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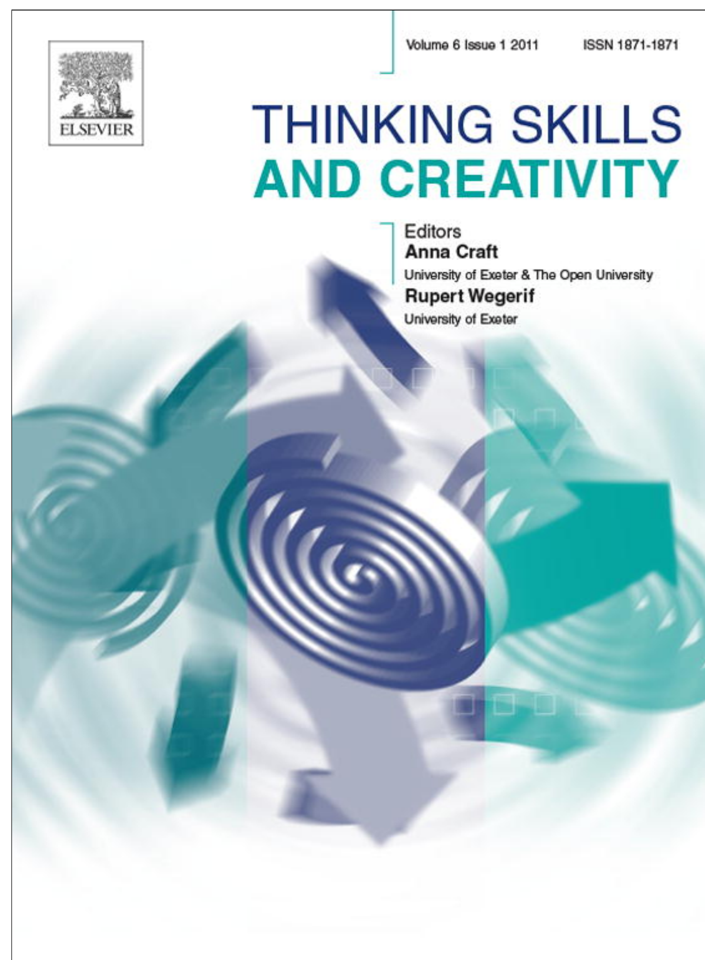

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Being and becoming: Elements of pedagogies described by three East Anglian creative practitioners

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ABSTRACT

It has been argued that a creative and cultural education is central to developing a creative workforce and promoting social inclusion. Despite the expanded involvement of creative practitioners in English education toward these aims, their pedagogies remain unclear and under-researched. The purpose of this exploratory case study is to examine elements of pedagogies creative practitioners describe. Four aspects of being central to the pedagogies of three East Anglian creative practitioners are discussed: not knowing, open-endedness, playing like a child, and becoming. It is argued that if creative practitioners are to contribute to imagining and creating new educational systems of and for the future, then their perspectives on ways of being must weigh in on that debate.

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1. Introduction

The *All Our Futures* report is often credited with renewing the allure of creativity and culture in English education (NACCCE, 1999). The report proposed that a creative and cultural education better equips a workforce for future economies and promotes, what is now often referred to as, social inclusion (NACCCE, 1999). Since this report, creative and cultural initiatives have expanded the involvement of creative practitioners in education. However, creative practitioner pedagogy remains unclear and under-researched. Therefore, the overarching aim of this small-scale research project is to broaden our understanding of creative practitioners' pedagogies from their perspectives. In the Spring of 2008, an exploratory case study of three creative practitioners examined the following research question, 'What elements of their pedagogies do creative practitioners describe?' Before turning to the research design and pedagogies, I provide further background of the frameworks and justifications orienting their involvement in English education.

2. Background

Since the *All Our Futures* report, new policies have aimed to promote a creative and cultural education in England. Recently, a new governmental organisation, Creativity, Culture, and Education, has formed to 'generate transformational cultural and creative programmes for children and young people across England' (CCE, 2009).[1] The flagship initiative, Creative Partnerships (CP), invests in relationships between creative practitioners and schools located in 'areas with significant challenges' in England (CCE, 2009). 'Find Your Talent' was launched to ensure that children, no matter their background, access at least 5 h of 'high quality culture' outside of school (CCE, 2009). The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA)

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[1] A comprehensive review of policies aimed at creativity is provided by SEED (2006).

