NARRATIVES OF ELSEWHERE AND IN-BETWEEN: REFUGEE AUDIENCES, EDU-CURATORS, AND THE BOUNDARY EVENT IN ART MUSEUMS

by

Marianna Pegno

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the

SCHOOL OF ART

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

WITH A MAJOR IN ART HISTORY AND EDUCATION

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2017

As members of the Dissertation Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Marianna Pegno, titled "Narratives of Elsewhere and In-Between: Refugee Audiences, Edu-Curators, and the Boundary Event in Art Museums" and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Larry Busbea, Ph.D — Date: Oct 12, 2017

Elizabeth Garber, Ph.D — Date: Oct 12, 2017

Manisha Sharma, Ph.D — Date: Oct 12, 2017

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copies of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Dissertation Chair: Manisha Sharma, Ph.D — Date: Oct 12, 2017

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of Arizona and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this dissertation are allowable without special permission, provided that an accurate acknowledgement of the source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the copyright holder.

SIGNED: Marianna Pegno

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is by no means a product of my single voice. Without the continuous conversation, input, and support of friends, family, and organizations this journey would not have been possible.

My family, who ventured to museums with me and tolerated longer than expected visits.

My friends, who continuously acted as critical sounding boards and provided moments of escape.

Colleagues and collaborators, for letting things get messy and encouraging me to experiment with programmatic structures.

Faculty, for encouraging me to explore new theories, providing endless guidance, and sharing critical and thoughtful feedback.

Program participants past, present, and future –thank you for trusting me, diving in, challenging me to think in new ways, always telling me the truth, and for an unwavering willingness to experiment.

To everyone who has influenced this process I am forever grateful.

DEDICATION

"I have always resisted the comfort of conventional categories. And my works are all sustained attempts to shift set boundaries—whether cultural, political or artistic."

(Minh-ha, 2011, p. 13)

To all who defy categories and support those who do.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores narratives that emerge from a community-museum collaboration while working with refugees in relation to Trinh T. Minh-ha's (2011) concept of the boundary event. Within this study the boundary event is explored as moments of overlap where identity, experiences, knowledge, and processes are continuously being negotiated; by embracing or leaning into these moments, community-museum programs can develop multivocal narratives—where no single voice is heard as distinctly clear or separate. These co-created museum narratives stand in contrast to educational and engagement strategies that aim to instill knowledge and elevate community with the museum as the expert. In this dissertation 16 participant voices– of 15 refugees and one museum educator– mingle, coalesce, and complicate museum narratives. These narratives are participant-created (data presentation) as well as researcher-constructed (analysis and interpretation). Using the methodological lens of narrative inquiry and decolonization I investigated data collected from over a two-year period (summer 2013-summer 2015) including: content and wall labels collected from two exhibitions, one marks the beginning of the study in 2013 and the second in 2015 concludes the study; gallery activities collected over the course of the two-year study; and educator field notes from the 28 individual sessions. Ultimately, I argue that multivocal narratives, and embracing moments defined as the boundary event, complicate traditional hierarchy and expected stories of refugees and new migrants illustrating how difference can positively disrupt linear, static, and authoritative institutional narratives.

CHAPTER 1.0

ART MUSEUM AS BOUNDARY EVENT

This research focuses on a long-term, community-museum[1] collaboration called *Museum as Sanctuary (MaS)*, involving the Tucson Museum of Art (TMA), which is a regional art museum in the southwestern US, and a non-profit collaborating organization named Owl & Panther (OP) that specializes in multi-generational, expressive arts programming for refugees affected by torture, trauma, and traumatic dislocation. *MaS* is an ongoing program that began in the fall of 2010 and meets regularly at the TMA. It entails numerous activities that occur both in classroom settings where participants make art, and in the galleries where they discuss and write about artworks on view.

I am a museum educator who has been a facilitator for this program since its inception. From July 2013 through July 2015, I collected data in various forms (e.g. audio recordings, written activities, exhibition texts, and ethnographic field notes) during each program session and from the two culminating TMA exhibits of *MaS* artwork. I did so in the interest of studying the impact of this program not only on the refugee populations being served, but also on the museum educators and education programming in the art museum. This represents the shift in my personal journey in becoming an edu-curator, someone who straddles between the educational and curatorial roles in the museum where I work. In examining this data I found narratives revealing multiple ways of knowing and understanding were being relayed simultaneously within *MaS*'s

[1] Throughout this dissertation community-museum and museum-community are used intentionally interchangeably, identifying collaborative practice between a community-based organization (OP) and museum (TMA), to avoid a hierarchical privileging of either institution.

[2] Executive Order 13769 was briefly in effect (January 27, 2017 – March 16, 2017) and

curatorial and pedagogical practices. In this way this study presents diverse significant narratives emerging from this long-term museum-community collaboration.

In the following pages of this chapter, I provide information on the *MaS* program and background on the urgency and relevance of cultural institutions like art museums working with refugees in the United States. After stating my guiding research questions and their significance, I provide relevant grounding of the study's form and conceptual framework, including its design. I conclude the chapter by clarifying limitations and caveats.

An Overview of the *MaS* Program

The current format and structure of *MaS* came into being in 2011, to ensure that TMA and OP were working together to create a beneficial learning environment for refugee individuals living in the Tucson, Arizona metropolitan area. The multi-visit program is comprised of two major types of activities: studio explorations, occurring in the TMA's education center, and in-gallery learning. I identify three main groups influencing program structure within *MaS* and this research: (1) art museum educator(s) including myself, (2) the OP program manager and administrative manager, and (3) refugee participants, ranging in age from 7 – 50+ years. Within this dissertation I refer to this broad age range as multi-generational since the program does not serve isolated age demographics such as youth, K-12, adult, etc.

A typical program session begins at approximately 4:30 PM when the art museum educator(s) and the program manager from OP, or other representatives from each organization, prepare the space and activities for the session. At 6:00 PM, participants and volunteers begin arriving, and by 6:30 PM, everyone (approximately 30 participants,

20 volunteers, two OP staff members, and two to three TMA educators) has begun working on the evening's activities. During the 1.5 hours of session time, small groups work collaboratively on gallery activities, or individually on their own art projects. In some instances, this might mean that 30 individuals are working on 30 unique studio projects, in which case the needs of each participant may vary drastically throughout the evening. When in the galleries, all attendees—myself, TMA educators, OP staff and volunteers, and participants— divide up into six to eight small groups to explore and converse with one another, and with other groups, about artworks on view. At 7:45 PM, clean up begins; by 8:15 PM, participants and volunteers have left the TMA's education center. Afterwards, myself and other museum educators finish cleaning up and debrief on the session and by 9:00 PM, educators and the program manager leave the TMA. This process repeats itself six to eight times a semester, for a total of 12-16 sessions per academic year. Over the course of this research study, the facilitators of *MaS* have experimented with layering education and curatorial practice by creating interpretative materials for works in permanent and temporary exhibitions. In addition, the program has mounted two exhibitions at the TMA, which included not only participant artworks, but also biographies and descriptive labels written by participants.

Identifying the Overlap: Refugees and Art Museums

Artist, educator, and researcher Trinh T. Minh-ha (2011) explores the overarching condition of flight and refugeeism as being "produced by political and economic conditions that make continued residence intolerable" (p. 29). Here, individuals are "dispossess[ed] not only of their material belongings but also of their social heritages," leading to individuals who live "a provisional life, drifting from camps to camps,

disturbing local people's habits and destabilizing the latter's lifestyles when they move into a neighborhood" (p. 30). Most importantly, flight is "neither voluntary nor simply involuntary…refugeeism differs from voluntary immigration in that it does not have a *future* orientation—the utopia of material, social or religious *betterment*" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 47).

Each year, armed conflict and persecution cause individuals to flee their families, communities, and countries, resulting in a large number of refugees. Displaced populations and those seeking refuge are constantly increasing. "Over the past two decades, the global population of forcibly displaced people has grown substantially from 33.9 million in 1997 to 65.6 million in 2016**" (**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2016). In the United States, the Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration notes that between 1975 and April 30, 2017, over 3.3 million refugees have been resettled in the United States (Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugee, and Migration, 2017).

As of this date and in the wake of the Trump administration's Executive Orders 13769[2] and 13780[3], refugees have been subjected to more persecution and further arrivals have been greatly curtailed[4]. This makes it even more necessary for cultural workers to

[2] Executive Order 13769 was briefly in effect (January 27, 2017 – March 16, 2017) and sought to lower the number of refugees being resettled in the United States, specifically targeting individuals arriving from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. Under this order US administration claimed, "Numerous foreign-born individuals have been convicted or implicated in terrorism-related crimes…including foreign nationals…who entered through the United States refugee resettlement program" (Office of the Press Secretary, 2017).

[3] Executive Order 13780 aimed to replace 13769.

[4] Both of these Executive Orders were blocked in court however, they did have an affect on the refugee ceiling in the United States and it wasn't until the last week in May when the State Department lifted the restrictions. According to Gardiner Harris (2017) the lift

close the gaps between art education, museum education, and immigration reform. In this political climate I find it necessary to assert that refugee status is not easy to obtain. Individuals receiving this legal status and accompanying working papers (in the United States an I-94 card is given) go through extensive background checks and legal questioning to prove a "well-founded fear of being persecuted" (UN High Commissioner for Refugees).

With the current administration providing as little help as possible to refugees and as more refugees and displaced persons settle in the United States, it is essential that communities and community organizations develop and support programming and services that encourage refugees to explore and become acquainted with their new home. Museums are unique sites of potentially rich engagement with refugees, helping to build connections with their local community through nontraditional methods of healing, such as art-making experiences and in-gallery activities, that can be facilitated with those having limited English language capacity. A study released by the American Psychological Association (2010) supports the importance of "nontraditional elements, such as interfacing and collaborating with other agencies, including cultural organizations not traditionally seen as 'service providers'"(p. 8) to support refugees in acclimating to new communities. Partnerships between traditional service providers, such as resettlement agencies, and cultural institutions like museums, give refugees an opportunity to express themselves through non-verbal communication and to engage in co-created and self-directed learning opportunities.

---

on the ban could double the number "of refugees entering the country, from about 830 people a week in the first three weeks of this month to well over 1,500 people per week by next month."

Research Questions

In this study I address the primary research question:

- How can we as art museum educators, or edu-curators, create spaces that provoke, and engage with, narratives between communities and museums?

In exploring and addressing this main question, I also engage with the following sub-questions:

- What multivocal narratives are revealed when refugee populations and edu-curators actively engage in and collaborate on museum programming?
- How do these narratives change over time?

Purpose and Significance

Despite the plethora of investigations on museum programs designed for diverse visitors such as immigrants or English language learners (Betancourt & Salazar, 2014; Gutierrez & Rasmussen, 2014; Iervolino, 2013; Macdonald, 2003; Ruanglertbutr, 2016; Shoemaker, 1998) and on how museums are working with communities and community partners (Lynch, 2011; Keith, 2012; Nightingale & Swallow, 2003; Onciul, 2013), there are substantial knowledge gaps regarding: what actually occurs during these programs; how relationships develop overtime; and what refugee participant narratives emerge. By focusing on these relationships and narratives fostered in *MaS*, I seek to understand what happens when refugee participants, a community partner, and myself as art museum educator overlap.

While this research is not about the personal life history narratives of refugees, their identity and experiences greatly influence the design and structure of this project. As an art museum educator, I do not see myself as an art therapist or a social worker but rather as an active listener; similarly, I attempt to reflect on my role as a thoughtful collaborator, rather than a formal or invasive researcher.

In my practice as a museum educator, I have found that collaboration thrives where no single voice is heard as distinctly clear or separate. A majority of research on museum-community programs discuss the harmony of partnerships but rarely include research on the duality of dissonance and harmony; for this reason, I attempt to equally explore moments of disagreement and agreement. Within this study, boundary events are enacted when *multiple voiced narratives* (*multivocality*) emerge from the mingling and overlapping of participant-artists' voices with my own reflections as an art museum educator. Next, I will elaborate on the key terms in this research, namely, collaborating organization, art museum, and art museum educator.

Collaborating Organization

MaS is a community-museum collaboration in which program planning, implementation, and evaluation are collaboratively developed by OP and the TMA. Taking inspiration from Viv Golding and Wayne Modest (2013), *MaS* situates art museum practice within the realm of social practice, redefining the museum-community relationship as "more than mere consultation and inclusion of diverse perspectives" (p.1).

Museums are able to broaden their potential as spaces of learning within an increasingly global society when working with collaborating organizations to include more voices within the institution. Collaborations between art museums and various

organizations help to build stronger connections within the community: "museums cannot operate in isolation in a world of shifting boundaries…Collaboration today has expanded possibilities…It is a way to invite more participation from the outside…Collaboration enhances the ability of each participant" (Hizry, 1992, p. 21). In *MaS*, OP and TMA aligned their educational missions and objectives in order to provide more successful expressive arts programs for refugees.

During the initial year of the collaboration between OP and TMA in 2010-2011, both organizations designed programming with their own particular organization's goals in mind. An informal evaluation of the program's effectiveness after that first year led to both organizations updating their educational goals for a more successful program. Together, these organizations realized that meeting at least once a semester to discuss projects and plan for future sessions was essential in order to foster an open dialogue to support the successful continuation of *MaS*. Additionally, it became apparent that museum educators needed to participate in other OP programs in order to build relationships and trust with refugee participants and thus, collaborative programming extended beyond the museum's walls.

Art Museum

Art museums are not universally definable institutions, because, "…there are so many different kinds of art museums: collecting and non-collecting; museums that focus on a particular culture, time period, artistic medium; large and small art museums; urban, suburban, and rural" (Villeneuve, 2007, p. 6). For the purpose of this study, I define an art museum as an institution with rotating and permanent art exhibitions and public educational programming. Here, the museum is a space of performance where the

narratives of refugee, collaborating organization, and art museum educator interact and exchange with one another, and museum education takes center stage.

According to Charles Garoian (2001), performance within the museum creates the potential for "new possibilities" (p. 236) where "viewers challenge the museum's monologic practices" (p. 237) by "introducing narrative content that would otherwise remain ignored" (p. 237). To further this concept of the art museum as a performative environment, I am drawing parallels to Trinh T. Minh-ha's (2011) concept of boundary event, which acknowledges ways in which "…participants' moves are mutually defined by one another, each response…a performance of its own" (p. 94), within museum practice. Through these mutually informed actions, the museum, its programs, and the people within the space are viewed as dependent on one another. Thus each actor or performer—in this case, refugee, collaborating organization, and museum educator—is a crucial component in how a museum functions and is understood in this study. Through these interactions and exchanges, the museum begins to open up to new experiences wherein "collaborative leadership involves thinking and acting across boundaries, often among organizations that are unconventional partners" (Hizry, 2002, p. 14). Thus, within the context of this research, the art museum is a space where the collection, exhibition, and preservation of objects occurs alongside conversation, collaboration, and exchange, and where neither action is privileged but rather, all are necessary in order to develop successful museum practice. While conversations about the connections between humans and environment or culture occur more frequently in anthropological and history museums, the focus on community engagement, in art museums, tends to be on the object and artist, as defined by curator or educator. My study shifts the reading of the art object

from the perspective of the curator and educator, to the perspective of the audience as participator and curator. It is this change in point of view that, for me, highlights the significance of the location of this study, within an art museum as opposed to another type of museum.

Art Museum Educator

My experiences and academic training inform my understanding of the art museum educator as someone who simultaneously straddles the world of art historical knowledge and art education practice. My sentiments are echoed in *From Periphery to Center: Art Museum Education In the 21st Century*, a volume edited by Pat Villeneuve (2007). The preface to this publication references a conversation that occurred at the Museum Education Division meeting at the 2006 National Art Education Association (NAEA) annual convention. The following ideas from this conversation have significantly informed my understanding of an art museum educator:

- "It has to do with the blurring of the lines between various disciplines within the art museum" (Villeneuve, 2007, p. 3).
- Someone who is "…willing to experiment and try different formats, work as part of that team to suggest alternate arrangements, alternate plans, and different ways of opening up to different kinds of experiences for people" (Villeneuve, 2007, p. 5).
- Someone who "…understand[s] that there are many different kinds of museum-goers and allow for different kinds of museum experiences." (Villeneuve, 2007, p. 7)

With these ideas in mind, an art museum educator is flexible, collaborative, social, and multi-disciplinary. Perhaps even more relevant to my research, and an extension of the art museum educator, is the hybrid entity of an edu-curator:[5] a museum professional who is defined by collaboration and visitor-centered practice.

Conceptual Framework

Postcolonial theory

In this dissertation, I am utilizing postcolonial studies,[6] as defined by Gayatri Spivak (1999, 2013) and Trinh T. Minh-ha (2011), as a conceptual framework. In these theorists' work, postcoloniality is a socio-political condition rather than a single instance or one type of relationship. Spivak (1999) asserts that, "postcoloniality—[is] the contemporary global condition" (p. 172). Similarly, Trinh T. Minh-ha understands the current economic and global phenomena as a continuation of the inequalities, injustices, and political dominance fashioned during colonization whereby the postcolonial condition illuminates continued violence. She reflects, "While the era of colonization has been officially proclaimed to have practically reached an end, invasion, occupation, disruption, and relocation—in other words, colonization by other means—continue to set the stage for unending aggression and destruction" (Minh-ha, 2011, p .5). Together, Spivak's observations of a global condition and Minh-ha's comments on societies' continued acts of violence illustrate how I am defining postcoloniality.

---

[5] This term is explored further and defined in chapter 2, A Changing Landscape: An Overview of Community-Museum Programming with Immigrant and Refugee Audiences.

[6] To clarify, within this dissertation I employ postcoloniality as a theoretical lens, rather than decoloniality, though I am aware of both, and I use decolonizing methods and strategies in order to organize, analyze, and interpret the data.

In pairing postcolonial theory with art museum practice, my objective as a researcher is to foster inquiry and dialogue about power relations within art museums – from how objects are displayed to the ways in which audiences are positioned within the institution. Furthermore, postcolonial theory helps to situate research that challenges a singular voice, linear historical narratives, and object-based learning within a global conversation. My conceptualization of the postcolonial is not time-specific, but rather emerges out of investigations and explorations of hegemonic systems and subjugated, silenced, or ignored audiences. Within the context of museum practice, "the postcolonial aesthetics dislocates and reinvents museum spaces…and disseminates alternative ways of elaborating and sharing memories" (Angelis et al., 2014, p. 7). Thus, if we understand colonization as the perpetuation of singular histories and truths from one perspective, then the postcolonial urges that we move away from homogeneous narratives toward multiplicities.

In *Postcolonialism and Education: Negotiating a Contested Terrain*, Rizvi et al. (2006) speak to the expanding discipline of postcolonial theory in order to address hegemony and inequality beyond the relationship of colonized and colonizer. They assert that a "more critical postcolonialism is needed if we are to understand how colonial assumptions remain embedded within the new discourses and practices of globalization" (Rizvi et al., 2006, pp. 255-256). This critical postcolonial lens is helpful in interrogating authoritative and hierarchical practices, specifically the systemic power structures still inherent within the art museum as an institution.

The museum as an institution is rooted in colonial assumptions; curatorial narratives often speak for collected cultures in broad generalizations (Macdonald, 2003;

Duncan, 1991). This notion of power is also manifested in the polarized relationship between museum professionals and museum visitors, whereby the first are producers of knowledge and the latter, passive receivers of information. Through a postcolonial lens I challenge this binary of the museum professional (the privileged) and visitor (the other) within the museum space. At this point, I must acknowledge that my role as art museum educator and researcher within this project immediately places me in a role of power and authority, no matter how hard I try to eschew this position. However, I try to continuously recognize the fact that my research does not seek the concrete, certain, or correct but rather aims to activate and question museum practice from the perspectives of participants/visitors, collaborating organization, and museum educators. This critical practice acknowledges my position of power while also working to combat the siloed practice of the educator or researcher by conceptualizing the research practice as a collaborative endeavor that is not possible without participant input.

The boundary event. I am interested in investigating the point of intersection and overlap between audience (refugee participant), art museum (educator—specifically myself), and collaborating organization (programming and administrative staff) and how these three entities are co-constructing narratives of museum-community relations and programming. I am identifying these instances of overlap as active sites of collaboration and examples of Minh-ha's (2011) concept of boundary event (see Figure 1). To summarize, Minh-ha explains boundary event as moments, spaces, objects, and/or things in a constant state of transformation, where certainty becomes questioned and possibilities are endless.

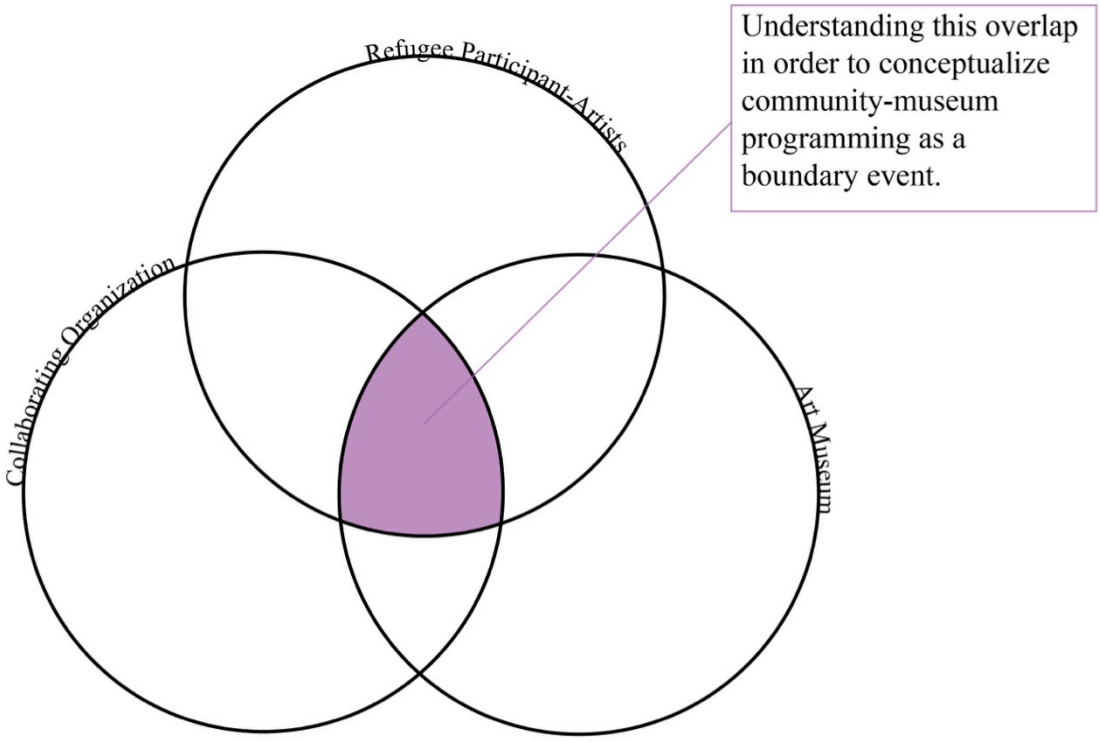


Figure 1. Understanding the overlap: community-museum programming as a boundary event.

As I imagine a practice that is an embodiment of Minh-ha's boundary event, I seek to cross the museum-community divide where "traveling can thus turn out to be a process whereby the self loses its fixed boundaries—a disturbing yet potentially empowering practice of difference" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 41). Within these fluid boundaries, there is a potential for the art museum to become a site of difference and multivocality. This illuminates how art museum practice can exist as "a place of decentralization that gives into neither side, takes into its realm the vibrations of both, requiring constant acknowledgement of and transformation in shifting condition" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 70).

A border-crossing: museum and community. Museum professional Ivan Karp (1992) discusses the relationship between museum and community by noting that, "the best way to think about the changing relations between museums and communities is to think about how the *audience*, a passive entity, becomes the *community*, an active agent" (p. 12). Poised with this move to situate the community as an active collaborator within the museum, it is necessary to engage with issues outside the traditional or assumed role of the art museum. As dialogue and mutual respect build, the art museum and collaborating organization must learn to navigate potentially controversial and difficult conversations to compromise.

Museum theorist and professional Bernadette Lynch (2011) sees potential within clashes between the museum and community: "…conflict must be allowed to be central to democratic participation if museums are to view participants as *actors* rather than *beneficiaries*" (Lynch, 2011, p. 160). Within this space of conflict, she argues for "a reflective practice and an institutional space that allows for conflict, and, *hence*, builds trust" (Lynch, 2011, p. 160). Thus, the act of migrating across the boundary between museum and community, and acknowledging the inherent conflict therein, expands capacity while broadening institutional focus, resulting in moving the museum towards a collaborative and dialogical social practice.

Research and Study Design

In this research project I use narrative inquiry and decolonizing methods in order to construct the study and analyze the data. The central focus of this research is to synthesize narratives of museum experience co-constructed from multiple points of view

including refugee participant(s), administrator(s) from a collaborating organization, and myself as an art museum educator. I seek to investigate how these participants influence, inform, direct, and negotiate experiences in a community-museum program.

I collected data from: (a) a Summer 2013 exhibition of *MaS* participant-generated works of art and wall text; (b) documentation of written gallery activities; (c) field notes recorded after each session from 28 program sessions from Fall 2013 – Summer 2015; and (d) a Summer 2015 exhibition that includes participant-generated wall texts and works of art. Though this research was not conducted as participatory action, in many instances, participant comments influenced data collection methods and modified study design. Examples include: eliminating interviews and reviewing field notes with OP staff and art museum educators to include their comments and reflections on sessions.

A Multivocal Narrative

In keeping with the tenets of postcolonial theory described previously, the confluence of voices occurring within an educational program is central to this study where I explore narratives of practice that stem from bottom-up and non-hierarchical pedagogical approaches. As such, the narratives contained within this dissertation are best defined as multivocal, since there is a confluence of multiple points of view, varying perspectives, and a multiplicity of action that disrupts a singular linear narrative.

Rick Altman (2008), in the *Theory of Narrative*, aims to broaden the definition of narrative to include multiple-focus texts that "thrive on discontinuity, forcing characters and readers alike to devise novel methods of deriving meaning from apparently unrelated fragments" (Altman, 2008, p. 242). Within this definition, narratives become a constellation of experiences that are multiform yet inter-related. Clarifying multiple-

focus texts further, Altman (2008) states that these publications "…set familiar pieces into unexpected patterns, calling into question the comfortable habits of readers and viewers alike" (p. 262). These multiple-focus narratives honor and acknowledge difference, rather than assimilating individual interpretations and ways of learning into a singular, cohesive, manageable process.

Decolonizing methods. The design of this study is based in decolonizing methods, so that as a researcher I would be more like a collaborator rather than a distant observer. In Marcelo Diversi and Claudio Moreira's (2009) *Betweener Talk: Decolonizing Knowledge Production, Pedagogy, and Praxis*, Diversi reflects on their role as researchers stating, "We hope our stories stand as scholarship that treats the Others not as objects/subjects of study but as co-constructors of decolonizing acts and performances" (Diversi & Moreira, 2009, p. 184). Inspired by these words, the data was collected through multiple sources: ethnographic field notes, in-gallery activities, and participant-artist written exhibition texts and is presented, analyzed, and interpreted as interwoven fragments.

As I thought about research, the idea of reducing my interference with the programmatic structure became increasingly appealing. I did not want to appear as a formal researcher, demanding attention or answers; instead, I aimed to create a research structure that did not mimic or perpetuate interrogation and immigration processes of oppressive hierarchies for refugee participants.[7] Shamser Sinha and Les Black (2014), in

[7] Again, intentionally distancing myself from these systems of power, now seen retroactively in relation to contemporary immigration policies and rhetoric within the United States and other countries, such as the United Kingdom, seems even more important and significant. I cannot stress enough that practitioners, educators, researchers, or others entering into services or collaborations with refugee or immigrant

their article "Making Methods Sociable: Dialogue, Ethics and Authorship in Qualitative Research," address the act of researching with immigrant youth and the importance of separating oneself from institutionalized and judicial practices of inquiry in favor of more social modes of data collection. They reflect upon their study design by noting that

> Part of our impulse towards thinking about how we listen comes from realising that many of our participants were likely to have been subject to coercive forms of qualitative interview, which we need to avoid replicating. Modes of interview informed by social science but practised by immigration authorities and the police can be focused on transforming personal history into information about times, places and circumstances… (Sinha & Black, 2014, p. 475)

Furthermore, these practices utilized by immigration authorities or resettlement agencies attempt to capture narratives of the refugee experience and of past traumas. Thus, I found it essential that the museum space and my research were greatly distanced from systems that perpetuate violence and re-traumatize individuals. Echoing Sinha's and Black's (2014) research practice, my own study design is conversational and sociable, rather than a formal directed narrative through a more traditional interview practice.

Narrative inquiry methods. I use narrative inquiry in this study to explore a *shared museum experience* that consists of multiple, fragmented, punctuated, decentered, simultaneous, overlapping, and concurrent narratives. This privileges no individual experience or single voice, and thus a variety of opinions, ideas, histories, and stories emerge during the program. Kathleen Wells' (2011) *Narrative Inquiry* provides some key clarifying points within the conceptualization of this research methodology by

---

audiences do so thoughtfully, critically, and aware of power dynamics influencing these individuals daily existence.

distinguishing between the practice of co-constructing narratives and the performance of narratives. Wells (2011) explains: "Although narrative co-construction and control focuses on the conversational interactions that shape a story, the concept, *narrative performance*, focuses on the broad way in which a story is told" (p. 33). These two concepts of narrative, co-construction and performance, are essential to address within my research design, where the collection of data that is co-constructed through experiences (chapter 4) and the performance is enacted in the way the data is interpreted (chapter 5).

In "Analysing Narratives as Practices," De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008) note that narrative is a social practice and "is an embedded unit…not free-standing or detached/detachable" (p. 381), thus the specific context and individuals informing the narratives are essential and each collaborator's past experiences are consistently informing how this co-constructed museum narrative emerges. Defining narrative further, De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008) see narratives as co-constructed and emergent rather than sequential and linear. In this context, narratives are much like Altman's (2008) multiple-focused stories, which are dialogical, simultaneous, decentered, discontinuous, overlapping, and multivocal. Furthering this parallel, De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2011) acknowledge the complexity of co-created narratives in chapter four of their book, *Analyzing Narrative: Discourse and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*, where they note that, "narratives may be collaboratively constructed…co-tellers and audience contributions profoundly shape the course and structure of narratives" (p. 92). *MaS's* narratives are co-constructed non-linear entities highlighting the way in which the museum is a space for complex engagements that include comments on artwork,

exhibitions, and art making, as well as reflections on home, school, and pop culture, and many other topics.

Data analysis and presentation. The way these stories are constructed, or performed, in this dissertation blends together different data sources, illustrating the performance of a multivocal narrative of museum practice. Specifically, I interpret analytical collages I create from my data, through the lens of Minh-ha's (2011) boundary event, reflecting growth + change, process + product, and poetics + performance, respectively. By adopting this performative style, I aim to honor conversational exchanges in the *MaS* program and to decolonize the authoritative and singular research practice or narrative. However, the narratives within this dissertation are pieced together from my perspective as the principal investigator and thus, are still influenced by my point of view despite the inclusion of a multiplicity of voices.

Delimitations

There are several delimitations within this research that must be addressed. First, this research is situated in the overlap between art education, museum practice, art history, community engagement, and refugee museum audiences. It is beyond the scope of this document to give a complete assessment or literature review of all of these practices individually. More specifically, in seeking to explore the nuanced experiences occurring within a community-museum program (i.e., *MaS*) I have opted not to engage in interviews with art museum educators or staff from the collaborating organization in order to avoid privileging their voices over those of refugee participants.

Secondly, the focus of this research is intended to closely investigate one art museum, one of their community partners (collaborating organization), and one local population (refugees); as a result I will not address other museum educational programming such as school tours, docent training, lectures, or outreach. While I believe these other museum educational endeavors have the potential to challenge and broaden the institutional metanarrative, I have concentrated exclusively on refugee audiences within the art museum due to the lack of research on this topic and the urgency of the moment, socio-politically.

Lastly, in relation to the theoretical lens I am utilizing for this research, I recognize that postcolonial theory is just one way of analyzing how museum practice can be multivoiced, and there are other theoretical lenses that could be effectively used to reflect multiplicities.

Structural Overview

In this chapter, I introduced the objectives and rationale of this research, including its location and participants, along with the conceptual and methodological frameworks I have used. In chapter 2, I present a review of literature exploring art museum practice in relation to the specifics of community-museum programs with immigrant and refugee audiences, highlighting the significance of collaboration within these types of endeavors. In chapter 3, I review the study design and methodologies while detailing the collection, analysis, and presentation of data. There, I introduce and define my research practice as performative and multivocal, and rooted in decolonizing theory and narrative inquiry. Chapters 4.0 through 5.5 are multi-section presentations of the narratives that emerge

during *MaS*. First, in chapters 4.0 – 4.2 I present the raw data, for transparency, and set up the idea of exhibition and in-gallery learning as research. In these sections, my own ethnographic reflections are woven within and between participant-artists exhibition texts and written documentation or interpretations from gallery-based activities. Next, in chapters 5.0 – 5.5 I expand on my process of analysis and the resulting interpretations illustrating three instances of the boundary event: growth + change, process + product, and performance + poetics. Finally, in chapter 6, I explore the conclusions, implications, and limitations of this study.

CHAPTER 2.0

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE: AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY-MUSEUM PROGRAMMING *WITH* IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE AUDIENCES

Below is one example of a prompt created for *Museum as Sanctuary (MaS)*. It acknowledges that collaboration is a multi-way street, evolving as participants and institution actively engage one another.

Prompt (Marianna, 2015):	**Response (Rami, 2015):**
Write a verse, poem, or prose about your experiences at the art museum inspired by the following questions: how have you changed the museum and how has the museum changed you?	*How the Museum has changed me:* It has changed my attitude about art. I used to not like art, but now I think art is a kind of language. *How Have I Changed the Museum:* My feelings changed the museum. The way I looked at the art changed the museum because museums are changed by the people who view the art

Moving Towards Collaboration and Away from Authoritative Voice

The above vignette from *MaS*, which occurred in preparation for the 2015 exhibition, demonstrates a way to incorporate participant-artist voice within the curatorial

process. This educational exchange illustrates a changing landscape within community-museum collaborations where various actors (participant, museum educator, and museum) work together and programming is design *with* rather than *for* an individual, group, or community. To recap, *MaS* is a museum-community program for refugee families, affected by torture, trauma, and traumatic dislocation, and it serves as one example of how museums serve as a space of collaboration and dialogue. The following literature review explores how museums have become sites of dialogue and a resource that strengthens communities by working with, rather than for, refugee and immigrant audiences. The mixing of museum and community programs and the resulting encounters between museums and audiences illuminate the way in which programming can function as Minh-ha's (2011) boundary event: a moment of receptivity and mingling.

New Practices in Museums:

Multivocality, Decolonizing Practices, Edu-Curation, and Diversifying Audiences

Art Museums have become spaces of experimentation, interpretation, exploration, and conversation between museum professionals (educators and curators), visitors (or participants), and community partners (collaborating organization). As these activated encounters occur more frequently in art museums, the traditional roles of visitor as a passive viewer, educator as a tour guide, and curator as expert have become complicated. Thus, museum practices and politics have shifted from the construct of museums as spaces of contemplation (Cuno, 2011; Duncan 1995 and 2004; O'Doherty & McEvilley 2000) to sites of activated engagement (Bourriaud, 1998; Hubard, 2015; Hooper-Greenhill, 1994 and 2000). As a result of this changing idea, the relationship between

institution and community has evolved: the museum has become "embedded within its specific community, operating as a powerful tool for development and social change" (Silverman, 2010, p. 12).

By embracing this new role, museums are imagining new ways of engagement in order to become welcoming centers of empowerment and creativity for diverse communities (Hirzy 1992 and 2004; Kendig-Lawrence, 2010; Nashashibi, 2003; Onciul, 2013 and 2015; Stein et al., 2008).[8] As museums begin to reframe themselves as socially responsive institutions that are attentive to the needs and voices of their constituencies, programmatic endeavors have become more focused on acts of collaboration and co-creation. Such museum programming and its related spaces are community or participant-centered and create multivocal encounters, reflecting Hooper-Greenhill's (2000) conceptualization of the post-museum, where "many voices are heard" (p. 144) and "histories that have been hidden away are being brought to light" (p. 145). By incorporating more voices, museums can begin to shed their authoritative and omniscient tone in exhibit and program design, culminating in more complete histories and stories of art objects in the museum.

In the following subsections, titled: Embracing multiplicities, Decolonizing museums, and Defining edu-curation: Blurring boundaries, I define exhibitions as spaces of multivocal exchanges where more than one expert influences and collaborates on the curatorial outcome. Below, Figure 2 illustrates this distinction between more traditional

[8] In these articles and chapters the authors explore the notion of "diverse communities" as defined by underserved populations, refugees, visitors, indigenous and first nations, and immigrants, respectively.

models of exhibition development and the community-based multivocal exhibitions I am exploring within this dissertation.

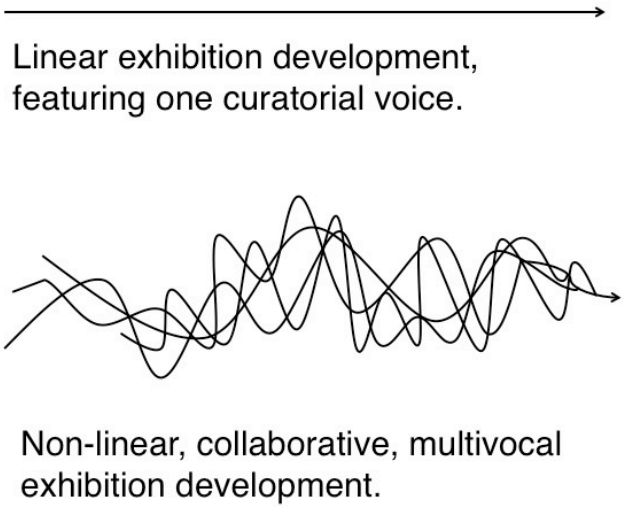


Figure 2. Linear vs. multivocal exhibition development.

