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Becoming through a/r/tography, autobiography and stories in motion

ABSTRACT

The authors present stories in motion, reminding all those interested in practice-based research of the importance of a/r/tography as becoming-intensity, becoming-event and becoming-movement. Embracing a métissage approach, this article provides an example of art educators co-labouring in order to understand their need for materializing, theorizing and practising their ideas, and, in doing so, realize that being committed to emergence offers ways for becoming artist, researcher and teacher as ways of living one's art practice as research.

KEYWORDS

a/r/tography
practice-based research
becoming
métissage
co-labouring

INTRODUCTION

A/r/tography is a practice of living enquiry that combines life-writing with life-creating. It promotes artistic enquiry as an aesthetic awareness, one that is open to wonder while trusting uncertainty. Through attention to memory, identity, autobiography, reflection, meditation, storytelling and cultural production, artists/researchers/teachers/learners expose their living practices in both evocative and provocative ways (Irwin 2013). Springgay et al. note that a/r/tography is an 'inquiring process that lingers in the liminal spaces between a (artist), and r (researcher), and t (teacher)', thereby becoming a fluid form

of enquiry that is created through a rigorous and continuous form of reflexivity and analysis (2005: 902). Utilizing the concept of *métissage* (see also Irwin and de Cosson 2004), this article depicts how *a/r/tography* not only weaves these (and possible other) identities together, but also interweaves theory, practice and poesis, allowing deeper understandings to emerge over time. It also demonstrates how *a/r/tographers* engage in their own becoming while being in communities of enquiry where stories are perpetually in motion, weaving through one another to enlarge, disrupt and enrich our understandings. In creating our autobiographies as *métissage*, we reflect upon moments of becoming in the presence of one another: stories of motion in which pedagogical significance emerges.

In a recent article entitled 'Becoming *a/r/tography*', Rita Irwin describes how her attention has shifted from what an art education practice might mean to exploring what art education, as a 'practice set in motion' (2013: 198), might do. This article attempts to enact a practice set in motion. Utilizing *métissage* as an artful weaving of relations (Hasebe-Ludt et al. 2008), we weave together three narratives, each one recounting the experience of engaging in an *a/r/tographical* project in order to explore how *a/r/tography*, as a practice-based form of research, allows important autobiographical explorations with pedagogical implications. These narratives are supported by Rita's contributions initially as an instructor of the course that led to some of these narratives and later as a member of a community of enquiry. Becoming *a/r/tography* may be witnessed by what an art education practice set in motion does: it is always in a state of becoming-intensity, becoming-event and becoming-movement. Each of these practices is evident in our *métissage*. After all, becoming-intensity is about the capacity to affect and be affected by learning to learn, while becoming-event is enacted through the rhizome in which 'affect resonates, reverberates, echoes across time and space within and beyond the event' (Irwin 2013: 207). Finally, becoming-movement exemplifies a 'potentiality for a plurality of problems' (Irwin 2013). Each of these is evident in the *métissage* enacted here because becoming is an emergent immersive process that exists in the liminal multiple lines of flight and multiple encounters that encourage experimentation and improvisation.

As an emergent process, what happens when we attend to what our stories contribute? 'There can be no being *a/r/tography* without processes of becoming-*a/r/tography*' (Irwin 2013: 200). What Irwin refers to as 'a dynamic process of knowing [that] is performed across three moments of becoming, one un/folding into the other, blurring the boundaries of each' (2013: 200). This text is a weaving of three individual stories becoming *a/r/tography* through becoming-artist, becoming-researcher and becoming-teacher.

BECOMING-ARTIST

SARA

I have never considered myself a visual artist. Though I am the sister, the daughter, the grand-daughter, and the great-granddaughter of artists, the identity has never resonated within me. Instead, I express myself in writing, choosing the perfect word instead of the perfect hue. And often when I have a difficult experience, I turn to writing to make sense out of it. I regularly share my writing with others, but I rarely consider how others will interpret my thoughts. Instead, I write my stories in the hope that readers will find a part of themselves in my words and know that they are not alone.



Figure 1: My Life, Sara Florence Davidson (2014).