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Advertising	Film and video
Architecture	Music
Art and antiques	Performing arts
Crafts	Publishing
Design	Software
Designer Fashion	Television and radio

Fig. 1. Creative industries as defined by DCMS, 1998.

initiative 'Creativity: Find it, Promote it' aims to develop and share curriculum development materials and teaching practices across the curriculum (QCA, 2004). 'Creative development' has also recently been introduced as one of six Early Learning Goals (DCSF, 2008). Moreover, the inspectorate for children and learners in England, Ofsted, has examined the promotion of creativity in schools in 'Expecting the Unexpected' (Ofsted, 2003).

This interest in creativity and culture has spurred the involvement of creative practitioners in education. Creative practitioner is an ambiguous term, but appears often used to describe those who have a background in 1 of the 13 sectors within the 'creative industries' [see Fig. 1], and are seen as promoting creativity and engagement with 'high quality culture' in and outside schools (CCE, 2009; DCMS, 1998). The Arts Council of England (ACoE, 2007, p. 2) argues that:

> Creative practitioners bring a new approach. They have different expectations of young people and when these are set high, the children rise to the challenge, frequently to the astonishment of their teachers. They bring a different language and a different practice, which stretches and challenges the teaching staff and young people.

Rather than framing this new approach within any particular discipline such as the visual arts or music, creative practitioner pedagogy has been oriented through two frameworks: a 'creative education' and a 'cultural education' (CCE, 2009; CLC, 2008; NACCCE, 1999).

All Our Futures suggests the aim of a creative education is 'to develop young people's capacities for original ideas and action' (NACCCE, 1999, p. 5). More recently, creative education is referred to as 'creative learning', a 'shorthand description for Creative Partnerships' contribution to school change, curriculum development and teaching and learning practices' (Sefton-Green, 2008, p. 8). As a part of changing schools (Sefton-Green, 2008, p. 12) suggests that creative learning stands 'for a set of values focused around developing individual potential and with an emphasis on authentic "deep" educational experiences.'

A cultural education, the report argues, is necessary to contend with a 'cultural profile' which has 'widened enormously' over the last three decades in the UK (NACCCE, 1999, p. 23).[2] Like the rhetorical shift from creative education to creative learning, a similar shift has occurred from cultural education to 'cultural learning' (CLC, 2008). Cultural learning appears to spring less out of a multiculturalist tradition found in *All Our Futures*, and instead points to a widespread engagement with artworks representing cultural achievement and heritage (CLC, 2008).

There are two central justifications for engaging creative practitioners to promote creative and cultural learning. The first is to transform the labour force from one equipped for an industrial economy into a creative workforce. The second is to promote social inclusion in light of concerns about anti-social behaviour, children's well-being, cultural integration, and national security. These justifications and their relationship to creative practitioner pedagogy are discussed below.

A creative workforce, it is argued, is necessary to meet the changing structure of demand in consumer-driven advanced economies (ACE, 2007; BOP, 2006; McWilliam, 2008; NACCCE, 1999; TWF, 2007). This flat, flexible, and adaptable workforce is envisioned as one which emphasises 'individual and small scale, project-based or collaborative notions of commercial and non-commercial media production' (Deuze, 2007, p. 249). It is adept at producing symbolic meaning that meets rapidly changing consumer needs, as well as generating and capitalising on new technologies that empower consumers to generate meaning.

To allow for divergent thinking that leads to new intellectual property, workers in the creative workforce must be prepared to share knowledge in networks across disciplines and work collaboratively in and beyond organisational structures with flat hierarchies (Hartley & Cunningham, 2001). The development of a creative workforce requires an education that provides 'students with opportunities to engage in collaborative knowledge building activities, through disciplined improvisations' (Sawyer, 2006, p. 46).

[2] The report defines *culture* 'as the shared values and patterns of behaviour that characterize different social groups and communities' (NACCCE, 1999, p. 47); and, cultural education as 'forms of education that enable young people to engage positively with the growing complexity and diversity of social values and ways of life' (NACCCE, 1999, p. 5).

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Engaging creative practitioners to develop a creative workforce may be guided by the belief that creative practitioners possess the above described skills and practices, and are well-suited to model them for learners (ACoE, 2007, p. 3). The Arts Council of England (ACoE, 2007, p. 2) argues that these skills and practices may also make creative practitioners effective educators.

Social inclusion is a flexible term that is embedded across multiple social, cultural, education and economic policies. It refers to initiatives, for example, that aspire to: reintegrate the chronically unemployed into the labour market (HMT, 2007); increase employment of those with learning disabilities (DoH, 2009); eliminate income disparities linked to being a member of a minority group, a family with a disabled child, or a mother (DWP, 2008); reduce anti-social behaviour among 'disaffected' young people (HOMJ, 2008); and civic renewal and national security strategies that address 'cultural fragmentation' (see Message, 2009).

