Thinking *Through* Art

*Exploring pedagogy through images and image making*

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“Modernist and postmodernist artists and their deliberate and considered intent to ‘break the rules’ have led to a misreading of art as un-teachable. The idea that children progress ‘naturally’ through developmental stages means that teaching is not necessary. At the same time, teachers look for one hundred and one variations on the bunny tasks. Teachers live, work and negotiate within contradictory spaces every day”

(McArdle, 2008, p.368).
Re-conceptualising practice

“Perhaps a person who has had occasion to paint has a greater practical sense, a sensibility for what it means, what a difficult, seductive thing, even for a child, it is to deal with being confronted with a large, white sheet of paper, making the first brushstroke, the first sign, entering relationship with this empty, unknown space of the white paper”

Why a self-study?  
Why arts-based research?

“The complexity and diversity of influences that have shaped views on the teaching of art can be understood as a palimpsest, a term that describes the way in which the ancient parchments used for writing were written over, but new messages only partially obliterated the original message beneath. Both the new and the original messages still stand, albeit partially erased and interrupted (Davies, 1993)”

McArdle, 2003, p.153
“Art goes back to my beginning”
Sally Morgan

1977 My drawing table
A modernist beginning

Mission bay kindergarten

1978-9
The influence of family perspectives on child art
‘Crafting at home’

“For years, the teachers and myself learned to undo learning. We learned to modify a part of the mental framework we had learned previously in our respective cultural and educational backgrounds and listen to reflections and experience different from our own ways of thinking. However, the largest changes in mental framework and point of view were caused by observing and documenting children’s strategies”

Vecchi, 2010, p.108
“when we pass on these artistries to our children, they are imbued with not only the meaning of what we say, but also with a sense of personal significance that these experiences have as part of the process. In these subtle, yet powerful ways, artistic messages are transmitted from older generations to younger ones”

Veale, 2000, p.28
High school and the dominance of a Westernised perspective
AUT – Design degree
Diversity and subjectivity

‘Opium’, 1999
Arts-based methodologies

*Using the visual as a tool for research*

*The body as portrait, 2000*
Reggio Emilia
A catalyst for a shift in thinking about the role of the arts in children’s learning
What did I discover about my own pedagogy in the arts?

“In much of the literature generated as a result of various people’s interactions with ‘Reggio’ though, there appears to be little recognition of the factors that make quality arts pedagogies. These include many social and cultural contextualising factors: a society with a long tradition and history of valuing the arts and aesthetic experiences; a community with a strong socialist politics that values public investment in education; the presence of a resident artist with a dedicated space; the collaboration and shared conversations between teachers and artist; the teaching of skills and artistry; the understanding of art as a language for communication and meaning making” (McArdle, 2008, p.371).
“That the process of creating art can generate new perceptions, knowledge, and understandings is a particular way of thinking about visual art (McNiff, 1998; Sullivan, 2005) so that art, in its processes and productions, is not just a representation of an already formed idea, but an act of inquiry and investigation: a provocation and a question”

(Kind, 2010, p.122)
Implications

“Embracing of overlap in these identities...can result in synergy in which new identities, thinking and practices can emerge further interrelating or integrating important aspects of the culture of visual art”

(Thornton, 2013, p.3).
Bibliography