When I began the a/r/tography class, I was still struggling with an experience of discrimination that had occurred in the previous semester. It had happened during a class and involved the use of the word 'dirty' to describe aspects of indigenous people. As a woman of indigenous ancestry, I emerged from the experience feeling tremendously ashamed and alone, as initially I was the only person to speak out against the use of the word. What I came to believe was that the silence in the classroom that day arose from the inability of others to comprehend the lifelong struggle I had endured with the word 'dirty' and all of the associated negative stereotypes. I turned to a/r/tography in the hopes of beginning to make sense of the experience.

As I learnt, there are openings in a/r/tography that allow us to 'open up conversations and relationships instead of informing others about what has been learned' (Irwin and Springgay 2008: xxx). They invite us to explore our own experiences in unstructured and often unexpected ways. When I began the class, I did not intend to create a video of my experiences with discrimination (Davidson 2014); I was merely seeking a way to help others to understand. But when I imagined the most compelling way to communicate my experience, it was not with words. It was with the image of my face. It became an invitation to see the humanity beneath my skin, an invitation to hear my story in my own voice. I understand now that I created an identity text (Cummins and Early 2011), and it was affect (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) that I sought in this invitation to engage in dialogue.

Something
beckons from within
an invitation to explore,
to 'affect and be affected'.

(Deleuze and Guattari 1987: xvi)

In the spaces between
the words
I find
the artist-becoming

And I imagine
the possibility
of existing here
in the tension,
in the place of
curiosity and wonder

Perhaps here
I can learn
to learn.

JEE YEON

We were improvising again
One spontaneous splash of creativity after another
Little fingers freely dancing across the piano keys
Happily exploring our sounding world
'Why do you like to improvise?'
'Because ...'
With a great big smile,
'I can make b-e-a-u-t-i-ful noise ...'

In our piano lessons, my students and I enjoy improvising together. Sometimes, we find inspirations from our favourite storybooks. Other times, we draw pictures to inspire musical ideas and to 'notate' our piano improvisations. Between our creative piano play, we also engage in long and improvised conversations about music and anything else that captures our imaginations. For us, sharing music improvisation and conversation with one another inspires new questions and ideas. Our improvisational piano lessons take us on a journey beyond the notes we read and play from the standard music books.

As a classically trained pianist, however, piano improvisation is a new practice for me. I was always curious about improvisation. Without knowing why, a part of me always longed for making music of my own. But it was not until I began improvising with my young students that I became aware of how much I enjoyed playing and writing my own music. In that sense, it was my students who inspired me to begin improvising. It was my students who encouraged me to listen and attend to my own musical needs. Thus, as I continue to create and perform new, creative concert programmes, I now aspire to integrate my own piano improvisations into my repertoire along with my favourite classical and contemporary piano works. And as I work

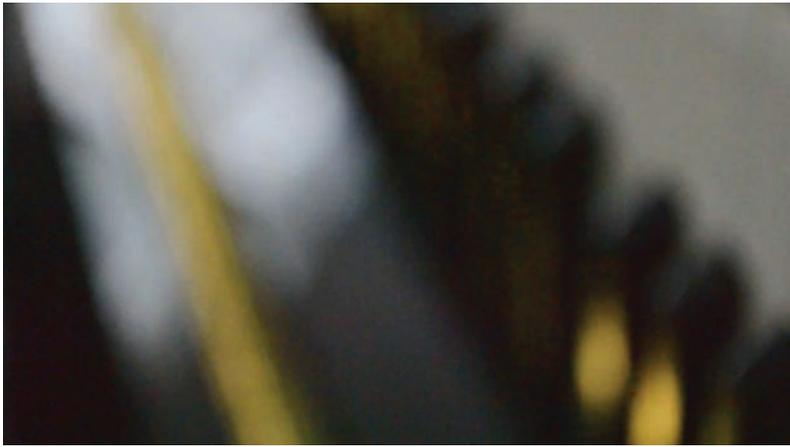


Figure 2: Video still, Piano Improvisation I, Jee Yeon Ryu (2014). Available at <http://vimeo.com/112247898>.

towards realizing my own artistic projects, I am also searching for new, musical ways of inspiring my young beginner piano students to discover their own performing artistry.

For those reasons, I agree with Rodgers and Raider-Roth's understanding that the 'teaching demands connecting with students and their learning, and the health of that connection is nurtured or jeopardized by the teacher's relationship to herself' (2006: 271). Similarly, Irwin reminds us that 'to truly care for [the students], it is vitally important for [teachers] to care for themselves first' (2006: 75). With those ideas in mind, as a way of creating a caring relationship with my students, and myself, I am learning to practise a musical living, an a/r/tographical way of knowing through music. As a piano teacher, I wish for my students to find their own musical voice. I wish for them to experience the joy of piano playing. I wish to be a part of their musical journey. With my students, I wish to share an a/r/tographical journey towards a musical enquiry.