Education is at the centre of this social inclusion agenda. The aim is to mitigate linked social problems through raising academic achievement for *all*, thus improving the likelihood of employment and social mobility (see Machin & Blanden, 2007). Raising academic achievement for *all* means improving school performance for students who are struggling academically for reasons such as neglect at home (see Ofsted, 2008), school bullying (Smith Peter, 2000), being identified as having special educational needs (Clark, Dyson, Millward, & Robson, 1999), and/or ineffective teaching (see Ofsted, 2000).

The social inclusion agenda in education may involve creative practitioners based on two central assumptions: they make schools and classrooms more dynamic places for learning that engage *all* pupils; and, they can help pupils develop the skills and capacities they need to successfully integrate into society.

The Roberts Report (Roberts, 2006) puts forward a framework that offers a progression for children from Early Years to participation in the Creative Industries, combining the social and economic justifications described above. As a part of the framework, the Roberts Report suggests professionalising this emerging field of creative practitioners engaged in education through training, accreditation, and recognition programs. The Education and Skills Select Committee Report on Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum suggests that Creative Partnerships presents one possible model whereby creative practitioners and teachers mentor each other in their respective practices (HCESC, 2007).

The government's response to the Roberts Report also points to the possible growing involvement of arts and cultural organisations, and presumably creative practitioners affiliated with them, in varying the provision of extended schools (DfES, 2006). It also responds to Roberts' observation that the geographic coverage of creative partnerships is 'patchy' and all schools must be encouraged and supported in their development of creative partnerships. Together, these government reports point to the expanding involvement and increased professionalisation of creative practitioners engaged in education.

In sum, the presumed 'new approach' of creative practitioners is aspired to contribute to changing state-sponsored educational systems that were conceived to develop 19th century workforces for industrialisation. From this perspective, their pedagogies have the potential to transform dated notions of how, where, and with whom people might learn. Moreover, underlying both the social inclusion and creative workforce agendas in education is the notion that employment marks successful integration into society, and indeed, a successful educational system.

Despite the enthusiasm for the transformative role of creative practitioners in fostering that integration, there is only a small, but growing body of research, discussed next, that explores what approach they bring to education, how it might relate to the justifications described above, and what the implications may be for the training and development of creative practitioners.

3. Existing research

Despite its perplexing nature and problematic legacies, widespread educational interest in creativity largely emanates from the belief in its economic significance in knowledge-based economies (Burnard, 2006). Craft (2006) critiques this 'creativity as universalized' perspective underlying policy documents throughout the world for ignoring the cultural differences with respect to creativity, as well as the implications of creativity driving economic growth through expanding consumption and a 'throw-away' culture.

Jeffrey (2006) suggests shifting educational research away from approaching creativity as a universal attribute toward situated enactments through creative teaching and learning, or creativity as a practice (Craft & Jeffrey, 2004). This shift is becoming increasingly evident by research that: focuses on 'ordinary creativity' rather than genius; seeks to characterise creativity rather than measure it; approaches it as domain-wide rather than arts specific; views creativity collectively rather than as individual 'talent'; and includes products as evidence of creativity but does not consider them necessary (Craft, 2003; Craft, 2008; Craft & Jeffrey, 2008).

The expanded involvement of creative practitioners in English education has contributed to a small, but growing, body of research. Research into creative practitioner and pupil interaction has suggested that creative practitioners share processes of creative thinking in classrooms through an apprenticeship model of teaching and learning (Griffiths & Woolf, 2004). This is further substantiated by Pringle (2008, p. 44), who notes that creative practitioners view art practice 'as an experiential process of conceptual enquiry that embraced inspiration, critical thinking and the building of meanings'. She argues that through 'constructivist' pedagogies, creative practitioners share artistic knowledge and enable learners to participate alongside them (Pringle, 2008, p. 46). Galton's (2008) descriptive account focuses on effectiveness, arguing that creative practitioners with an excellent reputation for work in schools were, in comparison to partner teachers: more dialogic; provided more time for thinking; offered more precise feedback; tended to more effectively extend pupils'

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ideas; maintained ambiguity and lowered risk for failure; and were more consistent in their management of learning and behaviour.