Embracing Multiplicities

In their anthology *Museums and Communities: Curators, Collections and Collaboration,* Viv Golding and Wayne Modest (2013) assert that "contestation and controversy—if imaginatively, respectfully, and sensitively addressed in the museum with reference to wider concerns of equality, human rights, and social justice—may offer a potent means of building bridges and even overcoming divisions among disparate groups" (Golding & Modest, 2013, p. 1). Institutions that embrace multiple voices, opinions, and histories have the potential to position museums as collaborative, empathetic, and critical sites of engagements. Change however, is never easy, and the idea of embracing divergent perspectives and new voices within the institutional program can be uncomfortable, challenging, and unsettling for all involved including museum

professionals, visitors/participants, as well as community collaborators (Evans, 2014; Lonetree, 2012; Nashashibi, 2003; Simon, 2010).[9] However, it is important to remember that, as Salwa Mikdadi Nashashibi (2003) notes in her article "Visitor Voices in Art Museums,"

> The inclusion of multiple voices in art museums is not a threat to the integrity of the museum or the authority of its scholarship. Instead, it presents an opportunity for democratization of interpretation and encourages the visitor to share in the excitement of discovery through critical thinking, dialogue, and communication. (Nashashibi, 2003, p. 25)

These multiplicities within art museums' programming for community audiences build variety; reflect more audiences' perspectives; and provide innovative points of access for visitors, while exciting and enticing new museum-goers. By embracing these multiplicities and differences art museums become multivocal institutions where museum experience is understood as "multiform in style and variform in speech and voice" (Bhaktin, 1982, p. 261).

Decolonizing Museums

According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), decolonizing museum practices are "concerned not so much with the actual technique…but much more with the context in which…problems [or programs] are conceptualized and designed, and with the implications of research [or programs and exhibitions] for its participants and their communities" (p. ix). Here, a decolonizing museum practice is understood in relation to

[9] While change tends to be uncomfortable for all, the majority of research in relation to museum practice has looked at how the roles of museum staff and communities have been altered and complicated making space for nontraditional expertise to guide curatorial practice, ultimately exploring the discomfort between curator and community.

its audience or collaborators where visitors, participants, and community members are not seen as lesser than museum professionals. Rather, each of them is an expert and authorities in their own right. Museum theorists Amy Lonetree (2012) and Bryony Onciul (2013 and 2015) have taken this idea of decolonization and applied it to museum practice in order to reimagine the way institutions are working with indigenous communities. Thus, "the traditional curatorial role changes considerably in the context of contact work.[10] The isolated scholar and manager becomes a facilitator and a collaborator who shares, rather than represents, authority" (Nicks, 2003, p. 24). It is within these spaces that museum practice begins to exist as a boundary event, in that the museum heeds the expertise of a community, effectively becoming "a responsive mold" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 56). Below I consider examples of institutions that have become more responsive by the ways in which they collaborate with communities by positioning these groups as curatorial experts.

Bryony Onciul (2015) sees decolonization as a process where exhibitions are "countering Eurocentric grand narratives" (p. 195) and engagement illuminates the way "power is always open to negotiations" (p. 75). Furthering this notion, Lonetree (2012) stresses the ideas of "self-determination and cultural sovereignty" (p. 1 – 2) within a decolonizing museum practice. These concepts are echoed by the Abbe Museum, in Bar Harbor, Maine, which asserts that a primary tenant of its strategic plan is decolonization: "at a minimum, sharing authority for the documentation and interpretation of Native culture" (Abbe Museum, 2015). These understandings of a decolonizing museum

[10] Contact work within this quote refers to the idea of contact zones (Pratt, 1992; Clifford, 1997), understood as spaces of cultural subjugation and conflict where Euro-American societies have taken artifacts from indigenous and non-Western cultures for display.

practice can be extended to how museums are designing programming and constructing exhibitions of artworks and objects from various historically subjugated or marginalized populations in order to position these as authorities and collaborators. These ideas can be extended to working with refugee audiences whereby programs and exhibitions involving this audience are designed with direct input from the community becoming spaces for sharing stories, challenging singular histories or stereotypes about refugees, and respecting individual autonomy.

Defining Edu-Curation: Blurring Boundaries

In *Visitor-Centered Exhibitions and Edu-Curation in Art Museums*, an edited anthology compiled by Ann Rowson Love and Pat Villeneuve (2017) the concept of an edu-curatorial practice is proposed and investigated both through theoretical and practical implications. In their call for submissions they assert,

> It's no longer one or the other! *Visitor-Centered Exhibitions and Edu-Curation in Art Museums* promotes balanced practices that are visitor-centered and educational while honoring the integrity and powerful storytelling of art objects. We are looking for authors who practice and promote visitor-centered exhibition development using collaborative, non-hierarchical curatorial and educational approaches. (Villeneuve & Love, 2015)

Edu-curation is one way to honor the diverse knowledge of community and seek to create exhibitions that are visitor-centered and participatory. Within this blended position that is still contained within the confines of the museum, learning and visitor experience direct institutional expertise and rigor. Furthermore, it is a shift towards collaboration within curatorial practice that is most significant within the concept of edu-curation

where by “Embracing a collaborative approach to curation plays to individual skill sets, relieving team members of the privilege or burden of functioning as sole authority” (Love and Villeneuve, 2017, p. 17).

Pat Villeneuve (2012 and 2014) has continually explored the concept of educationally-curated exhibitions with practices such as guided interaction and Supported Interpretation. Within these models, museum staff anticipates and plans for audience interaction with exhibitions in order to design experiences that are visitor-centered. Thus, “the curatorial team needs to identify potential audiences and keep them in mind as they select artworks and determine the content of the interface, plan text panels and labels, design activities and opportunities for feedback, and install the show” (Villeneuve & Erickson, 2012, p. 57). Utilizing guided interaction as a resource for exhibition development encourages the curatorial team to consider the various visitors entering the museum. This practice “demonstrates how anticipation of visitor needs can guide a curatorial team in imbedding resources and activities from which visitors, regardless of their prior knowledge, may choose to construct their own meanings” (Villeneuve & Erickson, 2012, p. 61).

Pushing the idea of guided interaction further, Villeneuve begins to define a model for curatorial practice: Supported Interpretation. This concept “re-envisions the exhibition as an interface, or point of interaction between the museum and its visitors” and relies on “a team curatorial approach, including educators, curators, and community members” (Villeneuve & Viera, 2014, p. 83). In Supported Interpretation, exhibitions are positioned as educational sites of exchange where the curatorial framework is designed to allow for multiple points of access rather than constructing a singular, linear narrative.

An example of a similar method for curation can be found at the International Folk Art Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico in the Gallery of Conscience, " an experimental space where the public is invited to help shape the content and form of the exhibition through interactive elements and facilitated dialogues" (International Folk Art Museum, 2017). This space is constantly evolving as visitors provide feedback and propose new directions for exploration; thus, during the life of the exhibition, it is a living entity rather than a fixed construct. As more and more museums have begun experimenting with curatorial practice to better engage visitors on an institution wide level, collaborations between curators and educators are becoming more common. As a result, cross-departmental collaborations have been developed, wherein educators and curators work together to redesign exhibitions and re-install permanent collections.

Catherine Evans, the former Chief Curator of the Columbus Museum of Art in Ohio, has written about her experiences moving from siloed curator to a collaborator on exhibitions. Through a series of conversations and a two-year dialogue about reinstallation of collections, staff at the Columbus Museum of Art identified "intentional learning outcomes…allowing for reimagining multiple access points for visitors" (Evans, 2014, p. 154). This collaborative practice made space for a diverse array of visitors and a multitude of experiences within their reinstalled museum. When considering the visitor, the next step is to further involve the community within the curatorial planning, pushing the notion of edu-curation to extend beyond the intuitional walls.

Community as Curator: Breaking Down Boundaries between Curatorial Practice and Museum Visitor

By working with communities (rather than for them) the curatorial voice is shifted through collaboration, such that no single opinion or individual's expertise is privileged. As museum theorist Mary Hutchinson (2013) reflects, "…working with and demonstrating an egalitarian conversation between differently located authorities, from the development of an exhibition into its fabric, plays a crucial role in creating an open, dialogue-inviting exhibition, encouraging audiences to respond from their own experience and knowledge" (p. 143).

Institutions such as the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience in Seattle, Washington have demonstrated blurring of the lines between curatorial practice and museum education by developing a community-based exhibition model. According to The Wing Luke, their "community-based exhibition model builds upon a basic exhibition development model but strives to infuse community members throughout the entire process" (Chinn, 2006). Within this type of curatorial practice, community voice is integral to exhibition development from the start, resulting in exhibitions that rely on expertise from a diverse array of people, not just traditionally trained curators. The institution has created several community advisory committees in order to leverage this non-traditional knowledge within the museum. Rose Kinsley (2016) sees community advisory committees as a way to "unsettle the traditional and hegemonic role of the solo curator, creating instead a distributed model of knowledge production" (p. 484). Kinsley (2016) also notes that these committees "challenge notions of what constitutes relevant expertise and who holds it" (p. 484); as a result, exhibitions highlight the "multiple realities associated with an exhibition's theme" (p. 484-485). As the community is positioned as content creator, topics relevant to the

Asian American immigration story are continuously highlighted. The permanent exhibition *Honoring Our Journey* explores the Asian immigrant and refugee narrative relevant to the Seattle community where exploring refugee narratives has become an integral part to the Wing Luke's exhibition program.

Exploring the concept of community as curator involves a shift in perspective, where exhibitions are constructed by dialogue and exchange from voices independent of institutional knowledge. These instances often suggest "that curators may benefit by giving away some of their traditional control over decision-making, so that…communities can have a genuine role in developing the story" (Wake & Perreault, 2016, p. 16). By dispersing institutional authority, community members have room to incorporate their perspectives and expertise within the interpretative design of exhibitions. Within these curatorial programs, multiple voices and opinions co-develop the narratives.

Involving the community and heeding to their expertise is crucial when working with native and indigenous communities (Conaty, 2003; Onciul, 2013, 2015; and Wake & Perreault, 2016). Bryony Onciul, in her research exploring indigenous voice and decolonizing practices notes, "cultural concepts such as expertise, customary boundaries and hierarchies, come into question and negotiation, and can change individuals' roles and status within the zone. Boundaries between insider and outside blur, and temporary boundary crossing are enabled" (Onciul, 2015, p 85-86). Often these contemporary encounters between museum and community are the basis for the application of a critical postcolonial lens and the development of decolonizing programs within institutions where monocultural lenses are deconstructed and challenged. These exchanges are

foundational when extending the conversation to include immigrant and refugee audiences within art museums.

Positioning immigrant audiences as content producers in museums continues to diversify the cultural lens of the institution. Museum consultant, Simona Bodo (2012) sees these audiences fostering sites of intercultural exchanges "…by bringing into dialogue their different perspectives, experiences and knowledge bases" (p. 185), ultimately resulting in more nuanced and complex interpretations of objects on view. Echoing this sentiment, Serena Iervolino (2013), a professor of museology, sees great potential in immigrant audiences becoming more active visitors, where they are "moved from being *spectators*, that is, receivers of the culture of the majority—a position they conventionally occupy in the host society—to being *actors*, that is playing an active part in shaping and sharing knowledge" (Iervolino, 2013, p. 121).

Creating spaces for audiences to influence curatorial practice and interpretive programs changes the way museums display objects and generate knowledge, ultimately making room for multiple and divergent perspectives and experiences. However, destabilizing the boundaries between educator, curator, and visitor is just one element of changing practices in museums to diversify narratives and ultimately engage more audiences.

Increased Diversity:

Changing Museum Audiences and New Practices in Museum Education

Graham Black (2008) speaks about audience development as building sustaining relationships, wherein "…audience development is not about increasing the number of

first-time or one-off visitors to walk through the door—it is about seeking to develop and *sustain* participation over the long term" (p. 47). Within this section, I will focus on practices within museum education that aim to develop long-term sustaining relationships with audiences, similar to *Museum as Sanctuary*. This type of program involves a long-term commitment and depends on multiple points of contact with participants or audiences. Programs like this are aimed at building continued and life-long museum-goers. Speaking to the commitment needed to build sustained relationships, Black (2008) notes this often necessitates that the "museum…establish an active presence in the community…also require[s] new skills on the part of museum staff—in building relationships and working sensitively with communities, in sharing expertise, and in recognizing groups as equal participants" (p. 47). Increasing audience diversity within museums requires both increased access and inclusion, where new strategies for engagement are imagined.

Museum programming for, and with, diverse audiences includes but is not limited to programs designed for Latinos, English language learners, immigrants, visitors with disabilities such as visual and auditory impairments, K-12 school age children, and library users, just to name a few. Architectural access and the inclusion of visitors with varying abilities is a topic widely discussed by institutions (Sandell et al., 2010). Institutions such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London have developed broad, sweeping accessibility plans "to support the museum in achieving equality in terms of employment, service provisions as well as access to premises and to ensure the consistent availability of support whenever disabled people visit the site" (Smith et al., 2012, p. 63). Programs such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's partnerships with libraries in

the greater Los Angeles area bring the art museum to new and diverse communities, some of whom may have never interacted with the institution. Museum educators Sophia Gutierrez and Briley Rasmussen (2014) have explored the need for developing more inclusive programming for English language learners within the art museum, rooted in fostering a shared language between visitor and institution. Within these types of programs, Gutierrez and Rasmussen (2014) advise that, "when selecting works of art…take into consideration how the work of art can connect with the cultures and experiences of [English Language] learners (p. 157). They remind educators and museum practitioners that, "the best works of art are not always the most aesthetically beautiful; the best artworks are the ones that move someone personally, the ones that can create personal change" (Gutierrez & Rasmussen, 2014, p. 157). These pedagogical practices attempt to engage English Language learners in the museum, providing points of access that encourage making personal connections rather than highlighting art historical significance.

Museums such as the Denver Art Museum in Colorado have taken this a step further by creating the position of Latino cultural programs coordinator, dedicated to better serving Latino museum users. Véronica Betancourt, researcher, and Madalena Salazar, educator, (2014) note the importance of hiring "staff who are bicultural and/or bilingual to better serve Latino visitors…" (p. 193) where "…diversifying museum staff to better reflect[s] American demographics and incorporate a variety of perspectives into the work of the museum" (p. 193). Programs working with varied and multiple audiences envision the museum as a site of critical engagement where monocultural institutional practices are altered in order to make room for difference. These programmatic

endeavors along with the development of an edu-curatorial practice and increased diversity within the museum bring me to a more focused exploration of how the museum actively engages with the topic of immigration and diaspora communities by exhibitions and pedagogical programming.

While my study focuses on refugee audiences, in the following section I explore displaced populations, broadly touching on art museums' engaging with diaspora communities, refugee audiences, and immigrant populations.

Mobility, Migration, and Museums

In this section, I explore how "outsider" stories are mingling within exhibitions in countries and resettlement communities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. All three of these nations have long histories of immigration, and terminology such as immigrant, migrant, and refugee are utilized within writings produced from these regions in cultural and social theory, including writing in art and museum theory and practice. While the research that informs this dissertation engages specifically with refugee audiences, within this literature review I also include examples of museums that are broadly interacting with increased migration and immigrant populations.

Refugee Experiences and Museum Exhibitions

In the United States, museums and exhibitions alike engage with historical and contemporary narratives of displacement, persecution, and, by extension, immigrant and refugee experiences. Organizations such as the Tenement Museum in New York, the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience in Seattle, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., just to name a few, are

dedicated to educating publics about genocide and xenophobia. Internationally, institutions often utilize exhibitions as a way to integrate immigrant audiences into their new community. The 2008 exhibition *Belonging: Voices of London's Refugees* on view at the Museum of London is one example of a United Kingdom curatorial endeavor engaging with refugee issues. The Director of the Museum of London, Jack Lohman (2008), in "How Do We Sing Our Song in a Strange Land? Belonging: Voices of London's Refugees in the Museum of London," states that the goal of the exhibition was to position refugee audiences as content generators within the museum and to locate the refugee narrative within the larger history of London. Lohman (2008) reflects that *Belonging* presents the

> undiluted telling of the stories which have shaped them and which they carry with them from the places from which they have been displaced. Their voices are at the heart of this exhibition, telling some 150 stories in personal interviews. These are the stories told in words, images and artefacts…" (p. 11)

In this example of the Museum of London's exhibition, one begins to see the ways in which refugee narratives can inform educational and curatorial programs and be objects on display. Exhibitions such as this one begin to place refugee voice and the contemporary experience of displacement and resettlement at the center of the museum's agenda, rather than as peripheral and trivial information.

Occasionally, refugee and immigrant stories are contained to specific galleries within institutions. Chiara O'Reilly and Nina Parish (2015) investigate the relevance of community exhibition spaces in sharing migration stories in Australia. O'Reilly and Parish (2015) conclude their article by asserting that the community gallery "continues to

represent a precious chance to develop diversity in the museum, and diversity in audience" (p. 310) while also acting as "an indispensable space within the museum…[for community groups] to showcase and celebrate their place in Australian history" (p. 310). However, while the community gallery is an important space for addressing immigrant narratives, it unfortunately relegates these stories to isolated exhibition spaces.

While these institutional explorations are important, art museums are often removed from the dialogue on contemporary displacement and often only engage with the historical issue of displacement through the guise of what artists were doing and what works were produced. Contemporary exhibitions such as *Mona Hatoum,* organized by the Tate Modern (United Kingdom) in 2016, *Islamic Art Now: Contemporary Art of the Middle East* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (United States) in 2016, and *Art in Exile* at the Museum of Contemporary Art (Denmark) in 2016, are just a few examples of this type of exhibition focus solely on artistic product in relation to displacement occurring in the last year. That being said, narratives of exile, displacement, and resettlement have been enmeshed with museum narratives since the 1940s.

Numerous exhibitions focusing on artistic expression and displacement have provided contexts for and opportunities to highlight the great amount of creative energy forced out of Nazi-occupied Europe during World War II. These narratives are often displayed and collected within the museum as curatorial programs and, in recent times, often focus simply on the individual artist rather than the refugee experience. However, during World War II, artists and exhibitions frequently attempted to explore narratives of displacement within the curatorial program, rather than a narrative investigating the life of a single artist.

In October 1942, an exhibition entitled, *First Papers of Surrealism,* was organized by André Breton, which commented on European artists who were displaced from Europe during World War II. Art historian T.J. Demos (2001) has reflected in his article "Duchamp's Labyrinth: First Papers of Surrealism, 1942" on the exile of artists from Europe and their feeling that the United States was denying or limiting access. Demos (2001) notes,

> The 'First Papers' of the exhibition's title announced its dislocated status by referring to the application papers for U.S. citizenship, which emigrating artists (including Breton, Ernst, Masson, Matta, Duchamp, and others) encountered when they came to New York between 1940 and 1942. (p. 91)

In this article, Demos (2001) recounts the surrealist movement and its relation to "homelessness" first as an extension of Freudian thought and then ultimately extending to a nationalistic homelessness during World War II (p. 95).

This notion of being displaced, unwelcomed, and in a state of constant exile is best illustrated by Breton's exhibition and Marcel Duchamp's installation. The work itself was a web-like structure of string woven throughout the gallery space, which obstructed and refused a voyeurism expected in more traditional art gallery and museum settings. Here, the artist's narrative and personal experience was imposed on the visitor wherein according to Demos (2001), "Duchamp's string produced a recalcitrant barrier between viewers, objects, and space" (p. 106); the denial of access and the experience of exile is replicated and the visitor is forced to experience a similar disconnection and denial of access to the surrealist works of art in Breton's *First Papers* exhibition. In this work, Duchamp shares his own experiences and personal narrative associated with his

forced migration from Europe to New York with visitors. Demos (2001) sees this narrative as an artistic experience that is aggressive and unsettling:

> Instead of providing an insulating mythological womb protecting against displacement, Duchamp's installation in fact forced artists to experience their displaced status firsthand in the disorganized and disorganizing space of his installation and in the disorientation of their objects in space. This, in effect, introduced a political framework to a display of art intent on escaping it. (p. 107)

Rather than providing political and historical context for his artistic expression, Duchamp chose to create a work of art that shares the experience of displacement and the equally uncomfortable act of resettlement. Here, Duchamp's work aims to address a narrative of exclusion and displacement within exhibition and curatorial programs, speaking to the immediate feelings and experiences of refugees. In future exhibitions, narratives would explore an artist's life from a historical vantage point rather than one of contemporaneity.

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art exhibition entitled *Exiles + Emigrés: The Flight of European Artists from Hitler,* explores the migration of twenty-three artists (all male), who were European refugees, during World War II and their artistic careers in exile (Barron, 1997, p. 11). This exhibition illustrates one way in which an art museum works to organize, catalogue, and structure the experiences of refugees and asylees from Nazi-occupied Europe. Stephanie Barron (1997), in the introductory essay, explores the genesis for the exhibition and the curatorial framework, which organizes and structures the works of art and artists' histories within the exhibit. She notes,

> the exhibition and catalogue reexamine the tremendous consequences of the exodus of European artists which followed Hitler's rise to power. From an

> American perspective this approach, focusing more on the exiles themselves than on their impact on American artists, is a departure from earlier accounts. *Exile and Emigrés* looks at the work they did in exile, its significance within their own development, and its reception by the American art world. (Barron, 1997, p. 12)

Through this assertion, Barron (1997) places her curatorial narrative apart from past explorations of the artists included in the exhibition. Additionally, she continues throughout her essay to explore the connection between exile and artistic practice, calling attention to an overall aesthetic of the experience of being displaced.

One artist who is included in all of the World War II refugee surveys is Marc Chagall, and more recently he has been the focus of a retrospective at the Jewish Museum in New York City from 2013 – 2014 entitled *Chagall: Love, War, and Exile*. This exhibition, curated by Susan Tumarkin Goodman, presents another example of an institution contextualizing an artist's flight from Nazi-occupied Europe during World War II. However, within this context, I would like to focus more closely on Chagall's experiences with exile, rather than an institutional survey of his work.

Chagall, a Jewish refugee during World War II, had a very complex relationship with sites of exile and the notion of home. Born in Russia, Chagall eventually fled persecution to Paris and was eventually, at the onset of World War II, forced to return to Russia. Kristine Harmon (2005), in her essay "Self-Exile and the Career of Marc Chagall," asks a simple yet poignant question: "Exile is a forced absence from one's home—forced by politics, law, religion. But what is exile, its color and substance, when it is chosen?" (p. 60). Throughout the article, Harmon investigates notions of home in relation to Chagall's creative output, while simultaneously acknowledging his

contentious relationship to "home." The idea of exile and the exploration of the artist's identity as refugee in relation to their artistic production is an interesting way of accessing Chagall's narrative of displacement. Harmon (2005) notes that Chagall "never disown[ed] any part of his heritage, his allegiances were often in contest with one another—and as dichotomies shifted, home itself changed shape and meaning" (p. 61). Perhaps in the floating and distorted imagery depicted on Chagall's canvases and within his stained glass windows, one can draw connections to the constant flux and shape shifting of his own complex relationship to home and cultural heritage.

Recently, the Museum of Modern Art in New York has created a series called "Citizens and Borders," which includes exhibitions such as *Insecurities: Tracing Displacement and Shelter* in order to address the growing global refugee crisis. This exhibition, according to MoMA's website, "respond[s] to the complex circumstances brought about by forced displacement…[and] focuses on conditions that disrupt conventional images of the built environment" (MoMA, 2016). "Citizens and Borders" presents an example of a major art museum re-engaging with the contemporary issue of displacement and border politics, rather than continuously putting an art historical spin on this global crisis. Kofi Annan (2010) in an article entitled *The Myth of Never Again* makes an argument for why the historical significance of the Holocaust, and by extension historical cases of displacement, must be paired with contemporarily relevant issues in order to effectively combat persecution and genocide. He reflects, "it is surprisingly hard to find education programs that have clearly succeeded in linking the history of the Holocaust with the prevention of ethnic conflict and genocide in today's world" (Annan, 2010). For this reason, programmatic endeavors such as MoMA's "Citizens and

Borders" is a unique educational opportunity to bridge historical narratives with contemporary issues.

However, all the examples of art museums engaging with issues of displacement, through works of art or lives of artists in displacement, presented above remain curated with a traditional model where refugees are not directly influencing the development of programming or curatorial design. Additionally, the exhibitions discussed at length engage with only within the historical narratives of displacement, or in the case of the MoMA exhibition, the housing shortage caused by recent, large-scale displacement. These exhibitions don't encounter currently displaced populations as potential audiences or as content producers. In the following section I will explore museum initiatives that work to bridge this divide.

Immigrants, Refugees, and Museum Engagement

The above examples highlight ways in which immigrant and refugee populations are reflected in exhibition solely from the prospective of curatorial practice, even in non-traditional exhibitions. However, little research has been completed on what a holistic, active engagement looks like when these populations are simultaneously positioned as artists, experts, visitors, and more. Echoing these sentiments, Stein, Garibay, and Wilson (2008), in their article *Engaging Immigrant Audiences in Museums*, start by noting that "much scholarly work has been written on the representation of immigrant culture—in museums, festivals, and other contexts of cultural display—but far less attention has been given to immigrant communities as visitors, consumers, or even producers of such experiences" (p. 180). Taking this into consideration, I am interested in exploring the notion of refugee and immigrant audiences as content producers and activated museum

visitors. In order to facilitate these types of programmatic encounters, "museums wanting to deeply engage with immigrant communities should avoid the tendency to develop one-time, isolated exhibits or programs aimed at increasing visitation by people of color; such initiatives do not develop long-term relationships with intended audiences" (Stein, Garibay, & Wilson, 2008, p. 184). Like Stein, Garibay, and Wilson (2008), I believe these community-museum relationships must avoid tokenism and simplistic approaches to engagement and instead require sustained interaction.

The question remains: what do sustained relationships look like between museums and refugee/immigrant communities? Also, what steps can be taken to engage new types of community-museum collaborations? These questions are embedded issues that this dissertation explores by investigating the long-term relationships occurring within *Museum as Sanctuary*, both between community and museum but also among program participants.

Research initiatives have begun within various museums and organizations to explore how to build long-term meaningful relationships with refugee and immigrant communities. For example, in Europe, the MeLa Project "focused on the impact of contemporary migrations of people(s), objects, information and cultures on museums, and on the identification of innovative policies and practices enhancing the role of these institutions towards a changing political, social and cultural context" (MeLa Project, 2015). The four-year research period ultimately resulted in twelve overarching ideas, presented in the MeLa final report (2015); these are listed below:

1. "Museums should acknowledge their potential to construct social values, and take a clear stand about their political, social and cultural positions" (p.19);

2. Representations of identity, memory and belonging should be redefined through a post-colonial approach" (p. 20);
3. "Multiple voices—including oppositional and antagonistic ones—should be integrated into representational practices" (p. 24);
4. "Migration should not be considered as a prerogative for a 'type of museum' but rather as a 'topic for museums'" (p. 27);
5. "Museums need to experiment with new communication and exhibition strategies and tools" (p. 30);
6. "The design of museum settings and spaces should be conceived as a strategic element to foster museums' societal role" (p. 34);
7. "Museums should re-think acquisition, conservation and archival policies and practices in the light of enhanced forms and concepts of heritage" (p. 41);
8. "More inclusive collection and archival practices should be fostered in response to—and in support of—a revised role of museums as social agents" (p. 45);
9. "Museums should embrace the emergence of a contemporary migrating heritage, and acknowledge new roles and patterns of cultural networking" (p. 47);
10. "The migration of people, knowledge and disciplines should be fostered to better address emerging challenges in museums" (p. 49);
11. "Museums should endorse experimentation with innovative ways of engaging with wider audiences" (p. 50); and lastly,

12. "Museums should improve knowledge and awareness about contemporary audiences" (p. 54).

Of particular importance for this dissertation are the ideas, in this report, of: including multiple voices (proposition three); experimenting within communication tactics (proposition five); and innovation when engaging new audiences (proposition eleven).

The MeLa research initiative resulted in a multitude of resources, including but not limited to journal articles, books, symposiums, and presentations. One such publication is *The Postcolonial Museum* (2016), in which the afterword asserts the goal of a postcolonial museum is to disrupt traditional narratives in order to address that "objects, histories, cultures, peoples were once wrenched out of their context in order to be put on display and exhibited" (p. 239) urging that the museums become sites of critical dialogue. This need to veer away from traditional narratives and histories repositions colonialism "not as a concluded chapter in global history, but as an intrinsic and indelible part of the contemporary world" (p. 20), wherein people and cultures are constantly being forced from homelands into unfamiliar environments.

Anna Chiara Cimoli's (2014) article *From Representation to Participation: The Voice of the Immigrants in Italian Migration Museums* is another product of the MeLa Project. In this article, she explores how museum professionals and immigrants, or migrants, "can meet and share thoughts, memories and interpretations, therefore enriching the complexity of the knowledge built through the museum experience" (Cimoli, 2014, p. 111). Her suggestions for creating a participatory migration museum includes "story telling, translation and interpretation based on personal experiences, as well as in-the field workshops" (p. 118). Through these points of access, all museums,

even art museums, can begin to engage new audiences and reflect multiple narratives of experience.

In recent years, institutions throughout Australia have been dedicated to immigration and the history of migration broadly. One example is The Immigration Museum in Melbourne, Australia, an institution that seeks to directly engage with the cultural diversity inherent within its immediate community where residents "come from more than 200 countries, speak 260 languages and dialects and follow 135 religious faiths" (Immigration Museum, 2016). Museums such as this can shift people's perceptions and combat racism. Schorch et al. (2015) found that "by discussing and negotiating pertinent issues in the exhibition with their peers, they deepened their understanding of racism and belonging and demonstrated the ways in which the exhibition affected their views on cultural diversity and people that experience racism" (p. 236).

This is echoed by a recent study in the United States conducted at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, in which students who visited the museum "demonstrated stronger critical thinking skills, displayed higher levels of social tolerance, exhibited greater historical empathy and developed a taste for art museums and cultural institutions" (Kisida, Greene, & Bowen, 2013). In this context, research focuses on school age students as an audience and pupil. However, I am interested in what happens when immigrant and refugee students become producers of knowledge not just as receivers of information.

Refugee Youth, Programs, and Museum Exhibitions

At this juncture, it is important to note that there is lack of knowledge on immigrant and refugee youth voice in exhibition and program development within museums. While, as illuminated above, cultural institutions are engaging with adult immigrant and refugee audiences on multiple levels, few institutions are exploring youth perspectives. Some museums run programming for refugee youth and have created exhibitions that are participant directed as a result.

For example, in 2010 the Museum of Photographic Arts in San Diego, California presented a photography-based exhibition entitled *A Different Life: finding our future in San Diego*. Julie Kendig-Lawrence (2010) discusses how the exhibition evolved out of an education program "…where products of educational programs that examine contemporary stories against the backdrop of an historical and social landscape would be given similar treatment and importance as the more traditional museum-curated exhibition" (p. 132). This youth-driven exhibition provides an opportunity for students to explores issues important to them as students *and* refugees, simultaneously engaging with global issues and more personal experiences. More recently in San Diego at the Museum of Man, an exhibition called *Inter+FACE* "uses participatory photography and community dialogue to explore how race, representation, and identity have been experienced in both past and present San Diego" (San Diego Museum of Man, 2016). This exhibition, in partnership with the AjA Project, an out-of-school program working with immigrant and refugee youth (AjA Project, 2016), continues the conversations begun at the Museum of Photographic Arts.

These exhibitions where refugee stories are shared are crucial as they "provide a space in which the culture and heritage that refugees bring is displayed, and a space in

which it is related to the cultures of the destination community" (Jones, 2010, p. xvii). Additionally, they present an opportunity to engage museumgoers with varied perspectives and different cultures, resulting in ways to combat assumptions and stereotypes surrounding refugees. However, further research into this topic, including diverse refugee narratives within museums, needs to be done in order to broaden the focus and to highlight new and innovative ways of incorporating voices *of all ages* within programming and exhibitions on a long-term basis.

Educational Engagement with Refugee Audiences in the Classroom and Beyond

When considering how art museums can better serve refugee audiences, it is often helpful to explore how classroom educators and community-based initiatives are adapting to better engage this growing population. For example, culling research and reflection from classroom-based settings can yield insight into what conditions are ideal for engaging refugee visitors. Necessary to an individual's success within an academic setting is comfort within the classroom. To this point, Eleni Oikonomidoy (2010) states, "a student's sense of belonging to school (or absence thereof) is cultivated through reflections on his or her experiences" (Oikonomidoy, 2010, p. 76). This calls attention to the importance of building welcoming, safe, and inviting spaces for refugee youth in order to engage students in learning opportunities. Pushing this idea of safe environments one step further is the importance of refugee students building new relationships with mentors as a way to be more connected with their new community. The benefits of these relationships and sustained points of contact include "increasing confidence, improving career opportunities, reducing risk-taking behaviour and alleviating isolation" (Weekes et al., 2011, p. 312). Additionally, community-based

settings can also provide innovative resources and pedagogical tactics for working with refugees, providing insight into both educational practice and how these programs can take on activist agendas.

Ruth Smith (2014) in her dissertation "Young Somali Women and Narrative Participatory Photography: Interrupting Fixed Identities through *Dumarka Soomaaliyeed Voices Unveiled*" utilizes community-based art education to examine stereotypes and redefine Somali refugee identity through narrative development and photography. Smith researches long-term collaborative programming, including exhibition development, with refugee women. In reflecting on the exhibition and resulting photograph essays, she states:

> This is not a documentation of a group of people, but a collection of different perspectives on issues of importance to the women participating such as culture, community, religion, dress, and vocation. Through the process of participatory photography, we discussed these issues, told stories, wrote poems and essays, and took photographs. Our hope is to challenge stereotypes, bridge communities by increasing understanding of a different aspect of the Somali community, and address difficult questions through artmaking and this exhibit. (Smith, 2014, p. 157)

Smith's research uses community-based art education tenets to educate the wider public on refugee issues while simultaneously encouraging participants to explore their own identities beyond their refugee status.

Conclusion

The institutional practices described above complicate and challenge the boundaries between museums and the communities they serve, illuminating a movement between things, or a boundary event, exploring "the intervening area between inside and outside and a realm where both the interior and the exterior merge" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 72). Through these endeavors, exhibitions and programming can combat stereotypes, build relationships, nurture confidence, and inspire action. More specifically, through critical engagement, education, curation, and interpretation, half-truths can be corrected and single points of view can be complicated, wherein one can begin to chip away at "the quasi-neurotic state of self-inducing fear, [where] every immigrant or voyager of color is a potential terrorist" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 5).

In the next chapter, a methodological exploration, I will expand on this idea of malleable boundaries through longitudinal explorations, mingling of narratives, and a performative multivocal research practice.

CHAPTER 3.0

REFLECTIONS ON THE STUDY DESIGN: AN INVESTIGATION ON RELATIONSHIPS, CONTENT AND THE OVER ALL AESTHETIC[11]

In this chapter, I will discuss research methods and study design, which investigates the multivocal narratives that emerge during the program *Museum as Sanctuary (MaS)*. In the following sections, I first introduce the idea of performative multivocal research practice that is rooted in the ebb and flow of collaboration, and informs the overarching study design including data collection and analysis. After reviewing the research questions, I present the methodological framework, which is a blending of narrative inquiry and decolonizing theory.

A Performative Multivocal Research Practice

Museum as Sanctuary is first and foremost a community-museum program; thus, the research practice and study design were structured by the existing relationships and program design. Within this context, a performative multivocality seeks to explore pluralistic voices within narrative data where museums become

Scattered. Changed. (Rami, 2015)[12]

---

[11] The phrase "content and the over all aesthetic" is pulled from my field notes from March 31, 2015 where I had been struggling with the balance of process and product within the scope of edu-curated community-based exhibitions. This is a direct quote from the data (Chapter 4.1) and is signaled in Arial in order to distinguish within this dissertation.

[12] These words are excerpted from participant Rami's object description for one of his self-portraits entitled *The Dark Diamond*, included in the 2015 *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition. The full text for this description can be found in chapter 4.1.

As a result, museums are reimagined sites of experience and learning. Key to understanding this idea of performance and multivocality as a research practice are the methodological reflections of Norman Denzin (2003) and Julie Choi (2016). Denzin defines performance as a critical pedagogy where "Performance becomes public pedagogy when it uses the aesthetic, the performative, to foreground the intersection of politics, institutional sites, and embodied experience" (2003, p. 9). My study utilizes this idea in order to explore narratives from refugee participants, collaborating organizations, and art museum educators at points of intersection and tension. In conversation with this are the ideas of Choi, where multivocality defines an individual "…who holds and carries out several different roles simultaneously in their daily life. We are all shifting in and out of, entangled in, and influenced by our many voices" (2016, p. 7). Multivocality thus speaks to the complexity and multiplicities contained within all individuals and the narratives that they communicate. As such, this dissertation exists as a "… performance of co-constructed meaning-making in opposition to the lone expert" (Moreira & Diversi, 2014, p. 299) within art museums.[13] To clarify how this plays out in this study, in chapters 4.0, 4.1, and 4.2, I present participant-constructed narratives in the form of in-gallery activities, exhibition texts, and educator reflections. In chapters 5.0, 5.1A, 5.1B, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5 I present researcher-constructed narratives drawn from participant narratives. Through this layered process, chapters 4 and 5 together illustrate how multivocality is created reflecting the performativity occurring within the museum space.

A Collaborative Longitudinal Study

[13] To clarify, within this study, I am exploring the idea of performance as a component of research rather than an artistic practice or movement.

This research study investigates a long-term community-museum engagement in an art museum, a topic that is generally under-explored—especially in regards to longevity of relationships. Sabeti (2015) and Everette and Barrett (2011) have noted the uniqueness of researching frequent and regular museum visitors, and explored how nuanced relationships between institution, object, and visitor develop over time with sustained engagement. This longitudinal study includes multiple visits over two years, with the relationships between participants and the art museum lasting beyond the timeframe of this study.

Research Questions

In this study I address the primary research question:

- How can we as art museum educators, or edu-curators, create spaces that provoke, and engage with, narratives between communities and museums?

In exploring and addressing this main question, I also engage with the following sub-questions:

- What multivocal narratives are revealed when refugee populations and edu-curators actively engage in and collaborate on museum programming?
- How do these narratives change over time?

Forms and Methods of Data Collected

I collected the data for this study over a two-year period (Summer 2013-Summer 2015); the study period is bookended by museum exhibitions of refugee artwork created in the collaborative program. Data on the exhibitions is in the form of exhibition texts

and photographic documentation of curatorial design. In addition to this, data from 28 regular program sessions was collected—this included ten visits to the galleries.

