities and welfare issues of the young

[78] "Aims," Rialto Youth Project, accessed July 7, 2017, http://rialtoyouthproject.net/aims/.
[79] Ian Berry, ed. *Tim Rollins and K.O.S. A History* (New York: MIT Press, 2009), 242.

students Rollins was teaching significantly inspired the group's development.[80] Furthermore, while this model of practice has led to Tim Rollins and K.O.S. receiving significant artistic agency and status, this is in part due to the established artistic profile of Rollins himself and the direct access he had to the artworld.[81] The attribution Rollins gives himself in the group's name also establishes and maintains his lead artist status. I discuss this latter point in more detail in Chapter Three, especially in relation to the way tbC has, in contrast, developed multi-artist-led governance and operation. However, it must be said that Tim Rollins and K.O.S. is the most like tbC's model, with its focus on the visual arts and its interest in the "development of a high level of artistic sophistication"[82] aimed at supporting young artists in building artistic agency and status. The group's dedicated arts focus and bold commitment to "dare to make history when you are young..."[83] are acknowledged as significant reasons for their notoriety and development of genuine artistic agency and status.

Although similar, these three examples are more programmed, adult-led, and outreach-driven than tbC, albeit to differing degrees. What ultimately distinguishes tbC from these

[80] Ibid.
[81] Artworld is a term used to define an academic or institutional expression of art. The conceptualisation of an artworld began emerging as far back as the mid to late sixteenth-century in Florence. Under the influence of Italian painter, Georgia Vasari, artists and architects began to cut their ties with the craftsmen's guilds and formed an Academy of Art, the first of its kind that served as a model for later similar institutions in Italy and other countries. The nineteenth-century saw artistic academies around the world further contextualisation the fine arts within institutional expressions of the artworld. This resulted in important and extensive theoretical and critical literature. Contemporary notions of an artworld emerged during the eighteenth-century, along with the term fine arts (Beaux Arts). See for example, Julius von Schlosser, *The Art Literature: A Handbook for Source Studies in Modern Art History* (Vienna: Schroll, 1924); Leonardo Olschki, *Geschichte der Neusprachlichen Wissenschaftlichen Literatur* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1919); Anthony Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy 1450-1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940); Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art, Past and Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940); André Fontaine, *Les Doctrines d'Art en France*: *Peintres, Amateurs, Critques, de Poussin à Diderot Paris, Ouvrage Illustré de 12 Planches Hors Texte* (Paris: H Laurens,1909); Arsene Soreil, *Introduction a l'Histoire de l'Esthetique Franfaise: Contribution a l'Etude des-Theories Litteraires et Plastiques en France de la Pleiade au XVIIIe Siecle* (Paris: H Laurens,1909);Vernon Lee, *Baldwin: Dialogues on Views and Aspirations* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1886); Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics Part I," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no.4 (1951): 496-527, https://doi.org/10.2307/2707484.
[82] Susan Cahan, "The Wonder Years," in *Tim Rollins and K.O.S. A History*, ed. Ian Berry (New York: MIT Press, 2009), 106.
[83] "Tim Rollins and the K.O.S.: A History," Frye Art Museum, published January 23 – May 31, 2010, https://fryemuseum.org/exhibition/3315/.

comparative youth arts and engagement models is that tbC does not engage in outreach and is more self-determined and youth-led. This investigation demonstrates how tbC's arts model addresses the young artists' creative needs and aspirations ahead of their general health, wellbeing and formal educational needs and how this might support the building of artistic agency and status. Young members often remark in the studio that they choose to participate in tbC's model of arts practice because of this focus. While the relational aspects of collaborative arts practice are an important part of the inviting studio culture at tbC, member artists often comment on how the focus on professional arts practice is implicitly nurturing and that they respect the model for not stigmatising them by focusing on their personal life or romanticising the positive outcomes the model indirectly has on their education, health and wellbeing.

tbC is also completely autonomous, with no organisational or institutional affiliations or restrictions. Membership and 'events of the day' drive the group's practices and outcomes. This independent, flexible *modus operandi* keeps the group fresh, responsive and relevant. Even the modest (mostly local government) funding that sustains tbC's practice is secured based on this autonomy. While engaging and sustaining young members and audiences is a key criterion of youth (arts) funding, funders have come to appreciate the success tbC's autonomous and dedicated arts model has had in achieving this engagement without overtly focusing on youth development and formal education practices. Many funders reach out to us unprompted, inviting us to bring tbC's youth arts model to their youth communities.[84] This desire for and trust in tbC's autonomous and dedicated youth arts model and the flexible funding partnerships that result help the group maintain its core artistic goals and aspirations.

[84] Communities such as Hobsons Bay, Maroondah, Cardinia and Casey.

Community sport presents an excellent example of the positive balancing act that can be achieved between institutional programming/funding and an autonomous and dedicated practice model. Group sporting activities are a well-established youth engagement and development tool and highly regarded and attended by young people. I would argue that the main reason for this is because the outreach goals of the model are not overstated. Instead, the model focuses on attracting young people to the game, skills practice and team building. In this case, the focus on physical activity, game playing, sporting skills and teamwork attracts sustained participation and membership. I speak from experience here, as I have two sons who have been inspired by and engaged in the community-based sports model for more than fifteen years. They talk plainly about how the focus on the game, the team and the club are the motivating forces behind their ongoing interest in this sports model.[85]

Like Argentine writer and youth theatre director María Inés Falconi, this investigation contends that young people's capacity to engage with art in a way that does not include an overt message or lesson is underestimated and that too often we try to develop and educate young people rather than allow the aesthetic function of creativity to stand as an independent artistic practice and outcome. It further contends that the focus on formal education and personal development within youth arts practice can distance the work from art.[86]

The comparative examples I have presented in this section will be explored further (along with others) throughout this dissertation - especially in relation to the concept of artist-run governance, the reciprocal nature of mentoring and tbC's overall artistic and youth-driven foundations and principles.

[85] Community sport is partly funded by a pay to play model. In the case of community arts, activities are often free and participants are less accustomed to paying to engage – a disparity this research acknowledges.
[86] María Inés Falconi, "Theatre for Children and Youth: Art or Pedagogy?" *Youth Theatre Journal* 29, no. 2 (2015): 159, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08929092.2015.1084828.

Contradictory youth discourse restricting agency and status

Giroux argues that young people are often caught in contradictory discourses that, on the one hand, celebrate them as symbols of hope for the future and, on the other, reproach them for being a threat to social order.[87] This investigation proposes that this contradictory youth discourse marginalises young artists, devalues their creative potential and limits their capacity to build artistic agency and status – thus restricting their "representational status as [aesthetic] citizens."[88]

Like Griffin, this investigation challenges societal tendencies to view youth as a troubled subculture, categorised by hormonal upheavals, rituals and cultural practices associated with the rites of passage from child to adult.[89] It argues that, in the case of tbC, this narrow view of young people obscures and restricts creative potential and limits a young artist's capacity to build artistic agency and status.

Sociologist Colin Campbell defines agency as the capacity to act independently of structural constraints and to make free choices.[90] Cultural theorist Chris Barker argues that the structural constraints societies naturally build can limit the capacity to act. He includes class, religion, gender, ethnicity, ability and customs as key structural constraints.[91] Considering the context of this research, I would add age to this list.

[87] Giroux, "Teenage Sexuality," 313.
[88] Ibid., 308.
[89] Griffin, "Imagining New Narratives of Youth," 148.
[90] Colin Campbell, "Distinguishing the Power of Agency from Agentic Power: A Note on Weber and the 'Black Box' of Personal Agency," *Sociological Theory* 27, no. 4 (December, 2009): 414 and 416, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2009.01355.x. See also, Craig Calhoun, ed. *Dictionary of the Social Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 7; Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill and Bryan Turner, *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology* (London: Penguin Books, 1985), 6.
[91] Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* (California: Sage Publications, 2005), 448.

Status is broadly understood as an individual's position or professional standing within a (social) hierarchy, resulting from accumulated acts of deference (respect and esteem).[92] Sociologists Michael Sauder, Freda Lynn and Joel Podolny talk about how the building and effects of status are determined by the degree of deference one receives.[93] Other sociologists like Paul Munroe and Emile Benoit-Smullyan talk about deference as the granting of influence and esteem to one another[94] and how approval, prestige and power[95] are important to building this deference or status.[96]

Anthropologist Linton Ralph describes two main kinds of status: ascribed and achieved. He defines ascribed status as one's position in a social structure that is neither earned nor chosen but assigned, such as gender, ethnicity and age.[97] On the other hand, he describes achieved status as a position in a social structure that is earned or chosen, such as a profession/occupation, relationship status, hobbies or pursuits.[98] This research demonstrates how tbC's united front approach to making and presenting art positions young artists' work ahead of their ascribed youth status and emerging identities and how this supports the development of an earlier achieved status.

Building agency and status is a cumulative process, developing over time and with concerted effort. Young artists often lack confidence due to the limited (durational) opportunities they have to make and present art. tbC members often talk in the studio about how empowering

[92] Michael Sauder, Freda Lynn and Joel M. Podolny, "Insights from Organizational Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 38 (2012): 268, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23254596.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Paul T, Munroe, "Deference," in *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology Online*, ed. George Ritzer. (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 990.
[95] Emile Benoit-Smullyan, "Status, Status Types, and Status Interrelations," in *American Sociological Review* 9, no. 2 (1944): 151, https://www.jstor.org/stable/i336334.
[96] Munroe, "Deference," 990-991.
[97] Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man: An Introduction* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1936), 479.
[98] Ibid., and 115.

regular practice is and how presenting to audiences who view and critique the work the group makes builds confidence, recognition and respect that leads to the building of an artistic reputation. tbC's more than decade-long record of practice and presentation provides a platform for young artists to springboard from.

The case study analysis ahead will explore the cumulative agency and status this durational and dedicated arts practice seems to have built at tbC and how this might present a significant reason for how and why tbC's model of collaborative arts and joint authorship is so empowering for its members. It will also examine the idea that tbC's growing visibility and reputation may have developed an artistic power base from which expanding artistic agency and status are achieved.

tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice support young artists in a continuous and committed way, creating time and space for the possibility of agency and status to develop.[99] This investigation examines how tbC's thirteen years of collaborative arts practice has impacted the building of an achieved status amongst artist members. It explores the idea that a heightened recognition and respect may have resulted from this consolidated creative group practice and presentation, delivering artistic agency and status that arguably could not have been built as quickly or successfully when working alone. Young tbC artists often talk about this during studio conversations. Many examples of this thinking can be found in the

[99] Dana Keller and Jennifer Sandlin, "Socially Engaged Practice and Pedagogy: A New Lexicon," *School of Social Transformation, Arizona State University* (2013): 2, https://www.academia.edu/5654246/Socially_Engaged_Practice_as_Public_Pedagogy. A comment inspired by this source.

in-practice dialogues[100] housed within the companion website that accompanies this dissertation.

There are, however, limited opportunities for young creatives to engage in dedicated studio-based art practices like tbC. This makes it difficult for other young creatives to achieve the kind of artistic agency and status tbC artists are building, especially when burdened with the aforementioned contradictions, prejudices and marginalisation. While arts training is available to secondary and tertiary students, this training is often highly structured and based on predetermined curriculums and formal assessments. Young artists at tbC often describe curriculum-based arts learning and training as too formal and restrictive, as evidenced by young tbC artist Joseph.

While this research doesn't support replacing one model with another, it does argue that there aren't enough studio-based art programs for young artists to engage in alongside traditional youth development and arts education models.

The youth sports analogy is worth reiterating here. Young people and children have many opportunities to practice sport and acquire skills that set up early sporting career pathways. Again, my personal experience supports this assertion. My two sons have enjoyed the

[100] Again, as noted in the introduction to this investigation and signposted for further discussion in chapters four and five, the in-practice dialogues this dissertation periodically hyperlinks you to have been collected during the process of artistic practice. They are documented as records of studio conversations within the extensive video footage the group has archived and through the notes artists write and leave on their studio art boards. Some of these dialogues even take the form of poetry written by member artists. Many of these in-practice dialogues were expressed during the making of *Hoodie Mag* and the two *Art of Conversation* art projects (included in this investigation as case study one, three and four), which saw artist members contribute responses to ongoing in-studio provocations about what it is like to be a young artist and how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. These in-practice dialogues are part of the material and medium of artmaking at tbC and were not formally solicited for the purposes of this research. Despite not being formally solicited, they constitute valuable creative data and are often used to support my observational arguments.

benefits of early sports training and practice. My eldest son has gone on to build an early professional soccer coaching career with one of Melbourne's national soccer clubs and a key outer-suburban club. My youngest son is sporty and artistic and often compares the many choices he has to engage in dedicated sports training with the limited opportunities he has to engage in dedicated arts training. tbC member Rohan has also commented on this. As a talented footballer, illustrator and street artist, Rohan often compares the unlimited opportunities he has to train as a footballer with the limited opportunities he has to train as an artist.

I have also observed that the youth sports model encourages durational practice and supports emerging sporting talent for extended periods of time – even years. As a result, young sportspeople have opportunities to lead and direct teams and clubs, with many taking on governance, coaching and umpiring roles alongside sports mentors. This kind of respect, recognition and support for emerging sports talent is significant. Many young people (some as young as six years of age) are accessing dedicated and durational sports training that delivers them a sporting status well beyond their ascribed youth status.

tbC focuses on young artists' passion for artmaking, just as the community sports model focuses on the young sportsperson's passion for sport. tbC views its youth arts model as just as significant a community asset as a youth sports model. Inspiring more dedicated art studios[101] is a key objective of tbC's practice and this research around it. This underlying social action agenda will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

[101] Art studio is distinguished here from an art class at school or a community workshop.

A gap in longitudinal research around youth arts

There is an abundance of research around young people in general and their developmental needs.[102] This research is frequently longitudinal, the benefits of which can be seen in the repeated and verifiable data that durational investigations deliver. There are many examples of youth development programming both here in Australia and around the world.[103]

In reviewing the field and some of the key literature around youth development, a range of prominent themes emerged, including how youth development programs help young people become more competent, engaged and responsible citizens;[104] the positive impact adult and peer relationships have on young people's development of life skills, learning and

[102] A range of related examples have and will continue to be presented, compared and contrasted. In short, the past twenty years has seen significant research on the subject of youth development. Some of the leading researchers and their investigations include: Jodie Roth et al., "Promoting Healthy Adolescents: Synthesis of Youth Development Program Evaluations," J*ournal of Research on Adolescence* 8, no. 4 (1998): 423–459, https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327795jra0804_2; Roth and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, "What Exactly is a Youth Development Program? Answers from Research and Practice," *Applied Developmental Science* 7, no. 2 (2003): 94-111, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/S1532480XADS0702_6; Joyce Walker, Michelle Gambone and Kathrin Walker, "Reflections on a Century of Youth Development Research and Practice," *Journal of Youth Development* 6, no. 3 (2011): 7-19, https://doi.org/10.5195/jyd.2011.172; Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer Appleton Gootman, ed. *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* (Washington, DC: National Academy Press; 2002); Nicole Yohalem and Alicia Wilson-Ahlstrom, "Inside the Black Box: Assessing and Improving Quality in Youth Programs," *American Journal of Community Psycholo*gy 45 (2010): 350-357, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9311-3; Larson, "Positive Development in a Disorderly World," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 21, no. 2 (2011): 317–334, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00707.x; Michelle A. Gambone and Amy Arbreton, *Safe Havens: The Contribution of Youth Organizations to Healthy Adolescent Development* (Philadelphia, PA: US Department of Justice; 1997).

[103] Some key ones include: "Be Youth, With Youth, For Youth," United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)Youth Programs, accessed April 2, 2019, https://en.unesco.org/youth; "Empowering Young People Since 1844," World YMCA, accessed April 5, 2019, https://www.ymca.int/; "International Youth Exchange," UNESCO, accessed April 5, 2019, https://en.unesco.org/creativity/policy-monitoring-platform/international-youth-exchange-34; "Global Youth Summit," Global Youth Summit, accessed April 5, 2019, https://www.iucnyouthsummit.org/; Smaller, specifically local examples include: "A Platform for Change," Youth Development Australia, accessed April 5, 2019, https://yda.org.au/; "Storytelling With Impact," Youthworx, accessed April 7, 2019, https://youthworxproductions.com.au/; "Fun Programs for Multicultural Youth," Youth Activating Youth, accessed April 7, 2019, https://yay.org.au/; and "About Us," Reach Out, accessed April 7, 2019, https://au.reachout.com/. The underlying principle behind all these organisations and initiatives is to provide life skills and general support to the educational, health, wellbeing and developmental needs of young people and to foster strong community engagement.

[104] Roth et al., "Promoting Healthy Adolescents," 423.

community participation;[105] the social, educational and employment benefits of youth development programming;[106] the way youth development programs support the in-between state of adolescence and adult-hood;[107] the positive impacts out-of-school and community-based youth programming has on the development of young people in general[108] and the positive outcomes youth development specifically has on young people's health and wellbeing.[109]

This review has confirmed my understanding that research around young people predominantly focuses on young people's social, cultural and educational growth. This focus is qualified by academics like Joanna Wyn, Robert White and Hickey-Moody who note that an overemphasis on these factors can marginalise young people.[110]

In contrast to the abundance of literature focusing on youth development and education, I found limited research (especially longitudinal) around the practices of young artists and how they are supported, especially in the case of the visual and experimental arts. The less frequent (longitudinal) research around youth arts and young artists can be attributed to what Hickey-Moody refers to as limited medium to long-term funding and the pragmatic and logistical difficulties associated with examining durational artistic practices and shifting

[105] Richard M. Lerner, "Commentary: Studying and Testing the Positive Youth Development Model: A Tale of Two Approaches," *Society for Research in Child Development* 88, no. 4 (2017): 1183-1185, https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12875.
[106] John Bynner, "Rethinking the Youth Phase of the Life-course: The Case for Emerging Adulthood?" *Journal of Youth Studies* 8, no. 4 (2005): 367-384, https://doi.org/10.1080/13676260500431628.
[107] Jeffry Jensen Arnett, "Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development from the Late Teens Through the Twenties," *American Psychologist* 55 (2000): 469-480, https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.5.469.
[108] Yohalem and Wilson-Ahlstrom. "Inside the Black Box," 350; Eccles and Appleton Gootman, *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*; Lori L Hager, "The Arts Matter in Afterschool: Community Youth Arts and Out-of-School Time," *Afterschool Matters: National Institute on Out-of-School Time* (June 2010): 33-41, http://www.niost.org/images/afterschoolmatters/asm_2010_11_june/asm_2010_11_june-5.pdf.
[109] Peter Benson and Rebecca Saito, "The Scientific Foundations of Youth Development," in *Trends in Youth Development*: *Visions, Realities and Challenges*, ed. Peter L. Benson and Karen Johnson Pittman (Massachusetts: Springer, 2001), 135, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-1459-6_5.
[110] Joanna Wyn and Robert White, *Rethinking Youth* (Melbourne: Allen & Unwin Academic, 1997), 51 and 71; Hickey-Moody, *Youth Arts and Education*, 16.

youth populations[111] - the nuances of which I have come to understand throughout tbC's more than decade-long practice.

During my review of the limited literature around youth arts, I found a report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare that focuses on the benefits of arts programs in communities.[112] What was interesting about this report was the fact that it advised that "longitudinal studies of program outcomes would help to capture and assess the magnitude of those benefits that appear to take longer to form than the average funding cycle allows."[113] The use of the word 'would' reinforces the argument that there is currently not enough longitudinal research around youth arts and that more would be of benefit.

The University of Melbourne's Youth Research Centre at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education supports longitudinal research around young people. Yet, the focus is still on understanding and improving young people's learning, participation and wellbeing.[114] Again, the lens and language focus on young people in general and their social, health and educational agency and status.

My literature review did reveal more frequent research around young people and the performing arts, which could be the result of a growing (youth) rights-based culture,[115]

[111] Hickey-Moody, Telephone conversation, Professor of Media and Communications at RMIT University, Melbourne, July 2020.
[112] Vicki-Ann Ware, *Supporting Healthy Communities Through Arts Programs, Resource Sheet no. 28,* (Canberra: Closing the Gap Clearinghouse, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare & Melbourne and Australian Institute of Family Studies 2014), 3, https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/142afee1-f0b5-40c9-99b5-5198feb255a4/ctgc-rs28.pdf.aspx. A report based on the synthesis of findings from over 30 studies and some international data.
[113] Ibid., 18.
[114] "Youth Research Collective," University of Melbourne, accessed November 6, 2018, https://education.unimelb.edu.au/yrc
[115] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation UNESCO, Diversity of Cultural Expression, *Upholding the Rights of Children and Young People to Cultural Entitlement* (Ireland: United

especially noticeable within youth theatre-making - Theatre for the Oppressed being a particularly good example.[116] The term rights-based is often used within the context of this form of youth theatre-making and is defined with the help of institutions, sectors and practitioners who align youth practices with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.[117] Rights-based youth theatre-making challenges dominant views of children and young people as vulnerable and in need of protection and commits to removing the barriers to fuller creative participation and recognition. This progressive approach resists practices that result in the stigmatisation, marginalisation and/or amelioration of young theatre-makers.

This growing culture of rights-based youth theatre-making supports what artist-researcher and educator Natasha Budd describes as practices that are successfully shifting the field's dominant developmental focus to an ethos of artistic agency and status for young people.[118] Budd discusses this in relation to her own experience as a theatre-maker and academic within the child/youth theatre-making sector. Through her work, she proposes a model of practice that moves beyond participant empowerment toward a more dynamic understanding of the

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Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation UNESCO, 2012), https://en.unesco.org/creativity/policy-monitoring-platform/upholding-rights-children-young; Sarah Louise Austin, "Ethics, Agency and Disruption: Toward a Rights-based Practice of Working With Children in Contemporary Performance," PhD thesis (Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne, 2019), http://hdl.handle.net/11343/238845.

[116] Theatre of the Oppressed is a performance strategy which aims to develop possible alternatives to oppressive forces in individuals lives, with the goal of creating generative conversations that look deeply into the issues of community through theatre. There is a historical connection between Theatre of the Oppressed and education, inspired in part by Paolo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed, as well as between youth and spaces of institutionalized oppression. As noted in Megan Alrutz, "*Review of Youth and Theatre of the Oppressed*, edited by Peter Duffy and Elinor Vettraino," *Theatre Journal* 63, no. 3 (October 2011): 485-486, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/455488. Also see, Peter Duffy and Elinor Vettraino, ed. *Youth and Theatre of the Oppressed* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2010).

[117] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) treats children and young people as an important constituency, actively encouraging and upholding the rights of children and young people and their full access to, and enjoyment of cultural entitlements and experiences. See, "Children's Rights Simplified," UNICEF Australia, accessed April 8, 2019, https://www.unicef.org.au/our-work/information-for-children/un-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child.

[118] Natasha Budd, "Staging Childhoods; Experiments in Authentic Theatre Making with Children," PhD thesis (Queensland: Queensland University of Technology, 2014), 62, paraphrased.

creative processes that see adults and children working together to create mainstream artistic products, which she argues leads to more authentic theatre-making practices with children and young people.[119]

tbC's model of collaborative arts and joint authorship aims to support young artists in seeking similar access to the gamut of artistic practice and expression and the rights to the artistic agency and status this fuller artistic practice and expression delivers. However, an equally in-depth review of the visual and experimental arts field has revealed limited examples of dedicated youth arts practices like tbC and little research around such. This suggests that the aesthetic citizenship of young visual and experimental artists is not sufficiently supported and/or adequately recognised. This reinforces my argument that the articulation of a youth arts voice and the development of aesthetic citizenship amongst young visual and experimental artists is under-valued, under-supported and, by default, under-researched.[120]

This investigation highlights that even when practices and research around young people and youth arts claim to focus on the arts, there is still the tendency to value the developmental benefits of arts practice over the aesthetic benefits. A range of Australian studies evidence this persistent focus on education, health and wellbeing.[121]

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[119] Ibid., 12 and 3.
[120] Hickey-Moody, *Youth Arts and Education,* 12-13. A comment inspired by this source.
[121]Australia Council for the Arts, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Participation Survey, Executive Summary*, (Canberra: Australia Council for the Arts, August 2020), 1-36, https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Creating-Our-Future-Results-of-the-National-Arts-Participation-Survey-executive-summary.pdf; Kevin Dupreez, *Youth Arts Research: A list of Research on Children, Young People and the Arts* (Canberra: Australia Council for the Arts, 2016), 1-4, https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/youth-arts-research-5791aa72793a6.pdf; Australia Council for the Arts, *Connecting Australian's: Results from the National Arts Participation Survey*, (Canberra: Australian Government, June 2017), 1-96, https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/connecting-australians/; Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Cultural Participation and Attendance Survey 2017-18*, (Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics,

For example, even the most recent (of four) *Australia Council Arts Participation Survey* reports how significant and valuable the arts are to making young people stronger and the communities they live in more cohesive.[122] Like much of the research around youth arts, these reports focus on art and creativity's value on educational, social and community development.[123] This investigation argues that there is a distinct lack of research specifically related to the benefits and intrinsic value a dedicated arts practice brings young creatives.

I did find some significant research around young people and their attendance at art events and programming. One of the aforementioned *Australia Council Arts Participation Surveys* (the 2020 report) confirms that young Australians strongly participate in and avidly attend creative programming.[124] The report indicates that young Australians value the arts and are highly engaged, with four in five of those aged fifteen to twenty-four attending arts events and activities, two in three creatively participating in them and four in ten giving their time or money to the arts in general.[125] However, while repeatedly acknowledging the benefits of arts participation and attendance and the fact that young people are vital to the future of Australia's cultural success, there is minimal reporting on how Australia is specifically

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2017-18), https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/attendance-selected-cultural-venues-and-events-australia-methodology/2017-18; Mary Ann Hunter, *Education and the Arts Research*, (Sydney: The Australia Council for the Arts, 2005), 1-40, https://www.ampag.com.au/wapap/Campaign/2-education-EducationAndTheArtsResearchOverview.pdf; Andrew Martin et al., "The Role of Arts Participation in Students' Academic and Non-academic Outcomes: A Longitudinal Study of School, Home, and Community Factors," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 105, no. 3 (2013): 709–727, https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032795; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office for the Arts, *Culture and Closing the Gap 2013*: *Report by Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office for the Arts* (Canberra: Australian Government, 2013), 1-4, http://iaha.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/000214_cultureclosinggap.pdf; Ware, *Supporting Healthy Communities*,1-23; James S. Catterall, Susan A. Dumais and Gillian Hampden-Thompson, *The Arts and Achievement in At Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies* (Washington DC: Office of Research & Analysis, National Endowment for the Arts, International 2012), 1-28, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Arts-At-Risk-Youth.pdf. These examples include large systematic reviews of the impact of the arts on young people. We can see, even from the titles of most of these studies that the focus is on the educational, cultural and health benefits of youth arts.

[122] Australia Council for the Arts, "Creating Our Future", 23.

[123] Ibid, 31.

[124] Ibid, 10.

[125] Ibid, 20.

supporting current and future young artists in the artmaking at the centre of these artistic events and activities. Despite stating that ninety-one percent of young Australians aged fifteen to twenty-four recognise the positive impact of arts and creativity in their lives and communities,[126] there is less clarity around how we provide young artists with the resources and spaces within which to build and sustain the practices behind these artistic events and activities.

The *National Youth Arts Summit 2016,*[127] also presented by the Australia Council for the Arts, resulted in a report that listed "key research and data about children, young people and the arts."[128] However, yet again, the examples listed mainly highlight the benefits of arts practice on the education, health and wellbeing of young people and communities in general.[129] The report acknowledged this[130] and the fact that this made it difficult to draw causal inferences from the data because of a lack of high-quality studies that specifically report on the artistic benefits of dedicated youth art practices.[131] The report encouraged Youth Arts Summit participants and the sector in general to submit new research that contributes to closing this gap.[132]

West Melbourne's Western Edge Youth Arts has also produced some innovative research around young people and the arts, working in partnership with the University of Melbourne and Deakin University, publishing peer-reviewed articles and chapters in national and international books and journals. These research endeavours focus on "innovative qualitative

[126] Ibid, 18.
[127] The *National Youth Arts Summit* is now run and reported on annually by Carclew Youth Arts.
[128] Dupreez, "Youth Arts Research," 1.
[129] Ibid, 3.
[130] Ibid, 1 and 2.
[131] Ibid, 3.
[132] Ibid, 1.

research based on the important principle that young people should be able to define their experience of and learning in the arts on their own terms."[133] However, this research is still primarily focused on how youth arts builds stronger, healthier, more connected and inclusive communities,[134] leaving room for more research that focuses on the benefits youth arts practice has on aesthetic enjoyment and the preparation of creative pathways.

Data resulting from Arts Front's *Under 30 Symposium (2018)*[135] proved more useful to this investigation. Still, again this symposium focused more on the benefits arts practice has on the education, health and wellbeing of young people and communities and was not explicit enough about the artistic benefits of youth arts practices. However, what was most interesting about this symposium was Arts Front Symposium organiser Sara Strachan's argument that the lack of specifically arts-focused research around youth arts stems from the fact that young people increasingly report being locked out of the arts sector in Australia and that "very few young people are included in conversations that steer the direction of the Arts industry."[136] Arts Front is an Australian four-year arts sector visioning project (2017-2020) supported by Feral Arts (a national community arts and cultural development service) and the Australia Council for the Arts. It has been researching how arts practitioners, organisations and institutions can shape the future of culture and the arts in Australia, specifically focusing on how young artists aren't currently but can be involved in this visioning. This aspiration and Strachan's comment are hopefully the beginning of a new

[133] "Research," Western Edge Youth Arts, accessed May 29, 2021, https://westernedge.org.au/?s=research.
[134] Western Edge Youth Arts, *Annual Report* (Footscray: Western Edge Youth Arts, 2018), 2, https://westernedge.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/WEYA_AnnualReport2018.pdf.
[135] "Arts Front Under 30," Arts Front, accessed October 3, 2019, https://artsfront.com/event/67-arts-front-under-30.
[136] "Arts Front Under 30 Symposium," Brisbane Art Guide, accessed July 19, 2019, http://bneart.com/arts-front-under-30-symposium/.

momentum in research that focuses on amplifying the young artists' voice and more targeted research around the artistic benefits youth arts can deliver.

International perspectives also reflect the disproportionate focus on youth development, even within the field of youth arts. An example being Helen Jermyn's review prepared for the Arts Council of England titled *The Arts and Social Exclusion.* During this review, Jermyn reflects on the popular governmental approach to youth arts, which focuses on the engagement of the arts to support education, mental health, social cohesion, the reduction of offending behaviour, and even the rehabilitation of young offenders.[137] Again, the links between the arts, social cohesion and education are reinforced.

A more recent UK report in the form of a literature review produced by *Connected Communities*[138] explores how artists work in communities to help build social cohesion and bring diverse forms of knowledge to the surface.[139] Yet again, "[t]his literature review specifically considers the use of arts methodologies for social cohesion."[140]

These examples testify to the argument that research and practice around youth development and even youth arts focus on the development or engagement of young people in general and that this focus invariably centres around educational, social and welfare drivers and

[137] Helen Jermyn. "The Arts and Social Exclusion: A Review Prepared for the Arts Council of England," *Arts Council England* (2001): 13. https://www.creativecity.ca/database/files/library/arts_social_exclusion_uk.pdf.
[138] Connected Communities is a multi-million-pound research programme designed in conjunction with Bristol University, University of East Anglia and the Arts & Humanities Research Council to understand the changing nature of UK communities in their historical and cultural contexts and the role of communities in sustaining and enhancing quality of life. See, "About," Arts and Humanities Research Council: Connected Communities Project UK, accessed September 23, 2019, https://connected-communities.org/index.php/about/.
[139] Katy Goldstraw, *Taking Yourself Seriously: Literature Review on Arts Methodologies for Social Cohesion*, (Sheffield: The University of Sheffield, 2018), 3. https://takingyourselfseriously.files.wordpress.com/2018/01/arvac-key-findings.pdf.
[140] Ibid., 1 and 32.

activities. Even the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – Centre for Educational Research and Innovation's comprehensive review titled *Arts for Art's Sake (2013)* focuses on the educational, behavioural and social impact of arts education.[141] It did, however, acknowledge the benefits of critical and creative thinking by briefly noting that the "main impact of the arts is in arts specific skills such as arts practice, observation, exploration, persistence, expression, collaboration and reflection."[142]

One of the key actions of this investigation is to highlight the fact that while social service and educational programming facilitate the positive development of young people in general, their community citizenship and the articulation of a youth voice, it doesn't adequately support the development of young artists, the articulation of a youth arts voice or the constitution of aesthetic citizenship.[143] The conflation of youth arts, youth development and arts education means that youth arts programming is often driven by outreach, public policy, educational and community health and wellbeing goals and activities. This is borne out by my experience with local, state and national government arts funding programs over the past decade. Funding for youth arts projects, especially community-based ones, is generally contingent on explicit educational, health and wellbeing activities, benefits and outcomes. This research highlights and addresses the fact that there is less funding, research and practice that specifically focuses on the aesthetic benefits of youth arts.

The Australia Council's ArtStart grant scheme is an interesting exception, of which tbC was a recipient in 2013. (The grant scheme ended in the wake of the 2014 national arts funding cuts). ArtStart was conceived in 2009 "to provide financial assistance for

[141] Dupreez, "Youth Arts Research," 3.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Hickey-Moody, *Youth Arts and Education*, 12-13.

young artists wanting to establish a career as a professional artist."[144] ArtStart recipients were allowed to use the $10,000 grant to fund artistic services, resources, skill development and equipment to help establish an income-generating career in a chosen artform. To be eligible, applicants needed to show a commitment to building a career as a creative practitioner. They also needed to present a viable plan outlining their proposed ArtStart activities, demonstrating their artistic potential and commitment to their chosen field. Instead of stipulating customary developmental and/or community and cultural goals and outcomes, the grant encouraged the demonstration of artistic practice, potential and display.[145] tbC used its ArtStart grant to fund a studio space, purchase art materials and produce and present artwork during 2013/14. Member artists found the experience and the focus on artmaking and display extremely validating.

While this investigation acknowledges that participation in the arts supports and improves young people's health, education and wellbeing[146] and dramatically adds to the quality of a young person's life,[147] this research focuses on the aesthetic values and benefits of youth arts practice. It argues there are few examples of practices and research around youth arts models that are driven by dedicated creative activity, which operate outside formal educational, behavioural, health and welfare parameters and which specifically advance artistic agency and status. It further argues that most youth arts programming persists in employing youth engagement and development strategies in conjunction with artistic ones. This invariably means that the artistic goals and outcomes are a secondary priority. Instead of practicing and

[144] "Kickstart Your Art Career with ArtStart," Australia Council for the Arts, published September 11, 2014, https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/news/media-centre/media-releases/kickstart-your-art-career-with-artstart/#:~:text=The%20Australia%20Council%20started%20the,1%2C000%20grants%20to%20emerging%20artists.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Francois, Matarasso. *Us or Ornament?: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts.* (Stroud: Comedia Publications, 1997).
[147] Jermyn. "The Arts and Social Exclusion," 23.

theorising youth arts as a method and model of community citizenship, tbC and this research advances the practice and theorising of youth arts as a method and model of aesthetic citizenship.

As noted earlier, my investigation did reveal more frequent literature around youth theatre and performing arts. However, this research still disproportionately focuses on the impact youth theatre and performing arts has on young people's personal, educational and social development and, by default, the wider community. (The earlier example, Theatre of the Oppressed being an exception). Such examples include Jenny Hughes, Karen Wilson and Michael Richardson's research around how taking part in youth theatre positively contributes to young people's personal and social development and transition from childhood to adulthood;[148] Lori Hager's critique of the ideological underpinnings of government policy related to theatre and the way it demonstrates how political, economic and social agendas shape and justify the role of (youth) theatre and legitimise it via its social service practices and outcomes;[149] and Kathleen Gallagher and David Booth's theorising around how youth theatre can be an educative force.[150]

Examples of more aesthetically focused research within the youth theatre and the performing arts sector are less frequent. Still, they include Rachel Turner-King's research around collaborative co-creation with young performers[151] and Thomas Barone's focus on artful

[148] Jenny Hughes and Karen Wilson, "Playing a Part: The Impact of Youth Theatre on Young People's Personal and Social Development," *Research in Drama Education* 9, no.1 (2004): 57, doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/1356978042000185911; Michael Richardson. *Youth Theatre: Drama for Life.* (London: Routledge, 2015), 1.
[149] Hager. "Partnerships, Policies, and Programs: Ideological Constructions in Federal Youth Arts and Drama," *Youth Theatre Journal* 17 no. 1 (2003): 82, https://doi.org/10.1080/08929092.2003.10012554.
[150] Kathleen Gallagher and David Booth, eds. *How Theatre Educates: Convergences and Counterpoints with Artists, Scholars and Advocates* (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2003).
[151] Rachel Turner-King, "Questioning Collaborative Devising in a Post-truth Era: Crafting Theatre *With* Youth," *Youth Theatre Journal* 33 no. 2 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1080/08929092.2019.1688212.

research around youth theatre and performance.[152] While Barone's research is also educationally focused, sitting somewhere in the middle of the youth arts/arts education research continuum, it does critique the common marginalising practices inherent in youth development and champions the concept of aesthetic citizenship for young people.[153]

Adding to this more prevalent research around youth theatre and performing arts are the many standout examples of youth theatre practices. Some Australian examples include Sydney's Australian Theatre for Young People and Powerhouse Youth Theatre; South Australia's Carclew Youth Arts and South Australian Youth Arts; Melbourne's St Martins Youth Arts Centre, Western Edge Youth Arts and Riotstage; ACT's Canberra Youth Theatre; Queensland's Backbone Youth Arts; Northern Territory's Corrugated Iron Youth Arts and Tasmania's Launceston Youth Theatre Ensemble.