For me, that means that I need to be in presence with my own artistic self

to listen to my musical calling

to trust my own musical self

to continue discovering my musical voice

and be walking the path of my own 'pedagogy of self'

(2006: 75)

NATALIE

My mother was a tailoress in Scotland before moving to Canada at the age of 17. Throughout my lifetime, she has made a significant amount of my clothing, from my baptism gown to my prom dress, and many school clothes and Halloween costumes in between. As a child, I watched as she carefully selected the pattern and the fabric, and patiently considered every detail from the choice of thread, zipper, ribbons, buttons, and snaps. On some occasions, she even sewed labels that said 'made with love from mom'.

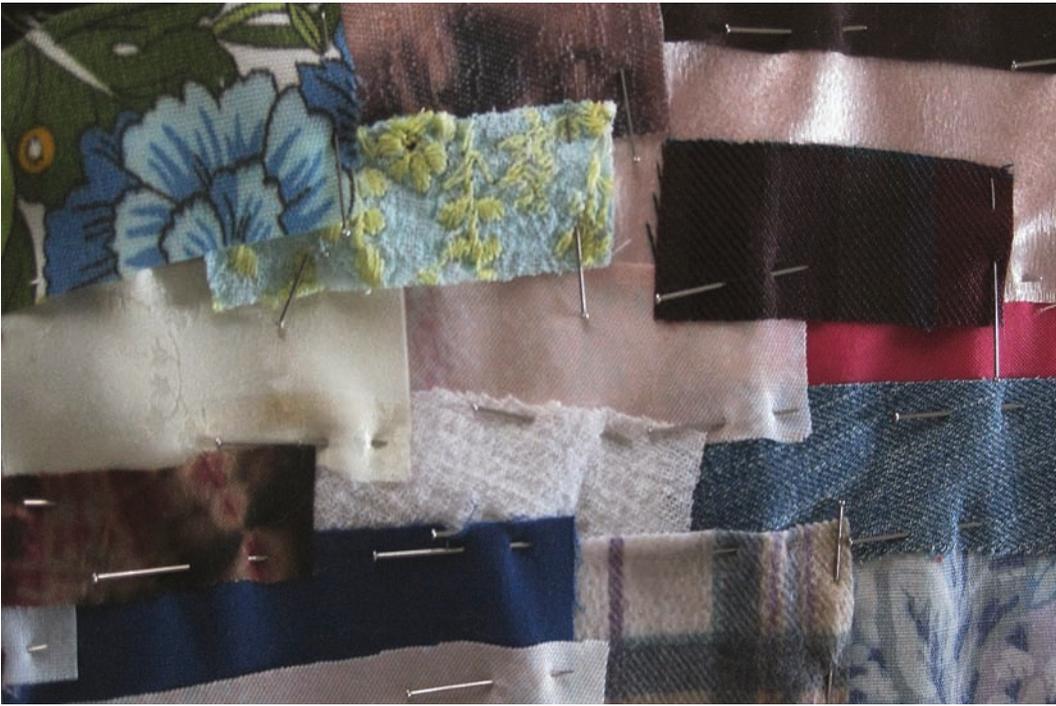


Figure 3: (Re)creating my Fabric, Natalie LeBlanc (2014).

Having taught me to sew at a young age, my mother planted a seed. As such, I have always had an appreciation for hand-made things. They are unique, personal, passionately assembled, and they tell a story. For Leggo, when we tell stories of our lives, 'we reveal ourselves in intimate ways and we grow more confident in our conviction about the power of words for writing our lived stories, and transforming our living stories, and creating possibilities for more life-enhancing stories' (2008: 4).

My first *a/r*/tography project began when I started saving the clothes that I had worn during various times and moments in my life – clothes that my mother made for me, as well as the very first items I learnt to sew with my mother's guidance, first by hand, and then by machine. I also saved other clothes that I simply loved to wear (and wear out) and brought this collection of clothing along with my other belongings when I moved to Vancouver from Montreal to begin my doctoral studies at the University of British Columbia. Although I had intended to make a quilt with them, through my *a/r*/tographic enquiry I was inspired to do something else.

