

**When past meets present: transference, art, and affectivity
in reflexive research**

MICHAELS, Debbie <<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8454-9081>>

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TITLE: WHEN PAST MEETS PRESENT: TRANSFERENCE, ART, AND AFFECTIVITY IN REFLEXIVE RESEARCH

Author: Dr Debbie Michaels Ph.D.

Affiliation: Sheffield Hallam University

Orcid No: 0000-0001-8454-9081

Website: <https://debbiemichaels.co.uk>

Email: debbie@debbiemichaels.co.uk

Abstract

This article reflects on emergent findings from an interdisciplinary practice-based doctoral research project situated in the fine arts. Grounded in artistic practices of ‘making’, and weaving in approaches from psychoanalysis and art psychotherapy the author explores what happens when things are moved from one context to another and how meaning is continually (un)made and (re)made over time through returning to revisit and respond to material ‘made’ in the past as it meets the stuff of new situations in the present. Emphasising the affective ‘work’ of art-as-research, attention is drawn to sites of ‘making’ as reflexive spaces for imaginative encounter, performative enactment, and working through, where understanding emerges through the affective work of moving, (re)assembling, and (re)configuring diverse practices and materials, the interweaving of dialogues, and the negotiation of tensions and resistances encountered at the borders between different domains. Claiming a position in the broad area of reflective practice(s) the research amplifies the significance of ‘transference’ as a reflexive method of enquiry, and the creative potential of art as a performative research practice; pushing beyond more conventional ideas of reflection and reflexivity in its capacity to embrace complex relationalities, and engage affective, ethical, sensibilities through the moving, modifying, and handling of ‘stuff’.

Key Words: art as research, psychoanalysis, art psychotherapy, transference and countertransference, affective reflexivity, reflective practice, ethics

Introduction

This article revisits research material from an art-based doctoral project which follows the intertwining dialogues and entanglements as I traverse institutional boundaries in healthcare and academia, *unmaking, making, and remaking* a body of work (Michaels, 2022a).

Expanding previous reflections (Michaels, 2022b, 2024) I explore the significance of ‘transference’ as a method of reflexive enquiry, and the ongoing learning that takes place through revisiting material ‘made’ in the past as it is ‘remade’ and amplified through touching the stuff of new situations in the present.

Background

Originating in the Latin *transfere*, ‘transference’ is generally understood as moving someone or something from one place to somewhere different; implying motion, direction, and a change or shift in position. The psychoanalytic concept of ‘transference’, introduced by Sigmund Freud, (2001 [1895]) is traditionally regarded as the unconscious repetition and transfer of past emotions and experiences onto a present situation, particularly one which involves a close relationship with another person. Initially seen as an obstacle to analytic work, transference is now widely viewed as a useful tool, offering opportunities to work on past issues in the present, and a framework for considering interpersonal and intersubjective phenomena. This includes the emotional and sensory experiences of the analyst/therapist, a phenomenon known as ‘countertransference’ (Heimann, 1950). Hinshelwood (2016:xiv) describes this as ‘the essence of the live connection between human beings’, reflecting contemporary ideas of transference and countertransference as a complex entanglement that emerges as a form of narrative or ‘imaginative event’ (Schaverien, 2007), where feelings and thoughts are evoked in the analyst/therapist through attention to process, emotional sensitivity, and an ordinary human capacity to pick up ‘vibrations’ (Hinshelwood, 2013). Like empathy, countertransference might be understood as an intensification of everyday experience, turning the spotlight on how aesthetic relations between people come alive. Indeed, Hinshelwood (2016) argues that, more than playing a role, countertransference is the specific experience of being ‘affected’ *in* that role. The implication is that this *affect* might kindle the transferential fire in the ‘here and now’ with immediacy of experience, while its significance and meaning might only make itself known later. The transference is brought to life by the countertransference because the *affect* hits us as an echo in our internal world before we understand its importance in the present (Birksted-Breen, 2003). In the process of ‘working through’ in psychotherapy/ analysis (Freud, 2001 [1914]), past experiences might then take on new emotional significance and meaning not previously held.