There are also many international examples. Key ones being London's National Youth Theatre and Southwark Youth Theatre; Irelands Kildare Youth Theatre; Germany's Berlin International Youth Theatre; Singapore's Buds Theatre; Chile's La Resentida and America's Young Americans' Theatre Company.

A possible reason for the limited longitudinal research and practice around the visual and experimental youth arts could be the fact that these practices are not as commonly positioned

[152] Thomas Barone, "Response to Greg Dimitriadis: The Curriculum Scholar as Socially Committed Provocateur: Extending the Ideas of Said, Satre and Dimitriadis," in *Curriculum Studies Handbook: The Next Moment*, ed. Erik Malewski, 477-480 (New York: Routledge, 2010).
[153] Barone, "Education as Aesthetic Experience: 'Art in Germ,'" *Educational Leadership* 40, no. 4 (1983): 107-120; Barone, "Seen and Heard: The Place of the Child in Arts-Based Research on Theatre Education," *Youth Theatre Journal* 11, no. 1 (1997): 113, 10.1080/08929092.1997.10012487.

as collaborative or ensemble-based, as is the case of the performing arts.[154] Having said this, the visual and experimental arts are becoming more collaborative and, to a degree, even ensemble-based as in the case of tbC. The rise of the artist-run initiative is also supporting more ensemble-style visual and experimental art practices, which I discuss in detail in Chapter Three. Despite these developments, this trend is arguably underexplored. I will discuss the concept of ensemble-based practice in relation to tbC's collaborative youth arts model in more detail in Chapters Three and Four.

I did find some useful research material from a range of conferences held around the world that focus on contemporary artistic practice with and by young artists. I attended several (and presented at some) of these and have built a supportive academic community around my practice and research (particularly in the UK). This academic community is actively documenting, mainly via conferences, a range of arts-based research around youth arts practice. I regard this academic community as a valuable source of contemporary artistic inquiry.

The most interesting and useful conference I attended was *Practice and Power 2018*, hosted by Create Ireland as part of the 2015-2018 Collaborative Arts Partnership Program – a transnational cultural program focusing on collaborative and socially engaged arts practice, often with young people.[155] I was particularly interested in the way this program and conference focused on "critically engag[ing] with questions of negotiation, power and

[154] Cahill. In conversation with, August 3, 2020.
[155] This conference was held in Dublin, Ireland and supported by a group of transnational partners including: coordinating lead partner Create (Ireland), Agora Collective (Berlin), hablarenarte (Madrid), Heart of Glass (St Helens), Kunsthalle Osnabrück (Osnabrück), Live Art Development Agency (London), Ludwig Museum – Museum of Contemporary Art (Budapest), M-Cult (Helsinki), and Tate (Liverpool).

representation in collaborative arts practice"[156] and how other (youth) arts projects and practices were exploring these questions.

I met Heart of Glass during the conference, an English collaborative and social arts agency based in St Helens, Merseyside. Heart of Glass focuses on "building communities of inquiry, in sharing skills and experience and placing art in direct interaction with all areas of life."[157] They work extensively with young creatives, engaging them in dynamic and ambitious inquiry-led collaborations.[158] Another good example is Britain's Live Art Development Agency (LADA). LADA works extensively with young artists and is interested in supporting "contemporary culture's most radical and inventive artists, practices and ideas."[159] What particularly interests me about LADA is the way they "champion new ways of working; legitimise unclassifiable artforms; record untold histories and support the agency of underrepresented artists."[160] Both Heart of Glass and LADA are distinctive because of their upfront focus on dedicated and collaborative arts practice instead of an upfront focus on outreach, wellbeing and education.

In summary, this chapter has defined the overarching concepts of youth and youth culture and established clear distinctions between youth development, arts education and youth arts. These definitions and distinctions are important within the overarching goal of tbC's practice and this research around it, as they actively position tbC as a dedicated youth arts practice and this investigation firmly within youth arts scholarship. This chapter also highlights a

[156] "Practice and Power 2018," Create: National Development Agency for Collaborative Arts, accessed May 3, 2019, https://www.create-ireland.ie/activity/practice-and-power-booking-open/.
[157] "About," Heart of Glass, accessed May 3 2021, https://www.heartofglass.org.uk/about.
[158] "Spring 2021 Cohort," Engage: Bringing People and Art Together, accessed May 3, 2021, https://engage.org/happenings/extend/spring-2021-cohort/.
[159] "About LADA," Live Art Development Agency, accessed May 3, 2021, https://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/about-lada/.
[160] Ibid.

disproportionate focus on youth development rather than youth expression and champions the idea that the intrinsic value and inherent benefits of arts practice should be valued in and of themselves rather than as a means towards something else.[161] The fact that this examination has revealed limited examples of dedicated youth arts practice and limited scholarship around such means this research has the potential to make an important contribution to the field.

The next chapter examines the methodological scope of artistic research, making a case for the adoption of a research-creation methodology. It describes the methodology in detail and explains how and why research-creation best fits this investigation.

[161] Kevin McCarthy, Elizabeth Ondaatjt, Laura Zakaras and Arthur Books, *Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate about the Benefits of the Arts* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2004), 3.

Chapter Two

A Research-Creation

"This promiscuous traffic between different ways of knowing

carries the most radical promise..." [162]

This research embraces written scholarship and creative endeavour. It affirms the idea that embodied experiences and creative expression can be primary ways of understanding and conveying knowledge, especially, as McNiff notes, the kind of knowledge that cannot be expressed through conventional language alone.[163]

This chapter foregrounds the field of artistic research before presenting the reasoning behind this investigation's adoption of a research-creation methodology. It also discusses how Deleuze and Guattari's metaphorical concept of the rhizome[164] frames the non-hierarchical workings of this research site, guides this research-creation's digital design and informs its findings. The tensions and limitations that arose during the planning and analysis phase of this research will also be discussed, the main ones being; the difficulty in choosing a specific creative methodology from the expanding field of artistic research, the contribution my collaborators indirectly make to this investigation via the dialogical artworks examined and the ethical considerations surrounding a collaborative arts practice that engages artists who are under eighteen years of age.

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[162] Dwight Conquergood, "Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research," *TDR (1988-)* 46, no. 2 (2002): 151, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1146965.
[163] McNiff, *Art-based Research*. (London: Jessica Kingsley, 1998), abstract.
[164] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus.*

Contextualising the expanding field of artistic research

Traditional approaches to conducting research include quantitative and qualitative modes of inquiry or a mixture of the two.[165] Quantitative research approaches have traditionally supported the examination of the natural sciences via empirical observation – what ethnographer Dwight Conquergood describes as "a view from above the object of inquiry… anchored in paradigm and secured in print." [166] Qualitative research approaches have traditionally supported the examination of the natural sciences via more embodied observation – what Conquergood describes as "a view from ground level in the thick of things… anchored in practice and circulated within communities."[167] As an artist-researcher, I am embedded in the thick of things, anchored in practice for extended periods, with a ground-level view.

Research theorist Brad Haseman and his colleague Daniel Mafe argue that artist-researchers generally find quantitative research methodologies (and to some extent even qualitative research methodologies) "too linear, too predictable and too ordered to capture the messiness and dynamism of the process of inquiry which lies at the heart of creative production."[168] They further argue that creative knowledge emerges from within the act of doing rather than theories predetermined and abstractly conceived[169] and that artistic research benefits from less structured and less distanced research approaches. The artist-researcher's struggle to find what Haseman describes as serviceable methodologies that fit the dynamics of creative

[165] Williams, Carrie, "Research Methods," *Journal of Business & Economic Research (JBER)* 5, no.3 (March 2007), 1, https://doi.org/10.19030/jber.v5i3.2532.
[166] Conquergood, "Performance Studies," 146.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Haseman and Mafe, "Acquiring Know-How: Research Training for Practice-Led Researchers," in Smith and Dean, eds. *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 211.
[169] Ibid., 9.

practice[170] has led to an expanded definition of research, one that includes the concept of artistic inquiry.

As a co-founding member of tbC, I have been embedded in the space I am investigating for thirteen years. This proximity and subjectivity are central to authentic knowledge building in this case. The relational experiences, creative processes and artistic outcomes that characterise my arts practice constitute valuable multisensory knowledge. This dissertation and the companion website that accompanies it examine and exhibit this multisensory knowledge, contributing creative scholarship on the subjects of collaboration, authorship, youth arts, informal arts pedagogy and digital research-creation.

Bolt argues that creative scholarship results from a very specific way of understanding the world, grounded in what she and fellow academic and artist Paul Carter call material thinking.[171] Bolt and Carter distinguish material thinking from conceptual thinking, with Bolt describing the former as "a way of considering the relations that take place within the very process or tissue of making."[172] She argues that "the materials and processes of production have their own intelligence which comes into play with the artist's creative intelligence."[173] Bolt further asserts that this interplay facilitates the uncovering of tacit knowledge that is often hard to access and difficult to make manifest.[174] Examples of this

[170] Brad Haseman, "A Manifesto for Performative Research," *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy: Quarterly Journal of Media Research and Resources* No. 118 (2006): 98, http://eprints.qut.edu.au/3999/1/3999_1.pdf
[171] Barbara Bolt, "Materializing Pedagogies," *Working Papers in Art and Design 4, School of Culture and Communication - Research Publications* 2006, http://hdl.handle.net/11343/29838; Paul Carter, *Material Thinking: The Theory and Practice of Creative Research* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2004).
[172] Barbara Bolt, "Materializing Pedagogies," 43.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid., 43 and 62.

tacit knowledge include the inherent subjectivities,[175] multiplicities,[176] entanglements[177] and messiness[178] often found within creative practice.

Artistic inquiry is progressively establishing itself as a rigorous research methodology, enjoying increasing peer support and institutional endorsement. Studio informed doctorates are regularly favoured in the creative fields over more orthodox or scientific approaches.[179] Theorists Hazel Smith and Roger Dean go so far as to say that "the turn to creative practice is one of the most exciting and revolutionary developments to occur in the university within the last two decades..."[180] However, despite this spirited contemporary outlook, the validity of artistic research has often been challenged, especially by traditional quantitative and even some qualitative scholars. These challenges generally relate to the methodology's inherent subjectivity. Even though there is growing appreciation for the more personal, situated perspective, objectivity is often favoured for its perceived impartial and unbiased viewpoint.

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[175] Henry Bial, ed. *The Performance Studies Reader* (Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 2004).
[176]Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*; Patricia Leavy, ed. *Handbook of Arts-Based Research* (New York: Guilford Press, 2019).
[177] Robert Cohen, *Working Together in Theatre: Collaboration and Leadership* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Suzanne Lacy, "Suzanne Lacy," accessed May 24, 2018, https://www.suzannelacy.com/; Mick Wilson, "Applied Experiments in Political Imagination," *Learning in Public: Trans European Collaborations in Socially Engaged Art,* ed. Eleanor Turney (Ireland: Create, National Development Agency for Collaborative Arts and The Live Art Development Agency, 2018): 33, http://www.susannebosch.de/fileadmin/user_upload/PDFS/Learning_in_Public.pdf; Springgay and Truman, "A Transmaterial Approach to Walking Methodologies: Embodiment, Affect, and a Sonic Art Performance," *Body & Society* 23, no. 4 (December 2017): 27–58. https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X17732626; Loveless, *Knowings and Knots: Methodologies and Ecologies in Research-Creation* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2021); Loveless, "Practice in the Flesh of Theory: Art, Research and the Fine Arts PhD," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37, https://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2531; Manning, *The Minor Gesture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 46-47; Kelly Guyotte, "Encountering Bodies, Prosthetics, and Bleeding: A Rhizomatic Arts-Based Inquiry," *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology* 8, no. 3 (2107): 53-65, Doi:https://doi.org/10.7577/rerm.2557.
[178] John Law, *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research,* (London: Routledge, 2004); Patti Lather, "Against Empathy, Voice, and Authenticity," in *Voice in Qualitative Inquiry: Challenging Conventional, Interpretive and Critical Conceptions in Qualitative Research,* eds. Alecia Y. Jackson and Lisa A. Mazzei, (London: Routledge, 2008), 17-26.
[179] Barrett and Bolt, *Practice as Research*, abstract.
[180] Smith and Dean, *Practice-Led Research,* 2.

While this investigation acknowledges that the presence and personality of the researcher can impact what is being investigated and that there is potential bias associated with an interior perspective, it also acknowledges that there is intrinsic value in this subjectivity. Theorist Robin Nelson argues that the success of creative research is centred around a valid and meaningful subjectivity that comes from embedded perspectives.[181] Similarly, performing arts theorist Henry Bial argues that in the case of arts-based research, the importance of proximity overrides the importance of objectivity.[182] Conquergood emphasises that "…original scholarship in culture and the arts is enhanced, complemented and complicated in deeply meaningful ways by the participatory understanding and community involvement of the researcher."[183]

This acknowledgement of the value of proximity within the process of artistic inquiry alleviates some of the tension I feel in relation to my embedded observations of tbC's collaborative arts model.[184] Academic Donna Haraway's argument that embedded observation amounts to valuable "situated knowledges [and] partial perspectives"[185] further alleviates this methodological tension. Haraway believes that the situated knowledges and partial perspectives found within artistic inquiry positively frame the researcher's positionality, revealing "'embodied' accounts of truth".[186] For Haraway, these embodied accounts of truth make valuable contributions to academic scholarship because of their inherent subjectivity.[187]

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[181] Nelson, ed. *Practice as Research in the Arts*, 156.
[182] Bial, *The Performance Studies Reader*, 373.
[183] Dwight Conquergood, "Performance Studies," 146.
[184] I will examine these tensions in detail in Chapter Four.
[185] Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, No. 3 (Autumn, 1988), http://www.jstor.org/stable/3178066.
[186]Ibid., 578.
[187] As noted in Rua Williams and Juan Gilbert, "Cyborg Perspectives on Computing Research Reform," *Extended Abstracts of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (New York: ACM Press, 2019), 2.

Shadré Davis, a contributor to Mike Allen's edited book *The Sage Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, argues that feminist research is one of the original advocates of the subjective research approach, citing feminist scholars like Haraway and Sandra Harding as key disputers of the central position of objectivity.[188] Davis also cites feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins who "champion[s] the idea that researchers should acknowledge, reflect and even incorporate personal perspectives into all aspects of the research process, including the reporting of research."[189] Davis' ranging discussion around the idea that "subjectivity plays an important role in making sense of human behaviour in the social world"[190] and Barone's discussion around the capacity a subjective approach to research has to provide "useful insights [and] critical persuasiveness"[191] positively reinforces my decision to embrace the subjectivity found within this artistic inquiry.

Art and design educator Richard Siegesmund examines a range of arguments for the positive influence of subjectivity in research within a chapter he wrote for Lisa Given's edited book *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. A compelling example of this examination is Siegesmund's paraphrasing of Albert Einstein's (1918) claim that if science was limited by objectivity, it would not be capable of fresh thinking or producing original insights.[192] Siegesmund also argues that technological advances in cognitive neuroscience,

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[188] Shardé M. Davis, "Research Reports, Subjective," in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, ed. Mike Allen (California: Sage Publications, 2018), 3. https://methods.sagepub.com/base/download/ReferenceEntry/the-sage-encyclopedia-of-communication-research-methods/i12327.xml.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Ibid., 2.
[191] As noted by Richard Siegesmund, "Subjectivity" in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. Lisa M Given (California: Sage Publications, 2012), 843-844, http://methods.sagepub.com/base/download/ReferenceEntry/sage-encyc-qualitative-research-methods/n438.xml; Barone, "On the Demise of Subjectivity in Educational Inquiry," *Curriculum Inquiry* 22, no. 1 (1992): 32, https://doi.org/10.2307/1180092. Also in Barone, *Aesthetics, Politics, and Educational Inquiry: Essays and Examples* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2000).
[192] Richard Siegesmund, "Subjectivity," in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. Lisa M Given (California: Sage Publications, 2012), 2, http://methods.sagepub.com/base/download/ReferenceEntry/sage-encyc-qualitative-research-methods/n438.xml.

specifically neural brain imaging, have identified that objective thinking can be deeply contextualized within subjective thought.[193] During this discussion, he challenges the conventional conception that subjectivity diminishes objectivity by citing Dewey's claim that "thinking in terms of the relationships of sensory qualities requires more rigorous thinking than the dispassionate manipulation of symbols."[194] Perhaps Siegesmund's most provocative reference on the matter pertains to Barone's radical argument for the abandonment of the terms objectivity and subjectivity altogether, based on the idea that critical persuasiveness can be an equally valid research standard.[195] According to Barone, "whether research is objective or subjective misses the point."[196] Instead, he argues that research should be "evaluated on its capacity to provide useful insights into addressing practical problems."[197]

Despite my growing confidence about an embedded and artistic approach to this investigation, I am mindful of academic Stephen Scrivener's argument that to ensure the validity and veracity of subjective knowledge, artist-researchers need to include the process of critical reflection. Scrivener argues that critical reflection bridges the gap between prior understanding and surprise and that this reflection leads to valuable new knowledge and understanding.[198] Bial makes a similar point, arguing that validity and veracity are found in artistic research that combines critical thinking and reflection with artistic excellence.[199]

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[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid, 2.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Stephen Scrivener, "The Practical Implications of Applying a Theory of Practice Based Research: A Case Study, " Working Papers in Art and Design 3, (2004): 11, https://www.herts.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/12367/WPIAAD_vol3_scrivener_chapman.pdf; Scrivener, "Reflections on Interactive Art and Practitioner Research: 1 Establishing a Frame," University of Technology Sydney (2011): 11, http://research.it.uts.edu.au/creative/linda/CCSBook/Jan%2021%20web%20pdfs/Scrivener-1.pdf.
[199] Bial, *The Performance Studies Reader*, 373.

Granted, there is a difference between thinking and doing (theory and practice) and interpreting and making (abstraction and embodiment), but the point Bial is making is that one need not cancel out the other. What Bial and Scrivener have in common is the emphasis they place on the importance of artistic research extending beyond the creator, the artefact and the personal experience of making this artefact. They argue that for artistic research to be regarded as a valid form of knowledge production, the examination that results from such an inquiry must contribute to a bigger field of scholarship.[200]

Michael Biggs and Daniela Büchler engage in a similar argument, one that centres around the idea that creative research only constitutes research if and when it is accompanied by legitimating practices accepted by a group of peers.[201] In making this argument, they submit that while artistic research methodologies need not be regarded as a specific type of knowledge that is equal to but different from established research methodologies, they need to be subjected to accepted protocols that affirm methodological rigour. For example, an explicit argument that justifies the form of an inquiry and which is accepted by peers.[202]

The conclusion I have reached from my wider reading on the subject of artistic inquiry is that the developments in creative research methodologies are not about replacing one research hierarchy with another. They are more about broadening the scope, relevance and power of research. This investigation acknowledges creative and academic protocols and establishes methodological rigour through dedicated ongoing practice, embedded and

[200] Scrivener, "The Art Object does not Embody a Form of Knowledge," *Working Papers in Art and Design* 2, (2002): 11-12, https://www.herts.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/12311/WPIAAD_vol2_scrivener.pdf.
[201] Michael Biggs and Daniela Büchler, "Rigor and Practice-Based Research," *Design Issues* 23, no. 3 (2007): 68, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25224118.
[202] Ibid., 62.

longitudinal inquiry, a broad review of the literature, conference participation, supervision, examination and peer review.

The methodological options for this creative investigation initially included arts-based action research, practice-based research, practice-led research and research-creation. As noted in the introduction, although differently named, these modes of artistic inquiry are similarly enacted, situating the creative practice within the research activity (or the research practice within the creative activity). They also share in the understanding that valuable knowledge can be found in extralinguistic experimentation, expression and examination. In the early design phase of this research, I considered a practice-based[203] methodology as a suitable investigative approach for this inquiry. The key reason being that the methodology allows for the inclusion of creative works arising from an investigation. As Candy and Edmonds point out, the inclusion of such works (and the experience of making them) can provide an artistic inquiry with a fuller understanding of the significance and context of such an inquiry.[204]

I also considered an arts-based action research methodology, mainly because of tbC's underlying social action agenda around the development of artistic agency and status for young artists, which I will discuss in more detail shortly. Arts-based action research's founding principles of co-operation and democratic participation[205] and the methodology's track record for supporting minority groups engaging in action-based practices[206] made the

[203] Candy, "Practice Based Research," Candy and Edmonds, *Interacting*; Gray and Malins, *Visualizing Research*.
[204] Candy and Edmonds, "Practice-Based Research in the Creative Arts: Foundations and Futures from the Front Line," *Leonardo* 51, (2018): 65, https://direct.mit.edu/leon/article/51/1/63/46472/Practice-Based-Research-in-the-Creative-Arts.
[205] Clem Adelman, "Kurt Lewin and the Origins of Action Research." *Educational Action Research* 1, no. 1 (1993): 7, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0965079930010102?needAccess=true.
[206] Paul Byers, "Cameras Don't Take Pictures," *Columbia University Forum* 9, (1966): 31. A comment inspired by this source.

methodology initially very appealing. The way the methodology embraces reflective thought and discussion, and the way it supports researchers in exploring shared issues and concerns is also very relevant to the context of my research.[207] Ernest Stringer's conceptualisation of arts-based action research as a method of inquiry that allows for the "moral intertwining"[208] of participants and the inquirer reinforced the initial fit I felt the methodology presented.

I was also particularly inspired by Lewin's philosophy of "[n]o action without research; no research without action,"[209] which foregrounded the development of the methodology. Furthermore, the fact that arts-based action research emerged as a method of inquiry that accommodates a combination of social, community-based and educational contexts,[210] often in combination, made its suitability even clearer. As this research sits at the intersection of youth arts, socially engaged art and informal arts pedagogy, the case for choosing an arts-based action research approach for this investigation felt even more appropriate.

However, on closer inspection, I realised that while arts-based action research is geared around and supports co-operation, democratic participation and action-based practices (defining features of tbC's arts model), the methodology generally supports a relationship between researcher and research participant/s. The fact that tbC artists aren't just participants but collaborators with the power to direct the practice this investigation examines led me to

[207] Adelman, "Kurt Lewin and the Origins of Action Research," 8. A comment inspired by this source.
[208] Stringer, *Action Researc*h, as noted by Egon Guba, in "Forward," xiii.
[209] Ibid.; Alfred J. Marrow, "The Effects of Participation on Performance," in *The Failure of Success,* Alfred J. Marrow ed. (New York: Amacom, 1972): 90.
[210] Ernest Stringer, *Action Researc*h, (California: Sage Publications, 2014); Bridget Somekh, *Action Research: A Methodology for Change and Development* (London: Open University Press), 2005; Sheri Klein, "Action Research: Before You Dive In, Read This!" in *Action Research Methods: Plain and Simple*, ed. Sherri R Klein, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1-20; David Coghlan and Mary Brydon-Miller, *The Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research* (California: Sage Publications, 2014); Timo Jokela and Maria Huhmarniemi, "Arts-Based Action Research in the Development Work of Arts and Art Education," in *The Lure of Lapland- A Handbook of Arctic Art and Design,* eds. Glen Coutts, Elina Harkonen, Maria Huhmarniemi and Timo Jokela (Finland: University of Laplan, 2019), 9-25.

seek out a research methodology that more assertively reflected and acknowledged the collaborative force behind this inquiry.

In troubleshooting this need further, I considered ethnographic,[211] digital ethnographic,[212] auto-ethnographic,[213] participatory arts[214] and participatory action research methodologies.[215] While I acknowledge that these allied research approaches can appropriately support the presentation of my insider perspective, again, they are generally centred around an inquiry that involves participation (as opposed to collaboration) and a visiting researcher dropping in to observe and examine, albeit often for extended periods. As a founding member of tbC, I am more than a visiting observer dropping in to carry out fieldwork. Even an auto-ethnographic approach, one that sees the researcher engaging in durational observation, doesn't quite fit the context of this investigation. My membership tenure exceeds even that of a durational observer.

Following this comparative analysis and review of the wider methodological field of artistic research and the desire to support and acknowledge tbC's collaborative underpinnings, a research-creation methodology was deemed the more appropriate choice.

[211] Michael W. Kramer and Tony E. Adams, "Ethnography," in, *The Sage Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, ed. Mike Allen. (California: Sage Publications, 2017). Key philosophers of ethnography include Gerhard Friedrich Müller, Lewis H Morgan, Bronislaw Malinowski, Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, James Clifford and George E Marcus.
[212] Sarah Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research* (California: Sage Publications, 2001); Dhiraj Murthy, "Digital Ethnography: An Examination of the Use of New Technologies for Social Research," *Sociology* 42, no. 5 (October 2008): 837–855, https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038508094565.
[213] Key philosophers of auto-ethnography include Walter Goldschmidt, David Hayano, Jerome Bruner, Norman Denzin, Carolyn Ellis, Arthur Bochner, Peter Reason, Hilary Bradbury and Andrew Herrmann.
[214] Key philosophers of participatory art include Stephen Kemmis, Robert McTaggart, Claire Bishop, Holly Crawford, Grant Kester, Shannon Jackson, Miwon Kwon, Suzana Milevska, Anna Dezeuze, Thomas Finkelpearl and Harrell Fletcher.
[215] Key philosophers of participatory action research include Jacques M.Chevalier, Daniel Buckles, Md. Anisur Rahman, Julio Cammarota, Michelle Fine and Robert Chambers.

Research-Creation: Experimental, interdisciplinary, collaboratively inspired

Research-creation is a term used in Canada for artistic inquiries that treat creative processes and outcomes as equally weighted objects of and contributions to knowledge in the academy.[216] The development of the methodology began in the early 2000s.[217] Framers of the methodology include creative scholars like Manning, Massumi, Springgay, Loveless, Chapman and Sawchuck.

For Manning and Massumi, research-creation emphasises the thinking in the making and the idea that systematic inquiry and artistic practice can produce novel and rigorous forms of knowledge.[218] In Manning's experience, the combining of systematic inquiry and artistic practice (research and creation) generates new forms of collaborative knowledge.[219] She describes her involvement in the collaborative project SenseLab, as a research-creation that occurs at the intersection of different practices, involving a range of practitioners working with a variety of materials, resulting in outcomes that could not have been achieved separately.[220]

For Springgay, research-creation supports the exquisite entanglements found within the chaos of making and thinking and imbrication processes at the heart of artistic inquiry.[221] This sensitivity and multiformity supports Springgay's transdisciplinary interests, which include experimental, pedagogical and collaborative artmaking and inquiry.[222]

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[216] Loveless, "Research-Creation and Social Justice,"; Loveless, "Towards a Manifesto on Research-Creation," 43.
[217] The methodology was initially conceived to help increase research funding for artists working in universities but has since emerged as a research methodology that supports artists (who are not always academics) whose practices combine experimentation, exploration and research in conjunction with production. See, Loveless, "Towards a Manifesto on Research-Creation," 52; Chapman and Sawchuk "Research-Creation," 9; Ibid.; "Funding," Canada Council, accessed, August 16, 2019, https://canadacouncil.ca/funding.
[218]Manning and Massumi, *Thought in the Act*, 88-89; Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, 53.
[219] "Immediations" Erin Manning. Accessed March 20, 2019. http://erinmovement.com/immediations.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Springgay, "Research-Creation," University of Melbourne Lecture, 2019.
[222] Springgay, "Research-Creation," accessed May 10, 2021, https://stephaniespringgay.com/research-creation/.

For Loveless, research-creation has emerged from a similar convergence of the arts and interdisciplinary humanities. The methodology supports her scholarly activities through an understanding that art practices are no longer only objects of scholarly inquiry but research methods in their own right.[223]

For Chapman and Sawchuck, the methodology "acts as an innovative form of cultural analysis that troubles the book, the written essay, or the thesis, as the only valid means to express ideas, concepts and the results of experiments." [224] Both also emphasise research-creation's support of new media experimentation and the devising of digital research methods that encourage non-linear presentations and wider distribution of research."[225]

These methodological standpoints confirmed research-creation as the best approach for this artistic inquiry for the following specific reasons: this investigation exists beyond the boundaries of written language and is mapped as an ecology of practice and inquiry within a dissertation and a companion website; this investigation engages in experimental practices that result in digital art(e)facts; this investigation acknowledges the impact collaboration has on the results of this research via the inclusion of creative data emerging from collaboratively made artworks; this investigation incorporates more than one branch of knowledge as it sits at the intersection of youth arts, socially engaged art and informal arts pedagogy. Despite research-creation being like other creative research approaches, it is the methodology's multiformity and inter/transdisciplinarity that ultimately confirmed it as the best choice for this investigation. The following discussions explore these key reasons in more detail.

[223] Loveless. *How to Make Art at the End of the World*, 2019, 13.
[224] Chapman and Sawchuck, "Research-Creation," 6 and 7.
[225] Ibid.

Supporting research and creation equally

As the name designates and as Loveless articulates, research-creation treats creative practices and scholarly processes as "equally weighted objects of and contributions to knowledge in the academy."[226] As this research involves the production of scholarly and creative knowledge in the form of both a dissertation and research artefact, this combined attention is essential.

Research-creation's purposeful hyphenation eloquently supports the conceptualisation of this equal status. (As does the hyphenated term artist-researcher). While other modes of artistic inquiry are also hyphenated, for example, practice-based, practice-led and arts-based, the dual activities of research and creation in these cases are not explicitly designated. Furthermore, in these cases, what follows the hyphen simply qualifies what is before the hyphen. In contrast, the term research-creation directly establishes the theoretical and creative partnership intrinsic to artistic research. It also affirms the equal status of the two activities in the way the hyphen separates them. Like Loveless and Manning, I see the hyphen as umbilically linking my equally weighted artistic and academic practices, bringing something new into being, while also keeping these equally weighted practices alive in their difference.[227]

[226] Loveless, "Research-Creation and Social Justice." 43.
[227] Ibid.; Loveless, "Towards a Manifesto on Research-Creation," 52; Loveless, *How to Make Art at the End of the World*, 43; Loveless, *Knowings and Knots*."; Manning, "10 Propositions for Research-Creation," Slide 1, Volume 19**,** Issue 2: "Disrupting the Humanities: Towards Posthumanities," *Journal of Electronic Publishing* (Fall 2016): Introduction, https://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jep/3336451.0019.206/--10-propositions-for-research-creation?rgn=main;view=fulltext; Truman, "The Intimacies of Doing Research-Creation: In Conversation with Natalie Loveless, Erin Manning, Natasha Myers, and Stephanie Springgay," in *Knowings and Knots: Methodologies and Ecologies in Research-Creation*, ed. Natalie Loveless, (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2021), 228.

The hyphen also allows me to conceptualise my research and creation practices as part of a circular journey. The circle is a metaphor for a perpetual state of motion with no beginning or end,[228] nor top or bottom. The circle characterises an always-in-the-middle, non-hierarchical state of being. tbC artists are encircled within a non-hierarchical mode of governance and practice, one that is ongoing and dynamic. Members practice together in this lively middle space, building and sharing artistic agency and status. My embedded position within this lively middle space facilitates valuable observational knowledge on the subject of this research.

Artist-researcher Marlene MacCallum's conceptualisation of research-creation as a "linear-yet-circular and ongoing process"[229] also resonates, aptly describing the hybrid nature of this doctoral submission, which includes a linear structured dissertation and a rhizomatically designed digital artefact. Periodically placed hyperlinks engage the reader in a circular journey between the theoretical and creative knowledge arising from this artistic inquiry. These hyperlinks also encourage random and unbounded horizontal experiences of this hybrid knowledge. I discuss how the metaphorical concept of the rhizome supports the design and experience of this artistic inquiry and how it impacted the decision to engage a research-creation approach in more detail shortly.

Thinking and writing about the relationship between my artistic and academic practices in these ways also reminds me of Haraway's philosophy of companion or interspecies relations. Haraway's philosophy acknowledges entangled relations between people and things and the

[228] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 25.
[229] As noted in Risa Horowitz, "Introduction: As if from Nowhere... Artists' Thoughts About Research-Creation," *Revue D'art Canadienne/Canadian Art Review* 39, no. 1 (2014): 26, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43203121.

concept of something becoming with and into something else by virtue of these relations.[230] A good example of this can be found in Haraway's description of her father's entangled connection to his wheelchair, something that makes the man both "organic flesh as well as wood and metal"[231] and the companion/interspecies she sees evolving between the herder, his dog and the sheep they shepherd. Haraway's idea that these relationships result in a process of 'becoming' acknowledges the complex evolutionary relationship between people, objects, events and activities. In a similar way, research-creation connects the companion practices of my research and creation, bringing another species of inquiry into being, one that keeps the two practices alive in their own becoming, as well as the idea that together they become something else.

Connecting the companion practices of my research and creation also reminds me of Haraway's conception of 'the articulata', which she describes as a discourse/body/entity that is "cobbled together" [232] producing something new or novel. While not considered through the same prism of biopolitics, this investigation relates to the way Haraway uses the concept of the jointed, cobbled together body of the monster or cyborg[233] to describe 'the articulata'. Of particular interest is Haraway's argument that this cobbling together to make something new often involves a more-than discursive process and that an articulated world is made up of a "number of modes and sites where connections can be made."[234]

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[230] Jane L. Carman, "Review of Donna Haraway's *When Species Meet*" *JAC* 30, no. 3/4 (2010): 857, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20866979.
[231] Ibid., 858.
[232] Articulata is a Latin word meaning articulated or jointed. To be articulate also means to clearly express oneself. Merriam Webster dictionary, accessed May 3, 2021, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/articulate. Also see, Haraway, *The Haraway Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 105-106; Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters: a Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others," in *Cultural Studies,* ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler, (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 1992), 324.
[233] Cyborgs are cybernetic organisms, hybrids of humans and machines. As noted in Ronald Kline, "Where are the Cyborgs in Cybernetics?" *Social Studies of Science* 39, no. 3 (2009): 331, https://doi.org/10.1177/0306312708101046. Also see, Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature,* ed. Donna Haraway, New York: Routledge, 1991; Haraway "Cyborgs and Symbionts: Living Together in the New World Order," in *The Cyborg Handbook*, ed. Chris H Gray (New York: Routledge, 1995), xi–xx.
[234] As noted in Ronald Kline, "Where are the Cyborgs in Cybernetics?" 331.

This dissertation is only part of this research-creations' articulation. A number of modes, sites, materials, practices and people are cobbled together to produce a fuller understanding of how tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. This fuller understanding is based on the combined presentation of theory and artefact, resulting in what theorist Guyotte refers to as a rich entanglement of thought, art and language.[235] Like Guyotte, this research doesn't regard creative components of artistic inquiry as simply illustrative or descriptive, nor does it regard theoretical writing as simply a linguistic marker for what is visually depicted. [236] This dissertation and the creative works accompanying it play an equal role in articulating the story about the site and subject of this research.

The dissertation introduces and backgrounds the research, engages in detailed literature reviews and presents key theorising on the research subject. The companion website digitally curates and presents extended exposition and case study analysis. The companion website is a living, lively digital platform and portfolio that operates as an exhibition space, an archive, a landing place for new members, a collaborative artwork in its own right and a research artefact. It exhibits records of creation, informal learning, action and inquiry within a multisensory space.[237] This creative work does more than just tell you about a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice – it shows you. It also invites you to experience this collaborative practice via interactions with some of the artistic works and processes the group has devised – artistic works and processes that directly relate to the subject of this investigation.

[235] Kelly Guyotte, "Encountering Bodies, Prosthetics, and Bleeding," 54.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Despite parts of the website existing in a constant state of becoming (reflecting tbC's living arts practice), the embedded links in this dissertation are designed to remain stable, providing ongoing access to the data being examined and the theorising taking place within this research-creation.

This research-creation maps an ecology of practice and inquiry via a flow of interconnected writing, images, videos, opinions, practices and interactions. Together, these sites of knowledge critically and creatively examine the power a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has in supporting young artists in building artistic agency and status.