As I touched each piece of fabric, memories began pouring out of them like a flood. The patterns, the smells and the stains transported me to a different place and time. I wanted to wear them again. I decided to make a dress as I felt a dress was a better representation of my lived experience. Aesthetically, my dress resembles a patchwork quilt; it is a new assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) that (re)combines the multiple garments that I have worn, interchanged, and shed throughout my life.



Figure 4: Dialogue, Sara Florence Davidson (2014).

BECOMING-RESEARCHER

SARA

In the words of Springgay et al. (2008a: 83), 'What exists in the space between inside and outside is an unknown relationship between self and other'; I did not know this in the beginning. However, I now realize that in creating the images for my video I took what was inside of me and placed it outside. I did this in the hope of generating an understanding in others. By 'lingering in these liminal spaces' (Leggo et al. 2011: 241), I was attempting to better understand myself through dialogue and in my relations with others. In Sidorkin's words,

I do not find my self inside of me. Instead, my self exists in relations between others and me. I look at the other not as in a mirror, as many have suggested. To the contrary, my real self is out there, in the multitude of relations with multiple others, and it is only partially under my control. And when I look inside, I see a complex reflection of the real relational self. My self does not merely manifest itself through relation with others, rather, it exist [sic] only in relation with others.

(1999: 142)

Beyond its capacity to facilitate dialogue and relation with others, my video also helped me to create a figured world (Holland et al. 1998) where I was able

to have my identities 'reflected back in a positive light' (Cummins and Early 2011: 3). This figured world allowed me to explore possibilities and consider different ways to make sense of my experience (Holland et al. 1998). As Urrieta explains, 'people "figure" who they are through the activities and in relation to the social types that populate these figured worlds and in social relationships with the people who perform these worlds. People develop new identities in figured worlds' (2007: 108). This figured world allowed me to reconsider the assumptions that I had made about the people around me as well as the beliefs I held about myself.

The creation of the video allowed me to reinterpret my experience and consider it in a multitude of ways. The sharing of the video allowed me to engage in dialogue with others to achieve a greater understanding of myself and others. Through this experience I was able to see the possibilities of the use of figured worlds to author our lives in other ways. We can exert our agency and transform our stories of adversity by examining them from different perspectives. This allows us to create new worlds with 'the possibilit[ies] for making/creating new ways, artifacts, discourses, acts, perhaps even more liberatory worlds' (Urrieta 2007: 11).

Sidorkin says,
that his 'real self
is out there
in the multitude of relations
with multiple others'.

(1999: 142)

It is in these relations
that we begin to catch glimpses
of ourselves.

He adds,
'to be human
is to be different
from other humans'.

(1999: 1)

And it is our differences,
that allow me
to see myself.

A mirror reflects
our perfect opposite.

But we still use it
to see ourselves
more clearly.

JEE YEON

According to Irwin, 'to live the life of an artist who is also a researcher and teacher is to live a life of awareness, a life that permits openness to the complexity around us, a life that intentionally sets out to perceive things differently' (2004: 33). In that sense, *a/r/tography* as living enquiry (Irwin



Figure 5: Video still, Piano Improvisation II, Jee Yeon Ryu (2014). Available at <http://vimeo.com/110631718>.

and de Cosson 2004; Springgay et al. 2008b) through the lens of a musician, teacher and researcher (Gouzouasis 2006, 2008, 2013) invites, challenges and enables me to reflect on my own performing practices (poesis as a musician) and the ways in which an *a/r/tographic* approach to piano pedagogy (theoria as a researcher) can help create meaningful music-making and piano-learning experiences for my students (praxis as a teacher).

With those ideas in mind, I created a series of video recordings of my own piano improvisations to explore the concepts of awareness, openness and complexities of be(com)ing a pianist, teacher and researcher. By intentionally setting out to capture the moving reflected images of myself improvising at the piano, I attempted to explore, express and evoke the fleeting, improvisatory moments with my students. Just as it is natural for young children to move freely from one idea to another (Gouzouasis and Ryu 2014), my improvised piano music and the fragmentary reflections of myself playing the piano flow together in free improvisation.