A more substantial body of research has focused on the tricky, yet promising terrain of partnership among creative practitioners, teachers and schools (Addison & Burgess, 2006; Brice-Heath & Wolf, 2004; Hall, Thomson, & Russell, 2007; Jeffery, 2005; Kind, de Cosson, Irwin, Rita, & Grauer, 2007; Mitchell, 2000; Remer, 1996; Thomson, Hall, & Russell, 2006; Upitis, 2006). Jeffery (2005, p. 84) has introduced a typological framework to describe the different roles creative practitioners might play in school-based partnership: the artist as *master* to the apprentice; the *agent provacateur* who challenges school conventions; the *artist in residence* who generates work individually and in partnership; and the *artist as professional* who collaborates with students on a shared enterprise. In addition, the organisation of space, material and time to allow for unpredictable, student-led enquiry is also emerging as theme that may matter to creative practitioners working in schools (Maddock, Drummond, Koralek, & Nathan, 2007).

Related research on teacher pedagogy is beginning to blur boundaries between 'teachers' and 'creative practitioners' present in research published by Creative Partnerships [e.g., Galton, 2008; Pringle, 2008]. For example, Jeffrey (2006) has also observed how teachers alter traditional school boundaries of time and space to allow for unpredictable, rigorous, reflective, and sustained intellectual enquiry. Cremin (2006) describes 'expert primary teachers' experiencing an 'uncertain and unsettling' role-shift to 'relatively novice artists/writers' that 'mobilized a kind of creative energy'. Through a 'disconcerting sense of being lost, confused and uncertain', Cremin describes teachers altering their relationship to students and the classroom, by, for example, offering 'more sensitive and empathetic support' and modelling for their pupils a capacity to tolerate ambiguity. Committed to pupils making meaning and valuing difference, pedagogies of listening (Burnard, Dillon, Rusinek, & Sæther, 2008) and pupil consultation about the nature of learning (Burnard, 2004) have also been described.

Other research explores teachers' question-posing and question-responding to provoke a consideration of 'what might be', or 'Possibility Thinking' (PT) (Burnard et al., 2006; Cremin, Burnard, & Craft, 2006). Chappell, Craft, Burnard, and Cremin (2008) examines the dimensions of children's question-posing and categories of question-responding activities as driving features of PT. Other core features identified in this exploratory research include teachers' positioning themselves 'off-centre stage' (Cremin et al., 2006) and valuing both structure and freedom to allow learner-directed enquiry to unfold (Craft, Cremin, Burnard, & Chappell, 2007).

This brief review illustrates that research into creative practitioner pedagogy is an emerging field of enquiry. In light of the call to expand and professionalise the engagement of creative practitioners, greater attention must be given to how they themselves view and describe their pedagogies. This understanding might contribute to policy makers, teachers and creative practitioners as they consider how they might facilitate creative practices.

4. Research design

The aim of this exploratory case study is to open future lines of enquiry for those interested in the pedagogies of creative practitioners (Yin, 1981). Limited extant research into their pedagogies demanded a flexible, cyclical design. The need for thick descriptions of creative practitioner pedagogy, and the limitations provided by only 4 weeks available to conduct field work, were balanced. In the design and implementation of this research study, the British Educational Research Association's most recent ethical guidelines (BERA, 2004) were strictly adhered to, with particular attention paid to preserving the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, and approaching them, their valuable time, and information they shared with care and respect.

This study's sampling rationale maximises the opportunity to access individuals who have a background in the creative industries and see themselves as promoting creativity in and outside schools (Creswell, 1998; Elam, Lewis, & Ritchie, 2003; LeCompte & Preissle, 2003). Criteria for selecting participants were purposeful (e.g., participants have 10 years of experience and are presently active as creative practitioners at the time of the study) and pragmatic (e.g., within a reasonable distance from my location). I accessed an organisation based in Cambridge, UK named Cambridge, Curiosity and Imagination (CCI). CCI describes itself as an artist-led initiative founded by professionals with a range of backgrounds in the arts, museums, drama and education. The organisation describes these professionals sharing a 'common interest in fostering the curiosity and imagination of young and old', working 'to develop the innate creativity of every individual'.[3] Ten members of the organisation were invited to participate in this study.

Three individuals, each with over 10 years of educational experience, agreed to participate and are described below[4]:

- Filipa Pereira-Stubbs provisionally self-identified as a 'movement artist' who helps others to author creative movement. She has led workshops in a variety of settings – from school science rooms to elderly home multi-purpose rooms.

[3] For more information, visit http://www.cambridgecandi.org.uk/.

[4] I promised Ruth Sapsed, the Managing Director of CCI, her organisation's anonymity in this research. I made the same promise to the three artists. However, upon reading a draft of this article, they decided for their names, as well as CCI, to be disclosed.