The research artefact (the companion website) began as a weblog, an informal but regularly updated online site housing visual and conversational data and observations about my collaborative arts practice with young artists. It was initially designed to collect and collate information that I could critically reflect on and analyse and included textual, visual, aural and experiential data. After a while, it occurred to me that the blog was not only digitally storing and collating data; it was helping me to critically evaluate, articulate and report this data. This blogging practice also inspired the decision to exhibit this data digitally. While the companion website has existed in some form for as long as tbC has been practicing (as a creative archive and space for presentation and interaction), the development of the website as a research artefact was significantly driven by this blogging practice.

The inclusion of this companion website within this research-creation was further inspired by digital researcher Kathryn Coleman and her own digital research-creation, which also took the form of a website.[238] Coleman's theorising of the digital portfolio within the context of her role as artist/research/teacher and the way she sees the digital portfolio as being "both process and product"[239] shaped my own version of such. In a similar way to Coleman, I have digitally mapped and surveyed my experiences in the field of collaborative youth arts practice and this research journey around it.

[238] Kathryn Coleman, "An A/R/Tist in Wonderland: Exploring Identity, Creativity and Digital Portfolios as A/R/Tographer," 2017, http://www.artographicexplorations.com/.
[239] Loveless, *How to Make Art and the End of the World*, 9-10.

Supporting new media experimentation

Although my submission is technically not a digital thesis like Coleman's, the role my digital artefact plays in enacting and illuminating this research is substantive. It is more than just an online mode of research presentation, and it does more than illustrate and describe my work. This investigation uses digital technologies and methods to collect, analyse and exhibit data. Together, the dissertation and companion website support a fuller understanding of the significance and context of this research. Furthermore, the digital space and design of this artistic inquiry facilitates its wider circulation.

Young tbC members are digital natives, having been born or brought up in the digital age, and naturally engage with digital technologies in the making of artworks. tbC's digital arts practices have inspired and supported the digital design of this research. While I haven't used digital research methods continually during this investigation, digital technologies, spaces and thinking profoundly shape this research-creation. The toing and froing between the reading of the literature that supports this field of research, the writing and theorising that followed and the design of this artistic inquiry has been a transformative investigative experience, resulting in a hybrid response to my research topic.

These in-tandem theoretical and creative processes fed off and into each other in ways that also kept me productive and inventive. For example, when I felt theoretically stumped or mentally fatigued, I was able to step away from the reading and writing and move my focus and efforts across to the making of the research artefact and the digital design of its presentation. This meant that when I returned to the dissertation, it was with a fresh mind and often with new creative ideas to research and write about – ideas that arguably would not have manifested without this creative side-step. Coleman argues that this blending of

theoretical, linguistic and conceptual thinking with spatial reasoning, symbolic processing and visual interpretation[240] mirrors the fundamental premise and benefit of research-creation.

Even though this dissertation is more analogue than digital, it too has digital characteristics. Today, analogue texts are commonly created, disseminated and stored electronically. Dissertations are routinely submitted for assessment as digital PDFs (portable document format) and stored in computer systems instead of printed on paper, bound in books and deposited on library shelves. Despite adopting a traditional literary (written) text and sequential composition (introduction, main content, conclusion), this dissertation has been digitised. It has been converted into an electronic format that can be processed and disseminated by a computer and will be stored and retrieved digitally. It is less likely to be printed and will primarily be read online and via a computer screen.

As noted in the introduction, the digital augmentation of this dissertation includes the use of hypertext. The term hypertext was coined by information technologist Ted Nelson and his assistant Calvin Curtin in 1965 to describe the interrelationship between texts and files.[241] This nomenclature was initially inspired by an article engineer Vannevar Bush wrote in 1945 titled, *As We May Think*,[242] which forecast many of the developments in information technology. The term describes cross-referencing (linking) features of computerized information systems that digitally connect a text, media or site. Mouse clicks, keyboard actions or voice commands on digital devices make these connections possible. A series of hyperlinks appear throughout this dissertation that, when clicked, connect the reader to a companion website that contains creative exposition, data and analysis.

[240] Coleman, "An A/R/Tist in Wonderland."
[241] Robert Burnett and David Marshall, *Web Theory: An Introduction*, (UK: Routledge, 2003), 83.
[242] Vannevar Bush, "As We May Think," *The Atlantic Monthly*, (July 1945), https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1945/07/as-we-may-think/303881/.

Hyperlinks positively disrupt the compositional structure of this dissertation, allowing for non-linear readings and multimodal, multimedia experiences of this research. (I will describe and distinguish the terms multimodal and multimedia shortly). This hybrid publication combines the linearity of a traditional dissertation with the non-linearity of the internet, connecting readers/viewers to this investigation in a multifaceted way. Academic George Landow invokes Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the rhizome[243] in his examination of the non-hierarchical movement of hypertext and how this has transformed traditional understandings of the aesthetics of reading or writing a text. He notes that the hypertext experience liberates the reader and writer from the constraints of linearity.[244] I discuss the connection to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of the rhizome in more detail in the following sub-section of this chapter.

The digital turn in communication and knowledge creation is historically situated in the late 1900s and early 2000s, following the rapid development of computer technology, pioneered in 1940 by John Vincent Atanasoff and his student Clifford Berry at Iowa State College, and via the production of the Harvard Mark I computer by IBM in 1944.[245] Today, digital interfaces offer the artist-researcher new and innovative ways to investigate, compose and present knowledge, which has broadened the academy's understanding of how we do and report on research.

This broader understanding has significantly shaped the concept of the contemporary research text. Academics Chapman, Sawchuck and Claire Lauer write about how knowledge creation and communication is no longer limited to one mode or realised through one

[243] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 6-7.
[244] Ibid., 84 and 85.
[245] Wim Westera, *The Digital Turn: How the Internet Transforms Our Existence* (Indiana: AuthorHouse, 2012), 21-22.

medium, such as the page or the book.[246] Modern-day research documents are composed of multiple forms of knowledge, including text, pictures and sound, and embrace analogue and digital formats and their hybrid configurations.

Chapman and Sawchuck cite precursor examples of contemporary experimentation with traditional forms of writing,[247] including Walter Benjamin's (1969) innovative use of the allegory and the structure of the thesis in writings such as *Theses on the Philosophy of History,*[248] Marshall McLuhan's (1970) experiment with typography in *Counterblast,*[249] Donna Haraway's (1991) remixing of the manifesto[250] and Roland Barthes' (1977) deployment of the alphabet as a template for an examination of the discourse on love.[251] They also cite Caitlin Fisher's (2001) *These Waves of Girls,*[252] a hypertextual novel about girlhood sexuality. This troubling of the book and traditional written work as the only valid means to express ideas and concepts challenges what Chapman and Sawchuck refer to as the "logico-deductive or analytic forms of argumentation."[253] So does this artistic inquiry.

This artistic inquiry is multimodal, involving multimedia in its development and presentation. A mode is a means of communicating and media is the channel, system or material through which communication is conveyed.[254] Semiotician Gunther Kress and

[246]Chapman and Sawchuck, "Research-Creation," 6 and 7; Claire Lauer, "Contending with Terms: 'Multimodal' and 'Multimedia' in the Academic and Public Spheres," *Computers and Composition* 26, no. 4 (2009): 227, https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/wgw/files/2015/05/lauer-contending-terms.pdf.
[247] Chapman and Sawchuk, "Research-Creation," 6.
[248] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflection,* ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1969).
[249] Marshal McLuhan, *Counterblast,* ed. W. Terrence Gordon, (New York: Harcourt, 1970).
[250] Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature,* ed. Donna Haraway, (New York: Routledge, 1991), 149-181.
[251] Roland Barthes, *A Lovers Discourse: Fragments,* trans. R. Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977).
[252] Caitlin Fisher, "These Waves of Girls" Published 2001, http://www.yorku.ca/caitlin/waves/.
[253] Chapman and Sawchuk, "Research-Creation," 6.
[254] Lumen Learning, "What is the Relationship Between Mode and Media," accessed May 3, 2021, https://courses.lumenlearning.com/olemiss-writing100/chapter/what-is-a-mode/#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20Relationship%20Between,form%20of%20medium%20is%20media..

linguist Theodore Van Leeuwen describe modes as the 'content' and media as the 'expression' of meaning-making.[255] The term multimodal arose out of the academic scholarship of the New London Group (1994). The term multimedia emerged out of entertainment, journalism, creative and commercial art industries and was coined by singer and artist Bob Goldstein in 1966. The two terms are often confused and even used interchangeably. Until the late 1990s, multimedia was the universal term for both concepts and still operates as a gateway term.[256] Other more recent terms include new media, digital media and multiliteracies.

Lauer notes that while the terms mode and media have different meanings, adding the prefix multi has resulted in the assumption that they are similar.[257] She suggests that a good way to manage the confusion around the conflation of these terms is to regard them within a situated activity.[258] For example, the classroom and the academy routinely use the term multimodal to describe multi-compositional practices and/or multiliteracies in the design of content/knowledge. Multiliteracies is a term used to describe linguistic diversity and multiple forms or modes of linguistic expression and representation[259] and includes; written, visual, aural, oral and spatial language,[260] such as; text, sound effects, music, still and moving images, animation and colour. The prefix multi describes a combination of more than one of these modes. In contrast, industry routinely uses the term multimedia to describe

[255]Gunther Kress and Theodore Van Leeuwen, *Multimodal Discourse: The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication* (London: Bloomsbury Academy, 2001), 20.
[256] Lauer, "Contending with Terms," 234.
[257]Ibid., 226.
[258] Lauer, "Contending with Terms," 1.
[259] William Cope and Mary Kalantzis, "'Multiliteracies': New Literacies, New Learning," *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 4, no. 3 (2009): 191, https://doi.org/10.1080/15544800903076044.
[260] Lucy Johnson and Kristin Arola, "Tracing the Turn: The Rise of Multimodal Composition in the U.S." *Poland: Res Rhetorica* nr 1, (2016): 98, http://bazhum.muzhp.pl/media//files/Res_Rhetorica/Res_Rhetorica-r2016-t-n1/Res_Rhetorica-r2016-t-n1-s98-104/Res_Rhetorica-r2016-t-n1-s98-104.pdf.

multifaceted production, including the design, presentation, communication and even marketing of content and knowledge.

Both multimodal and multimedia activities form part of a continuum along which a contemporary text evolves,[261] moving through an abstract conception and design of content phase to the material production and expression of this content. Together, this dissertation and companion website present an assemblage[262] of text, images, materials, situations, sounds, spaces, designs, channels, systems and displays. When combined, these sites of knowledge-making and presentation (these modes and media) constitute digital research-creation.

For many, navigating this digital research-creation will be a natural process, especially for digital natives and those used to hypermedia spaces and digital wayfinding. The website that accompanies this dissertation is highly visual, uncomplicated and embedded with straightforward navigation tools that facilitate comprehension and movement.[263] The images, text, film, sound and generative artworks contained within this website have been repeatedly published (without incident) via the group's social media sites[264] and during studio presentations and more formal exhibitions. These artworks and creative records present a compelling multisensory record that reflects and critiques tbC's collaborative youth arts practice. These records, reflections and critiques have become key forms of data collection and documentation, inspiring and shaping the design of this digital research-creation.

[261] Lauer, "Contending with Terms," 236.
[262] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus,* 602 and 603.
[263] If you can, use both a laptop and larger monitor to facilitate the reading/viewing of this research-creation. This will allow you to load this dissertation onto one screen and allow the hyperlinks to open up on the other screen. A large screen on its own will also support this dual reading/viewing experience.
[264] tbC operates several social media sites, which currently include Facebook, Instagram and Vimeo.

Visual ethnographer Sarah Pink highlights the benefits of documentary practice (specifically in relation to video) and how it preserves the interactions of the culture being studied, allowing the researcher to view the content and analyse the meaning during both its original enactment[265] and subsequent reflection.

Having said this, I do acknowledge the tension surrounding visual documentation and the fact that individual interpretations can alter a visual record's original meaning and intent. As literary theorist Roland Barthes observes, "meaning is often constructed and not passively received,"[266] often resulting in biased interpretations of the photograph or video. Author Paul Byer notes that this can lead to "an infinite number of messages which each viewer can construct for him/herself."[267] While this investigation acknowledges that the visual data contained within this research-creation is open to interpretation, the patterns revealed from long-term documentary practice and the longitudinal dialogical accounts accompanying this visual data arguably make for a more reliable and valuable data set. Ambiguities in these visual records and data are counteracted by the appearance of repeated patterns over the seven-year timeframe of this research (and thirteen-year time frame of tbC's practice). These patterns clarify and corroborate the contentions being made. This longitudinal documentation of collaborative textual, interactive, photographic, film and sound-based artmaking has resulted in a rich, multisensory knowledge base about tbC's more than decade-long practice, from which this investigation draws conclusions. Conclusions that critique the way a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

[265] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, 95. As noted in Diana Riviera; "Picture This: A review of Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research by Sarah Pink," *The Qualitative Report* 15, no. 4 (2010): 990, https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol15/iss4/13.
[266] Barthes, "Rhétorique de l'Image," *Communications* 4, Recherches Sémiologiques, (1964): 47, https://www.persee.fr/doc/comm_0588-8018_1964_num_4_1_1027.
[267] Byers, "Cameras Don't Take Pictures," 31.

Supporting collaborative practice and inquiry

The four case studies at the centre of this investigation are collaboratively made artworks. All have emerged from a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice that is inherently inquiry and action-based. Conversations about what it's like to be a young artist have always been a focus of tbC's studio practice. So too, the idea that making and presenting art together supports the development of the young artist. Three of the four collaboratively made case study artworks at the centre of this investigation are dialogical, the content of which directly speaks to the nature of how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

Artist-researcher Ricardo Dal Farra's writing around research-creation's sensitivity to the idea that collaborative arts practice and collectively made artworks play a role in the gathering and disseminating of research further confirmed my decision to engage a research-creation approach for this investigation.[268] Dal Farra's argument that research-creation is a conceptual tool and a methodological framework that can enhance our understanding of collaborative work deeply resonates with my experience of how my collaborative arts practice at tbC has inspired and informed the observations I make within this artistic inquiry.[269]

While my analysis of tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and my findings associated with the power this practice has to deliver young artists artistic agency and status is observational and officially results in solo-authored doctoral research, the in-practice experiences and opinions of my collaborators are entangled within the works at the centre of

[268] Ricardo, Dal Farra, "Experimental [Media and Computer Art] Transdiscipline." 6th Computer Art Congress - Concordia University, 2018, 2. A comment inspired by this source.
[269] Ibid.

this investigation. While the opinions of my young collaborators have not been directly solicited, their voices are audible within the materiality of the dialogical artworks I examine and within the companion website that houses them. I argue that by including collaboratively made dialogical artworks as case studies, I can reflect on both my experience of their making and the dialogical content found within their materiality. As these dialogues directly relate to the subject of this research, they constitute valuable in-practice knowledge.

Consent to use the dialogical data contained within the case study artworks this research analyses comes from tacit agreement already successfully negotiated during artmaking and presentation at tbC. Studio conversations and group-directed governance are at the heart of this consent model. As already noted, there has been no issue with this informed consent model during tbC's thirteen years of practice.[270] The concept of dialogical art will be further examined throughout the following chapters, especially in relation to how important dialogue and conversation are to tbC's culture of artmaking, but also in relation to the way this socially engaged arts practice has become a method of data-gathering and analysis. The strengths, limitations and ethical challenges of this kind of data will also be further discussed.

Incorporated within my thinking and writing around tbC's collaborative, dialogical and experimental arts practice is the argument that the group's collective artistic processes and

[270] As noted in the Introduction and Chapter Two, discussions about the subject of this research are part of regular studio conversations and dialogical artmaking at tbC. Presenting this creative data as direct quotes within this dissertation is not appropriate, as I have not sought ethics approval to formally solicit my collaborators opinions on the subject of this investigation (based on consent issues signposted in the Introduction and examined in detail in Chapter Four). Instead of quoting the in-practice opinions of my collaborators here in this dissertation, I regularly direct you to the companion website in which this creative data is housed. This companion website constitutes the artistic outcome of this research and the valuable in-practice data contained within it supports this observational investigation. This in-practice knowledge and dialogical artmaking has been in the public domain for years, with no adverse consequences.

outcomes are, in and of themselves, modes of inquiry and that this transforms my research into something 'more than solo'.

To borrow a term used by Bolt and Lucas Ihlein from their discussion around Ihlein's *Bilateral Petersham* project, I argue that this investigation rides the boundaries[271] of solo and collaborative research. And that this calls for a boundary-riding methodological approach. One that embraces the implicit collaborative, speculative and reflexive practices that inspire and transform this investigation. I see the inter and transdisciplinary scope of research-creation and the experimental and collaborative sensitivities of the methodology as key to supporting this boundary-riding research position and setting and the best way to make the implicitly collaborative contributions of my artistic collaborators more explicit. A research-creation approach, coupled with a case study method (one that engages with collaboratively made, dialogical artworks), actively acknowledges the multivocal context of this artistic inquiry.[272]

My commitment to acknowledging the collaborative imperative behind my practice within this research caused me to wonder whether I could have authored it with the alter-moniker tbC instead of Tiffaney Bishop. My collaborators and I often talk about tbC being 'the artist'. In a way, I have come to view tbC as not only personifying my identity and status as an artist but also my identity and status as a researcher. While I can't literally author this work with the tbC moniker, this authorial question and tension can at least be presented as a provocation arising from this research – a provocation that might inspire others (myself included) to further research this authorial tension.

[271] Barbara Bolt and Luca Ihlein, "Socially Engaged Art as a Boundary Rider," in *Associations: Creative Practice and Research*, ed. James Oliver, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2018), 83-103.
[272] The case study method is examined in detail in chapter five, as is its suitability and application in this instance.

Supporting informal learning

Research-creation supports contemporary artists interested in informal learning environments and pedagogical innovation.[273] Educators Brigitte Albero, Monica Linard and Jean-Yves Robin describe pedagogical innovation as a practice that is recognised as not only useful and meaningful but transformational.[274] Educator Jean-Pierre Béchard defines pedagogical innovation as an intentional action that introduces something original to a learning environment via interaction and interactivity."[275] Educator Francoise Cros concurs, noting that pedagogical innovation demands creativity, inventiveness and originality.[276]

Informal learning (in the form of arts mentoring and studio-based artmaking) underpins tbC's model of collaborative arts practice. Although this research is not primarily about pedagogy, informal learning has emerged as an important underlying characteristic supporting tbC's collaborative arts practice and the artistic agency and status this practice delivers.

Chapter Three includes a more detailed discussion on the subject of tbC's informal learning and its relationship to the building of artistic agency and status in young artists.

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[273] Loveless, *How to Make Art at the End of the World, 9-10.*
[274] Brigitte Albero, Monica Linard and Jean-Yves Robin, "Small Factory of Innovation at the University: Four Pioneer Journeys," *Social Logistics* (January 2009). https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=27663. As noted in Anne Mai Walder, "The Concept of Pedagogical Innovation," *Education Journal* 3, no. 3 (2014): 196, http://www.sciencepublishinggroup.com/journal/paperinfo.aspx?journalid=196&doi=10.11648/j.edu.20140303.22.
[275] Jean-Pierre Béchard, "Learning to Teach at Higher Education: The Example of Educational Innovators," *The Observatory of Educational Innovations in Management* 1, (September, 2000): 3, http://neumann.hec.ca/oipg/fichiers/2000-001_-_Apprendre_a_enseigner_au_superieur....pdf.
[276] Françoise Cros, *Perspectives in Education and Training: Innovative Action Between Creativity and Training* (Brussels: De Boeck, 2007); Cros, "Innovation in Education and Training: Topics and Challenges," in *Certainties and Paradoxes of Innovation* (Paris: National Institute for Pedagogical Research, 2002) 221-229. As noted in Walder, "The Concept of Pedagogical Innovation," 196.

The rhizome – metaphorically mapping artistic research

Deleuze and Guattari's metaphorical concept of the rhizome[277] informs the theorising around the egalitarian model of governance and practice at tbC and the reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships and practices that flourish within this environment. It also informs the digital design and presentation of this research-creation. Springgay, Irwin, Carl Leggo and Peter Gouzouasis talk about the rhizome as "an assemblage that moves and flows in dynamic momentum... operat[ing] by variation, perverse mutation, and via flows of intensities.[278] Again, this very much describes how tbC operates and the evolution of this investigation's design and presentation.

In botanical terms, a rhizome is a plant that grows from multiple rootstocks, producing ground covering shoots that extend in a lateral and unbounded way. It is a horizontal, interconnecting, living structure that spreads via networks of nodes that operate as junction points from which multiple pathways intersect and spread. The rhizome is in contrast to the tree motif, with its arborescent, single central trunk directing and controlling the growth of branches. There is no obvious beginning or end to a rhizome, which can spread endlessly in multiple directions. The rhizome is always in the middle, in-between and characterised by a multiplicity of potential – an apt description of the youth condition.

The map is a good example of a rhizome, with its radiating spatial distribution of information. This research-creation is like a map, charting the course of a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and this academic inquiry around it.

[277] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*.
[278] Springgay, Irwin, Carl Leggo and Peter Gouzouasis, eds. *Being With A/r/tography*, (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2008), xx.

Like the rhizome, tbC is a horizontal entity with a flat power structure, lateral characteristics and multiple ways of working. This supports multidirectional modes of development and discovery. I strongly relate to how Deleuze and Guattari describe the rhizome as an open and connectable entity, characterised by multiple entry and pathways – detachable, reversible and amenable to constant modification.[279] This very much describes the way creative ideas and practices emerge at tbC, germinating within the fertile multiplicity of artistic interests, popping up in unstructured and informal ways through collective dialogue, artistic processes and practices. This random, non-hierarchical culture of practice supports and promotes spontaneous modes of working at tbC. Even tbC's resilience and longevity can be likened to the rhizome's hardiness and adaptability.

I also relate tbC's governance and operation to the rhizome's agility, exhibited in the way the group morphs and moulds itself in response to creative stimuli. This agility is especially useful to tbC when a creative idea doesn't work. It allows for quick-moving alterations and changes in direction. This keeps tbC fresh, flexible and responsive. Like the rhizome, tbC has no fixed philosophical position, central governance or predetermined design behind its development. Egalitarian and adventitious practices encourage multiple perspectives and spontaneous interventions by all involved. Everyone at tbC, despite their age and level of experience and expertise, operates from and within the middle of this practice.

The rhizome is also an apt metaphor for the way young artist members create offshoot projects and pathways, which can be likened to the laterally spreading nodes of a rhizome. tbC has inspired a creative ecosystem that spreads beyond its original rootstalk. This conjures up another wonderful mental image and supports a discussion in Chapter Three

[279] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*,12. A description inspired by this source.

around the fact that young artists eventually move on from tbC, creating their own group and individual artistic practices that are often inspired by and loosely connected to tbC.

The design and presentation of this research are also rhizomatic, with hyperlinks spreading throughout the dissertation, acting as nodes and junction points that connect readers to extended content housed within the companion website. Digital and online spaces are naturally rhizomatic, horizontal and web-like, as opposed to linear and sequential. The internet is colloquially referred to as 'the web' because of this rhizomatic network of intersections and interconnections. While most of the theorising about tbC's collaborative practice model is housed here in this dissertation, extended descriptive content and case study data and analysis are housed within the companion website.

The horizontal and random structure of the companion website is a very different experience to the chapter-by-chapter linear progression and traditional narrative structure of this dissertation. This research-creation blends both linear and lateral narrative forms to support the academic and creative nuances and needs of this investigation. Embedded within the more formal linearity of this dissertation are digital links that direct the reader to the horizontal, rhizomatic space of the internet. Together, and with the help of this hypermedia format, the two documents/sites intersect and interconnect, creating a fuller understanding of how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

Once inside this digital interface, there is no pressure to remain sequential. The reader is encouraged to direct their own mapping of the study, participate in artistic practices along the way, and even collaborate in making a digital artwork. While the hyperlinks within this

dissertation and the accompanying website's home page guide the reader/viewer, 'getting lost' is part of the rhizomatic intention of this research-creation. Random, non-linear discoveries mirror the multiplicity and adventitious nature of tbC's model of practice. Getting lost in the adventitious process of creative practice is an intrinsic part of tbC's model of collaborative arts practice. It also helps describe tbC's joint authorship dynamic – specifically, the idea that authorship is hard to assign when the provenance of an idea gets lost in the entanglements and messiness often found within collective creative discovery and production. Chapter Four's discussion around joint authorship will explore this in more detail.

Artists at tbC frequently get lost in the rhizome of creative practice, which we believe is often where the most interesting creative experiences and knowledge can be found. Historian and activist Rebecca Solnit concurs, writing "[t]hat thing the nature of which is totally unknown to [us] is usually what [we] need to find, and [that] finding it is a matter of getting lost."[280] Writer for The Guardian, Josh Lacey, comments on Solnit's writing around this concept in a review he wrote about her 2005 book *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*.[281] Lacey's review also references Solnit's previous work around the history and power of walking and her conceptualisation of walking as not just a pleasurable practice but also a political, aesthetic, social and cultural one.[282] Lacey concludes his article with an enthusiastic paraphrasing of Solnit's treatise on walking, provoking the reader to "Go on. Start walking. Get lost. Who knows what you'll find."[283] This challenge also applies to the reader of this research-creation.

[280] Rebecca Solnit, *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* (UK: Penguin Books, 2006), 6.
[281] Josh Lacey, "Losing the Plot, Not the Place," *The Guardian*, Sat 6 May 2006 09.47 AEST, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/may/06/featuresreviews.guardianreview16.
[282] Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*, (New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 2001).
[283] Ibid.

In conclusion, this chapter's review of the methodological field of artistic inquiry has resulted in the selection of a research-creation methodology for this investigation. To reiterate, there are four main reasons behind this selection.

One, the fact that the methodology treats research and creation as equally weighted objects of and contributions to knowledge in the academy.[284]

Two, the methodology's appreciation for digital design, spatial reasoning, symbolic processing and visual interpretation.[285]

Three, the methodology's acknowledgement of the role collaborative arts practice and collectively made artworks play in gathering and presenting data.[286]

Four, the regard the methodology has for pedagogical innovation often found within artistic practice and inquiry.[287]

Together, these characteristics support a rich and rigorous examination of a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice, one that supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. The next chapter examines the site of this research, which includes extended discussion around tbC's foundation story and key operating characteristics.

[284] Loveless, "Research-Creation and Social Justice," 43.
[285] Coleman, "An A/R/Tist in Wonderland."
[286] Ricardo, Dal Farra, "Experimental Transdiscipline," 2. A comment inspired by this source.
[287] Loveless, *How to Make Art and the End of the World*, 9-10.

Chapter Three

The site of tbC

"tbC is not a hangout. It's taken very seriously by all artists as a creative lab for the development of artistic careers."[288]

The site of this research is a thirteen-year-old youth-driven, adult and peer mentored artist-run initiative based in Melbourne, Australia. I am a founding member of tbC and, as such, have an insider's perspective on its working model.

This chapter begins with tbC's foundation story, followed by a discussion around the key characteristics that define the group's *modus operandi*. This backgrounding paves the way for Chapter Four's detailed discussion around the most important of these characteristics and main focus of this investigation – tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship model and the power this model has to build artistic agency and status in young artists.

[288] Dr Marnie Badham, verbal comment during visit to studio, 2012. Marnie Badham is one of my main supervisors.

tbC's Foundation Story

In 2008, five young people from my local community asked me to help them organise a photography project that explored the social life of their hometowns Upwey and Belgrave, east of Melbourne. Together, we produced a body of photographic artwork that explored the cultural tensions these young people were experiencing, with a specific focus on the social dynamics of the Upwey train station.

We met at the station each Monday after school. As soon as the final school bell rang, the young members of the group would run ahead of their peers to get to the train station in time to record the social and cultural goings-on. We all shared my pro camera, which meant none of us was sure who took what photo. This didn't bother the group. Using professional equipment was exciting and empowering and elevated the project's artistic potential. Even during these early days, the work was more important than the provenance of an idea or the assigning of individual authorship. This was the beginning of tbC's joint authorship dynamic. It will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

After a few weeks, we named ourselves tiffaney bishop and the SCUMPUPS. This name reflected the arts mentoring culture we were experimenting with. It also gave me leeway to explore my early ideas around individual authorship in the collective space, which I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter. At the end of the initial workshop period (10 or so weeks), the young artists and I decided to continue working together, developing an ongoing collaborative arts practice.

Over the next two years, tiffaney bishop and the SCUMPUPS mounted two photographic exhibitions in the main gallery of Upwey's community arts centre. The images we presented were printed large and on fine art photo paper. The professional gallery setting, the scale and quality of the works and the audiences that attended these exhibitions delivered the group memorable and empowering experiences. One hundred or more people came to the first exhibition and two hundred or more to the second. Regular presentation has since become a key part of the group's operation. Case Study Four, which will be examined in detail in Chapter Five, investigates a more recent exhibition experience (this time in a leading Melbourne commercial gallery) and the artistic agency and status this experience delivered.

In terms of tiffaney bishop and the SCUMPUPS' studio dynamic, young artists initially looked to me to facilitate and guide. However, instead of the traditional facilitator-participant or teacher-student relationship developing, a mentor-protégé relationship evolved. Over time, this mentor-protégé relationship flattened out. Young members began to naturally guide and mentor each other. I will examine the emergence of this peer mentoring environment later in this chapter and throughout the four case studies in Chapter Five.

In 2011, tiffaney bishop and the SCUMPUPS found a studio space in the township of Belgrave and once established there, membership grew.[289]Scores of young and older artists were now working creatively together. This growth and the corresponding flattening out of the founding mentor-protégé dynamic saw the group morph into tbC.

[289] tbC doesn't recruit artists, they join independently. In the case of Belgrave, membership grew by opening up a studio in the lively township. The studio's visible street frontage (which led to a grungy underground workspace), word of mouth, member referrals and high-profile art projects supported the group's development. Even though tbC is no longer based in Belgrave, this high-profile community positioning of the studio space has become a key part of the group's mode of operation.

The tbC moniker replaced the updated but short-lived name tiffaney bishop COLLECTIVE, a title initially aimed at reinforcing the mentor-protégé workings of the earlier group dynamic and my ongoing interest in experimenting with collective practices and authorship modes. However, as the mentoring dynamics of the group became more peer-based, highlighting a single lead artist was no longer relevant. In fact, it obscured the group's growing non-hierarchical governance and operation. tbC was already being used as a nickname for this new incarnation of the group and quickly replaced the full title, better reflecting the group's growing multi-artist-led *modus operandi*.

Furthermore, the lower case 't' and 'b' was deliberately meant to de-emphasise my name and founding lead artist role. In contrast, the capital C was meant to emphasise the collective practices that more accurately defined the group dynamic.

Members of tbC find the colloquial expression 'to be continued' often attributed to these initials as an amusing attribution, one that very much represents the group's ongoing durational arts practice. The other common colloquial expression often attributed to these initials, 'to be confirmed,' is seen as a provocation – one the group responds to via ongoing artistic practice and presentation. Since 2011, tbC has been making and presenting collaboratively made and jointly authored artworks that focus on the visual, public, digital and publishing arts.

This research examines the idea tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice builds and 'confirms' artistic agency and status.

Underpinning tbC's model of collaborative arts and joint authorship:

Artists running the model
(Non-hierarchical governance and operation)

Dedicated arts practice
(Reinforcing the arts in youth arts)

Informal arts pedagogy
(In the form of mentoring)

These key operating characteristics underpin tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship model. Although not the main focus of this investigation, they have been identified as critical to the group's appeal and longevity and deserve further explication. These supporting characteristics are potential research subjects in their own right and are likely to be the focus of further research in the future.

This chapter will focus on a detailed examination of these three supporting characteristics. This examination leads into Chapter Four's focus on the defining feature of the tbC youth arts model and the subject of this investigation – tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice. All four characteristics provide the framework for the case study analysis to come in Chapter Five, again with an emphasis on tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and the power this practice has to build artistic agency and status in young artists.

Artists running the model (non-hierarchical governance and operation)

An artist-run initiative (ARI) model shapes tbC's collective arts activity. The term is specific to Australia. Artist-run space, artist-led and artist-initiated, is commonly used internationally. The United Kingdom and the United States of America mainly use the term artist-run space, although the United States of America also uses the term artist-run gallery and arts co-op. In Canada, the term artist-run centre is more common. These terms describe independent and collective art practices that are generally based in the community and often incorporate an active social life. They support groups of like-minded practitioners, offering alternatives to institutional and mainstream art projects.

Arts writer and academic Din Heagney refers to ARIs as "hotbeds of innovation and new ideas, driven by the energy and passions of individuals and small groups of artists."[290] Heagney also notes that "some [ARIs] show art objects and art processes in galleries, some engage in critical dialogue to create change and some present things that others are afraid to realise."[291] Academic Maria Miranda describes the ARI as a "diverse and significant institution for both artists and audiences."[292] Artist Frances Tapueluelu sees the ARI as an "important space to show work, to meet other artists and audiences and to engaging in questions around arts practice and philosophies of art."[293] Author and curator Anabelle Lacroix writes about how ideas of localism, artist agency and self-determination define many

[290] Din Heagney, ed. "Making Space, Artist-Run Initiatives in Victoria," *Victorian Initiatives of Artists Network* (2007): xi, https://www.dinheagney.com/making-space-artist-run-initiatives-in-victoria#:~:text=Making%20Space%20was%20a%20publication,taking%20place%20at%20the%20time.
[291] Ibid, xiii.
[292] Maria Miranda and Anabelle Lacroix, eds. *An Act of Showing: Rethinking Artist-Run Initiatives Through Place*, (Melbourne: Unlikely Publishing, 2018).
[293] Frances Tapueluelu, "An Act of Showing: Rethinking Artist-Run Initiatives Through Place," (Presentation, Testing Grounds, Melbourne, May 20, 2017), as noted in Miranda and Lacroix, 2018, 9.

artist-run initiatives and that these artistic formations have the potential to "enrich our understanding of contemporary art."[294]

The National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA), Australia's peak visual arts body, defines the artist-run initiative as an inclusive space that offers artists opportunities to experiment, learn and share in developing social and creative networks and practices.[295] NAVA also points out that artist-run initiatives are developed, organised and operated primarily by artists (as the name designates). Diverse ARI models are distinguished by group rationale, the duration of projects, delivery approaches and overall structure.[296] I particularly like the way NAVA extends the definition of the ARI to include "a gallery, a multipurpose space, a publication, a festival, or a series of projects."[297] These descriptions very much fit tbC's understanding of the artist-run initiative. tbC is organised and operated by artists and is a studio, a gallery, a public space, a publication and an artwork.

Although based in communities, ARIs are often distinguished from community art projects. ARIs are run by artists engaging in distinctly artistic activities. In contrast, community art projects are often characterised by local government or institutional planning and oversight. They usually involve artists visiting communities and co-creating with people who don't necessarily identify as artists,[298] supporting them in creatively exploring a wide range of

[294] Miranda and Lacroix, *An Act of Showing*, 61.
[295] "Resources: Artist-Run Initiatives," National Association for the Visual Arts, accessed June 3, 2018, https://visualarts.net.au/communities-practice/resources/.
[296]Amy Griffiths, "From Then to Now: Artist Run Initiatives in Sydney, New South Wales," Master's Diss., (College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 2012), https://www.unsworks.unsw.edu.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?vid=UNSWORKS&docid=unsworks_10585&context=L.
[297] "Resources: Artist-Run Initiatives, National Association for the Visual Arts."
[298] Hannah Jickling and Helen Reed, "Doing Horizontal Work in Vertical Structures: In Conversation with Loree Lawrence, Syrus Marcus Ware, and Pamila Matharu," (2013): 3, https://thepedagogicalimpulse.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/TPI_DoingWorkinVerticalStructures_v1.pdf.

social and cultural causes and issues.[299] While this description could apply to me as an artist working in the community, the difference is I don't engage with a community of non-artists nor in one-off, programmed creative activities. Moreover, I am not the only lead artist. My young collaborators drive and lead artistic processes and practices too. While tbC sees its community location, socially inviting space and informal learning environment as critical to its accessibility and longevity, the group's engagement with studio art processes, conceptual thinking and the critical audience is of primary importance and distinguishes tbC as an artist-run initiative. Artists like Clare attribute the experience of being engaged in an artist-run initiative as a critical part of the artistic journey from novice to practitioner.[300]

The ARI structure supports collaborative and experimental art practices at tbC and is driven by young and older artists together. Artistic outcomes are mostly collaborative and always collaboratively inspired. While there is room for both individual and group processes and practices at tbC, the group dynamic inspires and drives them all. For example, young Zak found the *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* so inspiring that he joined tbC and began to add his stencil artworks to the suite of works being produced along the laneway. The *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* involves a collection of individual artists who make works that, when combined, result in a collaborative public art project.