Piano improvisation inspires me to listen, trust and connect with my artistic self. It invites me to practise mindful listening. It draws me to linger in sounding presence. When I am improvising, I begin to listen to every sense of touch, thought and music flowing through my fingers. My inner being quietly connects and converses with my sounding world. For those reasons, the artistic process of filming my piano improvisations became a metaphor for my improvisational journey towards an *a/r/tographic* approach to piano pedagogy.

For me, *a/r/tography* is improvisational. It leads me to new ideas, possibilities and inspirations. It challenges me to live a life of awareness (Irwin 2004), a musical life that mindfully sets out to being in a new way. Thus, as I practise 'being with *a/r/tography*' (Springgay et al. 2008b) as a pianist, teacher and researcher, I am learning to create a space and time for my students and

myself to attune to our own musical selves. With my students, I am seeking new, meaningfully 'perceptive encounters' (Greene 1977: 124) that celebrate uncertainties, complexities and beauties of not knowing. Like Greene, I am yearning towards possibilities as I practise 'being present' (1984: 123) to an a/r/tographic approach to piano pedagogy that enables teachers and students to actively engage in an 'ongoing quest for understanding' (Irwin and Springgay 2008: xxiii).

Sitting quietly

I face my piano

As I sound my first note

I anticipate the unknown journey

I follow where my music leads me

I answer to the calling

As I search

meandering the corners of my sounding thoughts

I listen to the 'mystery of moments'

(Nachmanovitch 1990: 22)

– to the flow of dancing keys

NATALIE

The process of selecting, cutting, arranging and sewing the fabric for my dress (re)connected me with my past. Each piece of fabric that I touched, felt and studied became channels to a memory and to a story. Each piece stirred a different emotion, from happiness to sadness, fear and excitement, nostalgia and even embarrassment. Reminding me of events and things forgotten, they also provoked new thoughts about who I was and who I am becoming.

I found myself thinking about everyone who had come into my life in some way and about the relationships I had formed – not only of my mother but also of other family members, including my brothers, my father, my past and current friends, boyfriends, schoolmates, teachers, coaches and co-workers. I found myself thinking about the role that structure played in the formation of these relationships: schools I had attended, churches I belonged to, extra-curricular activities I had taken part in, and sports that I practised, such as gymnastics, highland dancing, swimming, diving, painting and piano, to name a few. In constructing my dress, I was reflecting on much more than the garments of clothing that I had once worn. I was thinking about the relationships that I had formed when I had been wearing them. I was becoming aware of the contexts that had helped shape who I am: the beliefs I hold, the personal virtues that I consider to be important and the ideological perspectives that I entertain. The process of (re)constructing my fabric opened up a site for which I was able to gain an understanding about the person I was and am becoming *in relation* to the people and to the cultural and societal structures that have also played a role in shaping me throughout my life.

My dress is a representation of living enquiry (Irwin and Springgay 2008). Uncertain as to where my journey leads, it has become something that I can continue to make, wear and/or even shed in my quest for knowledge and understanding. Irwin (2003) refers to this as an aesthetic of unfolding in which *in/sight* plays a pivotal role in aesthetic enquiry. The 'in' is myself, wearing the



Figure 6: In the seam, *Natalie LeBlanc* (2014).

dress (or providing a trace of my body when I am not wearing the dress). Held with/in the centre, my body is surrounded and supported by an assemblage of items that were made for me; that I have made; that I have worn; outgrown, and kept as an artefact of my growth. 'Sight' plays on the manner in which my dress brings all of these different pieces of fabric together, creating a new assemblage that produces a new relation between each fragment that comprises the whole. The 'slash' is the space between each piece of clothing, each memory and each story, which draws attention to the seam and to the threads that simultaneously hold each fragment together while keeping them apart. Springgay explains, 'Fragments leave gaps. Slits. Cuts. Seams. Breath. Spaces with, in, and through bodies, casting new fictions [and] creating new stories ...' (2003: 192). Seams are what remind me 'in-between-ness is imbued with the possibility and hope of creative and political agency' (Garoian and Gaudelius 2008: 100).

BECOMING-TEACHER

SARA

When I began to create my artwork, I did not realize the impact it would have upon my own transformation. Throughout its creation, I remained focused on affect (Irwin 2013) – that is, my desire to bring my pain to life in a way that would allow me to fully communicate my experience with others. I wanted others to engage with the images and the words and to have an emotional reaction. In doing so, I underestimated the power of the creation of the video to transform me.



Figure 7: Transformation, Sara Florence Davidson (2014).