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- Debbie Hall described herself as a multi- and inter-disciplinary artist, primarily working with willow and weaving. Discussions ranged from weaving workshops she has led at summer festivals to the collaborative design and installation of living willow sculptures at primary schools.
- Anne-Mie Melis described herself as a visual artist based in a rural arts centre. At the time, she was leading a weekly arts workshop for adult women at a community centre, as well as young children and families at a local museum.

Over 4 weeks, each participant was interviewed twice, for 1.5–2 h each time, through an unstructured and conversational approach (Powney & Watts, 1987); and, in Filipa case observed. The research question discussed here is 'What elements of their pedagogies do creative practitioners describe?'

Comparative data analysis informed by grounded theory focused primarily on emic descriptions and interpretations (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Participant observation was anticipated as a method to triangulate interview data, but only one workshop by Filipa was observed because of the pressures of the limited timescale. As a result, the second interview was used as a way to member check descriptions and cautious interpretations gleaned from the first.

Given the organisation's claim that its members are brought together by shared interests, the data was re-analysed through comparative, cross-case analysis to explore the possibility of shared themes (Yin, 1981). The importance of *being* emerged as a prominent theme. A case study, bound across the three creative practitioners, was written and shared with them for respondent validation.

Below is a selection of values that creative practitioners described as central to their pedagogies. Their pedagogies are presented through four identified themes: *not knowing*, *open-endedness*, *playing like a child*, and *becoming* – four aspects of *being* that they described as central values informing their pedagogies. However, the author neither suggests this account is an exhaustive typology or easily separable or reducible into these distinct categories.

In addition to limited triangulation and only a brief period afforded for fieldwork, this exploratory and descriptive account of their pedagogies is limited in other aspects as well. Because of the researcher's experience as a creative practitioner,[5] as well as his current status as a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge, it was a challenge to emphasise to the three participants that he possessed little, if any, understanding of their pedagogies.

With limited observation, any similarities or discrepancies between how they described and enacted their pedagogies could not be addressed by this limited research design. Moreover, the creative practitioners did not only refer to their school-based partnership work, but also their engagement in other settings such as galleries, museums, community-centres and elderly homes, engaging with a range of populations. Though it is assumed that pedagogies are enacted through specific contexts, it is not feasible, given the limited data, to restrict discussion of their pedagogies to particular contexts. In light of the above limitations, any claims are put forward cautiously and provisionally.

5. Findings

The three creative practitioners each emphasised promoting a particular way of 'being-in-the-world' through their pedagogies. Filipa described the crux of her practice as creating opportunities for participants to experience an artist's 'stance' or 'being-in-the-world'. Anne-Mie suggested her aim is to encourage participants to experience a 'making presence', described as a way of *being* similar to Filipa's 'stance'. While Debbie did not explicitly refer to *being* in her descriptions, their shared interests become evident in the discussion below.

5.1. Not knowing

A core value shared among these creative practitioners appears to be the desire to open possibilities for participants to experience what they described as *not knowing*. Filipa suggested her primary aim is to facilitate the experience of an artist's 'stance', which she described as:

> . . . a certain attitude in the world, being-in-the-world, in order to make art. You have to not expect answers, you have to be open to struggle. You have to be open to searching. . . There is a very fine line between deep knowing of oneself, but also deep unknowing. So, it's a very fine balance. It's knowing that we have the ability to find out, but we never have the answers.

Filipa described this way of *being* as a contrast from assuming one knows the answers to questions or that knowing answers should be the aim. She said each creative practitioner who is a member of the organisation sampled for this study is:

> . . . very much working with the understanding that there isn't a right or wrong outcome or even answer, it's the joy and curiosity of exploring the process of understanding the world.

[5] I am the founder and former director (1997–2007) of New Urban Arts, an American-based arts orgnaisation that partners 'artist-mentors' with high school students in a storefront studio (www.newurbanarts.org).

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In a movement workshop with elderly in an elderly home, I observed Filipa experience this not knowing herself. She described not knowing where the workshop might lead, but being confident that she might constructively work through any 'cul-de-sac' moments. I watched as she improvised the workshop through an initial and ongoing assessment of her participants' capacity for movement based on warm-up exercises, conversation and touch. In the end, the elderly transformed the workshop into a boisterous singsong of WWII-era songs, while they danced from their seats. This moment, which Filipa did not anticipate but nurtured, marked a dramatic shift from their passive and subdued *way of being* I observed prior to the workshop.