[299] "What is Community Arts and Cultural Development?" Australia Council for the Arts.

[300] Again, as noted in the Introduction and Chapter Two, discussions about the subject of this research are part of regular studio conversations and dialogical artmaking at tbC. Clare's in-practice expression emerged during one of the group's many *Art of Conversation* dialogical artmaking sessions. Presenting this creative data as a direct quote within this dissertation is not appropriate, as I have not sought ethics approval to formally solicit my collaborators opinions on the subject of this investigation (based on consent issues signposted in the Introduction and examined in detail in Chapter Four). Instead of quoting the in-practice opinions of my collaborators here in this dissertation, I regularly direct you to the companion website in which this creative data is housed. This companion website constitutes the artistic outcome of this research and the valuable in-practice data contained within it supports this observational investigation. Again, this in-practice knowledge and dialogical artmaking has been in the public domain for years, with no adverse consequences.

In 2018, Miranda carried out research around Australian ARIs, supported by the *Australian Research Council's Discovery Early Career Researcher Award*.[301] She points out that ARIs aren't a new phenomenon and that the forms we see today emerged around forty years ago, developing out of the social conditions of 1960s and art movements like do-it-yourself art[302] and as a backlash to traditional art practices and institutional expectations of artists.[303]

As part of her investigation, Miranda examined the idea that the self-organising and self-determination that goes on within an artist-run initiative resembles what academic and activist Marina Sitrin refers to as "a kind of organisational horizontalism."[304] Sitrin's horizontalism describes the building of relationships that champion the equitable distribution of power in a society. The term was notably used to describe the social movements that exploded in Argentina in 2001 (and more recently in Greece in 2009 and Spain in 2008/13) in response to the economic crises these countries were experiencing. Sitrin describes how, in the case of Argentina, horizontalism characterised the societal backlashes that saw "hundreds of thousands of people [take] to the streets... self-organizing: forming neighbourhood assemblies, occupying and re-opening shuttered workplaces and setting up massive barter networks."[305] More broadly, the term describes relationships grounded in equality, autonomy and respect, where no one person has power over another.[306]

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[301] Miranda, "The Ari Experience: Artist Run Initiatives in Australia: About the Research," accessed June 13, 2020, https://the-ari-experience.com/about/; Australian Research Council, Australian Research Council Grants: Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA), accessed May 3, 2020, https://www.arc.gov.au/grants/discovery-program/discovery-early-career-researcher-award-decra.
[302] Amy Spencer, *DIY: The Rise of Lo-Fi Culture* (New York: Marion Boyars, 2005). Do it Yourself art is a post-war art movement that grew out of the desire for both thrift and self-reliance, which presaged a wider shift in the 1950s and 1960s that challenged the dominant top-down culture model and promoted self-directed and self-realised modes of expression.
[303] Miranda, "Panel 1 - Artist-Run Initiatives: How does Art Speak to and with Communities?" *Re-structure – On Alternative Modes of Culture and Knowledge Production in Times of Shrinking Public Expenditures Conference*, 2014, (Journal of Creative Arts: Unlikely) video 00:42, accessed March 14, 2019, https://vimeo.com/163118222.
[304] Marina Sitrin, ed. *Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina* (California: AK Press, 2006).
[305] Ibid.
[306] Ibid., First known as 'horizontalidad'.

I will examine the concept of horizontalism further in the upcoming sub-section on mentoring, but for now, I'd like to connect tbC's artist-run model of operation to Miranda's discussion around this concept and Gibson-Graham's[307] characterisation of the practice of feminism as organisational horizontalism."[308] tbC's non-hierarchical governance bears some resemblance to this characterisation. The resemblance is noticeable in the way, as sociologist Amory Starr states, "[t]he practice of feminism as 'organizational horizontalism' foster[s] alternative ways of being (powerful)."[309] tbC developed in response to the lack of dedicated arts spaces in which young artists could build and express artistic agency and status. The model offers young artists opportunities to practice art in ways they can't in their schools or social service communities - engaging artist members in a dedicated youth arts practices that collaboratively position the young artist as practitioner.

Further supporting this progressive youth arts model is a deeply rooted principle of autogestión (self-management), something Sitrin also points to as supporting alternative avenues of value and power.[310] Like Gibson-Graham, Sitrin argues that radical movements like feminism are not based on hierarchy and that rather than looking to those in power to solve their problems, members look to one another.[311] Sitrin uses the remarkable rise of the *Occupy* movement in 2011 as a case in point. The self-organised acts of resistance that characterise this social movement empower the otherwise unempowered.

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[307] Miranda, *Re-Structure* conference, video 2:25, in reference to: J.K Gibson-Graham, (pen name for Julie Graham and Katherine Gibson) *A Postcapitalist Politics*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), xxiii.
[308] Miranda, "The Ari Experience: Artist Run Initiatives in Australia."
[309] Amory Starr, "Review of Gibson-Graham: A Postcapitalist Politics," June 24, 2006, https://amorystarr.com/review-of-gibson-graham-a-postcapitalist-politics/.
[310] Sitrin, *Everyday Revolutions: Horizontalism and Autonomy in Argentina* (London: Zed Books, 2012), abstract. A comment inspired by this source.
[311] Ibid.

An example closer to home can be found in Australia's decade-long Renew Newcastle project. This creative enterprise saw local artists reinvigorate a struggling township in New South Wales by filling empty shop fronts with artists. These artists and the creative activities and businesses that emerged from their presence brought a new life to the community of Newcastle. Like Gibson-Graham's example of feminism and Sitrin's example of the *Occupy* movement, *Renew Newcastle* engaged a horizontal approach to renewal efforts. Rather than looking to those in power to bring life back into their township, community members looked to one another. Together, a group of creatives transformed their township, gaining international attention and recognition in the process. *Renew Newcastle* has inspired the more recent Renew Australia, a national version of the social enterprise "designed to catalyse community renewal, economic development, the arts and creative industries across Australia."[312]

Despite their anecdotal differences, the non-hierarchical examples of collective action found within feminism, the *Occupy* movement and *Renew Newcastle/Australia* relate to tbC's artist-run model and its non-hierarchical, self-directed, collaborative arts action. tbC's embrace and application of autogestión (self-management) and organisational horizontalism result in similar expressions of resistance and empowerment, examples of which are exhibited throughout the website that accompanies this dissertation. A specific example of this can be found in the way tbC's T-Shirt Project engages young artists in creatively presenting themselves and their opinions in public. This example of arts action enhances the visibility of young tbC artists and their views and echoes the progressive and rebellious tenants of the feminist, *Occupy* and community renewal movements and ideologies.

[312] Renew Australia, accessed May 3, 2021, https://www.renewaustralia.org/.

Dedicated arts practice (reinforcing the arts in youth arts)

tbC's primary goal is the development of artistic agency and status through dedicated collaborative arts practice. The Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), where this PhD research is based, believes that dedicated arts practice and presentation advance artistic excellence and innovation.[313] For more than a decade now, young artists have been making and presenting art at tbC. Although less formal than the VCA, tbC's model supports the development of artistic excellence and innovation and facilitates similar transformative artistic experiences and outcomes.

tbC treats young creatives as practicing artists looking for artistic opportunities and pathways. Members of the group self-identify as artists who want to make artworks that reach critical arts audiences. Through dedicated artistic practice, tbC artists find the inspiration and impetus to build artistic careers. Despite this interest and ambition, tbC artists regularly report during studio practice that they are routinely confined and directed to developmental and/or educational arts programming. What tbC artists really want is to actively engage in artistic practices that lead to engagement with dominant art culture[314] and the artworld.[315]

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[313] "About Us," Victorian College of the Arts, The University of Melbourne, Faculty of Fine Art and Music, accessed August 22, 2020, https://finearts-music.unimelb.edu.au/about-us/vca. Comment inspired by this source.

[314] Dominant or high art is a term that defines an artwork of aesthetic importance and value. It attributes a high status to an artwork and the artist who made it. The term dominant art culture denotes society's collective esteem for exemplary examples of artistic works. Intellectual works of philosophy, history, and literature are also included in the scope of this term. In this case dominant art culture contrasts with the sub-cultural youth, community and welfare spaces young people often feel confined to. See, Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: HarperCollins Publishing, 2013), 91-92.

[315] The term artworld is commonly thought to have been coined in the twentieth-century but can be found in publications from the nineteenth-century. It describes the emergence of an art culture, which included galleries, critics, and museums, as well as the term *fine arts* (*Beaux Arts*) which dates from the eighteenth century. Historically, the five main fine arts were painting, sculpture, architecture, music and poetry with performing arts including theatre and dance. The contemporary version of the term includes, but is not limited to, the practices of film, photography, video art, installation and conceptual art. See for example, "The Artworld," *The Art Collector*, 9, no. 8 (1899): 113–115, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43894752; Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts,"; "Fine Art," *The Project Gutenberg EBook of Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol 10, SL 3 (March 12, 2011): 356, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35561/35561-h/35561-h.htm#ar209.

tbC's model of dedicated arts practice challenges traditional understandings about how creative environments that engage young artists can operate, the balance of power within them, the successful informal learning that can occur and the artistic merit of the work produced.

As argued in Chapter One, this model is distinguished from those that prioritise formal arts education and youth development ahead of the intrinsic value and benefits of artistic practice and expression. This investigation acknowledges that classrooms and community arts programming can support young artists' development. However, in this case, the value and benefits of a durational and dedicated studio arts practice support the primary focus of this research. By studio, I mean more than a bedroom where young people often make and display their artwork; more than an art room at school tied to curriculum-based programming; and more than a short-term community art workshop.

tbC artists work informally, alongside and with each other for extended periods. There are no predetermined or prescribed structures or expectations placed upon artists at tbC, yet creative empowerment and production flourishes. Together, young and older tbC artists have created a mutually beneficial space and power dynamic that sees all artists, irrespective of age and experience, actively participating in artistic practice and production. The collaborative nature of this practice and production encourages the building and sharing of artistic agency and status. Granted, informal power relationships exist to some extent within this space. However, these relationships operate horizontally through a decentralised workflow and the principle of group-driven artistic exploration. Artmaking at tbC is negotiated in the open, through day-to-day conversations and social interactions and via members' motivations. As membership shifts, so does the power dynamic, but not so much

as to disrupt the overarching egalitarianism and collaboration. The concept of power will be more closely addressed in the following sub-section on mentoring and extensively throughout Chapter Four, specifically in relation to tbC's collaboration and joint authorship model. This includes a discussion around copyright and group dynamics.

tbC embraces a range of social and material practices that produce high-profile publishing, exhibition, public and digital art projects. The merit of these projects challenge conventional understandings about young artists participating in the artworld. This investigation acknowledges that the concept of artistic merit is subjective and hotly debated, resulting in many theories and value judgements. A good example of how this investigation views this contentious concept can be found in academic Acton Ostling's view that artistic merit emerges from an artwork that commends and conveys esteem.[316] Academic Claudi Esslinger's view that artistic merit is found within an artwork's visual, intellectual and emotional appeal and the qualities "that draw the viewer in to want to see more..."[317] is another useful characterisation. For tbC, artistic merit is found within a shared understanding of a work's beauty, originality, and intelligence, not in the artist's age, social standing, or level of experience. As noted at the beginning of this investigation, young tbC artists believe it shouldn't matter if an artist is young, arguing that the merit of their work should be viewed through an aesthetic lens rather than a biographical one.

tbC's meritorious practices include exhibiting artworks like *The Art of Conversation* in established galleries and the sale of artwork to collectors who visit these galleries; publishing

[316] Acton Ostling, "An Evaluation of Compositions for Wind Band According to Specific Criteria of Serious Artistic Merit," PhD. Thesis, Iowa: University of Iowa (1978): 278.
[317] Claudia Esslinger, "Digital Imaging in the Visual Arts," Esslinger classes, accessed 17 Feb 2021, http://www.esslingersclasses.com/uploads/4/2/8/5/4285724/__digitalimaging_syl_s178.pdf.

award nominations for *Hoodie Mag*;[318] partnerships with industry specialists like app designer Simon Braunstein at Catlard Studios; the activation and management of public spaces like Belgrave's Blacksmiths Way; commissions like the Belgrave and Melbourne city Drain Art Projects; the securing and maintaining of long term studio spaces and the many small funding grants the group has won.

In relation to tbC's Drain Art projects, young artists collectively planned, designed, budgeted and rendered a suite of high-profile public art works that were painted on ten and twenty-five drain lids (respectively) in the township of Belgrave and the city of Melbourne. The works were initially designed in the studio and output as professionally cut stencils that artists used as the basis for the completed artworks. These two projects attracted large audiences and artist fees. They exemplify how tbC challenges artworld barriers by empowering young artists to direct, devise and deliver artistic projects – artistic projects that provide earlier professional practice and presentation opportunities from which earlier agency and status are built.

Following my more than thirteen years of arts practice with young artists and a comprehensive review of the literature around youth arts, I have concluded that there are few examples of dedicated youth arts practice and presentation like tbC and limited research around such. This investigation aims to address these deficits by presenting tbC as an aspirational model of dedicated arts practice and presentation for other youth arts practitioners and groups to examine and explore.

[318] The inaugural edition of *Hoodie Mag* was shortlisted in the 60th Annual Australian Publisher Association's Book Design Awards for *Best Designed Specialist Illustrated Book 2012*. It also received a finalist nomination for the *Best New Publication For and By Young People Under 30* in the Express Media Literary Book Awards in December 2011.

Informal arts pedagogy (in the form of mentoring)

Mutually beneficial mentoring relationships strongly underpin tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship model. These mentoring relationships support mature and dynamic exchange and encourage collective decision-making and interconnectedness. Valuable informal learning and co-creation emerge from these mentoring relationships and support the building of artistic agency and status. Before I explain how tbC's mentor relationships specifically manifest and the significant professional development and reciprocity found within them, I'd like to examine the term in more detail and historically contextualise the concept.

Mentoring is commonly described as the informal transmission of knowledge and social capital supporting professional development.[319] Psychologist Daniel Levinson describes it as a relationship that develops mainly through face-to-face communication over a sustained period, resulting in mutually beneficial learning and growth for both the mentor and the mentee[320] (or protégé as the mentee is also referred to). Although a much less formal relationship than the classroom teacher-student one, mentoring is still often characterised by a senior–subordinate affiliation[321] between an older person who is perceived to have greater knowledge, wisdom and experience (the mentor) and a younger person who is perceived to have lesser knowledge, wisdom and experience (the protégé).[322] Levinson argues, however,

[319] Maryann Jacobi, "Mentoring and Undergraduate Academic Success: A Literature Review," *Review of Educational Research* 61, no. 4 (December 1991): 507, https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543061004505; doi:10.1177/0095399707304119. S2CID 143989012; Barry Bozeman and Mark Feeney, "Toward a Useful Theory of Mentoring: A Conceptual Analysis and Critique," *Administration & Society* 39, no. 6 (October 2007): 733, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0095399707304119.

[320] Daniel Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1978); Carol A. Mullen, "Alternative Mentoring Types," *Kappa Delta Pi Record* 52, no. 3 (2016): 132, https://doi.org/10.1080/00228958.2016.1191901; Bozeman and Feeney, "Toward a Useful Theory of Mentoring," 719; Jacobi, "Mentoring and Undergraduate Academic Success," 507.

[321] Mullen, "Alternative Mentoring Types," 132.

[322] Bozeman and Feeney, "Toward a Useful Theory of Mentoring," 722.

that authentic mentor-protégé relationships describe a mutually beneficial and empowering space where the mentor and protégé both value and benefit from the working relationship.[323]

The concept of mentoring is widely cited as dating back to around 700 BC, originating alongside the character of Mentor in Homer's Ancient Greek poem *The Odyssey*. In the poem, Odysseus entrusts his young son Telemachus to the care of his reliable companion, Mentor, as he heads off to fight in the Trojan War.[324] Odysseus is absent for years, and during this time, Mentor nurtures and supports the boy, passing on his wisdom and knowledge. This ancient story led to the conceptualisation of the mentor-protégé relationship, characterised by the guidance an older or more experienced person gives to a younger or less experienced person.[325]

During the late Medieval and Modern Periods, mentoring was a common practice within the many artist guilds. Protégés (or apprentices as they were also known) benefitted from the patronage of more experienced and established artists.[326] These guilds flourished in Europe between the eleventh and eighteenth centuries and were an important part of the cultural and economic fabric of society. Young men were trained in the various arts and crafts, invariably becoming guild masters themselves, setting up their own workshops and mentoring their own apprentices. Since then, the practice of mentoring has ebbed and flowed in form and function.

[323] Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, 253. A comment inspired by this source.
[324] Andy Roberts, "Homers Mentor: Duties Fulfilled or Misconstructed," *ResearchGate* (1999): 2, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242760920_Homer's_Mentor_Duties_Fulfilled_or_Misconstrued.
[325] Bozeman and Feeney, "Toward a Useful Theory of Mentoring," 723.
[326] Judy McKimm, Carol Jollie and Mark Hatter, "Mentoring: Theory and Practice. Preparedness to Practice Project, Mentoring Scheme." *London Deanery* (2007): 2, http://www.richardswanson.com/textbookresources/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/TBAD-r8-Mentoring-Theory-and-Practice-J-McKim-et-al-2007.pdf.

Despite this long history, a unifying definition remains elusive,[327] with no widely accepted understanding in use and more than fifty definitions in circulation.[328] While earlier forms of mentoring were often characterised as one-way relationships, a result of the aforementioned senior-subordinate power dynamic[329] and a relationship between males, contemporary mentoring practices have allowed for the participation of females and more reciprocal modes of learning and growth.[330] Educators Lisa Ehrich, Brian Hansford and John Ehrich do note, though, that a lack of commitment and time often interferes with mutually beneficial mentoring outcomes and that some contemporary notions of the mentor-protégé model, such as between boss and worker, coach and trainee, sponsor and sponsored or teacher and student can be more instrumentalised and less mutually satisfying. [331]

Freire's[332] 1960s conception of peer mentoring describes a significantly flatter power dynamic that enhances the potential for mutually beneficial learning and growth. For Freire, peer mentoring allows people "to feel like masters of their thinking … explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades."[333] Through my experience at tbC, I have come to understand peer mentoring as a mutually beneficial relationship between people of a similar age or stage in life sharing specialised knowledge. While tbC initially embraced a mentor-protégé model (where older artist members shared their more established knowledge, wisdom and experience with younger, less experienced artist

[327] Phillip Dawson, "Beyond a Definition: Toward a Framework for Designing and Specifying Mentoring Models," *Educational Researcher* 43, no. 3 (2014): 137, http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0013189X14528751?journalCode=edra.
[328] Gloria Crisp and Irene Cruz, "Mentoring College Students: A Critical Review of the Literature Between 1990 and 2007." *Research in Higher Education* 50, (2009): 527, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-009-9130-2.
[329] Mullen, "Alternative Mentoring Types," 132
[330] Ibid.
[331] Lisa Ehrich, Brian Hansford and John Ehrich, "Mentoring Across the Professions: Some Issues and Challenges," in J. Millwater and D. Beutal, eds. *Practical Experiences in Professional Education: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, (Australia: Post Pressed, 2011), 5.
[332] Paulo Freire, et al., *Mentoring the Mentor: A Critical Dialogue with Paulo Freire* (Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers, 1997).
[333] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1968), 105.

members), over the years, this mentoring model has morphed into something much less hierarchical. Mentor-protégé relationships still exist at tbC; however, today, empowering peer mentoring predominantly encourages transformative learning and artmaking.

Peer mentoring encourages younger tbC artists with specialist interests and/or skills to guide and direct artistic processes and practices. This encouragement emerges from a highly engaged studio model that actively supports young artists in expressing and exploring artistic ideas. This empowered studio environment sees young tbC artists seeding and leading creative processes and practices. For example, from the early days of the *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project,* Rohan (tbC's resident street artist) took a lead role in engaging young artists from the local area to design artworks and plan the rollout of these works along the laneway.[334] In fact, Rohan was the one who suggested we begin painting the walls along the laneway and executed the first graffiti and street artworks of the project. These days tbC artists and their contemporaries paint these walls *en masse*, usually over a weekend. As the videos housed within the companion website demonstrate, these painting sessions are significant public art events and require sophisticated planning and production. Rohan's role in engaging and managing tbC's street art cohort is substantial, resulting in him leading the project's ongoing development. This role is critical to managing the personalities and even the artistic content of the project. Many of the artists come from Rohan's extended community peer group, which makes him an important conduit for meaningful participation. Furthermore, the complex interpersonal and political dynamics associated with graffiti and street art culture means that the project benefits from Rohan's insider experience and knowledge.

[334] Blacksmiths Way is a 500m laneway running behind tbC's Belgrave studio.

From my point of view, tbC's peer mentoring relationships appear even more energised, encourage greater rapport and equity and have more longevity than co-existing mentor-protégé relationships.[335] I will discuss tbC's highly participatory mentoring dynamic in more detail in Chapter Four, with the support of Sherry Arnstein and her influential *Ladder of Citizen Participation*.[336]

Granted, there are still power differentials between artistic peers at tbC, with those possessing specialist knowledge, wisdom and experience arguably having more power. However, the fact that tbC regards all artists as capable of possessing and sharing specialist knowledge, wisdom and experience means there is significant reciprocity within the group dynamic, one that mitigates lingering power differentials. At tbC, there are layers of mentoring going on. Anyone with more expertise, experience, and confidence naturally shares their interests and skills. This positively symbiotic[337] relationship engages tbC's multi-aged membership in all governance and operational aspects of artistic practice and, in turn, extends all artist members reciprocal rights to the agency and status that results.

This investigation demonstrates that tbC's model of collaborative arts practice supports the multi-ages and stages of all artist members and that this encourages a more inclusive, horizontal and egalitarian culture and operation. As a result, a cooperative give and take and pride in tbC's group dynamic have emerged. Studio discussions and dialogical artmaking affirm these claims. Artists often declare during studio practice, and through the dialogical

[335] Kathy Kram and Isabella, Lynn, "Mentoring Alternatives: The Role of Peer Relationships in Career Development," *Academy of Management Journal* 28, no. 1 (1985): 129, https://doi.org/10.5465/256064. A comment inspired by this source.
[336] Sherry R Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35, no. 4 (1969): 216-224, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01944366908977225.
[337] Stuart T. Haines, "The Mentor-Protégé Relationship," *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education,* 67 no. 3 (2003): 1 and 2, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/230822105_The_Mentor-Protege_Relationship. A phrase inspired by this source.

artmaking the group specialises in, that tbC's inclusive and egalitarian practices have produced an unusually uncompetitive and highly productive working and learning environment – as already observed by long-term member Clare. Clare further observed, during one of the group's many *Art of Conversation* dialogical artmaking sessions, how empowering and reciprocal tbC's mentoring is. Damien's in-practice observation also attests to the benefits of the flatter mentoring model that has evolved at tbC. Other members make similar observations. These, too, can be found throughout the companion website.

tbC artists negotiate the seeding and leading of creative projects via these reciprocal and productive mentoring relationships. Project ideas appear through the course of artistic expression and experimentation and are either pursued to fruition or passed over. Some ideas are parked for later exploration. Some artists lead an idea, while others actively join in when interested, moving away when not. When a particular idea resonates with a big enough group of artists, a creative momentum kicks in, and the idea becomes an activity that leads to a fully rendered collaborative outcome.

The earlier example of how Rohan's mentoring has supported *The Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* is particularly relevant here. Rohan's initial suggestion that we paint one of the exterior walls of the studio facing onto the back laneway led to the collaborative painting of the entire space. This small idea, voiced by young Rohan, became a fully-fledged collaborative art project and is the subject of the third case study in this investigation. As already noted, Rohan has become an important project organiser and mentor to other young artists working on *The Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project*. This is just one of many examples that evidence the fact that all tbC artists, regardless of their age and artistic stage, can suggest and lead creative ideas and projects. While a lead artist often directs a tbC

artwork or project, this lead role is not automatically awarded to or taken on by older artists. In reality, the *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* would not have been as successful (or even existed) if not for the presence of Rohan and this flatter, more peer-based mentoring.

Like artist Sophie Mahon, and her Heart of Glass project (a collaborative and social arts practice based in St Helens, England), tbC sees mentoring as a space that allows all involved to respond to the cycle of giving by receiving and reciprocating.[338] Creating a space where all artists are encouraged to seed and lead artistic ideas and projects results in highly reciprocal mentoring relationships. Artists of all ages and stages find access to and confidence in tbC's horizontal governance and operation. This highly reciprocal mentoring model has profoundly characterised the arts culture and informal learning environment at tbC.

In a recent paper, UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning notes that "[e]ducation and learning are not limited to schools or the workplace; they occur throughout life and in a wide array of formal and informal settings."[339] Artists at tbC often compare informal studio-based learning to more formal learning environments in schools and universities and the tension and dissatisfaction they often experience within the formal educational system. Jack describes his formal educational experiences in the 2018 edition of *Hoodie Mag*, highlighting the impediments he sees within the educational system, particularly arts

[338] Suzanne Bosch, "Where Values Emerge: An In-depth Exploration of the Collaborative Arts Partnership Programme's Process, Discoveries and Learning," in *Learning in Public: Trans European Collaborations in Socially Engaged Art*, ed. Eleanor Turney (Ireland: Create, 2018), 76, http://www.susannebosch.de/fileadmin/user_upload/PDFS/Learning_in_Public.pdf.
[339] UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, "UNESCO Education Sector Communication Paper: Technical Note, Lifelong Learning," n.d. accessed May 3, 2021, 2, https://uil.unesco.org/fileadmin/keydocuments/LifelongLearning/en/UNESCOTechNotesLLL.pdf.

education. He argues that in contrast to tbC's informal studio learning environment, formal educational settings can constrain rather than inspire young artists' development.

While tbC's mutually beneficial and shared power dynamic distinguishes the group from more structured teacher/student learning environments, if I were to compare tbC to a pedagogical model, the Reggio Emilia Approach[340] would be the closest example. Although a classroom pedagogy, this alternative pre and primary school learning philosophy is distinguished by its invitation to young students to help direct learning. There are synergies between the self-directed, experiential and relationship-driven Reggio Emilia Approach and tbC's arts mentoring model – the main synergy being how the Reggio Emilia Approach regards teachers and students as collaborators, working together as equal and active participants in learning.[341] Many embedded in this model even use the term *atelier*[342] when describing this creatively collaborative and more mentor-based pedagogical space.[343] Similarly, tbC's autonomous learning is directed by its members and their creative interests. These creative interests inspire and morph into collaborative experimental practices, allowing for learning that psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi argues is enriched by collaboration and teamwork.[344]

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[340] "The Loris Malaguzzi International Centre, A Space Open to All," Reggio Children, accessed 21 July 2019, https://www.reggiochildren.it/en/. A pre and primary school educational philosophy that is student centred and self-directed. It was developed by Loris Malaguzzi and parents in the villages around Reggio Emilia, Italy, after World War II. A comment inspired by this source.

[341] Carolyn Edwards, "Teacher and Learner, Partner and Guide: The Role of the Teachers," in *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Experience in Transformation*, eds. Carolyn Edwards, Lella Gandini and George Forman (Westpoint: Praeger, 2012), 150. A comment inspired by this source. Also see, Joanne Hendrick, "Reggio Emilia and American Schools: Telling Them Apart and Putting Them Together – Can We Do It?" in *First Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way*, ed. Joanne Hendrick (London: Pearson Education, 1997), 41–53.

[342] An artist's or designer's studio or workroom. See, Merriam Webster dictionary, accessed May 3, 2021, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/atelier.

[343] Si Ning, Koh. "A Parent's Guide to the Emilio Reggio Learning Approach," Orchard Early Learning Centre, last modified June 27, 2018, https://orchardelc.com.au/a-parents-guide-to-the-reggio-emilia-learning-approach/.

[344] Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1996).

The interest in creative pedagogy within the education sector has led to the development of many studio-based teaching and learning models in school and university settings worldwide. Again, I cite the example of the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) at the University of Melbourne and its studio-based arts pedagogy. At the VCA, the emphasis is on learning through a dedicated and sustained arts practice,[345] which naturally includes arts mentoring from and between established and peer artists. This arts mentoring environment builds an artistic agency and status in young artists that arguably cannot be achieved in more formal classroom settings. Unlike classroom settings, the VCA's studio-based learning is situated in a (quasi) professional environment where creatives experiment, reflect on and apply their learning in real-world contexts. Instead of more directed and prescribed learning, they arguably engage in more autonomous learning.[346] tbC's studio-based learning is even more autonomous and unstructured than VCA's academy-based model as it is primarily focused on self-directed learning and sits outside the education system.

In theorising tbC's mentoring relationships and studio-based learning practices, I reviewed the extended literature around informal, experiential, and creative learning. This included the writings of notable theorists such as: Jean Piaget and his theorising around self-constructed knowledge and his belief in offering students a dynamic and engaged approach to learning, rather than an environment where students are regarded simply as empty vessels and teachers the possessors of knowledge that is neutrally transferred;[347] Austrian painter

[345] "Visual Art" Victorian College of the Arts, The University of Melbourne, Faculty of Fine Art and Music, accessed 3 August, 2021, https://finearts-music.unimelb.edu.au/study-with-us/discipline-areas/visual-art. A comment inspired by this source. See also, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, *Victorian Certificate of Education, Studio Arts Study Design, 2017-2022* (Victoria, Victorian Government, 2016): 5, https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/studioarts/StudioArtsSD-2017.pdf.
[346] Graham Gibbs, "Improving the Quality of Student Learning," PhD thesis (University of Glamorgan, 2005). https://pure.southwales.ac.uk/files/2781825/G._P._Gibbs_2006_2059670.pdf. A comment inspired by this source.
[347] Les Smith, "A Brief Biography of Jean Piaget," The Jean Piaget Society, accessed March 10, 2019, http://www.piaget.org/Piaget/aboutPiaget.html.

Franz Cizek and his art school model based around limited structure, imagination and free expression;[348] Dewey and his theorising around social and experiential learning;[349] Freire and his theories around the intersections between dialogue, practice and education;[350] Rancière and his notion of self-education[351] in natural environments without the influence of outside authorities;[352] Giroux and his thinking around youth and the intersections between education, culture and public life;[353] Shirley Brice-Heath's theorising around informal and creative learning[354] and David Kolb's theorising around the idea that knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.[355]

Like Piaget, tbC regards its members as much more than empty vessels. Creative inspiration and knowledge are dynamically transferred between member artists through a collective artistic momentum that is unrestricted and freely expressed. tbC artists collaboratively drive the unstructured, self-directed, and informal arts learning environments that characterises this group *modus operandi*. These environments resemble the ones Cizek, Rancière and Brice-Heath theorise. Artistic processes and outcomes are also inspired by experiential learning, something Dewey writes about within the context of his exploration of socially constructed knowledge.

An excellent practical example of tbC's informal arts learning environment can be found in the group's Random Methodologies project, initially inspired by young Damien's in-studio

[348] Peter Smith, "Franz Cizek: The Patriarch," 28.
[349] John Dewey, *How We Think.* (Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., Publishers, 1910), 340.
[350]Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and as noted in Anat Greenstein, *Radical Inclusive Education: Disability, Teaching and Struggles for Liberation* (London: Routledge, 2016), 56.
[351] Jacques Ranciere, *Staging The People: The Proloterian and His Double* (New York: Verso 2011), 22.
[352] Juha Suoranta, "Jacques Rancière on Radical Equality and Adult Education," in Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory, ed. Michael Peters (Singapore: Springer 2015), 3, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_363-1.
[353] Henry Giroux, "Home Page," *Henry Giroux*, accessed 18 May, 2019, https://www.henryagiroux.com/.
[354] Shirley Brice-Heath, "Informal Learning."
[355] David Kolb, *Experiential Learning*, 3.

conversations about his synaesthesia. The relaxed social and creative environment that inspired the project also resembles Cizek's unstructured arts school model, where imagination and free expression reign.[356]

At tbC, collaborative artworks like *Random Methodologies* regularly emerge from the intersection between dialogue, practice and learning – a relationship Freire theorises within his writing around democratic philosophies of education and the formation of his critical pedagogy theory.[357] In the vein of Giroux and Kolb, the *Random Methodologies* artworks can also be described as works emerging from tbC's transformational studio, social and creative experiences. This project is a testament to tbC's fundamental collaborative arts making processes and intentions, where the importance of dialogue, listening, sharing and mentoring is showcased. The *Random Methodologies* project and its artistic genesis will be examined in more detail in the next chapter on collaboration and within the case study analysis.

Other key writings on the subject of informal learning include William Charland's theorising of a youth apprenticeship model of learning;[358] Ken Robinson's extensive body of work theorising the power of creativity in education;[359] Howard Gardner's research around the concept of multiple intelligences, whereby he affirms everyone learns differently and that linguistic and logical-mathematical ways of learning are too often privileged over more creative ways of learning;[360] Elliot Eisner's theorising around arts education and the concept

[356] Peter Smith, "Franz Cizek: The Patriarch," 28.
[357] Joe L. Kincheloe and Shirley R. Steinberg, *Changing Multiculturalism* (Berkshire: Open University Press, 2008), 24. Critical pedagogy is the term used to describe what emerges when critical theory encounters education.
[358] William Charland, "The Youth Arts Apprenticeship Movement."
[359] Ken Robinson, *Out of Our Minds: The Power of Being Creative* (Hoboken: Wiley, 2017).
[360] Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

that how (form) something is taught is as important as what (content) someone is taught;[361] and Maxine Greene's thinking around the importance of imagination in education.[362]

This comprehensive review of the field has led to an overwhelming appreciation for the benefits of informal, experiential, and creative learning. It also revealed that, formal educational settings are often criticised for not experimenting enough with informal learning. Curriculum pressures, financial and time constraints and a lack of arts specific skills and confidence are often given as reasons for not fully exploring the potential informal, experiential, and creative learning has to offer school students. tbC's autonomous, unpressured, and inclusive mentoring environment enables the group to explore this potential fully. While this observation isn't aimed at displacing the formal arts educational model; it does pertain to my earlier argument about the importance of providing more studio arts spaces for young artists to practice in – that sit alongside formal arts education.

The art school or artist-run school model provides this investigation with wonderful comparative examples of informal, experiential, creative learning and mentoring at work. One of my favourite examples is the mid-twentieth-century American Black Mountain College experiment, set up by educator John Andrew Rice. Rice was inspired by Dewey's progressive hands-on and democratic approach to education, which significantly influenced the development of the College's community-centred, loosely structured, arts-based curriculum.[363] The school resisted traditional educational hierarchies and became a

[361] Elliot Eisner, "What Can Education Learn from the Arts about the Practice of Education?" *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 18, no. 1 (Fall 2002): 12.
[362] Maxine Greene, *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts and Social Change* (Hoboken: Jossey-Bass Professional Learning, 2000).
[363] Johnathan Fisher, "The Life and Work of Progressive Higher Education: Towards a History of Black Mountain College 1933-1949," *Journal of Black Mountain College Studies* 6, accessed November 29, 2019, http://www.blackmountainstudiesjournal.org/volume6/6-fisher-halfway-formatted-use-other-version/.

"hothouse for avant-garde and experimental work."[364] The college attracted prominent teachers, including Bauhaus members Josef Albers and Anni Albers, composer John Cage, dancer/choreographer Merce Cunningham, painter Willem de Kooning and poet Charles Olson. The emphasis on interdisciplinary work and experimentation attracted students such as Robert Rauschenberg, Cy Twombly, Ray Johnson, Kenneth Noland and Ruth Asawa, who later became prominent artists. After almost twenty-five years, the school closed due to a lack of money and students, but its importance and legacy have continued to grow to this day.[365] While Black Mountain College had a more structured educational model behind it than tbC does, one that loosely included a liberal arts curriculum, the model's emphasis on studio-based learning, mentoring, experimentation, collaboration and democratic governance resonates with tbC's model.

Room 13 International provides another interesting example. Room 13 is a network of art studios based in primary schools around the world. The model's core goal is to "promote the value of creative, entrepreneurial education with particular emphasis on philosophy and the arts."[366] The program was seeded in Scotland in 1994 when a group of students established their own art studio in Room 13 at Coal Primary School near Fort William. Schools all over the world now run Room 13 studios as social enterprises, raising funds to buy art materials and to support the employment of professional artists in residence to mentor students. While this model is school-based, the program is dedicated to arts practice. It focuses on an art studio mentoring model that specifically encourages students to experiment, take the creative lead and think for themselves. The founding energy behind the Coal Primary School's setting

[364] "Performance Art: The Black Mountain College, John Cage and Merce Cunningham," The Tate - Art and Artists, accessed July 26, 2019, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/b/black-mountain-college/black-mountain-college-john-cage-merce-cunningham.
[365] Johnathan Fisher, "The Life and Work of Progressive Higher Education."
[366] "About Room 13," Room 13 International, accessed November 10, 2019, http://room13international.org/.

up of Room 13 is reminiscent of the founding energy behind the formation of the SCUMPUPS project mentioned earlier. However, while Room 13 has similar professional and young-artist-led goals, what distinguishes the model from the SCUMPUPS project and now tbC is that the latter two were/are situated entirely outside the school system. This means that the young artists involved had/have even greater control and power over the running of the model. Furthermore, in the case of tbC, the cultural and creative workings of the community-based studio (as opposed to the school-based classroom) means young tbC artists are a step closer to the artworld.