Sameshima explains that 'relationality-as-learning is connecting with the other by distinguishing reflection in the other. Relationality-as-teaching is providing a broad mirror in which the other is reflected' (2008: 49). The creation of the video allowed me to connect with others in ways that allowed them to reflect back to me their understandings and experiences and stories of adversity while also acting as a mirror for their own inactions.

Upon further consideration, I was able to understand the pedagogical possibilities for the use of multimodal responses to experiences of adversity with my students. Many of the students with whom I work struggle with discrimination both inside and outside the classroom. One of my roles in their lives has been to support them to work through those challenges in ways that allow them to engage with school academically. I have always worked with them through journaling and talking, but this experience allowed me to understand the value of creating an artistic and multimodal response to a very challenging situation. Through this experience, I come to understand the truth in Bach's (2007) suggestion that engaging with the visual aspects of a narrative allows for 'another layer of meaning'. I believe that it also affords the creator more time to fully consider a range of possibilities for action.

Cummins and Early (2011) speak of the value of identity texts to assist students in gaining a positive reaction from others to aspects of their identity that may have previously been a source of shame or discomfort. Furthermore, the texts can open up intergenerational dialogues in both their creation and

sharing. I can confirm the truth in this. The incredibly positive response to my identity text has moved beyond my own generation, and it has supported me to think differently about my indigenous ancestry – which had often been a source of shame.

Working to create multimodal expressions of our adversities can strengthen our understanding of others. It also supports us to come to a degree of peace with aspects of our identities that continue to remain as spaces of struggle. They encourage dialogue and allow us to explore the possibilities of new figured worlds, and they allow us to transform our adversity.

I did not believe
in art's capacity
to teach.

Perhaps
I did not listen
closely enough.

But now
I hear its whispers
beckoning to me
to explore the parts of myself
that were always
hidden
beneath.

And I am tempted
to exist for a moment
in its embrace

Cautiously
curious
of what
I may find.

JEE YEON

As Irwin and Springgay remind us, *a/r/tography* is 'concerned with creating the circumstances to produce knowledge and understanding through inquiry laden processes' (2008: xxiv). Inspired by *a/r/tographical* ways of living enquiry (Irwin and de Cosson 2004; Springgay et al. 2008b), I aspire to create an *a/r/tographic* approach to piano pedagogy that calls for musically sounding 'pedagogic situations' (Aoki [1986/1991] 2005: 159) wherein teachers and students are brought together to participate, enquire and share their own artistic and learning processes with one another. For me, an *a/r/tographic* approach to piano pedagogy engages me to mindfully listen and attend to my students' freely moving interests, curiosities and ideas. It helps me to support my young students' own musical ways of learning to play the piano. While focusing my attention on the fleeting, improvisatory moments with my students, an *a/r/tographic* approach to piano pedagogy offers me to keep on searching for musically pedagogical ways of inspiring my students' creativity, imagination and piano play.

Therefore, as I explore the ways in which my own performing practices can guide, inform and connect with my piano-teaching practices, I imagine