A Note on the Program and Participants

When this research study began, I had already embodied the role of educator and volunteer working with many of the participant-artists and support staff/volunteers from both the art museum and collaborating organization for over two years. As a result, embracing the role of researcher was difficult for me but generally welcomed by all who were willing to support the study. All *MaS* program participants were informed about my research study. With each new addition to the group, I explained how during this program I would be collecting information in order to understand how art museums, community organizations, and refugees are collaborating together and what stories these types of programs create. Within this study, 15 participant-artists who regularly attended the program during the two-year period of data collection and myself (an art museum educator) make up the research participants.

In following with the requirements for conducting research at the University of Arizona, I submitted this research study to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) where it was deemed exempt. All study participants consented to the research verbally and were made aware that they were not required to participate in the study. Additionally, together we agreed that as a researcher I would not interfere with their art-making activities or gallery explorations, and the data collected would only be culled from naturally-occurring exchanges within the art museum. Programs and activities that were already components of *MaS* drove the study design; these programmatic happenings, such as gallery activities

and exhibition texts, became the primary sources of data and informed how research was conducted.

Context and Location of the Study

The setting, programmatic structure or plot, and characters comprising this study are fundamental entities that informed the study design and types of data collected.

Setting. TMA; Summer 2013 - Summer 2015

Plot. Exploring the programmatic happenings of a community-museum collaboration, working with refugee affected by torture, trauma, and traumatic dislocation, which includes exhibitions and in-gallery learning.

Characters. Participant-artists (refugee youth and adults), volunteers, museum educators, and staff from the collaborating organization.

Given these existing structures and individuals, and to honor the programmatic happenings of *MaS*, I collected the following data:

- Audio recordings of 28 individual sessions, between 2 and 4 hours each in length.
- Educator reflections and field notes taken after each recorded session; totaling 28 entries.
- Written products (46) created from in-gallery activities completed during seven unique gallery visits, created by approximately 30 individuals, including participant-artists and support staff/volunteers from the collaborating organization.
- Exhibition design and object labels and biographies written by participant-artists; 15 artists who exhibited works in both the 2013 and 2015 exhibitions are highlighted.

This process of gathering data reflects my interest in dialogical experiences and an attempt to capture natural relationships occurring within the art museum in *MaS*.

Significance of an Art Museum. The importance of the art museum as a sanctuary or safe space for refugee audiences was perhaps best illustrated while I was working with a group of indigenous Congolese women who visited the TMA in spring of 2017. We were walking through the galleries, sketching, and communicating through a translator and we came across an exhibition of portraits of Native Americans. The women were in awe by the fact that an entire exhibition was displaying images of indigenous people, like them. The translator turned to me to tell me that the woman were talking about the museum as a safe space because indigenous peoples were included on the walls of the museum. Representation matters, narratives of difference are crucial in order to position art museums as welcoming spaces, and works of art have the potential to build connections if we let them. With this in mind, objects on view in galleries and in exhibitions can elicit uniquely individual responses from museum users if we as edu-curators provide space and opportunities for exploration and open-ended conversations. Patricia Lannes (2013) speaks to this idea when considering engaging immigrant audiences by reflecting that

> While the museum's exhibits might be, in a narrow sense, collections of culturally-specific objects, this need not prevent them from having universal appeal. These objects can have broad appeal (despite their cultural-specificity) if we recognize that they address issues and emotions that are universally shared. (Lannes, 2013)

Art museums are unique spaces for building intercultural connections because works of art are emotive and subjective as opposed to institutions dedicated to history, science, and other empirical disciplines.

Data Triangulation

Despite the range of data collected, I limited the primary modes of data presented in this dissertation to focus on the gallery-based interventions. In order to gain insights into how the museum can be understood as a decolonized pedagogical site investigated through narrative inquiry, I use other data for triangulated analysis, specifically:

- Exhibition content and wall labels (individual) collected from two exhibitions, one marks the beginning of the study in 2013 and the second in 2015 concludes the study.
- Collaborative gallery activities collected over the course of the study.
- Field notes or documentation of my own reflections as an art museum educator on 28 two-hour sessions.

Methodological reflections from Shamser Sinha and Les Black (2014), Marcelo Diversi and Claudio Moreira (2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2016), and Alecia Y. Jackson and Lisa A. Mazzei (2009 and 2012), all of whom urge researchers to consider issues of voice and hierarchy while engaging in qualitative studies, were essential to constructing this study.

Reflections on the Study Design

I designed this study to honor existing programmatic structures of *MaS* in order to avoid distracting, directly questioning, and causing discomfort for refugee participants. Sinha and Black's (2014) comments on working with young adult migrants are

foundational in my consideration of how to design studies that collaborate *with* immigrant and refugee participants:

> We did not want our study of the experience of young adult migrants to be conducted under conditions redolent of the criminal justice system or the immigration service. This is because we did not want to reflect the forms of coercive scrutiny that participants had already experienced from the state. Instead, we wanted to widen the parameters of exchange beyond those predicted on surveillance and suspicion, to encourage exchange and dialogue. (Sinha & Black, 2014, p. 474)

In an early study design, I had originally planned on scheduling interviews with participants, however, many assented to the research study with the caveat that they did not want to be interrupted during their art-making experiences thus, I dropped interviews from the research plan. Again, Sinha and Black (2014) help to support this revision to my initial study design where they "argue for a form of research that shifts the ordering of researcher dialogue, where participants are involved in deciding what/how methods are to be used to address research objectives" (p. 478). By embracing a more dialogical method of research, my study design was informed by what kind of information participants felt comfortable sharing and what types of exchanges they wanted to encounter.

While I attempted to create a research scenario that privileged a preexisting program design, all educational environments contain some level of hierarchies. To this point, Diversi and Moreira (2013) reflect on how education echoes regularly-occurring power dynamics by asserting that, "Any educational setting is part of the real world. The

same power relations shaping and informing the real world are present in the classroom" (p. 496). Thus, even under the most intentional of research studies and programmatic endeavors that seek to challenge hierarchies, power relations cannot be completely eradicated.

Narrative Inquiry: Multivocal Composite Narratives

Within this study, narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; and Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber, 2016) explores the content and themes that emerge through dialogue and programmatic occurrences. These practices within the museum seek to critically investigate the ways narratives are shaped and disseminated within educational programming. Here, I have embraced a critical narrative inquiry, which focuses "on difference, multiplicity, and lived experience in the moments of becoming…[where] unique characteristics of storytelling [are] being a resistant force that contests extant hegemonies in organizations and gives space to multiple voices in the configuration of the organization" (Jørgensen & Largacha-Martinez, 2014, p. 2). These critical modes of exploration within narrative inquiry must be multivoiced (Jørgensen, Klee & Canal, 2014), in order to broaden the expected linear structure of narrative. As such, in this dissertation, 16 participant voices (15 refugees and 1 museum educator) mingle, coalesce, and complicate the stories the objects of the museum convey to its attendant audiences: in other words, museum narratives. In this way, I utilize narrative inquiry to understand, investigate, and interrogate experiences occurring within and connected to educational programming in art museums.

Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, and Huber (2016) see narrative inquiry as an opportunity to "linger in the complex layers of intertwined and interwoven stories…where we can engage in the inquiries that will help us understand the lives of people and the worlds they and we live within" (p. 20). Through this research methodology, I am able to explore the complex inner workings of museums as educational spaces where users (in this case participant-artists) are positioning themselves as experts making connections between learning, works of art, the process of creating, and their own experiences. Within these narrative exchanges, the conversations and stories that are shared in the museum go beyond the institution as the sole topic of conversation.

By exploring the narratives that emerge within museum programming from both visitors (participant-artists) and museum professionals (researcher), we position the museum as a dialogical site where "education is not just about museums teaching visitors; it is about visitors using museums in ways that are personally significant to them" (Roberts, 1997, p. 132). Employing narrative inquiry within my study draws attention to the ways in which "viewers bring their personal identities into play with the institution's dominant ideologies" (Garoian, 2001, p. 236). Thus, the relationships and dynamics between research participants, in this case refugee participant-artists and myself as researcher-educator, are key to unlocking the data. This echoes the ideas of Park, Caine, McConnell and Minaker (2016), where "relationships are fundamental to narrative inquiry, as they shape the way participants and researchers negotiate the inquiry process…" (para. 2), making space for a malleable research process. As such, I designed a study and collected data where narrative becomes a fluid, dynamic, and an ever-

changing entity. De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2008), when discussing narrative research, define this method as social practice, imagining "narrative structures as dynamic and evolving" (p. 383), "narrative as part of social practices inevitably lead to pluralized and fragmented notions" (p. 383), and lastly within narrative practice "people participate in multiple, overlapping and intersecting communities" (p. 383). By acknowledging these relationships and creating spaces for them to collide and interact, the museum becomes a site of multiple and varied perspectives.

Narrative inquiry makes room for pluralistic interpretations to materialize where no single narrative or experience is privileged over another. For this reason, conflicts may arise, yet disagreement between participants and program facilitators and among participants themselves is not seen as detrimental but rather productive to supporting the development of different interpretations within the art museum. According to Lynn Butler-Kisber (2010), "narrative inquirers do not shy away from tensions that occur in their work. Instead, they always honor the personal and local and participate in the continuous stream of experience using the natural structure of narrative for co-constructing understanding" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 66). By respecting the varied narratives that develop within *Museum as Sanctuary*, the museum becomes a more inclusive institution. Susan Chase (2005) has also echoed this notion of a productive tension, which fractures singular and dominant narratives in favor of multiplicity. In Chase's (2005) view, narrative inquiry can explore "how to create public spaces in our local communities where the personal narratives and collective stories of marginalized people can be heard by—and can jolt out of their complacency—those who occupy more powerful subject positions and social locations" (p. 671). With these ideas presented by

Butler-Kisber (2010) and Chase (2005), I see museum-based learning through a narrative lens that supports the development of multiple perspectives in the research process and, by extension, in art museum education.

Narrative Analysis and Interpretation

Like Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre (1997), I struggled with the qualitative process and the act of making meaning out of my data. Engulfed in the different stories from various participants, I found it almost impossible to disconnect from the individual in order to discover parallels and common threads woven through each data source. Ultimately, I realized that "I had to find a different strategy for sense-making" (St. Pierre, 1997, p. 178), one that could fragment and isolate sections from whole narratives to make something completely new. For this reason, within this narrative approach I have sought out multiplicities, small moments of reflection, rather than an overarching, monolithic programmatic narrative. This research strategy is supported by Jackson and Mazzei (2009), who urge researchers to consider voice not as a singular truth or authentic assertion but rather as multiple ways of knowing and constructing understandings where the data exists as a way to "entangle ourselves in the layers of voices present" (p. 3). In this vein, we learn to embrace "an elsewhere-within-here" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 28) both within research practices and museum education.

These multiplicities were only possible through an analysis, and subsequent interpretation, that utilized creative strategies, such as poetry, to draw conclusions. Gillian Byrne (2017) reflects on the use of poetic prose to effectively disconnect and re-assemble narrative data, a similar strategy I utilized within my own coding and subsequent analysis and interpretation. Themes emerged from my own narrative data

through a process of collaging, where I cut out ideas that were present in multiple texts. These are presented in chapters 5.1 and 5.2. Such ideas included colors, materials, 'I am' statements, locations of birth, and other descriptions about artworks created or experienced. Afterwards, I began to lay these seemingly disconnected phrases on pieces of paper and grouped and regrouped words until they resembled a sentence (see Figure 3).

Within this process, I echoed Bryne's (2017) sentiments whereby "in turning to poetry I was seeking an alternative way in which to present the data to that of using disembodied extracts of data that could only ever be a partial representation of the participants' experience and the research process" (p. 43). This technique made my voice and presence within the research obvious since "Poetry is personal and the author's influence is explicit rather than hidden" (Byrne, 2017, p. 44). Thus, this presentation of a multivocal art museum is not without curation as these narratives are mediated by my own positionality as researcher *and* art museum educator.

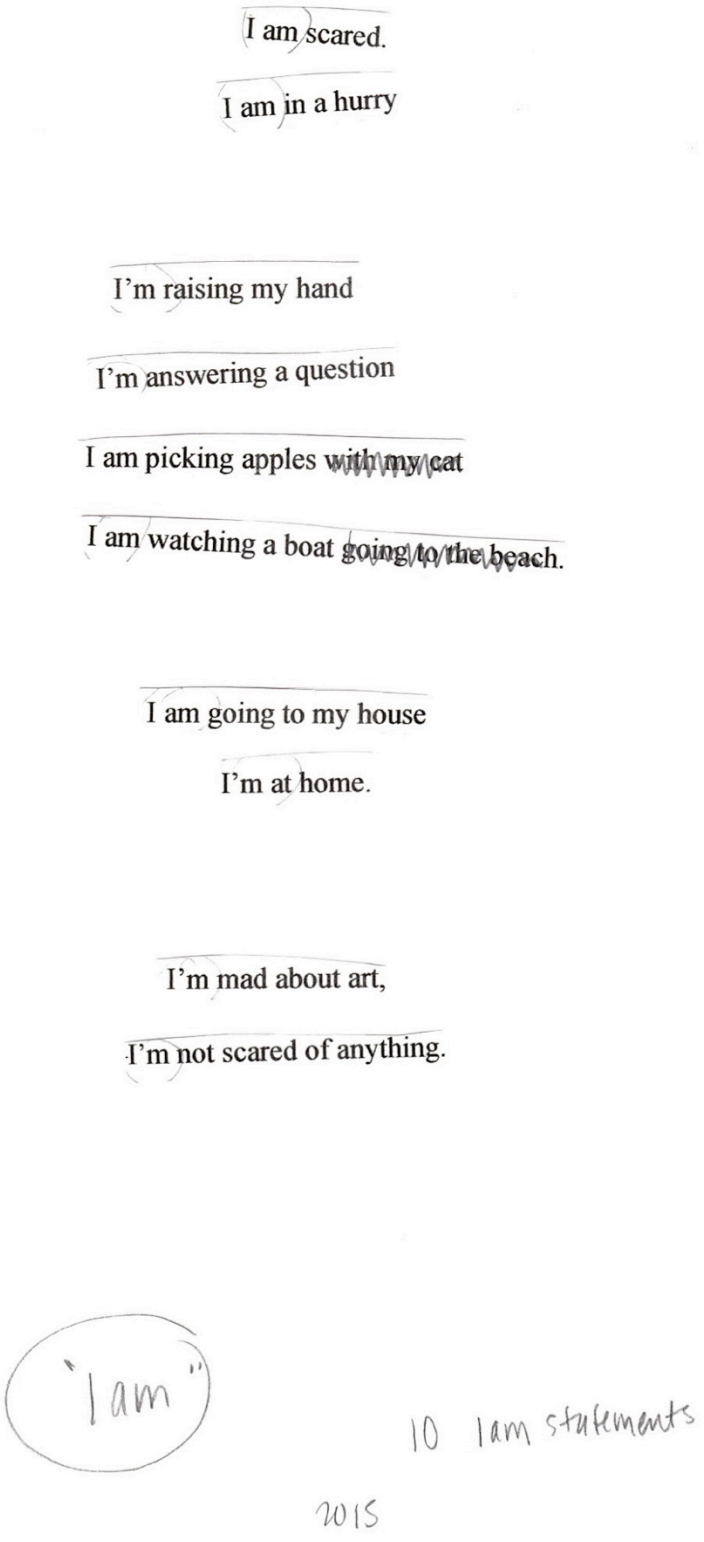


Figure 3. I am statements from 2015 exhibition.

Decolonizing Theory: Decolonized Methods and Performative Texts

By extending narrative inquiry to include a variety of lived experiences communicated by refugee participant-artists, I have sought to decolonize my research strategies inspired by the practices of Diversi and Moreira (2009, 2012, 2013, 2014). These theorists and practitioners are crucial to understand this study in that their collaborative efforts disrupt siloed and singular modes of inquiry; seek to investigate with audiences rather than about them; and acknowledge the position of authority and power that the researcher embodies. Within my own study, despite my best attempts to level hierarchies within museums and equitably share stories, I still contain undeniable authority in multiple contexts—that of an American citizen, a white woman, and museum employee. Thus, my attempts to decolonize the art museum and research was an intentional and critical undertaking whereby the "act of creating narrative space…[was] a constant site of struggle against oppressive forces of colonization" (Diversi & Moreira, 2009, p. 207). With this in mind, decolonizing methods are intentional actions where expected, traditional, and limiting practices are destabilized in order to open spaces up to different ways of knowing and shifting focus from monocultural, homogenous narratives to multivocal ones. Perhaps even more importantly within this study is the use of decolonizing theory within research is significant when considering the population I work with—refugees—a population only made possible through the act of colonization. These deliberate acts of creating decolonized narratives spaces within art museums opens the institution to multilingual complexities and varied utterances from audiences that are often ignored.

Sites of pedagogical exchanges, such as classrooms and, by extension, art museums, can be spaces of decolonized learning. To this point, Marcelo Diversi and Claudio Moreira (2013) assert that, "The classroom can be a place where these preconceived 'truths' can be examined, challenged, and transformed" (Diversi & Moreira, 2013, p. 471). It is within these environments "that we attempt to create and show possibilities of hope, of as many versions of a decolonizing utopia as we know" (Diversi & Moreira, 2013, p. 472).

Embracing the multiplicities of decolonized inquiry required an equally complex, fragmented, and active mode of analyzing, interpreting, and presenting texts. For this reason, I have used performative texts, such as the collaged poems, as a method of analyzing the data and as a way to continue to position narratives as dialogical, complicated, and multivoiced (see Figure 4). This method allowed me to embody action and dialogue within my research as well as the analysis and interpretation of the data. Thus, there are undeniable parallels between the actions: to decolonize and to perform. To this end, Diversi and Moreira (2012) claim that, "theories of decolonization are indeed performative, and so are our collective messy stories." (p. 194). Similarly, Norman Denzin (2003) sees the performative as an activated space of potential where, "Pedagogically, and ideologically, the performative becomes an act of doing (Giroux 2000, p.135), a dialogic way of being in the world, a way of grounding performances in the concrete situations of the present" (Denzin, 2003, p. 239).

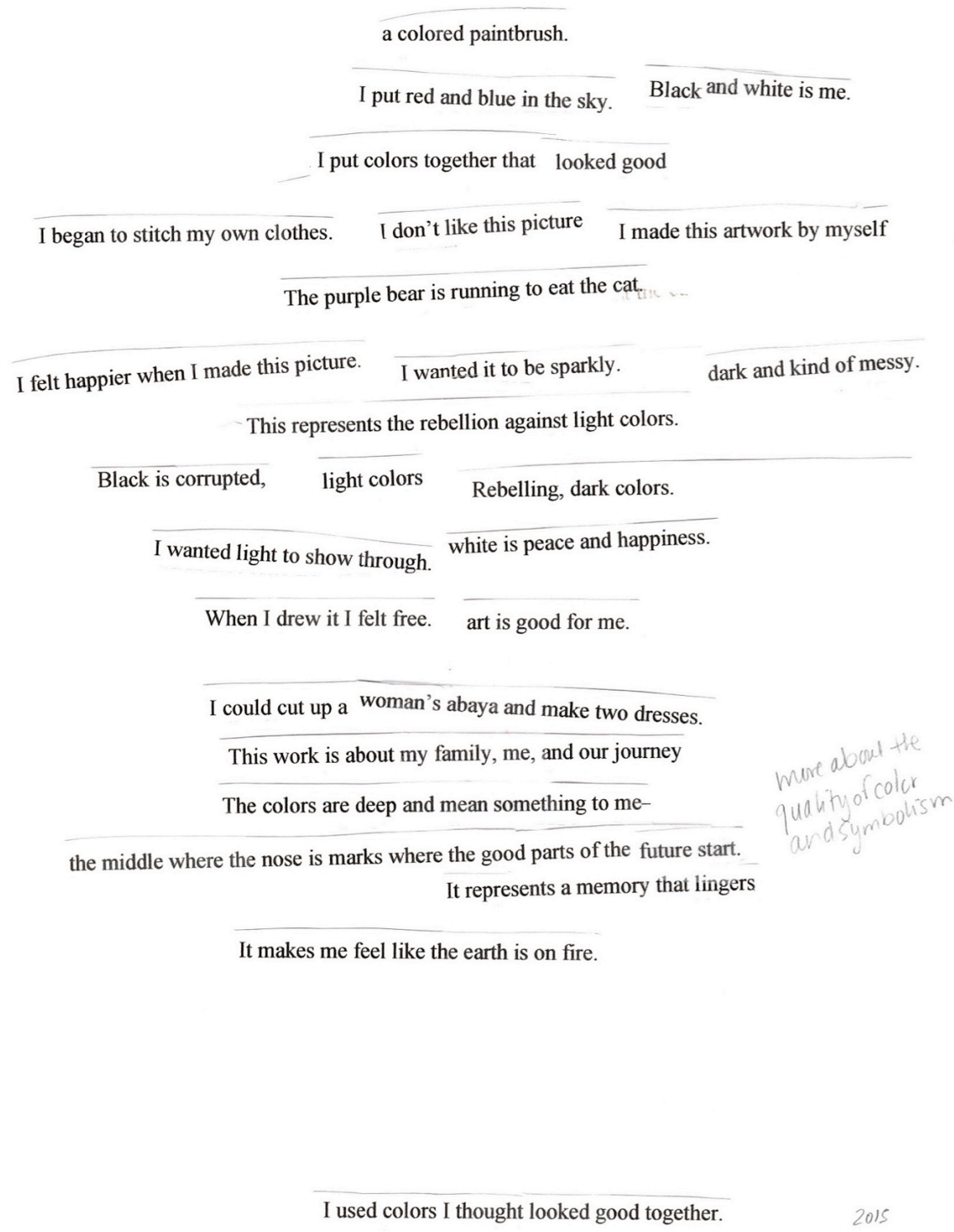


Figure 4. Collaged researcher constructed narratives: all the colors, process + product.

Multivocal Research in Art Museum Education

In art museums, multivocal research often focuses on the ways in which visitor expertise can be incorporated into the institution. For example, Jennifer Wild Czajkowski and Shiralee Hudson Hill (2008), reflect that museum educators can

> create a new location from which to articulate visitors' points of view and to accommodate a multiplicity of voices. It also helps us champion new models of museum organizational structures; models that help flatten the hierarchy to make room for new perspectives—including the visitors—as the senior management and strategic planning levels. (p. 260-261)

Czajkowski and Hill (2008) set the stage for the multivocal art museum where institutional narratives are expanded and multiplied to include visitor voice. Despite this apt reflection, I still wonder how educators and art museums might begin to incorporate narratives of users who are not traditional museumgoers who visit during leisure time, but rather who visit during more structured programming. This type of questioning and the lack of research investigating the narratives of diverse populations within art museums are an impetus behind my own study.

In this chapter, I have explained the study design and methodological lens upon which I have structured my research: Within the scope of narrative inquiry, I incorporate decolonizing methods and performative texts to build a multivoiced longitudinal study. In the following chapters, 4.0, 4.1, 4.2, 5.0, 5.1A, 5.1B, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5, I put these methods into practice in my presentation of the data, followed by my analysis and interpretation of it. However, before moving forward I must warn you that, "if you are looking for a complete story, you are not going to find it here. If your 'trained mind' is

looking for the whole thing, it is not here either" (Moreira, 2011, p. 586). Instead what follows are excerpts, narrative moments, and multivocal encounters that blend and complicate voices and identities in a curated performance on pedagogy and exhibitions within a single museum-community program.

CHAPTER 4.0

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Sharing with Strangers

As mentioned in chapter 3, the narratives presented in the following section (chapters 4.0 -4.2) are what I refer to as participant-constructed narratives; these are distinct from the researcher-constructed narratives presented in chapters 5.0-5.5. I have collected the voices presented here from: wall texts written by participant-artists for two exhibitions; gallery activities collaboratively written by participant-artists and support staff/volunteers from the collaborating organization; and reflections from myself: the art museum educator facilitating this program. For each exhibition, I instructed participants to describe their artwork and write an artist statement/biography that they would be comfortable sharing with a stranger (or an unfamiliar museum visitor). Additionally, my journal entries, written immediately after each session, shine a light on my role, apprehensions, frustrations, and excitements simultaneously as researcher and art museum educator.

The data presented from here on come from three main sources:

- **Exhibition Texts**

  Descriptions for the two *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibitions written by participants; these texts share biographical information, highlight personality traits such as hobbies and likes or dislikes, and often give context to artists works by explaining their process and creative choices.

- **Field Notes**

Each night after *Museum as Sanctuary* I would reflect on the session's happenings; within these field notes I continuously struggle with a balance of institutional structure and my own desire to heed control to participant-directed and participant-centered experiences.

- **Gallery Activities**

  These are collective interpretations of artworks on view, in the form of collaboratively written interpretations by the participants of artworks on view in the museum. Gathered over seven iterations of two activities, namely the *Exquisite Corpse* activity, and the *Voices* activity, these interpretive labels highlight that the ways people and groups experience these objects are varied. When given freedom to explore and reflect within the museum space, participants dive right in and are not impeded (or limited) by what other say or a singular linear narrative about the artwork.

Each of these data sources are distinct artifacts, however within this chapter I have blended rather than isolated them, in order to more closely echo structures of art museum programming where these experiences occur sometimes concurrently and to avoid privileging any one voice over another.

Within the following sections of chapter 4 my own reflections in my field notes are placed in context with participant-artist generated texts thus the resulting presentation of data investigates exhibitions as research (chapter 4.1), and in-gallery learning as research (chapter 4.2). In other words, by presenting this data in this format, I draw focus on two components of art museum practices: exhibitions and in-gallery learning.

In chapter 4.1, I explore the idea of exhibition as research where object labels are

the primary sources of data. This section includes texts developed for two exhibitions in 2013 and 2015; these were created by 15 participant-artists who were consistent participants in *Museum as Sanctuary* over the two-year research period. Below, Table 1 outlines each artist and the titles of their works, artworks and object labels, included in both exhibitions:

Artists	***MaS* 2013**	***MaS* 2015**
Esme, Democratic Republic of Congo, b. 2002	Artist Biography, Mythical Creature, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portrait (1), Artist Biography
Kumar, Nepal, b. 2003	Artist Biography, Desert Landscape, Mythical Creature, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portraits (3), Mixed Media Timeline
Lucas, Chile, b. 1949	Artist Biography	Mixed Media Sculpture
Luis, United States, b. 2000	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portrait (1), Artist Biography
Mahmoud, Iraq, b. 2002	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Desert Landscape, Mythical Creature, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portrait (1), Artist Biography
Malik, Iraq, b. 2001	Artist Biography, Mythical Creature, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portraits (3), Artist Biography
Meki, Ethiopia, b. 1999	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Desert Landscape, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portraits (2), Artist Biography
Munir, Iraq, b. 2005	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Desert Landscape, Mythical Creature, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portraits (2)
Nura, Iraq, b. 1966	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Desert Landscape, Owl & Panther Story	Sewing Installation

Paula, Guatemala, b. 1973	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portrait (1), Artist Biography
Rami, Iraq, b.1998	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Desert Landscape, Mythical Creature, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portraits (3), Artist Biography, Mixed Media Timeline
Samara, Democratic Republic of Congo, b. 2004	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Desert Landscape, Mythical Creature, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portrait (1), Artist Biography
Sonali, Nepal, b. 2006	Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portraits (4), Mixed Media Timeline
Tanka, Bhutan, b. 1956	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Desert Landscape, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portraits (2), Mixed Media Timeline
Zahra, Iraq, b. 1998	Artist Biography, Self-Portrait, Desert Landscape, Owl & Panther Story	Self-Portrait (1), Artist Biography

Table 1: Works of art, and their corresponding artists, included in *MaS* Exhibitions in 2013 and 2015.

In chapter 4.2, in-gallery learning and collaborative interpretations are the primary sources of data, though these are also interspersed with my reflective field notes. The authors of these texts are unidentified as they include over 30 participant-artists who attended *Museum as Sanctuary* between October 2013 and April 2015 and were created in collaboration, therefore there is no singular voice permeating these interpretations.[14] The written texts that comprise the bulk of this section were developed during two in-gallery activities, *Exquisite Corpse* and *Voices*, implemented seven times over the two-year research period. These in-gallery activities were as follows:

[14] For a description about this data source see chapter 3 subsection entitled: Understanding context and location of the study.

- *Exquisite Corpse*: January 28, 2014, resulting in six interpretations developed by six groups; this was the first time the *Exquisite Corpse* activity was conducted. Two of these interpretations were installed in the museum's Western Art galleries (permanent collection) as alternative labels.
- *Exquisite Corpse*: March 11, 2014, resulting in six interpretations developed by eight groups; two interpretations were lost during the March 11th in-gallery activity.
- *Exquisite Corpse*: March 25, 2014, resulting in six interpretations developed by six groups. During this iteration of the gallery activity three separate exhibition spaces were utilized where in the past we all remained contained within the same exhibition.
- *Voices* activity: September 9, 2014, seven groups explored one exhibition where each group created three interpretations of the work they selected; a total of 21 interpretations were created.
- *Voices* activity: October 14, 2014, seven groups explored one exhibition where each group created up to three interpretations of the work they selected; a total of 19 interpretations were created since not all groups completed all three prompts.
- *Exquisite Corpse*: November 18, 2014, resulting in six interpretations developed by six groups; during this interaction of the gallery activity three separate exhibition spaces
- *Exquisite Corpse*: February 24, 2015, resulting in seven interpretations developed by seven groups. During this iteration of the gallery activity one exhibition space

was utilized. After the interpretations were revised and formatted all descriptions were added as alternative labels to the temporary exhibition on horses.

The *Exquisite Corpse* (see Appendix 1) and *Voices* (see Appendix 2) activities are two examples of collaborative writing gallery engagements that encourage deep exploration with objects on view in the museum while experimenting with the way visitors move through exhibitions. Instructions for the *Exquisite Corpse* activity encouraged participant-artists to write their observations then fold the paper to hide their sentence, repeat their last word *only* leaving it for the next group to add to, and rotate to next work. The objective for the *Voices* was to explore points of view in relation to works of art, encouraging participant-artists to use descriptive language, dialogue, and first person narrative within their writing about artwork.

CHAPTER 4.1

PRESENTATION OF DATA: EXHIBITIONS AS RESEARCH

In this section I introduce 15 artists featured in both *MaS* exhibitions (2013 and 2015) and who are continuous voices within the two-year data collection period, thus helping to document shifts and growth in the community-museum program *Museum as Sanctuary*. These artists come from Bhutan, Chile, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Iraq, and Nepal and vary greatly in age, the youngest born in 2005 and the oldest born in 1949. Additionally, these artists have been living in the United States for a variety of lengths of time; one is a first generation American while most arrived as refugees between the 1970s and until as recently as 2012. They are:[15]

Esme, Democratic Republic of Congo, b. 2002
Kumar, Nepal, b. 2003
Lucas, Chile, b. 1949
Luis, United States, b. 2000
Meki, Ethiopia, b. 1999
Mahmoud, Iraq, b. 2002
Malik, Iraq, b. 2001
Munir, Iraq, b. 2005
Nura, Iraq, b. 1966
Paula, Guatemala, b. 1973
Rami, Iraq, b.1998
Samara, Democratic Republic of Congo, b. 2004
Sonali, Nepal, b. 2006
Tanka, Bhutan, b. 1956
Zahra, Iraq, b. 1998

Below, the participants' written texts appear sans serif (Arial) in order to call attention to these words. First I present participant-artist exhibition texts from 2013. This is followed

[15] For a complete listing of participant-artists' names and objects including in both exhibitions see Table 1 in chapter 4.0.

by Interludes: my own reflections from program meetings that transpired between the two exhibitions (2013-2015), including a focus on the idea of creating exhibitions and developing content (artworks and written descriptions). Then, I present participant-artists texts created in 2015.

Museum as Sanctuary: Giving Voice to Tucson's Refugees

July 3 - September 15, 2013

In 2013 *MaS* collaboratively created its first exhibition (see Figure 5). This was the TMA's Education Department's and the entire Museum's initial attempt at community-based exhibition. The majority of curatorial texts were written solely from the facilitators' perspective, including TMA educators and program staff from OP, while leaving out the voice of participants in introductory labels and section texts. However, participant voice was included through object labels. These labels were created using a worksheet (see Appendix 3) designed to capture standard information for tombstone labels as well as extended descriptions if participant-artists wished to include additional interpretation. This exhibition included over 220 individual objects (see Table 2) by *MaS* artists and community members.

2013 *Museum as Sanctuary* Exhibition Details	
Text and Descriptions in Exhibition	
Artist Biographies	31
Introductory Texts	1
Section Texts	6
Object Labels	71
Objects in Exhibition	
Self-Portraits	22 works

Nature Patterns	84 works
Desert Landscapes	45 works
Mythical Creatures	16 objects
Owl & Panther Story	26 works
Photographic Portraits	28 works

Table 2: 2013 *Museum as Sanctuary* Exhibition Details

The exhibition featured 31 artists from nine different countries: Bhutan, Chile, Congo, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Iraq, Nepal, Somalia, and Zimbabwe. They created artworks during the first three-years of *Museum as Sanctuary*. These works explored themes such as: community, identity, culture, and place and were installed in the lower galleries of the Museum. It included 28 photographic portraits (taken by *MaS* teenage participants), 26 painted panels illustrating a Cherokee creation story from which Owl & Panther gets its name, 22 painted self-portraits, 45 landscape paintings which were hung as a tiled installation, 84 6-inch x 6-inch black ink drawings, hung on 19 strings, exploring the idea of place, and 16 papier-mâché mythical creatures. This exhibition illuminates that the museum can position itself as a forum that encourages visitors to make connections between their own lived experiences and knowledge and works of art on view in museums.

Figure 5. Installation view of 2013 *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition.

Artist Biographies

The biographies included below accompanied photographic portraits that hung in the first iteration of *Museum as Sanctuary*. Each participant-artist created their own biographical note in order to introduce themselves to visitors to the exhibition, and participants were given freedom to include whatever details they wanted someone looking at their artwork to know. However, it was suggested that these be at least three sentences long. Additionally, participants were asked to list their year of birth and where they were born to echo artist details standard in labels often found in art museum exhibitions. Generally, in these biographies participant-artists included where they were born, when they moved to the United States, details about their families, and reflected on things they liked or disliked.

Esme
Congo, (b. 2002)

I am pretty and nice to other people. I am from Congo. I was eight-years-old when we flew in an airplane to Tucson. I was nine-years-old when I first went to school here in second grade and then they put me in third grade. I like the United States. It is fun.

Kumar
Bhutan/Nepal, (b. 2003)

I am a painter and I like hats and sculptures. I go to primary school and visit the Owl & Panther each week.

Lucas
Chile, (b. 1949)

I was born in Chuquicamate, a mining town in the Atacama Desert. I came to the United States in May 1976 as a political exile. Tucson has been my home ever since. I became a member of Amnesty International. I am married and have a family, graduated from the University of Arizona, worked as an adult education teacher. I am committed to supporting human rights.

Luis
United States, (b. 2000)

I am thirteen-years-old and am in seventh grade. My favorite subject is math because it is easy. I like to ride my bike and play games. I have worked with wire and 3D sculpture. My mother is a refugee from Guatemala and I am a long-term member of Owl & Panther. I have too many friends to have a best friend.

Mahmoud
Iraq, (b. 2002)

I am ten-and-a half years old. I was born in Baghdad, Iraq. I don't remember Iraq because the war happened. My mom and my brother

moved to Lebanon where my dad was. When we left Iraq, my grandfather got killed. We came from Lebanon to the U.S.A. in 2009.

Malik
Iraq, (b. 2001)

I am an artist from Iraq and I am twelve-years-old. I've been in Tucson for three-and-a-half years. I really worked hard on this stuff and a few of my paintings are inspired by other artists. The *Red Doggy* is about my own life. I worked really hard on all my work. I hope you enjoy my artwork. Thank you Owl & Panther for inspiring me.

Meki
Ethiopia, (b. 1999)

I come from Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, I lived thirteen years. In Ethiopia, eight years I played. In Ethiopia, I learned what to draw. When I was in fourth grade I always was drawing people's faces. My math teacher, he told me how to make the faces more real. He told me to bring to him anything I drew, he would help me to make real. When I was in seventh grade, my art teacher showed me how to draw the whole body. He taught me how to use color and my mom always told me I am a good artist, and that made me want to get better and better.

Munir
Iraq, (b. 2005)

I am from Iraq. I have been in Tucson for four years. I will be in second grade next fall. I like to play soccer and sometimes I like to play kickball. And sometimes I like to play tag.

Nura
Iraq, (b. 1966)

I was born in Baghdad. I had a happy childhood. I had six brothers and three sisters. My father died when I was thirteen. I was married when I was twenty and I have three children. When I was married, I had happy

life – after the war started (2003), my life changed. I had to move to Syria, but my husband stayed in Iraq to look for his brother who had disappeared. Then my husband disappeared also. I went back to visit my family in Baghdad and some people beat me – I went back to Syria and I waited for the United Nations to place me. I came to the United States in 2010 with my son.

Paula
Guatemala, (b. 1973)

I am a refugee from Guatemala. I have lived in the U.S. since 1985. I came to the U.S. because my family was being persecuted by the Guatemalan army. We endured torture. The Sanctuary Movement gave me a chance to live by helping me come to the U.S. I am married to Luis and have a child, Luis Pablo.

Rami
Iraq, (b. 1998)

I am from Iraq. I am fifteen-years-old. I was eleven when I moved to Tucson. I love soccer. I love music and dancing. I love kickboxing.

Samara
Congo, (b. 2004)

I am eight-years-old. I was born in Kigali, Congo, which is in Africa. Now, I live in Tucson. I have two sisters and one brother. We live with my mom. I like to sing and paint. My favorite food is cheese pizza. My favorite animal is a cheetah because it runs faster than other animals.

Tanka
Bhutan, (b. 1956)

I was born in Bhutan. I had to leave as a teenager because of my Nepalese background. I moved to a refugee camp in Nepal and had four children. My wife died of cancer. We moved to the United States three years ago.

Zahra
Jordan, (b. 1998)

> I love shiny things. I am from Jordan. I like pink and love snow. My whole room is pink. When I joined Owl & Panther, I loved to draw. I like to make sculptures. I love animals. I love flowers. I love basketball. I love cactus and that's why I moved to Arizona.