Two Australian art schools/studios, Art Est. Art School in Sydney and The Art Room in Melbourne, provide a couple of contemporary local comparisons. Founder and Director of Art Est. Art School Jennifer McNamara established the school in 2008 with a vision to create an art space where students of all ages and abilities could discover their artistic potential in a professional studio environment alongside practicing artists. The Art Room, established by Erica Gofton (joined a few years later by Ilona Nelson), is an independent art school offering a unique and holistic learning program that helps students achieve their personal and professional artistic goals. Both Art Est. Art School and The Art Room have gained a reputation for providing quality tuition in a nurturing and relaxed studio environment. Yet, there are several key distinctions between these two art schools/studios and tbC. While both examples are community-based and operate outside the formal, assessment-based classroom format, they are still quite structured, offering pre-planned classes participants pay to opt into. Moreover, while professional tutors provide excellent training and mentoring, there is less room for participants to alter or direct the creative learning and activity. Participants enrol in a pre-designed course, where they are ‘taught’ how to make art. At tbC, the creative learning space emerges directly from the interests and efforts of members, from within and

as a result of practice, instead of being pre-determined by a single lead artist. Furthermore, while both Art Est. Art School and The Art Room are based in spacious, light-filled studio warehouse-style settings like tbC's; these settings are managed by the owners of arts businesses. In contrast, tbC's model provides a much more accessible and shared studio space, directly engaging the young artists who walk through the studio door in the development of activities and programming. At tbC, young artists aren't just participants; they are collaborators with the power to direct the arts space, learning and practice. Furthermore, membership is free at tbC.[367]

A closer comparison to tbC's studio-based arts mentoring model is New York City's Tim Rollins and K.O.S. As already noted, Tim Rollins and K.O.S. is a thirty-year-old New York City-based art collective founded by artist, teacher and activist Tim Rollins. Membership originally included a group of Rollins' young students (mainly boys). More than fifty young people have been a part of the group over its thirty-year history. Despite the similarities between tbC and Tim Rollins and K.O.S.' visual and experimental arts model, the latter's model developed alongside the classroom and school environment. Even though set up as after school sessions, they were still quite structured, with fixed times and a focus on set texts.[368] Moreover, Rollins was still very much the lead artist/teacher. While authorship was clearly shared among young K.O.S. artists and Rollins, and while arts mentoring was a key feature of the collaborative model, the group embodied a more obvious hierarchical teacher/student structure and culture.

[367] While the term membership appropriately conveys the association and sense of belonging young artists experience from their involvement with tbC, it has become apparent to me that the term is somewhat anachronistic. tbC artists are more collaborators than members; however, the term membership is a ubiquitous one and is germane to the aforementioned sense of association and belonging experienced by tbC artists.
[368] Members of K.O.S. would read aloud from classic literary texts by such authors as Shakespeare and Orwell while the rest of the class drew or wrote on the pages being read, connecting the stories to their own experiences. These drawings formed the basis of large works. See, Berry, *Tim Rollins and K.O.S. A History*, overview, https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/tim-rollins-and-kos.

tbC's arts mentoring model resists more formal, hierarchical, teacher/student structures and relationships and is very separate from the school environment. Artists independently find tbC, connecting with the studio and projects via word of mouth, social media coverage or peer referrals. Social media has become a particularly dynamic way of achieving this connection, something tbC artists understand and cultivate. The group regularly posts stories about its arts mentoring practices, with many images and short videos capturing the informal, experiential and creative learning environment the group has built.

As already noted, from very early on in tbC's more than decade-long practice, the group became multi-artist-led as opposed to artist-led. This non-hierarchical power structure actively encourages and supports multiple mentors and lead artists of all ages. Member artists direct the programming and scheduling of arts activities. Instead of prescribed structures, plans or directions, tbC allows the arts practice itself to direct creative activities and outcomes. Like artist and theorist Pablo Helguera, I have come to realise that it is unrealistic to seek participation from collaborators who are not also part of the decision-making process.[369] I passionately believe in the idea that when a group shares the ownership of the working process, a unique range of expertise and commitment comes to the fore. In the paraphrased words of educators Myles Horton and Freire, my expertise lies in not insisting I am the only expert.[370]

tbC artists are emerging from this group practice and mentoring model with a unique level of training and confidence. Kate and Justine are key examples of this. Both these young artists have gone on from tbC to develop their own collaborative art practices. Kate and

[369] Pablo Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook.* (New York: Jorge Pinto Books, 2011), 55.
[370] Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 128.

Justine stay in touch and often talk about the confidence the tbC model provided them. In Kate's case, she has set up a peer-mentored artist-run initiative called This Mob, a collective of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists making ambitious collaborative artworks – artworks that are presented within and critiqued by both the community and more formal artworld settings. Justine has gone on to co-develop Hillscene Live, an artist-run live arts program supporting emerging and experimental artists through egalitarian modes of arts organisation and mentoring.

In terms of my mentor experience with tbC, I am driven by both personal and philanthropic motives. I am naturally interested in sharing my knowledge and skills with young artists, but I also genuinely enjoy their company, enthusiastic attitudes, and unbounded aspirations. I particularly enjoy the fresh, energetic dynamic that young artists bring to group practice. It doesn't bother me that the group is made up of mostly young artists. In fact, this is the attraction for me. There is also a very different kind of competitiveness within tbC's group practice. It feels less aggressive and more open. Other artist members have noticed this, too, with Clare's earlier cited in-practice expression being a good example. Young Josiah makes a similar in-practice observation.

Some people are confused by my interest in collaborating with young artists and mentoring in general. This strikes me as odd, considering we naturally accept and respect the career of teaching. Over the years, colleagues have asked me where my authorship, intellectual property and autonomy sits within the tbC model of practice. This question confounds and sometimes irritates me. It implies subjugation – that I am missing out or forgoing my own individual career. Interestingly, American arts and culture specialist Tom Finkelpearl once asked artist Tim Rollins if he had any time to do his own work, aside from his collaboration

with the Kids of Survival. Rollins explained that his contribution to the collaborative work with K.O.S. was his work.[371] I, too, have come to understand that group practice with young artists is my practice. Finkelpearl also talks about a discussion he had with collaborative photographer Wendy Ewald in 2003 while she was preparing for her exhibition at the Queens Museum of Art. She noted that even after more than three decades of work, she still sensed a profound misunderstanding about what she and her peers were up to. She went on to state that even after considerable critical writing on artistic cooperation and exchange, people still ask her if the collaborations are all she does or if she has time for her own work. On hearing this, Finkelpearl "cringed, remembering [his] own question to Tim Rollins."[372] Finkelpearl has since noted that he finds the way these two artists enjoy the collective nature of artmaking and presenting energising.[373]

As Levinson argues, mentoring is much more than an altruistic act and not just motivated by a sense of obligation.[374] For me, the mentoring relationship produces a reciprocal benefit and value, one I have grown to enjoy and need as much as any other member of tbC. I am not just responding to a perceived obligation. I, too, am benefitting, learning from and enjoying the shared tbC experience. After all, tbC is itself a collaborative artwork, and I have contributed to making it. While these comments are not central to the investigation around how the group dynamic empowers young artists at tbC, they pertain to the reciprocal value and benefit mentoring delivers member artists and how this supports the group's collaborative arts model.

[371] Tom Finkelpearl, *What We Made: Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), preface.
[372] Horton and Freire, *We Make the Road by Walking*, 128.
[373] Finkelpearl, *What We Made*, preface.
[374] Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, 253.

This chapter has closely examined three important working dynamics underpinning tbC's youth arts model. It has signposted the primary one, collaborative arts and joint authorship, for further discussion in the next chapter. To reiterate, the three key characteristics include non-hierarchical artist-run modes of governance and operation; a dedicated arts practice that reinforces the arts in youth arts and an informal arts pedagogy that supports a mutually beneficial creative learning environment. Although these three characteristics significantly support the young artist's development at tbC, the key characteristic, collaborative arts and joint authorship, is the primary impetus behind the building of artistic agency and status. The next chapter focuses on this primary characteristic.

Chapter Four

Together and In Chorus

"...everyone's voices are raised in unison in one common song.
That's the spirit of this group."[375]

This chapter examines the concept of collaboration and authorship, specifically focusing on how a united front approach to making and presenting art supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. It is presented in two parts.

The first part, **Together**, begins by defining and contextualising the concept of collaboration and distinguishing collaboration from participation. This is followed by a discussion about how relational and material practices work together at tbC and how this shapes the group's collaborative arts model. Acknowledging the debate around what qualifies as authentic collaboration and the criticisms sometimes levelled at the egalitarian presumptions about collaborative practice completes this section.

The second part, **In Chorus**, begins by defining and contextualising the concept of authorship. Included in this examination is a discussion around the different manifestations of authorship, focusing on the empowerment joint authorship delivers. This investigation's distinction between individual authorship in the group space and joint authorship and the tension surrounding the fact that this is a solo-authored inquiry about a collaborative practice completes this section.

[375] Tim Rollins, quoted in "Artist Tim Rollins Has Died at 62," by Benjamin Sutton, Hyperallergic, December 27, 2017, https://hyperallergic.com/419070/artist-tim-rollins-obituary/.

Comparative examples of other collaborative art practices further contextualise and distinguish tbC's model of group practice. Art collectives like Tim Rollins and K.O.S., Raqs Media Collective, Rialto Youth Project, Room 13 International, SenseLab, Black Mountain College, Artful Dodgers, Art Est. Art School and The Art Room are compared and contrasted. A key theatre example is also discussed: Philippine "Pina" Bausch and the Tanztheater Wuppertal dance company. The working practices of the choir and the orchestra further compliments this comparative analysis.[376]

Artists like Suzanne Lacy, Harrell Fletcher and Tania Bruguera offer comparative examples of individual artists working within relational contexts – often with young people.[377] This chapter discusses how these examples are distinguished from tbC because of how Lacy, Fletcher and Bruguera routinely claim the role of lead artist and how they also work predominantly with non-artists on one-off projects. This comparative analysis includes a discussion around the fact that even though these artistic practices embody the spirit of collaboration, they are more participatory than collaborative and more single artist-led than multi-artist-led.

Despite the varying distinctions between all of these examples and tbC, an extended analysis of them supports a fuller understanding of the group dynamics this investigation is theorising.

[376] Guise. Paul E, "Group Dynamics and the Small Choir: An Application of Select Models from Behavioural and Social Psychology," *The Phenomenon of Singing* vol. 2 (1999). https://journals.library.mun.ca/ojs/index.php/singing/article/view/665/579.
[377] These artists are often described, sometimes by themselves, as initiators and/or facilitators.

Together

Defining and contextualising collaboration

Over the past twenty-five years, there has been a proliferation of collaborative art practices worldwide, challenging what art critic Maria Lind refers to as traditional models of autonomous artmaking[378] and producing what Kester refers to as "new forms of artistic agency and identity."[379] Some artists working in groups choose to merge creative identities completely. Some choose to make distinctly individual work based on shared beliefs. Others engage in collective spaces to extend their skill base and access a wider range of materials and expertise.

Despite the proliferation of collaborative art, a perpetually shifting culture surrounds the practice, making the term difficult to define. Collaboration is nuanced, taking on different guises and emphasis depending on who is involved, where the practice is located, what the practice focuses on and why the practice exists. Ego's, hierarchies, blurred authorship, division of labour and multiple visions have and always will contest the parameters and structures of group work.[380]

For Lind, collaboration is "an umbrella term used to describe diverse working methods that require more than one participant."[381] Business and technology academics Mark Dodgson

[378] Maria Lind, "Complications: On Collaboration, Agency and Contemporary Art," *Public: New Communities*, no. 39 (Spring 2009): 53. This text expands on the author's "The Collaborative Turn" in *Taking the Matter into Common Hands* (Black Dog Publishing, 2005) and "The Future is Here." *Framework: The Finnish Art Review*, no. 6 (January 2007): 56-59.
[379] Kester, *The One and the Many*, abstract.
[380] Charnley, "Dissensus and the Politics of Collaborative Practice." A comment inspired by this source.
[381] Lind, "The Collaborative Turn," in *Taking the Matter into Common Hands: On Contemporary Art and Collaborative Practices*, eds. Johanna Billing, Maria Lind and Lars Nilsson (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 17.

and Roy Rothwell view the term as a description for "groups of two or more contributing resources and know-how to agreed complementary aims."[382] Several terms characterise collaboration within an artistic setting and include: relational, dialogic, participatory, socially engaged and site-specific. Artist and academic Mick Wilson notes that these forms of collaboration give prominence to collective authorship and action, social and participatory activities and the spectator.[383] Academic Vera John-Steiner lists acts of joint thinking, passionate conversation, emotional connection, shared struggle, artistic intention and the building of meaningful relationships as essential to the success of collaborative art practices.[384]

Collaborative art practices are often located in communities where social and cultural modes of interaction and engagement flourish. Activism thrives within these community-situated group practices, usually in response to local issues or social change agendas shared by community members. While tbC's activist goals around building artistic agency and status are supported by the social dynamics of communal and community-situated practice, the group's primary focus is on artmaking and presentation. As discussed in Chapter One, this distinguishes the group from traditional community arts programming, youth development practices and arts education.

Evidence of creative collaboration stretches back as far as the Ancient Era, between 3000 BC and AD 500. Historical documents show that around this time, a variety of skilled

[382] Mark Dodgson and Roy Rothwell, ed. *The Handbook of Industrial Innovation* (Cheltenham: Edward Edgar Publishing 1994), 1.
[383] Wilson, "Applied Experiments in Political Imagination," 32.
[384] Vera John-Steiner, *Creative Collaboration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), abstract; Paisley Livingston, "On Authorship and Collaboration," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 69, no. 2 (2011): abstract, http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1540-6245.2011.01463.x/abstract.

artisans collaborated in the building of important religious temples.[385] Ancient poets like Sappho, Aeschylus, Pindar, and Euripides also contributed their verse to a rapidly emerging theatre culture.[386]

The Medieval Period marked the transition from the Ancient Era to the Middle Ages and roughly spanned the fifth to the fifteenth-century. The centralized infrastructure of the Church dominated the production of art in the Middle Ages, with artists mainly working in monasteries or similar religious institutions.[387] This period saw artisans collaborating extensively on religious artefacts, especially alter pieces.[388] Toward the latter part of these middle ages, collective artistic practices within artist guilds began to form,[389] with young apprentice artists working cooperatively under the direction of a master artisan.[390] Medieval poets also often worked collectively, forming collaborative circles that promoted innovation and supported members as they mastered their art.[391]

The Modern Era marks the transition from the Middle Ages to modernity spanning the sixteenth-century to the current day. Collective artistic practices within artist guilds, studios, salons and *ateliers* were further established during this early modern period.[392] This period also saw the development of the printing press, typefaces and fonts that arranged literary

[385] Collette Hemingway, "Architecture in Ancient Greece," The Met, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History Essay, 2003, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/grarc/hd_grarc.htm.
[386] Michael Douma, curator. "Poetry through the Ages: The Business of Poetry," 2008 http://www.webexhibits.org/poetry.
[387] Ian Wallace, "The Evolution of the Artist's Studio, From Renaissance Bottega to Assembly Line," Artspace, Artspace LLC, 11 June 2014, www.artspace.com/magazine/art_101/art_market/the-evolution-of-the-artists-studio52374.
[388] Vivian B Mann, ed. *Uneasy Communion: Jews, Christians and Alterpieces of Medieval Spain* (New York: Giles, in Association with the Museum of Biblical Art, 2010), 227.
[389] Crawford, *Artistic Bedfellows*, ix.
[390] Arthur Efland, *A History of Art Education: Intellectual and Social Currents in Teaching the Visual Arts* (New York: Teacher's College of Columbia University, 1990).
[391] Peter Eubanks, "Review" of *The Virtuoso Circle: Competition, Collaboration and Complexity in Late Medieval French Poetry* by Adrian Armstrong, *French Forum* 40, no. 1 (2015): 155-56, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43954063.
[392] Crawford, *Artistic Bedfellows*, ix.

works into easily readable texts for mass production and dissemination.[393] I discuss how this development impacted our understanding of literary authorship in more detail shortly.

The early modern era also marked a significant period of linguistic and theatrical production, including the work of one of history's greatest playwrights, William Shakespeare. Academic Gabriel Egan argues that Shakespeare's plays are inherently collaborative, mainly "because drama itself is a collective artform."[394] Literary scholars like Seth Whidden and Heather Hirschfeld note that collaborative literature was common toward the late modern period and that multi-authored literary works were often published.[395] An apt example is the nineteenth-century collaboration of Alphonse Daudet and Paul Arène, who wrote the first five stories that eventually became *Lettres de mon moulin* (1869) under the joint signature Marie-Gaston.[396]The nineteenth-century also saw the emergence of artistic collaborations like The Nazarene Painters of Rome, forming in 1810 in response to the disappearance of the aforementioned studios, guilds, salons and *ateliers*.[397]

In the mid-1800s, a group of English painters, poets and critics called the Pre-Raphaelites began attracting attention. They formed as a secret society of young artists and a writer based in London in defiance of the Royal Academy's promotion of the ideal in the work of Raphael. Their principal themes were religious, but they were also inspired by literature and

[393] Robert Bringhurst, *The Elements of Typographic Style*, version 3 no. 1 (Canada: Hartley & Marks, 2005), 32.
[394] Gabriel Eagan, "What Is Not Collaborative about Early Modern Drama in Performance and Print?" in *Shakespeare Survey*, ed. Peter Holland, *Shakespeare Survey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 18, https://doi.org/10.1017/SSO9781107775572.002.
[395] Seth Whidden, ed. *Models of Collaboration in the Nineteenth Century French Literature: Several Authors, One Pen* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 5 and 89; Heather Hirschfeld, "Early Modern Collaboration and Theories of Authorship," *PMLA* 116, no. 3 (2001): 609-622, http://www.jstor.org/stable/463501.
[396] Seth Whidden, "On Poetry and Collaboration in the Nineteenth Century," *French Forum* 32, no. 1/2 (2007): 76, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40552448.
[397] Angelika Nollert, *Art of Life, and Life is Art*, in "Collective Creativity" catalogue (Kassel: Kunsthalle Fridericianum, 2005). Also noted in Lind "Complications" 53.

poetic concepts like love and death and the social problems of the day.[398] Key members included William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris. The late 1800s saw a group of young artists called the Anonymous Society of Painters, Sculptors and Printmakers launch the Impressionist movement. Their work was initially criticised for its unfinished, sketch-like appearance; however, more progressive writers praised them for their depiction of modern life.[399] Members included Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Camille Pissarro and Edgar Degas.

During the early 1900s, artists continued to work in collective and social ways. One of the period's most notable collective manifestations was the Dada group of artists. Dada was an art movement formed during the First World War in Zurich as an adverse reaction to the horrors of conflict. Dada's leading artists included Hans (Jean) Arp, Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia and Kurt Schwitters. Around the same time, a German school of art, design and architecture called The Bauhaus was founded by Walter Gropius in response to a growing desire to form art academies and closer cooperation between the practice of fine and applied art[400] and architecture. The Surrealist movement, again emerging around the same time, engaged a group of artists and writers such as André Breton (founder), Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Frida Kahlo, Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, Paul Éluard and Pierre Reverdy in experiments around the subconscious imagination. Surrealists would regularly meet in cafes, often playing collaborative word games like *consequences*

[398] "Pre-Raphaelite," The Tate - Art Terms, accessed August 26, 2019, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/pre-raphaelite#:~:text=Inspired%20by%20the%20theories%20of,dealing%20with%20love%20and%20death.
[399] Margaret Samu, "Impressionism: Art and Modernity," in *The Met Museum, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), published online, October 2004, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/imml/hd_imml.htm.
[400] Joanne Hoven Stohs, "Intrinsic Motivation and Sustained Art Activity Among Male Fine and Applied Artists," *Creativity Research Journal* 5, no. 3 (1992): 245-252, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10400419209534438. Fine art is characterised by a freely manifesting, intrinsic desire and motivation to create. Applied art is characterised by external, more technical qualities that are more deliberately put into action.

and *exquisite corpse*, in which players took turns writing phrases and drawing pictures that eventually formed absurd literary and visual stories.[401] Surrealism became an international movement widely influencing art, literature and cinema, as well as social attitudes and behaviour.

Around the mid-1900s, a collection of American painters began to share an interest in using abstraction to convey strong emotional or expressive content. This experimentation became known as the Abstract-Expressionist movement. Members included Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso and Wassily Kandinsky. Again, these artists regularly met in cafes and taverns, collectively discussing and sharing the knowledge found within their creative practices. Although the examples from these times broadly characterise groups of individual artists congregating, the sharing of creative ideas, practices and stories is a form of collaboration.

Even though artists have assembled like this for centuries, a prominent perception of the artist as a lone genius has persisted. This romanticised notion continued right up until the 1960s and 70s. However, since the 1960s, the enduring and widespread misunderstanding of the artist as an autonomous genius creating work in isolation from the rest of the community[402] has been significantly challenged.[403] Relational, social, communal and participatory practices have affirmed themselves as contemporary modes of making and presenting art. Artist and historian Holly Crawford argues that today collaboration is both "a mode of production and a key trajectory in art."[404]

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[401] André Breton, "Breton Remembers," Exhibition Catalogue, *Le Cadavre Exquis: Son Exaltation*, La Dragonne (Paris: Galerie Nina Dausset, October 7–30, 1948).
[402] Laura Meyer, "Exhibition: A Studio of Their Own" The Legacy of the Fresno Feminist Experiment, published 2009, http://www.astudiooftheirown.org/.
[403] Judith Stein. "Collaboration," in *The Power of Feminist Art: The American Movement of the 1970s, History and Impact*, eds. Norma Broude, Mary D. Garrard, and Judith K. Brodsky (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1994), 226-245.
[404] Holly Crawford, ed. *Artistic Bedfellows: Histories, Theories and Conversations in Collaborative Art Practices* (Maryland: University Press of America, 2008), 93.

The late 1900s saw the proliferation of more communal artistic collaborations. One of the most notable examples is the pioneering performance art duo Marina Abramovic and Ulay. Together, these two artists pushed performance and conceptual art limits, making radical performative works for the gallery.[405] Another notable example is the Guerrilla Girls, "an anonymous group of feminist artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism within the art world."[406] The group was formed in New York City in 1985 with the "mission of bringing gender and racial inequality into focus within the greater arts community."[407]

The Fresno Feminist Art Program is another excellent example of late-twentieth-century artistic collaboration. This collaboration emerged from the second wave feminist movement on the West coast of America and is known for its pioneering feminist art practices.[408] Like young people, women were (and arguably still are) a marginalised group within dominant art culture. The Fresno Feminist Art Program is an example of a collaborative arts project that not only challenged the outdated notion of the lone artist/genius but also challenged pervasive sexism within the artworld. The Program engaged artists in collective conversations about the lack of agency and status for female artists in the artworld, the feminisation of the artworld, gender dynamics and the contemporary female experience. The artworks made by the group came directly from these conversational sessions and the alternative space these female artists had created. The group was established by feminist artists Judy Chicago and Faith Wilding in 1970 and engaged around fifteen female artists at Fresno State College. The experiment aimed to champion agency and status for women artists in a male-dominated field by creating a space where female artists could flourish.

[405] Marina Abramovic and Ulay collaborated from 1976 to 1988. Also see, The Tate, Art and Artists, "Performance Art," accessed August 26, 2019, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/performance-art.
[406] The Tate, Art and Artists, "Guerrilla Girls," accessed August 26, 2019. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/guerrilla-girls-6858.
[407] Ibid.
[408] Second-wave feminism began in the 1960s and lasted for a couple of decades.

Together, Chicago, Wilding and fifteen female students set up a radical art class outside of the curriculum at the Fresno State College, taking the class off-campus. All were involved in creating this alternative space and the artworks that emerged. The class has since been referred to as a radical experiment in self-determination, responsible for cultivating what arts writers Tess Thackara and Issac Kaplan refer to as a female culture in art.[409] A year later, Miriam Shapiro (another pioneering feminist artist) invited The Fresno Feminist Art Program to set up at the California Institute of the Arts, where it spent another year and went on to inspire several other experimental practices and projects.

This investigation sees strong parallels between this feminist art project/movement and tbC's own *modus operandi* and arts industry experiences, especially the way the Fresno Feminist Art Program sought to emancipate women artists. tbC seeks similar agency and status for young artists. Similarities between the two projects include the prejudicial experiences young artists encounter (associated with their age, as opposed to gender), the co-development of an independent and self-directed arts space and an engagement in deep dialogue from which collective work emerges. Like the Fresno feminist artists, young artists at tbC are engaging in self-expression as a form of self-empowerment. This self-expression is amplified by what Bishop describes as the "empowering creativity of collective action and shared ideas."[410]

The feminist writer's experience represents another particularly successful example of collaborative arts action around agency and status. Like young artists, who suffer from prejudices associated with their age and limited biographies, women writers have suffered

[409] Tess Thackara and Issac Kaplan, "How Judy Chicago Pioneered the First Feminist Art Program," 2017, in *The Artsy Podcast* no.67, 20:42, Soundcloud, https://soundcloud.com/artsypodcast/no-67-how-judy-chicago-pioneered-the-first-feminist-art-program.
[410] Bishop, *Participation,* 179.

from an anxiety of authorship caused by gendered value judgements within literary circles and the general public. In response, feminist authors like Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar critique feminist literary theory in a way that emphasises an equality of intelligence in all writers. [411] Like Gilbert and Gubar, this research argues that just as there is no logical reason why female writers (and artists) should be judged differently from male writers (and artists), there is no logical reason why young artists should be judged differently from older artists. The argument being that if we emphasise what Ranciere refers to as an "equality of intelligence"[412] and talent in all artists, and if given the same opportunities as more senior artists, young artists can build genuine artistic agency and status. Rancière's philosophical stance that everyone has the capacity for an equality of intelligence rather than an inequality of knowledge; and that equality should be a presupposition rather than a goal; a practice rather than a reward situated firmly in some distant future[413] further supports tbC's conviction that young artists' limited biographies shouldn't prejudice them.

While the commonly accepted definition of talent is a natural aptitude or skill, a range of socio-political and cultural factors complicate this common understanding, which, as academics Eva Gallardo-Gallardo, Micky Dries and Tomas González attest, creates ongoing confusion.[414] In their writings, Gallardo-Gallard, Dries and González examine age-old questions, such as, "does talent refer to people (subject) or the characteristics of people (object)? Is talent more about performance, potential, competence, or commitment? And is talent a natural ability, or does it relate more to mastery through practice?"[415] In trying to

[411] Sandra M Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth Century Literary Imagination* (Connecticut: Yale University, 2000.). A comment inspired by this source.
[412] Ranciere, *The Ignorant School Master: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation,* trans. Kristin Ross (California: Stanford University Press, 1991), xxii.
[413] Ibid.
[414] Eva Gallardo-Gallardo, Micky Dries and Tomas González, "What is the Meaning of 'Talent' in the World of Work?" *Human Resources Management Review* 23 (2013): 290.
[415] Ibid, 291.

answer these questions, these writers note that even after an in-depth historical review of the literature surrounding the concept of talent, there is a fundamental lack of consensus around its meaning.[416] While Gallardo-Gallard, Dries and González specifically question the meaning of talent from an organisational perspective, their writing speaks to more universal difficulties in theorising the concept. In troubling the concept, myself, a definitive answer to the question of what talent is remains elusive. However, the way in which tbC prefers to handle the complex understanding and attribution of talent is to view the artistic merit of its young member artists through an aesthetic lens rather than a biographical one. In the previous chapter, I presented the concept of artistic merit as a form of creative expression that attributes a perceived value to a work of art via personifications of beauty, originality and intelligence. Artistic qualities that evoke esteem,[417] that are deemed visually, intellectually and emotionally compelling and that draw the viewer in.[418] Many of the works tbC artists have made together have been presented to audiences who have called them beautiful, emotional, original, intelligent, compelling – even radical.[419] tbC's artworks evoke esteem and draw viewers in, something my fellow collaborating artists and I have personally experienced during our regular presentation of artworks.

Just as women in the 1960s, 70s and 80s became politicized via the feminist movement, contemporary youths are arguably forming a similar collective manifestation, which is often expressed in the widespread discontent young people feel about social and cultural inequities and the state of the environment. One could argue that we are seeing a generation of politicized youth who are establishing new frontiers for politically (socially and creatively)

[416] Ibid, 297.
[417] Ostling, "An Evaluation of Compositions for Wind Band, 278.
[418] Esslinger, "Digital Imaging in the Visual Arts," 2.
[419] For example, Academic Lachlan MacDowall, personal comment connecting tbC's "punk" approach to making and presenting art to radical arts practice, 2014.

engaged young people.[420] From an artistic viewpoint, we see British musical artists Rat Boy,[421] Declan Mckenna, Jorja Smith and young Indigenous Australian rap artist Baker Boy making music about some of the significant social issues of their day, including ASBOS (Antisocial Behaviour Orders), the 'Black Lives Matter' global activist movement, contemporary religious issues, irresponsible media reporting, stereotypes about the LGBTQ+ community and the politics surrounding indigenous community services. Declan McKenna believes that young people today aren't afraid to make their voices heard and are trying to make changes in the world, especially through art and music.[422] Jorja Smith writes and sings about the police prejudices she's witnessed, especially directed at her black male friends.[423] Baker Boy is keen to present and preserve his native language and Indigenous culture via his rap lyrics.[424]

Young New York City multimedia artist and body-positive photographer Jheyda McGarrell also believes that artistic practice can influence and affect the political climate, asserting that "art is one of the most powerful weapons we have against violence perpetuated by media and the government."[425] McGarrell collaborates with other young artists via the Art Hoe Collective she co-founded in 2015 – an artist-run initiative that provides a safe space for and showcases the art of young creatives of colour. Like McGarrell, young Taungurung artist

[420] Hannah J. Davies, "Youth in Revolt: Is 2016 A New Dawn for Young, Politicized Musicians?," *The Guardian News and Media Limited*, last modified September 16, 2016, 21:00 AEST, https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2016/sep/16/declan-mckenna-jorja-smith-rat-boy.
[421] Jordan Cardy, English musician born 1996. Rat Boy has created a feverish youth cult via his rap lyrics. See, Kevin Perry, "He Sings About Things Everyone Our Age Feels', How Rat Boy Created a Feverish Youth Cult," *The Guardian News and Media Limited, EG*, last modified September 15, 2017, 15:00 AEST, https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/sep/15/he-sings-about-things-everyone-our-age-feels-how-rat-boy-created-a-feverish-youth-cult.
[422] Davies, "Youth in Revolt."
[423] Kathleen Johnston, "Jorja Smith: 'I Need To Be Doing What I love Without Someone Else Dictating Me'", *GQ Magazine*, October 15, 2018, https://www.gq-magazine.co.uk/article/jorja-smith-interview-2018.
[424] Jarni Blakkarly, "Danzel Baker aka Baker Boy is Rapping in Yolngu Matha Language." *SBS Estonian*, February 1, 2018, https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/danzel-baker-aka-baker-boy-is-rapping-in-yolngu-matha-language.
[425] Jack Mills, "The Activists" *Dazed Magazine*, February 27, 2017, https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/34883/1/the-activists.

Kate (the tbC member I mentioned earlier) has recently formed her own art collective, This Mob, for emerging Indigenous artists to participate in. This Mob's collaborative work focuses on the decolonisation of Melbourne's art scene, which Kate hopes will boost the confidence of local artists and prepare them for artworld participation, as well as promoting the idea that Indigenous artists are vital players in Australia's contemporary art scene.[426] While social and cultural issues are an important part of This Mob's operation, like tbC, its artistic practice is centred around aesthetic processes and outcomes. Other tbC artists express a range of political energies and viewpoints and an emerging collective social consciousness, especially around gender, feminism, the environment and artworld engagement and access. Young tbC artist Zak is an example of an environmentally aware young creative making art about environmental conservation and sustainability.[427]

A 2017 report titled, *Making Art Work: A Summary and Response by the Australia Council for the Arts* corroborates the contention that there is a political and collective uprising of young creatives by stating that:

"There are new types of artist-run initiatives working outside traditional art forms, social enterprises that blur commercial and non-profit boundaries, as well as international and online work, [and that] some young Australians in the arts are applying their skills in new ways and reinventing the definition of practicing professional artist."[428]

This reporting reflects and reinforces the arts action around artistic agency and status practiced at tbC and theorised within this research-creation.

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[426] "Kate ten Buuren," *Footscray Community Arts Centre*, last modified 2020, https://footscrayarts.com/profile/kate-ten-buuren/.

[427] It's important to note here that making art about social and cultural issues differs from being confined to socio-cultural youth engagement and/or more formal arts educational spaces. Social aesthetics is an artistic practice, medium and material and will be discussed in more detail shortly.

[428] Australia Council for the Arts, *Making Art Work: A Summary and Response by the Australia Council for the Arts*, last modified November 12, 2017, 11, https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/making-art-work/. Also see, Grace McQuilten, et. al, *Impact and Sustainability in Art Based Social Enterprises* Melbourne Social Equity Institute, University of Melbourne, 2015: 11, http://www.thesocialstudio.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/MSEI-Impact-and-Sustainabilityin-Art-Based-Social-Enterprises.pdf

Distinguishing collaboration from participation

In order to theorise tbC's model of group practice, it's important to unpack the concept of participation. There are many definitions and interpretations of the term participation, some more positive than others. A range of presumptions and prejudices exist, especially regarding the quality and degree of participation within group practices.

I draw on Sherry Arnstein's writing around the subject to help clarify the term and its relationship to this investigation. Arnstein authored the highly influential 1969 journal article *Ladder of Citizen Participation*,[429] where she describes a spectrum of participation, with some forms being more inclusive and empowering than others. The article emphasises the critical difference between going through the empty ritual of participation and having real power to affect a participatory process.[430]

There are eight rungs on Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation. They include forms of participation that are defined by non-participation (characterised by manipulation and therapy), degrees of tokenistic participation (characterised by informing, consultation and placation) and degrees of citizen power (characterised by partnership, delegated power and citizen control).[431] For Arnstein, the most equal and empowering level is citizen control. tbC's collaborative practice and joint authorship model arguably places the group high on Arnstein's ladder of participation, as the collective space actively engages members in citizen control.

[429] Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation,"
[430] Ibid., 216.
[431] Ibid., 217.

Helguera describes a similar spectrum of participation but within the context of the spectator as participant.[432] I will examine this conceptualisation within Chapter Five as part of *The Art of Conversation (Digital)* case study analysis. *The Art of Conversation (Digital)* directly engages the spectator in the making of a tbC artwork. This discussion will unpack how tbC extends its citizen control to artistic collaborations involving the general public and how this again amplifies what Bishop refers to as the "empowering creativity of collective action and shared ideas."[433]

Suzanne Lacy's social, participatory and collective artmaking practices have also helped me characterise and distinguish tbC's collaborative practice model. Lacy's work includes installation, video and large-scale performances focusing on social themes and urban issues. Her artistic status in these works is that of a lead artist or facilitator. Two key factors distinguish tbC's collaborative arts model from Lacy's more participatory model. One, the young people Lacy engages with to make art are not necessarily artists, nor are they part of an ongoing group practice. They are generally non-artists and invited to participate in a one-off or short-lived artistic project (albeit in an inclusive and highly participatory way). At tbC, all members are artists and practice together for extended periods. Two, tbC's practice is not about a solo artist (me) engaging participants in creative projects. tbC is multi-artist-led and engages a group of artists in co-creation and joint authorship. I am not an arts facilitator or the only lead artist at tbC. Lacy is more interested than I am in retaining a sense of herself as the lead artist in her projects. I am more interested in the empowerment that comes from assigning a group identity and group authorship to the artworks tbC makes. I am also more interested in equally sharing the artistic agency and status this practice delivers.

[432] Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*, 14-15.
[433] Bishop, *Participation*, 179.

This comparative analysis acknowledges that Lacy designs projects that empower young people and that she affords them real status within the artmaking process. Lacy, Annice Jacoby and Chris Johnson's *The Roof is on Fire*[434] is an excellent example of an artistic project that engages the meaningful participation of young people in the making of an artwork. However, at tbC, this kind of project would have emerged from durational studio practice. It would have been collaboratively created with and by young artist members from the idea stage to the creative execution of the idea. At tbC, artists of all ages work alongside each other and together for extended periods (sometimes years). While *The Roof is on Fire* was part of a decade-long engagement with youth living in Oakland, California, called *The Oakland Projects (1991-2001);* the project was characterised by a series of separate socially engaged artworks that different young people participated in as opposed to a durational collaboration involving long-term members.