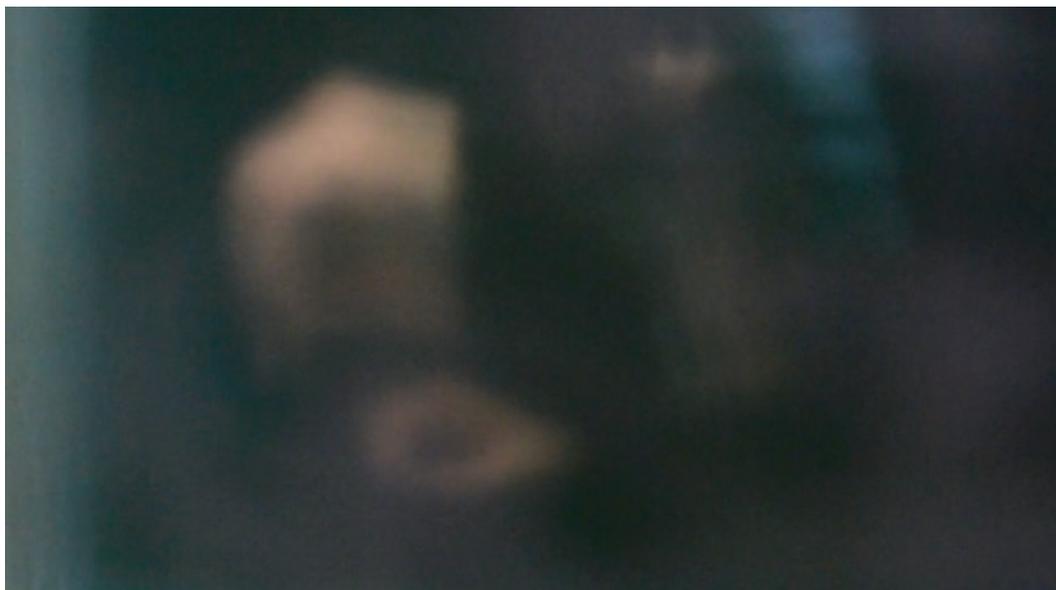


Figure 8: Video still, Piano Improvisations III, *Jee Yeon Ryu* (2014). Available at <http://vimeo.com/111389734>.

a piano pedagogy that calls for a trusting collaboration among students and teachers. I imagine a piano pedagogy 'set in motion' (Irwin 2013: 198) that invites both teachers and students to practise being in 'pedagogical presence' (Hill 2006) with one another. I imagine an improvisational *a/r/tographic* piano pedagogy that values the importance of 'presence in teaching' (Rodgers and Raider-Roth 2006) in children's experiences of learning to play the piano.

For those reasons, I will continue to (re)search, reflect and cultivate my own piano performing, teaching and researching practices to create more meaningful, pedagogical and *a/r/tographical* learning experiences for my young beginner piano students. To inspire my students and myself to continue discovering and sharing our musical selves, I practise *a/r/tography* as an 'ever-present process' (Dewey 1938: 50) towards an improvisational journey of a musical enquiry.

My students' stories, ideas, and questions matter to me
I want to encourage their curiosities –
to ask questions, to wonder, and to imagine possibilities in music
and in life

I want to share and be part of their musical journeys
I want to join them in their search for meanings
I want to listen

...

Every moment we share matters ...

...

As we explore, create, and discover a musical living,
an *a/r/tographical* way of knowing through music,
I wish to unfold my students' 'beautiful noise' into a 'beautiful music'

NATALIE

In talking about clothing, and dresses in particular, women reveal not only personal anecdotes but also personal stories about their lives that bring forth ideas pertaining to the body, identity and culture. Weber and Mitchell (2004) propose a methodology called *dress stories* in which clothing acts as an entry point for autobiography and enquiry. This methodology is intriguing because it not only concerns itself with the dress as a visual object but also emphasizes 'the wearer's view', which is a perspective that particularizes 'dresses-in-use', 'dresses embodied' and 'dresses worn' (Weber and Mitchell 2004: 5). The dress reconfigures time by provoking movement, dialogue and thought. It also resists a traditional narrative structure that comprises a beginning, middle and end by resisting closure. As a *collage narrative* (Garoian and Gaudelius 2008), it brings new associations and new questions to surface. Instead of becoming a totalized entity, the disparate fragments of garments produce various in-between spaces where meanings can be re-examined, remade and renegotiated (Ellsworth 2005; Garoian and Gaudelius 2008).

By remembering my life experiences, and (re)searching my past, through a/r/tographic enquiry, I (re)constructed my personal narrative and changed my life story. As such, my dress has become a free-floating signifier that denotes a temporal structure while exemplifying the complexity of my past experiences and my present identity. It is an autobiographical work that portrays my



Figure 9: My Dress Story, Natalie LeBlanc (2014).

subjective experience and my location in the world – a metaphor for the three roles that I play as an artist, as a researcher and teacher, and how I thrive in this liminal space.

As a pre-service visual art educator, I have grown concerned for what it means for someone to *become* a teacher. Britzman attests that prospective teachers bring to their teacher education more than a desire to teach. They bring their implicit biographies, their ‘cultural baggage’ (1986: 442) and their cumulative social experiences, which inform their knowledge of students, school structure and curriculum and pedagogy. For Britzman (1986) the dominant model of teacher education is vocational training, which neglects the significance of institutional biography. *Becoming-a/r/tography* has informed my understanding of becoming-teacher in that it involves paying attention to how meaning is made from the spaces *between* biography and practice. Importance resides on creating spaces in which pre-service teachers can reflect on personal stories and lived experience where their beliefs, values and assumptions about teaching and learning may be (re)opened and (re)negotiated while learning to teach, and more importantly, learning to learn.