Self-Portraits

For this 2013 exhibition, each participant was asked to create one self-portrait that represented them; the portraits were completed after looking at portraiture in the museum's galleries. The participant-made portraits were created on canvas paper using acrylic and other materials participants asked to explore and include in their works. For example, the work by Luis was sculpted in metal and then glued onto the canvas paper. Additionally some artists utilized colored pencils and markers instead of or in addition to paints. The accompanying descriptions for these works explained what was contained within each self-portrait and sometimes added clarity to symbolism within the paintings. These descriptions recount artists' process and the steps taken to create each self-portrait. For the most part they are literal and add little context beyond what can already be seen on view in the exhibition.

Luis

MetaLuis

Mahmoud

Mahmoud's Self-Portrait

> It is a picture of me with red hair, big ears and earrings. I wanted to show myself with earrings because my dad had just made them for me. It hurt to have my ears pierced, but I was happy about it.

Meki

Self-Portrait

The blue represents sky. The green shirt represents green plants, the red shirt represents the sunset. The bottom is the Ethiopian flag.

Munir

Munir

This is me. I'm surrounded by stuff—flowers, pumpkins, trees. The background is a sky.

Nura

Happy Girl

This is a painting of me when I was a young, happy girl.

Paula

Yo

My self-portrait was painted with my eyes closed because I just want to be. I want to dream, just breathe…

Rami

My face

It looks beautiful because I just copy my face. I love Red Bulls, the team.

Samara

A Girl Reading Books

Pink, yellow red + green are the colors. The girl is reading *Skippy John Joan*, a book about puppies.

Tanka

A Beautiful Me

Worked hard to make myself as handsome as possible.

Zahra

Zahra's Mirror Portrait

I did splatter paint red streaks dark brown eyes and have a dimple. I have dark blue t-shirt. I like the texture of it. I took a lot of time on it.

Desert Landscapes

These works on paper were created from photographs taken during weekend excursions into nature. When installed in the gallery these works were interspersed with the original photographs and the object descriptions, creating a collage-like installation. Here, each description explains the setting depicted, reading almost like a list of objects found in nature and their color.

Kumar

Cloud

I like clouds because they are cool.

Mahmoud

Sun and Sky

Sun, grass, mountains, blue sky. When we went to Rancho Luz, I took a photo of the beautiful clouds with the sun shining on them and the mountains. I loved it, and I wanted to paint it.

Meki

Comparing the woodpile in front of the mountain where the wood came from.

Munir

Pretty Mountains

Taken at the ranch. Grass, bushes, mountains. Happy when I took the photo and when I painted the picture.

Nura

Blue Sky with desert floor, green plants and brown.

Rami

Funky Monkey

The colors are very important to my artwork. Watercolor, paper, pen, and pencil. I liked using blue, yellow and green. I made it from a picture.

Samara

Mountains

Green bushes on a big mountain. The sky is blue. It's a hot day. There are no animals in sight.

Tanka

Arizona Garden

Forest. Flowers. Butterflies

Zahra

Desert Watercolor

I like the desert. It is smooth. It is clear. There is a little bit of trees. It is always hot. It never rains. It's kind of green, it's kind of yellow. There's a tiny lake.

Mythical Creatures

These works are inspired by *Alebrijes*, brightly colored Mexican folk art sculptures in TMA's permanent collection made from papier-mâché that depict fantastical creatures. The works are made from a variety of materials including recycled materials, papier-mâché, and acrylic paint. Displayed on pedestals these works were

scattered throughout the gallery space and allowed for visitors to walk around the figures exploring the works from all sides. These works were imaginative creatures and their accompanying descriptions explain each sculpture's identity, story, and personalities. However, several of these labels included artists recounting their process and describing details that could already be seen within the creature.

Esme

Pig

> Pink, black, red, green, brown, white. The pig is fat. My pig has six legs. The pig is so pinky, she has dots because she's wearing a costume for a party. The pig is nice to people because Esme taught her to be nice. There was an accident and the pig has six legs.

Kumar

A Camera, A Police Officer Camera

> It has Bears! It is a robot! I used trash and painting.

Mahmoud

Cheetah

> It has sharp teeth: black eyes: blue black white spots. First, I made the body. Then, I thought about it—whether it should be a giraffe, a dinosaur or a cheetah. I decided it should be a cheetah because of its sharp teeth.

Malik

The Ice Dragon

> He got poisoned by a plant, you can tell by his green tail. Poison ivy touched his tail. He lives in jungles, and he has a tongue in his mouth.

Munir

Bugling

Insect, very colorful, decorated all over. It was hard to make, and am happy with the result.

Rami

Pretty Bird

I made it from a toilet paper roll, and a paper towel roll. It is an old from 1,000 years ago. It is colorful because I liked these colors. It also looks like something from a star war game. Where I come from is the desert, and this bird lives there. He can't fly. I've seen this bird in Iraq.

Samara

Dragon

The dragon lives in the desert. It's a good creature. It breathes fire. He sleeps during the day. He cooks for himself.

Owl & Panther Story

As indicated earlier, Owl & Panther gets its name from a Cherokee creation story where the owl and panther are given the ability to see through darkness. For this component of the exhibition, the Programming Manager from Owl & Panther re-interpreted the story and the resulting lines were used as inspiration for participants' paintings. The reason for this project was two-fold: first it gave Owl & Panther the ability to introduce the story to participants who were unfamiliar with the program's namesake and secondly, it presented an opportunity to illustrate the strength and importance of working together where works of art when displayed together were stronger than in isolation. These 26 individual works hung side-by-side, and stacked in some instances, along the longest wall in the gallery and as viewers moved from left to right they were introduced to this narrative through text and visuals. The text included below in Times New Roman font is the line from the story that the participant illustrated;

the description in Arial font that follows in some is their own interpretation of the work. The descriptions written by participant-artists, similar to the previous works and their descriptions, remain fairly literal, concentrating on what is happening on the canvas. Lists of objects depicted and colors used, as well as insights to the artistic process are commonplace.

Esme

> "The first night all of the animals and plants stayed awake. Some even began to boast. 'This is so easy!' 'I don't feel sleepy at all.'"

The Animals Stay up all Night.

> The trees are green. The panther stay up all night. She felt sleepy, she ate all the blueberries. Here were strawberries, blueberries and oranges.
> The panther.
> The tree has apples, oranges.
> The flower is beautiful as the sky.
> The panther is nice to people.
> The grass is big as the flowers.
> The moon is nice to me and is yellow because it's hungry.
> The sky is good as a tree and is beautiful as me.
> The flower is good and red as gold as the ring.
> The grass covers the plants.
> The dirt is beautiful as the grass. The stars are beautiful as a moon.
> The end.

Kumar

> "On the second night, some where droopy and sleepy. 'Stop yawning!'"

The Owl Sings in the Dark

> I used paint, a roller, cut out shapes, marker stars for the dark. Man in the dark singing with a panther, the letter T for tree, red and green together, green dripped down orange on the bottom. Owl is flying to the stars, and there is a black line as a frame.

Luis

> "'I will reward you both with the power to see in darkness,' Creator said."

Mahmoud

"From then on, owl and panther stayed vigilant and protected those animals that had failed to remain awake and now must sleep each night."

My picture has the sky, a green tree, a cactus, one panther with gray eyes, gray mouth, gray nose, and he is a blackish color. I have a bunch of stars, one owl flying in the air, one moon shining yellow light. When the owl and panther passed the test they are looking for other animals that are awake and not sleeping for seven days and seven nights. I like the panther because he has gray eyes and he looks funny. It took me one whole week to paint it. I got the details and I made up the colors of the panther, the gray eyes. It has 13 shooting stars. I thought about making a wish. Everybody knows you make a wish when you see a shooting star. First I sketched the panther and the ground, then I sketched all the stars. I painted over, far away stars. I had red as the background and the painted over it with light blue, then the whole background is dark blue. I want people to copy my owl's yellow eyes and to copy my panther because it looks funny.

Malik

"By the fourth night, nearly all of them slept."

Meki

"When the world was new, Creator asked all the animals and plants, "Please stay awake and keep watch for seven days and nights'."

In this painting the creator gives the animals and plants the command "stay awake and keep watch for seven days and nights."

Munir

"From then on, owl and panther stayed vigilant and protected those animals that had failed to remain awake and now must sleep each night."

Nura

"By the fourth night, nearly all of them slept."

Gloom

My painting expresses my dark feelings about what has happened to me.

Paula

"Creator gave each the power to remain green all year and store great medicine in their leaves."

Grow, Heal & Love

The creator gave us all we need to survive and heal. In my painting I drew abstract trees with healing/curing leaves. The hearts represent life and the sun the warmth we need.

Rami

"'I will reward you both with the power to see in darkness,' Creator said."

Aso

Colors water colors, pen, brush. It is about a pretty bird. A pretty bird full of color. The bird is in the desert, he eats cactus fruit. People tried to hunt him down for his colorful feathers. A person came and protected him—he is in the painting too. That man got the night vision, the bird did not.

Samara

"Even now, when children move through their youth and pray for their gifts, they remind themselves they must stay alert and helpful like cedar and spruce and pine."

Cheetah in the Night

A tiny moon, stars, cheetah, a person. The person is looking at the stars. The cheetah is eating the grass.

Sonali

"On the third night, so matter how hard they tried, some could not stay awake."

Tanka

"Among the plants, the pine, spruce, hemlock, cedar, laurel and holly had remained awake and watchful."

Flower Gardens

Love to mix color and try to show beauty of desert.

Zahra

"The animals and plants wanted to do as they were asked. They knew if they could stay alert and keep watch, they would be rewarded."

The Creatures of the Night

My owl and panther picture has a moon and star next to it. It is all nighttime because all the animals come out at night because they are shy. I drew animals on the tree on the grass. I found the duck, rabbit and flowers on scrap paper. I put a little sparkle in my sunflower. I have very tiny flowers. It has tiny stars. I put a pinecone trying to roll down. It is pink. The stars represent the alert eyes so they can see at night.

Interlude: A Reflection on Practice or Art Museum Educator as Research

After concluding the first exhibition I began collecting data while simultaneously continuing in the role of art museum educator. This duality proved to be a difficult balance to negotiate, one that made me anxious, uncertain, and at times overwhelmed. However, it also presented an opportunity for me to systematically reflect on my practice and the roles I play within Owl & Panther and TMA resulting in a more conscious effort to cross the museum-community divide where "traveling can thus turn out to be a process whereby the self loses its fixed boundaries—a disturbing yet potentially empowering practice of difference" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 41). Within these fluid boundaries, there is a potential for the art museum to become a site of productive difference where I began to exist within a space of productive vulnerability.

Year One, First Semester:

The Anxious, Uncertain, and Awkward Researcher-Educator

This first semester (October – November 2013), immediately commencing after the first *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition in the summer of 2013, calls attention to the difficulty I encountered when becoming a researcher within an already existing program where I am lead facilitator.

October 1, 2013

> ...I am still uncomfortable in my role as a research[er], it feels counterintuitive to being invested and committed to a collaborative/community based museum program. I am not sure how to navigate these feelings...

October 8, 2013

> …I often times…get overwhelmed by the non-hierarchical and participant directed content. I worry that within a museum we look and sound like chaos; while we are housed in the education department-and thus generally removed from the expected museum decorum I still feel the museum structure imposed upon my educational practice.

This reflection from the beginning of the data collection stands out because of my own insecurities within the museum and the way I facilitate programming. I am fearful that someone might catch me and observe the way I conduct educational endeavors—ultimately deeming my pedagogical practice not museum worthy or appropriate.

October 15, 2013

> ... I remember feeling superfluous as an educator –does this idea of feeling superfluous equate success in engagement for participants/students…?

October 22, 2013

> …I found it difficult during the gallery component to explain that these everyday objects were similar to paintings on view in the museum. Many times…I caught people leaning on the tabletop or sitting in one of the chairs, it is hard to explain that beyond function these objects are accessioned into the collection…The museum, like my role as an educator

> who meanders between other roles, is a schizophrenic institution and does not necessarily adhere to one medium or one type of artwork…

November 12, 2013

> Tonight I was able to take a step back from facilitator and to be a participant, and to reconnect with everyone…

November 19, 2013

> …I am constantly exploring pushing on boundaries whether they be in terms of nonhierarchical programming, expanding/challenging traditional museum-community relationships, reimagining what the role of a museum educator is... However, boundaries and borders can be constructive, productive and more importantly necessary. I am interested in how to facilitate these types of good boundaries while simultaneously working to breakdown others…

November 26, 2013

> Often times a lack of structure is not non-hierarchical but rather is simply a lack of structure…I need to figure out how to set boundaries but also do it in a way that fosters healthy and creative exchanges…
> …there was too much freedom…
> …Next semester I am going to work on creating a curriculum that is simultaneously structured and open-ended, wherein opportunities for participant voice to direct/shift program structure is still incorporated into the over all plan—it will be fluid yet controlled…

Many of my own reflections from this first year focus on my insecurities as an art museum educator and as a researcher. Throughout these seven excerpts, I am constantly critical of the role I am playing within the institution and questioning how I can be a better facilitator. Similar to the participants in their own writings from the 2013 exhibition, I rely heavily on "I" statements and my own identity.

Year Two, Last Semester:

The Chaotic, Frustrated, and Excited Educator-Researcher

What follow are excerpts from the last semester (February – April 2015) of the data collection period of this study, which captures my preparation for the 2015 *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition.

February 24, 2015

> …but I know I look at works differently when planning for different groups – and hope that these experiences make me more sensitive to the different audiences I work with as an art museum educator and not just when collaborating with torture survivors/refugee audiences…

When planning for the second *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition, I made adjustments to the curatorial process to better honor and include a multitude of voices beyond the object label. In order to ensure that multiple perspectives were included in the development of the introductory texts and section text, participants answered weekly questions (up to three) as source material that would later be explored to pull content from. Additionally, Owl & Panther founders were asked to write brief reflections about the significance of the program reflecting on the 20-year history of the organization. Planning for the 2015 exhibition occurred within the period of data collection for this study, and as a result my field notes shine light on the intentionality of the inclusion of multiple voices within all exhibition texts.

March 31, 2015

> When I feel like there is pressure to make an awesome product and keep everyone focused I get pretty overwhelmed—I think this exhibition is stressing me out currently because I am worried about the content and the over all aesthetic. I want everyone to feel like the exhibition is awesome and that they are excited to have their artwork on the walls but right now I think everyone is just over it…
> I think I struggle with the balance of process, product, and critical encounters—I definitely feel like I am torn between the…notions of

> participatory practice, and the idea of kick ass product—where is the happy medium?
> Currently I just feel frustrated…

Here again, like the first semester, I struggle with my own practice within the art museum being different from the expected behavior. The need to create a product while facilitating a collaborative and participant-centered process was not an easy balance to maintain or strive for throughout the entire two-year research period.

April 7, 2015

> I am working on generating enough content during the write starts this time around for the exhibition in order to incorporate multiple voices and opinions within the text panels; that way they aren't written just from OP organizational or TMA perspective…
> …I have been brainstorming what an exhibition curated/conceptualized/planned…with the intent of illustrating a postcolonial art museum might look like right now[. T]he idea of voice seems to be crucial—ensuring that the narrative of the exhibition is not told only from one point of view and isn't just privileging the museum voice[; this] is essential.

April 14, 2015

> Margot and I briefly discussed earlier how we are going to collaborate using the kids' words (mostly from write starts and other reflections) to create wall text for the portraits, into panel, hands, timelines, and kites so that these labels would be a combination of traditional curatorial voices, partner voice, and participant voice.
> I think I could have done a better job setting up…the controlled chaos is only possible with the preplanning and structure in order to make the chaos successful.
> …I often feel like a crazy person on Tuesday nights—and I just get caught up in the moments and trying to ensure that everyone has materials they need and feels confident moving forward…

April 21, 2015

> …I talked with Nura about completing her installation and reminded her about the top for the pjs [pajamas] saying that the mannequin would be

> wearing only pants—Nura seemed ok with this as long as the mannequin also wore a bra! We agreed that she would complete the pj top after classes are done May 15—so I gave her until mid-June…

April 28, 2015

> It was the last night at TMA this semester—the next time everyone is back together at the Museum it will be for the opening of our exhibition July 24th. It is crazy to think that now what is next up are the reviewing/culling/editing/compiling of wall labels and deciding how to install things in the exhibition…Nura still needs to bring me the top to her pjs for the installation. So there are some loose ends – but for the most part things are coming together…
> …We finished casting hands—Nura even decided it was ok for her to do hers—originally she had said no because it reminded her of a severed hand…but Margot and a volunteer spoke with her and I took her to my office to show how they all were together and explained how the installation would look…and then she agreed…
> …Multiple alumni were there—so it will be awesome to have their voice/participation in the exhibition.

These shifts in narrative, from a singularly articulated curatorial program to a multivocal encounter reflect Bryony Onciul's (2013 and 2015) belief that "curatorial adaptation is an ongoing learning process informed by working with the community" (2013, p. 88) where the role of museum curator has evolved from "curator as expert to curator as mediator" (Onciul, 2015, p. 7). The above excerpts from my notes highlight the ongoing process inherent within this exhibition and how my role as edu-curator often became one of mediator attempting to collect materials organically over the course of the programmatic happenings.

Another major point of concern while moving forward was to consider and reflect upon the ways in which the first exhibition perpetuated stereotypes through its subtitle of *Giving Voice*. The labeling of the first exhibition as a platform for "giving voice" implied that these participants did not have their own voice before their experiences at the

museum—which is incredibly false and insincere. Thus, in order to be a better community-based exhibition we needed to acknowledge the fact that words matter and accept that we could do better since, as Minh-ha (2011) asserts,

> Words have always been used as weapons to assert order and to win political combats; yet, when their assertions are scrutinized, they reveal themselves, above all, as awkward posturings, as they often tend to blot out the very reality they purport to convey. (p. 46)

Moving forward with titling the 2015 exhibition as a result pulled ideas from participants and individuals from Owl & Panther in order to avoid myopic and potentially problematic titles. Thus, our second attempt at an exhibition more consciously engaged with a postcolonial framework where collectively we (participants, collaborators, and educators) sought "an egalitarian conversation between differently located authorities" (Hutchinson, 2013, p. 143).

Museum as Sanctuary: Perspectives of Resilience

July 17, 2015 - January 3, 2016

The 2015 exhibition (see Figure 6) focused on the concept of resilience and was broken into several sections that included over 140 individual objects (see Table 3): over 90 unique works of art by 32 artists and 51 plaster cast hands representing collaborators of *Museum as Sanctuary*. Due to the large number of works installed in the exhibition the curatorial program veered greatly from the modernist aesthetic of one work of art hung at eye level with space to breathe around all sides. Instead, works were hung salon style and clustered into thematic sections ranging from explorations on nature, self-

portraiture, timelines, sketchbooks, an installation of kites, reflections on the history of OP including a memorial chain and alumni artworks, a mixed media sculpture by a participant, and a participant-created installation about sewing.

2015 *Museum as Sanctuary* Exhibition Details	
Text and Descriptions in Exhibition	
Artist Biographies	24
Introductory Texts	2
Section Texts	8
Object Labels	77
Objects in Exhibition	
Self-Portraits	48 works by 24 artists
Mixed Media Timelines	11 works
Nature Drawings	9 works
Plaster Cast Hands	51 objects
Kite Installation	9 works
Sketchbooks	3 works
Alumni Reflections	5 works
Mixed Media Sculpture	1 work
Sewing Installation	3 paintings, 1 sculpture, 1 book of patterns, and 2 garments

Table 3: 2015 *Museum as Sanctuary* Exhibition Details

In this exhibition 32 artists were featured from 12 different countries: Bhutan, Chile, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Mexico, Nepal, and the United States of America. For the most part, works were created during the first five-years of *Museum as Sanctuary*, however, some objects on view were created outside of the Museum and were borrowed from participants. Installed in the lower galleries of the Museum, this exhibition included 48 self-portraits, 20 works on paper (timelines and nature drawings), 51 plaster-cast hands on seven shelves, an installation of

nine flying kites, three artist sketchbooks, five works by alumni, a mixed-media sculpture, and one artist directed installation.

This exhibition had two purposes, first to celebrate our collaborating organization, Owl & Panther's 20th anniversary, and secondly, to highlight the works of art created during *MaS*. It attempted to complicate and challenge generalizations about refugee identity while experimenting with curatorial practice in art museums. To accomplish this, the participants, museum, and community organization collaborated to define the content and narratives on view. The exhibition included artwork, artist statements, wall labels and introductory texts written from multiple points of view including refugee participants (32 artists), those of the collaborating organization (Owl & Panther), and museum educators.

The exhibition layout and curatorial program positioned participants, as well as individuals from the collaborating organization, as creators of curatorial content thus positioning the exhibition as an opportunity to challenge, blur, and expand upon assumptions/understandings about museum visitors, institutional collaborators, and the museum as an institution. The exhibition and program repositions curatorial and educational practices and complicates the roles of the program participant, community partner (collaborating organization), and the museum educator. In *Perspectives of Resilience,* the curatorial voice is multiform where refugee participants, the collaborating organization, and museum professionals are not confined to single roles but move between traditional separations in order to create an exhibition that is co-created or multivocal.

The 2015 exhibition was the capstone to this research study. It critically engaged with how community-based exhibitions are constructed and what an art museum with decolonizing practices looks like by including a variety of objects and labels written from multiple perspectives. The presentation of data below focuses on participant-created texts including: artist biographies and object descriptions for self-portraits, mixed media timelines, nature drawings, a mixed media sculpture, and a sewing installation.

Figure 6. Installation view of 2015 *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition.

Artist Biographies and Self-Portrait Descriptions

In the 2015 exhibition 48 works on canvas were created as an exploration on identity; 22 of these works were created by 13 of the 15 artists highlighted in this dissertation: Esme, Kumar, Luis, Mahmoud, Malik, Munir, Meki, Paula, Rami, Samara, Sonali, Tanka, and Zahra. The instructions for the self-portraits were to consider three

moments in time and to create portraits that spoke to identity in the past, present, and future. However, as an educator who attempts to make space for participant-directed exploration and choice within their works, I am comfortable that these self-portraits do not always strictly adhere to the guidelines but rather embrace a creative exploration. Additionally, the artists' corresponding biography (when the artist included one), was hung with each series of self-portraits. Thus each artist's installation included between one to four self-portraits and an accompanying biographical statement.

These biographies and self-portrait descriptions included details about the participant-artists' location of birth, when they came to the United States, information about their families, and things they like or dislike, as in the 2013 exhibition. Additionally, they incorporated new strategies for describing themselves such as metaphors, similes, and symbolism. Rather than just remaining fixed to the literal and what could be seen within the work of art, participant-artists experiment with including outside information about themselves, to add context to their biography or portrait and also share details about their personalities, emotions, and wishes.

Esme
Democratic Republic of Congo, (b. 2002)

> Hi my name is Esme, I was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo. I am thirteen years old. I came to the United States in 2010. I came to Arizona when I was eight and a half years old. My favorite place to visit is Idaho because I like to visit my family and friends. I like Owl & Panther because we do fun activities. I like doing art, and playing games. I have six sisters and I have eight brothers. I have burnt umber hair and I have brown eyes and I am tall.

Big Mama

> It's about me. I was happy in this picture. I felt happier when I made this picture.

Kumar
Nepal, (b. 2003)

Just Art (Ugly Art)

It is raining and there are ugly flowers with an ugly person. I don't like this picture I made, because it is dark and kind of messy.

Little Art

I'm mad about art, but I like art. I feel good about doing art because art is good for me. This painting looks funny.

Untitled

Luis
United States, (b. 2000)

I am fifteen-years-old and am a sophomore. My favorite subject is algebra 2 because it is easy. I am awesome at building computers and I like anything to do with them and I also like playing games. I have worked with wire and 3D sculpture. My mother is a refugee from Guatemala and I am a long-term member of Owl & Panther. I have two best friends and that is all I need.

Against the Authority

Rebelling, dark colors.
This represents the rebellion against light colors.
I felt unwanting of light colors when my mom suggested them.

Mahmoud
Iraq, (b. 2002)

Hey, my name is Mahmoud I'm 13 and I was born in Iraq. I like to draw sometimes or just dance a little. I like to dance in a lot of ways one is *tutting*, it's when you make shapes with your hands and fingers. I like a lot of sports one of my favorites is baseball. I like to pitch and bat and I like to play third base. My favorite thing to do on the weekends is to play indoor soccer and play a little video games. My favorite video game is *Minecraft*, it is a game where you farm, build houses, and make friends. I draw a lot of things one of my favorite things to draw is cartoon and self-portrait.

Self-Portrait

The work is about how I look and my personality. When I drew it, I was very happy. When I drew it I felt free.

Malik
Iraq, (b. 2001)

My name is Malik. I am from Iraq. I am fourteen years old. I like to play football and I like to talk a lot and make people laugh. My favorite subject at school is science. I want to be a technology engineer, a person who makes computers or phones and works with electronics and fixes them.

Untitled

Untitled

Untitled

Meki
Ethiopia, (b. 1999)

I really enjoy art. The reason why I enjoy Art is because I was born with Art and I live with Art. I'm from Ethiopia and my name is Meki but you can call me "M." The reason I still do art is because I mostly don't have free time, but when I come to Owl & Panther I get the place, and time, to do art. Always when I'm in Owl & Panther my mind always works for art only, not anything else. I love art and Owl & Panther helps me to love art. The way Tucson Museum of Art helps me is by putting this up so you guys can see my work and see the things that I want to share with you guys.

The Art dude,
Meki.

Inside Of My Brain Heart

What I See Behind My Eye

The left part is the past, the middle where the nose is marks where the good parts of the future start. When the water fills in the past it will be like the right, like if you stand on top of a hill and look into your future.

The Art
After Mary Oliver's The Summer Day

Who made this art?
Who knows about this art?
Who is the art talking to?
This Art, I mean –**the one** you looking at it right now,
The one that gives you sadness
and happiness at the same time,
Look at the eye and imagine a great time of your life-
Look at the eye again and imagine a hard time of your life.
Now you felt the happiness and the sadness,
Now you know how the artist was feeling
when he was making this art.
I don't know exactly how to explain this art but,
I do know that it came from a feeling deep inside.
It shows you how it feels being sad and happy at the same time.
Remember the sad and happy part--
looking at my wild art.

Munir
Iraq, (b. 2005)

My Face

I feel good and proud. I feel awesome. I have beautiful eyes. I'm raising my hand for my teachers. I'm answering a question for Math, my favorite subject. I like school.

Video Game

Minecraft is the best video game.

Paula
Guatemala, (b. 1973)

Untitled

I am a refugee from Guatemala. I have lived in the U.S. since 1985. I came to the U.S. because my family was being persecuted by the Guatemalan army. We endured torture. The Sanctuary Movement gave me a chance to live by helping me come to the U.S. I am married to Lorenzo and have a child, Luis Pablo. I am also a member of Owl & Panther's Community Advisory Board.

Rami
Iraq, (b. 1998)

I'm a person who came from Iraq six years ago. My life changed when I came to the United States. I'm a pretty friendly person who cares about other people's pain, heart, and feelings. Four years ago, I joined Owl & Panther and became an artist. I'm sixteen years old, and I'm going to graduate in a few years and go to college. I like playing video games, playing soccer, and drinking tea with honey.

Connection Between the Universe

The colors are deep and mean something to me—how my life was and still is.

Center of the Universe

I felt good painting this, I felt it was about me, and about how I think we should explore space instead of fight each other.

The Dark Diamond

Scattered.
Changed.
A hand holding love and peace.
I moved from Iraq to Tucson. I don't feel scattered anymore. I'm at home. These are all parts of me. Yellow is fear, it's my favorite color—I'm not scared of anything. Green is luck. Red is anger—I have a lot of that sometimes. Purple is love—it grows bigger and bigger. Blue is the ocean where my feelings are. Gray is all the people around me. Black and white is me. Black is corrupted, white is peace and happiness.

Samara
Democratic Republic of Congo, (b. 2004)

I have one brother and four sisters, plus me is five in my family. Favorite sports include volleyball, soccer, and track. I used to go to elementary school and I have some friends named Regina, Maybelline, Celia, and Amen. When I grow up, I want to be a doctor.

not happy girl

It is a girl. She's pretty.

Sonali
Nepal, (b. 2006)

The Dark Day

I am going to my house and it is a dark and windy day. I am in a hurry because it is windy. I put red and blue in the sky. The wind will blow the leaves. I felt good when painting.

Sun

I felt great when I was painting the picture. I like the sun. I was playing at the park in the painting. The swings are my favorite thing to play on at the park.

Halloween Day

The witches are coming to take me away. I am scared. There is a witch, skeleton, and monster. I like drawing scary things because they look funny.

It's Great

My work is about making a party. I felt good while I was painting this picture. The colors I used made me happy. I was also happy thinking about the party.

Tanka
Bhutan, (b. 1956)

Myself

I was tying to practice drawing people and I wanted people to see. It says nothing about me as a person. I used colors I thought looked good together.

Tanka

Strong.
The art is me.

Zahra
Iraq, (b. 1998)

I am Zahra. I am sixteen years old. I was born in Jordan. My mom is from Iraq. My favorite color is blue. I like summer because of the warm weather.

All About Me

It's about me. It makes me feel like the earth is on fire. It makes me feel like the center of attention.

Mixed Media Timelines

The timelines included in this exhibition were in the form of mixed media on paper. Each work varied in length and was hung salon style and in some instances wrapped around one of the corners of the gallery. These works asked participants to consider five important life events, some from the past and other still waiting to happen. These descriptions share insights into participants' artist processes and the stories contained within each work. Within these texts participants described the materials used, explanations about the images and their meaning, as well as their feelings both generally about life and the work they created.

Kumar
Nepal, (b. 2003)

Just Art From the Museum

I made this artwork by myself with magazines and a colored paintbrush. When I made it, I felt happy and unhappy at the same time.

Munir
Iraq, (b. 2005)

Timeline

Rami
Iraq, (b. 1998)

The New World & Our Greatest Journey

This work is about my family, me, and our journey to the United States. Moving away from all that fighting made me feel better.

Sonali
Nepal, (b. 2006)

A Good Day

I am watching a boat going to the beach. I am picking apples with my cat then it started to rain. The purple bear is running to eat the cat. The artwork is about when I was born and then I grew up. It is a happy feeling. It shows my birth in Nepal till eight years old.

Tanka
Bhutan, (b. 1956)

Flower Garden

There is a road and grass and a child is watering the garden. I put colors together that looked good and I wanted light to show through. I wanted it to be sparkly.

Mixed Media Sculpture

Lucas's role is constantly shifting within the program, and for the most part he did not attend sessions leading up to the 2015 *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition. However, he was an artist included in 2013 and he occasionally participates as a volunteer; thus he was asked to include something that spoke to ideas of past, present, and future. The work he provided for the exhibition was a visualization of a collective memory from his imprisonment in Chile, consisting of a small bronze sculpture of a cat with his back turned away from the viewer peering out a small wooden window with glass panes. In the description that follows, Lucas merges autobiographical details with a brief explanation about the work of art to provide insight into how his life and art connect, and support, his advocacy mission. However, despite this text accompanying the sculpture,

little information is given about the object itself and I am left wondering what memory specifically lingers with Lucas. Even the title itself, "*No hay Despedidas de Bronce*" gives the viewer almost no description beyond a slight hint to the material he used: bronze.

Lucas
Chile, (b. 1949)

No hay Despedidas de Bronce

> I was born in 1949 in Chuquicamata, Chile. Working as a pro-democracy activist after the 1973 military coup, I was eventually arrested, briefly "disappeared," tortured and incarcerated. In May 1976, I arrived in the U.S. as a political exile. After many years of marriage, fatherhood, study and work as an adult educator, I am now supporting a movement to create a memorial at the former torture center of "La Divina Providencia" in Antofagasta. My work entitled *No hay Despedidas de Bronce*" might be translated as "*There are no Bronze Farwell*s." It represents a memory that lingers from the days of the Chilean dictatorship.

Sewing Installation

Nura was the featured artist of this exhibition. Her works occupied an entry wall and their presentation was designed as an installation featuring two garments she created outside of the Museum during classes she took at the local community college classes, a pattern book she had created in Iraq and still held onto dearly, a sketchbook she created at the Museum, and three small works on canvas. Nura's installation in an example of what happens when a participant directs the exhibition content by bringing in outside works that perhaps better represent her artistic vision such as the garments and an old pattern book. Alongside this installation, her biography was written as a timeline to showcase her experiences, connections, and memories in relation to the art of sewing. Nura's description echoes some themes that emerge through many of the participant-artists'

writings, such as reflections on artist process/materials and insights into her own biography and experiences. However, Nura and Lucas's descriptions and works present a unique example of how two artists conceptualized more thematic installations, rather than individual objects, that represent a mixing of bibliographic information with artistic process and interests.

Nura
Iraq, (b. 1966)

> My older sister was the first person I ever saw sewing. I spent a lot of time as a child sitting behind her watching her stitch. When she cut a garment's pieces, I would take the scraps and hide them. Later, I would make clothes for my doll. Once I took what I thought was a scrap and cut it up for my doll. It turned out to be a sleeve she had already cut. After that she told me she would give me scraps and I shouldn't take them.
>
> When I was in high school I began to stitch my own clothes. My friends liked what I made and bought me fabric to make clothes for them. They would pay me to make their clothes.
>
> After high school, I got married. I made my wedding dress. An economic blockade was imposed on Iraq. No one had money to buy fabric. So my friends would bring me old clothes to cut up to make clothes for their children and themselves. I could cut up a woman's abaya and make two dresses.
>
> I decided to open my own sewing business. For this I needed a license, so I developed a sewing notebook to show how I made patterns. I got the license and opened a business in my home. The business was so successful that I found a shop and began operations there. I worked there until the war began. I loved to sew.
>
> During the war there was much sectarian strife and my shop was burned. I took my three children and left for Syria and safety. I bought a sewing machine there to sew my own clothes, but otherwise I didn't sew much.

When I came to the U.S. three years later, a volunteer gave me a sewing machine. I have been taking advanced sewing classes at Pima Community College.

My dream is to have my own sewing business in the United States.

A Prayer

This is a Muslim prayer that we say every day. We pray that Allah (God) will be with us through the day.

Fabric Design

Untitled

Reflections and Conclusions

Through these exhibitions, the various participant-artist texts begin to show that no single experience is illustrative of a shared refugee history and that each story, experience, and vision is unique. These descriptions, and their illustration of the ways the participant-artists have evolved over the course of a two-year period, explore a curatorial practice that is multiplied scattered. changed[16] through the presence of more than one voice and several stories. These narrative data sets, while bringing to light some overarching thematic similarities that will be discussed further in chapters 5.0 – 5.5, broaden narrow prevailing ideas of the refugee as outsider, other, immigrant, victim, or statistic. Instead of being identified in association with national, religious, or cultural identity, these wall labels encouraged participants to explore themselves as siblings, students, parents, or artists and to reflect on their daily lives and thoughts. While these

[16] Quoted from Rami's self-portrait description of *The Dark Diamond,* 2015.

explorations might seem obvious, these components of their identities are often overshadowed by their refugee status.

CHAPTER 4.2

PRESENTATION OF DATA: IN-GALLERY LEARNING AS RESEARCH

As museums strive to be more socially relevant, shifts are occurring within educational models within art museums where the audience is positioned as active in generating content. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (1994), in "A New Communication Model for Museums," addresses how museumgoers are constantly incorporating their own experiences and knowledge into their in-gallery experiences. Ultimately, she explores the ways in which museums can begin to acknowledge the visitor's own meaning-making process outside of the museum's imposed grand narrative and curatorial mission. Borrowing from the model of communication that is developed by Hooper-Greenhill, the curriculum for *Museum as Sanctuary* (*MaS*) explores how community-museum partnerships and refugee participants are exploring their own connections to works of art in the Museum's galleries. During this two year study, each participant was situated as "an active maker of his or her own meanings for experiences, an interpreter with previous knowledge, attitudes and values which will inform any interpretation" (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994, p. 25) wherein the museum experience is individualized, multiple, and active. Similar to this model of communication or engagement, the in-gallery activities utilized in *MaS* position museum exhibitions and works of art on view as triggers for conversations and reflection.

In-Gallery Learning: *Exquisite Corpse* and *Voices*

Documented in-gallery pedagogical experimentations within this dissertation include an *Exquisite Corpse Activity* (see Appendix 1) and a *Voices Activity* (see

Appendix 2), which act as opportunities for refugee participants to direct their museum experiences and extend their engagement beyond passively viewing works of art. During this time *MaS* participants explore the TMA galleries and develop interpretative materials for permanent collections and temporary exhibitions. These gallery sessions, each about one hour, are dedicated to small group work, where participants/visitors discuss works of art and share observations. Furthermore, these engagements are rooted in the belief that gallery-based learning is not static or stationary in front of a single work of art, but rather builds networks and dialogue among participants *and* artworks on view. These pedagogical experiments are designed to play with mobility within the galleries and exhibitions. Additionally, each gallery activity is an active site of dialogue where participants and volunteers are interpreting artworks and developing narratives. The presentation of data below highlights the following seven gallery-based encounters:

- Exquisite Corpse: January 28, 2014
- Exquisite Corpse: March 11, 2014
- Exquisite Corpse: March 25, 2014
- Voices Activity: September 9, 2014
- Voices Activity: October 14, 2014
- Exquisite Corpse: November 18, 2014
- Exquisite Corpse: February 24, 2015

Ten gallery visits, designed to be collaborative and conversation based, occurred over two-years between October 2013 and April 2015. Of these, seven were fully documented through photography, recordings, and written gallery activities; five of these were exquisite-corpse engagements and two were focused on exploring voice. However, three additional engagements occurred that did not result in written interpretation. These were: photographing a historic home managed by the art museum in order to collect inspiration for an art project, modeling transitions in tours and creating stories using

works of art on view, and a conversation with TMA's Associate Registrar about how exhibitions are installed.[17]

Over the course of the seven gallery visits, 46 individual interpretations of works of art on view in the museum were created. These textual responses were prompted by open-ended questions inspired by Visual Thinking Strategies (Visual Thinking Strategies, 2017) and creative writing. Below are some open-ended questions that were provided as suggestions with both activities, however, it was made clear that any open-ended question can be used instead:

- What is going on in this work?
- What does it look like?
- What do the texture, line, color, and shapes look like?
- What story does the work tell?
- What is the first thing that comes to mind when you look at this work? Explain.
- How does it make you feel? Explain.
- What is your favorite part? Why?
- What is your least favorite part? Why?