Tania Bruguera's installation and performance artmaking practices have also helped me characterise and distinguish tbC's collaborative arts model. Bruguera is a politically motivated Cuban artist exploring the relationship between art, activism and social change in works that engage participants in collectively examining the social effects of political and economic power. Bruguera defines herself as an initiator rather than an author, creating aesthetic models for others to use and adapt. She often collaborates with institutions and individuals where the full realization of her artwork occurs as others adopt and perpetuate it.[435] However, I regard Bruguera (as I do Lacy) as an individual artist working in the

[434] Suzzanne Lacy, "The Roof is on fire 1993-94," Suzanne Lacy, accessed June 3, 2018, https://www.suzannelacy.com/the-oakland-projects/#:~:text=Suzanne%20Lacy%2C%20Annice%20Jacoby%2C%20and,1000%20Oakland%20residents%20listening%20in. A participatory arts project featuring 220 public high school students in unscripted and unedited conversations on family, sexuality, drugs, culture, education, and the future as they sat in 100 cars parked on a rooftop garage with over 1000 Oakland residents listening in.
[435] "Tania Bruguera," Arts 21, accessed October 21, 2019, https://art21.org/artist/tania-bruguera/.

collective space, based on the fact that the people she invites into her collaborations are not necessarily artists and also because she brings an already conceived idea to an institution or group of people to explore under her direction.

tbC's practice of sharing in the conception and creative development of an artwork is not unlike that found in the theatre, choir, orchestra and dance worlds, where direction and governance are often characterised by what theatre writer and director Robert Cohen refers to as an entangled collaborative process.[436] Although still more hierarchical than tbC's model of governance and practice, the theatre, choir, orchestra, and dance worlds provide useful comparative analysis.

A particularly good example of this entangled collaboration can be found in the working model of the late German dancer Philippine 'Pina' Bausch. Bausch developed a collaborative approach to choreographing[437] that significantly influenced the field of modern dance from the 1970s onwards. She and her dancers created the company Tanztheater Wuppertal, which combines dance and theatrical methods of stage performance.[438] Bausch encouraged a practice where before any piece was rehearsed, she would ask questions of all her dancers. She regarded their views highly and wanted to engage with their interpretations of the work to come. She took notes and asked her dancers to do the same. This collaborative working method aimed to engage the cast in developing and understanding a work through dialogue. Bausch saw the dialogical process as a key mode of production and one that elevated a participatory practice into a much more collaborative one.

[436] Robert Cohen, *Working Together in Theatre*, 205.
[437] Vera Stegmann, "Brechtian Traces in Pina Bausch's Choreographic and Cinematic Work," *Language and the Scientific Imagination, The 11th International Conference of ISSEI, Language Centre University of Helsinki, Finland* (Pennsylvania: Lehigh University, 2008), 3, https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/15242/78_Stegmann.pdf.
[438] Dave Itzkoff, "Pina Bausch Dies" *Arts Beat, New York Times Blog*, June 30, 2009, https://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/06/30/pina-bausch-dies/.

Raimund Hoghe, a dance-dramaturg with Tanztheater Wuppertal, writes about the group's creative and often exhausting collaborative working methods, highlighting the "bit by bit, from the inside out" [439] inductive, explorative and developmental process Bausch pioneered. In practice, this collaborative process went beyond asking questions – the entire cast contributed to the development of a work through ongoing dialogue. Performing arts educator Thomas Kampe describes this as a testing and fine-tuning process that actively involved the dancers in considering the work in relation to one another.[440] Bausch's complex collaborative approach to dance theatre-making and her other collaborations with musical directors and dancers has become what Hogue now refers to as a foundational working method within the field of collaborative theatre-making and contemporary dance.[441]

The choir and the orchestra also strongly symbolise something more than just participation. Choir-making is an inherently collective and shared experience that sees the chorister developing important personal and musical collaborative skills.[442] The same could be said for the ensemble characteristics of the orchestra. Being a member of a choir or an orchestra requires a durational joint effort, one that sees choristers and musicians building critical relationships between ensemble members over extended periods to produce unified and extra-ordinary performances. Despite perceptions that the conductor leads the choir or the orchestra, the 'in unison' effort is an intrinsic part of a powerful choral or orchestral experience.

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[439] Raimund Hoghe, *Bandoneon (1981) Working with Pina Bausch*, trans. Penny Black (London: Oberon Books, 2017), 35.
[440]Thomas Kampe, "Book Review" *Bandoneon, Working with Pina Bausch*, by Raimund Hoghe with photography by Ulli Weiss," ed. Katalin Trencsény, trans. Penny Black (London: Oberon Books, 2016), in *Performance Paradigm: A Journal of Performance and Contemporary Culture: Performance, Choreography and the Gallery* 13 (2017): 233, https://www.performanceparadigm.net/index.php/journal/article/view/205/202.
[441] Raimund Hoghe, *Bandoneon*, 32.
[442] "Collaboration in Choir," *Calgary Children's Choir*, last modified January 9, 2017, https://calgarychildrenschoir.com/collaboration-in-choir/.

Collaborative artist, Tim Rollins of Tim Rollins and K.O.S., sang with a gospel choir in New York City (which I was lucky to experience). During a personal conversation he and I had at the time, he noted that his collaboration with the K.O.S. was contingent on a similar joint effort.[443]

Interestingly, even when a young singer or musician is identifiable within a choir or an orchestra, the status of that singer or musician is generally measured by the quality, beauty and resonance of their voice or the way they play their instrument, not their age or biography. In fact, in my experience, audiences are often positively in awe of the very young singer or musician, an awe that is paradoxically heightened by their age. I would also argue that the skill and talent of the young actor and dancer are measured in a similarly positive way. This unreserved respect for musical and performative skill and talent delivers the young chorister, musician, actor and dancer significant artistic agency and status. As a side note, even when a solo singer, musician, actor or dancer is highlighted during a choral, musical, theatre or dance performance, this individual focus still sits within the group dynamic and results in the development of both solo and collective agency and status. I examine this and the idea that collaborative practice need not be at the expense of the individual artists' development in the sub-sections that follow.

In contrast to the above comments regarding the performing arts sector, my experience with the visual and experimental arts sector reveals that even when a young visual or experimental artist shows talent and makes works of artistic merit, they have less access to presentation opportunities and, therefore, fewer chances to build artistic agency and status. Access to art museums and galleries is tightly controlled. Young visual and experimental artists are

[443] In conversation with Tim Rollins, New York City, 2010.

routinely denied presentation opportunities within these spaces. As CEO of the pioneering Tokyo art gallery Whitestone, Koei Shiraishi confirms, art museums and galleries tend to support more experienced and prominent artists and that this is a trend that becomes more pronounced with higher profile spaces and institutions.[444] He further argues that denying young artists access to art museums and galleries is counterproductive as many of these young artists possess unique perspectives and expressions that will eventually expand the art market and contribute new chapters to its history.[445] This impediment arguably exists because, unlike performing art practices, visual and experimental artists don't routinely operate within ensemble environments like that found in the choir, orchestra, theatre or dance world. There is significant power and momentum in ensemble practices, something young choristers, musicians, actors and dancers understand and naturally benefit from.

The artist-run initiative movement (predominantly the contemporary domain of visual and experimental artists) has arguably discovered the power and momentum of ensemble practice and presentation – so has tbC. Member artists regularly express during studio time their belief that group practice is largely responsible for the artistic agency and status they enjoy and that they could not have built the same kind of agency and status alone, or certainly not as quickly as they have together at tbC. The dialogue that arises during studio artmaking at tbC attests to the collaborative empowerment of group practice and the argument that making and presenting art together leverages young artists a fuller artistic experience. This is especially evident in the dialogue Kyle, Sonya and Josiah and Georgia contributed to the making of *The Art of Conversation* projects.

[444] Koei Shiraishi, *Space and Memory*, *Hong Kong* and *Dimensions*, *Tokyo*,(Whitestone Gallery, 27 August, 2021), accessed 20 February 2022. https://www.whitestone-gallery.com/blogs/online-exhibitions/young-artist.
[445] Ibid.

How relational and material practices work together at tbC

Traditional aesthetics focus on the beautiful object, with artistic value often attributed to ornamental, physical qualities. Contemporary understandings of art and beauty are broader. They include practices and processes that artist Kjell Caminha describes as outside traditional spaces of art production and distribution, such as the studio, gallery, museum, public park or city square.[446] Today, the artworld embraces new forms of community-based, experiential, social, digital and performative practices and processes. This is extending the boundaries of what we call art.

Relational aesthetics is an example of this alternative artistic expression and appreciation. Nicolas Bourriaud coined the term in the early 1990s to describe an aesthetic theory that "judg[es] artworks on the basis of the inter-human relations they represent, produce or prompt."[447] In his seminal book published in 1998 titled *Relational Aesthetics*, Bourriaud describes this philosophy as "[a] set of practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space."[448] For Bourriaud, relational aesthetics resists the presentation of imaginary and utopian realities,[449] resulting in artistic outcomes that represent actual ways of living and models of action within the existing real.[450] For example, Bourriaud regards artist Rirkrit Tiravanija's pop-up kitchen[451] (which involved visitors sharing a meal and engaging in conversation) and Félix González-Torres' pile of free candy

[446] Kjell Caminha et.al *Public Art Research Report*: *A Report on the Current State of Research on Public Art in the Nordic Countries and in a Wider International Context* (Sweden: Swedish Public Art Agency, 2018), 15. https://statenskonstrad.se/app/uploads/2019/03/Public_Art_Research_Report_2018.pdf.
[447] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland (France: Les presse du reel, 1998), 112.
[448] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 113.
[449] Ibid.
[450] Ibid.
[451] *Untitled (free)*, 1992.

in the corner of a gallery as artworks.[452] He argues that instead of equating aesthetic value with traditional notions of beauty, these socially imbued creations ask us to consider the work of art not as the dish served up or the piece of free candy but as the various modes of participation, interaction, exchange and relations that such work entails.

Socially engaged art (or social practice as it is often called), developed as part of the expanding field of relational aesthetics and is distinguished by what art historian Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen refers to as "artworks that feature the 'experience' of their own creation as a central element."[453] Both philosophies have been inspired and informed by social movements and modes of collaborative practice and collective agency since the 1960s and are distinguished from traditional aesthetics by the fact that building relationships and social interaction are, at some level, the art.[454]

Academic Neil Mulholland notes that socially engaged art has its roots in community-based, artist-led initiatives[455] where shared and social activities and dialogue form the basis of artistic practice and expression. Helguera argues that the emergence of performance and installation art has also impacted the development of the social life of art as these forms of creative practice focus on process, engagement and site-specificity.[456] So too has spirited forms of activism, especially feminism and the institutional critique.[457]

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[452] *Untitled, (Portrait of Ross in L.A.),* 1991.
[453] Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen, "A Note on Socially Engaged Art Criticism," in *Field, A Journal of Socially Engaged Art Criticism* 6, (2017: 2), http://field-journal.com/issue-6/a-note-on-socially-engaged-art-criticism.
[454] Finkelpearle, *What We Made*; Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, (New York: Verso Books, 2012); Aastha Chauhan, "Blurred Lines: Art, Activism, Popular Culture and Social change," *Tate Research Publication*, published Autumn 2015, https://www.tate.org.uk/research/research-centres/tate-research-centre-learning/working-papers/blurred-lines.
[455] Neil Mulholland, "Awkward Relations," in *Tate Papers* no. 2 (Autumn, 2004): 3, https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/02/awkward-relations.
[456] Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*, 2
[457] Institutional Critique is the systematic inquiry into the workings of art institutions, such as galleries and museums, and is most associated with the work of artists like Michael Asher, Marcel Broodthaers, Daniel Buren, Andrea Fraser, John Knight, Adrian Piper, Fred Wilson, and Hans Haacke and the scholarship of Alexander Alberro, Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, Birgit Pelzer, and Anne Rorimer.

Feminist and conceptual art practices are challenging the social discrimination and cultural confinement brought about by art institutions and restricted definitions of the artefact.[458] These radical art practices and the ongoing experimentation with relational and socially engaged art are producing vital forms of creative expression within the artworld and the arts academy.

Aside from Bourriaud, several other key academics and practitioners have advanced the concept of relational aesthetics and socially engaged arts practice. They include Joseph Beuys, Grant Kester, Claire Bishop, Alan Kaprow, Lucy Lippard, Miwon Kwon, Maria Lind, Shannon Jackson, Claire Doherty, Hal Foster, Rick Lowe, Jeremy Deller, Wochenklausur, Matthew Barney, Francis Alÿs, Phil Collins, Thomas Hirschhorn, Nato Thompson and Harrell Fletcher. Bishop reminds us, however, that many of these artists are established and commercially successful figures and still make work for the gallery,[459] yet what links them is a belief in the creativity of socially engaged art and the empowerment that comes from collective action and shared ideas.[460]

Kester[461] and Bishop's[462] lively dialogue and debate around social practice has specifically helped me contextualise and theorise tbC's form of socially engaged arts practice. For Kester, socially engaged practices prioritise the process of making art over object production

[458] Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artist' Writing* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2011). A comment inspired by this source.
[459] Bishop, "The Social Turn," 179.
[460]Bishop, *Participation*, 179.
[461] Art theorist Grant Kester describes dialogical art as a discursive aesthetic based on dialogical exchange and the social and relational experiences such exchange creates. See Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Kester, "Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially Engaged Art," in *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, ed. Zoya Kocur and Simon Leung, (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 153-165.
[462] Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *CUNY Academic Works* 110 (2004): 51-80, https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1095&context=gc_pubs; Bishop, "The Social Turn;" Bishop, *Participation*; Bishop, *Artificial Hells*.

and technical proficiency. This philosophy positions what academic Sarah Smith paraphrases as the importance of social interaction and community engagement over artistic autonomy.[463] Kester argues that socially engaged forms of art expose unique and different ways of being together and that socially engaged art has its own verifiable aesthetic and historical art framework.[464] He believes that socially engaged practices have redefined and renegotiated notions of contemporary art and mobilized new forms of agency and identity.[465]

While social engagement is an important part of tbC's community-situated communal space, members value traditional aesthetics as much as they value social interaction. tbC artists understand that aesthetics can be culturally, socially and dialogically constructed and that these constructions are valid art practices and outcomes in their own right. They also appreciate the welcoming, accessible nature and activist power found within socially engaged spaces and practices. Yet this interest and appreciation doesn't confine the group to a rigid focus on such. tbC's artmaking also includes the production of material artworks. As a result, the group's model of practice and this research around it connects more strongly to Bishop's contention that social practices can coexist with more traditional aesthetic ones.[466]

[463]Sarah E. K. Smith, "Working in the Space Between: Understanding Collaboration in Contemporary Artistic Practice," Review of *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*, by Grant H. Kester, *Reviews in Cultural Theory* 3, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 35-36. http://reviewsinculture.com/wp-content/uploads/legacy/reviews/97-RCT322012SmithKester.pdf.

[464] Bolt Rasmussen, "A Note on Socially Engaged Art Criticism."

[465] Kester, *The One and the Many*, abstract.

[466] Bishop, "The Social Turn," 181. While much of the writing around what Bishop calls the "social turn"[466] in art has focused on practices throughout America, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, some innovative examples of the practice also come out of greater Asia. Examples include India's Raqs Media Collective and Indonesia's Ruangrupa; Malaysian initiatives like Rakan Mantin, Arts-ED and Buku Jalanan; and Japan's Beppu Project, Toride Art Project, Cocoroom (Osaka) and Tokyo Art Research Lab. While socially engaged arts projects grow slowly in Singapore, they are regarded with importance. Examples include organizations like Dramabox, Participate in Design, Arts Fission Company and Very Special Arts. The intermediary organization ArtsWok Collaborative in Singapore plays a much-needed role, negotiating the boundaries and policies for socially engaged artists and providing capacity building and dialogical platforms for their development.

While Bishop believes in the social life of art, she argues that a social arts practice need not be at the expense of the traditional aesthetic or artistic autonomy.[467] Her more flexible understanding of socially engaged arts and the idea that the pursuit of more traditional aesthetic processes and outcomes can be accommodated within social practices is more relevant to the discussion around tbC's practice model. While this research acknowledges the underlying tension within the field, between "artistic autonomy and social embeddedness,"[468] tbC views its socially engaged culture and interest in traditional aesthetic goals as compatible. Like Bishop, this investigation argues that socially engaged art can "fuse social reality with a carefully calculated artifice."[469] The materials and mediums tbC engages with include paint, paper, music, print, film, cameras, prose, dialogue, performance, public space and technology.

Harrell Fletcher is a good example of a socially engaged artist who also engages in material practices. Fletcher's artmaking focuses on a combination of studio practice, gallery presentation and more socially engaged and experiential work. His practices blur the lines between social engagement, artistic autonomy, community and mainstream cultural production. Fletcher strives to empower people otherwise not afforded an artistic profile and status within his practice. In 2010 in *The Sound We Make Together (Melbourne)*, Fletcher invited individuals and community groups across Melbourne to collaborate in the development of an exhibition for the National Gallery of Victoria. This project successfully connected the community, artists and the art establishment.[470]

[467] Ibid., 180.
[468] Bret Schneider and Omair Hussain, "An interview with Hal Foster," *The Platypus Affiliated Society, Platypus Review 22* (April 2010): 2, http://platypus1917.org/2010/04/08/an-interview-with-hal-foster/.
[469] Bishop, "The Social Turn," 183.
[470] Harrell Fletcher, *The Sound We Make Together (Melbourne),* (Australia: The Council of Trustees of The National Gallery of Victoria, 2010), 2.

Fletcher's action-based creative goals resonates with the way tbC creatively challenges artworld boundaries with and on behalf of young artists. However, while tbC courts community and artworld engagement and attention, the difference between tbC and Fletcher is that Fletcher is (like Lacy and Bruguera) a lead artist, generally working with non-artists on one-off predetermined projects. Despite these differences, the way Fletcher connects communities and community artists to the artworld and the way he engages a combination of social and material art practices directly relates to this research around a collaborative arts practice that supports the building of artistic agency and status.

tbC's combined social and material modes of practice see members engaging in a range of rich and rewarding relational and sensory practices. Again, while tbC artists appreciate the group's accessible, community-based location and while many of the group's works are based around dialogue, shared experiences and social encounters, traditional aesthetic practices are also pursued. The making and presenting of material artworks and an interest in engaging with the wider artworld are critical founding principles at tbC. Rancière's memorable notion (paraphrased here by Bishop) that aesthetic practice doesn't need to be sacrificed at the altar of social change because it already inherently contains this ameliorative promise,[471] very much supports tbC's underlying interest in traditional aesthetic practices. This investigation examines a group practice that explores forms of artistic agency and status via combined social and sensory aesthetic processes and outcomes.

tbC's interest in a combined social and material practice didn't happen by design. The young artists that arrive at tbC dictate and direct this interest. tbC artists often comment during studio practice that the risk of marginalisation is heightened by a youth arts model that only

[471] Bishop, "The Social Turn," 183.

engages in social practices and that this is a position already occupied by youth development programs. While the social characteristics of tbC's collaborative arts practice support the group's underlying social change agenda around artistic agency and status for young artists, the success of this collaborative arts practice and the delivery of earlier artistic agency and status is bound up in a combination of social and material processes and practices.[472]

This investigation acknowledges the politics that often surrounds relational aesthetics and socially engaged art. While tbC doesn't specifically make political work, its artmaking model is innately subversive as it actively positions young creatives as practicing artists. tbC's social action agenda around the building of artistic agency and status for young artists challenges traditional educational, health and wellbeing paradigms in which young artists are routinely pigeonholed. This underlying social action agenda has encouraged the regular use of dialogue as an art medium at tbC. Many of the group's artworks contain thought, speech and discussion as core materials.[473]

Kester is a key proponent of dialogical art and its discursive, social aesthetic.[474] Helguera also writes about the power dialogue has as a socially engaged art medium, citing Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics, Dewey's pragmatism, the neo-pragmatism of Jurgen Habermas and Richard Rorty and the pedagogy of Freire as examples of "the act of discussion operating as a process of emancipation."[475]

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[472] It's important to reiterate that making socially engaged art differs from being confined to socio-cultural and/or educational spaces of engagement like youth outreach programs or the class room.
[473] Demarco, Richard. *The Road to Meikle Seggie* (Edinburgh: Luath Press Ltd, 2015), 22-23. In relation to Beuys concept of 'social sculpture.'
[474] Kester, "Dialogical Aesthetics;" Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially Engaged Art;* Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*; Kester, *The One and the Many*.
[475] Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*, 42.

Although tbC's model of arts practice values action through dialogue and social practice, it's important to reiterate that this is not at the expense of more traditional aesthetic practices. tbC's dialogical artworks include visual, aural, interactive and digital materials and modes of presentation.

While this hybrid social and sensory practice will be examined in detail throughout the case study chapter to follow, I'd like to briefly outline the blended aesthetic form each of the four case study artworks take.

Case Study One takes the form of a printed and digital magazine. However, its content is richly dialogical, having emerged from literary and relational practices within both the studio and community.

Case Study Two presents a series of painted walls in a public space. This project's cultural, social, and painterly qualities are recorded via film and photography and re-presented in both community and artworld settings. The content of the artworks that make up this project is often text-based, specifically in the form of colloquial language and dialogue.

The remaining two case studies are strongly dialogical, presenting conversations as artworks. However, it's not just the social aspect of the conversation that is explored and presented. These conversational works take the form of digital, interactive and 2D artworks on paper and are exhibited online and in galleries.

How collaboration manifests at tbC

Even though tbC's membership comprises artists of differing ages, experience and expertise, any member artist can seed and lead creative works. Artistic control is not centred around the older or more experienced artist/s, as is commonly the case in educational, youth development, community art and even participatory art models. Adult and young member artists equally value and benefit from working together at tbC. Many of the in-practice dialogues that make up the content of tbC's dialogical artworks (*The Art of Conversation* projects being two key examples) corroborate this. Another corroboration can be found within the in-practice expression of young tbC member Daniel.

This sharing of power at tbC is one of the group's distinguishing features and preserves a critical egalitarianism. Lively examples of this power-sharing can also be found in tbC's extensive documentary photography and film recordings. These visual records illustrate young artist members actively and equally engaging in making artworks and their presentation, examples of which can be found throughout the companion website, but particularly within the pages that describe the group's mentoring, dedicated arts and collaborative practice model.

The energy and momentum of tbC's group dynamic moulds practice and governance in lateral and adventitious ways. This rhizomatic mode of working fosters an inclusive, unstructured and flexible *modus operandi*. A natural motivation emerges from this egalitarian environment, and members are inspired and spurred on by each other's interests and drives.

Canadian-based art collective SenseLab describes its practice in a similar way. The group is an international network of artists, academics, writers and makers from diverse fields, working together at the crossroads of philosophy, art, and activism.[476] Artist members talk about a "collectively self-organizing dynamic within their collaboration and how their participants are held together by affinity rather than by any structure of membership or institutional hierarchy."[477] Founder of SenseLab, Manning, states that practices are collectively arrived at, through a process of thinking by doing and that the group prefers to let projects gain their own momentum or fade away rather than being directed.[478]

tbC's informal, self-organised group practice naturally encourages young artist members to direct practice and governance. All projects come out of this group space and are inspired and driven by a collection of artists. During studio practice, many young members comment on how different this experience is to the overly structured, hierarchical and pressured school classroom or higher education environment. Again, the earlier in-practice expressions by Joseph and Jack corroborate this. Clare also often talks about this difference in the studio.

There are many examples of young artists directing collaborative practice and governance at tbC (in addition to the four case studies that will be discussed in detail in the upcoming case studies chapter). One such example can be found in Justine's weekly Origami Meditations for resident artists and community members. These weekly sessions encourage collective contemplation and creative brainstorming. They are a place for dialogue, social engagement and the incubation of new ideas and have become an important part of the group's overall working methodology.

[476] Manning, "About," SenseLab.
[477] Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*, 42.
[478] Manning, "About" SenseLab.

DrawWrite is another practice that naturally developed out of the dynamics of group artmaking at tbC. Shelley, a drawer, and Justine, a poet, began drawing and writing on the same canvas in the studio one day. This led to further experimentation, with two or more artists often working on the one canvas in the studio, often inspired by or in response to studio conversations and artistic provocations. tbC has even been commissioned to 'perform' this creative process at a series of community and corporate meetings. It has also become an important studio brainstorming practice. The way Damien invited the group to creatively engage with photocopies of one of his drawn portraits illustrates another example of these naturally occurring collaborative processes and provocations. Many members participated, producing a suite of re-rendered collaborative works. Group dynamics like this naturally direct practices and outcomes at tbC. The freedom to initiate and direct an artistic activity arises because all members of tbC are on equal footing and genuinely share agency and status. It is this unusually flat and flexible hierarchy (unusual considering tbC's multi-aged/staged membership) that this research attributes tbC's sustained membership and longevity to.

Artistic processes and outcomes at tbC develop from catalyst moments like the aforementioned examples. Ideas are either embraced by the group, shelved for later attention or passed over. Sometimes a smaller cluster of artists engages on the periphery for a while, honing a niche idea that relates directly to their area of expertise. These ideas are folded back into the collective space and collaboratively engaged with or sidelined. There is often a natural lead artist or artists who keep a project on a certain trajectory. However, these lead artists don't insist that the project remains on its original path. Nor do they necessarily remain as lead artists. The group practice allows for and encourages multiple contributions and altered creative journeys. While there is often an overarching goal, the process is open to

amendment, redirection and surprise turns. This way of working together supports multiple and unpredictable encounters and outcomes and is regarded as a positive and enjoyable part of tbC's collaborative arts practice.

tbC's artmaking is also manifestly experimental and investigative. Creative dialogue, ideas and provocations emerge through collective inquiry and exploratory studio practices, which lead to the conceiving and production of collaborative artworks. The *Random Methodologies Project* is an excellent example of tbC's collaboratively experimental and investigative approach to making art.

tbC's collaborative arts practice has also had a profound effect on this investigation. As mentioned earlier, the rich in-practice knowledge found within tbC's practice not only directly relates to the subject of this research it also inspired the research question. The question about how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status is repeatedly asked (and answered) by artists in the tbC studio through the processes and practices of collaborative artmaking. The in-practice knowledge embedded within many of tbC's artistic practices and outcomes, including the four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation, amounts to valuable creative data. This creative data supports the observational analysis that underpins this investigation. The companion website that accompanies this dissertation was devised to specifically collate and exhibit this creative data. While my collaborators' opinions were not directly solicited, their role in making the artworks at the centre of this investigation is clearly observable.[479]

[479] As already noted, this dissertation not only hyperlinks the reader to the four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation it also hyperlinks the reader to a range of in-practice discussion that has emerged from artmaking at tbC. These in-practice discussions speak directly to the subject of this research. Although not formally solicited, this creative knowledge emerges from the artistic practices and outcomes being investigated and constitutes valuable creative data. This dissertation periodically hyperlinks the reader to the companion website in which these in-practice dialogues are creatively housed. To reiterate, these in-practice dialogues have been in the public domain for years, with no adverse consequences.

Three of the four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation use tbC's studio dialogue and conversation as a medium and material. This dialogical content represents a collective artistic voice. It also reflects the collaborative arts action at the centre of both tbC's practice and this investigation around it – arts action that supports the idea that practicing young artists can build artistic agency and status. As noted earlier, the creative data that is entangled within tbC's artistic processes and outcomes amount to what Haraway calls valuable situated knowledges and partial perspectives[480] – knowledges and perspectives that significantly support my observational account of tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and the power this practice has to support young artists in building artistic agency and status.

In terms of my own experience, I derive significant enjoyment from working with other artists. The sharing of creative power is not a difficult negotiation for me. Like artist-architect Valentina Karga, I don't feel the need to control and predict everything, and I appreciate that the collective process knows better than me.[481] I have also found that I particularly enjoy working with young artists as they contribute a refreshing and unrestrained dynamic to group practice. As already noted, I also enjoy the relaxed and uncompetitive mood young artists bring to the practice. Artist-researcher Suzanne Bosch eloquently reinforces my thoughts about this positive and uncompetitive environment when she describes her own collaborative arts practice as involving "a deep understanding of interdependence, as opposed to competition, where an atmosphere of trust, respect, care, appreciation, listening and interest prevails."[482]

[480] Haraway, "Situated Knowledges."
[481] Valentina Karga, "Process," in *Learning in Public*," *Trans European Collaborations in Socially Engaged Art*, ed. Eleanor Turney, 104, (Ireland: Create, National Development Agency for Collaborative Arts and The Live Art Development Agency, on behalf of the Collaborative Arts Partnership Programme, 2018). http://www.susannebosch.de/fileadmin/user_upload/PDFS/Learning_in_Public.pdf.
[482] Bosch, "Where Values Emerge," 65.

Tensions surrounding the democratic nature of collaborative practice

The social turn in contemporary art has prompted an ethical turn in art criticism, which is evidenced by the heightened interest in how collaborations operate. Bourriaud argues in his book *Relational Aesthetics* that while participation and interaction (the social in art) have become central paradigms of contemporary art, critics have and continue to challenge the democratisation promised by these contemporary paradigms.[483]

Bishop notes that collaborative artists are increasingly judged by their working process and the degree to which they supply good or bad models of collaboration and are often criticized for any hint of potential exploitation or practices that fail to represent their subjects fully.[484] She also acknowledges that collaboration can sometimes manifest as a form of idyllic togetherness that fails to accurately reflect the often complex and antagonistic dynamics of such practice.[485] Bosch voices a similar concern, noting that collaborative practices often result in "…an artistic reproduction of power practices, concealed by the impression of togetherness."[486]

This research acknowledges the tendency to overestimate the democratic character of collaboration[487] but believes that tbC's practice and this investigation around it provides an authentic example of mutually beneficial collaborative practice. The reciprocity found within tbC's collaborative arts practice was foregrounded by the founding artists of the SCUMPUP project. The foundational youth-driven culture that evolved from this formative project remains just as strong thirteen years later, from which an authentically horizontal

[483] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*.
[484] Bishop. "The Social Turn,"180.
[485] Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics." A comment inspired by this source.
[486] Bosch, "Where Values Emerge," 61-62.
[487] Ibid. In response to Bishop in "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," 51-80.

power structure has evolved. The most potent sign of tbC's authentic and valid model of collaboration can be found in the group's durational membership. Members engage with tbC for years at a time – some have been with the group since its inception in 2008.

As I have already noted, the horizontal power structure encourages all artists, irrespective of age and artistic stage, to seed and lead artistic works and projects at tbC. Artists manage and negotiate this flat operating culture together as it naturally emerges through collaborative practice. The group's egalitarian, rhizomatic *modus operandi* allows creative ideas and projects to take root symbiotically, resulting in the artistic ideas and projects that gain the most momentum naturally developing to collaborative fruition.

Describing this process as a natural one is not a trite comment. Artworks really do emerge without prescription and develop only when the group chooses to develop them. This unforced and unstructured method of artmaking is largely the result of tbC's independence and the fact that there are no predetermined goals or objectives of practice. Artists often talk in the studio about how there is no pressure but also no impediment to any artist seeding or leading an artistic process or outcome. tbC's main aim is to let the membership direct practice from within the practice. Bianca's in-studio comments endorse this working model.

More structured organisations (such as youth service models) or institutions (such as schools, classrooms and workshops) are constrained by funding, planning, administrative, institutional, subscriber and/or constituent expectations. In the case of tbC, there are no overseers, no external demands and no prescribed outcomes. tbC artists control collaborative artmaking dynamics and subject matters and, as such, control the momentum of collaborative arts practice. This momentum remains surprisingly energetic, considering the

lack of structure and pre-planning. Many young members comment during studio practice that this is precisely why the group dynamic remains so energetic. Sonya's in-practice expression presents a particularly good observation of this.

In terms of how tbC funds its collaborative arts practice, small grants are negotiated with as little oversight and prescription as possible. This preserves the model's independence and freedom to grow from within. Most of tbC's small funding comes from local government arts and culture departments and community-based organisations. This funding is secured based on tbC's autonomous operating model. Funding is not generally sought from youth services departments or youth development organisations because of the inherent health, welfare and educational milestones and expectations prescribed by such funding. Despite this, tbC works with and presents in multiple communities, including Yarra Ranges, Hobsons Bay, Cardinia, Casey, Manningham, Knox, Maroondah, City of Melbourne and Maribyrnong.

As noted in Chapter One, sometimes funders reach out to us having heard about the success tbC's collaborative arts model has in achieving durational engagement with young people. These funders acknowledge that even though tbC's collaborative youth arts practice is not overtly focused on youth development goals and outcomes, the practice naturally delivers these goals and outcomes. This respect for and trust in tbC's autonomous youth arts model enables the group to direct funding to the pursuit of dedicated artistic goals and aspirations. These funding relationships have proven to be mutually rewarding for both the communities tbC visits and members of the group.

In Chorus

Defining and contextualising authorship

An author is commonly known as the source and centre of creative work.[488] Authorship is commonly known as "the act or practice of creating something."[489] While much of the early historical discourse around authorship focuses on the concept of literary authorship, the following contextualisation pertains to the artist in general.

During the Ancient Period between 3000 BC and AD 500, the writer/artist was anonymous, separate from society, God-like and divinely inspired.[490] As such, the author's identity was of little importance and reflection on his role immaterial.

During the Medieval period, spanning the fifth and fifteenth centuries, writing and creativity was still a remote concept confined to the elite. Medieval writers and artists were often monks and priests based in monasteries. While Medieval craftsmen operated within collective workshops, studios, guilds or *ateliers*, these artisans were known by association and not publicly promoted. This was because the creative works of the time were regarded as more important than the authors' identity.[491] Even when the writer/artist/artisan was known by association, there was rarely any attempt (at least not until very late in the Middle Ages) to advance their identities. Historian Alastair Minnis notes that during this period, citizens were more interested in relating a text or artwork to an abstract truth rather than

[488] John Caughie, ed. *Theories of Authorship: A Reader*, (Oxfordshire: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 2001), 1.
[489] Pamela Long, *Openness, Secrecy and Authorship: Technical Arts and the Culture of Knowledge from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2001), 7.
[490] Andrew Bennett, *The Author* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 15 and 37. A comment inspired by his writings about French novelist Gustave Flaubert.
[491] "The Changing Role of the Artist in Society," University of Wisconsin, accessed 25th July, 2019. https://www.uwgb.edu/malloyk/lecture_6.htm.

discovering the personal goals or wishes of the individual author.[492] The *intentio auctoris* (intended meaning) was considered more important than the writer or artist through which the creative expression emerged.[493] Admittedly, these writers, artists and artisans would have enjoyed the agency and status that came with their privileged position in society and they would have been known for their work in their respective elite circles. However, this creative milieu would have been a discreet and small one.

Toward the end of the Medieval period, writers and poets like Geoffrey Chaucer, William Langland, and John Gower began to develop recognisable names and identities.[494] As did their artist contemporaries - artists like Donatello, Giotto, Leon Battista Alberti, Cimabue, Filippo Brunelleschi, Fra Angelico and Lorenzo Ghiberti. This was mainly due to the importance society began to place on the cultural and creative value of texts and artworks.[495] This growing interest in writing and art resulted in a corresponding interest in the identity of the writer and artist.

As the Medieval period gave way to the Modern Period, an era spanning the sixteenth-century to the current day, society began to develop rules and regulations protecting writers and artists. These rules and regulations related to the proprietary knowledge embodied within the literary and creative works of the day. The convergence of these two periods also saw the development of the printing press[496] and a re-conceptualisation of the author and authorship.[497] The printing press and its potential for mass reproduction revolutionised the

[492] Alastair J Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 20-21.
[493] "The Changing Role of the Artist in Society," University of Wisconsin.
[494] John Anthony Burrow, *Medieval Writers and Their Work: Middle English Literature and its Background* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 40 and 44.
[495] "The Changing Role of the Artist in Society," University of Wisconsin.
[496] The printing press was invented by German goldsmith/inventor Johannes Gutenberg in the mid 1400s.
[497] Katharina de la Durantaye, "Literary Authorship in Ancient Rome," 38.

idea of the manuscript/lithograph and the status of the writer and artist.[498] Print technology also radically altered access to and dissemination of literature and art in society, resulting in creative works being more available and their authors more identifiable. Conversely, the development in mechanical reproduction and dissemination distanced authors from their work, threatening the modern author's newfound autonomy and authority.