NARRATIVES OF BECOMING, STORIES IN MOTION

This article explores how *a/r/tography* produces artistic and pedagogical potentialities, not in form, but in moments of interaction and connection. Rather than producing a static or ascertainable entity, it generates dimensions and directions in motion that become networked and distributed in time and space. Informed by Gilles Deleuze’s (1990) philosophical concept of *becoming*, *a/r/tography* is conceptualized as an intercultural formation that operates on multiple registers of sensation in combination with a continuity of movement that is not measurable or easily defined. As an event of movement (between the things, the people and the thoughts involved), it requires receptivity to the effects and affects of *a/r/tography* as a process/event.

As Rita Irwin explains, ‘*Becoming-intensity* is about the capacity to affect and be affected through the dynamic movement of events with learning to learn’ (2013: 206, original emphasis). Here, Sara, Jee Yeon and Natalie experience this *becoming-intensity* as they engage with their art: Sara with photographic images and video, Jee Yeon with musical improvisation, and Natalie with the creation of dress. Each individual used these artistic expressions to both interact with themselves and with others to gain a better understanding of themselves. Engaging in a form of walking pedagogy (Irwin 2006), we performed a contiguous side-by-side movement, allowing us to access experiences that are multilayered, sensory and affective, which help us reach beyond the personal to social understandings. Moving alongside one another, our autobiographical stories offered us a community of enquiry for *becoming-intensity* that was deeply affective as we created and recreated our stories of becoming artist, researcher and teacher.

In her discussion of *becoming-event*, Irwin (2013) describes the relational paradigm that was invoked by the mapping of ‘contemplations and imaginings’ (2013: 207) that emerged in our stories of motion. Gilles Deleuze (1990) refers to the event as an indeterminant incipient transformational process. *Becoming*, when conjoined with event, constitutes a double movement with no beginning and no end (see also Garoian 2014). Here, Sara, Jee Yeon and Natalie take up the idea of relationship in their narratives. Notions of

dialogues with self, others and previous research emerge from these reflections on becoming-researcher. In these spaces we recognize that

Becoming-event does not reside in a single personal encounter: it resides in a multiplicity of events that are social and collective. *Becoming-event* runs alongside *becoming-intensity* as affect resonates, reverberates, echoes across time and space within and beyond the event.

(Irwin 2013: 207, original emphasis)

As Sara demonstrates with the image of her hand (see Figure 4), there is a reflection present in the process of becoming. Dialogue, which occurs with others, also occurs with oneself. As Irwin reminds us, 'life is full of entangled lines of events, intensities, and movements' (2013: 209). This is how we relate, this is how we connect, but it is in dialogue that we come to understand one another and come to new understandings about ourselves.

As Irwin further explains, 'to see movement is to feel the body in relation to potential' (2013: 209). In these narratives we came to understand how we can use art to teach and understand the potential in human beings; however, we also came to understand how art is also a teacher. In our encounters with a/r/tography and our multiple art forms, we came to know ourselves and others. That is the power of art to teach. Rita Irwin's understanding of movement takes into account the notions of moving and being moved. In the same way that Rita Irwin collaborated with Carl Leggo and Valerie Triggs (Triggs et al. 2014) to create multisensory experiences, we also came together in a space to realize the entanglement of our artistic, pedagogical and theoretical ideas. As Irwin recognized her own artistic experience of movement 'heightened [her] sensitivity to the aurality of physical spaces' (2013: 211), we too transformed our thinking through heightened sensitivities to stories in motion. Métissage is a metaphor of interweaving. Working with our singular practices and contiguous lines of flight, we moved in relation to one another, creating richly laden stories of motion, affecting one another. We came to appreciate our collectivity because we shared our autobiographical stories in motion.

Our stories in motion remind all those interested in practice-based research or a/r/tography of the importance of métissage with no beginning and no ending. Many people struggle to enact their identities in affective ways. Embracing a métissage approach, our becoming transforms us as we experiment, encounter and co-labour together to understand the materializing, theorizing and practising of our ideas. This article provides an example of art educators co-labouring in order to understand their need for materializing, theorizing and practising their ideas, and, in doing so, realize that being committed to emergence offers ways for becoming artist, researcher and teacher that overlap and inform one another, enriching, entangling and engaging one another, as ways of living our art practice as research.

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