In both activities, *Exquisite Corpse* and *Voices*, time is reserved at the end of session in order to share where groups lead a brief tour of works utilizing narrative interpretations developed.

Exquisite Corpse Activity

The *Exquisite Corpse* activity (Appendix 1) is a multi-visit in-gallery experience that positions visitors/participants as active meaning-makers who are developing connections to works of art on view in the museum's galleries, exhibitions, and permanent collections—bridging their experiences and knowledge with museum objects.

[17] These three engagements are not included within the scope of this dissertation since they did not result in written documentation created by participants and were only documented by my own reflections in the form of fieldnotes.

The *Exquisite Corpse* activity is derived from the Surrealist's playful and collaborative experiments where each person contributes a drawing or phrase without knowledge of the previous addition ("MoMALearning: *Cadavre Exquis* with Yves Tanguy, Joan Miró, Max Morise, Man Ray [Emmanuel Radnitzky]," n.d.). By appropriating this practice and applying it to gallery experiences that are simultaneously conversational and written, I have utilized artistic practices to intervene with the linear, cohesive, and singular perspectives arising within the art museum. This activity results in written object descriptions that reflect a multiplicity of voice rather than the traditional institutional narrative. In small groups, participants, rotate through selected works of artworks to create a collaborative poem. Each group is given time to develop a line to the poem after they rotate to the next work of art and add a new line to the story.

When the activity begins groups rotate through the works of art selected to create a collaborative poem/written description of an artwork. Each group is given five to ten minutes to develop a line to the poem, then groups rotate to the next work of art and add a new line to the story. At each artwork groups discuss the work, collaboratively write an interpretation/observation, conceal all but last word by folding the paper, leaving it for the next group to add to, and finally rotate to the next work. Once each group has rotated through the selected artworks, groups will lead a brief tour utilizing the collaborative multi-line poem as the description of each work.

Voices Activity

Voices activity (Appendix 2) evolved out of OP's programming manager's extensive experience with creative writing and work as a teaching artist. The resulting gallery activity was rooted in notions of critical thinking and multiple intelligences

(Gardner, 2011). The *Voices* activity presents opportunities to honor voice, consider different points of view, and experiment with the concept of "who's talking in your story or poem" (Pellegrino & Sather, in press). By extending this activity to the museum galleries, participants could spend an extended period of time engaging with a single work of art. This activity was utilized during *MaS* due to the success of the collaborative writing in the *Exquisite Corpse* activity and as a way to bring OP's background as a creative writing program into the galleries. Within these in-gallery experiences we sought to combine the strengths of TMA through museum-based engagements, and OP through experiential writing, into one programmatic endeavor.

The objective of the *Voices* activity was to play with points of view and to personify works of art. The instructions were to explore three points of view with one work of art: first, write about the work; second, have a conversation with the artwork; and finally, become the work. Sheets of paper were divided into three sections with the following headers: about the work, talking to the work, and I am the work. Similar to the *Exquisite Corpse* activity, small groups would select one artwork and spend time creating written descriptions; instead of rotating to different works this activity encouraged participants to get to know a single artwork more in-depth by exploring it from multiple perspectives. After groups completed their three interpretations, each group would read their favorite narrative to create a short participant-led tour of the various works selected during the gallery activity.

Presentation of Data: In-Gallery Learning

Oliver Winchester (2012) explores the idea of complicating the curatorial

program within museums and proposes that we engage in "a reappraisal of museum collections" (p 145). The experience of collaboratively creating object descriptions with multiple voices for these diverse works helps the museum visitor reexamine and interpret these works, rather than solely relying on the authoritative voice of the curator or educator developing descriptions.

The resulting stories, rather than focusing on the biography of the artist or the historical context of the work of art, show ways in which visitors can make their own interpretations about what is going on. Perhaps more importantly, they do not adhere to a singular canonical truth, educational objectives, or curatorial vision. Additionally, they allow for multiple interpretations of a work within a single description. There is no overarching institutional narrative providing a "truthful" interpretation; instead, there is flexibility and creativity within each story. Trends within the data include:

- Describing the visual content of works
- Developing a story to explain the work
- Focus/comments on artistic technique and process

Additionally, throughout the data and due to the collaborative nature of the activities, there are instances of agreement and disagreement between observations. Below, the participant-written texts appear sans serif (Arial) in order to call attention to these words. In order to introduce the planning and curriculum within these seven vignettes, I include excerpts from my field notes to provide additional insight into the occurrence during the session.

January 28, 2014

Educator Reflections (Field Notes)

> Tonight was our first night of 2014 back in the galleries – and Maddie, Tara and I had collaborated to come up with a new way of touring which was participant driven/centered. We modeled the inspiration after the surrealist exquisite corpse collaborative drawings…The artworks, all in TMA's western collection, included a variety of imagery and artists – but 5 out of the 6 were two-dimensional…
> …we stayed in the Museum for 45 minutes… Each group was engaged – and was able to talk about the works for at least 5 minutes and then move on to the next work… I think the combination of writing and exploring works of art really seamlessly merged TMA's and OP's missions and allowed for participants to explore their different types of creativity/interests…

Exquisite Corpse Responses (Gallery Activity)

The collaborative descriptions below represent the first attempt at facilitating an in-gallery experience that was simultaneously structured but also removed the influence of the art museum educator (myself) from the conversations about works of art. Six works of art were selected from TMA's permanent collection of Western Art that represented diverse media and artists. Objects were selected strategically in order to space the different groups throughout the space to avoid overcrowding and eavesdropping.

Donna Howell-Sickle
And the Dog Jumped Over the Moon

> Theres a man that has three workers, has a devil
> horse, a decapited
> head. There are dogs all over the place the man has a red and the man is laughing and they are clapping and they have a neckerchief.
> Neckerchief.
> One the lady is going to pop out,
> one of the lady's hands is moving.
> Moving.

The story talking about animals. They are
Color ful. Clothes, with cowboys, cowgirls, dogs and
horse.

Luis Jimenez Jr.
End of Trail with Electric Sunset

A warrior is riding a
horse has a handprint of the
rider wearing chocolate.
Chocolate mask look like cow hide.
Hide. He has a red eye and its glowing and he has a white horse and there is a hand on the horse and there is a knight and he has a sword.
Sword.
The man get hurt in battle and the horse is mad.
Mad. The horse have big eyes and scary.
And he had a cut hand. He is in top of horse.

Work[18] by Robert Henri

She is a young woman. She have red
cheeks. are red as a
Rose. I am from Spain and I am looking at my fiancé and I'm worried. And scared for her husband.
Husband had a problem and that why she was thinking.
Thinking. She has a flower and blush and a ring and red and gold clothes and a bracelet and she is sitting down and looking at something and she has lipstick and short hair.
Hair

Maynard Dixon
Summer Clouds, Tucson, Arizona

The white clouds look like smoke.
Smoke. The cloud look like
bunny. Cloud in front of a beautiful blue

[18] Artwork title unknown, in private collection.

sky. Ghost in the sky with evil eyes staring down at me, like he has done something
Wrong
shape for a storm cloud, it's a head
Head someone was laying on the ground and maybe they saw the hand of the person.

Emmi Whitehorse
Keyah (Blue)

It's windy and blowy and raining and there are leaves everywhere and lots of trees and cactus and snow.
Snow
It's snowing and there's people living in the ocean
Ocean
The big whale is swimming under
Ocean. With graveyard, flute, leaves, plants and
Wind. A loved one died and I'm suffering in
Pain from a jellyfish and the boat, see?

Maria Martinez
Collection of Black-on-black pottery

Made from clay and it's black.
Black. There are lots of pictures of animals in the bowls and the bowls and jars are black and different shapes and there are lots of zigzags.
Zigzags
Things are black so if they get burnt it'll still look perfect.
Perfect
The colors are shiny. They look like plates of-
Course. Is not what these are. The shapes tell a
Story. Devil dragon shoots out spikes of fire and hurting only himself.

These descriptions and interpretations of artworks are generally brief one sentence observations of what is going on in the object being discussed, reading like a list informing us what the content of these works of art show. Each group interpreted the

instruction of leaving the last word on the following line differently—some repeated the phrase and some moved it completely to the next line. These divergences within how groups understood the instructions led to differing composition strategies either creating repetition or an abrupt pause within the descriptions.

March 11, 2014

Educator Reflections (Field Notes)

During this gallery visit my reflections recounted stories shared by participants who discovered personal connections to the works on view as well as my own frustration with losing some of the written interpretations.

> … I am working on experimenting with ways we can move/experience the museum that are controlled and contained yet experimental and participant-centered… Again, we worked in small groups to look at, discuss, and compose a sentence about the works…
> Unfortunately, at the end of the evening I was only able to find/collect 6 of the 8 poems/stories so two are missing…
> …we were able to spend an entire hour in the galleries!!
> …During the gallery I spoke with Nura, who commented that one of the Zungia pieces that featured nude women reminded her of women in refugee camps, running from war. I also talked to Paula about Merida's work since he is a Guatemalan artist and she was familiar with the story of Popol-Vuh and the Mayan creation myth….participants are able to make personal connections to the works on view, and they can add their own stories and observations to the works –broadening and opening the Museum's curatorial program beyond that of the curator's intentions…

The last remark I share from this evening is a realization to the way in which this activity has begun to broaden the existing interpretation of exhibitions and works of art on view. As an educator, and perhaps even as researcher, I've shifted away from focusing on previous anxieties surrounding my practice to actual exchanges made during the program.

Exquisite Corpse Responses (Gallery Activity)

For this second experience with the *Exquisite Corpse* activity we focused on a temporary exhibition of modern and contemporary Mexican art. Eight individual works of art were selected, but only six of the eight descriptions were found after the gallery exploration.

Javier Chavira
El Guerrero

> The man with the fire in his eye is standing next to the green crystal
> Leaves
> The picture is of a power and strength. The green in the leaves are a symbol of strength. The man is a fighter—it is an
> Iron head
> I see a native American woman with a face of many shapes and leaves inside of broken
> eyes of a warrior with a helmet on.
> On grass a person laying on his side has a blue
> eye. This is the face of a statue. It's giant. He looks like he is going to close his eye. There are leaves all around him. He has a big nose that's almost bigger than his
> face. Dramatic face golden box painting creative eye.

Carlos Mérida
Estampas del Popol-Vuh

> The man is smoking in the sky and the birds are flying
> away and the animals are playing and eating there are lions and tigers.
> the artist is comparing happiness and
> Peace
> These spirits bring feelings of ancestors.
> The color of magic.
> Magic is like Esme, the dragon; she has blue eyes and breathes out fire faces of evolution. In the Mayan creation there are the five Faces of Evolution
> Different animals that are ghosts and they are

performing music a boy with his violin and his snake coming out of his mouth near the
Dinosaur

Gustavo Rivera
Sin Título

The neighborhood is filled with roads and
Mountains.
The little baby was painting a picture and he was writing words and using all the
colors. I see everything. Leaf, rainbow, vague nation of
art
There's a flag, a pencil, eyes, and a pool.
Playful like a child
A child is learning how to draw and the ABCs
ABCs
The ABCs of poetry and art in the making.
Poetry and art
A washing mashing and different colors and Spanish
writing, it's crazy painting and crazy writing

Alejandro Colunga
Nino con Vestido de Animales

A boy/girl has a dress on and has rats in her
Home is where he should be but he is at a
Party.
The giant girl has a dress with pictures of all kinds of animals. She has a shoe that looks like a mouse and an elephant trunk around her leg. She has a hand that looks like a
face is dirty and she kills animals except her dog and she wears wheel shoes
Dark spirits of animals, scared to stay balanced.
Balanced boy can hold up to 30 animals with 3 below
him
The illusionist is masquerading his many personal ties within him
Masquerading with different kinds of faces and animals—it looks like a god.

Roberto Munguia
Hocker

I see a girl and Chihuahua on a corn farm with plants and
cactus is by the fire and the wolf has red
eyes.
This is a man with his back to us. He is masked with a feather on his back the footprint of the animal that looks for
food
Big scary birds. Are we looking at its head or its feet?
~~Feet.~~[19] Footprint of the king bird because of there's a waterfall of blood
Blood
The blood of Jesus will renew your spirit

Roberto Gil de Montes
Jengibre

This painting is peaceful and still the frame looks like
curtains for a stage
because there is a play going on involving a rooster, plants and the ocean waves with jai alai
racket and sky, chair and leaf, the chicken and plant and
water
This is a place at the beach. There is a chair that looks like a leaf. There's a little girl with a hat like a leaf. There's a chair that looks like a banana. There are island all around. There is a green giant
plant. Thinking about the future by using the past. Looking out the window of my
imagination.
Tropical seas, a swimming whale, a toy chicken and a coconut, with red leaves, blue sky
sky is blue
the tree is green
leaves are red
the chicken, face, and banana are yellow

[19] In this response the group crossed out feet and replaced their first word with foot.

In these interpretations, participants are developing longer observations and occasionally containing references to themselves. Each observation is a bit more developed than just listing out details or things one can see within the artworks and in one, the Munguia description, a group has taken the liberty to edit another's language. In two of the interpretations, Chavira and Colunga, different pronouns are even used to describe a single figure contained within a work.

March 25, 2014

Educator Reflections (Field Notes)

After the third iteration of the *Exquisite Corpse* activity, I reflected on the process of selecting objects, creating groups, and the hiccups that occured during the in-gallery time despite all the preparation before beginning. Again, my reflections are back to critical observations about the processes of the program and my own actions as an art museum educator.

> … Margot and I walked through the galleries and picked objects… In order to make this gallery activity work it is necessary that groups are created before people arrive and we head over to the galleries…
> …no matter how much you plan and no matter how much you practice/have experience with an activity or a program something always keeps you on your toes…I did keep making jokes in the galleries with Margot, Ashley, and Tara that our in-gallery migration was totally off balance, and Margot pointed out that it was most appropriate since migration is never predetermined or perfect. The metaphor of in-gallery mobility and migration seems to be resonating well with our exquisite corpse style gallery activities—even the most planned paths are held up by slower groups, or pressures are put on groups by hovering individuals waiting to swoop in and begin their addition. There is random motion that occurs when people are moving through the spaces and when they are waiting and looking at other works—despite the most meticulously laid path things change… in the end the museum experience is [a] dynamic

and unfixed migratory experience that negotiates participant interests, group dynamics, mishaps, varied paces, and my own goals/objectives as a museum educator…
I want to play more with the metaphor of gallery activity as migration…

Exquisite Corpse Responses (Gallery Activity)

For this third *Exquisite Corpse* activity we were separated out into two smaller permanent collection spaces, Asian art and contemporary paintings, rotating through six objects. The works varied from more realistic older artifacts with concrete images to more abstract contemporary paintings—and the descriptions echo this visual difference.

Artist Unknown
Tomb Model of a Noble's Home

Kung foo house with monks praying and a temple
Temple of treasures, protected by
Guards in unity with a snake and birds welcome visitors to their palace.
Palace
This is a court. The people like security and they have guns and axes. Each floor has a different
thing are kinds of shapes and it looks like a play house it is the celebration of
life in china guarding the queens house and there are a lot of people sitting and waiting for the green to come

Artist Unknown
Woven Dragon Textile

I like the mountains, because they have snow. I like the dragon because it has gold.
gold dragon with a scary human face trying to grab human bodies bodies killed by a giant Golden feathered Dragon with huge claws.
A chines dragon shines as it scares the people with its claws. The dragon has 4 hands so he doesn't walk like the people.
Birds with yellow and white are flying

This is fabric which is hand-stitched
it is nice
handwork. Golden dragon new year celebration gold threaded
snake swan under the
world.

Artist Unknown
Painted Scroll

A green mountain is close to
school is in the water. A lot of people are walking through the
forest of trees in a village with a flowing
river with boats and a picnic
picnic with the family as the boat floats by the
village
people come from their village to the temple. Cactus, water, snow
and tress are all around.
peaceful village
The king's house is here and there are
knights.

Paul Manes
Passage

Six moons, meatball sized, they light the passage through
a rainy day this looks like when the
war started and part of the house looked like
this. Six circles, white and black, many colors, many faces hiding in
the
wall
goin to be dark because its night and their washing clothes in the
white sunny
moon
there is there moon the splash colors on
the board. Board painted with bricks from a new york wall.

David Longwell

Selections from *Marking Time: 432 consecutive days of mark making, January 1, 2012—March 7, 2013*

> Every day the artist made a circle because he felt different each day
> each circle is
> different. Spheres he used hundred fourty-four pens. Some are light and some are
> dark dots and white dots creative
> way to express your feeling and control over the day
> day starts with the sun and ends with the
> moon
> Circles within squares—not all the same. Some are flashing on and off—
> This might be the many moons when you go off to outer space
> off to outer space

Liao Shiou-Ping
Gate of Peace

> A map/Game/Gate, Red: A happy Chinese
> wedding
> A little palace in a busy city. Red cars—1…2…3…4…
> GO. Looks like pinball game in an arcade. A modern wedding. A couple is rushing to their wedding in a car
> 1…2…3…4…Go this looks like a maze
> game. In the night a building has light like a Chinese lamp with a candle
> inside of a closet and the clothes are
> outside
> the red rolling ball it is outside the glass is covering the red ball

The first three descriptions of the Asian art artifacts are more literal, recounting what is seen within each work and listing off what each group finds. Once the groups move to the contemporary works the various observations are much more distinct, each line reading different than the previous or following interpretation.

September 9, 2014

Educator Reflections (Field Notes)

September 9, 2014 marks the first experience using the *Voices* activity within the museum. While different in learning objectives than the *Exquisite Corpse* activity it is structured similarly, relying on small group conversation, and requires some preparation before participants arrive.

> … The goal was to, in small groups, pick one sculpture and explore three different points of views or voices. The first question asked the groups to speak about the sculpture, the second asked the groups to speak to the sculpture, and the last asked to speak *as* the sculpture…
> …Knowing that the Mat Bevel exhibition is slightly overwhelming and requires a lot of attention we gave the groups about 15 minutes to wander, turn switches on an off, and look at the various works of art. Once the 15 minutes were up the groups had to select *one* sculpture and spend sometime exploring the three different prompts and writing 5 lines…
> …At 7:30 we met back up at the entrance to the galleries and quickly toured through the 7 objects, sharing the written stories each group developed in response to their selected work of art. Once 8 pm hit we were still in the galleries and needed to quickly head over to the Education Center to clean up and grab a quick snack…
> THIS WAS THE LONGEST WE HAD SPENT IN THE GALLERIES EVER…

In my reflections, I explore the three related prompts for the gallery experience and anticipate participant-artists being overwhelmed within the exhibition, and as a result plan for time to wander before settling into developing responses. The second half of my observation focuses on the time spent within the exhibition, realizing that we utilized the full two-hour program in the galleries leaving little time for clean up. Again, my attention is dedicated to my role as educator and the overall process of *MaS*.

Voices Responses (Gallery Activity)[20]

Mat Bevel
Work 1

Talking about the work…

It's a space shuttle or rocket, the pumpkin is driving it.
It has 7 wheels, 4 small, one big and 2 medium.
There are 5 security cameras on the top. There are 5 lights at the bottom and a bird. There is a red light at top. If you touch it it will pop. There is an alien guard and lights under the pumpkin.

Talking to the work…

You look awesome. You have a lot of details.
You are creative. You are really big.
You are too noisy, quiet down.
Your head is fake. The flash makes you beautiful.

I am the work…

I am a beautiful piece of art. I'm the greatest art in the world.
I am a rocket king and I have guards. My name is MeMah and I flew here from Jupiter. I am here to show you how beautiful, awesome and powerful I am and I've come to destroy earth.
We are angry pumpkins!

Mat Bevel
Work 2

Talking about the work…

It has all sorts of bike stuff, chain, tires, wheels and wheels to put on boxes and an on and off switch and a girl's bicycle wheel and held together with screws with a cord plus two cans on a table
Is it metal, wood, or plastic?

[20] Unfortunately, I did not document the titles of works in the Mat Bevel exhibition, thus in this section works are simply numbered for clarity.

Talking to the work…

Hi bike!

Are you all about bikes? What's your name? What kind of bike do you have? If you go somewhere, do you park your bike in the lock?

I am the work…

I am a bike!

I move myself. I move wheels. I would fix bikes' chains, wheels, and even birds wings. I'll make art for people to see and people can come to me and see how I made it. I would be a wheel and I'd roll. I can move my whole body and I'll spin.

Mat Bevel
Work 3

Talking about the work…

Flowers, flamingo

On the flamingo it looks like the polls are the flamingos legs and it looks like the flowers in the back of the flamingo are its tail.

Colors:

Pink, Orange, Green, Brown, Grey

Talking to the work…

Hi nice to meet you and I like your colors. I like your colors they beautiful.

Hi there Mrs. Flamingo I like your beautiful colors and your body and I also like your pink flower my most favorite color on your body is the pink flowers.

I am the work…

I will like colors. They pretty.

Thank you so much I really appreciate what you said to me. No one ever said something that lovely to me but you're the only one who said kind words to me.

Thank you for coming to look at the arts.

Mat Bevel
Work 4

Talking about the work…

It's cool and awesome, too.
It's like Leonardo DaVinci. It draws every single body part.
Everything moves like a movie. It's like a circus.
When it's trash no one touches it, and when it's art no one touches it.

Talking to the work…

You are beautiful. You are three dimensional.
You are creepy, funny, goofy and crazy.
Why are you so big? What did Santa give you?

I am the work…

I am the universe. You like me because I am the biggest.
Get off my lawn!
No one is as big and beautiful as I am. When I am turned off I am a statue.

Mat Bevel
Work 5

Talking about the work…

Scary. It's scary thing because she's looking through the mirror and the skeleton is behind. Shadows, gives a reflection
There's a wheelchair. I feel like I'm in Disney because of all the lights and the pony spinning.
I feel happy, like in a good mood like if I'm mad or sad I could imagine this and get rid of what's in my mind.
Someone looking at it
A heart going back and forth, and the light going up and down like a heartbeat. Encouraged, like to make someone feel better.

Talking to the work…

What were you thinking? Where are you going? Who made you? What was the artist thinking? What's the purpose for

doing this? What were your feelings and emotions? Where do you come from? What was the purpose?

I am the work…

I would be tired.
My heart is attached and it can start and stop at any moment. I don't know when it's going to stop and start.
It's hard staying in one spot and moving to other museums.
I'm scared and alone.
I'm looking ahead and behind—even though there's a scary guy behind me I'm looking into my future. I'm encouraged to look forward[21], I have a choice to look forward or back.
There's no way out because I'm just a horse. There's not only one way to look. This is not only sadness but also happiness if you look at it a different way.

Mat Bevel
Work 6

Talking about the work…

The butterfly is big. The butterfly has colorful wings and it has three wheels. There are 4 black tires. It looks like bicycle.

Talking to the work…

Hey? Butterfly you are so tall. You're so cute and colorful. You so slow. Can you fly? Why bent you're wings? Why you are so colorful? How do you feel at night alone?

I am the work…

I am the butterfly. I can fly in the sky.
Why am I in here with all these other things?
What is going on here? People come to see me during the day, then it's dark at night.

Mat Bevel
Work 7

[21] Forward was underlined in the original handwritten response.

Talking about the work…

> The rack is going up and down. The spokes are spinning. The scissors are snapping. I like the hands shaking. A person with boots and a head. I like the way the wheel goes up and down. The gold and brown guitar. The flying butterfly. There's a big drum.

Talking to the work…

> Hey, I like the way you move the rake up and down and spin the spokes. I like the way the rack goes up and down. Well I like your bear. I like the way your mouth moves and your eyes move up and down. Hey, you look scary orange pumpkin. I like your trolls spinning around.

I am the work…

> If I were the work, I would make the rake spin and the wheels turn faster. I am going around and around (the earth). I am the red feather and flower moving sideways.

These observations from each group show progressions from describing, to conversing with, and finally becoming the artwork. Responses for the "Talking about the work" prompt include the different found materials utilized in the sculptures, colors, and individual reflections or feelings about the work. Most commonly found within the different observations for "Talking to the work" are questions the groups have for the sculptures and statements involving "you." Finally, in the last prompt "I am the work" groups speak directly as the sculpture describing their actions and feelings, and use several "I" phrases to claim identity.

October 14, 2014

Educator Reflections (Field Notes)

The *Voices* activity was implemented as a way to directly engage with the idea of varying ways of speaking and points of view while talking about works of art. Previously, gallery activities were seen as an opportunity for dialogue, prolonged engagement, and an opportunity for a movement through selected works—such as with the *Exquisite Corpse* activity. Experimenting with point of view with the *Voices* activity, participant-artists are directly asked to consider ways of speaking and how objects might engage in conversation, rather than being static objects or subjects of descriptions.

> …At 6:30 we moved over to the galleries in 8 small groups to explore the folk art exhibition and work on the idea of voice…
> …We gave the groups 5 minutes to select a work, and then 5 minutes for each prompt (15 minutes total) and then we came back together and shared for 10 minutes, only sharing what each group they thought their strongest piece was...
> …At 7pm we wrapped up and walked back over to the Education Center…

The brief reflections from October 14, 2014 indicate the structure for the evening and the intention of the activity—only 30 minutes in the galleries and a meticulous time schedule to ensure that we stayed on track for that evening.

Voices Responses (Gallery Activity)

> Artist Unknown
> *Collection of Mexican Folk Art Figurines*
>
> About the Work…
> They are a lot of people. They are coming of the dead. The work is unique.
>
> Talking to the work…
> What are you riding? Why are you playing music, while the baby is sleeping? Why are you guy coming out of the dead?
>
> I am the work…

I think I should be looked at because I am royalty. I miss the thing I did when I was alive. I am sitting on a chair. Scared of this baby to wake up.

Artist Unknown
Collection of Mexican Folk Art Figurines

About the work…

There's a big circle and chairs with a billion people. People are playing on the slide and the horse! It's like a rodeo or a playground. There are cows.
The colors are blue, yellow, red, pink, and white.

Talking to the work…

I like your art. You're awesome and I wish that I could go.
I like how you decorated the playground. I like the way you dress the people in black and white. Your kids are nice.
Your playground looks fun! Your slide looks like a yellow high heel.

I am the work…

I am the slide and I make people feel happy. I am like a roller coaster. When people step on me I feel bad. I like the way people built me. I want people to feel excited on the Ferris wheel.

Velia Villasenor de Alba
Nativity Set

About the work…

It about Jesus story, some had a baby and it look like a new born baby. It look like people are coming to support the baby. The mom look happy to have a baby and Jesus was happy too.

Talking to the work…

It look like my country Iraq.
Where do you live? Do you live in the desert? Is it hot? Do you have water? Does it rain? Do you guys eat or cook?

I am the work…

All the people are coming to see the baby. I am holding the baby. They give the baby a new home. The animals are wearing different clothes. The people are wearing colorful shirts. She's holding the baby as gentle as a puppy. The baby look like Jesus.

Jimenez Family
Peruvian Retablo

About the work…

It's in the past. There's people that are mostly men.
One of the colors is red (ruby red). There's a lot of colors.
There's animals.

Talking to the work…

Are you at war/fighting with other people?
Why is it dangers there? Are you different?

I am the work…

I'm bending down. I'm working. I'm fighting like I'm at war

Artist Unknown
Collection of Mexican Folk Art Figurines

About the work…

People having fun, children riding horses and rollercoasters, people playing instruments, a man playing with a ball.
Slide band playing together.

Artist Unknown
Calavera Outlaw

About the work…

Colorful, all bones, teeth, funny, mustache, skeleton has shoes one, green skinny pants, we can see the bones, we can see the bullets on the belt, looks like a

robber/bandit/thug, has a weapon, wearing clothing around his neck, an old hat from the 1700s.

Talking to the work…

You are all bones, what happened? You are dead and can't hear us. Why are you wearing that belt?
Why do you have a weapon in your hand?
Why are you yelling? Why do you like to wear that mustache? What's your name? What do you eat? Do you eat meat or people? What do you think about?

I am the work…

My name is skinny bones.
I eat people or animals, but because I'm all bones, I'm never full. I'm wearing a hat to protect my head from the sun.
I'm cold because I don't have my clothing on. I hunt like a wolf. I'm quiet like a snake. I'm super fast like a flash.

Artist Unknown
Carnival Dance Mask

About the work…

It's a face. He has brown hair and beard. He has eyebrows, lips, nose, skin. He has eyes with holes, so he looks more like a person.
He looks old. He's smiling but he can't be hiding.

Talking to the work…

You have nice hair, it's curly and soft.
You have nice eyes like a circle.
You look happy yet kind of sad.
Where are you from?

I am the work…

I have a nice nose.
I have lines in my teeth and they are square.
Will you be my friend?

Pedro Moctezuma
Alebrije

About the work…

Funny looking, a lot of colors, cartoon looking. Lots of action, scary looking.

Talking to the work…

Are you friends? Do you breathe fire? Why you pink?
Do you eat people? Why you looking at the sky?
Can you fly? Why are you changing your directions?

I am work….

I'm powerful. Am I ugly!? I will eat you after 20 min.
I have little feet. I have fire on my nose. I like apple.
Weird. Crazy. Funny.

These responses are similar to the September 9, 2014 observations where each prompt—"About the work," "Talking to the work," and "I am the work"—shows shifts in point of view but starts as general observations of the content being discussed. They then transition to questions or directed comments using "you," then finally with the last directive participants begin to personify the work of art explaining personality traits, strengths, and things they like. However, perhaps due to the time limit, not all groups were able to address all three prompts.

November 18, 2014

Educator Reflections (Field Notes)

For this revisiting on the *Exquisite Corpse* activity we again were in the permanent collection exhibitions located on the lower level of the museum, the same place as March 25, 2014—except with new works of art to explore. Six two-dimensional

works were selected from three different exhibitions and two groups were stationed in each location at a single time.

> … At 4:30 we transitioned to prepping for the evening. Margot and I went over to the galleries to discuss selecting artworks for the activity, which was going to be a revisit of exquisite corpse tour/activity. We selected 6 works of art positioned in the lower galleries in three different exhibitions: Shadow Play (contemporary/modern), Southwest Anthems (Western), and WPA Connections (modern); each exhibition would have two groups stationed in them at one time…
> …We started walking over to the galleries at about 6:30 and stayed until 7:45 – we have clearly mastered the hurdle of being able to stay an hour or more in the exhibitions; the new ways that we are doing the activities (Voices and Exquisite Corpse) definitely help to push the length of time we are able to engage with works…

Exquisite Corpse Responses (Gallery Activity)

Harold Joe Waldrum
Las Sombres

> Some of the houses look like houses from a long time ago. They also look like old houses, the houses look like the houses from the 1980s.
> New and old texture
> New and old texture, sandy, sunny, rocky, shady and giant
> Giant
> It looks like a sunset and the church was
> burned hot sun. We are looking at the ghost it look like it painted and it on fire from inside. Like there is no tomorrow a light the can get in my mind.
> It's crazy, there's a shadow, there's a cross, yellow, big building
> Building bright light. Nine crosses, seen in different ways, drawn in different ways and different shapes and colors.

Simon Donovan
Hail Holy Dress

> The dress belonged to a nice queen and to remember her they made a dress out of stone, dress made out of gold.

Mercy this dress is ugly, muddy, dirty, old and broken.
Broken
The dress old and torn so lost the
sleeve
it look like it a dances that never been there, throw it to the
mud
A missing arm, sculpture from Greece, with words.

Merrill Mahaffey
Deep Canyon Morning

This painting makes us feel happy and peaceful. Sunset hits the water and it looks beautiful with the mixed
color that are shiny on the mountain and water like a horizon. Below the[22] horizon there are special animals in the hills and a river with fish
(I don't see any fish)[23]
There's birds flying in the canyon. It looks very
Peaceful river and there is beautiful water and the birds in the sky make my group happy like no one has be happy.

Karen Kitchel
Hiss

The baby was looking or good of her sister and brother. It is a very good place and it is scared. It lonely no one there. I don't know what's going to come slithering. The danger feeling of that green. Green, brown, black, dark, darker, something is going
to happen to make a messed up puzzle with grass, a snake swirling in the grass in the
desert. Like a ranch dry like a drought and smells like fire
fragrant where the snake lives and there's no water and the trees are falling down and dying
dying

[22] The words "below the" were added before horizon in order for the group to adapt the sentence to their desires.
[23] The parenthetical statement here was added as a way to explain why the group decided not to start with the word "fish" in their interpretation; they disagreed with the previous groups' claim that there were fish in the river.

The snake looks like it is moving through dying grass.

William Baziotes
Tropical Bird

The bird looks shocked. The eyes and mouth
are all wide open like an alien. A eye that can't stop look for a place where color can be there self.
a wide line!
Like an alien, I feel cool, creepy, little
disconnected in a crazy way. Different shapes, different colors, and different
Looks like an alien with one eye and no arms. WHAT IN THE WORLD!
What is the alien doing looking at us?

Romare Bearden
Out Chorus

Colorful instruments make loud noises with a bunny
conductor
conductor
There could be a conductor, but we can't see one. Maybe they are free-styling. Makes you want to dance can't sit still I can sing I can feel the song there is a band and they are making music with instruments.
I see drums, guitars, saxophones, a piano and even people. I hear loud
music at a jazz club for others to dance and forget about their problems started when they separated, one way or another.

These texts describe the works of art, explaining what is depicted in each image, developing stories, explaining artistic choices, and making connections to things the works remind them of. Additionally, in these descriptions we begin to see exchanges occurring within the texts between groups, where there is occasionally disagreement. In both the interpretations for the works by Bearden and Mahaffey, one group responds with

a statement that they do not see the same thing the previous group found: "There could be a conductor, but we can't see one" and "(I don't see any fish)."

February 24. 2015

Educator Reflections (Field Notes)

February 24, 2015 was the final gallery visit within my data collection. The plan was to use the *Exquisite Corpse* activity to create alternative labels for an exhibition curated from our permanent collection of Western Art called *Horses of the West*, which would be on view until September 13, 2015. The resulting interpretations were more carefully created as it was repeatedly stated throughout the night that these descriptions would become labels on view in the exhibition. In my own reflections I struggle with the idea of censorship in relation to what artworks we focus on when in the galleries, questioning what content is appropriate when working with torture survivors and the reality of PTSD.

> In preparation for tonight – and visiting the galleries I ended up censoring, or taking down a work of art from display. The work, a photograph by Richard Misrach, was of a dead horse from a series he did on mass graves from nuclear bomb test sites. This was a weird experience for me because generally, I don't really support or believe in censorship. However, the idea of mass graves and mangled animals was one which I immediately had a visceral reaction about when I saw the work hanging in the galleries. When I was looking at the works on view I knew I was planning for a night in the exhibition, and given the audience/population and their past experience that content was simply not appropriate and had the potential to trigger memories and cause more PTSD than already a part of daily life. So this work and my reaction was/is an interest[ing] aspect of the work I do – while in one aspect, as a someone who does not believe in censorship my role in taking down the work (even if temporary) seemed odd – however, knowing the audience and working to be an

advocate and sensitive to past experience I knew full well that this work was inappropriate…

… I still don't know how I feel about this – but I know I look at works differently when planning for different groups – and hope that these experiences make me more sensitive to the different audiences I work with as an art museum educator and not just when collaborating with torture survivors/refugee audiences…
…After typing up the labels/descriptions I reflected specifically on the content of the labels and the process of creating them…
The resulting labels are poetic dissonance – they highlight dynamic conversations and critical engagement with works of art on view in the Museum's galleries – they are playful yet observant – they are reflective and imaginative…
…They might not agree – or make sense, as one participant observed tonight, but they capture something about the actual atmosphere and dynamics of Owl & Panther –perhaps in their poetic dissonance there is a reflection of the controlled chaos and the creative experimentation that is inherent with the programmatic structure of Museum as Sanctuary…
…Would this dissonance or controlled chaos be possible with other visitors in the Museum's galleries? Would I be willing to experiment in such a way if other staff were watching? (probably not)

Exquisite Corpse Responses (Gallery Activity)

These collaborative interpretations hung along side traditional object labels[24] in the *Horses of the West* exhibition and works were selected for this activity in order to space out groups and avoid over hearing each other's conversations.

Howard Post
Three Crossing

Reflecting the past, white horse leads to the future.
Future will decide weather things will be
good or bad. But if it's bad the horses will still
have a chance.
Three horses, walking in/on water in a river, clean

[24] The more traditional labels included in this exhibition focused on biographical details of the artist, provenance of the artwork, and other historical details.

water, two brown horses and one white
White horse's reflection in the river surrounded
by forests, the horses want to drink water.
Water.
The water was cold that the horses walked
across the blue lake horses are
walking.
Reflection of a bright white horse walking
in water.

Paul Brach
Last Light

Wild horses running in the morning sun
Under the mountains backlit by the sun
Sun is going down and the horses are running
by the mountains. It is getting dark.
Dark. It is a rocky desert and they are running.
Horses. Running near mountains during sunset.
Sunset coming down behind the pointy mountains
Colors moving and 11 horses running.
Running into misty purple night
The red shiny golden bricks frame
the wild emptiness.

Fritz Scholder
Galloping Indian After Remington

It looks like there is a horse with a lot of colors that is
galloping. It looks like there is a person riding the horse.
Horse. The bull broke his leg and he is
dead man on a horse with blood
shooting off of the dead man.
Blood. From the man on top of the horse in the desert.
Desert feather flying Indian rider and horse are one
raw blood connected
Connected. The background is like a leading
line and the subject pops out with rough
texture, bright colors, red colors, horse without

eyes, just legs, and a rider

Maynard Dixon
The News

This is the west. Friends talking in an old café!
Café. Mellow café homecoming. Friends United!
United! Two friends just chilling on a
Nice sunny day and
chatting. With a man with a cowboy hat,
giving him news, about to get coffee.
Coffee-colored horse,
behind the horse colored like a hamburger bun or honey.
Honey came from somewhere and gave his horse
water dried up from the ground
In the hot sunny desert.

William Robinson Leigh
The Rampage

What I see going on in the painting is a cowboy
riding a horse and the horse throws him
up in the air.
Holy cow look at him falling.
Falling. Falling rider rebel horse bucking unbreakable spirit
Excitement.
Excitement.
The man rides the horse to be free
and the horse bucks the man to be free
bucking bronco won the fight with the
cowboy who was doing something bad to the horse
Horse is jumping and the man is falling
from the horse. The horse is crazy.
Crazy!
The guy scared the horse and he fell.