Anne-Mie suggested *not knowing* is an 'openness to struggle', and perhaps counter-intuitively, described it as a 'very balanced attitude, a very peaceful attitude'. She also emphasised experiencing this way of *being* is more important than its end products. She described starting workshops in an open fashion, allowing for 'things to grow' through her facilitation. She described avoiding introducing end-products at the beginning of workshops to allow for a diverse student body to experience *not knowing*. She said, 'I will never show an example from the beginning. Everybody is different and everybody will make different things.'

These sentiments were shared by Debbie who described a 'revealing' moment in a school-based workshop in which a teacher and student became frustrated as the student could not replicate the weaving techniques taught the previous year. When the student asked Debbie for help, she described herself saying to him, 'Well, it doesn't really matter... Just wiggle the string around anyway you like it.' She suggested the student ultimately figured out a way to weave on his own. Debbie wanted the student to experience *not knowing* because, she said, 'I don't think being spoon-fed what's going to happen is a great start to life.' While this practice might be observed as being hands-off, or perhaps even lacking structure, she describes her intent as allowing the student to experience *not knowing*.

When these creative practitioners described pushing participants to embrace *not knowing*, they described it as both joyful and a struggle, delightful and disorienting. They also described facilitating the experience of *not knowing* through *open-endedness*, explored next.

5.2. *Open-endedness*

Anne-Mie noted her workshops provide 'a starting point, a tiny little seed that [her participants] can almost nurture.' Avoiding constraining her participants, Anne-Mie described how she attempted to model her pedagogic approach on her studio practice where:

> You start with something very open... you are just working and everything evolves. And, it's an open end. You don't know where you are going.

In several instances, Anne-Mie reiterated this interest in open-ended pedagogies so that she and her participants experience possibilities for *being* that might not have felt possible before.

Evident in the observed example described above, Filipa also emphasised an open-ended, evolving approach in her workshops, which she said 'are known for being completely non-prescriptive.' Filipa noted the difficult, ephemeral nature of open-endedness is embodied in dance because, 'It's gone. It's always going.'

Debbie positively described art works created in one school-based workshop as 'quite random stages of things on their way to becoming other things.' She also expressed an interest in working with living willow – whereby branches are planted, and once rooted, are sculpted and woven – because it 'has its own life' and 'it becomes a completely different shape from where you started'.

The above descriptions illustrate how they aim to encourage *being* in flux that unfolds without much intervention. This desire to be non-imposing is also related to their interest in child-like ways of *being*, described next.

5.3. *Playing like a child*

Each creative practitioner noted the importance of uninhibitedness, of *being* like a child. Anne-Mie noted that an aim for her workshops is to remove individuals' defences and boundaries, and:

> ... push people into finding their way of how they were like when they were playing like a child... they weren't restricted. They weren't limited by anything. If you look at children, you give them something and they start playing, not always creating something, but they start building their little world...

She later noted the difficulty of teaching adults, and described her preference for working with children:

> I get a lot of inspiration from children. Although I like to teach adults, but it is harder. You have to work harder to let them experience the child... the child *being*... again. Some are very easy at that, who understand very quickly about the attitude, and other's aren't.

Filipa also noted that it is difficult for adults to shed 'defences and boundaries [that] are sort of stains on individuals'. Debbie also noted how her workshops with teenagers identified as having special educational needs have influenced the development of her pedagogy. She described their lack of inhibitions playing with costumes in one workshop as 'catching'.

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She described herself often attempting to be less inhibited, to be in ways that adults are not conditioned to be. She suggested being uninhibited is 'more fun'.

Each creative practitioner described their challenge to create an uninhibited atmosphere where children and adults are allowed to be 'as children', to experience playful and unrestricted ways of *being*. One possible interpretation is that the three creative practitioners feel that with experience, individuals become entrenched in particular ways of *being*. The practitioners seek to disrupt norms and expectations that govern individuals in order to re-experience child-like ways of *being*. To these creative practitioners, experiencing *being* in the ways described above opened up opportunities for *becoming*, discussed next.

5.4. Becoming

Through embracing the joy and struggle of not knowing, shedding inhibitions through child-like play, and allowing for unfolding possibility through open-endedness, these creative practitioners described encouraging participants to see themselves and act in ways that might signify some shift in sensibility.

For Filipa, she described the challenge in facilitating creative movement is to create a context through which people can see themselves as capable of this movement. She discussed this poignantly in the case of working in elderly homes, which she felt served its bureaucratic needs by encouraging elderly to see themselves as immobile and frail, thereby reducing risk and work for burdened care providers.