As an art psychotherapist, much of my understanding comes from reflecting on the thoughts, sensations, and ambivalences evoked *through* my experiences in/of a situation (Michaels, 2010, 2015). The introduction of ‘art’ changes the transferential dynamic through offering an intermediate, intersubjective, collaborative space between client and therapist. Exploring its significance Dalley (2013) suggests that the artmaking process and product invite playful, imaginative, and contemplative, involvement *between* therapist, client, and artwork, and are pivotal in holding complex, conflicting, emotions, and acting as a focus for

the transference. She argues that it is *through* the affective impact and reaction to the art-making process and product, for both client and therapist, that the transference comes to life. When seen as part of an assemblage of ingredients that make up the therapeutic environment, transference and countertransference may thus emerge out of the ‘staging of experience’ (Whitaker, 2007: 116). The physical and sensory handling of materials in the imaginative, embodied, improvisational space of the artmaking process invites the emergence of unconscious images, conflicting elements and ambivalent, thoughts and feelings which may be beyond words (Hilbuch et al., 2016). This potentially amplifies and intensifies transference and countertransference responses through processes of witnessing, mirroring, reverberation, and reflection (Schaverien, 1999, 2007). How materials and objects are made use of, (re)interpreted, and understood culturally, in turn opens possibilities for movement and transformation through revisiting, reworking, and ‘working through’ as material made in the past is infused with life and textures of feeling in the here-and-now of the therapeutic relationship through the ‘work’ of art (Dalley, 2013; Miller, 2022; Whitaker, 2007). The art psychotherapist’s own artistic response also offers opportunities for exploring and reflecting on transference/countertransference phenomena; deepening attunement and broadening understanding of a situation through paying attention to internal resonances (Deaver & McAuliffe, 2009; Fish, 2012, 2019; Miller, 2022; Nash, 2020).

While intense transferences may develop in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, feelings, imaginings, and bodily reactions are part of everyday life, subtly colouring our responses to materials, inanimate objects, artworks, institutions, and other things, including the relationship between researcher and research material. Through our associations, imaginings, and our capacity to *feel* ourselves into things (Currie, 2011) past experiences are brought to life in the present. Indeed, although ‘transference’ emerges within the bounds of psychoanalytic thinking, the concept itself is not lifeless. Rather, as a living relationship in which there is constant movement (Joseph, 1985; Schaverien, 1999) it remains open to modification and re-evaluation in different circumstances.

Transference as a Method of Enquiry

Despite encouraging a more meditative, contemplative, playful, and imaginative attitude, psychoanalytic ideas are strikingly absent in accounts of reflective practice and reflexivity, and little attention has been paid to the role of transference as a reflexive method of enquiry outside the clinical setting (Brown, 2006). Mapping clinical concepts onto social or artistic research is complex (Parker, 2010). Nevertheless, the use of countertransference is of growing interest to psycho-social researchers (Braddock, 2010; Brown, 2006; Holmes, 2014; Jervis, 2009). It has been argued that psychoanalytic ideas may enrich researcher reflexivity in qualitative research through offering an affective dimension which invites the researcher to embrace, rather than reject, their vulnerability and to use emotional reactions and responses as sources of knowledge (Gemignani, 2011; Hollway, 2006, 2016; Kenny & Gilmore, 2014).

For the philosopher Donald Schön (1983) the power of the psychoanalytic transference lies in its use as a ‘virtual’ world, the creation and maintenance of which, he argues, is ‘both a method of enquiry and a strategy of intervention’ (p.161). He suggests that in such a ‘virtual’ world (implying something in essence or effect rather than in fact) it may

be possible to experiment and slow down phenomena which would ordinarily be lost to reflection (p. 160-161). Arguing in favour of more artistic, intuitive processes, Stressing the tacit knowledge implicit in our 'patterns of action and in our *feel* for the stuff with which we are dealing' (p. 49, my italics) he proposes that, if the transference can become an object of curiosity, dialogue, and shared enquiry, then thoughts and feelings may be seen as sources of discovery. The 'virtual' world of 'transference' may then offer opportunities for past experiences, situations, relations, feelings, and imaginings to be explored, and *worked through* or *reworked* in the present – potentially transforming understanding and *moving* us from one place to another.