Jaune Quick-to-see Smith
Untitled (from the "Kalispell Series)

Someone went out to hunt and he got a
horse tied onto something and a bear standing on a rock with
something on top of the bears back.
Kite all over the sky.
Sky. Orange dream like constellation sailing in dawn.
Dawn. People drew a trap for the animals and are going to make
the
trap.
Cowboy graffitied Native American art, with a shadow of a boat, a
kite, and a jumping horse
horse is jumping to the man. The bear is on a boat.

Lon Megargee
Wild Horse Race

The background is like a heart
and an apple without color
Wild horses jumping and kicking together
with wild cowboys
Cowboys are falling, cowboys are
chasing, cowboys are scared.
Scared. The cowboy fell off the wild angry
horse. Jumping up and drops a person
and the person falls down and holds on
to someone else's horse.
Horses combined together to look as one
One single rider joining the brawl

These labels tell stories about the works on view, often describing the action taking place within the artwork. Landscapes, time of day, characters, actions, and emotions are commonplace within these texts.

Reflections and Conclusions

Gallery-based learning and exploration can be spaces of experimentation and exist as source material for research co-created narratives in art museums. These

interpretations of artworks highlight a variety of stories that works of art can tell and also inspire closer examinations. Due to the collaborative design of these gallery activities, agreement and disagreement between observations are possible, including points of divergence, forcing one to question singular truths and more nuanced understandings that are only possible with the presence of this multiplicity of authorship. However, when trying to push on the confines of museum work, these reflections also highlight my own anxiety as researcher and edu-curator within multiple contexts. First, I struggle between the modernist museum—a space of quiet reflection—and the postmodernist pedagogical encounter—a non-hierarchical space for productive chaos. Secondly, there exists a fear of failure where as an art museum educator, I am seeking to create enjoyable experiences for participants and always wary of falling short.

CHAPTER 5.0

DATA ANALYSIS + INTERPRETATION: INTRODUCTION

A Note on Narrative

The narratives presented within this dissertation, namely of identity, process, and performance, can be read from multiple perspectives. This study is not a single nor a complete narrative interpreting the voices of the refugee audiences; nor is it a linear narrative of what the art museum provided to this refugee audience. Instead it provides excerpts of a community-museum programming from the perspectives of an edu-curator (me) as well as the participant-artists. The result is interwoven research-constructed narratives reflecting identity, displacement and collaboration. These narratives, presented through chapters 5.0-5.5 clarify how I have made sense of the community-museum program and engage the participant-created stories that were presented in chapters 4.0 – 4.2.

For instance in chapter 5.1A are researcher-constructed narratives signifying a process of creating a multivocal identity. These are the result of collaging together fragments of participant-artist narratives and my own field notes. Visible in this chapter are my own notes and reflections on how I was making sense of what was emerging out of the data.

In chapter 5.1B, I have gone through and refined, organized, and turned these data collages into aesthetic text-based images that speak to the boundary event in relation to identity (chapter 5.2), art-making (chapter 5.3), and in-gallery learning (chapter 5.4).

In chapters 4.0-4.2, I shared the data from *Museum as Sanctuary (MaS)*, collected over a two-year period. This data represents programmatic fragments amassed from

exhibition texts, field notes, and interpretations from in-gallery activities. In this chapter comprised of researcher-constructed narratives, I present my analysis of those texts, as illustrations of Minh-ha's (2011) concept of boundary event, in response to the research questions:

- How can we as art museum educators, or edu-curators, create spaces that provoke, and engage with, narratives between communities and museums?
- What multivocal narratives are revealed when refugee populations and edu-curators actively engage in and collaborate on museum programming?
- How do these narratives change over time?

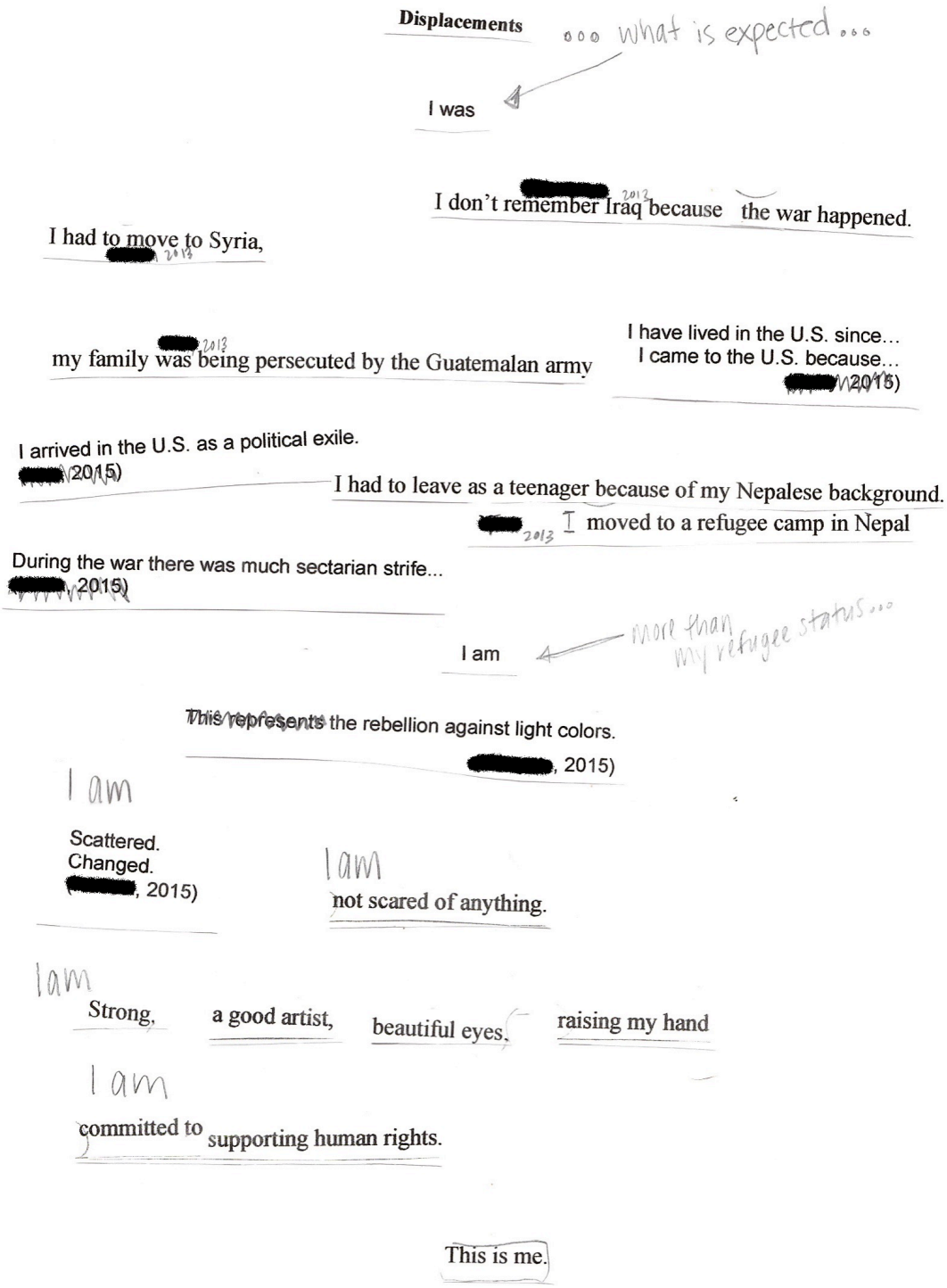
In chapter 3, I explained that embracing the multiplicities of decolonized inquiry requires an equally complex, fragmented, and active mode of analyzing, interpreting, and presenting texts that are narratives of experience. Here I lay out my performance of this methodology, in the form of poetic collages– analytical fragments created by splicing together components of data to create brief snapshots of the programmatic happenings. Using these strategies for analysis and interpretation of narrative inquiry (St. Pierre, 1997; Jackson & Mazzei, 2009), voice is amplified, complicated, and interwoven. Furthermore by mixing together various data sources and single identities into composite narratives, I present an analysis (chapters 5.1A and 5.1B) and interpretation (chapters 5.2-5.4) that is a decolonized performance (Diversi & Moreira, 2009). This process most closely represents the individual sessions of *MaS*, where diverse and divergent encounters or experiences occur simultaneously and overlap throughout the course of the evening.

Within the separate data sources (exhibition texts, field notes, and gallery activities) are emerging narratives, which I will explore ahead. These are: identity,

process (art-making), and performance (in-gallery learning). These narratives are ambiguous, complicated, and constantly evolving exchanges. The data collages and composites were created through cutting and pasting phrases together and digital typeset in order to more closely engage with analysis of data without regard for the personhood of each participant—for I struggled deeply with distancing myself from the personhood. The next section (5.1A and 5.1B) documents the process of my analysis, as I present the data collages in 5.1A and my own artistic investigations of the process of data analysis and interpretation in 5.1B through typographic explorations utilizing Adobe InDesign. In the subsequent three sections (5.2, 5.3, and 5.4), I interpret these analytical collages through the lens of Minh-ha's (2011) boundary event, reflecting growth + change, process + product, and poetics + performance, respectively.

CHAPTER 5.1A

ANALYSIS DATA COLLAGES



59 I am a refugee from Guatemala. I am from Jordan.

I am from Iraq. I am from Congo. 53 I am from Iraq from Ethiopia

I am an artist from Iraq and I am twelve-years-old.

10 I am a painter and My favorite food is cheese pizza.

4 I am pretty and nice to other people.

I am married and I love music and dancing.

I am a good artist, I'm surrounded by stuff-

I am thirteen-years-old and 10 I am ten-and-a half years old.

31 I am eight-years-old. I am fifteen-years-old.

I am in seventh grade. and I like to play kickball.

I am committed to supporting human rights. and

I want to dream, just breathe...

"I am" - 17 I am statements

I am ... and ...

2013

...I am still uncomfortable in my role

I am not sure how to navigate these feelings...

Reflecting on my role and position "I am"

...I am constantly exploring pushing on boundaries whether they be in terms of nonhierarchical programming, expanding/challenging traditional museum-community relationships, reimagining what the role of a museum educator is... However, boundaries and borders can be constructive, productive and more importantly necessary! I am interested in how to facilitate these types of good boundaries while simultaneously working to breakdown others...

I am going to work on creating a curriculum that is simultaneously structured and open-ended, wherein opportunities for participant voice to direct/shift program structure is still incorporated into the over all plan—it will be fluid yet controlled...

... I am working on experimenting with ways we can move/experience the museum that are controlled and contained yet experimental and participant-centered...

I am worried about the content and the over all aesthetic.

I am working on generating enough content during the write starts this time around for the exhibition in order to incorporate multiple voices and opinions within the text panels that way they aren't written just from OP organizational or TMA perspective.

I am scared.

I am in a hurry

I'm raising my hand

I'm answering a question

I am picking apples with my cat

I am watching a boat going to the beach.

I am going to my house

I'm at home.

I'm mad about art,

I'm not scared of anything.

"I am"

10 I am statements

2015

I was born in Baghdad. I was born in Kigali, Congo

I was born in Chuquicamate, a mining town in the Atacama Desert.

I was born in Bhutan. I was born in Baghdad, Iraq.

I was eleven when I moved

I was eight [redacted] when we flew in an airplane to Tucson.

I was nine-years-old when I first went to school here

I was married when I was twenty I had happy life –

I was in fourth grade I always was drawing

I was in seventh grade, ~~my art teacher showed me~~

"I was"

11 I was statements

2013

Displacements
Tension...

I was looking at the works on view I knew I was planning for a night in the exhibition, and given the audience/population and their past experience that content was simply not appropriate and had the potential to trigger memories and cause more PTSD than already a part of daily life.

"I was"

…I often times…get overwhelmed by the non-hierarchical and participant direct content. I worry that within a museum we look and sound like chaos; Many times…I caught people leaning on the tabletop or sitting in one of the chairs, it is hard to explain that beyond function these objects are accessioned into the collection…

I need to figure out how to set boundaries but also do it in a way that fosters healthy and creative exchanges…

…no matter how much you plan and no matter how much you practice/have experience with an activity or a program something always keeps you on your toes…

I think I could have done a better job setting up…the controlled chaos is only possible with the preplanning and structure in order to make the chaos successful.

I struggle with the balance of process, product, and critical encounters— I feel like there is pressure to make an awesome product

In preparation for tonight – and visiting the galleries I ended up censoring, or taking down a work of art from display. Currently I just feel frustrated…

Would this dissonance or controlled chaos be possible with other visitors in the Museum's galleries? Would I be willing to experiment in such a way if [redacted], [redacted] were watching? (probably not)

in the end the museum experience is dynamic and unfixed migratory experience that negotiates participant interested, group dynamics, mishaps, varied paces, and my own goals/objectives as a museum educator.

I was born and then I grew up.

I was born in 1949 in Chuquicamata, Chile.
I was eventually arrested, briefly "disappeared,'

I was playing at the park

I was painting the picture. I felt great

I was painting this picture.

I was very happy. When I drew it,

I was tying to practice drawing people

I was happy

I was also happy thinking . . .

"I was"

2015

9 I was statements

1973 military coup,

1976 as a political exile.

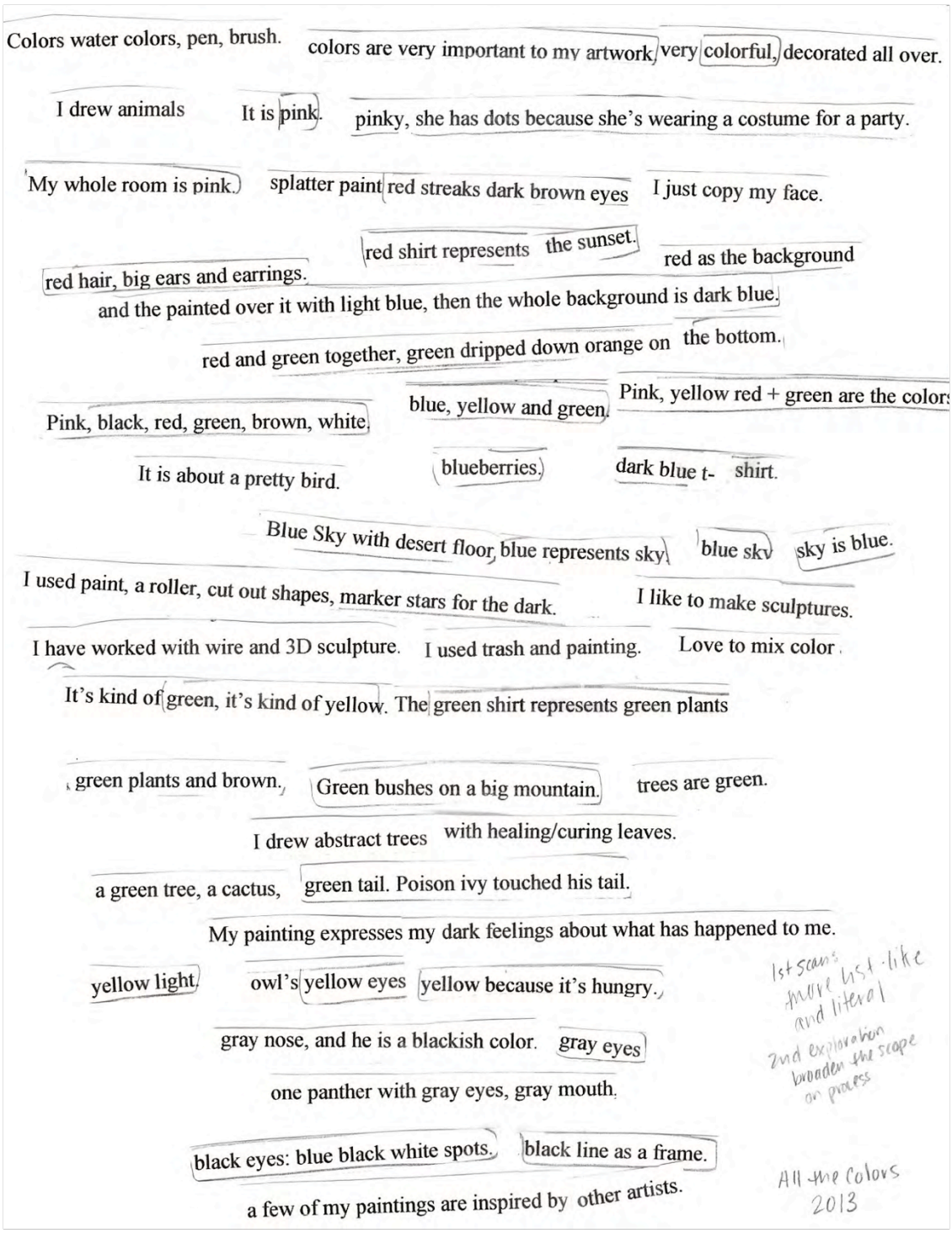
1985. I have lived in the U.S. since

(2003) after the war started

2009. We came from Lebanon to the U.S.A. in

2010 with my son. I came to the United States

2013 - 2015


Colors water colors, pen, brush.
colors are very important to my artwork, very colorful, decorated all over.
I drew animals
It is pink.
pinky, she has dots because she's wearing a costume for a party.
My whole room is pink.
splatter paint red streaks dark brown eyes
I just copy my face.
red hair, big ears and earrings.
red shirt represents the sunset.
red as the background
and the painted over it with light blue, then the whole background is dark blue.
red and green together, green dripped down orange on the bottom.
Pink, black, red, green, brown, white.
blue, yellow and green.
Pink, yellow red + green are the colors
It is about a pretty bird.
blueberries.
dark blue t- shirt.
Blue Sky with desert floor, blue represents sky
blue sky
sky is blue.
I used paint, a roller, cut out shapes, marker stars for the dark.
I like to make sculptures.
I have worked with wire and 3D sculpture.
I used trash and painting.
Love to mix color
It's kind of green, it's kind of yellow. The green shirt represents green plants
green plants and brown.
Green bushes on a big mountain.
trees are green.
I drew abstract trees with healing/curing leaves.
a green tree, a cactus,
green tail. Poison ivy touched his tail.
My painting expresses my dark feelings about what has happened to me.
yellow light.
owl's yellow eyes
yellow because it's hungry.
gray nose, and he is a blackish color.
gray eyes
one panther with gray eyes, gray mouth.
black eyes: blue black white spots.
black line as a frame.
a few of my paintings are inspired by other artists.
1st scans more list-like and literal
2nd exploration broaden the scope on process
All the Colors
2013

a colored paintbrush.

I put red and blue in the sky. Black and white is me.

I put colors together that looked good

I began to stitch my own clothes. I don't like this picture I made this artwork by myself

The purple bear is running to eat the cat.

I felt happier when I made this picture. I wanted it to be sparkly. dark and kind of messy.

This represents the rebellion against light colors.

Black is corrupted, light colors Rebelling, dark colors.

I wanted light to show through. white is peace and happiness.

When I drew it I felt free. art is good for me.

I could cut up a woman's abaya and make two dresses.

This work is about my family, me, and our journey

The colors are deep and mean something to me–

the middle where the nose is marks where the good parts of the future start.

It represents a memory that lingers

It makes me feel like the earth is on fire.

more about the quality of color and symbolism

I used colors I thought looked good together. 2015

This is a man with his back to us. He is masked with a feather on his back the footprint of the animal that looks for food

Big scary birds. Are we looking at its head or its feet?

~~Feet.~~ Footprint of the king bird because of there's a waterfall of blood

Blood

Roberto Mungmia Change 3/11/14

crossed out + edited text

T'

v

color that are shiny on the mountain and water like a horizon. 11/18/14 Mem/ Mahaffey

Below the horizon there are special animals in the hills and a river with fish.

(I don't see any fish Fatimah)

There's birds flying in the canyon.

added by following group

disagreement/disonance

Ocean. With graveyard, flute, leaves, plants and
Wind. A loved one died and I'm suffering in
Pain from a jellyfish and the boat, see?

whitehorse
dissonance
1/28/14

12
13 It looks like a sunset and the church was
14 burned hot sun. We are looking at the ghost it ~~does~~ look like it painted and it on fire
15 from inside. Like there is no tomorrow a light the can
16 get in my mind.

dissonance
11/18/14

Harold Joe Walth

A little palace in a busy city. Red cars—1…2…3…4…
GO. Looks like pinball game in an arcade. A modern wedding. A couple is rushing
to their wedding in a car
1…2…3…4…

Liao Jhiou-Ping

3/25/14 dissonance

CHAPTER 5.1B

ANALYSIS COMPOSITES

Displacements

I was

I don't remember Iraq because the war happened.

I had to move to Syria...

My family was being persecuted by the Guatemalan army.

I have lived in the U.S. since...
I came to the U.S. because...

I arrived in U.S. as a political exile.

I had to leave as a teenager because of my Nepalese background...
I moved to a refugee came in Nepal.

During the war there was much sectarian strife...

...what is expected...

I am

the rebellion against light colors

I am
Scattered.
Changed.

I am
not scared of anything

I am
strong, a good artist, beautiful eyes, raising my hand

I am
committed to supporting human rights

this is me.

...more than a status...

Displacements
T E N S I O N

I was born in Baghdad. I was born in Kigali, Congo.
I was born in Chuquicamate, a mining town in the Atacama Desert.
I was born in Bhutan. I was born in Baghdad, Iraq.

I was eleven when I moved.
I was eight when we flew in an airplane.
I was nine-years-old when I first went to school here.
I was married when I was twenty.

I was in fourth grade I always was drawing
I was in seventh grade

I was 2013

I was born and then I grew up

I was born in 1949 in Chuquicamata, Chile.
I was eventually arrested, briefly "disappeared"

I was playing at the park

I was painting the picture, I felt great
I was painting this picture
I was very happy when I drew it
I was trying to practice drawing people

I was happy

I was also happy thinking...

I was 2015

reflexive praxis

...**I was** looking at the works on view...
I was planning for a night in the exhibition,
and given the audience/population and their past experience
that content [Richard Misarch, *Dead Animals #327*]
was simply not appropriate and had the potential to trigger memories
and cause more PTSD than already a part of daily life...

1973, military coup

1976, as a political exile

1985, I have lived in the U.S. since

(2003), after the war started

2009, we came from Lebanon

2010, with my son

...**I am** still uncomfortable in my role
I am not sure how to navigate these feelings

I am constantly
pushing on boundaries
expanding/challenging traditional museum-community relationships, re-imagining what the role of a museum educator is...
boundaries and borders can be constructive, productive and more importantly necessary.
I am
interested in how to facilitate these types of good boundaries while simultaneously working to breakdown others...

I am going to work on creating a curriculum that is simultaneously structured and open-ended
it will be fluid yet controlled...

I am working on experimenting with ways we can move/experience the museum that are controlled and contained yet experimental and participant-centered...

I am worried about the content and the over all aesthetic

I am working on generating
content during the write starts this time around for the exhibition
in order to incorporate multiple voices and opinions within the text panels...

reflexive praxis

I a m
2 0 1 3

I am a refugee from Guatemala from Jordan

from Iraq from Congo from Iraq from Ethiopia

I am an artist from Iraq **and I am** twelve-years-old

I am a painter **and** my favorite food is cheese pizza.

I am pretty **and** nice to other people

I **am** married **and** I love music and dancing

I am a good artist **and** **I am** surrounded by stuff

I am thirteen-years-old **I am** ten-and-a half years old

I am eight-years-old **I am** fifteen-years-old
I am in seventh grade **and** I like to play kickball

I am committed to supporting human rights

and

I want to dream, just breathe...

I a m

2 0 1 5

I am
scared
I am
in a hurry

I am
raising my hand
I am
answering a question
I am
picking apples
I am
watching a boat

I am
going to my house
I am
at home

I am
mad about art
I am
not scared of anything

Process

Instructions:
collect all the colors listed and described in object descriptions from 2013 and 2015 exhibitions

addendum
scan one
all the colors, search for the direct and literal

scan two
(lack of literal and listed in 2015 exhibition)
exploration, broaden the scope on materials

colors water colors, pen, brush. colors are very important to my artwork
very colorful, decorated all over.

I drew animals.
It is pink. pinky, she has dots because she's wearing a costume for a party
My whole room is pink.
splatter paint red streaks dark brown eyes. I just copy my face.

red hair, big ears and earrings. red shirt represents the sunset. red as the background
and then painted over it with light blue, then the whole background is dark blue.
red and green together, green dripped down orange on the bottom.

pink, black, red, green, brown, white. blue, yellow and green.
pink, yellow, red + green are the colors

it is about a pretty bird. blueberries. dark blue t-shirt.
Blue Sky with desert floor. blue represents sky. blue sky. sky is blue.

I used paint, a roller, cut out shapes, marker stars for the dark.
I like to make sculptures.
I have worked with wire and 3D sculpture. I used trash and painting.
love to mix color

It's kind of green, it's kind of yellow. The green shirt represents green plants
green plants and brown. green bushes on a big mountain. trees are green.
I drew abstract trees with healing/curling leaves.
a green tree, a cactus green tail. Poison ivy touched his tail

My paintings express my dark feelings about what has happened to me

yellow light owl's yellow eyes yellow because it's hungry

gray nose, and he is blackish color gray eyes
one panther with gray eyes, gray mouth

black eyes: blue black white spots black lines as a frame

a few of my paintings are inspired by other artists

a colored paintbrush.

I put red and blue in the sky. black and white is me

I put colors together that looked good

I began to stitch my own clothes. I don't like this picture. I made this artwork by myself.

The purple bear is running to eat the cat

I felt happier when I made this picture. I wanted it to be sparkly dark and kind of messy.

This represents the rebellion against light colors.
black is corrupted light colors rebelling, dark colors
I wanted light to show through. white is peace and happiness.

when I drew it I felt free. art is good for me.

I could cut up a woman's abaya and make two dresses

This work is about my family, me, and our journey

The colors are deep and mean something to me
the middle where the nose is marks where the good parts of the future start

it represents a memory that lingers

it makes me feel like the earth is on fire

I used colors I thought looked good together

r e f l e x i v e

p r a x i s

...I often times...get overwhelmed by the non-hierarchical and participant direct content. I worry that within a museum we look and sound like chaos...

Many times...I caught people leaning on the tables or sitting in one of the chairs, it is hard to explain that beyond function these objects are accessioned into the collection...

I need to figure out how to set boundaries but also do it in a way that fosters healthy and creative exchanges...

...no matter how much you plan and no matter how much you practice/have experience with an activity or a program something always keeps you on your toes...

I think I could have done a better job setting up...the controlled chaos is only possible with the preplanning and structure in order to make the chaos successful.

I struggle with the balance of process, product, and critical encounters

I feel like there is pressure to make an awesome product

In preparation for tonight - and visiting the galleries I ended up censoring, or taking down a work of art from display.

Currently I just feel frustrated...

Would this dissonance or controlled chaos be possible with other visitors in the Museum's galleries? Would I be willing to experiment in such a way if other Museum employees were watching? (probably not)

...in the end the museum experience is [a] dynamic and unfixed migratory experience that negotiates participant interest[s], group dynamics, mishaps, varied paces, and my own goals/objectives as a museum educator.

c o l l a b o r a t i o n

Instructions:
agreement is boring, discover dissonance
and nonsense

addendum
scan one
dissonance

scan two
utter confusion

Ocean. With graveyard, flute, leaves, plants and
Wind. A loved one died and I am suffering in
Pain from a jellyfish and the boat, see?

It looks like a sunset and the church was
burned hot sun. We are looking at the ghost it look like it
painted and it on fire
from inside. Like there is no tomorrow a light the can
get in my mind.

A little palace in a busy city. Red cars - 1...2...3...4...
GO. Looks like pinball game in an arcade. A modern
wedding. A couple rushing
to their wedding in a car.
1...2...3...4...

c o l l a b o r a t i o n

Instructions:
after frustration settles, discover
instances of group editing to alter word
left by previous group

addendum
scan one
dissonance and frustration

scan two
discover edits and alterations

This is a man with his back to us. He is masked with a feather on his back the footprint of the animal that looks for
food
Big scary birds. Are we looking at its head or its feet?
~~Feet~~ Footprint of the king bird because of there's a waterfall of blood
Blood

color that are shiny on the mountain and water like a horizon.
Below the horizon there are special animals in the hills and a river with fish.
(I don't see any fish)
There's birds flying in the canyon

CHAPTER 5.2

I AM, BOUNDARY EVENT = GROWTH + CHANGE

Analysis and Methods

Constructing this section involved multiple steps. First, I sorted through the data presented in chapter 4.1 to examine the evolution in an individual participant's work over the course of two-years, noting differences between their descriptions created for the 2013 and 2015 exhibits. Next, I identified trends in descriptions from all 15 participants in both 2013 and 2015 and then compared these trends between the years. Lastly, I searched for overarching themes emerging from all 15 artists' biographies and object descriptions for self-portraits across the data collection period. These can be seen grouped and collaged in chapter 5.1A. After discovering commonalities in descriptive techniques and sentence construction, I became interested in the varied frequencies of language use across all data sources, changing over the course of the study (see sections 5.1A and 5.1B) to see how they reflected participants' relationship with the museum, and the edu-curatorial process. I focused on capturing reflections on identity that utilized the phrase *I am*, common to all biographies, descriptions for self-portraits, and my own reflections. As a result of this emphasis, I noticed the phrase woven throughout methodological and theoretical texts I was using. I want to clarify that I do not aim to represent anyone's story in full nor is it my right to claim this presentation gives voice to any participant or group. I echo Diversi and Moreira's sentiments (2009) where they assert: "**I am** not daring to represent Conde. **I am** not *giving him voice.* He has his own. **I am** performing my own experience of my relationship with him grounded in my commitment with social justice…" (p. 112).

Assignment: Detours in Self-Portraiture

In 2013, we are introduced to a 15-year-old boy; in 2015, at the age of 17, we meet him again (chapter 4.1). Each self-portrait and resulting autobiographical text is an example of an artwork created to respond to the assignment of self-portraiture—a broad and vague yet specific project to tackle. This focus on Rami's autobiographical narratives is an example of my analytical process and a way to further explain how these descriptions were created during the program.

2013

Rami

(Iraq), b. 1998

My face

It looks beautiful because I just copy my face. I love Red Bulls, the team.[25]

2015

Rami

(Iraq), b. 1998

The Dark Diamond

Scattered.

Changed.

A hand holding love and peace.

[25] This autobiographical description can be found first presented in chapter 4.1: Data Presentation: Exhibition as Research from the data sets on the 2013 *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition.

> I moved from Iraq to Tucson. I don't feel scattered anymore. I'm at home. These are all parts of me. Yellow is fear, it's my favorite color—I'm not scared of anything. Green is luck. Red is anger—I have a lot of that sometimes. Purple is love—it grows bigger and bigger. Blue is the ocean where my feelings are. Gray is all the people around me. Black and white is me. Black is corrupted, white is peace and happiness.[26]

Narrative Texts: Personalization within the Art Museum

The object descriptions above come from two self-portraits, where the artist Rami was asked to describe his artwork in a way that he would feel comfortable sharing with a stranger. These texts are written in first person and provide details the artist felt were important to contextualize his paintings. *My face* (see Figure 7) features a brief description (just two sentences) illuminating what was done to create this work and adding an explanation for the shirt selection worn within the portrait. *The Dark Diamond* (see Figure 8) experiments with writing, starting with a three-stanza poem and continuing to a series of explanations of the colors used in the work. Utilizing a first person narrative within these labels creates an intimate setting where there is an intentional movement away from a more formal and traditional curatorial voice.

Importance of voice. The interpretive plan and curatorial voice of an exhibition is an extension of the overall exhibition design in *MaS.* In it the traditional singular voice of the art museum shifted or fractured into plural or multivocal descriptions, where first

---

[26] This autobiographical description can be found first presented in chapter 4.1: Data Presentation: Exhibition as Research from the data sets on the 2015 *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibition.

person texts and personalized narratives were shared, thus humanizing works of art. This written shift in voice is especially significant when displaying works of art by refugees in an art museum. For instance, Beverly Serrell (2015) elucidates best practices for label writing in her publication *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*, and speaks to the importance of storytelling within exhibitions. She notes,

> The nature of storytelling in museum exhibitions and the techniques for doing it well are part of a larger context of issues that surround education, communication, and being human. We need stories that tell of origins, envision the future, and give a sense of continuity and purpose. This is especially challenging when we think about the diversity of typically urban communities that museums serve. (Serrell, 2015, p. 28)

Together, Rami's labels and artworks tell a story that simultaneously reflects on educational programming in art museums but also speak to identity and refugeeism within the local community. This interpretive strategy shifts the institutional voice from one of rarefied and omniscient expert to a personable and relatable teenager. The community-driven and authored narrative within *MaS* is an example of the changing relationships between visitors (i.e., program participants) and interpretative texts in museums. Louise Ravelli (2006) reflects on the significance of voice in her publication *Museum Texts: Communication Frameworks*. She notes that when labels are written by community members, an institution can "…distanc[e] itself from conventional institutional voices, and thereby enabling visitors to reconceptualise the role of the institution in relation to such communities" (p. 73). For an art museum engaging with refugee artists and displaying their works, the inclusion of participant-written labels was

critical in assuring that the institution did not speak for an individual or a group of people.

From the Literal to the Abstract

In both 2013 and 2015, the *MaS* exhibitions included self-portraits and biographical statements; these reflections, when read together, highlight a shift in the way participant-artists are constructing their identity. Having the same artistic prompt for both years (i.e., create a self-portrait and accompanying biography) provides the opportunity to map changes in participants over time, thus illuminating how "an identity is not a complete whole but is in fact unsettled, ambiguous, mostly elusive and subject to change in a new context" (Ghorashi, 2007, p. 119).

Rami. In 2015, Rami describes himself through the symbolic use of color where he is comprised of pieces that are constantly evolving rather than static or equal parts of a whole. This later biographical statement is intimate, complicated, and poetic. Shari Sabeti (2016), who has studied creativity and writing within a museum over a five-year period, reflects, "it is inevitable, that over a long period of time, relationships of a more personal nature have evolved" (p. 141). In comparing Rami's two descriptions, a similar more personal relationship evolved within the museum space, where he shares emotions and other influences upon his identity from a literal representation of self. These autobiographical narratives when presented together call attention to the way selfhood is understood throughout his artworks and descriptions wherein "identity [is understood] as a process that is continually reshaped at the crossing of past and present experiences" (Ghorashi, 2007, p. 120). Together, the written descriptions and the self-portraits (see Figures 7 and 8) illustrate a performance of self that occurs over a two-year timeframe.

The object descriptions for these self-portraits present a seismic shift in his self-understanding, his English language skills, and creative process; these changes are also reiterated in his artistic process seen within each portrait. The two descriptions are drastically different; they are evident of a teenager growing up, discovering himself, and becoming more comfortable with language but also his artistic and critical thought. They show increased comfort with the museum, the creative process, and self-exploration, resulting in work that challenges and expands upon the expected: a self-portrait composed of abstract symbolism and no recognizable "subject."

Figure 7. *My Face*, 2013

Figure 8. *The Dark Diamond*, 2015

In the first self-portrait, ***My Face*** (Figure 7), Rami gives a two-sentence account of the artwork—a literal description of the work as well as an insight into his own

interests. This portrait is a pencil and acrylic work on canvas paper. The right half of the background is green, and the left half is yellow. In the center of the canvas is the subject of the self-portrait, a bust drawn in colored pencil wearing a black shirt adorned with the NBA's Chicago Bulls' emblem on the chest. Visible through the colors in the figure are pencil lines used to map the location of the nose firmly located between two eyes outlined in Sharpie. The subject is flat with no illusion of three-dimensionality, and the brown eyes gaze directly at the viewer. In contrast, the latter self-portrait has nothing in common with this first portrait.

Rami's latter self-portrait, *The Dark Diamond* (Figure 8), is composed completely of abstracted forms and done in acrylic. Eleven textured forms in black, white, red, and gray float on the canvas, curling from the left side of the canvas to the right creating a U-like design. Five painterly forms take up the majority of the composition— a marquise shaped yellow figure in the lower left-hand corner and, towards the upper right corner, are similarly shaped forms of green and then red. Above the red diamond-like structure is a white and black oblate object, and finally closest to the upper right-hand corner is the largest of the marquise forms, which is a translucent brown. These objects float within a blue background, and in the upper left corner are three additional organic masses—another translucent brown mass that is long and skinny and moves down the canvas, hugging the left-hand side and almost meeting the yellow marquise organism. To the right of this mass are a purple orb and a smaller black-brown mass. The description of this self-portrait is fragmented, poetic, and symbolic—explaining that each color holds a specific significance and noting that the artist has changed over time.

Nura. Rami's changes in how he is describing himself through autobiographical texts and through self-portraiture were seen in many of the participant-artists, both youth and adults. For example, Nura an adult participant from Iraq was included in both exhibitions (chapter 4.1), her works of art, wall labels, and autobiographical statements also indicate a shift from the literal to the abstract. In 2015 her self-portrait and artist statement were symbolic and metaphorical represented through sewing rather than literal images of herself. By contrast, her 2013 self-portrait (Figure 9) was more direct with the title "*Happy Girl"* and included the accompanying description: "This is a painting of me when I was a young, happy girl." In preparation for the 2015 exhibition, and moving away from these literal self-portraits, Nura asked me if she could include clothes she had been making in a course at the local community college. When she finally brought the items to the Museum (in June for an exhibition opening in July) it included two items of clothing, a pajama set and an outfit with a leopard print top and black skirt, and a pattern book from her seamstress days in Iraq. Along with these items, and artworks created at the Museum including paintings, a sketchbook, and a sculpture of a house, Nura wrote an extended autobiographical statement tracing her life in relation to her experiences with sewing.

> I spent a lot of time as a child sitting behind her watching her stitch… When I was in high school I began to stitch my own clothes… After high school, I got married. I made my wedding dress. An economic blockade was imposed on Iraq. No one had money to buy fabric… I decided to open my own sewing business. For this I needed a license, so I developed a sewing notebook to show how I made patterns. I got the

> license and opened a business in my home… During the war there was much sectarian strife and my shop was burned… When I came to the U.S. three years later, a volunteer gave me a sewing machine. (Nura, 2015)

These objects rather than displayed as individual objects were exhibited as an installation (Figure 10) representing how Nura as an artist was constructing her identity alongside her relationship with sewing.