To become 'as much of their dancing selves as possible', Filipa described aspiring to create experiences in which elderly might see themselves and act as *other than* immobile and frail. For example, I observed her trying to safely lessen their dependence on walkers during her session, a strategy she described as specifically meant to address the above. At the beginning of the workshop, the majority of the elderly participants had walkers in front of where they sat. As she welcomed everyone to the workshop, she moved their walkers to the edge of the room. She described spending weeks reassuring these participants and gaining trust so that she might do so.

Debbie described a similar justification in the development of her interdisciplinary arts practice, which informs the ways she encourages the use of materials in her pedagogy. She described her own frustration with her schooling as a painter, as well as a course in children's literature that suggested children's books must contain a linear narrative centring on a single character. She now sees herself as an artist working across disciplines, and through this acceptance has found it easier to, as she said, 'help other people feel more at ease with what they might do.' This has led to the playful use of materials, for example. In one instance, she described substituting play-dough for clay in order to allow people to sculpt in an exploratory, less inhibited way, rather than working toward a pre-determined outcome shaped by expectations of *being* a ceramicist.

Filipa and Debbie might have been describing their desire to address the ways in which institutionalised cultures, such as elderly homes or schools, and disciplines, such as ceramics, might limit how individuals see themselves. They attempted to address these barriers so that their participants can be led out somewhere new, somewhere different. Anne-Mie suggested that this *becoming* requires an acceptance of difference, ambiguity, and uncertainty, which if embraced, would lead to a greater acceptance of others. In a powerful conclusion to one interview, she said:

> There would be no war if people would have the intuition of sensing each other and being able to deal with negative thoughts. . . I think that could be the solution to the cruelty in the world.

6. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to begin to explore how three creative practitioners describe elements of their pedagogies. This study highlights how these creative practitioners are interested in facilitating a *way of being* that embraces not knowing, open-endedness, playing like a child, and becoming. They appear to describe themselves pressing for an acceptance of the ephemeral and open-ended nature of being-in-flux, or becoming. They describe pedagogies that facilitate *being* that stretches beyond the restrictions one might feel in particular contexts and opens up to the realm of the possible and unknown.

Some research on creative practitioner pedagogy has suggested that creative practitioners share processes of creative thinking in classrooms through an apprenticeship model of teaching and learning, whereby learners participate in practices alongside creative practitioners (Griffiths & Woolf, 2004; Jeffery, 2005; Pringle, 2008). One of the fundamental and lingering questions challenging this area of research is what discipline(s) and/or skills participants might learn through apprenticing to creative practitioners and/or teachers as creative professionals. Suggestions have varied from a particular discipline such as conceptual art enquiry (Pringle, 2008), the trans-disciplinary [e.g., 'creative and cultural education' (NACCCE, 1999); 'creative learning' (Sefton-Green, 2008), and 'cultural learning' (CLC, 2008)], or a more specific thinking skill such as Possibility Thinking (PT) (Burnard et al., 2006; Chappell et al., 2008; Cremin et al., 2006).

Although there are likely overlaps, these creative practitioners' description of facilitating *a way of being* suggests a slightly different view, or at least metaphor, for describing what they might model for participants. Given creative practitioners engagement in education is an emerging field of practice and research, this study, while only offering a glimpse, points quite simply to the importance of soliciting creative practitioners' descriptions in order to begin to understand what may be taught and learned through their engagement.

Potential differences in responsibilities, practices, and expectations between creative practitioners and teachers is well-discussed as a source of possible tension and opportunity in creative partnerships (see above for references). Pedagogic

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differences have also been observed in, for example, the case of Galton's (2008) study, which describes creative practitioners being more effective in maintaining ambiguity and lowering the risk for failure in comparison to their partner teachers. Brice-Heath and Wolf (2004) describe a creative practitioner pushing for accidents and experimentation in his workshops with children, where their ideas might be born from the realm of the unexpected and not-yet-explored. Cremin (2006) describes how teachers engaged in a creative writing practice model for their pupils a greater capacity to tolerate ambiguity. The described pedagogies of creative practitioners explored here, particularly their interest in not knowing, becoming, and open-endedness, seem to be in simpatico with these observed practices in teachers and creative practitioners.