This era was further impacted by the formation of copyright law in the early eighteenth-century. On the one hand, copyright law reinforced the author's exclusive and assignable legal rights; on the other, it widened the definition of author.[499] The law extended the rights, responsibilities, and ownership of authorship beyond the originator of a work, broadening the definition of an author to include compiler, translator, editor or copyist. An example of this can be found in social theorist Walter Benjamin's critique of the aforementioned mechanical printing process and his argument that "in the context of journalistic work [the] 'aura of authenticity' appear[ed] not in the original manuscript of an article or essay … but rather in the by-line, the masthead and the copyright – the marks of journalistic authorship that combine creation, control and ownership."[500] Bennett writes that copyright laws facilitated the gradual legal existence of a broader definition of the author and, to some degree, instrumentalised the field of writing and artmaking.[501]

Academic Andrea Pisac notes that alongside the development of these broader definitions of

[498] "The Applied History Research Group: Multimedia History Tutorials: The End of Europe's Middle Ages," University of Calgary, accessed 6th May 2019, www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/endmiddle/langlit.html#press.
[499] For example, the Statute of Anne,[499] drafted in 1710, gave copy rights to owners of 'copie' who were not necessarily the original author of the work. See, Statute of Anne, 1710, 8 Anne c.19, http://www.copyrighthistory.com/anne.html. Also see, John Feather, "The Book Trade in Politics: The Making of the Copyright Act of 1710," *Publishing History* 8 (1980): 39; Feather, *A History of British Publishing* (London: Routledge, 1988).
[500] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn, (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 217-251; As noted in Bill Reader, *Audience Feedback in the News Media.* (London: Routledge, 2015), Introduction, 6.
[501] Bennett, *The Author*, 23.

the author, a "newly emerging literary [and art] market began to assert itself."[502] The emergence of writers and artists who sought to earn their livelihood from selling their work and a new and rapidly expanding reading and art appreciating public transformed perceptions of the writer and artist. Literary theorist Martha Woodmansee and copyright specialist Peter Jaszi state that around this time, the author also started to attract celebrity status and was often venerated over and above the work itself.[503] Pisac further notes that to be noticed in this new world of literary and artistic production, the writer or artist had to develop a profile and become, in a sense, individualised.[504] Whether as a reaction to these expanded definitions of the author and authorship or the result of a growing interest in the author's identity, the origins and authenticity of authorship and the author's identity became very important.

By the late nineteenth-century, the modern literary world saw a return to the importance of the work over the value of authorship, especially in theoretical circles – as a backlash of sorts. Renewed arguments for the "disappearance, irrelevance or incoherence of the author"[505] persisted until the mid-twentieth-century. Around this time, the views of literary theorists Stéphane Mallarmé, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault came into prominent view.

(Again, while the following discussion focuses on literary authorship, the philosophical tenets can be applied to artistic authorship in general).

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[502] Andrea Pisac, "Emerging Politics of Authorship: Recovering Collectivity, Negotiating the Risk." Academia. Accessed May 1, 2017, 1, https://www.academia.edu/2052921/Emerging_Politics_of_Authorship_recovering_collectivity_negotiating_the_risk.
[503] Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi. Frederic Jameson and Stanley Fish, eds. *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 1994), 36.
[504] Pisac, "Emerging Politics of Authorship," 2. In ref to Woodmansee, Jaszi, Jameson and Fish.
[505] Bennett, *The Author*, 68.

Mallarmé's discourse focuses on the notion that "it is language which speaks, not the author"[506] and that "the pure work implies the speaking disappearance of the poet, who yields the initiative to words."[507] His theory promotes the death of the ethos (the author) in favour of the logos (the words) and the idea that the author corrupts the purity of the work. For Mallarmé, the author's intention was simply not relevant nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a literary work.[508] Similarly, Gustave Flaubert, a contemporary of Mallarmé's, argued that "the artist in his work must be like God in his creation… invisible and all-powerful …everywhere felt, but never seen."[509] Philosopher Merold Westphal's 1994 essay *Kierkegaard and the Anxiety of Authorship*[510] discusses how nineteenth-century thinker Søren Kierkegaard published many of his works using pseudonyms. Although written much later, this essay is a good example of what Mallarmé and Flaubert were theorising. Westphal's essay notes how happy Kierkegaard is "for readers not to know the author's identity...for they then have only the book to deal with without being bothered or distracted by [the author's] personality."[511] This leaves, as Westphal describes, "the reader alone with the text."[512]

There are strong correlations between these literary viewpoints and tbC's model of collaborative arts practice. For tbC, it is important that the audience encounters the artworks the group makes ahead of individual artists' identities. Identifying young artists upfront reveals their limited biographies, potentially prejudicing them and their artworks. Like

[506] Barthes "The Death of the Author," 143.
[507] A translation of "L'oeuvre pure implique la disparition élocutoire du poëte, qui cède l'initiative aux mots," in Mallarmé, *Igitur, Divagations. Un coup de dés*, 256; Arild Michel Bakken, "Textual Self-Branding: The Rhetorical Ethos in Mallarmé's" *Divagations*, *Authorship* 1, no. 1 (2011): 1, https://www.authorship.ugent.be/article/view/777; Rosemary Lloyd, "Crise de Vers," 55.
[508]Rosemary Lloyd, "Crise de Vers," La Revue Blanche, (September 1895) trans. in Mallarmé : The Poet and his Circle ([1999] 2005), 55.
[509]As noted in Bennett, *The Author*, 67.
[510] Merold Westphal, "Kierkegaard and The Anxiety of Authorship," *International Philosophical Quarterly 34, no. 1 (1994): 5,* https://doi.org/10.5840/ipq199434158.
[511] Ibid.
[512] Ibid.

Barbara Johnson argues (in relation to Mallarmé), tbC believes that an artwork should speak of and by itself without the biography of the artist "getting in the way."[513] tbC obscures the identities of its member artists via a collaborative arts practice that assigns joint authorship via the group moniker tbC. This united front approach encourages audiences to engage with the artworks the group makes on their own merits. To paraphrase Westphal's earlier comments in relation to Kierkegaard, this leaves audiences (initially at least) with only the artworks tbC makes to respond to, without being bothered or distracted by the biographies of the artists who made them.[514]

Similarly, in his 1967 essay *Death of the Author*, Barthes writes that to "give a text an author, is to impose a limit on that text…to close the writing."[515] He argues that authority, reliability and authenticity are often sought in the person who has produced the text and not often enough in the text itself.[516] Barthes cites some striking examples of authorship negatively affecting a work's reception in an essay he wrote about French poet Charles Baudelaire, post-Impressionist painter Vincent van Gogh and Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, claiming that "… Baudelaire's work is the failure of the man Baudelaire, Van Gogh's work his madness and Tchaikovsky's his vice…".[517] The notoriety of these artists extended beyond their oeuvre and, to some extent, prejudiced the reception of their works. These examples describe what can happen when the writer or artist is distinguished from their work. The negative descriptions of Baudelaire, Van Gogh and Tchaikovsky have become inextricably tied to their person and work. In a similar way, age and lack of experience can be negatively tied to young artists and their work. At tbC, the distancing of

[513] Johnson, "Mallarmé Gets a Life," 9.
[514] Westphal, "Kierkegaard and The Anxiety of Authorship,"5.
[515] Heath, *Roland Barthes*, 147; Johnson, "Mallarmé Gets a Life," 9.
[516] Heath, *Roland Barthes*, 143.
[517]Johnson, "Mallarmé Gets a Life," 9.

the author from the work affords the audience a chance to view the work made by young artists without the associated prejudices of age and perceived lack of experience getting in the way.

Barthes also claims that authorship is inherently social and collaborative and that texts are born from many cultural sources – sources that cannot be easily attributed to one author.[518] This sentiment is of particular interest to this research and directly relates to the collective culture that underpins tbC's collaborative artmaking and presenting. In his essay *Death of the Author*, Barthes claimed that a "text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture," rather than emanating from one individual experience.[519] The idea that texts and artworks are inspired by a range of sources, experiences, ideas, cultures and philosophies and that a single author's biography is not the sole source of a creative work resonates with my group practice experience. tbC's spirited group dynamic makes it difficult to track and trace the provenance of ideas and authorship, especially in the heat of the creative moment. To interrupt the creative process to record intricate details of who said what and when or to keep an account of where ideas originated is inconsistent with this spirited, creative process.

Argentine post-modern pioneer of fictional writing and poet Jorge Luis Borges and his parable *Borges and I* come to mind here, specifically the line "I do not know which of us has written this page."[520] While Borges is referring to the locus of authorial identity and intent between his public and private self, the parable helps illustrate the point that at tbC, the locus of authorship is with the group as opposed to individuals. Members of tbC

[518] Barthes, "The Death of the Author," 146.
[519] Ibid.
[520] Jorge Luis Borges, "Borges and I," trans. by James E. Irby, in *Labyrinths*; *Selected Stories and Other Writings*, eds. Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby (Massachusetts: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1964), 212.

understand that individual authorship is hard to assign because of the fluid and unstructured way the group operates and that assigning group authorship is fair and appropriate.[521] Sonya's in-practice expression corroborates this.

This research also enlists Foucault's argument that a "pervasive anonymity [can liberate us from the] tiresome repetitions [of] who is the author and have we proof of his authenticity and originality?"[522] Foucault argues in his 1969 essay *What is an Author* that attributing authorship can alter the reading of a text or artwork, whereas deliberate anonymity allows the work to stand unconditionally on its merits.[523] Despite the title of Foucault's essay, Foucault is less interested in what an author is and more interested in how authorship functions. He sees the author as a function of discourse, replacing the conventional figure of the author with what he calls the author-function, "a concept which [seeks] to capture the discursive role played by that figure."[524] This research is particularly interested in Foucault's notion that authorship should be more about the function of discourse or creativity rather than the writer or artist as a person.

My experience at tbC confirms that the emerging identity of the young artist does affect how we view, value, validate and authenticate their work. In response to this observation, this research argues that the prejudices associated with age and experience restrict the reception of work made by young artists and that obscuring authorship and artist identities (even temporarily) supports impartial encounters. [525]

[521] tbC members are present and active voluntarily – they wouldn't stay and engage if they didn't enjoy or approve of this naturally evolving working method and communal attribution.
[522] Foucault, "What is an Author," 138.
[523] Ibid., 126.
[524] Adrian Wilson, "Foucault on the 'Question of the Author': A Critical Exegesis," *The Modern Language Review, White Rose Research Online* 99 no. 2 (2004): 341,http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/4458/1/s5_%282%29.pdf.
[525] As a side note, while member artists are primarily attracted to and supported by tbC's collaborative arts practice and joint authorship model, this doesn't preclude members' interest in developing individual agency and status as artists. I discuss how the two interests are not necessarily mutually exclusive in more detail shortly.

Tensions in the post-modern era of authorship

These arguments for the presentation of the work ahead of the author are not without challenge. Tensions and contradictions within authorship theory need to be acknowledged. Mallarmé, Barthes and Foucault's texts about authorship have themselves become seminal works, mitigating the arguments contained in them. Their names and identities incongruously reinforce the idea and figure of the author, limiting discussion about the death or displacement of authorship. To paraphrase academic Russel Smith, Mallarmé, Barthes and Foucault's fame paradoxically reinforces the authorial figure even as they appear to challenge it.[526]

Mallarmé's notion that the identity of the author should remain unknown is challenged by his own notoriety. Writers Bertrand Marchal, Rancière and more recently Daniel Oster even speak of a "Mallarméan tendency towards autobiography."[527] They argue there is an "auctorial presence in [his] text,"[528] that "Mallarmé is not the silent and nocturnal thinker of the poem too pure ever to be written"[529] and that he exhibits an "eagerness to put every scene of his private life into text."[530]

In his article *Textual Self-branding: the Rhetorical Ethos in Mallarmé's Divagations,*[531] Arild Michel Bakken further contends that "Mallarmé constantly cultivates his ethos [his figure as author/poet] and that one of the primary subjects of the Divagations is the auctorial

[526] Russell Smith, *What Matter Who's Speaking : Samuel Beckett and the Author-Function - Beckett, Samuel, 1906-1989 Criticism and Interpretation*, PhD thesis (University of Adelaide, 2000), 5, https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/handle/2440/19798.
[527] Bakken, "Textual Self-Branding," 2.
[528] Wilson, "Applied Experiments in Political Imagination," 33.
[529] Ranciere, *Mallarmé: The Politics of the Siren* (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2011), abstract.
[530] Daniel Oster, *Stephane Mallarmé, 1842-1898, La Gloire* (France: P.O.L. 1997), 60.
[531] Bakken, "Textual Self-Branding."

figure."[532] Bakken also discusses how "Mallarmé does not only use ethos to add authority … but also to brand himself as an author."[533] Bakken asserts that the level of ethos (the sense of the author's character) within the work of Mallarmé's *Divagations* "indicates that Mallarmé is aware of this and wishes to influence the perception of his persona."[534]

Barthes, too, is famously connected to his texts, despite talking about the author's presence limiting a text. Furthermore, the fact that Barthes names and uses a lengthy quote from French novelist Honoré de Balzac's novel *Sarrasine* as a central focus of his argument in *Death of the Author* is entirely inconsistent with his argument around anonymous authorship and the distancing of the writer or artist from their work.

Foucault's argument is equally inconsistent. Like Mallarmé and Barthes, his authorial persona is evident. Foucault's identity as an author has paradoxically transcended his quest for a "culture where discourse would circulate without any need for an author."[535] Foucault also paradoxically assigns authorship to playwright Samuel Beckett when quoting his famous rhetorical question, "What does it matter who is speaking..."[536] In the conclusion of his seminal text, Foucault incongruously imagines a world where:

> Discourses, whatever their status, form, or value, and regardless of our manner of handling them, would unfold in a pervasive anonymity. No longer the tiresome repetitions: Who is the real author? Have we proof of his authenticity and originality? Behind all these questions, we would hear little more than the murmur of indifference: 'What matter who's speaking?'[537]

[532] Ibid., 2.
[533] Ibid., 13.
[534] Ibid.
[535] Foucault *What is an Author?* 138.
[536] Ibid.
[537] Ibid.

Contemporary literary theorist Seán Burke troubles the concept of the author-function, the authorless text and the death of the author in his own book, going as far as to propose that the attempt to abolish the author is fundamentally untenable, arguing that in each case, Mallarmé's, Barthes' and Foucault's "public figure has to a great extent influenced the reading of [their] texts."[538] Burke adds that even contemporary philosopher Jacques Derrida, another opponent of the authorial canon, was himself a canonical author.[539] Theorist Jason Holt also talks about the contradictions surrounding the authorless text or artwork in his essay, *The Marginal Life of the Author* stating that:

> If authors are unimportant as to deserve metaphorical death, why bother mentioning them? As authors, Barthes and Foucault have enlarged their own importance by denying that of authors generally... By assailing authorial privilege, they have further cemented, in certain quarters at least, their own practically unassailable intellectual authority.[540]

My own engagement with such well-known authors in the theoretical arguments I make about the importance of tbC's collective identity has not gone unnoticed. I acknowledge this contradiction and the fact that there is a persistent author-focus that invariably reveals authorship – even if over time. This makes it almost impossible to completely separate the writer or artist from their work. Moreover, as Burke provocatively states, "authorship is never more alive than when pronounced dead.[541] This research argues that while authorship at tbC and the identity of young artist members is discoverable over time, the group's attempts to delay this identification via a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice support young artists in the establishment of artistic practices and pathways.

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[538] Seán Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), abstract.
[539] Ibid., xiv.
[540] Jason Holt, "The Marginal Life of the Author," in *The Death and Resurrection of the Author?* ed. William Irwin (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002), 65.
[541] Ibid., xvi.

How authorship manifests at tbC

tbC's model of artistic practice is primarily defined by collaboration and joint authorship. This united front approach to making and presenting art gives audiences the chance to encounter the artistic work young tbC artists make ahead of the prejudices often associated with their biographies. This, in turn, delivers young artists the opportunity to build earlier artistic agency and status. By making and authoring artworks as a group, tbC obscures individual artists' identities leaving the audience alone with the artwork.[542] Instead of being distracted by the biographical details of the makers, audiences are free to focus on the aesthetic value and merit of artworks made. Again, while cognisant that the identities of tbC members become evident over time, this delayed awareness facilitates less prejudiced first encounters with the group's work.

It's important to reiterate that tbC's focus on group practice doesn't exclude individual artistic expression nor the development of individual artistic agency and status. In fact, individual artistic expression inspires and drives group practices at tbC. The earlier example of Rohan and his desire to paint an exterior wall of the studio being an apt one. Rohan's individual interest and practice led to tbC developing the *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project,* a collaborative arts project that delivers young tbC artists significant artistic agency and status. I will examine this project's authorship dynamic in detail and the success it has had in delivering young members of tbC artistic agency and status in the case study chapter that follows.

[542] Merold Westphal, "Kierkegaard and The Anxiety of Authorship," 325. Reiterating my earlier point.

It's also important to note here that references to individual artists in this dissertation and the links to individually featured artists in the companion website speak directly to the success tbC's group dynamic has had in building artist agency and status – both individual and collective. The building of individual and collective artistic agency and status happens concurrently at tbC. As Georgia, Kyle, Sonya and Josiah reinforced in their earlier in-practice observations.

Bishop talks about the balance that is often struck between individual and group practice within collective spaces.[543] Her opinions are highly regarded but regularly contested, mainly by Kester, who views individual authorship within the collective space as a potential threat to group consensus, one that can disrupt the egalitarian nature of group practice.[544] tbC's model of group practice is more aligned with Bishop's theorising. Individual artistic expression is not seen as a threat to group practice at tbC, mainly because these expressions inspire and drive group practices and artworks.

An example of the balancing act Bishop talks about between individual and group practice within collective spaces[545] can be found in the workings of the Fluxus project. Fluxus is an international, interdisciplinary community of artists, composers, designers and poets who emerged in the late 1950s, becoming very active in the 1960s and 1970s. The group is reportedly still active today. While Fluxus often engages in experimental art performances that emphasise the artistic process over the finished product,[546] they also make material artworks. An example of such an artwork and one that best relates to tbC's authorship model

[543] Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 78.
[544] As noted in Kim Charnley, "Dissensus and the Politics of Collaborative Practice," *Art & The Public Sphere* no. 1 (January, 2011): 48 and 49, https://doi.org/10.1386/aps.1.1.37_1.
[545] Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 78.
[546]Lisa S. Wainwright, "Fluxus." *Encyclopedia Britannica* 2016, accessed September 4, 2020. https://www.britannica.com/art/Fluxus.

is Daniel Spoerri and Robert Filliou's 1966 book project *Typography of Chance*.[547] Spoerri and Filliou describe this project as one that involved them making individual works that interlock to form a collaborative text, one they regard as jointly authored.

tbC's *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* and *Hoodie Mag* publication demonstrate a similar interlocking of individual works that amount to joint authorship. I analyse these two projects in detail in the next chapter, focusing on the idea that even though individual artists are present within these projects, they are examples of joint authorship because of the collaborative processes that transform them into something more than just a compilation of artworks.

Another example of an artist group that embraces the concept of collaboration while simultaneously leaving room for individual authorship to co-exist within the group space can be found in the workings of Raqs Media Collective. Raqs is made up of three media practitioners from New Delhi: Jeebesh Bagchi, Monica Narula and Shuddhabrata Sengupta. Together, these artists make films, curate exhibitions, edit books and stage events. They have collaborated with architects, computer programmers, writers, and theatre directors and have founded processes that have deeply impacted contemporary culture in India.[548] Members of Raqs Media Collective define their joint authorship practice in the following way:

> We do not identify any one of us as the custodian of a particular practice, method, style, or work process. The work that we do, artistic and curatorial, emerges and exists at the intersection of our triangulated curiosities, skills and desires. In some ways, we could say that Raqs, which is more than the sum of its personified parts (any one of us as individuals), is the author…. For us, authorship is not something that collapses into bodies and biographies alone. A moment and a duration are also

[547] Daniel Spoerri and Robert Filliou, trans. Emmett Williams, *An Anecdoted Topography of Chance (Re-Anecdoted)* (New York: Something Else Press, 1996), originally published in 1966.
[548] Chloé Nicolet-dit-Félix and Gulru Vardar, "Interview with Raqs Media Collective on the Exhibition, Sarai Reader 09," In *On Curating* 19, (2013): 42, http://www.on-curating.org/issue-19-reader/interview-with-raqs-media-collective-on-the-exhibition-sarai-reader-09.html#.W7sWIVJxU4o.

> authors. A network can be an author. A desire and a dilemma can also author a work. We see authorship in terms of the things that make a work appear in the world. Only some of those things are people. Sometimes more than one person causes a work to appear. This can mean that authorship may be vested in each of these people as individuals; it can also mean that it is vested in the relationship that ties these individuals together.[549]

This inspiring and flexible description of collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports my contention that a united front approach to making and authoring art does not necessarily exclude individual artistic expression. The relationships between tbC artists and the artistic expression that flows amongst them ties the group together and is key to defining a group dynamic in this case.

One could argue that the different ages, levels of experience and expertise contests the egalitarian claims I regularly make about tbC's group practice. However, this research argues that members enjoy unusually equal agency and status despite these disparities. As noted earlier, this investigation argues (like Rancière does) that everyone has the capacity for an equality of intelligence rather than an inequality of knowledge and that equality should be a presupposition rather than a goal and reward situated firmly in some distant future.[550] Again, like authors Gilbert and Gubar, this investigation promotes the idea that just as there is no logical reason why female writers can't be as talented as male writers,[551] there is no logical reason why young artists can't be as talented as older artists. Although a logical argument, convincing the public of this is often difficult, especially in the case of the young artist. tbC responds to this problem by engaging a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice that obscures young artists' biographical details. Presenting artworks ahead of young

[549] Ibid., 39.
[550] Ranciere, *The Ignorant School Master*, xxii.
[551] Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic.* A comment inspired by this source.

artists' identities limits prejudicial encounters with the group's work, making way for earlier artistic agency and status to develop.

tbC's group dynamic also resembles Michael Farrell's conceptualisation of the "collaborative circle."[552] Farrell describes a collaborative environment as a "primary group consisting of peers … [who] through long periods of dialogue and collaboration, negotiate a common vision that guides their work."[553] tbC's shared vision is guided and supported by long periods of dialogue and collective artistic experimentation. This shared vision and practice also guide individual works, which in turn inspires and guides more group works.

The earlier example of Zak is a good case in point. To reiterate, Zak found the *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* so inspiring that he joined the group, designing and painting stencils artworks along the laneway. While working at tbC, Zak has enfolded his individual interests into the group's collective interests. The relationships he has built through his involvement in the *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* have empowered him as an artist in a way that working alone could not have. Furthermore, Zak was 12 when he began making art with tbC, which proves my earlier point that age and limited biographies need not impede arts practice or the building of artistic agency and status.

The debate around individual authorship within the collective space versus group consensus is ongoing and often punctuated by contradictions. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, egos, hierarchies, blurred authorship, division of labour, invisibility, and multiple visions have and always will contest the parameters and structures of group work. As the writer of

[552] Michael Farrell, *Collaborative Circles: Friendship Dynamics and Creative Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
[553] Ibid., 11.

this sentiment, Kim Charnley, notes, we need to acknowledge this debate and embrace the contradictions surrounding the concept of authorship – just as we embrace the contradictory nature of democracy and politics.[554] This investigation acknowledges that tbC's model of collaborative arts practice is not without contradiction or complexity. However, the model has successfully engaged scores of artists in durational collaborative arts practice for more than a decade and has had significant success in delivering collective artistic agency and status to young artists, which the upcoming case study analysis will verify.

In closing this section, I'd like to signpost a specific authorship tension that came up for me during tbC's development of the two *Art of Conversation* projects (Case Study Three and Four). While I will discuss this tension in detail in the next chapter, I want to note here that this tension also centres around the concept of individual authorship in the collective space and my initial struggle to define the two artworks as jointly authored. However, what began as an authorial conundrum ended up reinforcing tbC's group practice and joint authorship methodology and the contentions made within this research. The case study analysis of these two artworks will demonstrate how the collaborative processes that supported their making transformed them into more than individually authored works within the collective space. Like tbC's other collaborative artworks, joint authorship best describes the culture of artmaking and presentation in both cases.

Furthermore, joint authorship best describes the joint rights and ownership of these collaboratively made artworks, which I will examine next.

[554] Charnley, "Dissensus and the Politics of Collaborative Practice," 38 and 46. A Comment inspired by this source.

Affirming tbC's joint authorship model

Words often used to characterise the joint nature of something include common, shared, communal, collective, mutual, multiple, reciprocal, cooperative, collaborative, concerted, joined, combined, allied, united, co and contributing. These words are all excellent descriptions of tbC's authorship dynamic. However, some are more relevant than others and will be compared and contrasted below.

Co-authorship and the concept of the contributing author see a more formal, hierarchical positioning of contributing authors – often seen in the way many academic papers and post-doctoral research projects are authored. The order of authors is usually based on reputation, employment and even income. This does not adequately describe tbC's horizontal model of practice and group authorship.

Multi-authorship describes the presence of numerous authors and comes close to defining the combined, equal process of making art at tbC. However, the term describes a form of group authorship that is often distinguished by a collection of authors as opposed to unified authorship. Multi-authorship usually pertains to book projects where chapters are written by different authors or group exhibitions that involve artists presenting solo works together. tbC's *Hoodie Mag* project could arguably be classified as an example of multi-authorship, but as I indicated earlier, there are deeply collaborative practices and processes that go on behind the presentation of *Hoodie Mag* that make it more than just a compilation of individual artistic works and more than multi-authored. This difference will be described in detail in Case Study One in the next chapter. The *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* and *The Art of Conversation (Gallery)* are also arguably examples of a group exhibition of multiple solo works. However, again, the collaborative backstories to these works reinforce

their joint authorship status. Again, these backstories will be explored in detail in the case study section ahead. In short, the argument is that multi-authorship is more aligned with the concept of the individual author within the collective space and that this is not a true enough description of tbC's authorship dynamic. tbC is definitely multi-artist-led, but multi-authorship is still not as good a description as joint authorship for tbC's group authorship dynamic. The durational and deeply connected practices and process of conceiving, making and presenting at tbC results in artworks and outcomes that are entangled, intertwined and hard to separate from each other.

Like multi-authorship, collective authorship generally refers to a compilation (often describing a periodical, anthology or encyclopedia) in which several separate and independent works are assembled into a bigger work. Ownership generally remains with the individual maker of each work included in a compilation.[555] The fact that tbC's durational and deeply connected practices and processes are entangled, intertwined and hard to separate from each other means that this definition is also inappropriate. tbC's collaborative practice is much more than a series of individual and collaborative works sitting together in collective presentation. Even the Vertical Platform project amounts to more than a series of individually created artworks presented within the collective space. Mainly because of the deeply collaborative practices and processes that occur in the conceiving and making of these works. *Vertical Platform* artworks involve collective practices and processes from the conception, editing, design and production phases. As a result, artists are regarded as more than contributors and authorship is regarded as more than collective.

[555] "Joint Authorship and Collective Works: Copyright," University of California, accessed February 19, 2019, https://copyright.universityofcalifornia.edu/ownership/joint-works.html. Ownership and authorship can be attributed to the complier of such a production.

The term joint authorship more aptly reflects tbC's shared authorship practices and the shared ownership of the artworks the group makes. Joint authorship and ownership describe the presence of more than one author where copyright is shared. Copyright law is a legal framework that covers the rights and uses of creative or artistic work.[556]This law helps my investigation define and distinguish tbC's authorship dynamic as joint. Definitions of joint authorship found within Australian and American copyright law present useful national and international frames of reference. These frameworks reinforce this investigation's decision to characterise tbC's authorship model as joint. While tbC has never had to defend the ownership of jointly authored works, this investigation acknowledges that all members share in both the authorship and ownership of tbC artworks.[557] To reiterate, tbC's joint authorship results from inclusive studio conversations about agreed artistic terms, collectively devised creative practices and collaboratively made artworks – artworks that have been repeatedly presented and published without incident.

The *Australian Copyright Act 1968* defines a work of joint authorship as "a work that has been produced via the collaboration of two or more authors and in which the contribution of each author is not separate from the contribution of other authors."[558] A joint work is defined in Section 101 of the *U.S. Copyright Act (2016)* as a work prepared by two or more authors with the intention that their contributions be merged into inseparable or interdependent parts of a unitary whole.[559] US Copyright Law expert, the late J.A.L.Sterling, notably argues that joint authorship occurs when "two or more persons contribute enough to the work to be the

[556] Office of Parliamentary Counsel, Canberra. *Australian Copyright Act* No. 63, 1968. Section 10, Part 11 – Interpretation, https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016C00253.
[557] The use and acknowledgment of these artworks is covered by a Creative Commons (CC BY) licence, as noted in the front matter of this dissertation and the introduction.
[558] Office of Parliamentary Counsel, Canberra. *Australian Copyright Act* 23.
[559] Copyright Law of the United States, "101 Definitions: Joint Work," in *Copyright Law of the United States: and Related Laws Contained in Title 17 of the United States Code* December (2011): 4, https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/us/us352en.pdf.

author of that work."[560] He also argues that "[i]n the case of joint authorship, the authors share the copyright in the work with each other."[561] Fellow US copyright law expert William Patry reinforces this, arguing that "in the case of joint authorship, each author is the owner of not only the part he or she created but of the whole work."[562] US legal case *Thomson v Larson 1998* further distinguishes joint authorship by stating that the concept is also defined by the intention to make work together at the conception of a work, arguing that "[t]he core of joint authorship is joint labouring by two or more persons in order to complete a pre-concerted common design [and that i]n the absence of a pre-concerted common design, the completed work will not be regarded as a joint work."[563] The US legal case *Edward B Marks Music Corp v Jerry Vogel Music Co. (1942)* is another case in point, arguing that a jointly authored work (in this case a song) is constituted when the person who created the lyrics for the song does so with the intention that they will be combined with music created by another person, or vice versa, and that the composition is made complete because of this intention.[564]

The University of California's copyright website also provides an excellent definition of joint authorship. This website was created to respond to the needs of educators and scholars for information on copyright policies and laws and how to apply them to academic work. The university describes jointly-authored works as works prepared by two or more individuals where the separate contributions merge into a single work and that this results in the joint authors sharing in any status, profits or ownership of such work.[565]

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[560] J.A.L. Sterling, *World Copyright Law*, (London: Sweet & Maxwell, 2008), 210.
[561] Copyright Law of the United States, "101 Definitions: Joint Work," 4.
[562] William F Patry, *Patry on Copyright.* (Toronto: Thomson Reuters, 2012), 5-17.
[563] Lynn M. THOMSON, Plaintiff-Appellant, v. Allan S. LARSON, Nanette Larson, and Julie Larson McCollum, Defendants-Appellees, United States Court of Appeals, Second Circuit, Docket No. 97-9085, Decided: June 19, 1998, https://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-2nd-circuit/1392355.html.
[564] Marks v Vogel Music Co. "Edward B. Marks Music Corp. v. Jerry Vogel Music Co., 47 F. Supp. 490 (S.D.N.Y. 1942)" https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/47/490/1799427/.
[565] University of California, "Copyright," accessed February 19, 2019, https://copyright.universityofcalifornia.edu/index.html.

All of these examples appropriately describe tbC's joint authorship model, the connecting tenets being the merging of contributions into a single work or body of work and the sharing of the rights and ownership of these works. Arguing that any single tbC artist has a bigger claim than another over collaboratively made artworks is difficult. As a co-founding member of tbC, even I find this claim too difficult to make, as explained in Case Study Three. As previously discussed, the main reason for this is that the creative input and intellectual property associated with tbC artworks is difficult to assign to individual artists, because tbC's spirited group dynamic makes it difficult to track and trace the provenance of ideas and authorship, especially in the heat of the creative moment. Over the group's more than decade-long practice, artists have come to understand that the creative process naturally takes precedence at tbC and that the provenance of the creative idea is less of a priority. The many studio discussions that take place during artmaking at tbC acknowledge that to interrupt the creative process to record intricate details of who said what and when or to keep an account of where ideas originated from is inconsistent with tbC's spirited creative environment. tbC artists are less interested in traces and recordings of authorship and more engaged in the group's open and unrestrained creative processes. (Sonya's earlier observations being an excellent case in point).

Artists understand that individual authorship is inextricably entangled within the collaborative processes that result in the production of artistic works at tbC. They understand that individual authorship is not easily assigned due to the free-flowing and free-forming nature of these creative processes and that assigning joint authorship is fair and appropriate. Like the members of Raqs Media Collective, members of tbC don't see their artistic selves or lives getting lost in this communal process. Instead, they feel liberated and empowered

by this process.[566] (Josiah's earlier observations reinforce this sentiment). These sentiments are also embedded within the dialogical content of the two *Art of Conversation* projects and will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

It is, however, important to reiterate that while artists do make individual works in the studio at tbC, it is the group work and the group dynamic that artists attribute to the successful building of artistic agency and status, as demonstrated through the many studio conversations and dialogical artworks found within the website that accompanies this dissertation. This understanding inspired the focus of this investigation around how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. tbC artists see authorship as vested in the relationships that tie the group together and have come to understand that collapsing individual identities into the communal body and biography of the group[567] liberates them from the constraints of their individual biographies and delivers them artistic agency and status they have less success building on their own.

Like the way the term multi-artist-led best describes tbC's culture of collaboration, the term joint authorship best describes tbC's "inseparable and interdependent"[568] arts authoring. This research argues that the four case studies at the centre of this investigation are examples of multi-artist-led collaborative arts and joint authorship practices. Each case study will be examined in detail in Chapter Five, with specific models of collaboration and authorship highlighted and theorised.

[566] Nicolet-dit-Felix and Vardar. "Raqs Media Collective."
[567] Ibid.
[568] Copyright Law of the United States, "101 Definitions: Joint Work," 4.

Troubling solo-authored research of a collaborative practice

In terms of my role as artist-researcher, I am acutely aware of the fact that I am a solo investigator gathering and interpreting data from and about a group practice. The fact that this dissertation is about collaboration but is not collaboratively authored creates a real tension for me. While I understand this authorship tension is hard to resolve, I feel it is important to acknowledge it, especially considering my claims about equity, communal status building and power-sharing. This issue has been threaded through various discussions within this dissertation around collaboration and equity and is reinforced here.

I have purposefully designed this investigation as an observational one to relieve myself from some of this authorial tension. Hence, I have not applied for ethics approval to directly solicit the opinions of my young collaborators. As noted in the introduction and Chapter Two, many of my collaborators are under eighteen years of age, making the solicitation of their opinions problematic. Furthermore, as most members self-select into the group, parental consent is not always possible or desired by the young member. It is, however, implied by the young artists' ongoing membership. As also noted earlier, this membership arrangement has operated without a negative incident for over a decade.

I further alleviate the authorial tension I experience in submitting solo-authored research about a collaborative practice by acknowledging the fact that while this investigation examines my embedded observations of group methods of practice and not the direct opinions of my collaborators, the impact my collaborators have had on this research is clear and present in the collaborative artwork and artistic modes of engagement presented and examined throughout this research-creation.

Incorporated within this observational approach is a case study method of data-gathering and analysis. As this is an artistic inquiry, these case studies are presented as research artefacts. Three of the four case study artworks are dialogical and literally contain my collaborators' in-practice opinions about the subject of this investigation. As already explained, this in-practice dialogue has become a key material and medium of artistic practice at tbC and amounts to a rich source of creative knowledge. As the four case studies at the centre of this investigation and the companion website are research artefacts the valuable creative data that emerges from them can be used to support my observational arguments. To reiterate, these artefacts are collaboratively made, have existed within the public domain unchallenged and directly examine the question at the centre of this investigation.

What also alleviates the authorial tension surrounding this solo PhD research about a collaborative practice is the fact that including my collaborators in the authoring of this doctorate is not an achievable goal based on the fact that more than one person cannot author doctoral research.[569] Even when two people are writing about the same subject or site, two discreet doctoral works need to be created. As already noted, while journal articles and some post-doctoral research allow for multi-authorship or even co-first authorship,[570] the academy does not accept multi-authored PhD research.[571]

As discussed in Chapter Two, a participatory action research approach could have supported the solicitation of my collaborators' viewpoints. However, this was not deemed an equal enough relationship to draw viewpoints and observations from. My collaborators are not

[569] Even though there are rare examples of people under the age of eighteen receiving doctorates (the youngest being thirteen-year-old child prodigy Karl Witte in 1913, who became a Dante scholar later in his academic life) this is not a customary occurrence. See, "Top 10 Youngest People to Earn their Doctorates," Online PhD Programs, accessed July 6, 2019, https://www.online-phd-programs.org/youngest-phd/.
[570] Lapidow, Amy and Paige Scudder, "Shared First Authorship," *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 107, no. 4 (2019): 618-620, file:///Users/tiffaneybishop/Desktop/Wokring%20PHD/700-6605-2-PB.pdf.
[571] Nor does it allow for the sharing of academic authorship with minors.

research subjects. They are partners in the making and thinking that have inspired and informed this research. What I have come to understand more fully is that while this research is based on my embedded observations of how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports the building of artistic agency and status in young artists, it is the rich artistic data housed within the companion website and the case study artworks that breathes life into this observational account. The voices and opinions of my collaborators echo throughout the creative artefacts at the centre of this investigation – without which this research would be bereft of its authenticity, power and importance.