Figure 9. Happy Girl, 2013

Figure 10. Sewing Installation, 2015

Nura's installation was a boundary event in that it illustrated was a moment where I relinquished control, and my idea about exhibitions, in order to meet the interests of a participant-artist. At times this made me extremely anxious, as seen in reflections from April 25, 2015 and April 28, 2015, where twice I documented my reminders to Nura stating that she needed to bring (and finish) the items she wanted to include.

April 21, 2015

> …I talked with Nura about completing her installation and reminded her about the top for the pjs [pajamas] saying that the mannequin would be wearing only pants…We agreed that she would complete the pj top after classes are done May 15—so I gave her until mid-June…

April 28, 2015

> It was the last night at TMA this semester—the next time everyone is back together at the Museum it will be for the opening of our exhibition July 24th…Nura still needs to bring me the top to her pjs for the installation. So there are some loose ends – but for the most part things are coming together…

Embracing this opportunity to include other objects from participant-artists is one example of how as an edu-curator I worked to create a space engaging with narratives between communities and museums—where the community asked to broaden the exhibition content.

Change over time. Comparing the self-portraits and accompanying biographies created by Rami and Nura, the viewer is privy to a movement from the literal to abstract. In the earlier work, the artist adheres to expected compositions, mimicking conventional self-portraiture typically seen on museum walls. However, after more artistic experimentation over the course of two years, Rami and Nura leave the figurative tradition behind. This freedom to challenge the confines of self-portraiture positions Rami as comfortable in seeking new modes of expression, echoing Minh-ha's delicate balance of foreignness where, "first assimilate, and then be different within permitted

boundaries" (2011, p. 30). By existing in the boundary event, one can strike a delicate balance of ceding to expectations but also discovering how to push upon the confines of these limitations. Experimentation within the confines of defining oneself not only exists within the difference between participant-artists from 2013 to 2015, but can also be found in anonymous composite texts from both exhibitions.

This change over time is not just about coming up with more complex ideas and increased comfort with the English language, as would be expected in a two year period for English language learners, but about increased abstract and creative thinking in relation to art making and artworks. Further research looking specifically at the correlation between sustained engagement and language acquisition would need to be done in order to better understand linguistic development in art museums. This could include comparisons on language used by long-term and short-term participants in *Museum as Sanctuary* as well as individuals who've visited the museum with refugee organizations for shorter time periods, including one off visits. Within the scope of this study the focus was on exploring increased comfort with the art museum and creative expression. As an edu-curator this opportunity to revisit the same prompt multiple times such as self-portraiture, writing artist statements, and development object descriptions created the occasion for participant-artists to more deeply engage with their identity and the act of creating self-portraits.

On the Importance/Significance of Identity

Reflecting on identity was a common theme I found in both participant-artist written texts as well as in my own reflexive documentation. I am statements are an

example of what kind of multivocal narratives emerged from both participant-artists and myself, the edu-curator, within the museum. First, the composite prose (Figures 11 -12) introduces identities defined in the 2013 and 2015 exhibitions; then, are my own *I am* statements (Figure 13). I collected these instances based on sentences containing the phrase, which became apparent from the 2013 exhibition texts. This writing or reflection strategy was common throughout the writings of the 15 artists and my own reflections, but once I began to examine these sentences further, I found a wide breadth of content within each statement.

I am

Both data sources, my own reflections and participant written descriptions, included a plethora of *I am* statements; these phrases were the focus of collection and analysis. Working in community-based exhibition settings, these narrative elements are not uncommon. Ruth Smith (2014) also found a series of *I am* statements within her research on Somali women, in the forms of photo-documentation and reflective writing. These reflections, according to Smith, highlighted "the multiple ways that the women portray themselves to each other, others within the Somali community, and outsiders through an ongoing negotiation of boundaries, offering no single image or story of 'I am'" (p. 206). Within my own research, these *I am* statements highlight the museum environment as a space for intricate mingling of identities.

I am: 2013. In 2013, participants shared basic facts about themselves in artist biographies and in self-portrait descriptions (see Figure 11). From these sources, I discovered 17 statements beginning with the words *I am*. Example statements include where they came from, their age and/or school grade, and occasional details about their

personal life including miscellaneous interests, marital status, and their favorite foods.

I am a refugee from Guatemala from Jordan

from Iraq from Congo from Iraq from Ethiopia

I am an artist from Iraq **and I am** twelve-years-old

I am a painter **and** my favorite food is cheese pizza.

I am pretty **and** nice to other people

I **am** married **and** I love music and dancing

I am a good artist **and** **I am** surrounded by stuff

I am thirteen-years-old **I am** ten-and-a half years old

I am eight-years-old **I am** fifteen-years-old
I am in seventh grade **and** I like to play kickball

I am committed to supporting human rights

and

I want to dream, just breathe...

Figure 11. I am, 2013; presented first as data in chapter 4.1: Data Presentation: Exhibition as Research and revisited again in 5.1A: Analysis Data Collages and 5.1B: Analysis Composites.

I am: 2015. In 2015, a total of 10 ***I am*** statements (see Figure 12) were discovered in artist biographies and descriptions created for self-portraits. However, they were obviously different compared to those from 2013–in place of specifics on nationality, age, or general interests were a series of emotions and action oriented phrases.

I am
scared
I am
in a hurry

I am
raising my hand
I am
answering a question
I am
picking apples
I am
watching a boat

I am
going to my house
I am
at home

I am
mad about art
I am
not scared of anything

Figure 12. I am, 2015; presented first as data in chapter 4.1: Data Presentation: Exhibition as Research and revisited again in 5.1A: Analysis Data Collages and 5.1B: Analysis Composites.

Composites. The two *I am* poems are composite and constructed narratives, collected from participant-artist written texts with sentences starting with or containing the phrase *I am* from the two *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibitions. The opportunity to reflect on the increasing complexity of participants' identities over the course of two years highlights the significance of sustained, long-term, longitudinal relationships with participants. In 2013, these descriptions are generalizable, literal, rooted in the present tense, and generally reflect upon major life events connected to refugee status. The descriptions from 2015 stand in contrast: they include more humanizing reflections; are

more nuanced; and do not read like traditional biographical details. These later descriptions are symbolic and metaphorical and replace nouns with action items and emotions.

However, simultaneously, the identity of "refugee" has also waned, the 2015 assertions now are unspecific and could be applied to anyone. Participants have become what Kwame Appiah (2006) refers to as cosmopolitans, where "…there is no place for the enforcement of diversity by trapping people within a kind of difference they long to escape" (p. 105). No longer is their refugee status the main identifying factor within their self-portrait descriptions and biographies. They have created stories about themselves highlighting their day-to-day experiences, interests, and actions, rather than remaining fixed to issues of nationalism.

Reflexive I am. In my own reflections, I discovered eight instances where I began thoughts with the phrase *I am* (see Figure 13). However, rather than biographical details, these statements reflected on my role as a museum educator and my attempts to negotiate expectations as a museum educator and what was best for participants. Within these reflections, there exists an unrelenting anxiety and continued attempts to push my own practice (and comfort) to meet the participants' needs. I seek a constantly elusive balance between being a good museum educator and a strong advocate for the community. Still, as I write this, I wonder what it means to exist in limbo or as Minh-ha (2011) asks, "How to negotiate…the line that allows one to commit oneself entirely to a cause and yet not quite belong to it? To fare both as a foreigner on foreign land and as a stranger at home?" (p. 55). While completely at home within the museum and

comfortable with these participant-artists, I remain uncomfortable throughout the two-year period.

...**I am** still uncomfortable in my role
I am not sure how to navigate these feelings

I am constantly
pushing on boundaries
expanding/challenging traditional museum-community relationships, re-imagining what the role of a museum educator is...
boundaries and borders can be constructive, productive and more importantly necessary.
I am
interested in how to facilitate these types of good boundaries while simultaneously working to breakdown others...

I am going to work on creating a curriculum that is simultaneously structured and open-ended
it will be fluid yet controlled...

I am working on experimenting with ways we can move/experience the museum that are controlled and contained yet experimental and participant-centered...

I am worried about the content and the over all aesthetic

I am working on generating
content during the write starts this time around for the exhibition
in order to incorporate multiple voices and opinions within the text panels...

Figure 13. I am statements; educator reflections, presented first as data in chapter 4.1: Data Presentation: Exhibition as Research and revisited again in 5.1A: Analysis Data Collages and 5.1B: Analysis Composites.

In this composite of my responses, I am anxious and awkward, even rambling at times, while participant-artists seem more certain in their declarations of *I am*. These identities thus assert an ambiguity "…of belonging and of displacement and of their inevitable and mutual interdependence" (Rogoff, 2000, p 148). My frequent uncertainty

and constant desire to change my practice calls attention to the way in which, even as a long-term museum-goer (over 25 years) and museum professional (over 12 years), that comfort is in flux. This echoes Minh-ha's (2011) claim that even in a space perceived as familiar, there are moments of instability where "In fact, 'home' in itself has no fixed territory; depending on the context in which it appears', it can convey the concept of settlement or unsettlement" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 53).

I am: a "re-siting of boundaries"

The autobiographical narratives in my research present a series of conceptualizations of identity and writing that seek to explore constructs of self. They are brief moments captured over a two-year period (2013-2015) that illuminate identities in transition. Borrowing from Judith Butler's (2015) malleable and mutable notion of self, these statements "…describe the emergence or formation of the subject" (p. 5) and highlight the ways in which selfhood is an evolution rather than a fixed construct. Longitudinally investigating ever-changing identities of 15 participants and myself highlights the importance of sustained relationships between people and the museum. It also illustrates how *I am* is not a singular assertion, but rather can be multiple instances within complex systems:

> **I am** affected not just by this one other or a set of others, but by a world in which humans, institutions, and organic and inorganic processes all impress themselves upon this me who is, at the outset, susceptible in ways that are radically involuntary. (Butler, 2015, pp. 6-7)

Change is the only constant, and within these narratives, the museum educator (myself) and participant-artists become fellow explorers with continuously growing, changing, and increasingly complex ideas of identity in flux. Butler's claims about identity are not isolated to her own experiences; they can be translated, interpreted, and applied to various individuals. Within this construct, multiple variables influence how identity forms, evolves, and manifests itself—be they people, institutions like museums, objects like works of art, and even experiential situations. The concept of static, fixed, and completely formed personhood is challenged and reimaged as an impressionable entity. Thus, despite the seemingly emphatic certainty of *I am*, there still exists room for transformation, evoking a "re-siting of boundaries" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 27) where "positionings are radically transitional and mobile" (p. 51). Within these contexts, each artist is simultaneously singular and multiple, and it is the longevity of this study that illuminates how identity is in a constant state of transformation.

> **I am** the one making a detour with myself, having left upon my departure from over here not only a place but also one of my selves. The itinerary displaces the foundation; the background of my identity, and what it incessantly unfolds is the very encounter of self with the other—other than myself and, my other self. (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 41)

For participant-artists and myself there have been opportunities to continuously reflect on identity within the museum. It is within these moments, or detours that there exists opportunities to displace, or challenge assumed truths. At this point it is important to note that some detours are choices while others are forced, this is particularly significant when working with refugees who have been displaced from their home. When in the art

museum the detours explored are those of chosen experimentations, where comfort and trust have enabled moments for myself as an edu-curator and participant-artists to embrace the boundary event in order to experiment and reflect on our identities.

Identity and the Boundary Event

The evolving and multiple I am reinforces Minh-ha's (2011) boundary event as a moment, or identity, in transformation. These artworks, descriptions, reflections, and declarations from various data sources over the course of study from 2013 to 2015 reverberate as "a voice that serves as a site for rich resonance and metamorphoses generated in the endless possible combinations that language offers" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 119). The boundary event contained here is one of practice that is illustrated by continuous and constant change where "nothing is stable…"(Minh-ha, 2011, p. 114), not unlike the evolution and change of human identity.

These boundary events provide opportunities to think differently about the roles in which we play within the art museum, broadening our definitions and reflecting on practice. In broadening definitions participant-artists challenged and reconsidered what it meant to engage in self-portraiture and autobiographical narratives. As I reflected on my practice as an edu-curator I sought to relinquish control, sit with moments of discomfort in order to be more user-centered, and challenged my assumptions about how I should behave as a museum employee.

CHAPTER 5.3

A COLORED PAINTBRUSH,

BOUNDARY EVENT = PROCESS + PRODUCT

Analysis and Methods

In looking at participant-artists' reflections on process presented in chapter 4.1, I noted the descriptions of colors in participant-created labels; these can be seen collected in the data collages from chapter 5.1A. While color was mentioned frequently when discussing process in 2013 *MaS* descriptions, it was noticeably less frequent in reflections of process from the 2015 exhibit. Participants explored process in descriptions in more nuanced ways, not just limited to color.

Process vs. Product

I worry that within a museum we look and sound like chaos...

I feel like there is pressure to make an awesome product

Educator Reflections: October 8, 2013[27]

These excerpts from my own reflections call attention to my struggle between process and product, which was magnified when planning for the 2015 exhibition. My definition and understanding of the art museum's purpose was oscillating between the modernist and postmodern institution. This internal tension influences my anxiety as an art museum educator working towards community-based exhibitions where artworks are

[27] Excerpt from field notes from October 8, 2013; for more information on this reflection see: chapter 4.1, Interlude: A Reflection on Practice or Art Museum Education as Research, Year One, first semester: the anxious, uncertain, and awkward researcher-educator.

created by participant-artists. I must constantly remind myself to question whose aesthetic I am privileging when I worry about product.

Modernist Museum

The modernist museum is the tradition I grew up in and where I learned to love museums and explore works of art. I expected white walls, perfectly spaced works of art, and guards watching over valuable objects. Brian O'Doherty and Thomas McEvilley (2004), in *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, echo my own experiences with their description of the art museum where "an image comes to mind of a white, ideal space that, more than any single picture, may be the archetypal image of twentieth century art" (O'Doherty & McEvilley, 2004, p. 14). These spaces of display, as O'Doherty and McEvilley suggest, are more ubiquitous than the works of art contained within the institutions. Thus, my inability to leave the modernist museum behind makes perfect sense.

In the moments building to the second exhibition, I was continuously influenced by the art museum as an aesthetic, organized, and quiet space for passively viewing art. These spaces are "unshadowed, white, clean, artificial" (O'Doherty & McEvilley, p. 15) and where "works of art are mounted, hung, scattered for study" (p. 15). Similarly, Carol Duncan (1995), in *Civilizing Ritual: Inside Public Art Museums,* positions art museums as ritual sites illuminating traits of the modernist museum. Describing the architectural aesthetic of museums, Duncan (1995) introduces how art museums represent themselves as exclusive institutions since "like most ritual space, museum space is carefully marked off and culturally designated as reserved for a special quality of attention—in this case, for contemplation and learning. One is also expected to behave with a certain decorum"

(p.10). While still a space for reflection, Duncan's museum (1995) is intimidating, sterile, oppressive, and formal to the unfamiliar visitor. This architectural program frames the art museum as a space reserved for the elite and intellectual, creating a narrative of privilege and sophistication rather than one of inclusion and enjoyment.

Within these spaces, the museum's narrative and ritual environment continuously press upon the visitor, regardless of the visitor's interests or objectives. As Duncan elaborates, "even when visitors enter museums to see only selected works, the museum's larger narrative structure stands as a frame and gives meaning to individual works" (1995, p. 12). More often than not, art museums tend towards a model of display where galleries are uncluttered and works of art have their own space in order to be revered and contemplated without competing with another work. This type of curatorial programming often minimizes or separates the educational component from the artwork itself, encouraging visitors to experience the work of art exclusively for its aesthetic value. The art object is set up to be the most important item in the museum program. As an art museum educator who grew up in these spaces, this memory and experience still permeates my conceptualization of the museum even when I intentionally shift away from this modernist aesthetic.

Postmodern Museum

The postmodern museum, in contrast to the modernist institution, is one of action that Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (2000) says is "imagined as a process or experience" (p. 152). In these spaces, exhibitions, visitors, and museum staff "negotiate responsiveness, encourage mutually nurturing partnerships, and celebrate diversity" (p. 153). There is room for holistic experimentation both within curatorial endeavors and educational

programs, and process takes priority over product. In working with participant-artists in *MaS*, the postmodern museum provided more opportunities for individually-directed experimentation and did not privilege my cultural expectations of art in either visiting the galleries or in studio settings. The postmodern museum "incorporate[s] personal narratives, collaboration, interplay between high and low culture, [and] multiple interpretations" (Tapia, 2008, p. 42) within the institution. Mixing narratives, creative techniques, and references to artists' everyday lives in the exhibitions makes for a l curatorial program without a single lens and instead with varied perspectives shared.

Both exhibitions experimented with installation techniques in order to include diverse objects from sculpture, paintings, installations, and more (see Figures 14– 17); art works are collaged together or installed one over top the other, sometimes accompanied by extensive object labels and artist biographies. There is no single or traditional curatorial style; mixed methods of display incorporated participant-artists' requests and brainstorming sessions also informed the best ways to present objects. *MaS* exhibitions are attempts to shift and distribute curatorial voice and honor varied ideas on exhibition design. This approach echoes Christina Kreps's (2006) urge for cross-cultural exhibitions where **"**cross-culturally oriented approaches to curation are inherently about sharing curatorial authority and power, and making room for the inclusion of multiple forms of knowledge and expertise" (p. 469).

Figure 14. Museum as Sanctuary 2013 exhibition

Figure 15. Museum as Sanctuary 2013 exhibition

Figure 16. Museum as Sanctuary 2015 exhibition

Figure 17. Museum as Sanctuary 2015 exhibition

Process

In each *MaS* exhibition, the artistic processes explored in making each work of art were very important to participant-artists. Materials were varied, including watercolor, acrylic paint, paper, canvas, pen, Sharpie, magazine clippings, papier-mâché, cardboard, recycled materials, metal, and fabric. In preparation for the 2013 exhibition, artists were introduced to new materials and encouraged to view their artworks from varying distances, to be sure the works were finished. In 2015, artists were encouraged to experiment with new materials and were also able to revisit old favorites. The following

texts focus on artistic process and come from object labels written by participants in 2013 and 2015.

The first series of analytical fragments (2013) begins with "colors water colors, pen, brush. colors are very important to my artwork" and the later (2015) collection starts, "a colored paintbrush."[28] These collections of text speak to the significance of the art making process but also are evocative of a developing complexity of the participant-artists' understanding of creative exploration. In the 2013 texts, there were numerous participant-artist reflections about the materials, yet in 2015, artistic process was often tied to other details such as biography or constructing a story about an artwork. To expand on this, the following sections present researcher constructed narratives calling attention to materials first as literal objects in 2013 and in 2015 as active and symbolic.

2013

The descriptions from 2013 are relatively simple: lists of colors, art making supplies, and direct accounts of how the artist created the works. These descriptions have few connections beyond the artwork itself. Artists were introduced to new materials and how to use them, as well as color and its unique application. This investigation speaks to Josef Albers's (1971) assertion in *Interaction of Color*, where he claims, "first, it should be learned that one and the same color evokes innumerable readings" (p. 1). The below composite poetic text (see Figure 18) culled from object description labels consists predominately of colors and their diverse applications and meanings. For example, the

[28] These sequences of texts, appearing in, Arial, referenced throughout this chapter can be seen first in chapter 5.1A and 5.1B, are an example of analytical fragments pulled from chapter 4.1: Presentation of Data: Exhibition as Research.

color green represents healing, plants, and poison simultaneously, echoing Albers' pedagogical sentiments on color. Additionally, within this composite, artists share their artistic process and choices made within their works. There is only one instance where the artist connected past experiences to their artwork: "my paintings express my dark feelings about what has happened to me," indicating that the creative process is tied significantly to experience and identity.

2015

The 2015 collection of comments on process and creative expression is more complex than the 2013 iteration. Participant-artists in 2015 are using their artworks as a way to understand their feelings and situate themselves in context beyond the walls of the art museum (see Figure 19), something almost unseen in the 2013 collection. Here, colors are not the primary subject; descriptions exist in more than just present tense; and reflections highlight how these artists exist within and relate to society. While not specific, phrases touch on emotions, artistic choices, abilities, memories, and accomplishments. Among the most interesting reflections are those about emotions in direct response to art making, ranging from happiness to distaste. When seen in tandem and collectively, creating is neither a purely positive or negative experience but rather one that moves between the two possibilities. Creativity is an unfixed, complicated, multivalent process.

colors water colors, pen, brush. colors are very important to my artwork
very colorful, decorated all over.

I drew animals.
It is pink. pinky, she has dots because she's wearing a costume for a party
My whole room is pink.
splatter paint red streaks dark brown eyes. I just copy my face.

red hair, big ears and earrings. red shirt represents the sunset. red as the background
and then painted over it with light blue, then the whole background is dark blue.
red and green together, green dripped down orange on the bottom.

pink, black, red, green, brown, white. blue, yellow and green.
pink, yellow, red + green are the colors

it is about a pretty bird. blueberries. dark blue t-shirt.
Blue Sky with desert floor. blue represents sky. blue sky. sky is blue.

I used paint, a roller, cut out shapes, marker stars for the dark.
I like to make sculptures.
I have worked with wire and 3D sculpture. I used trash and painting.
love to mix color

It's kind of green, it's kind of yellow. The green shirt represents green plants
green plants and brown. green bushes on a big mountain. trees are green.
I drew abstract trees with healing/curling leaves.
a green tree, a cactus green tail. Poison ivy touched his tail

My paintings express my dark feelings about what has happened to me

yellow light owl's yellow eyes yellow because it's hungry

gray nose, and he is blackish color gray eyes
one panther with gray eyes, gray mouth

black eyes: blue black white spots black lines as a frame

a few of my paintings are inspired by other artists

Figure 18. All the colors, process + product from 2013 *MaS* exhibition. These exhibition narratives are first seen as presented data in chapter 4.1 Presentation of Data: Exhibition as Research and in 5.1A and 5.1B as collaged analytical data sets.

a colored paintbrush.

I put red and blue in the sky. black and white is me

I put colors together that looked good

I began to stitch my own clothes. I don't like this picture. I made this artwork by myself.

The purple bear is running to eat the cat

I felt happier when I made this picture. I wanted it to be sparkly dark and kind of messy.

This represents the rebellion against light colors.
black is corrupted light colors rebelling, dark colors
I wanted light to show through. white is peace and happiness.

when I drew it I felt free. art is good for me.

I could cut up a woman's abaya and make two dresses

This work is about my family, me, and our journey

The colors are deep and mean something to me
the middle where the nose is marks where the good parts of the future start

it represents a memory that lingers

it makes me feel like the earth is on fire

I used colors I thought looked good together

Figure 19. All the colors, process + product from 2015 *MaS* exhibition. These exhibition narratives are first seen as presented data in chapter 4.1 Presentation of Data: Exhibition as Research and in 5.1A and 5.1B as collaged analytical data sets.

Process + Product: Creativity and the Boundary Event

"Creating does not merely consist of deforming or inventing a character within a situation, but rather of drawing new relationships between people and things as they exist" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 92). The creative process does not need to adhere to any single definition of the museum, but can exist as its own experience, constantly oscillating between process and product. By understanding art making as a boundary event, creativity becomes an example of discovering new relationships and symbolism. It is an act of multiplying, diversifying, and experimenting where there is an opening to new possibilities.

In art museums, engaging with both the product and process is important. However in my experiences, we as art museum educators or edu-curators often get bogged down in the product. The unique masterpiece and the aesthetically pleasing exhibition are our focus but we often forget that experimentation and learning can be messy and sometimes look less than perfect. As an art museum educator I constantly encourage participants to experiment with their art-making process however, as an edu-curator I struggled to experiment in relation to exhibition development. Discovering ways to honor the process, as an edu-curator, is essential in order to really challenge existing practices in art museums and make way for community-based exhibitions like *Museum as Sanctuary*.

CHAPTER 5.4

EXPERIENCE THAT NEGOTIATES,

BOUNDARY EVENT = PERFORMANCE + POETICS

Analysis and Methods

The in-gallery learning narratives in this section explore collaborative practice and shifting authorship in *MaS*, and highlight my understanding of the museum as a site of multiple encounters. These narratives illustrate "moments of collective tuning, in the midst of a crowd or while working with a communal issue" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 55). Within these instances, the art museum becomes a performance "composed of multiplicities" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 73). These in-gallery performances are examples of negotiating tensions, hierarchies, and collective voice, where collaborative responses position the museum as a site of performance, opening up narratives to a moment of multiplicities.

Setting the Stage

> ...in the end the museum experience is [a] dynamic and unfixed migratory experience that negotiates participant interest[s], group dynamics, mishaps, varied paces, and my own goals/objectives as a museum educator.
>
> Educator Reflections: March 25, 2014[29]

Towards the end of my data collection, I began to accept the instability of the museum experience, seeking to acknowledge the environment as a performative space or stage.

---

[29] This texts, appearing in Arial, can be seen first in chapter 4.2: Presentation of Data: In-Gallery Learning as Research, as a reflection on the March 25, 2014 *Exquisite Corpse* activity.

Charles Garoian (2001) sees the museum as a space of performance where tensions between the various individuals emerge:

> Performing the museum is a dialogic process, a play between the public narratives of the museum and the private narratives of viewers. To achieve this dynamic relationship requires an open, risk-taking pedagogy on the part of the museum, one that enables viewers to turn history onto itself and to interrogate its ideological terrain. (p. 239)

In this conceptualization, the museum becomes a space of process and dynamic exchange—a stage for understanding, disagreement, and conversation.

Performative Pedagogy

Art educators Charles Garoian (2001), Olga Hubbard (2015), and Dipti Desai (2010) envision spaces of pedagogical encounters as performative environments where knowledge evolves from active experiences and co-produced dialogues, both of which support the development of multivocal performances. These pedagogical insights highlight ways in which educators can begin to position museums as spaces in transition. For Garoian (2001), it is essential that institutions respect the ways in which "viewers bring their personal identities into play with the institution's dominant ideologies. In doing so, they are able to imagine and create new possibilities for museums and their artifacts within their contemporary cultural lives" (p. 236).

Providing opportunities for visitors to share their expertise and connect their lived experiences to the museum is crucial in making the museum experience enjoyable and relatable. One way to do this is to create spaces for embodied responses where visitors are encouraged to encounter works with more than their eyes. Olga Hubbard (2015)

exemplifies this approach: "non-discursive activities can help art viewers engage either bodies and emotions in response to an object, grant them access to aspects of work that may elude linguistic discourse, and enable them to express their responses through processes other than rational thought" (p. 131-132). By experiencing works of art through means that engage emotions and elicit physical responses, rather than just didactic exchanges and fleeting glances, museumgoers can better make personal, and lasting, connections to works of art in the museum. Echoing these sentiments, Dipti Desai (2010) urges educators to test new and innovative curriculums in order "…to experiment with ways of known that are embodied—that embrace desire, movement, senses, emotions, and hope" (p. 440) in order to promote "teaching and learning as social performance" (p. 440).

These types of educational strategies present the museum visitor with new ways of knowing and experiencing works of art that go beyond inquiry-based questioning and art historical expertise. In the following section, influenced by notions of multivocality and performance, museum engagement is as a boundary event where knowledge production is

> Caught in a shifting framework of articulation, words and concepts undergo a transformative process where they continue to resonate upon each other on many planes at once, exceeding thereby the limit of that very plane where all the 'actions' are supposed to be carried out. (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 56)

Case Study: *Exquisite Corpse* Activity

The collaborative responses shown below were created during an in-gallery activity where small groups write a phrase about a work of art, fold the paper over to conceal the phrase, and then rewrite the last word of the phrase for the next group to see. The resulting exchanges are interpretative texts that are nonsensical poetic prose that show consensus and disagreement, and even occasionally document a group's comfort to completely ignore activity instructions. In these exchanges, there is a "folding of complex and contradictory narratives into and through each other" where there exists "possibilities for engaging in democratic discourse, understanding alterity, and respect for cultural differences and peculiarities" (Garoian, 2011, p. 158). When recited in front of works of art, these *Exquisite Corpse* descriptions become performances that sometimes clarify content, imagine narratives occurring within the artwork, and veer in new directions or previously uncharted territory. The *Exquisite Corpse* activity capitalizes on the unknown and asks participants to fill in empty spaces in a narrative as these voids are simultaneously overwhelming and full of potential. In these spaces, the museum becomes a stage for multivocal performances where "the blank space remains alive with indefinite possibilities" (Minh-ha, 2015, p. 137). Through these "blank spaces," as Minh-ha calls them, there are opportunities for adaptation, destruction, and discord within interpretations.

Adaptation, Destruction, and Discord

Adaptation. The below description of a landscape painting contains three different reflections in the resulting text. In these stanzas, participants changed the last word from the previous sentence and openly disagreed with another group's reflection; the red text indicates these changes and disagreements. The work being discussed is a

painting by Merrill Mahaffey entitled *Deep Canyon Morning* from 1984. It is a horizontally-oriented landscape painting with vibrant colors depicting a canyon flanked by green grass and multicolored canyon walls ranging in tones of red and green. The rock formations take up the majority of the painting while the bottom fourth is of a quiet and reflective river; in the upper left hand corner, a blue sky is punctuated with white clouds.

color that are shiny on the mountain and water like a horizon.
Below the horizon there are special animals in the hills and a river with fish.
(I don't see any fish)
There's birds flying in the canyon[30]

In the collaborative description of *Deep Canyon Morning*, most participants' narratives focus on the canyon and life in the surrounding area. The first sentence is a brief description of the work that concludes with the word "horizon," which is also repeated on the following line with the intent that the next group uses it as their first word. However, instead of following these guidelines, the second group adapts the sentence to begin with "below the horizon…" in order to make better reference to the compositional structure of the work. In the third sentence, the word "fish" is left for the following group to utilize as the beginning of their interpretation. However, this proves to be insufficient as the third group openly questions the presence of fish within the painting.

These edits within the interpretation indicate that participants play dual roles within the museum—they are both receivers of information and content producers. Shari Sabeti (2016), in researching creative writing in museums, reflects on the process of

[30] This text, appearing in Arial, is an excerpt from chapter 4.2: Presentation of Data: In-Gallery Learning as Research. I was written in response to Merrill Mahaffey's work during an *Exquisite Corpse* activity from November 18, 2014.

editing and revising texts where "constant adaptations to the writing are the evidence of subtle shifts between the position of writer and reader…" (p. 145). Playing both author and reader encourages a unique opportunity to revise, alter, and partake in productive destruction to create something new.

Destruction. In another instance from the *Exquisite Corpse* activity, when responding to *Hocker* a work by Roberto Munguia from 1991 one group crossed out the starting word in order to edit the previous groups observations. This artwork is an abstract mix media (oil and wax) on canvas in muted tones of green, red, blue, pink and yellow all seemingly washed over by a grey-tone. Three bird footprint-like forms can be found on the canvas, which acted as the central focus for groups during the activity. The excerpt below is from two groups and indicates where a strikethrough occurs to make way for another groups own creative interpretation about the work.

> Big scary birds. Are we looking at its head or its feet?
> ~~Feet~~ Footprint of the king bird because of there's a waterfall of blood[31]

This act resembles the tenants of artistic engagement with poetry where destruction is necessary for creation. In *Towards a Constructive Poetry*, Theo van Doesburg (2007) reflects on destruction as a liberating and productive process:

> Destruction is part of the rebuilding of poetry.
>
> Destruction of syntax is the first necessary preamble to the new poetry.
>
> Destruction has expressed itself in the following ways:
>
> 1. In the use of words (according to their meaning).

[31] This text, appearing in Arial, is an excerpt from chapter 4.2: Presentation of Data: In-Gallery Learning as Research. It was written in response to Roberto Munguia's work during an *Exquisite Corpse* activity from March 11, 2014.

2. In atrocity (psychic disturbance).
3. In typography (synoptic poetry). (van Doesburg, 2007, p. 113)

Editing, or crossing out, a previous groups contribution is an example of productive destruction, which bolsters the poetic qualities of the description. These instances of adaptation and destruction during the in-gallery experience highlight freedoms to challenge and experiment with expected behaviors within the Museum.

Discord. The below description is of a work entitled *Keyah (Blue)* by Emmi Whitehorse from 1993. This work on paper, a blue abstraction, contains no recognizable figures or subject matter but rather reads as an atmospheric representation. Rather than adaptation or destruction, the following description embodies nonsense and fluidity of composition, illustrating an example of poetic dissonance where "discord is not an unpleasant sound but an energetic one" (Bishop & Watson, 2012). These playful compositions that seek to describe the artwork, elicit images of an environment that could be atmosphere or aqueous.

Ocean. With graveyard, flute, leaves, plants and
Wind. A loved one died and I am suffering in
Pain from a jellyfish and the boat, see?

As Minh-ha (2011) reflects in regards to "blank spaces" (p. 137), these voids and empty spaces are sites of potential. Within the *Exquisite Corpse* activity, Minha-ha's (2011) theoretical ideas about the freedom of "blank spaces," results in a fluid discord that entices and excites rather than arrests or disrupts the audience's engagement with the work. John Cage (2013), in *Composition as Process* reflects on the act of composing as a way to unite disparate parts:

"bring-

ing about i-

deally, a

freely moving

continui-

ty within a

strict division

of parts." (p. 18)

Cage's understanding of composition relates to the exquisite corpse activities, where collaboratively written interpretations unify divisions by imposing continuity and fluid poetic narratives.

These accidental instances of poetic dissonance are made possible by the revealing of the entire exquisite corpse interpretation. To this point, Garoian (2011) notes that "it is at its unfolding when the incongruities of the sections are revealed and when viewers are left with an interminable conundrum in fusing the disjunctions of its heterogeneous body" (p. 159).

Museums as Performative Environments

These narratives of in-gallery learning highlight the ways in which museums are spaces of performative environments where adaptation, destruction, and discord are enacted. To explain this interpretation further, ideas from feminist geography (Gibson-Graham, 2008), cosmopolitanism (Skrbiš &Woodward, 2013), and multilingualism (Blommaert et al., 2005) are crucial to unpacking this understanding. The mixing of these ideas contextualize, support, and extend Garoian's (2001) notion of performing the

museum, where it becomes an activated, experiential environment. By embracing the notion of the museum as a performative environment, program participants are positioned as content producers, where diverse knowledge and experience is lauded within a multivocal museum.

Multivocal Performance

Above, the in-gallery activities and resulting narratives are a euphonic cacophony of poetic dissonance where "difference is thus paired with harmony, rather than with conflict" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 70). Within these in-gallery engagements (chapter 4.1) multivocal narratives emerge from systems of exchange, social experiences, and freedom to experiment with new observations and ideas. Foundational to this idea of a multivocal performance is Gibson-Graham's (2008) concept from the field if geography calling for a "proliferative space of difference" (p. 615) within performative practices. Gibson-Graham (2008) imagines this "space of difference" with economies where they are bringing to light "hidden and alternative economic activities" (p. 618) in order to diversify static and oppressive systems of exchange. Within this space of difference, everyone is free to disagree, revise, edit, and transform opinions such that connections are built between seemingly disconnected points as seen within the excerpts from the *Exquisite Corpse* activity. This notion of a space of difference occurs within the museum when in-gallery learning is open to the potentials of adaptation, destruction, and discord—leaving space for participant-artists, or museum users, to respond to works however they deem appropriate.

Cosmopolitanism, another tenant of a multivocal performance, emerges within environments that foster difference and engagement. Skrbiš and Woodward (2013) reflect

on spaces where openness is encouraged and "people feel both relatively comfortable with the mix of people in the vicinity, but they also reflexively perform, monitor and reproduce this ease with cultural difference through various accommodations and rituals of mixing. Thus, people expect to encounter difference…" (p. 56). Utilizing this concept of cosmopolitanism, the museum becomes a space of social experience where participant-artists are comfortable to freely exchange ideas. Through this ability to experiment freely emerges the proliferation of comfort, which is quickly extended to new participant-artists in *MaS,* enabling gallery activities to be successful, even as new participants are introduced.

These cosmopolitan environments and sites of in-gallery learning within *MaS* embrace multilingualism where these pedagogical designs encourage communicative experimentation. Blommaert et al. (2005) note that, "multilingualism is not what individuals have or lack, but what the environment, as structured determination and interactional emergence, enables and disables them to deploy" (p. 213). This tenet highlights the museum's ability to encourage or stultify participants' strengths and expertise. However, it is my hope that a multivocal performance within the art museum exists as a space for fostering, and supporting, visitors' agency. Thus, museum as sites of multivocal performance are spaces of difference, mixing of ideas, and asset-based[32] environments.

By placing the ideas of Gibson-Graham (2008), Skrbiš and Woodward (2013), and Blommaert et al., (2005) in conversation with tenets of art education explored by

[32] This term asset-based in this context is borrowed from asset-based community development (Kretzmann, 2003), which focuses on a community's strengths rather than its weaknesses.

Garoian (2001), Hubbard (2015), and Desai (2010), in-gallery learning is understood as a system of exchange where the production of knowledge is open to alternative ways of thinking, a freedom to experiment and disagree, and where new and different ideas are seen as a strength rather than an aberration. The art museum becomes a multivocal performance through a willingness to share authority and challenge expected hierarchies of knowledge production where different, and perhaps even divergent, perspectives are cultivated.

Performance + Poetics: Dissonance and the Boundary Event

The *Exquisite Corpse* activity responses and my own reflections on the Museum as a stage for negotiating experiences and knowledge contest static narratives and experiences in the museum. Through these practices of adaptation, destruction, and discord resulting in poetic dissonance, I have found that participants become even more receptive—both to the works on view and to the process of interpretation in art museums. In these moments of dialogue and response, participants "develop the ability to receive with more than one's eyes or ears … to expand that part of oneself which is receptive but can remain atrophied, almost closed, when its potential lies dormant" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 56). Furthermore, activities such as these expand on art historical truths and narratives within the museum, calling attention to the variety of potentials within poetic experiences that fosters a multivocal performance defined by difference, dialogue, and participant agency.

As an edu-curator, or art museum educator, by designing activities that are collaborative and highlight multiple opinions within the galleries was a way to open up to multiple narratives. Additionally, by using the activity frequently on gallery visits

participants became more comfortable with the instructions, and at times felt empowered to ignore the instructions resulting in instances of adaptation, destruction, and discord.