While countertransference to artworks may be a useful research tool in art psychotherapy, my enquiry shifts the emphasis from art *as/in* therapy to art as a 'primary way of examining experience' (McNiff, 2008). Increasingly acknowledged as a valid method of enquiry the arts unsettle established ways of knowing, moving across boundaries, inspiring connections, and making empathic participation possible through forms and practices that are evocative and compelling (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Cheng, 2010; Leavy, 2009, 2017). Reflexive by nature, this is made possible through the multiplicity of models, metaphors, and approaches the arts offer (Candy, 2019), and by the transfer of artistic energy *through* which an artist's emotions, thoughts, and experiences are infused into the 'work' of art (Townsend, 2019). Reframing 'transference' in a challenge to Freud and traditional hierarchical structures, Deleuze and Guattari (2009 [1972]) argue that, through its exploration of emotive themes, art functions like psychoanalysis; establishing a profound emotional connection with its audience and acting as a powerful tool for understanding the unconscious.

Creating the circumstances for something to happen – an experiment with method

Grounded in artistic practice, and embraced as an active, imaginative, process of exploration, encounter, and discovery, my enquiry assembles approaches from psychoanalysis, art psychotherapy and the arts in an experiment with method involving the moving, handling, modifying, and assembling ideas, objects, and things (Vear, 2022).

Within the overarching frame of the research setting, I create the circumstances for something to happen, combining diverse ideas, materials, and practices and redirecting their flow in anticipation of what might emerge (Ingold, 2010b). This might be likened to the idea of 'gathering the transference' – establishing the setting and arranging the conditions for the emergence of something – a process that is as much about creating a psychological space as a physical one (Meltzer, 1994; Townsend, 2019; D.W. Winnicott, 2018 [1960]).

Learning *through* experience is at the core, with 'experience' understood as undergoing and encounter – bound up with life and dwelling *with* and *in* a situation as well as practical contact *with*, observation *of*, and reflection *in/on* events. Expanding heuristic methods (Moustakas, 1990), I engage in dialogue with the materials, process, and products of artmaking as well as different audiences (McNiff, 1998), involving myself in various artistic projects (initiated by myself and/or others). *Feeling my way forward and into* the research situation I perform various tasks along the way. These involve experiencing and observing different situations and myself *in* them over time; making contemporaneous notes and responsive, reflexive, artworks; documenting process through a range of media; returning to

revisit and reconsider the sites of my research on an ongoing basis; and involving others in meaning-making. As artist-researcher I am situated amidst, rather than separate from, the situation I seek to understand; concerned with listening, sensing, and imagining, with mulling over practice, and being impressed by a thing – ‘feeling its touch and feeling in response’ (Are, 2018: 2).

Rather than searching for meanings, patterns or codes, analysis takes place as part of the gathering, production, and assemblage of data as particular processes, thoughts, ideas, and feelings take on significance or begin to ‘glow’ (MacLure, 2013). I revisit documentation to see where else these resonances have arisen in the past; going back *into* and *over* that happens throughout the research process, including writing the thesis. The implication is that the world may reveal itself through fluctuations and movements in the situation I set up as artist-researcher, that I am ‘part of – *affecting and affected by* – the research process, and that the situation can answer back and contribute to this interaction’ (Knudsen & Stage, 2015:5-6).

Ethics

The study was subject to ethical scrutiny and approval by Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Committee and all necessary permissions and consents were gained from those involved.

Findings

I conceptualise my research as a ‘speculative weaving in three Transpositions’, *unmaking, making, and remaking*. Although each ‘Transposition’ foregrounds a primary gesture which stands alone, each is intricately interwoven with the others in a reflexive conversation that continually loops back *over* and *into* as I return to revisit sites of making and research, *feeling my way forward* through the performance of tasks on their way to being completed. ‘Finding’ is therefore approached as a process rather than something to be found.

For the purposes of this article, I focus on the key artworks and projects as I revisit different sites, exploring what is activated through the process of moving ideas, practices, materials, objects, and things from one place to another. Further details can be found in my thesis and practice documentation (Michaels, 2022a) and at <https://www.debbiemichaels.co.uk>

From Art (Psycho)therapy to Art Research (Transposition I)

Taking an early opportunity to explore artistic production as research methodology for a group project, I explore what might be activated through moving aspects of art psychotherapy into a fine art arena (Michaels, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c) (Fig. 1). Revisiting an ‘art-therapy-object’ (made by me) which hung on the wall of my art psychotherapy room, I document the unpicking and reconfiguring of its threads, acting something out to see what is activated. Entering into a dialogue with the process of transferring the art-therapy-object from the relative privacy of the art psychotherapy setting to a public exhibition space I invite audience members to sit with the unravelled art-therapy-object (as I do) for the duration of a traditional

psychoanalytic hour – to become part of the drama through acting as witness to the object’s predicament.

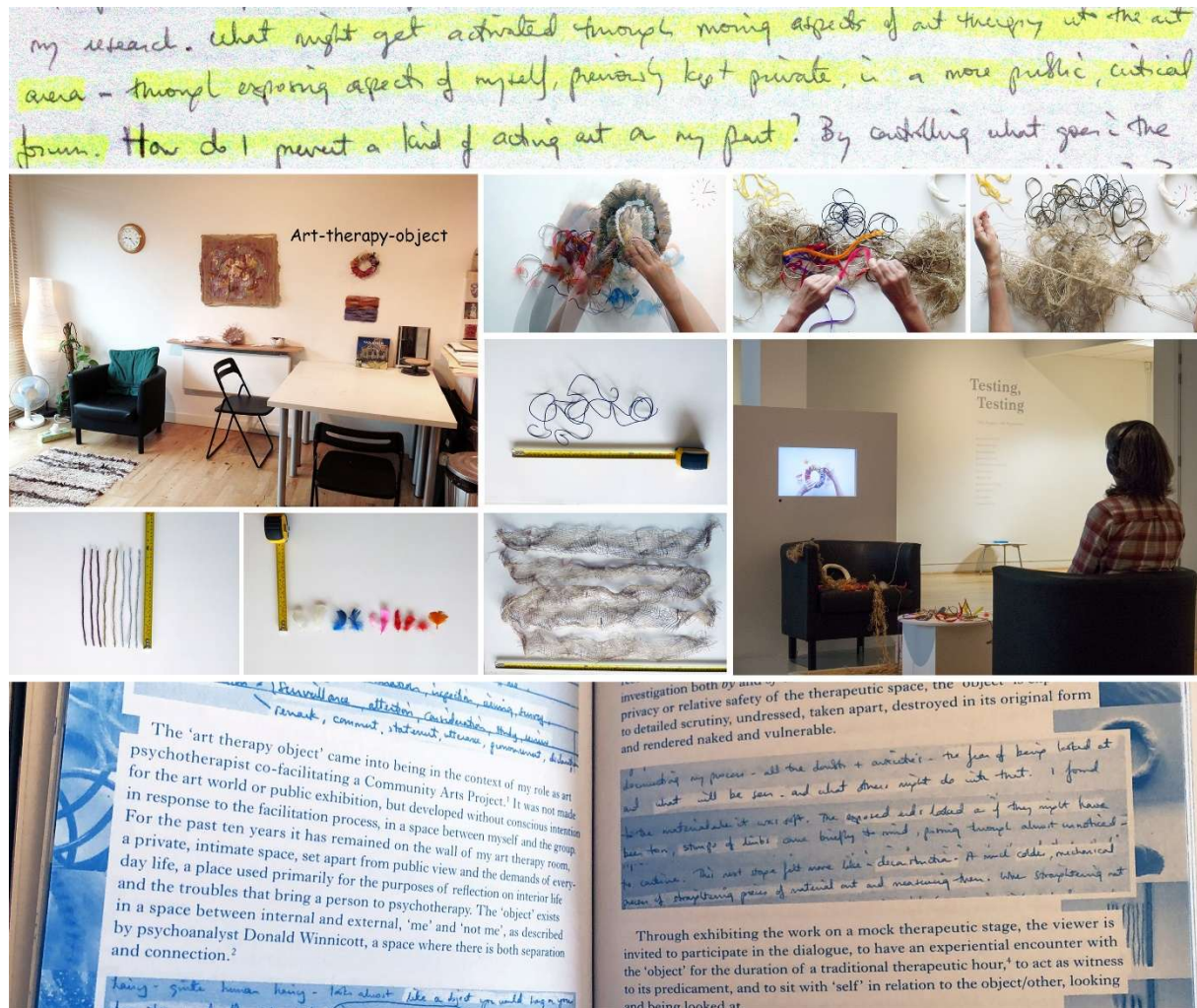


Figure. 1

Be|Tween, 2016, multi-media installation.

‘Testing Testing’, Sheffield Institute of Art.

Digital composite © Debbie Michaels

Although unable to articulate a case at the time for how ‘Be|Tween’ functions as a site for reflexivity, with the time and space that follow the act, including conversations with others, I come to understand the ‘work’ of art as (re)framing my reflexive practice in a performative, imaginative, space, somewhere between fact and fiction.

Resonating with doubts, anxieties, and ambivalences about crossing disciplinary boundaries and loosening professional conventions, the making process gains new meaning *through* what it evokes and moves in me as the unravelled ‘art-therapy-object’ meets this new, unfamiliar, situation. Critical dialogues around the artwork provoke feelings of exposure and vulnerability, as well as embarrassment. Other conversations raise my awareness of the dangers of more reductionist methods that attempt to understand something by separating out and measuring the component parts until a sense of the whole is lost. In contrast, through staging and dramatizing the work, and engaging with the narratives that take place around it,

the artistic process becomes an empathic, imaginative, exploration; a transference and reorientation of practice *through* which something new is re-imagined – *unmade* and *remade* – by contemplating one situation in the context of another (Collier, 2010). Even though the materials are the same, some change has taken place.

From Organisational Site to the Site of ‘Making’ (Transposition II)

Crossing boundaries again for the main body of my research I assemble frames from psychoanalysis and art psychotherapy *through* which to observe and experience a neurorehabilitation day service and myself therein. Returning to the site of my art psychotherapy training placement (undertaken some years earlier), I negotiate a twelve-week observational placement based on a psychoanalytic training model of organisational observation (Hinshelwood & Skogstad, 2000). Interested in exploring what happens if I make art in response to my observations and experiences in/of the setting, I adapt the method, first encountered some years earlier (Maxwell, 2000), expanding its frame by transferring the intensity of experience from organisational site to art studio – a site of ‘making’ (Michaels, 2022a) (Fig.2).



Figure. 2.
Twelve weeks: Twelve Hours + Twelve Hours +.
 Project, January – April 2017. © Debbie Michaels

Experiencing the situation and myself *in* it, I use my personality, including my sensory and emotional sensitivity, as an apparatus for receiving and processing subjective information; taking something from the *outside, inside*, and allowing it to inhabit and touch me bodily (Townsend, 2019). The model becomes ‘one hour a week observing in the organisation + one hour a week in the studio’, at a regular time and place over twelve weeks, a process I document using various artistic strategies. These include a research journal for recording observations and reflections, a Fitbit to record heartrate, speed, and journeys travelled and, in the studio, time-lapse photography and audio-visual recording as well as material documentation.

Entering the neurorehabilitation service as artist-researcher, I challenge convention for myself and the organisation, my silent presence provoking questions about why I am there, what I am doing, and whether I just sit there each week watching telly! In contrast, while appearing to ‘do’ nothing, I experience powerful, sometimes disturbing, sensory and emotional responses that surprise with their intensity and are, at times, difficult to sit with. The studio offers a transferential space away from the clinical setting (although connected to it), *through* which to explore my sensitivity to the situation as I move, handle, and manipulate materials, feelings, and thoughts within the constraints of time and space – a process that also evokes surprisingly powerful feelings which I describe in my thesis and elsewhere (Michaels, 2022a:55-122; 2024).

Returning to the same sites each week and working *through* the process reflects the ritualistic habits of successive regular sessions in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, creating a rhythm that is essential to the frame supporting and facilitating the research, as well as focussing attention and containing affect (Morra, 2008). Engaging in an imaginative dialogue with the ‘body’ of work as it emerges through the weekly routine puts me in touch with the painful predicament of people recovering from stroke, and the corresponding pull (more or less conscious) by those in a caring role, to turn towards ritual task performance and distancing in an effort to manage the emotional pain (Michaels, 2024).



Figure. 3

I do not want to be seen even though I am. Practice documentation, 2017.

Digital composite © Debbie Michaels

From Inside to Outside and In-Between (Transposition III)

Although the twelve-week observational project involves regularly moving across boundaries between various insides and outsides, the *work* itself is a mainly private, subjective, affair in that it involves ‘getting into the culture and simply experiencing it’ (Hinshelwood & Skogstad, 2000:165). Moving the work ‘outside’ and sharing my sensitivity across disciplines, the aim is to test prior conceptions and open a space for dialogue, something that might be considered vital to the negotiation of meaning (Leavy, 2009).

(Re)presenting the ‘body’ of work in different settings that bridge art, healthcare, and academia also involves processes of transference, reworking, or ‘remaking’ – processes which often assume unexpected significance. For example, transferring the residual ‘body’ of material out of the studio and (re)situating in the place from where I had observed for *Interrupting the Flow* (Fig.5) brings the work to life again *through* the physical act of touching and moving it. Indeed, it is through the powerful evocation of carefully handling a body that I realise I cannot separate its parts without damaging its integrity (Michaels, 2022a:152-154). The silent presence of the ‘body’ in the neurorehabilitation setting further stimulates and provokes responses from staff. These range from ‘just a load of materials’ and ‘makes no sense’ to ‘reaching out to something that is difficult to grasp’, and a mask that is ‘disconnected emotionally – deathly’ (Michaels, 2022a:161).



At first when I saw it I thought it looks a bit like – you know – what's been washed up by the sea – a bit of flotsam and jetsam – that sort of thing.
But that mask there. I feel it's like somebody that's had a stroke that's on the outside looking in – thinking everything is scrambled –
Yes...cause it's not nice at all. Why it should be there...why it's there?
It's weird
I don't know where I am – I don't know what's happening – I'm really frightened. That's how I think of it. Just like, they are there – looking in – on the outside looking in – and it's actually them – but they don't know why it's them. It's all mixed up and not connected.
It's just how it feels to me. It's frightening. But I think that mask – it's frightening. At first, I thought, oh it looks like flotsam and jetsam, but then – when I've looked at it.
I don't know what it feels like to have a stroke obviously.

Figure. 5
Interrupting the Flow, 2018, mixed media installation, 5 hours duration, Sheffield.
Digital composite. © Debbie Michaels

Later still, moving the ‘body’ again for a conference intervention, I rework the studio recordings for *The-Voice-of-its-Making*, a process that gives new texture and meaning to what has gone before (Michaels, 2018) (Fig. 6).

26.8.18

In bed thinking about the recording I’m making for Double Agent intervention – my associations to a voice being muffled – gagged – a body being bricked up behind a wall.

trapped imprisoned



Figure. 6

The-Voice-of-its-Making, 2018, soundpiece, 60 minutes duration.

‘Double Agency’, Design4Health, Sheffield Hallam University

Digital composite © Debbie Michaels

As a counterpoint to the still, relatively silent presence of the material object-body-thing, the sound-piece amplifies a discomfoting disturbance in the atmosphere that is difficult to clearly grasp or articulate. Nonetheless, this touches those encountering it through its resonance with the facelessness of some institutions and the evocation of someone in distress and trying to escape a situation (Michaels, 2022a:171-176).

In both these situations as well as others, the embodied act of moving, handling, (re)situating, and (re)presenting the ‘body’ of work brings an ethics of attention, responsibility and care to the fore through what is evoked and provoked, offering an insight into how the art is *working*, as affective understanding is *unmade* and *remade* with each ‘re’ iteration and performance of it. Encountering what was made *then* in the *now*, it is as if the volume has been turned up, intensifying the affective experience and ‘expanding the range and depth of thoughts and feelings that one is able to derive from one’s emotional experience’ (Ogden, 2004:1358) in Michaels, 2022a: 173)

Discussion

A key thread in this research is concerned with the reflexive learning that takes place *through undergoing* the embodied, performative, work of moving, handling, and (re)configuring diverse practices, ideas, materials, emotions, and other ‘things’ within the transferential frame set up by the unique situation. Viewed as a space of curiosity, dialogue, and shared enquiry the transference offers itself up as a ‘playground’ (Freud, 2001 [1914]:154). Here, the ‘work’ of art acts in an intersubjective, transitional space ‘between’ (Winnicott, 1991[1971]); an

intermediate area of experiencing where inner and outer worlds collide and fold into one another (Deleuze, 2006 [1988]). Feelings, thoughts, and insights emerge at different times and from all directions, as material ‘made’ in the past is ‘unmade’ and ‘remade’ through touching the stuff of new situations in the present

Weaving threads across personal, professional, disciplinary, institutional, and material boundaries, as well as external and internal spaces, fact and fiction, the ‘work’ of art-as-research emerges *through* the entangled relations and tensions at the borders between different domains, offering a mediating space though which otherwise difficult conversations might occur. Reluctant to move towards the exclusivity, absolutes, and certainties often associated with knowing, the emotional, affective, and performative intensity of working *through* the transpositional, transferential, ‘making’ process necessarily opens spaces of resistance as well as possibility. Such tension is evident throughout my research, particularly in the material ‘body’ and ‘the-voice-of-its-making’ both of which provoke ambivalence through the artwork’s refusal to settle comfortably in one place. Sharing my sensitivity across disciplines and challenging more conventional ways of presenting research, the psychosocial presence of the ‘body’ and its voice is amplified and charged with resonant meaning as different audiences become participants in meaning-making through receiving, handling and response. Pressed to notice and feel more acutely, this deepens my understanding of the human situation, drawing my attention to the nature of different sites, as well as an ethics of responsibility, attention, and care *for/of* the body – matters which remain poignant for healthcare, academia, and reflective practice.

Expanding Schön’s ideas, Candy (2019) suggests that reflection in creative practice is a ‘multi-faceted and pervasive process, embedded in the practitioner’s way of working’ (p.52). Drawing on my own practice, and (re)assembling threads from psychoanalysis, art psychotherapy and the arts in a new configuration, I do not plan to develop Schön’s idea of transference as a method of enquiry. Nonetheless, this resonates with my research which develops through an iterative, reflexive, conversation with the material of the situation as it emerges (Schön, 1983). Although I initially turn back to an already existing set of tools, as well as theoretical and physical sites, like the bricoleur (Levi-Strauss, 1966), it is the *act* of using whatever is to hand that calls the ‘work’ of art-as-research into existence, as the ‘making’ process takes on new significance and meaning *through* what it moves in me and others. More than representation (implying something fixed), the emergent ‘body’ of work is alive with gestures and answering forms, inviting and enabling emotional connection and empathic response. Thinking *through* affect rather than merely reflecting on it (Massumi, 2015) the knowing resonates experientially over time *through* direct sensory engagement with the material of the research situation; what it evokes and provokes, what it brings into the present to be attended to, the degree of awareness it induces, and how it affects and ‘moves’ those it touches and who touch it.

Attachment of value moves away from ‘meaning’ to how the art ‘works’ as it moves between the boundaries of time, place and context; shaped and reshaped by its interactions with the world in a constant state of ‘becoming’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004[1980]). Indeed, it is *through* the ongoing experiential exploration afforded by the ‘virtual’ transferential space, and the interwoven narratives that gather around the work of art-as-research, that I begin to get a *feel* for the stuff with which I am dealing. Maybe then, as Cazeaux (2008) suggests, it is

‘not simply the case that we leave one way of shaping experience and move to another; it is the tension between the two’ that is of concern (p.129).

It is true that I question at times whether I merely repeat the same thing by returning to go over old, familiar, ground; yet, with each iteration – (re)making – there is a retexturing of experience; a ‘re-turning’ of ground which opens it up, ‘breathing new life into it’ (Barad, 2014:168). Indeed, it is the working *through* – the ongoing transferential process of *unmaking*, *making*, and *remaking*, and the compression of time and space involved as material is continually moved, (re)organised, and (re)assembled in different contexts – that offers new ways of understanding. Not only is there a delay in understanding, but an ongoing provocation to further (re)makings as material that appears the same is reworked and retextured, each re-iteration giving new meaning to what has gone before. Implicit in this is the time and space that follows the act, allowing for experience to be assimilated, digested, transformed into understanding and articulated – ‘worked through’ the body and put into words. By reflexively paying attention to my affective dealings with the research : how I administer and document the process; how I move, handle, and use ‘things’, including other bodies; and how I negotiate the tensions, entanglements, and resistances at the borders between domains – my understanding is also sophisticatedly moved. This foregrounds an ethical reflective practice focused on experience which estranges and ‘undoes the self’ through elements of surprise (Done & Knowler, 2011; Pollard, 2008).

Conclusion

Being a reflective, reflexive, practitioner means challenging familiar ways of doing things, *unmaking* and *remaking* the ties that both organise and constrain, and cultivating the many ways we can learn *through* experience. Much of the dialogue and questioning in this research remains unarticulated – embedded and embodied in the relational process of weaving the work. Nonetheless, claiming a position in the broad area of reflective practice(s) this research amplifies the significance of ‘transference’ as a method of enquiry, and the creative potential of art as a performative research practice; pushing beyond more conventional ideas of reflection and reflexivity in its capacity to embrace complex relationalities, and engage affective, ethical sensibilities through the moving, modifying, and handling of ‘stuff’. As a site in/through which one may be pressed to notice and feel more acutely – to be *moved* – the research value lies in the potential of this method to affectively (re)sensitise practitioners and researchers across arts and/in healthcare in ways that may not emerge through more traditional approaches to reflexive/reflective practice.

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Declaration of Interest

No conflicts of interest.

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Figures

Figure 1 - *Be|Tween*, 2016, multi-media installation. ‘Testing Testing’, Sheffield Institute of Art. Digital composite © Debbie Michaels

Figure 2 - *Twelve weeks: Twelve Hours + Twelve Hours + Project*. January – April 2017. Diagram © Debbie Michaels

Figure 3 - *I do not want to be seen even though I am*. Practice Documentation, 2017. Digital composite © Debbie Michaels

Figure 4 - *Practice Documentation*, 2017. Digital composite © Debbie Michaels

Figure 5 - *Interrupting the Flow*, 2018, mixed media installation, 5 hours duration, Sheffield.
Digital composite © Debbie Michaels

Figure 6 - *The-Voice-of-its-Making*, 2018, soundpiece, 60 minutes duration. 'Double Agency',
Design4Health, Sheffield Hallam University, Digital composite © Debbie Michaels