In summarising this chapter, I return to Haraway's conceptualisation of the articulata.[572] Earlier discussion focused on how Haraway's conceptualisation of the articulata relates to the way this investigation is "jointed [and] cobbled together"[573] and how the combining of artistic and scholarly inquiry supports a fuller understanding of the power tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has in supporting young artists in building artistic agency and status. I'd like to reiterate that tbC itself can be viewed as an articulata. tbC is a group of artists cobbled together, constituting an articulated entity that creates new and novel artworks. Young and older artists with a range of skills, passions and drives breathe life into this collaborative arts practice from which new forms of artistic agency and status are achieved, and new forms of collaboratively inspired knowledge emerge.

The next chapter foregrounds the case study data-gathering method before exploring the four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation. These case study artworks reveal detailed knowledge about how tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice delivers artistic agency and status to young artists.

[572] Haraway, *The Haraway Reader*, 105-106; Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters," 324.
[573] Ibid.

Chapter Five

Art(e)facts and D(art)a

Engaging the case study as both "a means of knowing and a method of telling."[574]

This research-creation is supported by a case study method of data collection and analysis. Four collaboratively made artworks examine group methods and practices at tbC. To reiterate, these include a printed and online magazine, a street art project, a digital artwork and a series of works on paper hung in the gallery. These case study artworks reveal specific knowledge about the communal and reciprocal benefits of a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and how this practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status. Underpinning the success of this collaborative arts and joint authorship practice is a dedicated arts focus, non-hierarchical governance and an informal arts pedagogy. Discussion around the importance of these supporting features is included in the case study analysis.

The four case study artworks emerged from regular practice at tbC and are based on previous iterations. All four were exhibited in site-specific spaces at the time of their making – a time frame that coincides with this artistic inquiry. Young member artists self-selected into the making of these artworks and were not asked to do anything they were not already doing as part of their group practice at tbC. Artists were not formally interviewed and were aware they could withdraw at any point.[575] Despite not being formally interviewed, the voices of

[574] Laurel Richardson, *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 58.

[575] A Plain Language Statement was pinned to the studio wall detailing the scope of the research and its design. Artists and parents were aware of this and provided informed consent via ongoing membership. This informed consent covers the presentation of photographic and film documentation within this research-creation, documentation that has been published numerous times without consequence.

my young collaborators reverberate throughout the case study analysis via the studio dialogue that is both the medium and material of the works being examined – works that speak directly to the subject of this research. I will elaborate on the important role this in-practice knowledge plays in more detail shortly.

The case study method emerged from the Chicago School of Sociology[576] in the 1960s as an observational, reflective and interpretative data-gathering technique. It is a method widely used across several disciplines, including health, business, education, law, arts and the broader social sciences. It supports in-depth and durational examinations,[577] making it particularly useful to the artist-researcher whose proximity is closely connected to the site or activity being examined. The method effectively connects the lived (creative) and academic experience intrinsic to artistic research[578] and is often used by researchers exploring the 'how' and 'why' of something.[579] This investigation looks at how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

Artistic practices are often centred around ephemeral and phenomenal experiences[580] that are difficult to manifest from a distance or over a short timeframe. A case study method supports the artist-researcher's examination of these kinds of experiences through the senses, up close and over time. While case study data doesn't always produce statistical or

[576] The University of Chicago, "About: The Department of Sociology," accessed October 28, 2019, https://sociology.uchicago.edu/content/history-culture.
[577] Sarah Crowe, et al., "The Case Study Approach," *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 11, no. 100 (June 2011): 1, https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-11-100.
[578] Julian Meyrick, "Reflections on the Applicability of Case Study Methodology to Performance as Research," *Text Journal* 18, No. 2 (October 2014): 9, http://www.textjournal.com.au/oct14/meyrick.htm.
[579] Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research Design and Methods*, (California: Sage Publications, 1994). Also noted in, BedrettinYazan, "Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake," *The Qualitative Report* 20, no. 2 (2015): 138 and 148, http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR20/2/yazan1.pdf.
[580]Meyrick, "Reflections," 9.

quantifiable proof, it does produce valuable anecdotal and experiential information that can be tested and validated through the reappearance of data, embedded observation, deep reflection and critical analysis. In this context, recurring themes, patterns and generalisable tenants corroborate data, making it more explicit or, as Nelson argues, more verifiable.[581]

This investigation gathers data directly from four case study artworks and the in-practice observations and experiences found in their making. Multifaceted field notes support the analysis of this data and include dialogue, photos, videos, mind maps, artworks, stories, poems, journal writing, blogs and vlogs. Together, this data provides a fuller understanding of tbC's group dynamic and its power to support the artistic development of young artists. Knowledge extrapolated from this data is critically analysed, validated, and verified by recurring themes and patterns found within tbC's thirteen-year arts practice and the seven-year timeframe of this investigation.

Research findings are drawn from the combined creative, narrative and dialogical data that emerges from these case study artworks. In the case of *Hoodie Mag*, visual, literary and digital creations reveal storied data about the impact a collaborative and jointly authored publishing project has on the development of artistic agency and status in young artists. The *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* is based around writing, drawing and painting, from which more coded stories emerge about the impact this model has on young artists' development. In the case of the two *Art of Conversation* artworks, studio conversations about this empowering model of arts practice are literally the medium and material of both works. Together, these four case study artworks provide this investigation with valuable in-practice knowledge.

[581] Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts*, 62.

Arts-informed researchers Ardra Cole and Gary Knowles describe creative data as representational forms of knowledge.[582] These forms of knowledge extend beyond the boundaries of written and numerical data. Pictures, diagrams, maps, poetry, films, music, audio, technology, performance and face-to-face encounters[583] are all sources of creative data. Even without written or numerical support, creative data embodies valuable narrative qualities.

The case study approach often involves the collection and examination of narrative data. Despite the fact that the most popular source of narrative data is the formal interview,[584] other less formal kinds of narrative data are highly regarded, such as oral stories, diaries, letters, autobiographies, archival or historical accounts and, as noted above, visual and performative narratives and casual face-to-face encounters. Academic authors Viveca Nyström and Linnéa Sjögren argue that storytelling, conversational and real-life settings reveal valuable informal narrative data and that this informal data is harder to find via interviews or questionnaires.[585] Instead of soliciting information from formal interviews or questionnaires, this investigation gathers and analyses data that emerges through creative and conversational practices. This method results in the discovery of valuable informal narrative data around how a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

[582] Ardra Cole and Gary Knowles, "Arts-Informed Research," in *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues*, ed. Gary Knowles and Ardra Cole, (New York: Sage Publications), 5; See also, Cole and Knowles, eds. *Lives in Context: The Art of Life History Research* (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 2001), 25. A comment inspired by these sources.
[583]Michael Murray, "Narrative Data," in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection*, ed. Uwe Flick, (London: Sage Publications, 2018), 2, https://methods.sagepub.com/base/download/BookChapter/the-sage-handbook-of-qualitative-data-collection/i1943.xml.
[584]Ibid.
[585]Viveca Nyström and Linnéa Sjögren, *An Evaluation of the Benefits and Value of Libraries* (Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2012), 41 and 84.

This informal narrative data is often referred to as dialogical, which means related to or in the form of dialogue.[586] Dialogue denotes conversational exchanges between two or more people, as opposed to monologue, which is a solo concept and does not include another's response.[587] Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin foregrounded the concept of dialogical inquiry, arguing that life is dialogic – a shared event.[588] He further contends that living requires one to participate in dialogue and that valuable meaning comes about through dialogue.[589] tbC's artistic processes and practices are largely dialogical, and the data that emerge from these processes and practices speak directly to the subject of this research. However, even though the voices and opinions of my collaborators reverberate throughout the artworks being investigated (revealing valuable in-practice and dialogical data), I am careful not to speak too much for or on their behalf. Although my observational approach is an embedded and durational one, I am particularly mindful not to "finalise"[590] my collaborators through the analysis and reporting of this dialogical data.

Bakhtin talks about the concept of finalisation in relation to Makar Devushkin, a fictional character in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Poor Folk.*[591] Dostoevsky's novel portrays the tension that arises when someone feels that their life is being analysed and described by another.[592] *Poor Folk* is written in the form of letters between Devushkin and distant relative Varvara Dobroselova. At one point in the story, Dobroselova sends Devushkin a copy of Nikolai

[586] *Oxford English Dictionary*, "Dialogical," "Dialogue," "Monologue." Version 11.7. 712 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).
[587]Ibid., "Monologue."
[588] As noted in Coghlan and Brydon-Miller *The Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research*, 73. Also see, Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 270-271.
[589] Ibid. Also see Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 352.
[590] Arthur Frank, "What Is Dialogical Research, and Why Should We Do It?" *Qualitative Health Research*, 15 (2005): 965, https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305279078; Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 427; Bakhtin, "Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics," in *Theory and History of Literature*, trans. Caryl Emerson, vol. 8 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 58.
[591] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Poor Folk*, (St. Petersburg: The Almanac, 1846).
[592]Bakhtin, "Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics," 58 and 59. A comment inspired by this source.

Gogol's *The Overcoat*.[593] As Devushkin reads the novel, he recognises similarities between himself and the main character, Akaky Bashmachkin, to which he takes offence.[594] He misinterprets the book as a negative reflection and finalisation of his own life. The inclusion of Gogol's novel within Dostoevsky's own storyline is meant to create this tension in Devushkin's character. Bakhtin argues that Dostoevsky creates the sense of finalisation in Devushkin to critique the complex relationship between literary representation and interpretation.[595]

However, Dostoevsky gives Devushkin's character the literary space to examine this tension. As such, Devushkin becomes more than the object of authorial discourse; he becomes the subject of his own directly signifying discourse.[596] Bakhtin argues that by doing this, Dostoevsky creates a polyphonic literary work within which his characters have a voice – arguably as fully weighted as his own.[597] Bakhtin views Dostoevsky's *Poor Folk* as a radical example of dialogical authorship through which multiple views and voices are expressed. This theory supports the argument that although this investigation relies on my observational reflections and analysis of a collaborative arts practice, the dialogical data that emerges from this reflection and analysis gives weight to my collaborators' critical role in the passage and outcome of this research. This, in turn, minimises their finalisation. Even in the analysis and reporting of the case study artworks at the centre of this investigation, I am noticeably speaking with – not about – my collaborators. Bakhtin writes about this in relation to the

[593] Nikolai Gogol, *The Overcoat* (Egypt: The Library of Alexandria, 1842).
[594] Bakhtin, "Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics,"
[595] Bakhtin, "Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics," 59. A comment inspired by this source. Dostoevsky and Gogol have published several works that illustrate and discuss this problem, both implicitly and explicitly. Also see, Georgianne Maroon, "Dostoevsky and Gogol's Acknowledgments of Writers' Limitations," *WR: Journal of the Arts & Sciences Writing Program*, Issue 2, 2009–2010, 14. https://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/journal/past-issues/issue-2/maroon/.
[596] Bakhtin, "Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics," 7.
[597] Ibid.

dialogical author, who he argues "speaks not 'about' a character, but 'with' him."[598] The fact that the voices and opinions of my collaborators are palpably present throughout the artworks this investigation examines (and the fact that these voices and artworks directly speak to the subject of this research) reduces the risk of finalisation. It also allows my collaborators to indirectly share in the agency and status that arises from this research. I have repeatedly reinforced this research goal throughout this dissertation, a goal that is inextricably connected to my practice goals.

Moreover, the voices and opinions of my collaborators are not finalised by the conclusion of this research because they are part of a living practice that allows these voices and opinions to continue to form and resonate. As in Bakhtin's dialogical ideal, I do not see this research report as a final statement of who and what tbC is. It is part of a continuing dialogue through which my collaborators and I progressively form and frame ourselves and the story about our collaboration.[599] The companion website that accompanies this dissertation was designed partly to keep this artistic inquiry as alive as the practice it investigates.

Academics Yuni Sari Amalia et al. write about how dialogical research is characterised by reciprocity, joint efforts and collaboration and that the method is well suited to research that is multivocal and socially critical.[600] Multivocal communication, reciprocity, joint effort, shared events and social practices underpin the making of the four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation. While a solicited data approach could have directly questioned

[598] Bakhtin, "Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics," 63; Frank, "Practicing Dialogical Narrative Analysis, in Varieties of Narrative Analysis," in *Varieties of Narrative Analysis*, eds. James Holstein and Jaber F. Gubrium (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2012), 34, http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781506335117;
[599] Bakhtin, "Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics." A comment in response to this source.
[600] Yuni Sari Amalia et al., "Dialogue in Narrative Inquiry: Collaboration in Doctoral Study in the USA," in *International Handbook of Interpretation in Educational Research Methods*, eds. P. Smeyers, D. Bridges, N. Burbules and M. Griffiths (Netherlands: Springer, 2015), 161-162.

tbC artists about these modes of practice, the monologic traits and prescribed conditions associated with such an approach contradict the relaxed, communal and reciprocal environment that characterises tbC's model of arts practice. Instead of critiquing the formal testimony of my collaborators, I examine a series of artworks we made together – artworks created through what sociologist Arthur Frank refers to as an "ongoing process of anticipation and response to each other's voices."[601] The data that emerges from this dialogical artmaking and analysis not only answers the question at the centre of this investigation, it acknowledges the impact my collaborators have had on the passage and outcome of this investigation.

In summing up, I'd like to reiterate that the four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation contain creative, narrative and dialogical data that directly relate to the subject of this research. Despite being less formal than solicited data, this knowledge constitutes what academics Molly Andrews, Corinne Squire and Maria Tamboukou refer to as valuable "routes to understanding."[602] Creative, narrative and dialogical practices and outcomes have been revealing knowledge about tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and the way this practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status for years now. Three of the four case study artworks at the centre of this investigation are literally embedded with narratives and dialogues that exemplify tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and the hypothesis that this practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

These four case study artworks and their analysis are housed within the artefact that accompanies this dissertation – the companion website. Situating this analysis within the

[601] Ibid., 966.
[602] Molly Andrews, Corinne Squire and Maria Tamboukou, eds. *Doing Narrative Research* (California: Sage Publications, 2008), 5.

context of artistic practice supports the methodological intentions behind the design of this research-creation by facilitating an authentic connection between artistic and academic sites of knowledge-making. This approach also connects the reader of this dissertation to a multisensory encounter with the research site and the data that emerges from its examination. This experience gives the reader a fuller understanding of tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and how this practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

As I signalled in the introduction, I write from different points of view throughout this research-creation. I sometimes use the first-person pronoun 'I' to reinforce the more solo practice of the dissertation. I sometimes use the first-person plural 'we' to reflect the collaborative and joint authorship practice that characterises the site of this research and my place within this practice, and I sometimes use the third person to reference the thoughts and actions of others I come into contact with during my artistic research. I sometimes even use the second person to talk directly to you, the reader, when I prompt you to interact with one of tbC's artworks. The companion website that accompanies this dissertation uses a similar combination of points of view. However, for the four case studies (which are housed within the companion website), I have chosen to only write in the third person to ensure the accounts maintain a scholarly tone – especially considering they sit outside this more formal space of the dissertation. I have also written the case studies as stand-alone narratives, which includes brief recapitulation. This also makes it easier for a member of the general public who finds these studies via their experience of the website to benefit from the self-contained knowledge such stand-alone presentation delivers.

The page that follows presents a synopsis of each case study. Each case study has its own hyperlink connecting the reader to the companion website. Return to this page to link yourself to each case. (There are also consecutive links at the conclusion of each case study analysis, which allows the reader to remain inside the website for the duration of this analysis). Once the four case studies have been explored, return to this dissertation to read the conclusion.

As signposted earlier, tbC's four key operating characteristics will be used as analytical frameworks throughout the case study analysis. They include dedicated arts practice, non-hierarchical governance, informal arts pedagogy, collaboration and joint authorship - collaboration and joint authorship being the main focus of this analysis.

Four case study artworks

1. *Hoodie Mag*: A collaboratively made and jointly authored youth arts publishing project that combines literary, visual, interactive and digital creations within a group presentation. *Hoodie Mag* is published in both a printed format (as a book) and an electronic format (as a website) and has been in development since 2010. This case study focuses on the 2017 edition and examines the artistic agency and status achieved through a collaborative and jointly authored publishing practice.

2. *Blacksmiths Ways Graffiti and Street Art Project*: A collaboratively made and jointly authored public art project created in a semi-anonymous way by means of the pseudonym. This case study focuses on the 2017 iteration of this project and examines the artistic agency and status achieved through a collaborative and jointly authored public arts practice.

3. *The Art of Conversation (Digital)*: A collaboratively made and jointly authored dialogical artwork that engages the general public in conversation with tbC artists via interactive digital technology. Anyone can scan the artwork (with a free app) and engage in a creative conversation. Conversation starters come from tbC's social and studio spaces. The wider public adds to these conversations by interacting with the artwork. This case study focuses on tbC's 2017 version of *The Art of Conversation (Digital)* and examines the artistic agency and status achieved through a collaborative and jointly authored practice that is socially engaged and digitally augmented.

4. *The Art of Conversation (Gallery)*: A collaboratively made and jointly authored exhibition project. Works take the form of 2D prints on paper that contain fine mesh-like layers of text (and sometimes accompanying imagery). These works present colloquial and visual dialogue about young artists and tbC's group practices around artistic agency and status. Dialogue originates from tbC's social and studio spaces and practices and the work is authored and presented as a group conversation. This case study focuses on tbC's 2017 exhibition of *The Art of Conversation (Gallery)* and examines the artistic agency and status achieved through a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice within the gallery space.

Conclusion

This artistic inquiry has examined modes of collaboration and authorship within a thirteen-year-old youth-driven, adult and peer mentored artist-run initiative called tbC, based in suburban Melbourne, Australia. The inquiry has specifically focused on how tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice helps young artists build artistic agency and status.

Three supportive characteristics underpin this collaborative arts and joint authorship practice. They include a non-hierarchical governance and operation that empowers artists of all ages and stages, a dedicated arts focus that reinforces the arts in youth arts and an informal arts pedagogy in the form of mentoring. These supporting characteristics have been examined alongside the main focus of this investigation and their importance confirmed as part of the overall success this collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has had in delivering young creatives artistic agency and status.

An extended discussion around the distinctions between tbC's arts practice, youth development and arts education firmly situates this investigation within the youth arts space. Academics like Dewey, Giroux, Freire, Cahill, Hickey-Moody, Eisner and Charland support an extended comparative analysis of these different youth activities, resulting in two important deductions. One, youth development focuses on the health, wellbeing and community citizenship of young people in general, while youth arts focuses on artmaking and presentation and the aesthetic citizenship of young artists. Two, arts education is a formal and directed activity, whereas youth arts is less formal and self-directed.

While these distinctions seem clear, these activities are routinely conflated. This is often the result of governmental and/or institutional pressure to broaden the scope and impact of youth engagement. However, in the case of youth arts, emphasising youth development and formal education can be both a disabling and intimidating experience for young artists.[603] This research argues that this conflation limits artistic practice's intrinsic value and creative potential. Admittedly, tbC's dedicated arts practice delivers significant developmental and educational benefits. However, this is not by design but by default. The critical argument being that in the case of youth arts, developmental and educational benefits naturally emerge through dedicated artistic practice and do not need to be overemphasised.

This examination has also highlighted that while many youth development and arts education programs and activities are available to young people in communities worldwide, there are far fewer dedicated art programs, especially durational ones. Even the youth arts projects this research comparatively analysed prove the aforementioned tendency to conflate art with developmental and educational activities and outcomes. This affirms the argument that the intrinsic value and creative potential of artistic practice within youth arts are under-supported and, by default, under-examined.

Making the field of youth arts practice and research more arts-centred requires acknowledging the young artists' dedicated creative journey as a beneficial pursuit. It also means making dedicated art practices more available to young artists. This investigation challenges the community (both general and artistic) to re-evaluate their understanding of youth arts and acknowledge the need for a dedicated youth arts convention.

[603] Cahill, "Resisting Risk," 24. A comment inspired by this source.

Collaboration is key to the development of tbC's youth arts practice, the success of which is demonstrated through durational practice, sustained membership, an extensive body of group work, as well as the rich dialogical content found within these group works.

This investigation distinguishes tbC's model of collaboration from participation, drawing on the theoretical discourse of theorists like Bishop,[604] Kester,[605] Arnstein[606] and Helguera.[607] It identifies tbC's collaborative arts practice as multi-artist-led rather than artist-led via the comparative analysis of community-based artists like Lacy, Bruguera, Fletcher and Rollins. The discourse around Bourriaud's Relational Aesthetics,[608] Kester's Dialogical Aesthetics[609] and the expansive literature around socially engaged art[610] contextualises the social environment and practices that intersect with tbC's studio art practices, revealing how a combination of relational and material practices shapes the group's collaborative arts model.

The other critical part of tbC's united front approach to making and presenting art involves assigning joint authorship. In theorising this model of joint authorship, I have examined the discourse of literary philosophers like Mallarmé, Barthes and Foucault.

Mallarmé's writing around the authorless text (artwork) speaking for itself[611] has helped me theorise tbC's joint authorship model as an example of artistic empowerment. Assigning joint authorship at tbC forestalls prejudicial receptions of artworks made by the group -

[604] Bishop, *Participation*; Bishop, *Artificial Hells*.
[605] Kester, *The One and the Many*.
[606] Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation."
[607] Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*.
[608] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*.
[609] Kester, "Dialogical Aesthetics".
[610] Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*; Kester, "Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially Engaged Art"; Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics"; Bishop, "The Social Turn."
[611] Barthes "The Death of the Author," 143.

prejudices often associated with individual artists' biographies. Making and presenting work together at tbC advances artworks ahead of members' biographies. This encourages viewers to evaluate the artworks the group makes through an aesthetic lens rather than a biographical one, paving the way for the earlier development of artistic agency and status.

Barthes' writing around the way we often look for authority, reliability and authenticity in the person who has produced a text (artwork) and not often enough in the text (artwork) itself[612] supports tbC's united front approach to making and presenting art and this investigation around it. Barthes' dialogue around authorship's inherently collaborative and social nature [613] also supports this investigation's theorising around tbC's community-based location and socially engaged artmaking. tbC's accessible, inclusive and relational art practice is a key reason for the group's longevity and sustained membership. Some member artists have been with tbC since its inception in 2008; others stay for years at a time.

Foucault's dialogue around how authorship affects the way audiences view, value and validate texts (artworks)[614] has also helped me articulate how tbC's group dynamic privileges the merit of a work of art ahead of individual artist's identities, particularly the way this practice presents tbC as 'the artist'. tbC's united front approach to making and presenting art advances artworks the group makes ahead of members' identities, again paving the way for earlier artistic agency and status to develop.

Designing a methodological framework to support this artistic inquiry proved a complex task. Many of my collaborators are under the age of eighteen. Most self-select into tbC's

[612] Heath, *Roland Barthes,* 143.
[613] Barthes, "The Death of the Author." 144. A comment Barthes made in relation to surrealism.
[614] Foucault, "What is an Author." 126.

collaborative arts practice, preferring to engage with the model independently of their parents. This makes soliciting the opinions of my artist collaborators problematic as formal permission is hard to secure.[615] Moreover, as I noted in Chapter Five, the monologic traits and prescribed conditions associated with the formal solicitation of research data contradict the relaxed and communal environment that characterises tbC's model of arts practice.

These constraints and concerns led me to engage a research-creation methodology and a case study method of data-gathering and analysis, characterising this investigation as creative and observational. It's important to remember that I am a co-founding and active member of tbC and have been embedded in the space of this artistic inquiry for thirteen years. This investigation argues that the inherent subjectivities[616] within my embedded research position produce what Haraway calls valuable "situated knowledges and partial perspectives"[617] and that the data that emerges from my artistic inquiry constitutes what Andrews et al. refer to as valuable "routes to understanding."[618]

Research-creation's sensitivity to what Manning and Springgay refer to as the inherent collaboration found within artistic inquiry[619] has supported my efforts to bridge the gap between my collaborative experience of tbC's arts model and my scholarly account of this experience.[620]

[615] To reiterate, young artists' ongoing membership at tbC constitutes informed consent. In relation to this investigation, a Plain Language Statement was pinned to the studio wall detailing the scope of the research and its design. Artists and parents were aware of this and provided informed consent via ongoing membership. This informed consent covers the presentation of photographic and film documentation within this research-creation. Documentation that has been published numerous times without consequence.
[616] Williams and Gilbert, "Cyborg Perspectives on Computing Research Reform," 2.
[617] Haraway, *The Haraway Reader,* 89.
[618] Molly Andrews, et.al *Doing Narrative Research,* 5.
[619] Manning, "Immediations"; Springgay, "Research-Creation."
[620] Ibid.

Chapman, Sawchuck and Springgay's belief that research-creation supports the experimental nature of artistic practice and inquiry (including the use of new media) [621] ensures this research-creation does more than reflect and report on artistic practice but also brings something new into the world.[622] tbC's speculative and experimental artistic practices (which often engage digital technologies and interactivity in the creation and presentation of artistic work) inspired the design of the companion website that accompanies this dissertation. This investigation reveals how a multisensory research-creation transcends traditional linear and literary expressions of knowledge and how connecting artistic and scholarly pursuits brings something new to the tradition of academic inquiry and youth arts scholarship. A multisensory engagement with the site and subject of this research provides the reader with a fuller understanding of the power tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has to support the building of artistic agency and status in young artists.

This investigation is situated at the intersection of youth arts, socially engaged art and informal arts pedagogy. My examination of Loveless's theorising around research-creation's interdisciplinary scope[623] has allowed me to explore these intersections and the underlying support systems within my hybrid practice, resulting in the production of multifaceted knowledge. While not the main focus of the investigation, pedagogical innovation underpins the success tbC has had in building artistic agency and status. The methodology's interest and engagement in innovative pedagogy encouraged me to include extended discussion about tbC's empowering mentoring model, which helped build a fuller research story around the group's sustained membership and the success this has had in building artistic agency

[621] Chapman and Sawchuk "Research-Creation," 6; Springgay, "Research-Creation."
[622] Springgay, Pedagogical Impulse. A comment inspired by this source.
[623] Loveless, "Research-Creation and Social Justice."

and status. Future research may include a closer examination of tbC's informal arts pedagogy.

As a side note, I did consider arts-based action research and participatory action research methodologies for this investigation, based on how both could include my collaborators' participation within the data collection phase of this investigation. This consideration stemmed from my concern about submitting solo research about collaborative practice. This has been a troubling contradiction for me, especially considering tbC's egalitarianism and the group's collective practice of building and sharing agency and status. However, after careful consideration, both methodologies were abandoned because a participatory approach doesn't adequately reflect the collaborative dynamics of the group practice being investigated – collaborative dynamics that include tbC's cohort of artists in significant in-practice speculation and inquiry. As I have repeatedly noted, I understand tbC artists are not able to collaboratively author this research, yet authentically acknowledging their impact on the passage and outcome of this investigation has been an important goal.

Looking to tbC's practice itself ended up helping me solve this research conundrum. tbC has been creatively troubling the concept of artistic agency and status for years through collaboration, conversation, experimentation and dedicated artmaking. These creative investigative practices have produced rich experiential, storied and dialogical data that amounts to valuable in-practice knowledge about tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice and how this practice supports young artists in building artistic agency and status.

Three of the four case studies at the heart of this investigation are dialogical artworks,[624] engaging what Beuys describes as "interdisciplinary and participatory processes in which thought, speech and discussion are core materials."[625] These case study artworks have revealed knowledge through their creative, narrative and dialogical content, knowledge that directly addresses (and inspired) this investigation's research question. I have drawn on this knowledge throughout my observational analysis. In doing so, I have informally involved my collaborators in this artistic inquiry. The fact that the artworks this investigation examines were made during a longstanding and ongoing artistic practice, the fact that young artists have willingly and safely collaborated in the making of them and the fact that these artworks have been repeatedly presented in the public domain without incident makes the data they reveal useful, as well as observable and verifiable.

As noted in Chapter Five, this less formal data has been validated and verified via recurring themes and patterns found within tbC's thirteen-year arts practice and the seven-year timeframe of this investigation. The case study data demonstrate recurring themes and patterns. These recurring themes and patterns revolve around the power a group dynamic and joint authorship practice has in supporting the creative pathways of young artists and the artistic agency and status that emerges from such practice.

The four case study artworks at the heart of this investigation have presented and analysed examples of tbC's print, public, digital and gallery practices and outcomes. These artworks were made by young and older artists working together within a durational group practice. The authorship and ownership of these artworks are shared, as is the artistic agency and

[624] Kester, "Dialogical Aesthetics: A Critical Framework for Littoral Art"; Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*; Kester, *The One and the Many.*
[625] Doherty, *Contemporary Art*..

status they deliver. This concept of shared artistic authorship and ownership informally connects tbC artists to the agency and status this research builds.

The companion website accompanying this dissertation houses these case study artworks and other forms of valuable in-practice knowledge. This website emphasises the connection between practice and inquiry and, as noted earlier, extends the reader a multisensory experience of tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice. The following summary of each case study focuses on the success tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has had on building artistic agency and status in young member artists.

In the case of *Hoodie Mag*, young artists collaboratively made and jointly authored a youth arts publication - combining literary, conversational, visual, interactive and digital creations in a group presentation. In examining this case study artwork, I have identified the magazine as an accessible format for young artists to experiment with and build artistic agency and status from – an agency and status enhanced by radical zine/little magazine culture. *Hoodie Mag* has proven to be a powerful site for the production and reception of contemporary art and the building of community, identity and solidarity.[626] *Hoodie Mag's* accessible and assertive creative format and engaging storied content are key reasons for the publication's success in delivering young tbC artists artistic agency and status. This is supported by artist engagement, public accolades and the magazine's publishing award nominations.[627]

[626] Allen, *The Magazine*, 15.
[627] The inaugural edition of *Hoodie Mag* was shortlisted in the 60th Annual Australian Publisher Association's Book Design Awards for *Best Designed Specialist Illustrated Book 2012*. It also received a finalist nomination for the *Best New Publication For and By Young People Under 30* in the Express Media Literary Book Awards in December 2011.

Even though *Hoodie Mag* artists are presented alongside each other, the power dynamic behind the publication's success comes from the combined effort that goes into its planning, collation and design. Artists have not just independently submitted content for consideration, nor has this been on an ad hoc basis. Content emerged in and through tbC's dynamic collaborative arts practice – via the group's empowering mentoring relationships, spirited social encounters, rebellious experimentations, regular studio conversations and collective design decisions. This means young artists collaborated in defining the publication's overarching character. This combined effort flows through to the look, the feel and the read of *Hoodie Mag*, resulting in a collective outcome that transcends any single artist or artistic input.

This investigation has found few comparative examples of artistic publications like *Hoodie Mag*, arguing that the dedicated and collaborative arts practice surrounding the project further distinguishes it from other (youth) arts publications. The involvement from incubation to publication advances young artists considerable control and power from which significant agency and status have transpired.

In the case of the *Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project*, young artists collaboratively made and jointly authored a public art project via the concept of the pseudonym. Like *Hoodie Mag*, the collective spirit found in making artworks together significantly supported the building of a group identity. This group identity privileged the work made ahead of young artists' biographies, allowing for unreserved artistic agency and status to develop. This group dynamic very much describes the momentum behind achieving artistic agency and status at tbC.

Despite being a dedicated arts initiative, *The Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project's* social and cultural impacts have not gone unnoticed. The images and videos included in the companion website strongly evidence these social and cultural benefits. While tbC views the artistic profile the project builds as its most transformative outcome, the group acknowledges naturally emerging social and wellbeing benefits. Young artists enjoyed a combined community and aesthetic citizenship by participating in *The Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project*. However, it is important to reiterate that the project's main focus was on artistic materials, spaces and practices and developing young artists' creative practices and pathways. Again, the main argument being that social and cultural benefits naturally flow from this dedicated arts practice and don't need to be overemphasised.

The traditional graffiti and street art identity obscuring culture found within *The Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* prioritised artworks ahead of artists' biographies, privileging the aesthetic impact of the work. This case study explained how the public doesn't quite know who painted what along Blacksmiths Way and how the works often flow into each other, sometimes without a discernible start and finish. Several artists painted spaces together, and because of limited space, many artworks overlap. This sharing of exhibition space and the blurred and alter-ego mode of authorship often associated with graffiti and street art exemplifies tbC's group dynamic and provides the opportunity for unconstrained encounters with the work and the unreserved awarding of artistic agency and status. The notoriety of *The Blacksmiths Way Graffiti and Street Art Project* has made it easy to confirm the achievement of artistic agency and status in this case, which I discussed at length during the case study analysis.

The data that emerged from the making and presentation of *The Art of Conversation (Digital)*, a collaboratively made and jointly authored dialogical artwork that engaged the general public in conversation with tbC artists, demonstrates how wider presentation opportunities encourage critical engagement with artworks created by young tbC artists and new forms of professional development. This investigation affirms the empowerment that comes from this wider public presentation. *The Art of Conversation (Digital)* was presented in *Hoodie Mag*, galleries, online and at various graffiti and street art sites. This extended presentation positioned the young artist and their work well beyond the customary sites of their bedrooms, classrooms and local communities. The opportunity to engage with audiences and receive critical feedback has been a fundamental part of artistic development at tbC. *The Art of Conversation (Digital)* introduced young tbC artists to this experience which, in turn, offered them the opportunity to build earlier artistic agency and status.

The Art of Conversation (Digital) also significantly inspired this investigation's method/ological approach as it highlighted the power and value of in-practice dialogue. This artwork's dialogical framework and the expressive content resulting from its interaction speak directly to the subject of this research. The dialogue that emerges from this artwork has helped me validate and verify my observational analysis of the power tbC's collaborative arts and joint authorship practice has had in supporting the development of artistic agency and status in young artists.

In the case of *The Art of Conversation (Gallery)*, young artists collaboratively made and jointly authored a body of work exhibited in the gallery. Works took the form of 2D prints on paper containing fine mesh-like layers of text (and sometimes accompanying imagery). tbC artists are as interested in the exhibition of artwork as they are in making it. For this

reason, gallery exhibition has become a key priority at tbC. As described in the case study of *The Art of Conversation (Digital)*, young tbC artists want the opportunity to engage with audiences and receive critical feedback, something they see as a fundamental part of their artistic development.

An interest in gallery exhibition is also partly due to the exclusion young tbC artists routinely experience when accessing more formal presentation spaces for their artwork. Young artists often talk in the studio about how difficult it is to secure such opportunities, citing their limited biographies and lack of artistic agency and status as key impediments. tbC has experimented with more conceptual artistic practices and production to broker access to the gallery system. *The Art of Conversation (Gallery)* is an example of how tbC configured a body of work that the formal gallery sector found appealing. The project's success is attributed to the conceptual idea behind the works and the collective thread that runs through them. The invitation to intimately engage with the work, its high-quality print production, framing and artful hanging contributed to its innovative and sophisticated presentation. The exhibition success that has resulted from this more conceptual collaborative artmaking is evidenced in the calibre of the galleries tbC has exhibited in, the audiences the group has attracted and the artwork sales that have ensued, as outlined in the case study analysis.

The creative scholarship arising from these four case study artworks reinforces the idea that a collaborative arts and joint authorship practice can support young artists in building artistic agency and status. For tbC, collaboration and joint authorship advance artworks ahead of young artists' identities, producing an independent force that supports the artistic cohort in ways that working alone cannot.[628] This independent force (this third hand, as artist Charles

[628] Green, *The Third Hand*, 179.

Green calls it) both comprise and transcends the individual artist at tbC.[629] Members see practice and presentation as conferring artistic status, which they build on through the agency of collaboration and joint authorship. The momentum of group practice and the freedom from prejudice that joint authorship brings has meant that young artists at tbC have benefited from earlier artistic agency and status. This united front approach to making art presents the young artist as practitioner and, in doing so, challenges the boundaries and norms around who can be an artist.

Importantly, this investigation addresses the lack of dedicated arts practice and research within the youth arts sector. It specifically argues that while there is substantial research around programs that engage and support young people in general, there are fewer examples of durational youth arts practices and longitudinal research around young artists. My hope is that the aspirational nature of tbC's practice and this research around it encourages more practices like tbC and further studies like this one. I specifically hope that it inspires broader discussion around youth arts practice within secondary and university art school curriculums, funding organisations and civic institutions.

Where to from here? Apart from an interest in further examining the value and power of tbC's informal learning model, I am interested in more formally engaging tbC artists in research around tbC's empowering group practice and authorship dynamics. My understanding of the research world is that while doctoral research is a solo-authored endeavour, post-doctoral research and journal article writing can be co-authored. I have begun investigating academic and funding opportunities to support such collaborative research.

[629] Ibid., 1 and 179.

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