Without over-interpreting, these three creative practitioners also appeared to be describing their pedagogies in light of those associated with the short-termism, high-stakes accountability, and 'concrete' *ways of being* that they view being valued and materialised in contexts such as schools and elderly homes. Through contrast, these artists might see themselves as creating opportunities, no matter how fleeting and small-scale, to create alternatives to that peformative logic (see Burnard & White, 2008). Each creative practitioner described facilitating ways in which individuals might step out of restrictive norms, expectations, and contexts in which their present *being* may feel entrenched.

Yet, it can also be dangerous to suggest, and thereby reinforce, a dichotomy between creative practitioners' pedagogies and those of teachers, practitioners, and care workers within schools and other settings. Indeed, Burnard and White (2008) address the difficulty that teachers face in navigating the opposing demands of the creativity and performativity agendas. Indeed, describing 'teachers' and 'creative practitioners' as different types of educators with different pedagogical approaches, which may be inferred from the Arts Council of England's report on Creative Partnerships (2007) and its published research (e.g., Galton, 2008; Pringle, 2008), may be an unhelpful starting point.

A possible explanation for observed pedagogical differences between teachers and creative practitioners may be that the latter can position themselves as *provocateurs* (Jeffery, 2005), while the former intervenes from the sidelines of the creative partnership to enforce order and discipline. Galton (2008) describes this dynamic in detail. Furthermore, unlike creative practitioners, teachers are left complying pedagogically to external mandates that emphasise rote performance toward measurable and predictable outcomes (see Ball, 2003). Moreover, the pedagogical shifts in teachers who experience the uncertainty of *being* through a creative writing practice, noted by Cremin (2006), is in synergy with how these three creative practitioners describe their interest in not knowing. Therefore, there is evidence to move beyond a simplistic dichotomy that characterises teachers and creative practitioners differently.

Rather than expecting to determine who creative practitioners are and how they are different from teachers, this points to a more complex and vital direction for this emerging area of research: to describe ways in which educators – 'creative practitioners' and 'teachers' alike – might describe, experience, and model pedagogies that support a creative practice. This research contributes to that vision by describing a creative practice, in part, as a way of *being*.

These three creative practitioners' pedagogic interest in *being* might also be interpreted as consistent with the two justifications for expanding their educational involvement discussed earlier, namely the development of a creative workforce and the promotion of social inclusion. The capacity to contend with uncertainty and change may be seen as integral to developing a workforce with the capacity to think divergently and build relationships across boundaries. This may prepare them for sharing knowledge in networks across disciplines and work collaboratively in and beyond organisational structures with flat hierarchies. Moreover, it might support social inclusion by addressing cultural fragmentation and alienation. Learning to embrace difference, ambiguity and uncertainty so that our encounters with others are an invitation to be led out somewhere new rather than understanding others through two-dimensional caricatures that lead to snap judgments is undoubtedly a step forward toward a more inclusive society.

Yet, the underlying aim under both the social inclusion and creative workforce agendas is to expand economic participation for all, thus promoting upward social mobility. This aspiration did not come through in my research. Instead, a desire to allow individuals to come to terms with the uncertainty of our existence, and move toward new possibilities for themselves amidst the limits of institutionalised cultures and entrenched norms and expectations, was more evident. While the extent to which these three creative practitioners' perspectives are representative of others is unclear, this potential difference suggests that if creative practitioners are to contribute to imagining our educational systems of and for the future, then assuredly their perspectives on their pedagogies must weigh in on that debate.

7. Conclusion

Despite aspirations for developing a creative workforce, bureaucratic pressure to teach and learn in a way that is efficient and measurable, that predicts and controls for outcome, appears more consistent with developing an industrial one. By contrast, these creative practitioners describe valuing an open-ended way of *being*, accepting of uncertainty, which is undoubtedly difficult to test and measure but likely essential to any creative activity.

But facilitating a way of *being* mired in ambiguity and open-endedness should not be interpreted as an acceptance of mediocre, low-stakes education. Indeed, what is more difficult than letting go of the braces we use to feel more secure and experience the self-injury that comes with confronting the not-yet-known? What is more challenging than dwelling in the feeling of being 'quite random stages of things on our way to becoming other things'? To be serious about developing a creative workforce that is inventive and freethinking rather than compliant and predictable, surely this way of *being* matters.

To support the emergence of a creative workforce, further attention must be given to how the boundaries between teachers, creative practitioners, and pupils might be blurred, where each has an increasing stake in determining their creative

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activities and ways of *being*. Research and policy makers might support that aim by seeking to describe and re-describe pedagogies rather than predict, control and measure. Moreover, research and policy might move away from considering who creative practitioners are, how they are different, and how we professionalise/accredit them to the more elusive, complex, and fundamental considerations of how we educate today and why.

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