CHAPTER 5.5

IMPLICATIONS OF INTERPRETATIONS

The three sections of interpretations (5.2, 5.3, and 5.4) within this chapter explore instances of the boundary event within art museum practice, where the museum exists as a space of contradiction, experimentation, and multivocal exchanges. These museum-based narratives of exhibitions and in-gallery learning are formed through negotiations between refugee participants, individuals affiliated with the collaborating organization, the museum, and me as the museum educator. These multivocal narratives explore diverse issues and are constantly changing.

In chapter 5.2, I focused on self-portraiture and biographies where identities were constantly in flux, and refused adhering to a single construct. In chapter 5.3, I investigated the dynamics of process and creativity where relationships to art making continued to multiply and diversify through experimentation. Lastly, in 5.4, I highlighted how gallery-based experiences foster difference, dialogue, and agency, promoting a multivocal performance.

These examples of the boundary event speak to multiplicities and narratives of difference, rather than myopic assumptions or stereotypes about refugees. By existing within "the elsewhere within here," these examples challenge "the stereotype, which is not necessarily a false, but rather an arrested representation of a shifting reality" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 93). The museum-based boundary event as I have explored it is illustrated by the (im)balance of growth + change, process + product, and performance + poetics where at first the multivoiced exchanges seem overwhelming and chaotic. However, I

must reaffirm that chaos does not negate interconnectivity within these contexts. In the next chapter, I will discuss implications of my findings for museum practice; address implications for research practices; and state delimitations of this study to identify further areas of research.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS: LEANING INTO THE ELSEWHERE AND IN-BETWEEN

"Nothing, indeed, stands more acutely in opposition to the poetic than the stereotype, which is not necessarily a false, but rather an arrested representation of shifting reality." (Minh-ha, p. 93)

Museums as a Multivocal Boundary Event

MaS is one example of a program where I, as an art museum educator and more specifically edu-curator, embraced moments of the boundary event in order to engage with multivocal narratives within the institution. This played out in the form of curatorial projects or exhibitions as well as in-gallery learning.

These endeavors sought to incorporate participant-artist voices and honor multiple stories and shift away from: 1) traditional learning, which privileges a single narrative about objects on view or adheres to a specific style of inquiry-based learning, such as Visual Thinking Strategies (Yenawine, 2013) and 2) a curatorial program informed by a select few experts (e.g., curators, museum professionals, and or a quest expert) in favor of a multiplied and diverse exhibition sharing varied stories from multiple perspectives.

As a result, exhibitions and curatorial endeavors became multivocal undertakings where my singular and expert opinion as the edu-curator is re-envisioned as a conversation of varied perspectives and ideas between participants. By moving beyond singularities in voice and embodying experiences that complicate traditional hierarchy

within the museum, the narratives presented in chapters 5.0-5.5 show how cultural difference can disrupt linear, static, and authoritative[33] institutional narratives.

In chapters 4.0 – 4.2 and 5.0-5.5, I presented narrative fragments of *MaS*, including participant-artists' perspectives along with my own museum educator reflections woven within each section. These narratives, both participant-created and researcher-constructed, expand upon the current rhetoric on museum narratives, which often centers on exhibitions.

In discussing potential conversations and exchanges occurring in museums, Richard Sandell (2016) states that these institutions "…hold considerable potential to frame, inform and enable conversations that visitors, and indeed wider society, have about difference" (p. 135). However, even in this claim, narratives and knowledge move in one direction—from the museum to the visitor—and continue to focus on narratives presented and not constructed within museums. Three questions guided my research, these are restated below with the conclusions I have come to in seeking to answer them.

Question One:

How can we as art museum educators, or edu-curators, create spaces that provoke, and engage with, narratives between communities and museums?

In creating exhibitions and in-gallery activities in community-museum settings, multiple narratives of communities and museums emerge from making space for participants to share opinions, observations, and their own experiences in response to works of art on view and their own artistic products. Instances of these are the narratives

[33] Here, I use authoritative to reference how museums often use language to position themselves as elevating publics, audiences, and communities in order to impart knowledge on *others*. In these settings, learning moves in one direction: from institution to museum-goer.

of identity, process, and performance, delineated in chapters 5.0 – 5.5. Edu-curators create these spaces by encouraging individuals to share only what they are comfortable sharing with strangers, making space for disagreement, opening up interpretation for multiple possibilities, and honoring all stories told.

Some examples of these strategies include: relinquishing control creating opportunities for refugee participants to take the lead; listening to your collaborating partners and heeding to their expertise and past experiences when working with diverse audiences; being aware of differences in values and cultural norms when working with refugee audiences; and embracing flexibility and willingness to trying something new in order to be more user-centered.

Within my dissertations an embracing of these strategies can be seen within gallery activities where little instruction is given and groups are encouraged to interpret objects through their own expertise and in curatorial programs that include interpretive programs, written by participant-artists who are English language learned and often young children, that honor first person perspective with no edits or revisions in order to sound more professional and/or mature.

By designing gallery activities that include blank spaces, creating open-ended art-making prompts, and creating data composites space is made for "multiple perspectives or voices to be layered into conversation" (Koke & Ryan, 2017, p. 50); authority is shared, challenging traditional expertise, in order to highlight multiple perspectives. Multivocality itself is a decolonizing practice where through the development of co-created narratives, there exists "…a dissembling of museum exhibits from static…to open-endedness and multivocality" (Tolia-Kelly, 2016, p. 907).

One decolonizing act was exemplified within in-gallery learning where there was a movement away from the historical knowledge about the artwork or in curatorial practice there was a shift to including more authors in developing wall texts and interpretation. More specifically, in the *Museum as Sanctuary* exhibitions there existed instances where narratives were multiplied and points of view were varied ultimately broadening what kind of objects on view in art museums, including works created by refugees, youth, and novice artists. However, it is not enough to create space for these exhibitions, but it must also lead to more critical conversations about how institutions present and interact with ideas, artists, and community groups.

Amy Lonetree (2012) discusses strategies of decolonizing museums in relation to indigenous populations and legacies of colonialism, however, her ideas can be extended to various populations who have been subjugated and produced through colonial power struggles—such as refugees. Engaging with multivocal narratives is one way for art museums to begin to decolonize museums "…through truth telling in exhibition spaces…" (Lonetree, 2011, p. 41) whereby traditionally silenced or ignored experiences are shared. Lonetree (2012) warns "But this does not happen overnight" (p. 165), and changing narratives and ways of practice within art museums is not immediate. Nevertheless, *MaS* could become one small step in the direction of a decolonizing multivocal museum practice. Edu-curators can work to support these decolonizing narratives by ensuring that privileged groups do not speaking for another, encourage shared authority between museum professionals and program participants, and shift from the singular to the multiple.

Question Two:

What multivocal narratives are revealed when refugee populations and edu-curators actively engage in and collaborate on museum programming?

The narratives presented in this study diverge from the expected or perhaps even the desired refugee stories. The fragments discussed within this dissertation are not narratives of trauma but rather open up dialogue to the ways in which refugees access, use, explore, navigate, and create within art museums to more than their status or past experiences. Remaining fixed on these issues of trauma so frequently displayed and shared within museums, media, and in contemporary venues society continues to perpetuate the singular narrative of refugees as victims. In this study I have attempted to make space for participant-artist texts that do not fit into the a prescribed narrative, which resulted in stories that were self selected rather than directed towards a specific topic.

I identified three overarching themes emerging during my analysis and interpretation:

- narratives of the changing concepts of self as recorded in autobiographical exhibition texts;
- narratives highlighting the participants' artistic processes and their nuanced relationships to materials and the artistic process culled from object descriptions;
- and narratives of difference, dialogue, and agency occurring within in-gallery learning, ultimately making the museum a space of multivocal performances.

For participants, these co-constructed and multivocal narratives highlight an increasing comfort within the museum. The museum becomes a safe space to experiment with ideas and materials, negotiate with one another, and reflect on themselves.

In the I am poems there is a movement to defining oneself as more than their country of origin, their refugee status, or their age, but rather an interest in focusing on their daily lives and details that occur in a specific setting such as their classroom or at the museum. As comfort builds within materials the collage reflections on process include first descriptions of color and how an artwork was created. However, the later comments about process include symbolism and how they felt while making the artwork. As participants become more at home within the museum, I become more aware of my discomfort. For myself, the edu-curator, there is a persistence of anxiety that I am not adhering to the expected museum practice. I will now discuss these three ideas further and address their implications for museum practice.

First, I would like to address the idea of multivocality within the museum broadly by affirming that art and culture are inherently political. Embracing, displaying, and incorporating diverse narratives from refugees in art museum programming and exhibitions helps to rethink structures where change is constant, migration is global, and voices from the margins are valued. Within this structure, voices are amplified and narrative fragments illuminate shifting ways of knowledge production where there is a movement away from singular and dominant ways of knowing to multiple and divergent ones. Museum exhibitions and programs thus become action-oriented forms of discourse for broadening how we see, understand, interpret, and produce knowledge.

I urge museum professions to reconsider the way they frame engagement with diverse audiences. For instance, rather than designing programs with the intention of reaching wider demographics, how might programming engage *with* audiences to

develop sustaining relationships? In this way, the amplification of multiplicities is a way of disrupting static practices where all involved are positioned as co-learners and experts.

Multivocality, exhibitions, and in-gallery learning. Incorporating oral histories and diverse voices within exhibitions broadens and diversifies interpretation. In this way, the concept of multivocality questions what kind of expertise is being shared and how works of art are relevant in today's society.

In chapter 5.3, I explored the idea of a postmodern museum that sought to balance the need for a product with a focus on process. These community-based exhibitions experimented with installation approaches borrowing more from salon style hangings (constellations) rather than the modernist curatorial strategy of privileging or accenting a single object. Rather than continuing with traditional object-based learning in museums I experimented with in-gallery activities that were conversational and open-ended. Objects in art museums have the potential to exist as active entities and gateways for dialogue to create an environment where different ideas can be exchanged. These conversations and negotiations between different ideas were explored in chapter 5.4, where a performance of knowing and learning was visible through moments of adaptation, destruction, and discord.

Question Three:

How do these narratives change over time?

Over time the included the two-year period during which I gathered and studied data included for this study, there was an increased comfort to share multiple correlating and divergent ideas, which was made visible through the variety of in-gallery learning experiences. These engagements with objects also became more critical and complex

over time—a change also seen in the autobiographical descriptions that participant-artists created. As presented in chapter 5.2, the boundary event manifested itself within in-between moments resulting in instances of growth and change highlighting evolving voice, reflections and observations that shifted from literal to abstract, and evolving conceptions of identity.

It is my hope that as these narratives from participants evolve with increased comfort levels, multivocality also begins to take hold institutionally –impacting that way exhibitions are developed, collections are cultivated, and new programs are begun. In my role as an edu-curator within art museums, working to change the tone and equity in museum narratives has encouraged me to re-consider standards and values in relation to privilege when working with immigrant and refugee audiences. Specifically it has brought home the importance of creating space, within interpretive strategies, to (a) tell multiple, and sometimes conflicting, histories, (b) be aware of representation within exhibitions and select objects that are created by artists from diverse backgrounds, and (c) continuously plan for ways in which participants might narrate stories rather than being told what the edu-curator assumes to be the important story.

Research as a Multivocal Boundary Event

The voices presented and the narratives created in *MaS* and this dissertation show how, from identifying and working through boundary events, museums can be multivocal spaces where meaning making is collective and narratives voiced are collaborative. However, what I have presented in this dissertation was still rooted to the voices of individual participants (chapters 4.0-4.2) and eventually began to intermingle reflecting the overlap between community and museum (chapters 5.0-5.5). It is in these latter

articulated but singular-authorless moments where the true multivocal narratives emerged—narratives of identity, process, and performance that explored creativity and knowledge from many varied perspectives all at once.

In the field of qualitative studies, I hope to see more opportunities to engage with deconstructed and decolonized collaborative narratives—where truth is constructed through the multiple rather than the individual illustrating that "…qualitative inquiry is no longer stable or coherent" (St. Pierre, 2009, p. 225). With particular implications for qualitative studies in museums, I hope this study illustrates methods where individuals are no longer privileged and instead are placed in concert with one another–where individual reflections are woven together to illuminate multivoiced narratives *between* museums, and communities emerge.

Delimitations and Identifying Further Areas for study

The boundary event is a multivocal, multivalent moment, or series, of transformative transitions. Embracing these encounters yields discomfort, confusion, and anxiety, but if art museum educators and museum users can lean into this unknown to embrace the ebb and flow of adaptation, destruction, and discord, then growth, change, and creativity can result in a unequaled performance of the balancing of process and product. Further research is needed to explore more closely these instances of unsettling and settling as related to how multivocal narratives can emerge within other museum-based programming such as outreach and studio-based encounters. Additionally, more in-depth conversations with educators, collaborators, and participant-artists would more fully flesh out the narratives manifested within the museum space. Other potential areas

for exploration include comparisons with sustained engagement with various audiences and further investigations into what types of language acquisitions programs and collaborations with immigrant communities thrive in museums. In my future research, I am interested in exploring how programs like *MaS* and the concept of multivocality, or the act of expanding narratives, can impact other museum-based initiatives, exhibitions, and pedagogical practices.

In conclusion, I urge museum practitioners and researchers to lean into the boundary event. This space of elsewhere and in-between "…keeps the creative potential of a new relationship alive between strategic nationality and transnational political alliance" (Minh-ha, 2011, p. 112) whereby the art museum educator or edu-curator is loyal to both and neither museum and community—only honoring the overlap between multiple entities.

APPENDIX A:
Exquisite Corpse Activity

Exquisite Corpse Activity
Collaborative Poem/Story Gallery Activity Worksheet

Instructions

1. Write one sentence about the work, use the guiding questions below to help start brainstorming
2. Fold over paper to hide your sentence from the next group
3. On the next line write the last word of your sentence
4. Rotate to next work
5. Repeat

Guiding Questions

- What is going on in this work?
- What does it look like?
- What do the texture, line, color, and shapes look like?
- What story does the work tell?
- What is the first thing that comes to mind when you look at this work? Explain.
- How does it make you feel? Explain.
- What is your favorite part? why?
- What is your least favorite part? why?

APPENDIX B:
Voices Activity

Voices Activity
Collaborative Gallery Activity

Instructions

1. *Describe the artwork*

   Write down least three words that describe the work

2. Have a conversation with the artwork

   Create at least two exchanges between you and the work
   Artwork says…

   You say…

   Artwork says…

   You say…

3. Become the artwork

   What might becoming the artwork look like?

   What might you say?

   How would you feel?

Writing Your Own Label

Your labels will help provide someone looking at your artwork more information about the work and you as an artist - be sure to make clear what is going on in the work and any details you might want to share with someone looking at your art.

Artist Name:	**Where you were born:**	**Year you were born:**

Title of work:	**Year work was created:**

Materials Used:

Description of work: Think about what you might want to tell someone about your artwork. What is the work about? How did you feel when you made it? **Remember that this description should be something you would be comfortable sharing with a stranger viewing your artwork**

REFERENCES

Albers, J. (1971). *Interaction of color* (Abridged edition). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Altman, R. (2008). *A Theory of narrative*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Anderson, G. (Ed.). (2012). *Reinventing the museum: The evolving conversation on the paradigm shift* (2nd edition). Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Annan, K. A. (2010, June 17). The myth of "never again." *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/18/opinion/18iht-edannan.html

Appiah, K. A. (2007). *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a world of strangers* (Reprint edition). New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.

Assche, C. van (Ed.). (2016). *Mona Hatoum*. London: Tate.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1982). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. (M. Holquist, Ed., C. Emerson, Trans.) (Revised edition). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Barron, S. (1997). European artists in exile: A reading between the lines. In *Exiles emigres: The flight of European artists from Hitler* (pp. 11–29). Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Betancourt, V., & Salazar, M. (2014). Engaging Latino audiences: Visitor studies in practice at The Denver Art Museum. In J. B. Acuff & L. Evans (Eds.), *Multiculturalism in art museums today* (pp. 181–196). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Bishop, L., & Watson, A. (2012). Dissonance. In R. Green, S. Cushman, & C. Cavanagh (Eds.), *The Princeton encyclopedia of poetry and poetics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Black, G. (2005). Developing new audiences. In *The engaging museum: Developing museums for visitor involvement* (1st edition, pp. 46–73). New York, NY: Routledge.

Blommaert, J., Collins, J., & Slembrouck, S. (2005). Spaces of multilingualism. *Language & Communication*, *25*, 197–216. doi:10.1016/j.langcom.2005.05.002

Bodo, S. (2012). Museums as intercultural spaces. In R. Sandell & E. Nightingale (Eds.), *Museums, equality and social justice* (pp. 181–191). Cambridge, MA: Routledge.

Bourriaud, N. (1998). *Relational aesthetics* (Les Presses Du Reel edition). Dijon: Les Presse Du Reel,Franc.

Bryne, G. (2017). Narrative inquiry and the problem of representation: "giving voice", making meaning. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, *40*(1), 36–52. doi:10.1080/1743727X.2015.1034097

Butler, J. (1015). *Senses of the subject*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press.

Butler-Kisber, L. (2010). *Qualitative inquiry: Thematic, narrative and arts-informed perspectives*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.

Cage, J., & Gann, K. (2013). *Silence: Lectures and writings, 50th anniversary edition* (50th Anniversary ed. edition). Middletown, CT: Wesleyan.

Chambers, I., Angelis, A. D., Ianniciello, C., Orabona, M., & Quadraro, M. (Eds.). (2016). *The postcolonial museum: The arts of memory and the pressures of history*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Chase, S. E. (2005). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition, pp. 651–679). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Chew, R. (2002). Community roots. In American Alliance of Museums (Ed.), *Mastering civic engagement: A challenge to museums*. Washington, DC: American Alliance of Museums Press.

Chinn, C. (2006). Exhibit Process > Wing Luke Museum. Retrieved November 1, 2016, from http://www.wingluke.org/exhibit-process

Choi, J. (2016). *Creating a multivocal self: Autoethnography as method*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Cimoli, A. C. (2014). From representation to participation: The voice of the immigrants in Italian migration museums. *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, *6*(3), 111–121.

Clandinin, D. J. (Ed.). (2006). *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (1st edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Clandinin, D. J., Caine, V., Lessard, S., & Huber, J. (2016). *Engaging in narrative inquiries with children and youth*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research* (1st edition). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 40–59). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Clifford, J. (1997). *Routes: travel and translation in the late twentieth century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Conaty, G. T. (2003). Glenbow's Blackfood Gallery: working towards co-existence. In A. K. Brown & L. Peers (Eds.), *Museums and source communities: A Routledge reader* (1st edition, pp. 227–241). New York, NY: Routledge.

Connelly, M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experiences and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, *19*(5), 2–14. doi:10.2307/1176100

Cotter, H. (2016, March 17). Making museums moral again. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/17/arts/design/making-museums-moral-again.html

Cuno, J. (2011). *Museums matter: In praise of the encyclopedic museum*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Czajkowski, J. W., & Hill, S. H. (2008). Transformation and interpretation: What is the museums educator's role? *Museum Education Roundtable*, *33*(3), 255–263. doi:10.1080/10598650.2008.11510607

De Fina, A., & Georgakopoulou, A. (2008). Analysing narratives as practice. *Qualitative Research*, *8*(3), 379–387. doi:10.1177/1468794106093634

De Fina, A., & Georgakopoulou, A. (2011). Narrative as interaction. In *Analyzing narrative: discourse and sociolinguistic perspectives* (pp. 86–124). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press Textbooks.

Demos, T. J. (2001). Duchamp's Labyrinth: "First Papers of Surrealism", 1942. *October*, *97*, 91–119. doi:10.2307/779088

Denzin, N. (2003a). Critical performance pedagogy. In *Performance ethnography* (pp. 223-241). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Denzin, N. (2003b). The call to performance. In *Performance ethnography* (pp. 3-24). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. (2017). *Summary of Refugee Admissions* (Office of Admissions - Refugee Processing Center). Retrieved from http://www.wrapsnet.org/admissions-and-arrivals/

Desai, D. (2010). Unframing immigration: Looking through the educational space of contemporary art. *Peabody Journal of Education*, *85*(4), 425–442. doi:10.1080/0161956X.2010.518031

Diversi, M., & Moreira, C. (2009). *Betweener talk: Decolonizing knowledge production, pedagogy, and praxis*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Diversi, M., & Moreira, C. (2012). Decolonizing constructions of childhood and history: interrupting narratives of avoidance to children's questions about social justice. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *25*(2), 189–203. doi:10.1080/09518398.2011.649703

Diversi, M., & Moreira, C. (2013). Real word: Classroom as decolonizing sites against neoliberal narratives of the other. *Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies*, *13*(6), 469–473. doi:10.1177/1532708613503771

Diversi, M., & Moreira, C. (2016). Performing betweener autoethnographies against persistent us/them essentializing: Leaning on a Freirean pedagogy of hope. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *22*(7), 581–587. doi:10.1177/1077800415617208

Duncan, C. (1995). *Civilizing rituals: Inside public art museums*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Duncan, C. (2004). From the princely gallery to the public art museum: The Louvre Museum and the National Gallery, London. In D. Preziosi & C. Farago (Eds.), *Grasping the world: The idea of the museum* (pp. 250–278). Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing.

Evans, C. (2014). The impact of the participatory, visitor-centered model on curatorial practice. *Journal of Museum Education*, *39*(2), 152–161.

Everette, M. C., & Barrett, M. S. (2011). Benefits visitors derive from sustained engagement with a single museum. *Curator The Museum Journal*, *54*(4), 431–446. doi:10.1111/j.2151-6952.2011.00108.x

Executive Order: Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States.. (2017, January 27). Retrieved May 31, 2017, from https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/01/27/executive-order-protecting-nation-foreign-terrorist-entry-united-states

Executive Order: Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States. (2017, March 6). Retrieved May 31, 2017, from https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/03/06/executive-order-protecting-nation-foreign-terrorist-entry-united-states

Fairclough, N. (2003). Introduction. In *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research* (pp. 1–18). New York, NY: Routledge.

Farrar, C., & Pegno, M. (2017). Multivocal, collaborative practices in community-based art museum exhibitions. In P. Villeneuve & A. R. Love (Eds.), *Visitor-centered exhibitions and edu-curation in art museums*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Gallery of Conscience. (n.d.). Retrieved August 21, 2017, from http://www.internationalfolkart.org/about/our-history/gallery-of-conscience.html

Gardner, H. (2011). *Frames of mind: the theory of multiple intelligences*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Garoian, C. (2001). Performing the museum. *Studies in Art Education*, *42*(3), 234–248.

Garoian, C. R. (2011). The exquisite corpse of arts-based research. In N. K. Denzin & M. D. Giardina (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry and global crises* (pp. 155–177). Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Ghorashi, H. (2007). Giving silence a chance: The importance of life stories for research on refugees. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *21*(1), 117–132. doi:10.1093/jrs/fem033

Gibson-Graham, J. (2008). Diverse economies: performative practices for "other worlds." *Progress in Human Geography*, *32*(5), 613–632. doi:10.1177/0309132508090821

Giroux, H. A. (2000). *Impure acts: the practical politics of cultural studies*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Golding, V. (2012). Comment: an unlikely match: on the curator's role in the social work of the museum. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, *27*(3), 214–216. doi:10.1080/09647775.2012.708575

Golding, V., & Modest, W. (Eds.). (2013). *Museums and communities: Curators, collections and collaboration*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic.

Goodman, S. T., & Silver, K. E. (2013). *Chagall: Love, war, and exile*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Goodnow, K., Lohman, J., & Marfleet, P. (2008). *Museums, the media and refugees: Stories of crisis, control and compassion*. New York, NY: Berghahn Books.

Greene, B. K., Jay P., & Bowen, D. H. (2013, November 23). Art makes you smart. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/24/opinion/sunday/art-makes-you-smart.html

Gutierrez, S., & Rasmussen, B. (2014). Code-switching in the art museum: Increasing access for English Language Learners. In J. B. Acuff & L. Evans (Eds.), *Multiculturalism in art museums Today* (pp. 145–160). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Harmon, K. (2005). Self-exile and the career of Marc Chagall. *Hedgehod Review*, *7*(3), 60–66.

Harris, G. (n.d.). U.S. Quietly Lifts Limit on Number of Refugees Allowed In. Retrieved May 31, 2017, from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/26/us/politics/united-states-refugees-trump.html?nytmobile=0

Hirzy, E. (1992). Master civic engagement: A report from the American Association of Museums. In *Excellence and equity: Education and the public dimension of museums* (pp. 9–20). Washington, DC: American Association of Museums.

Hirzy, E., & Pitman, B. (2004). *New forums: Art museums & communities*. The AAM Press, American Association of Museums.

Hooper-Greenhill, E. (1994). *The educational role of the museum*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hooper-Greenhill, E. (2000). *Museums and the interpretation of visual culture*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hubard, O. (2015). *Art museum education: Facilitating gallery experiences* (1st edition). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hutchinson, M. (2013). "Shared authority" collaboration, curatorial voice, and exhibition design in Canberra, Australia. In V. Golding & W. Modest (Eds.), *Museums and communities: curators, collections and collaboration* (pp. 143–162). New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic.

Iervolino, S. (2013). Museums, migrant communities, and intercultural dialogue in Italy. In V. Golding & W. Modest (Eds.), *Museums and communities: curators, collections and collaboration* (pp. 113–128). New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic.

Immigration Museum. (2016). *About us*. Retrieved November 7, 2016, from https://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/about-us/

Insecurities: Tracing Displacement and Shelter | MoMA. (n.d.). Retrieved November 6, 2016, from https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1653

Islamic Art Now: Contemporary Art of the Middle East | LACMA. (n.d.). Retrieved August 21, 2017, from http://www.lacma.org/art/exhibition/islamic-art-now-contemporary-art-middle-east

Jackson, A. Y., 1968, & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (Eds.). (2009). *Voice in qualitative inquiry: Challenging conventional, interpretive, and critical conceptions in qualitative research*. New York: Routledge.

Jorgensen, K. M., Canal, M., & Klee, N. (2014). The multivoiced classroom - A storytelling ethics approach to management education. In K. M. Jorgensen & C. Largacha-martinez (Eds.), *Critical Narrative Inquiry: Storytelling, Sustainability and Power* (pp. 217–227). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers.

Jorgensen, K. M., & Largacha-martinez, C. (2014). Critical narrative inquiry - storytelling, sustainability and power. In K. M. Jorgensen & C. Largacha-martinez (Eds.), *Critical narrative inquiry: Storytelling, sustainability and power* (pp. 1–13). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers.

Karp, I. (1992). Introduction: Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture. In S. D. Lavine, I. Karp, & C. M. Kreamer (Eds.), *Museums and communities: The politics of public culture*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Kendig-Lawrence, J. (2010). In our own image stories of refugee youth. In O. Guntarik (Ed.), *Narratives of community: Museums and ethnicity* (pp. 128–145). Edinburgh, UK: MuseumsEtc.

Kinsley, R. P. (2016). Inclusion in museums: a matter of social justice. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, *31*(5), 474–490. doi:10.1080/09647775.2016.1211960

Koke, J., & Ryan, K. (2017). From consultation to collaboration: Mechanisms for integrating community voices into exhibition development. In P. Villeneuve & A. R. Love (Eds.), *Visitor-centered exhibitions and edu-curation in art museums* (pp. 47–56). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Kreps, C. (2006). Non-Western models of museums and curation in crosscultural perspective. In *A Companion to Museum Studies* (pp. 457–472). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Kretzmann, J. P. (2003). Asset-based community development. In K. Christensen & D. Levinson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of community: From the village to the virtual world* (pp. 67–68). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Lannes, P. (201, May 23). Calta21: A model for bridging museums and immigrant English learners [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://incluseum.com/2013/05/23/calta21-a-model-for-bridging-museums-and-immigrant-english-learners/

Lonetree, A. (2012). *Decolonizing museums: Representing Native America in national and tribal museums*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

Lynch, B. T. (2011). Collaboration, contestation, and creative conflict: On the efficacy of museum/community partnerships. In J. Marstine (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to museum ethics: Redefining ethics for the twenty-first century museum* (pp. 146–163). Routledge.

Malin, H. (2013). Making meaningful: Intention in children's art making. *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, *32*(1), 6–17. doi:10.1111/j.1476-8070.2013.01719.x

McLean, K. (2004). Museum exhibitions and the dynamics of dialogue. In G. Anderson (Ed.), *Reinventing the museum: The evolving conversation on the paradigm Shift* (pp. 193–211). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

MeLa Research Field 06 - Envisioning 21st century museums (Ed.). (2015). MeLa Final Brochure: European museums in an age of migrations. The MeLa Project. Retrieved from www.mela-project.eu

Minh-ha, T. T. (2010). *Elsewhere, within here: Immigration, refugeeism and the boundary event*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Minh-ha, T. T. (2016). The image and the void. *Journal of Visual Culture*, *15*(1), 131–140. doi:10.1177/1470412915619458

Mizzi, R. (2010). Unraveling researcher subjectivity through multivocality in autoethnography. *Journal of Research Practice*, *6*(1).

MoMA | Cadavre Exquis (Exquisite Corpse) with Yves Tanguy, Joan Miró, Max Morise, and Man Ray. Nude. 1926–27. (n.d.). Retrieved August 16, 2017, from https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/max-ernst-levade-the-fugitive

Moreira, C. (2011). Tales of Conde: Autoethnography and the body politics of performative writing. *Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies*, *11*(6), 586-595. doi:10.1177/1532708611426114

Moreira, C., & Diversi, M. (2013). Betweeners speak up: Challenging knowledge production through collaborative writing and visceral knowledge in decolonizing times.

International Review of Qualitative Research, *5*(4), 399–406. doi:10.1525/irqr.2012.5.4.399

Moreira, C., & Diversi, M. (2014). The coin will continue to fly: dismantling the myth of the lone expert. *Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies*, *14*(4), 298–302. doi:10.1177/1532708614530300

Nashashibi, S. M. (2003). Visitor voices in art museums. *The Journal of Museum Education*, *28*(3), 21–25. doi:10.1080/10598650.2003.11510487

New Exhibition (Husarstalden) - Art in Exile | Museet for Samtidskunst. (n.d.). Retrieved August 21, 2017, from http://samtidskunst.dk/en/news/new-exhibition-husarstalden-art-exile

Nicks, T. (2003). Introduction. In A. K. Brown & L. Peers (Eds.), *Museums and source communities: A Routledge reader* (pp. 19–27). New York, NY: Routledge.

O'Doherty, B., & McEvilley, T. (2000). *Inside the white cube: The ideology of the gallery space* (Expanded edition). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Oikonomidoy, E. (2010). Zooming into the school narratives of refugee students. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *12*(2), 74–80. doi:10.1080/15210960.2010.481186

Onciul, B. (2013). Community engagement, curatorial practice, and museum ethos in Alberta. Canada. In V. Golding & W. Modest (Eds.), *Museums and communities: Curators, collections and collaboration* (pp. 79–97). New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic.

Onciul, B. (2015). *Museums, heritage and indigenous voice: Decolonizing engagement*. New York, NY: Routledge.

O'Reilly, C., & Parish, N. (2015). Telling migrant stories in museums in Australia: Does the community gallery still have a role to play? *Museum Management and Curatorship*, *30*(4), 296–313. doi:10.1080/09647775.2015.1044461

Parati, M. (2014). Performance in the musuem space (for a wandering society). In I. Chambers, A. D. Angelis, C. Ianniciello, M. Orabona, & M. Quadraro (Eds.), *The Postcolonial Museum: The Arts of Memory and the Pressures of History* (pp. 99–108). Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing.

Park, E., Caine, V., McConnell, D., & Minaker, J. (2016). Ethical Tensions as Educative Spaces in Narrative Inquiry. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *17*(2, Art. 25), 41 paragraphs.

Pellegrino, M., & Sather, K. (in press). Look Who's Talking. In *Neon Words: Light Up Your Writing!*

Pratt, M. L. (1992). *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London ; New York: Routledge.

Ravelli, L. (2006). *Museum texts: Communication frameworks*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Refugees, U. N. H. C. R. (2017). Figures at a Glance. Retrieved August 15, 2017, from http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html

Refugees, U. N. H. C. for. (n.d.-b). Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016. Retrieved August 20, 2017, from http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/5943e8a34/global-trends-forced-displacement-2016.html

Rizvi, F., Lingard, B., & Lavia, J. (2006). Postcolonialism and education: Negotiating a contested terrain. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, *14*(3), 249–262. doi:10.1080/14681360600891852

Roberts, L. (1997). *From knowledge to narrative: Educators and the changing museum*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books.

Rogoff, I. (2000). Bodies. In *Terra infirma: Geography's visual culture* (1st edition, pp. 144–170). New York, NY: Routledge.

Ruanglertbutr, P. (2016). Utilising art museums as learning and teaching resources for adult English language learners: The strategies and benefits. *English Australia Journal*, *31*(2), 3-29.

Sabeti, S. (2015). "Inspired to be Creative?": Persons, objects, and the public pedagogy of museums. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *46*(2), 113–128. doi:10.1111/aeq.12094

Sabeti, S. (2016). Writing creatively in a museum: tracing lines through persons, art objects and text. *Literacy*, *50*(3), 141–148. doi:10.1111/lit.12079

San Diego Museum of Man. (n.d.). Race: Are We So Different? Retrieved November 6, 2016, from http://www.museumofman.org/exhibits/race-are-we-so-different/

Sandell, R. (2016). Museum work as human rights work. In *Museums, moralities and human rights* (1st edition, pp. 135–162). New York, NY: Routledge.

Sandell, R., Dodd, J., & Garland-Thomson, R. (Eds.). (2010). *Re-Presenting Disability: Activism and Agency in the Museum*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Schorch, P., Waltson, J., Priest, N., & Paradies, Y. (2015). Encountering the "Other": Interpreting student experiences of a multi-sensory museum exhibition. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *36*(2), 221–240. doi:10.1080/07256868.2015.1008432

Serrell, B. (2015). *Exhibit labels: An interpretive approach* (2nd edition). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Shoemaker, M. K. (1998). “Art is a wonderful place to be”: ESL students as museum learners. *Art Education*, *51*(2), 40–45.

Silverman, L. H. (2010). *The social work of museums* (1st edition). New York, NY: Routledge.

Simon, N. (2010). *The participatory museum* (1st edition). Museum 2.0.

Sinha, S., & Black, L. (2014). Making methods sociable: Dialogue, ethics and authorship in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, *14*(4), 473–487. doi:10.1177/1468794113490717

Skartveit, H.-L., & Goodnow, K. (Eds.). (2010). *Changes in museum practice: New media, refugees and participation* (1st edition). New York, NY: Berghahn Books.

Skrbiš, Z., & Woodward, I. (2013). Networks, cosmoscapes and encounters. In *Cosmopolitanism: Uses of the idea* (pp. 53–74). London, UK: SAGE Publications.

Smith, H. J. L., Ginley, B., & Goodwin, H. (2012). Beyond compliance? Museums, disability and the law. In R. Sandell & E. Nightingale (Eds.), *Museums, equality and social justice* (pp. 59–71). Cambridge, MA: Routledge.

Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples* (2nd edition). London, UK: Zed Books.

Smith, R. (2014). *Young Somali women and narrative participatory photography: Interrupting fixed identities through Dumarka Soomaaliyeed voices unveiled* (Doctorate). The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Spivak, G. C. (1999). Literature. In *A critique of postcolonial reason: toward a history of the vanishing present* (1st edition, pp. 112–197). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

St. Pierre, E. A. (2009). Afterword: Decentering voice in qualitative inquiry. In A. Y. Jackson & L. A. Mazzei (Eds.), *Voice in qualitative inquiry: Challenging conventional,*

interpretive, and critical conceptions in qualitative research (pp. 221–236). New York, NY: Routledge.

Stein, J. K., Garibay, C., & Wilson, K. E. (2008). Engaging Immigrant Audiences in Museums. *Museums & Social Issues*, *3*(2), 179–196.

St.Pierre, E. A. (1997). Circling the Text: Nomadic Writing Practices. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *3*(4), 403–417. doi:10.1177/107780049700300403

The AjA Project | About. (n.d.). Retrieved November 6, 2016, from http://ajaproject.org/html/organization.html

The MeLa* Project - MeLa Research Project. (n.d.). Retrieved November 6, 2016, from http://www.mela-project.polimi.it/

UNHCR Global Trends - Forced displacement in 2016. (n.d.). Retrieved August 20, 2017, from http://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2016/

van Doesburg, T. (2007). Towards a constructive poetry. In L. R. Lippard (Ed.), *Dadas on art: Tzara, Arp, Duchamp and Others* (Reprint edition, pp. 113–115). Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.

Villeneuve, P., & Erickson, M. (2012). Beyond the constructivist museum: Guided interaction through an exhibition interface. *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, *4*(2), 49–64.

Villeneuve, P., & Love, A. R. (Eds.). (2017). *Visitor-centered exhibitions and edu-curation in art museums*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

Villeneuve, P., & Love, A. R. (2015). Turning point: Visitor-centered exhibitions and edu-curation in art museums, call for submissions. Retrieved November 1, 2016, from

http://arted.fsu.edu/turning-point-visitor-centered-exhibitions-and-edu-curation-in-art-museums-call-for-submissions/

Villeneuve, P., & Viera, A. (2014). Multiculturalism and the Supported Interpretation (SI) model: Embracing cultural diversity through inclusive art exhibitions. In J. B. Acuff & L. Evans (Eds.), *Multiculturalism in art museums today* (pp. 81–94). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Visual Thinking Strategies. (n.d.). Retrieved January 1, 2017, from http://www.vtshome.org/what-is-vts/method-curriculum--2

Wake, D. A., & Perreault, A. (2016). Whose voices? *Museum Management and Curatorship*, *31*(1), 10–16. doi:10.1080/09647775.2016.1117235

Weekes, T., Phelan, L., Macfarlane, S., Pinson, J., & Francis, V. (2011). Supporting successful learning for refugee students: The classroom connect project. *Issues in Educational Research*, *21*(3), 310–329.

Winchester, O. (2012). A book with its pages always open? In R. Sandell & E. Nightingale (Eds.), *Museums, equality and social justice* (1st edition, pp. 142–155). New York, NY: Routledge.

Witcomb, A. (2013). Testimony, memory, and art at the Jewish Holocaust Museum, Melbourne, Australia. In V. molding & W. Modest (Eds.), *Museums and communities: Curators, collections and collaboration* (pp. 260–274). New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic.