



TALES FROM THE SUBURBAN GARDEN
The Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project:
Constructing Community Cohesion through Horticultural
Practice

An Exegesis submitted by

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ABSTRACT

This practice-led research, as an example of social practice, will culminate in the development of a community project in the form of sustainable garden plots. The proposal has unearthed the following questions. Is it feasible to foster an altruistic engagement process with neighbours and others in the broader suburban community for the purpose of building companionship and security? Is it also possible, to create a garden as ‘artwork’, being an activity that relates to the everyday? To support this research and answer these questions, the theories of Relational Aesthetics and participatory practice and theory are engaged as they are the theoretical frames that position the outcomes of the research within contemporary artistic discourse. The creative objective was demonstrated through collaborative and cohesive exercises of shared stories and memories and shared garden produce and or products yielded from plant life. Oftentimes these shared products were matured through sustainable and historical horticultural practices. The intention of engaging others in a participatory exercise was to establish a community network for connectiveness that potentially could extend beyond our respective garden gates to permeate other neighbourhoods. The rationale was to unpack the concept of the encounter and to acknowledge the importance of maintaining memberships within a social network. Through this research it emerged that staying connected is a necessity for personal wellbeing, this proved significant, as the project was developed during the period of a global pandemic that saw long periods of enforced physical distancing.

This paper discusses the research objectives in creating lasting social networks substantiated by relational and participatory art principles promoting participants’ engagement with their garden spaces and other residents to assist others, to develop a healthier sense of self and to build personal resilience, through a sustainable form of community identity.

CERTIFICATION OF EXEGESIS

I Therese Bernadette Hethorn, declare that the Doctoral exegesis, TALES FROM THE SUBURBAN GARDEN. The Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project: Constructing Community Cohesion through Horticultural Practice is not more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references, and footnotes. The exegesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this exegesis is my own work.

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Student and supervisors' signatures of endorsement are held at the University.

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INTRODUCTION

The proposition of the research for this Doctorate of Creative Arts was initially examined through analysis conducted for a previous Master's dissertation entitled, *The Tingalpa Community Garden Project 2017*. This research has progressed from those initial concepts investigated in the Master's degree to this doctoral study focusing primarily on Relational Aesthetics and participatory art, as they are the primary theoretical fields that frame the field of research. This is due to the multi-faceted nature and broad interpretation by both theorists and critics within the relational and participatory disciplines. This relates to the maturation of the relational concept, driven by changing social perspectives derived from challenges such as the need to be sustainable in our interactions with nature, and a global pandemic, that required people to remain in their homes. Collaborative art projects afford profound opportunities for considered participatory impute, expression, and fruitful discussion¹. These are the primary aspects of this practice-led research as it positions and justifies the outcomes within the relational aesthetic contemporary field it is engaged with.

The studio outcome of the research will be managed via this same approach, consisting of gardening activities and the subsequent sharing of any produce harvested, with willing participants. The purpose of this is to create the cohesive, neighbourhood community and to incite relational dialogue between participants². The initial approach to establishing these relationships will be engineered through stories gathered, that relate to their gardening and neighbourhood experiences, (from childhood through to the current day). While the principal exercise of produce swapping will be guided by their acceptance of the sharing nature of the participatory concept. To engage deeply with participants and their stories, an autoethnographic methodology will be utilised and the collected research subsequently analysed through a mixed method approach. The mixed method inclusive of both qualitative knowledge (participant's stories and identification of similarities and diversity within

¹ G. Kester, (a) (*Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (updated edition, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2011), 151.

² Initially the project was a community garden, but after working with the Brisbane City Council for a period of 4 years, complying with all governance processes, the Council determined that they would not support any new community garden projects, citing concerns with toxins in the soil. For this reason, the garden project was restructured.

communities and instances of connections and gardening as healing tools) and quantitative data (the analysis breakdown in statistics) is applicable in this instance as it will assist in clarifying the learned insights, and understanding, of the demography of a modern, urban neighbourhood. This will include suggested strategies that may assist with future social networking for the wellbeing of individuals, which in turn can further positively impact the community as a whole. This is specifically integral given the current status of social isolation as a measure to abate local COVID transmissions. A participatory project such as this practice-led research, nurtures two corresponding elements of development and aesthetic outcome. Firstly, a garden as a substantial participatory platform and secondly, the creative visual attributes of community partnerships. It is therefore the intent of this research to respond to the following questions:

- 1. In the current age of assumed societal insularity, is it important and therefore possible to create and sustain personable and connected neighbourhood relationships, specifically via the creative act of shared horticultural practice?*
- 2. In what ways can relational and/or participatory practice be measured to determine success in this project?*

This practice-led research project is concerned with the observations and documentation of community connections grounded within a participatory art project. This will materialise through gardening activities and the exchange of home grown produce as a way of building community connectivity and shared experience. These exchanges will be conducted through practice actioned by both artist (as facilitator) and participants (as co-creators) in a relational exercise, identified by the concordant activities of the acceptance of/ or swapping of produce. While the gardens and gardening activities house creative merit³, the primary creative aesthetic outcome will be the photographic evidence (documentation) of the exchanges between the human participants. The photographs will be presented in a journal, (Volume II A & B of this submission) inclusive of creative works inspired by the garden, annotated notes, personal thoughts and articles that relate to community networks, and gardening as well as documented observations of participants within their spaces,

³ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art* (Albany, New York University Press, 1993), 69.

noting their adopted practices. These practices may be grounded in participants' history or interests and therefore may influence how their social exchanges evolve, for example a retired neighbour choosing to mow on a weekday, so he/she does not cause a disturbance on the weekend for residents who work during the week. On reflection, it would seem that the history of participants' garden practices appears to deepen their connection to their gardens and their enjoyment of gardening. The social network that is designated to become the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, will comprise mostly neighbours, working in their own spaces and engaging via the exchange of garden produce or items offered to them. My garden space is the primary supportive site, (Figure 0.1)⁴, discussions ensued on the types of produce and or species, participants would like to receive, this provided confidence in that any items harvested, would be readily accepted.



Figure 0.1: Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project, T. Hethorn, 2021

The 'garden as artwork' has offered something new to society by taking a seamlessly simple idea of a garden and using it as a vehicle to create increased connectiveness amongst the community it directly affects. In this case the garden not only becomes a place to grow food for nourishment, but acts as a meeting point for people to gather, share and connect through their individual stories. This is one of the reasons why the garden in this instance, is 'not' an ecological arts project that

⁴ T. Hethorn, *Untitled*, 2021.

deals with socio-political environmental concerns. Rather the garden, becomes a neutral space for participants to feel physically connected through sharing in a safe space, in our current world of endless disconnection through technological advancement. This is the primary original research outcome that has come from this research as the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* is the first participatory garden project in Brisbane and Queensland. What this artwork demonstrates that through using an everyday, familiar activity, allows for a platform of engagement to occur that extends and expands upon the Relational Aesthetic field in order to make a contribution to new knowledge. What it also does is brings the idea of artwork, traditionally isolated within gallery and museum spaces, and positions them within the familiar, and everyday spaces of the community, breaking down hierarchical positions, allowing everyone to hold a vital position within the work. Such outcomes posit the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* as an important outcome that demonstrates that even within participatory art – the material of the project is secondary to the inter-connect-ness of the individuals participating in the work, which is a central premise in relational aesthetic-based arts practice.

The participants were interviewed and asked a series of questions (Ethics Approval No. H20REA094, UniSQ Ethics Department). These questions were devised to encourage earnest discussion and memorable storytelling to determine if and how gardening activities can support personal identity, wellbeing and resilience. This was to determine how or if the sensation of wellbeing may translate to the broader community. It is hoped that the intrinsic sensation of a healthy notion of self, both in identity and esteem, is bolstered by the establishment of community networking. The depth of the relationships that develop as a result of the study, are integral to the success of this type of project, as it is evident that the fundamental theories of Relational Aesthetics, (that being the construction of a welcoming scenario that supports ongoing encounters), are being actively applied. This is in line with outcomes from recent theoretical studies that suggest platforms that offer continued opportunities for social encounters, are effective in nurturing the ongoing wellbeing for self and others⁵. American professor John Cacioppo details the importance of maintaining connections for continued good health and wellbeing,

⁵ M. Ledwith, & J. Springett, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change* (Bristol, Policy Press, 2010), 88.

both emotive and physiological, in his book, *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connections* 2008, co-authored with American science writer William Patrick⁶. Cacioppo's research will be further utilised in this exegesis to substantiate the participatory concept in the garden project.

The uniqueness of this specific project lies in the profundity of social engagement, irrespective of the number of participants, the number of participants does not determine the worthiness of this study, as relational scenarios are measured in terms of the quality of the encounter and not the quantity of participants⁷. Therefore, the establishment of profound engagement is the preferential research outcome. As stated previously, the methodology best suited to a project such as a garden and the accompanied research on community interconnection is autoethnography. In this way, I will position myself as both a reflective observer and learner. The project was devised following the reflection of personal experiences growing up in a working-class suburban neighbourhood in Brisbane during the 1970s. The structure of families and financial circumstances of some at that time, encouraged social connectivity and necessary assistance on occasions. Central to these connections was the sharing of food items that had been grown and nurtured in backyard vegetable plots. At that time, people engaged regularly with their garden spaces and produced items such as vegetables, fruits, flowers, cuttings, seeds, and even eggs from backyard chicken runs, which were kindly offered and gratefully accepted. Sustainability was a common practice, and many households operated an active compost heap, while garden beds were often established in septic tanks, no longer in use following the implementation of sewage infrastructure by the Brisbane City Council between 1961 and 1975⁸. It was evident that the central focus of these connections was the swapping or giving of items that provided physical nourishment for the maintenance of good health. This notion is echoed in the Hierarchy of Needs concept devised by American psychologist, Abraham Maslow in 1943. Food is a

⁶ J. Cacioppo, & W. Patrick, *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connections* (New York City, W.W. Norton and Company, 2008), 11.

⁷ The book *Relational Aesthetics* was initially published in 1998, but was not translated to English until 2002. This is the edition that is being drawn on to underpin the project attached to this exegesis and will be referenced with an (a). N. Bourriaud, (a). *Relational Aesthetics*, (Dijon, Les Presses du Reel, 2002), 17.

⁸ N. Bochenski, 'Time tunnel: Brisbane's oldest sewer pipe a "gift" from 1915' *Brisbane Times* (14 Aug. 2015), para. 18, <https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/queensland/time-tunnel-brisbanes-oldest-sewer-pipe-a-gift-from-1915-20150814-gizh52.html>, accessed 14 March 2021.

fundamental necessity for survival and the retention of wellbeing for all living entities⁹. On a personal note, the mantra that underpinned this ideal, was stated regularly by the formidable women in my life, that, ‘if you grow your own food, you will never go hungry’. It is these words that drive the autoethnographic direction of this project and as such, will be central to the emergent interconnectedness of the community network. The art of reflection and or contemplative practice is based on the studies of American philosopher and professor Donald Schon. Schon describes it as a circular process¹⁰ that originates from an initial idea and/or thoughts that relate to a perceived issue, in this instance the need for personable and supportive interactions within the community. The reflections incite discussions (informal interactions with those in the neighbourhood) and dialogue (formal interactions with others within the academic field) that incite deeper reflection to appreciate the lessons learned which ultimately impact the resultant outcomes¹¹. The history of the method, which emerged at a similar time as Relational Aesthetics, (during the period of the 1980s)¹², came about as social researchers were seeking robust outcomes, inspired by the connectivity with their subjects, choosing to enact investigations with an empathetic mindset in a bid to better understand diverse perspectives¹³. This was in opposition to accepted theories based on statistical data that had been employed in the past¹⁴. The process draws on applications of ethnographic and autobiographical

⁹ K. Cherry, ‘Hierarchy of Needs: The Five Levels of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs’ *Awaken* (Dec. 2015), para. 2, <https://awaken.com/2015/12/hierarchy-of-needs-the-five-levels-of-maslows-hierarchy-of-needs>, accessed 14 March 2021.

¹⁰ D. A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*. (New York City, Basic Books, Inc., 1983), as cited in F. Lee, ‘F. Rogue Academy: Conversational Art Events as a Means of Institutional Critique’. PhD thesis, University of Tasmania, 2016, <https://eprints.utas.edu.au/23042/>, accessed 13 March 2021.

¹¹ E. Barrett, ‘Experiential Learning in Practice as Research: Context, Method, Knowledge’, *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 6/ 2, 121, <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/routledg/jvap/2007/00000006/00000002/art00004>.

¹² C. Ellis, & A.P. Bochner, ‘Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity’. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln Eds., *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., Thousand Oaks, Sage, 2000), 733 – 768, as cited in, C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A.P. Bochner, ‘Autoethnography: An Overview’, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para.,2, (Jan.2011). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>, accessed 12 March 2021.

¹³ M.R. Grumet, ‘Existential and phenomenological foundation’, in W.F. Pinar & M.R. Grumet eds., *Toward a poor curriculum*, (Dubuque, Kendall Hunt, 1976), 31-50, as cited in, E. Lyle., ‘A Process of Becoming: In Favour of a Reflexive Narrative Approach’, *The Qualitative Report*, 14/ 2, (Memorial University of Newfoundland, June 2009), 297, pp. 293-298, <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR14-2/lyle.pdf>, accessed 14 March 2021.

¹⁴ A.P. Bochner, ‘Perspectives on inquiry II: Theories and stories’, in M.L. Knapp & G.R. Miller eds., *Handbook of interpersonal communication*, (Thousand Oaks, Sage, 1994), 21 – 21, as cited in C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A.P. Bochner, ‘Autoethnography: An Overview’, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para. 3, (Jan. 2011), <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>, accessed 12 March 2021.

traits and utilises the researcher's experiences as a basis to incite stories and memories from participants during an interview or less formal discussion¹⁵. With the garden project, the autoethnographic methodological approach to collecting data will be analysed using a mixed formula inclusive of both qualitative and quantitative knowledge. This approach assists in gaining further insights into neighbourhoods and the strategies required to encourage social networking and cohesion for the specific purpose of maintaining wellbeing for those participants, which it is anticipated will further impact the greater community. This method too, provides a more substantial platform of support, as the outcomes are reached through two avenues, that being qualitative (statistical information) and quantitative (personal narratives shared by participants) data stores¹⁶. American scholar, Valerie Caracelli defines the mixed approach to analysis as one that allows a deeper insight into the research content. In turn, she suggests that this manner of working provides a greater confidence in the findings, as the outcomes are supported through differing strands of analysis, giving a comprehensive result¹⁷.

The Relational Aesthetic framework that supports and guides the direction of this research project, was identified by French curator, Nicolas Bourriaud in the latter stages of the 20th century¹⁸. The theory underpinned and defined a selection of the creative works appearing at the *Traffic* 1996 Biennial in Bordeaux France, curated by Bourriaud¹⁹. The rationale from the exhibiting contemporary artists such as Thai national, Rirkrit Tiravanija and American artists Vanessa Beecroft and Christine Hill

¹⁵ D.N. Caulley, 'Making qualitative research reports less boring: The techniques of writing creative nonfiction', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 14/3, (2008), 424-449, as cited in C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A.P. Bochner, 'Autoethnography: An Overview', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/ 1, para.12, (January 2011), <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>, accessed 12 March 2021.

¹⁶ M.D. LeCompe. & J.J. Schensul, *Analysis and Interpretation of Ethnographic Data: Mixed Methods Approach: Ethnographer's Toolkit*. (Book 5, 2nd Edition, Plymouth, AltaMira Press, 2013), 12.

¹⁷ V. Caracelli in Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research, *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, R. Burke Johnson, A. J. Onwuegbuzie, L.A Turner, Vol. 1 No. 2 (April 2007) p.p.112-133, Sage Publications, Doi 10.1177/1558689806298224 accessed 6 November 2022.

¹⁸ Artspace Editors, 'What Is Relational Aesthetics? Here's How Hanging Out, Eating Dinner, and Feeling Awkward Became Art', *Artspace Magazine*, para. 1, (Sept. 8, 2016), https://www.artspace.com/magazine/art_101/book_report/what-is-relational-aesthetics-54164, accessed 16 May 2021.

¹⁹ N. Papastergiadis, 'Collaboration in Art and Society: A Global Pursuit of Democratic Dialogue' in J. Harris ed., *Globalisation and Contemporary Art* (1st Edition, West Sussex, Willey-Blackwell, 2011), 275.

was that the artwork or formations²⁰, were staged specifically, to actively incorporate audience members and have them engage directly with the artists and their respective scenarios. Bourriaud utilised the term ‘formation’ as it suggested an extension of the concept ‘form’²¹. Form denotes the platform and/or fundamental structure that in turn supports the formation and relational interactions²². This concept was developed to reinforce the importance of viewers in the appreciation and consequential legitimisation of art, and to also understand and investigate the concept of relations and contemporary social constructs as an aesthetic commodity²³.

The participatory concept has profound historic groundings, such as in the work of French Dadaist, Marcel Duchamp who investigated the notion in the early stages of the 20th century,²⁴ through the conceptual displaying of mass objects as artistic form, which he termed *Readymades*. The artist mused that he had created a ‘kinship with the merchant’²⁵. His connections ran deeper however, than the one conducted with the supplier of his materials²⁶. In the demonstration of his work, *Fountain* 1917 (Figure 0.2)²⁷, his philosophy was to display the work in a way that required audiences to adopt alternate viewpoints to summons a sincere appreciation of the form. In this way; Duchamp incorporated the gallery space within the scope of the work. He termed this concept the ‘*Co-efficient of Art*’, a collaborative practice that connected artist and audience, to build a relationship with the work, offering a considered physical space so audiences could engage and interpret the form for themselves— as opposed to the artist’s intention²⁸. This is important, as it creates consolidation that is reached through personal experiences, forming the basis for

²⁰The term coined by Bourriaud to define the relational scenario, N.Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 21.

²¹ N. Bourriaud, (a). *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon, Les Presses du Reel, 2002), 17, as cited in, A. Hollinger Lindley, ‘Relating to Relational Aesthetics’, Senior Theses, Pomona College Claremont, 2009, 16, Paper 37, http://scholarship.claremont.edu/pomona_theses/37, accessed 9 March 2021.

²² N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 21.

²³ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 14.

²⁴ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 26.

²⁵ N. Papastergiadis, ‘Collaboration in Art and Society: A Global Pursuit of Democratic Dialogue’, *Globalisation and Contemporary Art* in J. Harris ed., 277.

²⁶ N. Papastergiadis, ‘Collaboration in Art and Society: A Global Pursuit of Democratic Dialogue’, *Globalisation and Contemporary Art* in J. Harris ed., 276.

²⁷ W. Cromar, ‘Alfred Stieglitz. American, 1864-1946. Fountain, photograph of sculpture by Marcel Duchamp’ Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) *Creative Commons*, (2004), <https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/e912dcfb-d8d8-4473-bf2d-fcfcb77fad1> accessed 3 November 2021.

²⁸ N.Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 29.

profound appreciation²⁹. Duchamp provided the opportunity for intrinsic engagement by showcasing the object's form³⁰, achieving this by laying the work on its back and by utilising the necessary physical space and accessibility to incite a sensation of connection³¹. Duchamp understood the role an audience played in terms of validating artwork, in that artwork requires an uninterrupted gaze, consideration and critique of an audience to endorse form as valid and expressive³².



Figure 0.2: *Fountain - Urinal readymade, Marcel Duchamp 1917*

Duchamp is considered influential to the participatory concept³³, and in the investigation of fundamental avenues for exchange between artist, as facilitator and the viewer as participant³⁴. This idea can also be seen in French philosopher Roland Barthes's essay, *Death of an Author* 1977 where he concluded that in the modern age, a work made public should be analysed by an audience based on their own ideals and experiences and not on the contextual considerations of the author: 'The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its

²⁹ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 27.

³⁰ F. Kleiner, 'Europe and America 1900 to 1946: Artists on Art Futurist Manifestos', *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History* (13th Edition. Belmont, Thomas Wadsworth, 2009), Chapter 35, 930.

³¹ F. Kleiner, 'Europe and America 1900 to 1946: Artists on Art Futurist Manifestos', *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History*, Chapter 35, 930.

³² N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 41.

³³ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 26.

³⁴ K. Ruhrberg, 'Revolt and Poetry' in I.F Walther ed., *Art of the 20th Century Volume I – Painting* (Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 130 – 131.

destination'³⁵. Barthes suggests that the reasoning for this is to develop the viewers' capacity to engage deeper with creative works, alluding to the notion that the author acts as a conduit or presenter of information to be disseminated by each observer through their personal perspectives and understanding, 'the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author'³⁶. This notion reflects that of Duchamp, in that he extended an open invitation to his audiences for viewing by providing broad physical space so maximum engagement and discernment could be reached. This was recognition of the co-creator role viewers played in the arts³⁷.

Rirkrit Tiravanija, is a contemporary, artistic pioneer in the participatory practice genre, facilitated by his signature work, *Untitled (Free)* 1992, (Figure 0.3)³⁸ first staged at the 303 Gallery in New York City³⁹. The premise of cooking a traditional meal of Pad Thai and sharing it with audience members was inspired by real-life events⁴⁰, where Tiravanija would cook a hearty meal for his artist colleagues on a Friday evening, during the lean financial periods, at a time they were endeavouring to establish their practice within the competitive New York City arts scene⁴¹. He did this knowing it was possibly the only decent meal his colleagues had consumed that week, but it was also an opportunity to engage with them in meaningful creative and life discussions. Conscious of the fact that these conversations would not only extend his knowledge, but also that of his colleagues, which in turn would enhance their practices⁴². Tiravanija, realising the depth of social and cultural characteristics that were generated by the dining concept,

³⁵R. Barthes, 'Image, Music, Text', *The Death of the Author* (London, Fontana, 1977), 148, <https://sites.tufts.edu/english292b/files/2012/01/Barthes-The-Death-of-the-Author.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2021.

³⁶ R. Barthes, 'Image, Music, Text', *The Death of the Author* (London, Fontana, 1977), 148, <https://sites.tufts.edu/english292b/files/2012/01/Barthes-The-Death-of-the-Author.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2021.

³⁷ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 26.

³⁸ Figure shows a recreation of *Untitled (Free)* 2007. Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0). Researchgate, *Rirkrit Tiravanija Untitled (Free) 1992 – 2007* (2013), https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Rirkrit-Tiravanija-Untitled-free-1992-2007-Courtesy-of-the-artist-and-Gavin-Browns_fig2_307796598, accessed 3 November 2021.

³⁹ MoMA, *Rirkrit Tiravanija: Untitled (free/still) 1992/1995/2007/2011*. (2021), <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/>. Accessed 13 May 2021.

⁴⁰ R. Tiravanija, QAGOMA, Rirkrit Tiravanija Brisbane interview [video], YouTube (7 Dec, 2010), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lx2i9Vqw6vA>, accessed 9 March 2021.

⁴¹ QAGOMA, *21st Century: Art in the First Decade*, edited by Miranda Wallace. (Brisbane, Qagoma, 2010), 36.

⁴² R. Tiravanija, QAGOMA, Rirkrit Tiravanija Brisbane interview [video], YouTube (7 Dec, 2010), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lx2i9Vqw6vA>, accessed 9 March 2021.

recreated it in collaboration with a gallery audience, (which would incorporate a diverse and comprehensive demography, in consideration of the broad makeup of



Figure 0.3: *Untitled (Free)*, Rirkrit Tiravanija 1992

gallery visitors) and with the similar intention that they too would engage with each other and extend their perspectives in terms of how they view the world⁴³. This would materialise through the socialisation that ensued, during and following the enjoyment of a meal with others, whom they previously did not know. The concept of engaging with the everyday is a fundamental component of relational work, the situation, or formation is generally grounded in real or daily events⁴⁴.

The artworks that align with the tenets of Relational Aesthetics are described by Nicolas Bourriaud as ‘no longer presented to be consumed within a monumental time frame and are open for a universal public’⁴⁵. This statement suggests that upon participating with a relational work, either actively or from the fringe, the engagement extends beyond that of the time spent with the work, in that it is something that will continue to remain present in the thoughts of the co-creators, in part owing to their connectivity and the connective element of the work⁴⁶. In the early 1990s, relational work began to emerge; partially due to the global political

⁴³ R. Tiravanija, QAGOMA, Rirkrit Tiravanija Brisbane interview [video], YouTube (7 Dec, 2010), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lx2i9Vqw6vA>, accessed 9 March 2021.

⁴⁴ P. Helguera, ‘Community’ *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Technique Handbook* (Kindle Edition, New York City, Jorge Pinto Books Inc., 2012). Location 32.

⁴⁵ G. Kester, (b), *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2011), 29:2.

⁴⁶ P. Helguera. ‘Community’ *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Technique Handbook*, Location 792.

shifts occurring within Russia and Eastern Europe⁴⁷. Walls tumbled, and checkpoints and borders, (erected following World War II in 1945) were dissolved, allowing those who had been previously restricted to travel, giving them the freedoms to investigate new shores and discover different ways of being⁴⁸. Despite wanting to experience change, some immigrants struggled with a loss of identity as a result of their shifting residencies and the loss of borders that had acted as a boundary defining their cultural identity⁴⁹. These shifts provided some artists with an opportunity to explore an alternate function of art and to investigate differing avenues of exhibition⁵⁰ that redefined the way they conducted their practice⁵¹. These artists and their specific ways of working, were seen to emerge as empathetic facilitators within a real-life scenario which sought to incorporate viewer engagement and create an intimate relationship with their audiences⁵² by navigating the societal changes that emerged – due to those choosing to migrate and/or travel to experience new environments and liberties that were unfamiliar and perhaps difficult to navigate. An example of this concept was a work staged by Danish artist Jens Haanings, *Turkish Jokes* 1994 (Figure 0.4).⁵³ The work comprised the erecting of



Figure 0.4: *Turkish Jokes*, Jens Haanings 1994

⁴⁷ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 3,

https://monoskop.org/File:Bishop_Claire_Artificial_Hells_Participatory_Art_and_the_Politics_of_Spectatorship_2012.pdf, accessed 17 April 2021.

⁴⁸ N. Thompson, 'Living as Form', in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*. (New York City, Creative Time Books, 2012), 30.

⁴⁹ N. Thompson, 'Living as Form', in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*, 31.

⁵⁰ N. Thompson, 'Living as Form' in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*, 32.

⁵¹ P. Helguera, 'Community' *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Technique Handbook*, Location 149.

⁵² N. Papastergiadis. 'Collaboration in Art and Society: A Global Pursuit of Democratic Dialogue' in J. Harris ed, *Globalisation and Contemporary Art*, 276.

⁵³ J. Haanings, *Turkish Jokes*, (2002) <http://jenshaaning.com/download.html>, accessed 23 November 2021.

loud speakers within a Copenhagen public square by Haanings, who then proceeded to broadcast amusing stories in the Turkish language. The outcome was that only Turkish migrants, or those having a command of the language, had an appreciation of the antidotes, thus creating a micro collective within the wider community. The intention of the artist, was to bolster a sensation of identity to those who felt like outsiders in an unfamiliar space⁵⁴. There is a similar element that appears in Haaning's work that can be recognised within the neighbourhood garden network, in that a micro community is identified sited within a larger entity⁵⁵ where the artwork is closely aligned with traditional participatory arts practice strategies of art 'as' engagement through collective participation through an activity. Bourriaud defines the term micro community as a definitive group that is brought together by a collective interest, however, he does suggest that a micro community is not a lasting experience⁵⁶. This was the case with the garden project, in that items such as seeds or produce, were shared by participants, beyond the scope of the primary community and as such the garden becomes an open-ended art activity.

During this period also, artists were looking to maintain avenues of self-expression as a counter measure to the digital communications, a component of innovative technology emerging at that time. These modes of communication were considered impersonal⁵⁷. In stating this however, technology too, was an effective mode to both document and subsequently display the interactive events by production of, either digital stills or video recordings that captured the primary creative visage⁵⁸. The concept of the scenario or platform would seemingly dissipate, and become the supportive but secondary artwork, as the image of the relational connections were the predominant creative focus. For this research, the gardens form the relational scenarios or platforms that bring together and support the primary aesthetic being the encounters that manifest between community members. This was initiated by conducting interviews and documenting stories that were shared through

⁵⁴ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*. 17.

⁵⁵ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 17

⁵⁶ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 17

⁵⁷ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 14.

⁵⁸ B. S. Bunt, *Bourriaud and the aesthetics of electronic interaction* (Faculty of the Creative Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, Archive Papers, University of Wollongong, 2009), 5, <https://ro.uow.edu.au/creartspapers/253/>, accessed 16 May 2021.

this process and the subsequent digital images that show participants either swapping garden items with others or being active within a garden space (Figure 0.5)⁵⁹



Figure 0.5: Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project, T Hethorn, 2021

American professor Amy Elias presents her analysis of Bourriaud's theories, referring to the emergence of the ideals as a new age. Framing the redefinition of relationships as a now universal concept⁶⁰ citing global events during the early period of the new millennium as the catalyst. Tragedies such as 9/11 in New York City, the subsequent war on terror, the financial recession and the consequential flow on to the world in some way, was due in part to the technological advances that enabled events to be broadcast instantaneously⁶¹. The response from the arts sector was to develop a creative vocabulary⁶² that underpinned human unification⁶³. Words such as collaboration, participation and relationships became commonplace within galleries through the creation of empathetic formations that encouraged and

⁵⁹ T. Hethorn, *Untitled*, 2021.

⁶⁰ A.J. Elias, 'The Dialogical Avant-Garde: Relational Aesthetics and Time Ecologies', *Contemporary Literature*, 53/ 4, (University of Wisconsin Press Winter. 2012), 738, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41819535>, accessed 10 February 2021

⁶¹ A.J. Elias, 'The Dialogical Avant-Garde: Relational Aesthetics and Time Ecologies', *Contemporary Literature*, 53/ 4, (University of Wisconsin Press Winter. 2012), 739, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41819535>, accessed 10 February 2021.

⁶² A.J. Elias, 'The Dialogical Avant-Garde: Relational Aesthetics and Time Ecologies', *Contemporary Literature*, 53/ 4, (University of Wisconsin Press Winter. 2012), 739, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41819535>, accessed 10 February 2021.

⁶³ A.J. Elias, 'The Dialogical Avant-Garde: Relational Aesthetics and Time Ecologies', *Contemporary Literature*, 53/ 4, (University of Wisconsin Press Winter. 2012), 738, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41819535>, accessed 10 February 2021.

supported human engagement⁶⁴. The term ‘universal’, as such is an inherent component of the relational charter, in that the work can provide a platform for equality and an opportunity for exchange, irrespective of personal perspectives or affiliations⁶⁵. An exemplar that showcases equal opportunity for collaboration within a community enterprise is the Endless Orchard, 2004 – ongoing (Figure 0.6)⁶⁶ facilitated by American arts group, Fallen Fruit⁶⁷.



Figure 0.6: Endless Orchard, Fallen Fruit 2004 - ongoing

The project comprises the planting of fruit trees with the assistance of residents, in urban neighbourhoods, initially in the artist’s native Los Angeles and eventually extending throughout European centres such as Madrid, Spain⁶⁸. The work is important as it provides participants with an opportunity to beautify their own neighbourhoods, giving them a sense of ownership and identity, as well as knowing they are providing food trees for the enjoyment of the community and itinerant population that inhabit major cities on a global front⁶⁹. The projects developed by Fallen Fruit, also incorporate sustainable practice, through the mass planting of trees and organic preparation of the soil. The work facilitated by American ecological artist Alan Sonfist, and his garden, *Time Landscape* 1972

⁶⁴ G. Kester, *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*, 2.

⁶⁵ N. Papastergiadis. ‘Collaboration in Art and Society: A Global Pursuit of Democratic Dialogue’ in J. Harris ed., *Globalisation and Contemporary Art*, 277.

⁶⁶ C. Wei, ‘This Art Group Installs pick your own Fruit Parks around Los Angeles’, NPR: The Salt June 13 2017, <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/06/13/532142377/this-art-group-installs-pick-your-own-fruit-parks-around-los-angeles>, accessed 3 November 2021.

⁶⁷ Fallen Fruit, *Hope Builders: Fallen Fruit* - PBS PSA for KVCR thru DGA WSC [video] (Jan 14, 2020), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOdzjkzIQ6o>, accessed 12 March 2021.

⁶⁸ Fallen Fruit, *Endless Orchard* (2020) <https://endlessorchard.com>, accessed 12 March 2021.

⁶⁹ Fallen Fruit, *Hope Builders: Fallen Fruit* - PBS PSA for KVCR thru DGA WSC [video] (Jan 14, 2020), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOdzjkzIQ6o>, accessed 12 March 2021.

(Figure 0.7)⁷⁰, situated in Manhattan, New York City, embodies the same philosophy of working with and not against nature by the cultivating of species of native trees (prevalent in colonial times but since dissipated) within the urban space⁷¹.



Figure 0.7: *Time Landscape*, Alan Sonfist, 1972 - ongoing

Regarding the garden project, and as determined by personal observations, a sound sustainable way of working, appears to be a principal ingredient of some participant's gardens. As such, there is a requirement to investigate artists who adopt sustainability within their creative endeavours. This necessitates a review of the work of artists such as Fallen Fruit, and Alan Sonfist to garner a deeper understanding of the alluring nature of caring for a garden or being present in a natural environment. This is integral as a supportive concept to this doctoral practice-led research given that, if engagement with a garden site is a profound experience for participants, the likelihood is that this will influence human encounters of substance also⁷². Australian philosopher Damon Young documents in his book *Philosophy in the Garden* 2012, describes the rich history of relationships between gardens and humans, referencing Aristotle who suggested that the construction of a garden and the ongoing maintenance provided evidence of the concordant relationship between humans and nature, and showing the depth of human creativity and vitality⁷³. A further example of this ideal is reiterated by the research of American professor Mara

⁷⁰ Wikimedia, 'Time Landscape of New York by Alan Sonfist (1965)' Text of Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License, *Commons*. (2021) https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alan_Sonfist_Time_Landscape_of_New_York.jpg, accessed 3 November 2021.

⁷¹ M. Rosenthal, C. Field (ed.), *Alan Sonfist, Indoor Out: Environmental Art*, Gli Ori, Florence, Italy, 2010, Chpt 2, 'Earth as Public Monument'.

⁷² S. Thompson, & L. Corkery, B. Judd, *the Role of Community Gardens in Sustaining Healthy Communities*, Faculty of the Built Environment, UNSW, (2007), 7, <http://soac.fbe.unsw.edu.au/2007/SOAC/theroleofcommunitygardens.pdf>, 16 May 2021.

⁷³ D. Young, *Philosophy in the Garden* (Melbourne University Publishing, 2012), 6.

Miller who found that gardening activities underscore serenity and personal satisfaction, extending a supportive platform for the resolution of tension, both in a social construct and as an intrinsic experience⁷⁴.

The investigation of sustainable practice in the arts occurred during the early period of the 1970s⁷⁵, evolving from the movement termed Land Art (and/or Earthworks) which was established in the mid-20th century as a response to the dispositional mindset of the 1960s. The artists drew correlations between human wastefulness and changes that occur naturally within the landscape⁷⁶. The elements of Land Art and Earthworks were essentially the construction of large projects situated within a natural location by either utilising materials local to the site, or positioning work of foreign materials, such as American artist Nancy Holt's *Sun Tunnels* 1976⁷⁷ (Figure 0.8)⁷⁸. Situated within the Great Basin Desert, Utah. Holt's work comprised four concrete pipes approximately 5.5 m in length and 2.75 m in diameter, that were orientated in a cross formation. They had been aligned to succinctly frame the sun when on the horizon, during the occasions of the Northern Hemisphere's summer and winter solstices⁷⁹. The artist drilled holes in the body of the pipes to reflect the constellations of Draco, Perseus, Columba, and Capricorn within the interiors of the work. Holt's philosophy was to deliver the concept of space to her audience and to furnish them with an appreciation for the vastness of the universe but from the standpoint of their earthly environment⁸⁰.

⁷⁴ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, 54.

⁷⁵ S. J. Kagan, *The Practice of Ecological Art* (15 Feb. 2014), *Researchgate*, 1, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274719395>, accessed 16 May 2021.

⁷⁶ S. J. Kagan, *The Practice of Ecological Art*. (15 Feb., 2014). *Researchgate*, 1 <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274719395> accessed 16 May 2021.

⁷⁷ C. Kron, *The Story behind "Sun Tunnels," Nancy Holt's Land Art Masterpiece* (2018) <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-story-sun-tunnels-nancy-holts-land-art-masterpiece>, 16 May 2021.

⁷⁸ Wikimedia, 'Nancy Holt Sun Tunnels 1973', *Commons* (n.d.), [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nancy_Holt,_Sun_Tunnels,_1973-1976_\(7841426122\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nancy_Holt,_Sun_Tunnels,_1973-1976_(7841426122).jpg), accessed 3 November 2021.

⁷⁹ Dia:, *Nancy Holt, Sun Tunnels Great Basin Desert, Utah* (1995) <https://www.diaart.org/visit/visit-our-locations-sites/nancy-holt-sun-tunnels>, accessed 16 August 2021.

⁸⁰ Holt Smithsonian Foundation, *Sun Tunnels* (2021) <https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/sun-tunnels>, accessed 25 October 2021.



Figure 0.8: Sun Tunnels, Nancy Holt 1976

A second seminal artwork created in situ from local materials and the work most referred to in clarifying Land Art, is *Spiral Jetty* 1970 (Figure 0.9)⁸¹, created by American artist Robert Smithson. The work depicts a spiral motif 460m long, 4.6m wide, constructed using basalt rock and salt crystals, when on completion jutting out from the edge of the Great Salt Lake in Utah⁸². The spiral, a common motif in Smithson's work, is an Archimedean symbol, the assumption being that the artist was inspired to replicate it due to his interests in geometry and logic⁸³. It was also thought it may have been attributed to a curiosity about mysticism, (the clockwise spiral is the universal symbol of growth)⁸⁴. American professor Edward Shanken, however suggests that as well as geometry and logic, there was an alternate rationale for the use of the symbol. Smithson created spirals that were both clockwise and anti-

⁸¹ Wikimedia, 'Spiral-jetty from Rozel-Point' *Commons* (2021), <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Spiral-jetty-from-rozel-point.png>, 3 November 2021, this file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic license.

⁸² Dia:, *Great Salt Lake Utah* (1995), <https://www.diaart.org/visit/visit-our-locations-sites/robert-smithson-spiral-jetty>, accessed 14 March 2021.

⁸³ R.L. Chianese. (n.d). 'Spiral Jetty Changeable, perhaps even erasable, by time, how permanent should Earth art be?' *American Scientist*, <https://www.americanscientist.org/article/spiral-jetty>, accessed 16 May 2021.

⁸⁴ E. A. Shanken, 'Broken Circle and Spiral Hill? Smithson's Spirals Paraphysics Syzygy and Survival' *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative Research*, 11/1 (2013), 6, doi: 10.1386/tear.11.1.3_1.

clockwise, and Shanken suggests that this related to the artist's gravitation toward understanding entropy⁸⁵, not the metaphysical⁸⁶.



Figure 0.9: Spiral Jetty, Robert Smithson 1970

The evolution from Land Art to work that showcases sustainable practice has been shaped by the effects of climate change, and scientific studies that reveal the current fragility of the earth⁸⁷. Sustainable practice has become prevalent in the late 20th and 21st centuries, as society adopts mindful and respectful care practices when spending time in natural environments. This noted shift in the arts has been investigated by Sonfist and his contemporaries and significant practitioners in this field of work. American artists, Bonnie Ora Sherk, and Agnes Denes, their collective working methodology was linked with co-creators and sustainability and the outdoors. These artists, whose practices will be discussed further in Chapter Four, opted to work in unison with their chosen environment, to echo the movement that is in pace with the rhythmic ebb and flow of the seasons and the natural attrition that occurs, (for example the dropping of leaves or tree limbs)⁸⁸. This was in opposition to working in a way that manipulated, modified or removed items from the location

⁸⁵ Entropy is the attrition process of change from one form to another, Smithson, gives an example for this as the man-made concrete highways that invade natural landscapes, alter the mineral content of said landscapes. B. Finger, *Modern Art: The Groundbreaking Moments* (Munich, Prestel, 2012), 184.

⁸⁶ E. A. Shanken, 'Broken Circle and Spiral Hill? Smithson's Spirals Paraphysics Syzygy and Survival' *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative Research* 11/1 (2013), 6, doi: 10.1386/tear.11.1.3_1.

⁸⁷ S. J. Kagan. 'The Practice of Ecological Art', *Researchgate* (15 Feb. 2014), 1. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274719395>, accessed 16 May 2021.

⁸⁸ M. Rosenthal, C. Field (ed.), *Alan Sonfist, Indoor Out: Environmental Art*, Gli Ori, Florence, Italy, 2010, preface.

in which they situated their work ⁸⁹. This practice expresses a deep regard for nature, acknowledging the richness of art materials offered by the natural world, media can be acquired from this source, yielding items such as charcoals, clays and pigments⁹⁰. This too provides an opportunity for viewers to not simply acknowledge the serenity, and flow of natural environments that appear to bolster emotional wellbeing, but to engage with natural materials in the creative process⁹¹. Those who choose to garden, are well-versed in these organic practices, such as the non-use of pesticides, allowing insects and birds to thrive and choosing to improve soils through the recycling of garden and/or kitchen waste. Through personal observations, I have developed a keener sense of nurturing these characteristics and have endeavoured to implement them in my own space, opting to investigate and apply harmonious ways of working with, not against nature. It should be noted however, that while sustainable and organic practices are utilised by some of the garden participants, and this approach is beneficial for the environment, the *Murarrie Neighbour Garden Project* does not actively draw on the theories of the eco or environmental art movements. While parallels can be drawn, for instance the garden is indeed a natural environment being tended to, the eco and environmental art movements are grounded in socio – political theories⁹², looking to highlight the plight of the marginalised in society, while this specific community neighbourhood, garden project is shaped by the principles of Relational Aesthetics, in a bid to encourage a social aesthetic of encounters among participants.

This exegesis will comprise five chapters that will discuss different aspects of the research culminating with the conclusion. Collectively the aim is for these to demonstrate the academic merits of relational and participatory work within the creative field of ‘art’ and as a conduit for the broader community to support and mature partnerships and create social networks for the purpose of wellbeing, resilience and robust self-identity within a suburban space. Chapter One: *Studio practice – the practice-led project as the basis for creative research* will discuss the

⁸⁹ M. Rosenthal, C. Field (ed.), *Alan Sonfist, Indoor Out: Environmental Art*, Gli Ori, Florence, Italy, 2010, introduction.

⁹⁰ *Art in the Land: A Critical Anthology of Environmental Art*, edited by A. Sonfist (Kindle edition, New York City, E.P. Dutton Incorporated, 1983), Location 4058.

⁹¹ M. Rosenthal, C. Field (ed.), *Alan Sonfist, Indoor Out: Environmental Art*, Gli Ori, Florence, Italy, 2010, chpt 5.

⁹² S. J. Kagan. *The Practice of Ecological Art*, Researchgate (15 Feb. 2014), 1. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274719395>, accessed 21 August 2022.

studio artwork inclusive of the working methodology used in this project. Specifically, further investigation of autoethnography as an effective methodology of proffering a foundation for projects derived from the artist's history and experiences. This provided a platform from which to develop the qualitative research data. This methodology succinctly underpins the community exchanges I experienced as a child growing up in suburban Brisbane. I observed the cessation of this practice when change permeated the urban landscape that involved people relocating as their family dynamic evolved, and the subsequent demolition of older properties that has seen the construction of apartment blocks (as a way of abating urban sprawl) on the vacant land, removing the backyard space that I had access to during my childhood. This participatory based artwork is about using garden practice as a way to reinvigorate the community encounters and to replicate those that occurred years ago at a time when connections with neighbours were conducted as a means of ensuring people were safe and secure, (this is a necessity as we negotiate the shift in the suburban landscape). The artwork strategically uses the Relational Aesthetic frame as a way of connecting the practice-led research to the historical and contemporary field of this avant-garde practice.

Chapter Two: *Literature review* will discuss seminal literature in the field as a way of positioning the research within both historic and contemporary debates. Collectively these selected writings represent a link to past theories that anchor the relational concept within the artistic vernacular that suggesting substantiality within this type of arts practice. The current literature delineates the emergent ideals and how the concept is continually adapting to meet contemporary societal perspective to ensure the ongoing presence of the arts within the community as a means of supporting ongoing emotional equilibrium⁹³. The theorists whose work is discussed in this chapter regarding relational and/or participatory concepts are Nicholas Bourriaud, American professor Grant Kester, and American curator and author, Nato Thompson. Theorists such as Swiss professor Ettiene Wenger and British professors Margaret Sedwick and Janet Springer, who have authored books on community and the importance of developing networks within them, make them a necessary

⁹³ F. Matarasso. 'Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts' (1997), 8, <https://www.artshealthresources.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/1997-Matarasso-Use-or-Ornament-The-Social-Impact-of-Participation-in-the-Arts-1.pdf>, accessed 15 May 2021.

inclusion in this chapter to explicate the ideals anchored within the garden project, as with the theories of the autoethnographic methodology, as defined by the work of American professors Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams and Arthur Bochner. will be discussed. In support of the notion of a garden as ‘art’, the thesis of American professor Mara Miller will be drawn on as it best represents a theoretic frame of the inherent aesthetic characteristic within gardens that engages and interconnects with humanity. To underpin the mixed method approach to analysis, the chosen methodology for this study, statistics provided by agencies, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and a meta-study by Professors Masashi Soga, Kevin J, Gaston and Yuichi Yamarura from the University of Tokyo, will be referenced with this chapter also, to support the research findings.

Chapter Three: *History of relational aesthetics and participatory artwork* will investigate literature by Nicolas Bourriaud and Grant Kester as the central focus of this concept. The chapter comprises the history of relational and participatory concepts tracing the evolution of the practice, beginning with Marcel Duchamp’s *Readymades*, in the early 20th century, to seminal scenarios developed by Rirkrit Tiravanija and Thomas Hirschhorn in the late 1990s and early 21st century. An additional theorist that is discussed is British critic Claire Bishop, whose beliefs counter those of Bourriaud’s in regard to the merits of a relational encounter, however Bishop does cite the work of Hirschhorn as housing ideals that can be measured and subsequently engaged with. The work reflected in this chapter defines the evolutionary scale of the encounter, this is important prior to investigating the contemporary perspective which is discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: *Contemporary Practice*, will discuss the current practices that relate to participatory art concepts. These include those that incorporate sustainable practices to echo the methodology that has been observed in the spaces of fellow residents. The drawing of attention to natural spaces is specifically poignant in the current age, given the status of global environmental issues as well as our interconnectedness in the age of separation due to Covid. The artists of specific interest investigated are those whose ideas, philosophies, and artistic concepts both mirror and sit parallel to the work and desired outcomes of the garden project,

providing a rigorous understanding of where the project is situated in terms of the arts. This type of arts project, is significant as it draws on both the idea of the ‘garden as art’ and participatory practice, making it an original concept within Brisbane. It demonstrates a new way in which we are able to re-establish meaning within a community. This practice through the act of dialogue, has the capacity to question societal inequities and provide a platform for self-expression and the encounters that come from this form of relational aesthetic artistic strategy⁹⁴. These attributes are found within the work of American artist Christine Hill, titled *Volksboutique* 1996 – 2017⁹⁵ (Figure 0.10)⁹⁶. Hill’s work was situated in Weimar, Germany (where she had established her arts and teaching practice at the Bauhaus-Universität), and consisted of a shopfront that sold second-hand clothes and rooms that provided a secure and comfortable space for community discussions to be conducted and where local craftspeople could display and sell their work⁹⁷.



Figure 0.10: *Volksboutique*, Christine Hill 1996 - 2017

The penultimate chapter, Chapter Five: *Research Analysis* will be the presentation of sample, pertinent discussions UniSQ (Ethics Approval no. H20REA094). These discussions have supported the direction of the project and the manner in which the exchanges transpired; the sample responses provide a comprehensive overview of the connections that participants have created with their gardens. This information also, explicates the importance of inclusion of qualitative

⁹⁴ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* 17 – 18.

⁹⁵ P. Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art A Materials and Techniques Handbook*, Location 83.

⁹⁶ Regine, *We Make Money not Art: Interview with Christine Hill* (2007), https://we-make-money-not-art.com/interview_with_20/, accessed 4 November 2021.

⁹⁷ Regine, *We Make Money not Art: Interview with Christine Hill* (2007), https://we-make-money-not-art.com/interview_with_20/, accessed 18 June 2021.

strategies in creative research as it supports the richness of the research that explains the importance of nostalgia in the present and the understanding as to why participants engage in their specific practices. This provides discussions with others and their personal perspectives, a necessary and imposing element for engaging successful relational encounters. These interviews also assist with enhancing connectivity between the 'site' and humans and time and space. In a bid to deepen these discussions, presented too within this chapter will be the analysis of the research queries presented via qualitative data stores and the utilisation of the statistics gleaned from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on a national level and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with a global overview, to showcase the impacts of the contemporary urban landscape on humanity.

The conclusion, will provide an overview of the main points of the exegesis, and relate the findings back to the initial research questions, to determine the outcomes of the study. These outcomes will reference the data that has been sourced through the autoethnographic methodology and examined using the mixed method approach of analysis including both qualitative and quantitative collections. Reference will be made to the specific movements and their accompanied relational and participatory philosophies, which despite adapting to modern social outlooks, remain constant in current art practices.

The overall aim of the doctoral thesis is to provide theoretical, philosophical and contemporary practical research development through the relational and participatory creation of a garden (as artwork – *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* 2020 – current). The garden comprises a cohesive social network of community participants, united for the express purpose of building personal wellness, resilience and connectedness. In this instance the artwork is not separated from the community, housed within a white museum or gallery space, but occupies the same space 'as' the audience. Operating in the way provides a strong locational pull that engages everyday life and everyday reality as a lived experience that evolves and grows alongside those individuals that engage with it.

CHAPTER 1: STUDIO PRACTICE – THE PRACTICE-LED PROJECT AS THE BASIS FOR CREATIVE RESEARCH

The fundamental drive of the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* was to develop a social network and provide an opportunity for residents to participate in an exercise that saw their perspective acknowledged and respected. The practice-led research strives to achieve outcomes that specifically further the knowledge of this theory that in turn supports and extends the practice⁹⁸. For this project's studio work it involved relational encounters, with humans and history and nature that complimented the theory, and then be interpreted through the lens of the research. The research denotes the human encounters as a relational formation, that subsequently underpins and encourages ongoing healthy self-worth and physical well-being for those participating within the frame. In unpacking this statement, the studio practice will incorporate, interviews and discussion off garden practice and being outdoors and subsequently using the knowledge gleaned from the discussions to implement within respective gardens to build a social group. This community then becomes the focal creative outcome, as evidenced through the sharing and receiving of produce and framed by the research.

In addition to the encounter, the creative practice in this regard has the capacity to identify and resolve any concerns that arise during the research process. Relative to the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, there are two creative elements situated within the practice, positioning the studio in a unique position within the research. That is the garden 'as art' and the inherent design principles that collectively incorporate three distinctive aspects: the primary formation (the garden), the human connectivity and the cohesive energy that is created via the participatory work, the participatory encounters being the primary creative outcome. The uniqueness that emerges from this creative element, is the nature of the relationship between the garden and participants and the observation of seasonal ebb and flow. It can be an environment that supports the encounter, demonstrated through the sharing of stories and experiences which builds the qualitative research component of the

⁹⁸ L. Candy. 'Practice Based Research: A Guide, 2006' *CCS Report*: Vol. 1 (1 Nov. 2006), 3, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257944497_Practice_Based_Research_A_Guide, accessed 17 March 2021.

exegesis, or be evident in the swapping of produce that is yielded from the garden environment. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, and the accompanied periods of lockdowns that occurred during the production of this project, the research process (participant interviews) was frequently interrupted. This however provided opportunity to develop alternate avenues of engagement with the garden space, allowing time to investigate a secondary creative outlet that aligned with the autoethnographic methodology. I developed a series of lino printed artworks inspired by both occasions spent in the garden and as a reflection of childhood memories of printed dress fabrics and household items that were so prevalent in homes during that time. These products housed vivid and lively ‘Pop kitsch’ designs of garden products, the kitchen linen oftentimes serving a dual purpose as they were printed with a recipe alongside the bold images. These prints now serve as both a secondary aesthetic outcome influenced by the garden, and as a personal archive of treasured childhood experiences (Figure 1.1)⁹⁹ that come from reflective engagement of past gardens.

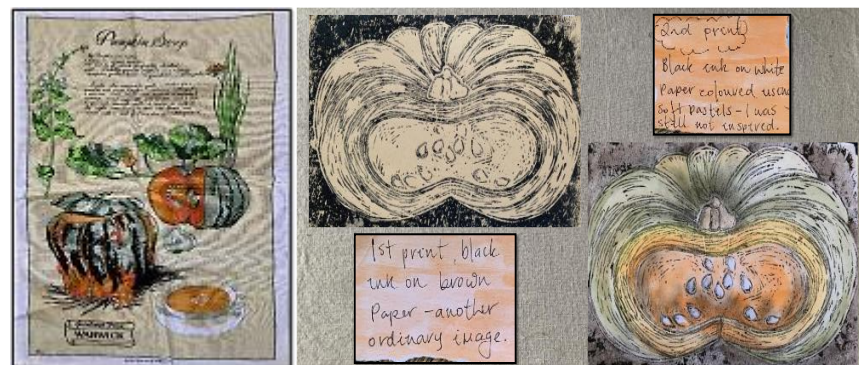


Figure 1.1: *Untitled (journal entry)*, T. Hethorn 2021

⁹⁹ T. Hethorn, *Untitled (journal entry)*, 2021.

This combination of practice, served this project well in terms of gained knowledge presenting as, facilitated learning for both the artist (as researcher and participant) and participants (as co-creators)¹⁰⁰. It's important to note however, that the role assumed by the artist/researcher/facilitator is in flux, dissolving once the discussion outline has been established, the role then emerges as a participant or co-creator¹⁰¹. This highlights the transient role artists hold within the contemporary aesthetic when the traditional methods of making art are abandoned in favour of becoming a conduit for discussion and changes in cultural and community perspectives. As a result, a shift occurs in the manner that society may view art and art making¹⁰². This is relevant as it challenges the traditional viewing process of art and as such affords all interested participants an opportunity for self-expression. This occurs through working with a creative mindset and enabling a platform to reach people through their daily creative rituals¹⁰³, like tending their gardens. In this way, the artist is also able to facilitate their own learning through their role as participant, which provides an avenue to evolve the concepts of practice-led research in both making and writing and effectively extending and adapting creative practice to meet the evolutionary societal construct¹⁰⁴.

The learning is definitively emergent as issues or unease that arise through the encounter are subsequently addressed within this same creative process¹⁰⁵. To provide an understanding of this concept the following exemplar of applied relational dialogue and reflective practice is highlighted. Apprehension was raised by a specific participant during the course of an interview, who due to their cultural perspective was concerned with how to engage in accepting and item of produce

¹⁰⁰ H. Smith & R.T. Dean, 'Introduction', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. Ed. 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 5 – 7.

¹⁰¹ B. Haseman, 'Tightrope Writing: Creative Writing Programs in the RQF Environment', Eleventh Annual Conference of the Australian Association of Writing Programs, Queensland University of Technology, (Brisbane, 23-26 November 2006) <http://www.textjournal.com.au/april07/haseman.htm>, accessed 21 March 2021.

¹⁰² G. Kester. (a). *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (Updated edition, University of California Press, 2011), 92. This edition of *Conversation Pieces* is the reprinted version and as such this book will be referenced as (a).

¹⁰³ E. Barrett, 'Experiential Learning in Practice as Research: Context, Method, Knowledge', *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 6/2, (Bristol: Intellect, 2007), 116., <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/routledg/jvap/2007/00000006/00000002/art00004>.

¹⁰⁴ G. Kester, (a), *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (Updated edition, University of California Press, 2011), 92.

¹⁰⁵ H. Smith & R.T. Dean, 'Introduction', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. (Ed. 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 5.

from a garden they did not tend and without express permission on each occasion. Following discussion, a negotiation ensued and a compromise was reached by the planting of a desired item on the nature strip as opposed to inside the property gate, essentially collapsing the border between private and public and successfully allaying fears. Even though an individual is privately planting on the nature strip, the produce is available for public use. This action provided comfort for the participant who could then engage actively with the concept. It also offered clarity on the underlying concept of community. The different perspectives were grounded in cultural diversity, as the participant had been raised in a busy city centre in Taiwan, residing in an apartment in an urban high-rise, where communications with fellow residents was scant. Some of those residents would grow herbs in small garden boxes situated on window ledges, however no one shared any items that they produced and nor was it accepted practice to anticipate being offered what was grown. Interactions too with natural spaces occurred infrequently and consisted of family visits to public parks where the touching, or picking of plants was strictly forbidden. These experiences were revealed through discussions initiated by the interview process, to provide research for this project. Not only was an amicable solution negotiated successfully, but the dialogue provided a platform to gather insight into the diverse cultural experiences of others, in this instance relative to the gardening process within a private and public space.

American professor Grant Kester, refers to discussions of this nature as Dialogical Art¹⁰⁶, or the art of collaboration, offering a greater understanding of constructs through insight. The works of this genre are created beyond the scope of traditional art spaces such as galleries and museums¹⁰⁷. This yields another tier to the aesthetic, that being the informal manner in which participants activate and evolve the encounter through consideration of the nominated spaces' characteristics and whether they inhibit or encourage fruitful exchange between participants¹⁰⁸. An exemplar that illustrates this concept documented by British professors Janet Springer and Margaret Ledwith, is a garden community created in unison by

¹⁰⁶ This term was coined by Grant Kester suggesting there is a creative element in discussion. G. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 85.

¹⁰⁷ G. Kester, (a) *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, xv -xvi.

¹⁰⁸ G. Kester, (b), *The One and the Many: Contemporary collaborative art in a global context* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2011), 139.

residents in Merseyside, UK in the early 2000s (Figure 1.2)¹⁰⁹. For the purpose of abating criminal activity and indiscriminate littering, the local policing agency encouraged the residents in inner city terraced homes, to place gates at each end of



Figure 1.2: Shared Garden, Merseyside, circa. 2000

the shared rear alley spaces¹¹⁰. Following the gating of the alleys, residents, in collaboration with the city's health sector, began reclaiming these spaces to create shared garden beds which resulted in a rejuvenated sense of community when residents came together to care for the gardens¹¹¹. The space also became a place to sit and reflect. Both Ledwith and Springer suggest that that irrespective of scale connective projects such as this garden have the potential to grow beyond the primary site to impact the greater population and incite potential social change across cities¹¹².

This endeavour and related encounters, mirror the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* created for this doctoral research as it explains how engagement with gardens, or nature in a cohesive, community network, can underpin a healthy sense of identity and wellbeing. This concept was demonstrated throughout the interview process, and this research revealed several similar responses that reflected this sensation of wellness:

¹⁰⁹ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, Bristol, The Policy Press, 2010), 30.

¹¹⁰ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 30.

¹¹¹ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 29.

¹¹² M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 30.

‘I am open to giving and receiving, (garden items). I think that this exchange is important in the community for creating openness with neighbours and friends and ensuring people are getting fresh, organic food items. When my grandchildren were younger, they loved to play in the garden whilst I worked, I really enjoyed that. I used to volunteer too at IndigiScapes, the native gardens and playground in the Redlands, I met a lot of people through that experience, we were all just home gardeners wanting to volunteer and learn more about native plants. - Participant # 1¹¹³

‘I used to give away cuttings to my neighbours, but a lot of them have moved away now. I take cuttings and pot them and donate them to the small fair we have at the church. A lot of my social contacts now are through church, and we do spend a lot of time talking about our gardens. My friend who lives up the street is a recent widow; she was very lonely and so she started attending church with me and she really enjoys talking about the garden with other parishioners following mass. We also have a lovely garden at the church, and it provides us with something to talk about too.’ – participant # 5¹¹⁴

‘Often people walking past will stop and talk to me about my garden, I will invite them in to pick vegetables or flowers and I am happy to offer cuttings and or advice if asked. I really enjoy it when people compliment my garden. there is enormous satisfaction in that.’ – participant #24¹¹⁵

These statements, in conjunction with the information contributed by Ledwith and Springer, provide a robust example of gaining wellness through extending oneself to others beyond one’s intimate spaces by developing sites that promote community connectiveness. It also denotes substantial precedence to broaden the ideal beyond the initial site and extend the ideal into neighbouring communities. It is anticipated that the research conducted for this exegesis will further support this notion and substantiate the idea that cohesive community projects are both creative and satisfying. draws on the significance of site, (as theorised by Kester) and the role it plays in the provision of comfort and confidence for the development and growth

¹¹³ Garden Participant #1, APPENDIX: INTERVIEWS, p. 198

¹¹⁴ Garden Participant #5, APPENDIX: INTERVIEWS, p. 206

¹¹⁵ Garden Participant #24, APPENDIX: INTERVIEWS, p. 246

of the aesthetic of the encounter It is anticipated that the research conducted for this exegesis will support the notion that cohesive community outcomes, as authenticated practices, are both creative and satisfying.

1.1 The practice-led approach: an overview

Australian based professor Irminda van Niele suggests that while academic findings are reached through two differing modes in a practice-led project, both writing and creative practice, the project in its entirety should be considered a creative exercise¹¹⁶ where the synthesis between the writing and creative elements generate the research outcomes¹¹⁷. It has been a challenge to bring these aspects together, as there is a variety of strands to combine succinctly to produce a cohesive research paper. These consist of applicable research processes that incorporates interviews, conversations and gardening activities to support relational and participatory theories in an academic context. van Niele utilises techniques such as mapping to clarify thoughts and research content and to draw connections between personal experiences, theories and creative practice¹¹⁸. While Professor van Niele's discussion inferred there was a verve essence inherent within the practice-led approach, the application of the model within a higher research degree has not always been wholly encouraged, as some academics believe that research grounded in creativity was not conducive to establishing authentic outcomes worthy of academic merit¹¹⁹

Australian professor Andrew McNamara, authored a paper outlining the following recommended regulations when utilising the practice-led approach as a research tool¹²⁰. McNamara suggests that the use of the word 'I' should be

¹¹⁶ I. van Niele, *Inventive Synergy: Studio-based Research Beyond Reflective Practice* (Adelaide, South Australian School of Art, University of South Australia, 2014), 1, <https://acuads.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/van-niele.pdf>, accessed 17 March 2021.

¹¹⁷ I. van Niele, *Inventive Synergy: Studio-based Research Beyond Reflective Practice*.

¹¹⁸ I. van Niele, *Inventive Synergy: Studio-based Research Beyond Reflective Practice*.

¹¹⁹ L. R. Green, *Recognizing Practice-led Research... At Last!* Proceedings of Hatched 07 Arts Research Symposium (Perth: Australia, 2007), Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts Edith Cowan University, Research Online. ECU Publications. <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ecuworks/1371/>, accessed 8 September 2021.

¹²⁰ A. McNamara, *Six Rules for Practice-led Research* (Brisbane, Queensland University of Technology 2012), 1 - 2, https://www.academia.edu/2096943/_Six_Rules_for_Practice_led_research_, accessed 18 March 2021.

minimised or abandoned altogether as it suggests a lack of direction in terms of establishing an avenue to attain research findings. He states that personal experiences are not a valid position from which to build critical engagement due to over-riding subjectivity. He cautions avoiding creative practice as the weighted basis for an academic argument, specifying that the abstract should reference creativity and the theoretical content equally, guiding the researcher towards an application of other research models to ensure a substantial outcome¹²¹. In consideration of McNamara's guidance, it would seem that the usage of the practice-led approach would need to be applied with a secondary method to achieve a worthy outcome. However, as the method continues to evolve with time and further studies, so too should the regulatory scope of application. In relation to this specific project, the term 'I' was utilised as the basis from which to move forward and connect with others. The term dissipates during the meeting phase to become 'we'. This can occur through the sharing of similar experiences or occasions of learned knowledge. In a bid to connect earnestly with participants, and to facilitate learning, it is necessary to be fluid in one's approach. While McNamara's guidance was while not dismissed entirely, a structured pathway was not in step with this specific project that incorporated a participatory concept.

To contrast the thoughts of McNamara regarding practice-led research, with those of Australian theorist and artist, Graeme Sullivan who extols the artist's use of a practice-led approach, is explained by the following. Sullivan theorises that practice-led research sufficiently undergirds the culture of studies by incorporating participatory concepts, which he argues, deepens an understanding of the societal processes because the research is grounded in empathy¹²². Empathy is important as a response to inquiry as it proffers an equitable platform for the sharing of diverse knowledge with a view to eliciting change in communities by providing insight into the alternate perspectives of others¹²³. Sullivan suggests that the creative researcher can produce a considered outcome by taking what is previously understood and

¹²¹ A. McNamara, *Six Rules for Practice-led Research* (Brisbane, Queensland University of Technology 2012), 5 – 11.

¹²² G. Sullivan, 'Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-led Research', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean (eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, (Edition 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 45.

¹²³ G. Sullivan, 'Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-led Research', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean (eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edition 1, Edinburgh, University Press, 2009), 62.

blending that with ideas consistent of new knowledge acquired through conceptual, dialogical, and reflective exchanges. He uses the presentation, *New Adventures of Mark Twain: Coalopolis to Metropolis*, 2007¹²⁴ to illustrate his position on the practice-led approach. The exhibit featured an artwork by Australian artist, Patricia Wilson-Adams, entitled, *Grave Markers for the Silent VI* 2007 (Figure 1.3)¹²⁵. The work constructed from feathers, lead and screen-printed papers, paid homage to those whose history and identity had been forgotten following their passing. The feathers were symbolic of the transience of life, while the lead was suggestive of a presence that was once substantial in the lives of others¹²⁶. The work reflected desolation and was inspired by Wilson-Adams formative years spent in an outback Australian environment, the artist was well acquainted with both isolation and a barren landscape, identifying with silence and a banal view that offered few interesting or distinctive features of note, to break the monotony of the loneliness¹²⁷. The artist's work and experiences were inspired and reflective of the words of Twain who when passing through Horsham in Victoria documented these thoughts: 'Horsham sits in a plain which is as level as a floor – grey, bare, sombre, melancholy, baked, cracked, in the tedious long drouths [sic]'¹²⁸. In regard to the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, and in consideration of the thinking of McNamara's, the application of Sullivan's theories and those of Australian professor Estelle Barrett, discussed below, may provide a more apt framework for this specific endeavour. An

¹²⁴ The exhibit shown in the Pearl Street Gallery, Brooklyn New York City, was a retrospective showcasing an incident that occurred during American author Mark Twain's lecture tour of Australia in 1895, that created a lasting bond between the author and the city of Newcastle, New South Wales. Twain, whilst travelling by train on the Australian East Coast, suffered a tooth ache and was forced to alight in Newcastle to visit a dentist. Twain delivered to the dentist a letter of appreciation, detailing his experience on the Australian landscape as observed from the train. The retrospective was a collection of works inspired by Twain's musings that featured in the letter. G. Sullivan, 'Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-led Research', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean (eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edition 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 51.

¹²⁵ G. Sullivan, 'Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-led Research', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean (eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edition 1, Edinburgh, University Press, 2009), 58

¹²⁶ G. Sullivan, 'Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-led Research', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean (eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, 59.

¹²⁷ G. Sullivan, 'Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-led Research', as in H. Smith & R.T. Dean (eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, 59.

¹²⁸ S. Ruppert, 'Coo-ee: Mark Twain in Australia', *Shepparton News*, (Shepparton, 2 Jun. 2020), para. 7, <https://www.sheppnews.com.au/2020/06/02/1214841/coo-ee-mark-twain-in-australia>, accessed 19 May 2021.

empathetic and diverse approach is required to anchor practice-led ideal in which to realise the intended academic and creative outcomes.



Figure 1.3.: Grave Markers for the Silent VI, Patricia Wilson-Adams 2007

1.2 The practice-led approach directing the Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project

Barrett's theories attest to the strength of practice-led research, as practiced by Sullivan, by arguing for the validity of learning that is generated by creative action as it draws on sensory experiences to guide the research¹²⁹. It can, however be interpreted differently via participant's unique outlooks, which can supply learning opportunities following discussions with others and profoundly hearing their experiences. This is especially relevant to the garden project, as the creative work is inherently sensory however, it may be interpreted by participants and co-creators diversely, which creates an opportunity for education through experimental practice. The following statement by Barrett attests to this notion by framing the creative process as an effective basis for emergent knowledge, 'the juxtaposing of disparate objects and ideas has, after all, often been viewed as an intrinsic aspect of creativity.

¹²⁹ E. Barrett, 'Experiential Learning in Practice as Research: Context, Method, Knowledge', *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 6/ 2, (2007), 115, <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/routledg/jvap/2007/00000006/00000002/art00004>.

The interplay of ideas... creates conditions for the emergence of new analogies.’¹³⁰. This suggests that the practice-led research model provides a multidisciplinary approach to research outcomes¹³¹. The very nature of the complexities, suggests that through creative practice profound and emergent findings are possible¹³². Barrett suggests that one avenue of thought pertaining to the practice-led concept is that through a natural attrition process, traditional methods and systems of research reach a stage of exhaustion, unable to support conclusions. This then allows for new modern methods to emerge, develop and ascertain outcomes¹³³. Barrett references British/Australian artist Annette Iggulden’s¹³⁴ reflections on her PhD research entitled, *Silence: In the Space of Words and Images* 2002 as an exemplar of the efficaciousness of the practice-led approach within the creative academic sector. Iggulden’s practical outcome was a series of paintings entitled, “*Silence*” ... *In the Space of Words and Images* 2002 (Figure 1.4)¹³⁵, the content of which was driven by subjective inquiry into historic, decorative scripts which were ultimately incorporated into her painted works as appropriations. The research trajectory led her to investigate a medieval and silent order of religious sisters, who painted detailed and ornate manuscripts. It was by crafting the decorative script that the nuns fashioned an alphabetic dialogue using design elements such as colours and shapes, as a means of actioning a mode of communication with each other¹³⁶.

¹³⁰ E. Barrett & B. Bolt (eds.), *Practice as Research Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (London, Tauris & Co Ltd., 2007).

¹³¹ E. Barrett, ‘Introduction’, in E. Barrett & B. Bolt (eds.), *Practice as Research Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, (London, Tauris & Co Ltd., 2007), 7 – 8.

¹³² E. Barrett, ‘Introduction’, in E. Barrett & B. Bolt (eds.), *Practice as Research Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, London, Tauris & Co Ltd., 2007, 8.

¹³³ E. Barrett, ‘Experiential Learning in Practice as Research: Context, Method, Knowledge’, *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 6/ 2, 2007.

¹³⁴ A. Iggulden, *Women’s Silence: In the Space of Words and Images*, PhD thesis, Deakin University, Geelong, 2002, 67, <https://www.worldcat.org/title/womens-silence-in-the-space-of-words-and-images/oclc/223371703>, accessed 14 May 2021, As cited in E. Barrett, ‘Experiential Learning in Practice as Research: Context, Method, Knowledge’, *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 6/ 2, (2007), 122.

¹³⁵ J. Pech, ‘Artist discovers ancient colour code’, *The Standard* (August 24 2011) <https://www.standard.net.au/story/795098/artist-discovers-ancient-colour-code/>, accessed 4 November 2021.

¹³⁶ E. Barrett, ‘Experiential Learning in Practice as Research: Context, Method, Knowledge’, *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 6/ 2, (Bristol, Intellect, 2007), 122.



Figure 1.4: Silence in the Space of Words and Images, Annette Iggulden 2002

Iggulden, through her practice-led research, uncovered knowledge of the nun's communicative code that was previously unknown to scholars, and as such extended on the historic and aesthetic data base of the specific medieval order¹³⁷. The use of practice-led research in academic circles in contemporary times, would seem to be a method achieving merited outcomes. This is due to the need for research approaches to remain in step with the changes that occur in society. These changes are best understood by a multidisciplinary strategy, the practice-led mode provides this through the creative strategies of one's own practice paired with the richness of the experiences of others in the pursuit of substantial research outcomes.

1.3 Practical research relative to the Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project

Scottish academic Carole Gray's theory concerning the practice-led mode, frames the creative research task as the merging of two differing strands to achieve academic outcomes¹³⁸. Firstly, research queries and subsequent challenges are determined and identified through creative thought and discussion and secondly a resolution is sought through the application of combined creative practice¹³⁹. An exemplar that explicates this concept was the collaborative efforts of Irish artists and

¹³⁷ A. Iggulden, *Women's Silence: In the Space of Words and Images*, PhD thesis, Deakin University, Geelong, 2002, 14.

¹³⁸ C. Gray, *Inquiry through Practice: developing appropriate research strategies*, *No Guru, No Method* (Helsinki, UIAH, 1996), 1, <http://carolegray.net/Papers%20PDFs/ngnm.pdf>, accessed 15 March 2021.

¹³⁹ C. Gray, *Inquiry through Practice: developing appropriate research strategies*, *No Guru, No Method* (Helsinki, UIAH, 1996), 3.

transport workers entitled *The Routes Project* 2001 - 2002¹⁴⁰. The collaborative exhibit, conceived by the artists and utilising the practice-led concept, was influenced by the courageous efforts of bus drivers working in the Northern Irish capital of Belfast in the 1970s at the height of the ‘troubles’¹⁴¹. The term ‘troubles’ 1968-1998, refers to the sectarian and political conflict that occurred between Nationalist Catholics (who wanted to claim Ireland as a Republic) and Loyalist Protestants (who wished to remain part of the Britain Isles). A peace treaty was orchestrated between representatives of all stakeholders and subsequently legislated on Good Friday, 1989¹⁴². The artwork comprised a broad representation of arts strands including work by writers, filmmakers, visual artists and photographers who exhibited portrait work of the bus drivers (Figure 1.5)¹⁴³ involved in the ratification of the Transport Workers Union mandate.¹⁴⁴ The mandate was embraced wholeheartedly by union members, irrespective of their political or religious affiliation stating that they would continue to work all routes within the Northern province. These routes included those situated in sectarian trouble spots, that when not rostered on, the drivers would normally avoid. The only way the policy was workable was through supportive discussions and unified agreement between the drivers. It was not always safe, 13 drivers were killed and approximately 1400 buses destroyed during the period of sectarian unrest, however this was one of the workplaces during this time in Northern Ireland when a collective perspective was maintained despite the actions and efforts to derail it.

¹⁴⁰ G. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 6.

¹⁴¹ G. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 7.

¹⁴² J. Dorney. *The Irish Story: The Northern Ireland Conflict 1968-1998 – An Overview* (2015), <https://www.theirishstory.com/2015/02/09/the-northern-ireland-conflict-1968-1998-an-overview/#.YRs2xt8RXIV>, accessed 17 August 2021.

¹⁴³ U. Burke., Belfast Exposed, Routes Gallery 1, <https://www.belfastexposed.org/exhibitions/routes/>, accessed 3 November 2021.

¹⁴⁴ Belfast Exposed Gallery 1, ‘Routes’, *Exhibitions* 2nd May 2002 to 6th May 2002 (2018), accessed 17 March 2021 <https://www.belfastexposed.org/exhibitions/routes/>, accessed 17 March 2021.

This resulted in a unique, yet cohesive community entity, constructed by the drivers. The community, irrespective of personal and diverse world views, adopted a single outlook, supported by a collective mantra of solidarity for the duration of their shifts.



Figure 1.5: The Routes Project, Portrait of a Bus Driver Ursula Burke 2002

The allied concept, was grounded within their roles as bus drivers and not related to their political affiliations¹⁴⁵. The inclusion of this project in this research, was to showcase both the power of a collective mindset, and the concordant production of works consistent with practice-led concepts. The artists while presenting work that relayed experiences, were guided by their own personal thoughts. While the stories will always remain that of the transport workers, it was the creative practice that interpreted these experiences and subsequently showcased them, providing the audience with an insight into a unique period of their history. For those who experienced the troubles first hand, their engagement would be impacted by their actual experiences, while for the younger demographic whose experiences were learned via secondary resources, could engage differently with the content¹⁴⁶. The stories and experiences however, belong to them all as a collective and are consolidated and analysed through the conveyance of a creative frame. This demonstrates that an unwavering universal collective, maintained through and conducted within the magnitude of sectarian violence and commemorated some three

¹⁴⁵ G. Kester (b) *The One and the Many: Contemporary collaborative art in a global context* (Durham, Duke University, 2011), 7 - 8.

¹⁴⁶ Belfast Exposed Gallery 1, 'Routes', *Exhibitions* 2nd May 2002 to 6th May 2002 (2018), accessed 17 March 2021 <https://www.belfastexposed.org/exhibitions/routes/>, accessed 17 March 2021.

decades later in a collaborative exercise, is both a positive case study for participatory projects and a practice-led research model¹⁴⁷.

Regarding the garden project, while it may appear a stretch to appreciate how a participatory work shaped by sectarian violence can relate to a community gardening endeavour, it is the supportive and creative components of storytelling and discussions underpinned with mutual regard for diversity, that guides interconnectedness. The perspectives that have been shaped through historic and cultural experiences are utilised as a basis for education, and guidelines for the emerging creative practice. These practical and creative rituals that sit at the core of the research process will be the avenue that delivers the results specific to each project.

The writing of this exegesis incorporates theory that supports the creative events, such as monitoring the gardens and accompanied activities, the encounters, the interviews/storytelling and the aspects of interest and alternate thoughts that arise from those discussions to collectively become a singular artwork. The observations are deciphered through both reflective and reflexive approaches. To aide with clarity, I have adopted practices of note taking observing, using mind mapping strategies and developing instinctive creative work as this allows the space to make personal thoughts tangible, and affords an opportunity to contemplate ideas, to decipher what is worth pursuing and what should be discarded in striving for the outcome. These annotations were documented in the creative journals (Volume II of this submission). (Figure 1.6)¹⁴⁸. This was a necessary requirement due to the profound and nuanced nature of the components belonging to the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*.

¹⁴⁷ H. Smith & R.T. Dean, 'Introduction', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, ed. 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 7.

¹⁴⁸ T. Hethorn Journal Entry Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project 2021.

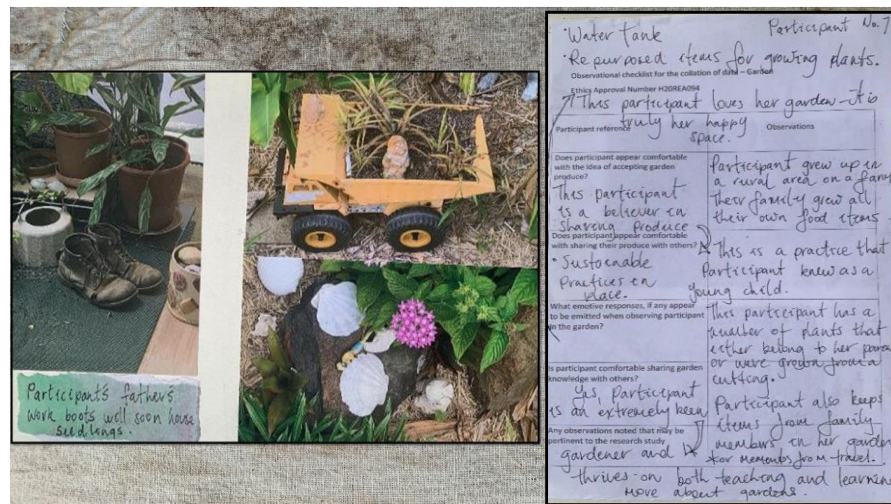


Figure 1.6: Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project T. Hethorn 2021.

1.4 Reflective and reflexive practices

Discussion of the variations of reflective practices and reflexivity is integral to this study, indeed all studies, as it represents the capacity for profundity of the research concept. It also assists with outcomes and pathways for the researcher to mature and deliver an academic outcome¹⁴⁹. Reflection is what is actioned following an interview or discussion with a participant to determine and decipher any feelings or concepts that may have been observed or sensed throughout a discussion¹⁵⁰. Reflection assists with how the researcher may see other participants and the way they interact in the space and the manner in which the researcher can incorporate changes to build deeper connections. Alternatively, it provides the necessary space to alter questions or behaviours to obtain more conclusive findings, essentially informing themselves of effective strategies and determining where and how to apply it to their practice¹⁵¹. Reflexive practice however, underpins the reflective musings in that reflexive inquiry asks questions as to why is the researcher undertaking this specific research? What are the specifics that connect the researcher to the research? Are they theory based, politically motivated or emotive, and possibly the most profound query that could impact the findings – what preconceived ideas or

¹⁴⁹ L. Mortari, *Reflectivity in Research Practice: An Overview of Different Perspectives* (2015), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1609406915618045>, accessed 21 August 2021.

¹⁵⁰ G. Bolton, 'Reflection and Reflexivity: The what and why', in *Reflective Practice: Writing and Professional Development*, (London, Sage Publishing, 2009), 3.

¹⁵¹ G. Bolton, 'Reflection and Reflexivity: The what and why', in *Reflective Practice: Writing and Professional Development*, (London, Sage Publishing, 2009), 4.

experiences am I bringing to this research¹⁵²? Estelle Barrett cites French social theorist, Pierre Bourdieu in outlining a succinct delineation of the reflexive model, that proposes the profundity of subjectivity in relation to research and the associated findings. Bourdieu posed the notion, that the application of reflexivity places the researcher within a space, where they too are exposed to the same critical inquiries that are asked of the participants¹⁵³. This is important for the researcher, in that it allows for critical contemplation, which in turn offers a deeper response through maintaining awareness¹⁵⁴.

In summary, the application of practice-led methods in support of the execution of this garden project, would be considered an apt approach to reach the attained academic outcomes. This is due to the multi-disciplinary elements consistent within the creative model. The practice-led mode, in accordance with Andrew McNamara, denotes there is a strict regulatory code in which to frame the creative approach as subjectivity is not considered a substantial model on which to base a critical academic query. However, Estelle Barrett attests that creative practice, due to the inherent multi-faceted aspects, is an applicable process in which to invoke learning and gain understanding. The creative practice that evokes the learning, includes discussions and shared stories from participants which provides the opportunity for the researcher to action reflective practice in determining firstly, what has been learned and secondly, how to apply this knowledge to effectuate outcomes. The reflexive process which underpins reflection, asks of the researcher a deeper critical commitment to the research. This inquiry is required to be asked often and is best responded to by annotated notions and mind maps, this strategy places the queries into a space that can be addressed more succinctly within the creative frame. This highlights the emergent role of the researcher/artist, as the process unfolds, as one that incorporates a facilitatory capacity and a participant within the project. The research queries and subsequent challenges are determined or identified through

¹⁵² L. Norton. Y. Sliep. A Critical Reflexive Model: Working with Life Stories in Health Promotion Education. 2018. P. 47. *South African Journal of Higher Education* <http://dx.doi.org/10.20853/32-3-2523>.

¹⁵³ P. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Oxford, Polity Press, 1990), *Sociology in Question* (trans. R. Nice) (London: Sage, 1993), as cited in E. Barrett, 'Experiential Learning in Practice as Research: Context, Method, Knowledge', *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 6/ 2, 2007.

¹⁵⁴ C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A. P. Bochner, 'Autoethnography: An Overview', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para.,2, (Jan.2011). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>, accessed 12 March 2021.

creative thought and discussion, while a resolution is sought through the application of creative practice. The use of this approach allows for outcomes to be resolved through both creative discussion (the initial encounter between participants through the interview process) and a creative framework (application of the discussion in conjunction with participants to the encounter and the garden) that in turn supports the writing to produce the applicable research findings.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter comprises the literature review that considers the materials related to the field. Provided, will be an account of the seminal literature reviewed as a way of framing the key areas that have developed the practice-led approach. The strategy utilised is a descriptive analysis of each source and contains a summary of content and a short evaluation, critiquing and assessing the primary, secondary and peripheral source materials. This chapter will discuss the literature that has been central to the research in determining the direction of the exegesis related to participatory art and the establishment of a social, garden network within a residential neighbourhood, the garden being used as the platform for developing the network. As the project requires differing strands of research to ensure the proposed academic outcomes, the literature that has been investigated is broad, incorporating content that outlines the creative theory of participatory artwork, participation in a community network and the theories of an autoethnographic methodology.

Relational Aesthetics is the philosophy that underpins the primary creative image, that being the human encounter. Relational Aesthetics was first identified by French curator Nicolas Bourriaud, the authority figure of the concept, following a curatorial period at the *Traffic* Biennial in Bordeaux, 1996¹⁵⁵. Following Bourriaud's appointment at *Traffic* and his observation of avant-garde participatory concepts and formations, he developed a philosophy concerning the manner of engagement established by artists whose intention was to invite audience members to connect, with both other viewers and with the constructed scenario¹⁵⁶. Bourriaud penned *Relational Aesthetics* in 1998, (reprinted in English 2002) which examines the historical influences that emerged in the early 20th century through the *Readymades* series conceived by Marcel Duchamp¹⁵⁷. Bourriaud however, has continued to study and document the concept's evolutionary trajectory, publishing four subsequent books to accompany his initial work. They are entitled *Postproduction. Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* 2002, *The Radicant* 2009 and *Exform*

¹⁵⁵ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 25.

¹⁵⁶ N. Bourriaud, (b) *Post Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World*, (New York City, Lukas & Sternberg, 2002), 7.

¹⁵⁷ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 29.

2016¹⁵⁸. These publications show the evolutionary nature of the relational concept discussed by Bourriaud, and the validation of the work implemented by the arts sector into the broader community. It is important to note the evolutionary flow of the concept oftentimes reflects the societal need that presents over time ¹⁵⁹. From reading the literature, the determination to create cohesion through garden practice seemed logical, given that a garden produces opportunities for connection even in times of segregated conditions forced by a global pandemic.

To reinforce Bourriaud's theory, the work of American professor Grant Kester will be studied. Kester's has two books that discuss at length the emergent concepts of participatory practice, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Discussion in Modern Art* 2011 and *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* (reprinted with new content 2011). The rationale for investigating emergent practice is to quantify participatory work as a concept that has yet reached maturation, anchoring it within the contemporary art sector. In a bid to fully examine the relational argument within the arts, the work of British curator Clair Bishop will be referenced. Her paper, *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics* 2004 and subsequent book, *Artificial Hells and the Politics of Spectatorship* 2010, counters relational practice outlining her difficulty to provide analysis of relational formations and the basis for questioning the concept as accepted arts practice. It's important to provide the opposing perspective of the argument, to fully explicate the diverse and nuanced layers of relational practice.

American curator Nato Thompson, editor of the book, *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 -2011* 2012, is an advocate for the participatory concept curating a number of significant works, that supports audience participation in the arts. One such example was the Samuel Beckett's play, *Waiting for Godot* 2007¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Bourriaud, in conjunction with Denyse Beaulieu has completed a fourth work on participatory concepts, the book entitled *Inclusions: The Aesthetics of the Capitalocene* (September 2021) which outlines his theories on the emergent role of artists as anthropologists, and the investigation of human encounters and the impact on and relationship with nature. Penguin Random House. n.d. *Inclusions: Aesthetics of the Capitalocene*. By Nicolas Bourriaud. Translated by Denyse Beaulieu. Accessed 24 March 2021. <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/676005/inclusions-by-nicolas-bourriaud-translated-by-denyse-beaulieu/>

¹⁵⁹ N. Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World*, 8.

¹⁶⁰ P. Chan, *Waiting for Godot: A Field Guide* in P. Chan ed., (Kindle Edition, New York City, Badlands Unlimited, 2011), Location 564.

(Figure 2.1)¹⁶¹, staged within the ravaged neighbourhoods of New Orleans, for the residents, in the aftermath of Cyclone Katrina 2005. The premise of the work was to draw attention to the importance and poignancy of place in the participatory scenario. The content of the play echoing the stage on which it was performed, in this case destruction. While the background of the garden project is less dramatic, the reflection of staging a relational artwork with residents own properties, provides familiarity for participants, which evokes trust in regard to sharing stories and ideas. Although through participation, much like for the residents of New Orleans, the familiar may evolve into an alternate viewpoint, given a change in the manner in which the space is experienced¹⁶². This can deepen participants' relationship with each other and their surroundings.¹⁶³.



Figure 2.1: Waiting for Godot, Nato Thompson 2007

¹⁶¹ H. Cotter, 'A Broken City, A Tree. Evening' *New York Times, Art and Design*, (2 Dec. 2007). <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/02/arts/design/02cott.html>, accessed 4 November 2021.

¹⁶² M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012), 24.

¹⁶³ M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012), 133 -134.



Figure 2.2: *Pistols into Spades*, Pedro Reyes 2008

The book, *Living as Form*, details a number of artworks and accompanied theories of that provide an overview to the breadth of participatory concepts¹⁶⁴. An example, is the work developed by Mexican artist, Pedro Reyes, called *Pistols into Spades* 2008 (Figure 2.2)¹⁶⁵ which saw the artist appeal to residents, (through media platforms), of the western Mexican town of Culiacan¹⁶⁶, to surrender their firearms and ammunition in a collective effort to rid their community of these weapons. Reyes collected over 1500 guns, which he flattened and melted down before having the residual materials remodelled as gardening spades. These spades were presented to the community for the purpose of planting trees within the grounds of local public schools. A total of 1,527 trees were planted, one for every shovel that was cast, fundamentally becoming a poignant symbol of peace and community solidarity against violence¹⁶⁷.

The act of participation within a community and the role of the artist within the practice, is explained by drawing on the theories of the following authors and researchers. Swiss theorist Professor Etienne Wenger explicates his ideas on community projects and the use of an autoethnographic methodology, in his paper, *Learning in a Landscape of Practice* 2015. To underpin these theories on community, British professors Margaret Sedwick and Janet Springer, authors of

¹⁶⁴ N. Thompson, 'Living as Form' in N. Thompson, ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*. (New York City, Creative Time Books, 2012), 30 – 31. Creative Time Books, New York City.

¹⁶⁵ G. Ebert, 'Mexican Artist Pedro Reyes Molds, 1527 Guns into Shovels used to Plant Trees', *This Colossal Art*, <https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2019/12/pedro-reyes-guns-shovels-trees/> 2019 accessed 4 November 2021.

¹⁶⁶ Culiacan is a town with a propensity for drug trafficking and gun violence. N. Thompson, 'Projects' in N. Thompson (ed.), *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*, 210.

¹⁶⁷ N. Thompson, 'Projects', in N. Thompson, (ed.), *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*, 120.

Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change 2010, will be cited to provide an insight into the necessity for social networking as a tool for maintaining the wellbeing of community members and the sensation of belonging and self-identity. These concepts sit at the heart of the participatory ideal¹⁶⁸. The application of these theories in the justification of participatory practice ensures accountability for the artist. Community practice is served by the use of autoethnography as the working methodology, as it drives the initial research questions and context¹⁶⁹. Professors Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams and Arthur Bochner's essay, *Autoethnography: An Overview* 2011, will establish further perception as to why an autoethnographic approach is the most applicable for a participatory and community art project¹⁷⁰. Finally, in a bid to determine the garden as housing aesthetic qualities, the theories of American professor Mara Miller found in her book, *The Garden as Art* 1993, will be cited. Miller attests to the idea that a garden has a measure of fundamental artistic value, encapsulating overt elements such as colour, texture and form¹⁷¹. Miller's work also proposes that the inherent sensuality of a natural garden space is what initially attracts and engages an audience¹⁷², as it evokes the sensation of personal experiences and memories. While the garden in the instance of this project is not the primary creative image, it did evoke the making of art (Figure 2.3)¹⁷³ and as such, it is important to engage with Miller's research to identify the underlying aesthetic principles of the garden to truly understand the allure it provides.



Figure 2.3: *Untitled* T. Hethorn 2021

¹⁶⁸ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 13.

¹⁶⁹ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 23.

¹⁷⁰ C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A. P. Bochner, 'Autoethnography: An Overview', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para., 38.

¹⁷¹ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, 69.

¹⁷² M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, 69.

¹⁷³ T. Hethorn *Untitled*, (*Journal Entry*) 2021,

2.1 Relational Aesthetics and the participatory concept

2.1.1 An overview of the theories of Nicolas Bourriaud Grant Kester, Claire Bishop and Nato Thompson

Bourriaud's theory defines the key elements of relational formation as work that supports social interactions and connection¹⁷⁴, which may have cultural or political affinities, and be grand in scale or subtle. The work is generally conducted beyond the plane of the traditional gallery space, extending the arts to a broader audience demographic and ensuring availability to all in the community¹⁷⁵ to establish a platform that prompts discussion between audience members¹⁷⁶. While readings may situate relational work in the latter stages of the 20th century, the historic influences can be traced to the theories developed by Marcel Duchamp in the early period of that century¹⁷⁷, these theories underpinned his *Readymade* series, circa 1914 – 1951. His seminal work within the sequence, *Fountain* 1917 (Figure 2.4)¹⁷⁸ was simply that, a generic item (a urinal) through which the term 'selected'¹⁷⁹ evolved, which in itself became an integral concept, as it stipulated that form chosen by the artist held artistic merit¹⁸⁰. The dematerialised¹⁸¹ aspect of the exhibit did not detract from its visual worth, and when positioned in an alternate configuration (placed on a plinth and situated on its back) it provided a broader viewing platform for audiences to firstly engage and subsequently on reflection, ascertain the beauty for themselves¹⁸². The work was initially displayed in New York City, as submission

¹⁷⁴ N. Bourriaud, *The Radicant*, (New York City, Lukas & Sternberg, 2009), 48.

¹⁷⁵ N. Bourriaud, (b) *Postproduction. Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* (New York City, Lukas and Sternberg, 2002), 9.

¹⁷⁶ N. Bourriaud, *The Radicant*, 31-32.

¹⁷⁷ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 25.

¹⁷⁸ S. Virji., 'Duchamp at the Fountain', This image was marked with a CC BY-SA 2.0 license. *Creative Commons Search* (2006), <https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/03f4e62d-d2fd-49a9-bb6a-6d64f0a06612>, accessed 4 November 2021.

¹⁷⁹ N. Bourriaud, *Postproduction. Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World*, 28.

¹⁸⁰ N. Bourriaud, *The Exform*, [Translated by Erik Butler] (New York City, Verso, 2016), 26.

¹⁸¹ Dematerialization is the act of focusing primarily on the thoughts, processes and practices adopted by the artist as the principal work. These practices, that underpin the art object as outcome are considered secondary in relation to what the artist presents to the audience, L Lippard & J. Chandler, *The Dematerialization of Art* (1968), 47, <http://cast.b-ap.net/arc619f11/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2011/09/lippard-theDematerializationofArt.pdf>, accessed 24 May 2021.

¹⁸² N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 29.

to the group exhibition shown by the Society of Independent artists, using the pseudonym R. Mutt¹⁸³.



Figure 2.4: *Fountain*, Marcel Duchamp 1917

Grant Kester uses the theories of French philosopher Jean Luc Nancy to define the benefits of participatory practice, citing Nancy's assertion that a community will not experience growth as a collective¹⁸⁴ without empathetic listening skills being practiced and being open to fully hear others – as opposed to simply offering a personal opinion or seeking to connect only with those whose ideas align¹⁸⁵. Kester terms this 'active listening'¹⁸⁶, determining that it promotes personal growth that has the capacity to extend into the community. Participants can gain an opportunity to develop deeper insights and understanding of others¹⁸⁷. This is the anchor from which the encounter will formulate and mature¹⁸⁸. Kester's theory lists the surrender of the artist to this process as the shift to engaging participants as co-creators¹⁸⁹. Some critics view this as detrimental to the outcome, as the co-creators are not necessarily skilled in the arts, however Kester sees co-creation as positive, terming it creative transitional vitality that ebbs and flows in conjunction with the participant's

¹⁸³ Tate Gallery, 'Marcel Duchamp, Fountain 1917 replica 1964', *Art and Artists*, (n.d.), <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/duchamp-fountain-t07573>, accessed 29 May 2021.

¹⁸⁴ G. Kester, (a), *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (University of California Press, 2011), 156 -157.

¹⁸⁵ G. Kester, (a), *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 158.

¹⁸⁶ G. Kester, (a), *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 163 – 164.

¹⁸⁷ G. Kester, (a), *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 158.

¹⁸⁸ G. Kester, (b) *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* 114.

¹⁸⁹ G. Kester, (b) *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*, 115.

energies¹⁹⁰. This energy is imperative to the aesthetic as it brings diversity and opportunities for reflection and learning¹⁹¹.

Claire Bishop's book, *Artificial Hells*, was so named as a 'for and against' stance of the participatory genre¹⁹². From the outset, Bishop writes that participatory artwork differs from the relational concept defined by Bourriaud in that the desired outcome is not the encounter, rather the processional strategies put in place by the artist¹⁹³. This statement will be unpacked further in this exegesis, because it does showcase the diverse thinking evoked by the act of the encounter. Bishop, in her role as art critic, cites that her experiences with the participatory concept have not moved her. Her rationale is that she finds an absence of substance, or a hook from where she can engage. She writes, that in her role as an unpaid critic who is balancing a consummate academic career, she does not have an adequate timeframe to spend with a participatory formation to volunteer a valued critique. Bishop avows some relational artists need to deliver a more solid demonstration of connection, other than that of a digital still¹⁹⁴. Surely however, the responsibility should extend beyond the artists' investigations of new and fresh ways to convey the social encounter for it to be considered valid. Perhaps critics also, need to adjust their practices in order to engage and to keep pace with contemporary arts practice¹⁹⁵. American philosopher, Cornel West stipulates that in the latter period of the 20th century, a panel of critics had adopted a creative measure that reflected the contemporary political and socioeconomic backdrop in which the work was created. Adopting an improvisational perspective and on occasions a sense of humour, the critics recognised they would need to abandon previous conservative methods of appraisal, if they were to engage with participatory work that incorporated social and political

¹⁹⁰ G. Kester, (b) *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*. (Durham, Duke University Press, 2011), 114.

¹⁹¹ G. Kester, (b) *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*, 116.

¹⁹² C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2010), 6.

¹⁹³ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2010), 2.

¹⁹⁴ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2021), 5.

¹⁹⁵ R. Szott, *Claire Bishop and Nato Thompson as two sides of the same art worshipping coin* (19 Sept, 2013), <https://randallszott.org/2013/09/19/claire-bishop-and-nato-thompson-as-two-sides-of-the-same-art-worshipping-coin-some-notes-on-a-review/> accessed 25 May 2021.

themes¹⁹⁶. As the 21st century unfolds, this concept continues to push boundaries through the theories of British philosopher Irit Rogoff, who suggests that the postmodern critic has shifted from conducting an exercise in detached fault-finding towards a harmonious and empathetic resonance of values and engagement with processes. This is in step with the relational concept that has broadened the arts to include viewers, inclusive of critics.¹⁹⁷

Nato Thompson refers to participatory practice as functional, the purpose being to entertain audiences while proffering a foundation from which to extend knowledge on a specific issue¹⁹⁸. To illustrate this point, Thompson reflects on the work by artists Julieta Aranda from Mexico and Russian Anton Vidokle, called *Time/Bank* 2010 – ongoing¹⁹⁹ (Figure 2.5)²⁰⁰. This setup embodies an online global utopian network that encourages participants, (most volunteers are creatives), to exchange skills for time spent working and serving others within their community. On occasions, local branches of the creative network, commission ephemeral projects such as *Time/Food* 2011 (Figure 2.6)²⁰¹, that provide meals for project participants who had earned credits by assisting those with additional needs, in their respective communities²⁰².

¹⁹⁶ C. West, 'The New Cultural Politics of Difference', in S. Seidman ed., pp. 65 – 81. *The Postmodern Turn: New Perspectives on Social Theory* Cambridge University Press, 1994), 76.

¹⁹⁷ J. Rodenbeck, 'Working to Learn Together', in J. Harris ed., *Globalization and Contemporary Art* (edited by Jonathan Harris, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2011), 167-168.

¹⁹⁸ N. Thompson, 'Living as Form', in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*, 19.

¹⁹⁹ N. Thompson, 'Living as Form', in N. Thompson ed. *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*, 20.

²⁰⁰ e-flux, 'Time/Bank', *Projects* (2012), <https://www.e-flux.com/projects/415845/time-bank/2012>, accessed 4 November 2021.

²⁰¹ e-flux, 'Time/Food restaurant at Abrons Arts Centre,' Film /Video (2016), <https://www.e-flux.com/video/152713/time-food-restaurant-at-abrons-arts-center/> 2016, accessed 4 November 2021

²⁰² N. Thompson, 'Living as Form', in N. Thompson, ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*, (New York City, Creative Times Books, 2012), 22.



Figure 2.5: *Time/Bank*, e-flux 2010 - ongoing



Figure 2.6: *Time/Food*, e-flux 2011

A similar characteristic is inherent in these projects, that being social participation, in a creative context, has the capacity to alter the lives of all involved²⁰³. As such, artists are seeking to become a respected voice that critiques and questions the political rhetoric for the express betterment of community and community members.²⁰⁴ One such example of this is the work by Swiss artist Thomas Hirschhorn, *Gramsci Monument* 2013 (Figure 2.7)²⁰⁵, which was constructed with the collective efforts of local New York residents creating a shared aesthetic although Hirschhorn prefers the term ‘unshared’²⁰⁶, in that there is no one author, nor a responsibility on the part of the artist for how the work is viewed and

²⁰³ N. Thompson. ‘Living as Form’, as in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*. (New York City, Creative Time Books, 2012), 22

²⁰⁴ N. Thompson, N., *Seeing Power: Art and Activisms in the 21st Century* (Kindle Edition, Brooklyn, Melville House Printing, 2015), 33.

²⁰⁵ Artforum, *Monumental Endeavour: Thomas Hirschhorn’s Gramsci Monument*, Thomas Hirschhorn, *Gramsci Monument*, (2013) Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Romain Lopez. All works by Thomas Hirschhorn © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. <https://www.artforum.com/print/201309/monumental-endeavor-thomas-hirschhorn-s-gramsci-monument-43522> accessed 4 November 2021.

²⁰⁶ V. Simpson. Thomas Hirschhorn: the Gramsci Monument, like all monuments, is made for eternity, *Studio International* (15/02/2017) <https://www.studiointernational.com/index.php/thomas-hirschhorn-interview-the-gramsci-monument-is-made-for-eternity> accessed 21 August 2022.

understood. The project remains open to personal interpretation, this aspect also remains ‘unshared’²⁰⁷.



Figure 2.7: Gramsci Monument, Thomas Hirschhorn 2013

2.2 Community practice and autoethnographic methodology

2.2.1 An introduction to the theories of Etienne Wenger, Margaret Ledwith and Janet Springett, and Mara Miller

Etienne Wegner uses the term, ‘Community of Practice’ to furnish an understanding of the concept of collaborative thought, essentially as a learning system²⁰⁸ and applied within the confines of a community. To be considered community, there must be three distinctive elements incorporated within the learning space²⁰⁹. Firstly, domain, which references the collective environment where the learning happens, the learning may be overt or less obvious and recognisable only on

²⁰⁷V. Simpson. Thomas Hirschhorn: the Gramsci Monument, like all monuments, is made for eternity, *Studio International* (15/02/2017) <https://www.studiointernational.com/index.php/thomas-hirschhorn-interview-the-gramsci-monument-is-made-for-eternity> accessed 21 August 2022.

²⁰⁸E. Wenger, ‘Communities of practice and social learning systems: the career of a concept’ in C. Blackmore, ed., *Social Learning Systems and communities of practice*, (Springer Verlag and the Open University, 2010), 1, <https://wenger-trayner.com/resources/publications/cops-and-learning-systems/>. accessed 29 March 2021.

²⁰⁹E. & B. Wenger-Trayner. Communities of practice: a brief introduction. (15 April 2015), 2, <https://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/07-Brief-introduction-to-communities-of-practice.pdf>, accessed 30 March 2021.

reflection – the domain provides the stability or identity²¹⁰. The identity is supported through the domain of commonality (as in residing in the same suburb) that exists between members. The commonality in this regard supports and grows confidence and security when engaging and will possibly extend beyond this point²¹¹. The second element is community, which incorporates the inherent notions of security and identity, (which may be diverse) and continue to mature through learned and intellectual discussion, which in turn develops a platform that supports a changing perspective and understanding as a consequence²¹². The third is a reference to the practice of documenting experiences and the subsequent conclusive reflections. In terms of relational practice, this looks like a safe space where open discussion and learning can occur with transparency²¹³ and where individual perspective is respected and celebrated²¹⁴.

Professors and co-authors Margaret Ledwith and Jane Springett theories are similar to that of Wenger, in that implementing participatory practices of living can evoke a change of perspective which had been held previously, of how a community should look and feel²¹⁵. The relevance of this, is that engagement with others, in shared practice can develop relationships beyond superficial connections²¹⁶. This is important in humanity, as it supports wellbeing for others, and ourselves. This bolsters self-identity, self-expression and self-esteem²¹⁷. Despite recognition of

²¹⁰ E. & B. Wenger-Trayner. *Communities of practice: a brief introduction*. (15 April 2015), 1-2, <https://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/07-Brief-introduction-to-communities-of-practice.pdf>, accessed 29 March 2021.

²¹¹ E. Wenger, Social learning capability: four essays on innovation and learning in social systems. Social learning capacity: spaces, citizenship, artists, and governance. *Social Innovation*, (Lisbon, MTSS/GEP & EQUAL, 2009), 6. <https://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/09-04-17-Social-learning-capability-v2.1.pdf>, accessed 2 December 2021.

²¹² E. Wenger, 'Communities of practice and social learning systems: the career of a concept' in C. Blackmore, ed., *Social Learning Systems and communities of practice*, (Springer Verlag and the Open University, 2010) 1, 9, 10, <https://wenger-trayner.com/resources/publications/cops-and-learning-systems/>, accessed 1 December 2020.

²¹³ E. Wenger, 'Communities of practice and social learning systems: the career of a concept' in C. Blackmore, ed., pp. 1 – 16, *Social Learning Systems and communities of practice*, accessed 27 March 2021.

²¹⁴ E. & B. Wenger-Trayner. *Communities of practice: a brief introduction*. (15 April 2015), 2, <https://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/07-Brief-introduction-to-communities-of-practice.pdf>, accessed 29 March 2021.

²¹⁵ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 27.

²¹⁶ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 128.

²¹⁷ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 14.

fruitful and positive benefits when engaged in community relations, the authors do caution that this can be a difficult action to undertake. They counsel looking to the natural world for inspiration and insight, drawing comparisons between human relationships and those found within natural environments²¹⁸. The scientific theory is that within nature, species will gravitate towards grouped placements, and that will support maturation. Species that are connected closely in terms of physical space, are more aligned a natural predilection for growth, as they utilise a shared energy²¹⁹. The sensation of shared experiences, aids healthy growth – as opposed to choosing an isolated lifestyle²²⁰. Professors John Cacioppo and William Patrick investigated this phenomenon, documenting a series of case studies in their book, *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection* 2008 to support their theory. The studies revealed that ‘connection adds more water to the well that nourishes our human potential’²²¹. This is specifically relevant to the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, as the practice of gardening can be a shared experience, irrespective of whether it is conducted within the participant’s personal spaces or in public. The following statements made during the research process support this:

‘Often times when I am working in the yard, people will stop and talk to me. Sometimes about the yard, somethings about other things, sometimes too people will ask me to assist them with something in their yard, I am always happy to help’. - Participant #20²²²

‘I really enjoy learning about gardening from my mum and my father-in-law who are both keen gardeners. I have started a propagation station and since being able to have someone to share it with, my interest has grown, and I love the actual growing process. I have always loved looking at gardens, especially flowers, but since being able to share ideas, I’ve developed a keen interest especially in growing my own produce’ – Participant #21.²²³

²¹⁸ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 30.

²¹⁹ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, 26.

²²⁰ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 2.

²²¹ J. Cacioppo, & W. Patrick, *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection* (New York City, W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 269: 2.

²²² Garden Participant #20, APPENDIX: INTERVIEWS, p. 237

²²³ Garden Participant #21, APPENDIX: INTERVIEWS, p. 239.

What this demonstrates is the fundamental entity of human caring, the visual of a tended garden displays the tangibility of the depth of this caring sensation²²⁴. This is extended through the engagement with others. As suggested by participant responses, engagement is fuelled primarily by the admiration of form and tempo found within the garden, and secondly through the sharing of knowledge, which promotes growth, both horticultural and in the sense of community²²⁵, which sits at the core of the outcome sought by the development of this garden project.

Autoethnography provides both a measure to implement empathetic research that should encourage rich dialogue. It should be noted however, that in drawing on Kester's theories, the researcher once encapsulated within the participatory formation, will rely less on the methodology and be guided by the directive of the collaborative energies. Readings authored by American professors, Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams and Arthur Bochner outline the avenue of autoethnographic research as both a process and a product²²⁶, explaining that in striving for an understanding of deeper societal perspectives, the researcher will activate an investigative approach shaped by personal experiences and reflections as a basis for inquiry and to establish a pathway on which to move forward²²⁷. The methodology is an applicable approach to a project in the vein of Relational Aesthetics²²⁸, the history is embedded in social studies, when researchers were seeking outcomes inspired by the creation of deeper connections and understanding with their subjects, seeking an empathetic approach to deliver diverse perspectives²²⁹. This served these specific outcomes as opposed to the generalised approach that had been employed in the past, as it softened the boundaries between research and subject²³⁰. The process imbues an application of ethnographic and autobiographical attributes, utilising the researcher's memories to incite relaxed and fruitful discussion with participants during the course of an

²²⁴ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, p.34.

²²⁵ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, p.34.

²²⁶ C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A. P. Bochner, 'Autoethnography: An Overview', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para.,2, (Jan.2011). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>, accessed 12 March 2021.

²²⁷ H. Smith & R.T. Dean, 'Introduction', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. Ed. 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 28.

²²⁸ C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A. P. Bochner, 'Autoethnography: An Overview', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para.,7.

²²⁹ H. Smith & R.T. Dean, 'Introduction', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. Ed. 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 35.

²³⁰ C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A. P. Bochner, 'Autoethnography: An Overview', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para., 8.

interview²³¹. The theorists denote it as a product also, and this refers to the research that can be evidenced by both qualitative and quantitative data stores²³².

In analysis of autoethnography as methodology, essentially in a project that integrates community participants, this approach provides a substantial base from which to expand the inquiry through making connections with others with both similar and alternate experiences, which in turn, offers a space for learning. This can occur through reflective practice that allows a broad scope to consider and understand the diverse perspective of others, extending both the research and the depth of the community network.

American professor Mara Miller in her book, *The Garden as an Art* 1993, describes a garden as not just a natural environment, but also a ‘site’ of significance²³³. The significance is the purposed nature of the space and the specific function that it serves, for example a kitchen garden that produces food items. The significance also refers to a place that is efficacious in the support of wellbeing, both physically and intellectually due to the habitual practice of gardeners investing energy into and drawing on the inherent liveliness present in nature²³⁴. As a reference, Miller credits the 18th century *Tea Gardens* 1753 (Figure 2.8)²³⁵ situated



Figure 2.8: 18th century Tea Gardens

²³¹ C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A. P. Bochner, ‘Autoethnography: An Overview’, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para.,9.

²³² C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A. P. Bochner, ‘Autoethnography: An Overview’, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para.,12.

²³³ M. Miller. *The Garden as Art*.

²³⁴ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, 99.

²³⁵ The Hillcart Tales, *The Pleasures of the Tea Gardens of the 18th Century* (n.d), <https://www.thehillcarttales.com/tea-tales/the-pleasures-of-the-tea-gardens-of-the-18th-century/>, accessed 4 November 2021.

in the city of London, as evidence of a multipurpose space. These spaces housed interconnective networks for sating social needs (people coming together for companionship) cultural needs (tea housing an upper-class status) and physical (being outdoors in an urban centre, while enveloped by nature)²³⁶.

2.3 External statistics gathered from secondary sources

To ensure the analysis of the primary data is comprehensive, the application of a mixed approach was utilised to determine the findings. The primary source of data was qualitative and was derived from participant responses to research questions approved by the UniSQ (Ethics Approval no. H20REA094). To support this research, statistics from government agencies, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), were applied. These statistics, determine the changes in the suburban landscape and the effects of those who reside in these areas. This data will underpin the collected data from long term resident participants in this community. Also applied was data taken from a meta-study conducted by Professors Masashi Soga, Kevin J. Gaston and Yuichi Yamarura from the University of Tokyo. Collectively these various pieces of research inquiry show the benefits of gardening practice on well-being. This data is crucial as it underpins the qualitative responses from the project participants as it demonstrates the importance and outcomes of the community ‘as’ artistic outcome, but also ‘as’ a form of community engagement. It should be noted, that while the data researched from other sources was not collected specifically for this study, it does provide substance to the primary data that was the focus of this research. In accordance with American Professors Margaret D. LeCompte and Jean J. Schensul, the mixed approach can be adept in recognising patterns within qualitative studies, drawing on previous quantitative studies, like the one undertaken by Soga, Gaston and Yamarura can assist with the formulating of participant questions, in determining positive outcomes for all stakeholders²³⁷.

²³⁶ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, 101.

²³⁷ M.D. LeCompte. & J.J. Schensul, *Analysis and Interpretation of Ethnographic Data: Mixed Methods Approach: Ethnographer’s Toolkit*. (Book 5, 2nd Edition, Plymouth, AltaMira Press, 2013) p.p. 11-12.

To summarise, this chapter was an investigation into the insight of the seminal literature that has supported and affirmed this practice-led research of a participatory garden project. The research that has explicated the underlying creative theory, has been the four publications outlining Relational Aesthetics, as determined by Nicolas Bourriaud, that is a requisite to appreciate and theoretically understand the evolutionary process of participatory practices. Additionally, understanding the participatory concepts as theorised by Grant Kester provides yet another nuanced perspective, showcasing the depth of this form of arts practice. While Claire Bishop's critique has suggested that participatory formations are difficult for critics to analyse due to their open-endedness and to construct a substantial evaluation of the relational and participatory concept, it is important in research to investigate the polar perspectives in order to provide a considered overview.

Reflected also were the contemporary theories of Nato Thompson who has determined the potential of participatory work as being a vehicle for political statements, artists working with a co-creator in a project seeking to draw attention to social issues that occur in communities. These social issues may be on a grand scale or more understated. To appreciate the notion of community, the accompanied practices and protocols of engagement, the work of Etienne Wenger, Janet Springer and Margaret Ledwith were drawn on to ensure the comfort of participants and to establish the framework for advancing the relational concepts of acceptance and diversity. To ensure a substantial basis from which to grow the initial discussion, the theories of professors Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams and Arthur Bochner will be applied. It is integral to reference these underlying concepts, as they provide a solid theoretical basis from which to advance the research.

Regarding the analysis of research data, resources drawn from government agencies such as the ABS and OECD, were applied to further validate the qualitative data gathered from the participant's responses. The interview data and secondary statistics collectively create research outcomes that support the primary findings and proposition of this research field of inquiry.

CHAPTER 3: HISTORY OF RELATIONAL AESTHETICS AND PARTICIPATORY ARTWORK

This chapter will investigate the history of relational and participatory practices tracking the evolution, as it has progressed over the course of the 20th century. Arts practice would oftentimes echo the specific social and political leanings of each specific era, the work corresponding to events and the consequential impacts for society. For example, the practices adopted by Dadaists (1916 - 1925)²³⁸ (Figure 3.1)²³⁹ that emerged in the time periods both during and following the First World War 1914 – 1918²⁴⁰. Throughout this time, self-expression and free-speech ideologies were abated in keeping with communicative blackouts that occurred as a result of armed conflict²⁴¹ and in the recovery period in the years following. The Dadaists work countered this notion by producing artwork that used anti-aesthetic



Figure 3.1: Dadaist Poster 1916 - 1925

²³⁸ MoMA, Learning: Dada. (n.d.), https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/dada/ accessed 31 May 2021.

²³⁹ Wikimedia., 'Dada: Dadaism poster to exhibit, Switzerland, Febr. 1920' Commons (2018), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Dada#/media/File:DaDa_exhibit.jpg, accessed 4 November 2021.

²⁴⁰ MoMA, Learning: Dada. (n.d.), https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/dada/ accessed 29 May 2021.

²⁴¹ MoMA, Learning: Dada. (n.d.), https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/dada/ accessed 30 May 2021.

philosophy, such as printed posters, and protest activities as a way of demonstrating their aversion to bourgeois values amid the despair following the First World War²⁴².

While the Relational Aesthetics concept was identified in the latter stages of the 20th century, the ideals that shaped the underlying philosophy, that being the artist working in unison with their audiences as co-creators²⁴³, was shaped and influenced by the various genres²⁴⁴. The rationale for the experimental way of working was to have their audiences develop a deeper understanding of art by providing opportunities for intensive engagement with, artworks and artists²⁴⁵, imploring audiences to look further than the aesthetic to appreciate the conceptual elements of the works²⁴⁶. The Duchampian philosophy of coaxing the audience member inside the frame was initiated by the displays of early *Readymade* works²⁴⁷, everyday items such as a bottle rack, *Bottle Rack* (1914) (Figure 3.2)²⁴⁸ and urinal, *Fountain* (1917) (Figure 1.1), were chosen specifically by the artist for their intriguing forms²⁴⁹.



Figure 3.2: *Bottle Rack* (replica), Marcel Duchamp 1914

²⁴²F. S. Kleiner, *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History*, (13th edition, Thomas Wadsworth, Boston, 2009), 929.

²⁴³ G. Kester, (b) *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*. (Durham, Duke University, 2011), 89.

²⁴⁴ N. Bourriaud, *The Radicant*, 16.

²⁴⁵ G. Kester (a). *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*. (Updated edition, Berkley, University of California, 2011), 9.

²⁴⁶ N. Bourriaud, *The Exform*, 82.

²⁴⁷ N. Bourriaud, *The Exform*, 82.

²⁴⁸ Wikimedia, 'Bottle Rack - Marcel Duchamp' *Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bottle_Rack_-_Marcel_Duchamp.jpg 2021, accessed 4 November 2021.

²⁴⁹ N. Bourriaud, *The Exform*, 82.

His earliest seminal work, *Bicycle Wheel*, 1913 (Figure 3.3)²⁵⁰ consisted of a bicycle wheel bolted to a wooden stool, Duchamp termed this work *Assisted Readymade*²⁵¹ as the bicycle wheel was supported by another object. The artist would encourage his audiences to participate by spinning the wheel, stating that the rotating action would advance them a sensation of comfort²⁵².



Figure 3.3: *Bicycle Wheel (replica)*, Marcel Duchamp 1913

The frame for audience participation was extended through a series of scenarios developed by American artist Allan Kaprow entitled *Happenings* (circa.1959 to late 1960s) (Figure 3.4)²⁵³ while inspired by Duchampian theories they reflected the changing times also, and as such drew on the influence of American scholar John Dewey and mid-century American audio artist John Cage²⁵⁴. American

²⁵⁰ Wikimedia, File: Bicycle wheel by Marcel Duchamp, 1913, this version 1964 - Galleria nazionale d'arte moderna - Rome, Italy - DSC05467.jpg *Commons* (2021), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bicycle_wheel_by_Marcel_Duchamp,_1913,_this_version_1964_-_Galleria_nazionale_d%27arte_moderna_-_Rome,_Italy_-_DSC05467.jpg accessed 4 November 2021.

²⁵¹ N. Bourriaud. (b) *Post Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* (New York City: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002) 38.

²⁵² MoMA Learning, *Bicycle Wheel: Marcel Duchamp*. (n.d) https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/marcel-duchamp-bicycle-wheel-new-york-1951-third-version-after-lost-original-of-1913/, accessed 22 August 2021.

²⁵³ K. Beaven, Tate, *Performance Art the Happening*, Sol Goldberg's photograph of participants in Allan Kaprow's 'Women licking jam off a car,' from his happening 'household 1964' (n.d.) Courtesy Getty Research Institute, © Estate of Sol Goldberg <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/h/happening/happening> 8 November 2021.

²⁵⁴ P.A. Lehnert., *An American Happening: Allan Kaprow and a theory of process art* The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1989 iv.

arts group Fluxus, emerged during the period of the 1960s creating *Events*²⁵⁵, in response to the political unrest that related to the Vietnam War (1955-1975)²⁵⁶ while Swiss artist Thomas Hirschhorn's urban community work, showcasing social inequities will also be discussed. These various artists, theorists, happenings and events, provide a greater understanding as to the depth and historical placement of the relational formation, as they each explicate the evolutionary path. Each artist and theorist express or explain a perspective that relates to their specific time in history, providing a succinct timeframe of the participatory concept.



Figure 3.4: Happenings: Women licking Jam off a Car, Allan Kaprow 1959 – 1960s, 1960s circa.

To continue unpacking the relational aesthetic, the writing of Nicolas Bourriaud and Grant Kester will be discussed as these theorists present the most comprehensive argument for relational and participation, essentially in the arts²⁵⁷. To counter these perspectives, British arts critic and author, Claire Bishop's theories and outlook on the relational encounter will also be considered. Despite Bishop's reservations, she regarded the community-based work of Thomas Hirschhorn as

²⁵⁵ M. Schwendener, Celebrating Fluxus, a Movement That Didn't Create by the Rules, *New York Times*, 6 Jan 2012. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/08/nyregion/celebrating-fluxus-a-movement-that-didnt-create-by-the-rules-review.html> accessed 15 August 2022.

²⁵⁶ M. Schwendener, Celebrating Fluxus, a Movement That Didn't Create by the Rules, *New York Times*, 6 Jan 2012. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/08/nyregion/celebrating-fluxus-a-movement-that-didnt-create-by-the-rules-review.html> accessed 15 August 2022.

²⁵⁷ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* 11.

housing sincere relational value due to the non-utopian premise on which it is staged²⁵⁸ specifically Hirschhorn's, *Bataille Monument* 2002²⁵⁹ (Figure 3.5)²⁶⁰.



Figure 3.5: *Bataille Monument*, Thomas Hirschhorn 2002

3.1 The relational concept – recognition of audience participants as co-creators, the work of Allan Kaprow his influences and the Performance Arts

3.1.1 Allan Kaprow

As a response to the commercialism of the post 2nd World War era,²⁶¹ Neo-Dadaist Allan Kaprow, who described himself as an ‘unartist’²⁶² utilised found objects such as tyres and barrels within his *Happening* sequences to construct work

²⁵⁸ C. Bishop, ‘Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics’. October (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 65:2.

²⁵⁹ The *Bataille Monument* was part of Documenta 11, a quinquennial contemporary art's festival, which in 2002, was held in Kassel Germany. This exhibition was curated by Nigerian curator Okwui Enwezor and was the first Documenta to incorporate an authentic global collective and artistic perspective. *Universes in Universe. Documenta 11. 2002*. accessed 29 May 2021. <https://universes.art/en/documenta/2002>

²⁶⁰ Wiki Art Encyclopedia., *Bataille Monument, Thomas Hirschhorn 2002, Conceptual Art installation* (2013), <https://www.wikiart.org/en/thomas-hirschhorn/bataille-monument-2002> accessed 04 November 2021.

²⁶¹ R.C. Morgan, W. Kahn, & I. Sandler, ‘Allan Kaprow (1927–2006)’, *The Brooklyn Rail* (May 2006), <https://brooklynrail.org/2006/05/art/allan-kaprow-19272006>, accessed 29 May 2021.

²⁶² This concept relates to Kaprow's philosophies of moving beyond the traditional art methodology. Kaprow, A., *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, in J. Kelley ed. (Extended edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 1993), 98.

that subsumed assemblage²⁶³. Kaprow incorporated theatrical concepts by engaging active audience participation which was listed as a material in the artist's descriptive statement²⁶⁴. The acknowledgement of people as a material, referred to the energy incited by participants, and was documented as such to suggest the empowering and justified context of the work²⁶⁵. Participants were those who chose to be participate actively, however the audience supporting the exhibit played a participatory role while observing from the fringe²⁶⁶. In this way, Kaprow extended the Duchampian co-efficiency principles of participatory efforts by inviting viewers to actively take part in the construction of the work²⁶⁷. The works were influenced by daily experiences and saw participants either construct forms with the supplied assorted items, like large ice blocks, *Fluids* 1967 (Figure 3.6)²⁶⁸ in a collaborative and spontaneous exercise; or to interact with a previously constructed form like an obstacle course assembled from worn tyres, *Yard* 1961²⁶⁹ (Figure 3.7)²⁷⁰. The form however was incorporeal (for example, the ice used in *Fluids*, melted away)²⁷¹ and termed anti-form²⁷², in that the work focused on the inherent properties of the chosen matter or participants, the artist as such, in adopting a facilitator and supportive role in a co-creative process, had no preconceived notion of how the work may evolve

²⁶³ Assemblage is a collection of items used to create artistic form. F. S. Kleiner, Glossary, *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History* (13th Edition. Boston, Thomson Wadsworth, 2009), 1031.

²⁶⁴ R. Schechner, 'Extensions in Time and Space. An interview with Allan Kaprow', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol/ 3 (Architecture/Environment, Spring 1968) ,154, Massachusetts, The MIT Press, 1968), 154, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1144364>, accessed 30 May. 2021.

²⁶⁵ R. Schechner, 'Extensions in Time and Space. An interview with Allan Kaprow', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol/ 3 (Architecture/Environment, Spring 1968) ,154.

²⁶⁶ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 39.

²⁶⁷ G. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 53.

²⁶⁸ Wiki Art Visual Art Encyclopedia., *Performance Art; Allan Kaprow*, <https://www.wikiart.org/en/allan-kaprow> (n.d). accessed 04 November 2021.

²⁶⁹ C. Fricke, 'Intermedia: Happenings, Actions and Fluxus' in I. F Walther ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography* (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 582.

²⁷⁰ Wiki Art Visual Art Encyclopedia., *Performance Art; Allan Kaprow*, <https://www.wikiart.org/en/allan-kaprow> (n.d). accessed 04 November

²⁷¹ C. Gormley, *Performance at Tate: Into the Space of Art Allan Kaprow 1927–2006: Fluids 1967 and Scales 1971* (2008/ 2016), <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/performance-at-tate/case-studies/allan-kaprow>, accessed 24 June 2021.

²⁷² R. Schechner, 'Extensions in Time and Space. An interview with Allan Kaprow', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol/ 3 (Architecture/Environment, Spring 1968) ,154.

and or culminate. This allowed participants a platform of self-discovery and personal expression²⁷³.



Figure 3.6: *Fluids*, Allan Kaprow 1967



Figure 3.7: *Yard*, Allan Kaprow 1961

Kaprow's working methodology was process-orientated, focusing not on the creative outcome but the collaborative processes that were adopted to attain the outcome, assuming the emergent learning and energy as the true aesthetic²⁷⁴.

Kaprow's seminal works were shaped by American Abstract Expressionist artist, Jackson Pollock's manner of painting, for example, *Blue Poles, (Number 11)*, 1952 (Figure 3.8)²⁷⁵, supporting the idea that his painted canvases supported a secondary aesthetic. The frantic activity employed to create them, captured by German photographer Hans Namuth, *Jackson Pollock painting with his drip method* 1950 (Figure 3.9)²⁷⁶, was considered the authentic, creative image²⁷⁷.

²⁷³ A Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, in J. Kelley ed., (extended edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 1993), xiv, https://monoskop.org/images/3/36/Kaprow_Allan_Essays_on_the_Blurring_of_Art_and_Life_with_Impurity_Experimental_Art_The_Meaning_of_Life_missing.pdf, accessed 7 April 2021.

²⁷⁴ A Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, in J. Kelley ed. (extended edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 1993), 214.

²⁷⁵ T. Hethorn, Personal Photo, Jackson Pollock *Blue Poles*, 1952, (Canberra. National Gallery of Australia, 2017).

²⁷⁶ Wikipedia., *Hans Nameth*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Namuth 2021, accessed 04 November 2021.

²⁷⁷ A. Kaprow, 'The Legacy of Jackson Pollock' *Artnews* (1958), <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/retrospective/archives-allan-kaprow-legacy-jackson-pollock-1958-9768/>, accessed 30 May, 2021.



Figure 3.8: *Blue Poles*, Jackson Pollock 1952



Figure 3.9: Jackson Pollock painting with his drip method, Hans Namuth 1950

In looking to the everyday for inspiration, Kaprow over the course of two weeks documented his teeth cleaning ritual *Untitled*, circa. 1980²⁷⁸ endeavouring to understand the creative quality of routine conducted through keen observation. It was supposed that through the act of observing, the ritual would appear to alter²⁷⁹. Kaprow writes that in the initial stages of observation, his thoughts related to the act being ritualist and a non-art practice as he was alone and not collaborating with an audience or performing for critics. However, as his observations deepened, his focus shifted to the rhythmic actions of his body, becoming aware of the tension in his hand, the way in which he manipulated the brush and the sensations this made within his mouth and on his gums. To a lesser extent, he noticed the taste of the paste and the freshness upon rinsing. Towards the end of his experiment, he wondered how

²⁷⁸ Unable to source image.

²⁷⁹ A Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, in J. Kelley ed. (Extended edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 1993), 214

https://monoskop.org/images/3/36/Kaprow_Allan_Essays_on_the_Blurring_of_Art_and_Life_with_Impurity_Experimental_Art_The_Meaning_of_Life_missing.pdf. Accessed 7 April 2021.

many other rituals he performed throughout his day inadvertently. He began to examine how he situated himself within his community and his considered behaviour when in the companionship of others. He found that the exercise provided him with a profound notion of self-awareness²⁸⁰. Kaprow determined, following his investigation, that the ritualistic task of teeth cleaning served the arts in a broader sense, as it symbolised emergent concepts that were extending beyond the traditional ideologies of the past. The new way of thinking, acknowledged the profundity of processes in relation to fluid thought and the use of the body as an expressive and valuable form of art. These concepts were considered indisputably authentic, and as such were reaching broader audience demography's by extension into the community to engage participants in an environment of safe and creative, collaborative practice²⁸¹.

3.1.2 Kaprow's influences

As well as Pollock, Kaprow's inspirations were derived from the ideals of American theorist John Dewey²⁸² and American musician John Cage. Dewey's social theories supported the ideal that to retain a healthy ethos in social groupings, there was a need for fluidity in the collective philosophy. This was to permit individuals to share experiences, events or happenings and to offer responses and opinions by drawing on their own personal perspectives and outlooks without fear of ridicule from others²⁸³. Dewey documented his theories in his book, *Art as Experience* 1934, where he stated that artistic properties are grounded within social interaction related specifically to emergent and evolutionary thought, these properties emerge through process²⁸⁴. What this means is, that humans do possess the ability to alter their opinions gathered from previous experiences, if an alternate perspective is presented in a safe environment. This occurs through the partaking of benevolent and

²⁸⁰ A. Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, in J. Kelley ed. (Extended edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 1993), 214.

²⁸¹ A. Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, in J. Kelley ed. (Extended edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 1993), 215.

²⁸² A. Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, in J. Kelley ed. (Extended edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 1993), xi.

²⁸³ R. Audi, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (3rd edition. Cambridge University Press, 1995), 266 -267.

²⁸⁴ J. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, (Kindle Edition, New York City, The Berkley Publishing Group, 1934), 63.

respectful communications²⁸⁵. The foundational thought underpinning a ‘process’, was adopting fluidity in perspective and being open to change²⁸⁶. Kaprow utilised Dewey’s theories in support of his *Happenings* sequences, which were experiences conducted both with and for participants to engaged with an opportunity to explore and investigate an alternate approach, beyond previously held ideas relating to art and life. These opportunities, broadened the participant’s outlook, and saw the embedding of modern practice, ensuring the continued growth of the arts. The invitation extended to audience members to participate affects the outcome and more importantly, immerses their ideas within the process. This is the entity that Kaprow saw as the authentic aesthetic experience²⁸⁷. It is interesting to note Dewey’s theories extended into gardening programs for children. He counselled that gardening programs should be implemented in schools, providing students engagement with nature, and the imparting the necessary skills to grow their own food. Dewey also advised that gardening would give students a concept of service and spirit that translated into the notion that communication and conversation allows for a robust community²⁸⁸, saying ‘truth is not the urge to dominate, but the urge to create, and to attain working harmony among diverse desires’²⁸⁹. This statement correlates with the work conducted in the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, the seeking of connection and harmony through the experience of gardening and sharing the harvest.

²⁸⁵ J. Dewey, *Art as Experience*. 65. (Kindle Edition. New York City, The Berkley Publishing Group, 1934), 65.

²⁸⁶ P.A. Lehnert. An American Happening: Allan Kaprow and a theory of process art The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1989, 30.

²⁸⁷ A Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, in J. Kelley ed. (Extended edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 1993), xiii.

²⁸⁸ S. J. Ralston, ‘John Dewey on Gardening and Food Security’ The Pragmatic Pyramid (Jan, 2013), accessed 23 August 2021, doi: 10.5840/socphiltoday20144142

²⁸⁹ R. Rorty, ‘Method, Social Science and Social Hope’ in S. Seidman (ed.) *The Postmodern Turn: New Perspectives on Social Theory*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1994, p. 61:1.

John Cage was an avant-garde music composer who investigated avenues to enhance the audio concept by incorporating dance and theatre elements in his work²⁹⁰, such as *Fielding Sixes* 1980²⁹¹ (Figure 3.10)²⁹². Influenced by his Buddhist beliefs, Cage was inspired to create silence, but found that silence in a pure sense did not exist. For his work *4:33*, 1952 (Figure 3.11)²⁹³ Cage arranged for performer David Tudor to play the piece by closing the lid of the piano at the beginning of the movement, and opening it at the end, a period of 4 minutes and 33 seconds. The audience, in anticipation of hearing music began talking, before the realisation that their noise was the sound that they had come to experience²⁹⁴. In this regard, the audience were engaging in a participatory role with the artist²⁹⁵.



Figure 3.10: *Fielding Sixes*, John Cage 1980

²⁹⁰ M. Schneckenburger, 'Kinetic Expansion', in I. F. Walther ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography* (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 504.

²⁹¹ Merce Cunningham Trust, *Choreography 1980: Fielding Sixes* (2021), <https://www.mercecunningham.org/the-work/choreography/fielding-sixes/> accessed 26 August 2021.

²⁹² *Fielding Sixes*, (Event Arrangement] (n.d), <https://www.dasilvalighting.com/fielding-sixes> accessed 5 November 2021.

²⁹³ The Piano n.d. <https://www.thepiano.sg/piano/read/john-cages-433-defies-silence> accessed 5 November.

²⁹⁴ M. Schneckenburger, 'Kinetic Expansion'. In I. F. Ingo ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography*. (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 504.

²⁹⁵ M. Schneckenburger, 'Kinetic Expansion'. In I. F. Ingo ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography*. (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 505.



Figure 3.11: 4:33, John Cage 1952

Cage's arts endeavours to evoke all the human senses, resulted in the composing of the work *Water Music* 1951, the score was accompanied by a deck of cards, wooden sticks, a pipe, and a water ball with instructions on how to incorporate the items to reflect the sounds²⁹⁶. Cage's influence on the work of Kaprow was evident in a seminal piece in the 'Happening' series, *18 Happenings in Six Parts* 1959 (Figure 3.12)²⁹⁷. This work was a multi-discipline act that saw participant groups given musical instruments to play, (Figure 3.13)²⁹⁸ canvases to paint on (Figure 3.14)²⁹⁹ and placards to read (Figure 3.15)³⁰⁰. The activities played out for a period of 90 minutes, in New York City's Reuban gallery. The room had been divided into three spaces with plastic sheeting that had been adorned with painted and collaged references to earlier works of Kaprow's. The artist utilised an electronic

²⁹⁶C. Fricke. 'Intermedia: Happenings, Actions and Fluxus' in I. F Walther ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography* (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 582.

²⁹⁷MoMA, Fred W. McDarrah, *Allan Kaprow's 18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, Reuben Gallery, New York, (October 1959), 2021, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/173014>

²⁹⁸ MoMA, Fred W. McDarrah, *Allan Kaprow's 18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, Reuben Gallery, New York, (October 1959),2021, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/173009> accessed 4 November 2021.

²⁹⁹MoMA, Fred W. McDarrah, *Allan Kaprow's 18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, Reuben Gallery, New York, (October 1959), 2021 <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/175004>, accessed 4 November 2021.

³⁰⁰ MoMA, Fred W. McDarrah, *Allan Kaprow's 18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, Reuben Gallery, New York, (October 1959), 2021, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/173010> accessed 4 November 2021.

music score to temper the rhythm of the activities³⁰¹ as a lighting system operated in a sequenced pattern keeping time with the score³⁰².



Figure 3.12: Happenings in VI Parts, Allan Kaprow 1959



Figure 3.13: 18 Happenings in VI Parts, Allan Kaprow 1959



Figure 3.14: 18 Happenings in VI Parts, Allan Kaprow 1959



Figure 3.15: 18 Happenings in VI Parts, Allan Kaprow 1959

The unprompted musical element of this work mirrored aspects of a theatre performance³⁰³, which echoed work with a similar style that was emerging at a

³⁰¹ S. Jenkins, *Allan Kaprow Artist Overview and Analysis*, (21 Nov 2011), <https://www.theartstory.org/artist/kaprow-allan/artworks>, accessed 2 September 2021.

³⁰² F. S. Kleiner, 'Europe and America after 1945' *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History* 1017, para. 3.

³⁰³ K. Beaven, Tate: Art and Artists Performance Art: *The Happening* (n.d.) <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/h/happening/happening>, accessed 30 May 2021.

synchronised juncture in European centres such as Cologne. Korean artist, Nam June Paik conducted a series of concerts, titled *Piano Integral* 1958 – 1963 (Figure 4.16)³⁰⁴ which comprised the playing of a piano that had been modified through the placing of items like glasses and egg shells, between the strings. The artist had also arranged for the insertion of sirens and bicycle bells within the mechanism, that were activated at the turn of a key³⁰⁵. A prominent figure within this expanding, explorative arts practice in New York, was American George Maciunas, a musician whose work, *Flux Kit* 1964, (Figure 4.17)³⁰⁶ was a collection of his scores written on square pieces of white card. Maciunas had formal qualifications in art history and architecture, however he sought to create a movement, Fluxus (circa. 1960 – 1978) to challenge preconceived traditional ideas of what audiences believed that art should be³⁰⁷. His intention was to erase the boundaries that divided art from the observer to draw audiences further into the work. The movement was difficult to define, in that there was no specific art discipline nominated as the significant practice, the artist's work was inventive and conceptual, continually striving to find avenues in which to reach the public. The philosophy was simply to have both audience and artist interact freely and profoundly with the work, redefining the ideals of art practice³⁰⁸.



Figure 3.16: *Piano Integral*, Nam June Paik 1958 – 1963

³⁰⁴ Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, 'Nam June Paik Klavier Intégral 1958 – 1963' (n.d.) <https://www.mumok.at/en/klavier-integral> accessed 5 November 2021.

³⁰⁵ M. Schneckenburger, 'The Direct Language of Reality', in I. F. Walther ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography* (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 521.

³⁰⁶ St Louis Art Museum (n.d), <https://www.slam.org/collection/objects/40674/> 5 November 2021.

²⁹⁵ C. Fricke. 'Intermedia: Happenings, Actions and Fluxus' in I. F Walther ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography* (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 587.

³⁰⁸C. Fricke. 'Intermedia: Happenings, Actions and Fluxus' in I. F Walther ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography* (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 588.



Figure 3.17: *Flux Kt*, George Maciunas 1964

Performance art is linked to the 1970s (but can be traced to Futurist and Dadaist productions of the 1910s) and adopted similar philosophies to the works of Kaprow in that the performances subsumed immaterial matter and conveyed meaning through expressive presence, inclusive of actions and sounds and were conducted both as a collective or an individual who invited participation from the audience³⁰⁹. Performance art grew from a frustration with the traditional modes of exhibiting artworks³¹⁰, citing difficulty in engagement or appreciation with traditional artworks due to the austere environments often present in galleries and museums³¹¹ and the physical separation imposed between viewer and artwork³¹². The artist's intentions in the late 1960s and early 70s were fuelled by an emergent, anti-establishment political and social climate that adopted a protestant mindset voicing anti-war sentiments and demanding civil rights for all. The artists' investigated contemporary events while demonstrating democratic liberties³¹³ to both develop

³⁰⁹ F. S. Kleiner, 'Europe and America after 1945' *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History*, 1017, para. 4.

³¹⁰ F. S. Kleiner, 'Europe and America after 1945' *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History*, 1017, para. 2.

³¹¹ F. S. Kleiner, 'Europe and America after 1945' *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History*, 1017, para. 2.

³¹² Dr. V. B. Spivey. 'Performance Art: An Introduction. When Art Intersects with Life'. Khan Academy (n.d.), <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-1010/conceptual-and-performance-art/performance-art/a/performance-art-an-introduction>, accessed 30 May 2021.

³¹³ MoMA Learning, Media and Performance (n.d). https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/media-and-performance-art/ accessed 30 May 2021.

performance pieces and to incite active participation. The works were often emotive in nature, seeking a platform that evoked a sense of identity in terms of recognising one's personal values for both the performers and the audience. This essentially eradicated the line between player and observer in an expressive participatory exercise where all performers are actively in union within a mutual creative experience³¹⁴.

3.1.3 Performance Art

The New York City based group Fluxus was a collective of avant-garde artists who staged works, termed *Events*, such as the work of American artist, George Brecht, whose work *Three Chairs Event* 1961 (Figure 3.18)³¹⁵ involved the placement of three different coloured chairs; a white chair, situated within a gallery space placed near notes of a musical score, and a message stating that the work involved three chairs. The second chair was black, and was placed within the gallery bathroom, while the third chair, yellow in colour, was situated outside the gallery involved three chairs. The second chair was black, and was placed within the gallery bathroom, while the third chair, yellow in colour, was situated outside the gallery³¹⁶.



Figure 3.18: *Three Chairs Event*, George Brecht 1961

³¹⁴ F. S. Kleiner, 'Europe and America after 1945' *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History* 1017, para. 4.

³¹⁵ Artsy, George Brecht Chair Event, 1967

Installation, wooden chair, 2 posters, glass object (n.d), <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/george-brecht-chair-event-1>, 5 November 2021.

³¹⁶ J. Robinson, 'From Abstraction to Model: George Brecht's Events and the Conceptual Turn in Art of the 1960s'. *October* Vol. 127 (The MIT Press, Winter. 2009), 94, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40368554>, accessed 26 August 2021.

The work comprised elements of Duchamp's *Readymades*, both works housing conceptuality. This invited the question, of whether tangible form was necessary, or was the suggestion of form enough to captivate an audience³¹⁷? In moving beyond Kaprow's *Happenings* series (Figure 4.19)³¹⁸, the Fluxus work involved a greater effect of intrinsic thought and intellect to engage, as opposed to working with concrete items in a physical exercise with others³¹⁹. As well as the Fluxus works incorporating minimal props in comparison to Kaprow's work, the term 'events' was adopted as this suggested a participatory 'experience', as opposed to Kaprow's term of 'Happenings' which embodied everyday routines or rituals³²⁰. The Fluxus group encapsulated a variety of cultures and arts disciplines such as stage performers and writers exuding a richness of diversity and perspective in which to explore and ultimately produce as work³²¹. Japanese/American conceptual artist, Yoko Ono's work *Cut Piece* 1964³²² (Figure 3.20)³²³, saw the artist sit on a stage with a pair of scissors, inviting audience members to come and cut away sections of her clothing, as she sat unresponsive³²⁴, even on the occasions when some participant's actions were aggressive³²⁵. While there have been conflicting interpretations of the work, it has been suggested that Ono, an activist for peace, was showcasing violence against women. Participants were permitted to take the swatches they had cut away as a

³¹⁷ J. Robinson, 'From Abstraction to Model: George Brecht's Events and the Conceptual Turn in Art of the 1960s'. *October* Vol. 127 (The MIT Press, Winter. 2009), 94 – 95, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40368554>, accessed 26 August 2021.

³¹⁸ S. Graf, 'Allan Kaprow and the Art of Happenings' (6 Aug. 2021), <https://www.thecollector.com/allan-kaprow-art-of-happenings/> accessed 8 November 2021.

³¹⁹ C. Fricke. 'Intermedia: Happenings, Actions and Fluxus' in I. F Walther ed., *Art of the 20th Century: Painting, Sculpture, New Media, Photography* (Volume II, Hohenzollernring, Taschen, 2005), 583.

³²⁰ T. Di Tolla, 'Happenings Movement Overview and Analysis', *The Art Story*. (2012). <https://www.theartstory.org/movement/happenings/history-and-concepts>, accessed 30 May 2021.

³²¹ Tate., 'Fluxus', *Art Terms*, (n.d.). <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/f/fluxus>, accessed 29 May 2021.

³²² During the interview with artist in the field, Tiffany Lee Brown, (APPENDIX p.), she made reference to *Cut Piece* by Yoko Ono, in her opinion, being the quintessence of participatory work.

³²³ MoMA, 'Cut Piece' *Learning* (n.d.), https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/yoko-ono-cut-piece-1964/, 5 Nov 2021.

³²⁴ M. DiRuggiero. Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece*. Bates Museum of Art. (6 Dec. 2017), <https://www.bates.edu/museum/2017/12/06/yoko-onos-cut-piece/>, accessed 30 May 2021.

³²⁵ MoMA., 'Cut Piece' *Learning* (n.d.), https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/yoko-ono-cut-piece-1964/, accessed 5 Nov 2021.



Figure 3.19: Happenings/ Yard, Allan Kaprow 1961

reminder of violations against women³²⁶, however, not all of those who participated actioned this portion of the performance, opting to leave the cut pieces with the artist³²⁷. Ono has documented her experience, citing that having her clothing cut away was deeply symbolic of people removing parts of her that were unlikeable, until all that remained was someone deemed acceptable by audience standards³²⁸. Her final statement as co-creator and in assessment of the work performed on approximately five occasions, was that despite her sensations of vulnerability, participants appeared keenly motivated to ascertain who she truly was, inquiring who would remain following the removal of clothing³²⁹?



Figure 3.20: Cut Piece, Yoko Ono 1964

³²⁶ K. Concannon, *Yoko Ono's Cut Piece: From Text to Performance and Back Again* (2008), <http://imaginepeace.com/archives/2680>, accessed 29 May 2021.

³²⁷ MoMA., 'Cut Piece' Learning (n.d), https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/yoko-ono-cut-piece-1964/, accessed 5 Nov 2021.

³²⁸ K. Concannon, *Yoko Ono's Cut Piece: From Text to Performance and Back Again* (2008), <http://imaginepeace.com/archives/2680>, accessed 29 May 2021.

³²⁹ MoMA., 'Cut Piece' Learning (n.d), https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/yoko-ono-cut-piece-1964/, accessed 5 Nov 2021.

It is this element of inquiry adopted by audiences that shows nuancing regarding the participatory concept, in that while the artist/facilitator has an emergent enquiry in relation to their work, this notion is also imparted to the audience, drawing once again on Roland Barthes' *Death of an Author* 1977, where Barthes theorised, that on presentation to an audience, meaning is then open to interpretation by the beholder³³⁰. Participatory and relational work provides an opportunity with which to incite intimacy and garner subjective experiences and perspectives in establishing meaning for all participants. As with Kaprow's documented observations of his teeth brushing ritual inciting personal questions of his societal purpose, the capacity for us to understand our place within our immediate communities can be established through the act of the encounter and abundant participatory efforts³³¹.

3.2 Relational Aesthetics

Bourriaud incorporated a commonality among the inclusive works³³² focusing specifically on the social constructs between the artist, the viewer and the work itself, to incite relatability and foster deep discussion³³³. The functionality that fuelled these works created a platform for audiences to experience social philosophies³³⁴. The dissipation of space between artist, artwork and audience participant provided both a platform for interpreting societal context and a capacity in which to investigate the transactions freely³³⁵. Bourriaud proposed an artistic display, that dispelled the usual methods of art assessment, in that the formation was in flux, and the traditional artistic components of elements and principles had given way to audience engagement and exchange as the imagery, to encourage fruitful, social discussions³³⁶. This curatorial premise of Bourriaud's is the same theoretical strategy that has framed the garden project for this doctoral research.

³³⁰R. Barthes, 'Image, Music, Text', *The Death of the Author*. (London, Fontana, 1977), 142 – 148, <https://sites.tufts.edu/english292b/files/2012/01/Barthes-The-Death-of-the-Author.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2021.

³³¹J. Westerman, 'The Dimensions of Performance', *Performance at Tate: Into the Space of Art* *Tate Research Publication* (2016), <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/performance-at-tate/dimensions-of-performance>, accessed 30 May 2021.

³³²N. Bourriaud, *Traffic: Space-times of the Exchange* (2012), <https://www.mayrevue.com/en/traffic-espaces-temps-de-lechange/> accessed March 2021.

³³³N. Bourriaud, *Traffic: Space-times of the Exchange* (2012), <https://www.mayrevue.com/en/traffic-espaces-temps-de-lechange/> accessed March 2021.

³³⁴N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 61.

³³⁵N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 58.

³³⁶G. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 151.

Some of the exhibited works in *Traffic* comprised social issues that were of a specific interest to the artist³³⁷. For example, Italian artist Vanessa Beecroft's work, *Untitled* 1996, (Figure 3.21)³³⁸, comprising a number of young, female models all similarly attired in lingerie and platinum wigs³³⁹. The models were posed and subsequently viewed through a narrow opening by only two or three audience members at a time³⁴⁰. The rationale was to jettison the experience objectification that women are considered by some members of society as commodities to be ogled³⁴¹. The experience was deepened by Beecroft's direction to the model's to not interact with audience members, however they had been instructed to shift their physical stance, after a time, to retain personal comfort³⁴². Beecroft's performance work is considered controversial in that to make her point of women being subjected to societal stereotyping, she exposes women in this same manner to illustrate the scrutiny experienced between the genders, in terms of regard³⁴³. Women are often subjected to the gaze and judged for both their visage and any behaviours deemed inconsistent with the traditional female role³⁴⁴. The artist's statement incorporated feminist philosophies that seek gender equality by providing for viewers to experience an uninterrupted gaze, they may sense the discomfort experienced by the models³⁴⁵. Ideally, Beecroft seeks participation to both impart an appreciation for the often-unattainable ideals imposed on women by fashion houses and aspects of society and to then attempt to elicit empathy for their plight³⁴⁶. Beecroft's work is conducted with an autobiographical ethos in that the artist suffers from an ongoing

³³⁷ N. Bourriaud. *Traffic: Space-times of the Exchange* (2012), <https://www.mayrevue.com/en/traffic-espaces-temps-de-lechange/> accessed March 2021.

³³⁸ N. Bourriaud, *Traffic: Space-times of the Exchange* (2012), <https://www.mayrevue.com/en/traffic-espaces-temps-de-lechange/> accessed March 2021.

³³⁹ N. Johnstone. 'Dare to Bare', *The Guardian* para. 5, (13 Mar. 2005), <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2005/mar/13/art>, accessed 23 June 2021.

³⁴⁰ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 39.

³⁴¹ N. Bourriaud. *Traffic: Space-times of the Exchange* (2012), <https://www.mayrevue.com/en/traffic-espaces-temps-de-lechange/> accessed March 2021.

³⁴² N. Bourriaud. *Traffic: Space-times of the Exchange* (2012), <https://www.mayrevue.com/en/traffic-espaces-temps-de-lechange/> accessed March 2021.

³⁴³ C. Bonham-Carter, & D. Hodge, *The Contemporary Art Book* (Second Edition, London, Carlton Books 2009), 28.

³⁴⁴ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 39.

³⁴⁵ N. Johnstone, 'Dare to Bare', *The Guardian* (13 Mar. 2005), <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2005/mar/13/art>, accessed 23 June 2021.

³⁴⁶ Artsy, *Vanessa Beecroft, Biography* (2021), <https://www.artsy.net/artist/vanessa-beecroft> accessed 29 May 2021.

food disorder, as she endeavours to project and maintain an image considered palatable by societal standards³⁴⁷.

3.2.1 Claire Bishop – critique of relational concepts

As discussed in Chapter 3 introduction, British art critic Claire Bishop states categorically in her overview of relational work, that she struggles to find a focal point in which to engage³⁴⁸, as the work is process orientated and outcomes are open ended³⁴⁹. Perusal of video footage and/or digital stills leave the critic frustrated due to the ambiguity, lack of sufficient energetic detail and the time necessary to incite enough interest to develop understanding of the specific concept. The critic is unable to relate intimately with secondary captures, and as such cannot measure the collective energy of participants³⁵⁰. Bishop draws inspiration of the appraisal theories from American author and critic Clement Greenberg³⁵¹. That being, engagement and drafting a critique is an autonomous exercise, requiring physical space and quietude to absorb oneself and to draw a robust conclusion based on a sense of transcendence that translates beyond that of the traditional form or frame³⁵². The relational aspect that troubles Bishop in her analysis is the absence of boundaries and the concept of co-creating³⁵³ with audience members who are seeking to construct sublime



Figure 3.21: *Untitled*, Vanessa Beecroft 1996

³⁴⁷ Artsy: *Vanessa Beecroft, Biography* (2021), <https://www.artsy.net/artist/vanessa-beecroft>, accessed 29 May 2021.

³⁴⁸ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'. *October* (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 57.

³⁴⁹ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 9.

³⁵⁰ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 7.

³⁵¹ C. Bishop. *Artificial Hells and the Politics of Spectatorship*. (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 3.

³⁵² C. Bishop. *Artificial Hells and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 3.

³⁵³ C. Bishop. *Artificial Hells and the Politics of Spectatorship*, (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 5.

connections irrespective of the ephemeral nature of the connects³⁵⁴. This raises ethical issues for Bishop concerned that as a critic of the arts, she does not possess the skill to analyse work consistent with a moral clause, essentially one that she believes overrides the artistic content³⁵⁵ concerned also with role the artist taking a role in social constructs³⁵⁶. Bishop believes that an artist understates their professional standing, by not assuming a definitive label and instead choosing to float between the roles of artist, manager, facilitator and participant³⁵⁷. In consideration of this statement of Bishop's, Kester concludes that an artist assuming differing roles extends both their relationship with their audience, as well as provides the audience/participants with a platform to understand themselves through the act of participation. Kester quotes German Sociologist, Hans Joas who uses the term, 'meaningful loss of intentionality' to delineate the openness of a relational concept, in that everyone's roles are in flux³⁵⁸. In this way, there are no correct positions for the audience as participant within the act, because the actual 'act' of being involved is the artwork, regardless of the process, outcome, or way they are interacting.

This concept referred to by Kester, is also referenced by Bishop in her appraisal of the work and accompanied philosophies of Brazilian drama theorist and activist, Augusto Boal. Boal, in the face of government oppression, sought to educate and build resilience within his audiences by adapting the structure of traditional theatre production and staging work in public spaces, involving participants who did not know they were involved, and an audience who were viewing a show that they did not realise was a show³⁵⁹. Boal referred to this as 'Invisible Theatre circa. 1970 (Figure 3.22)'³⁶⁰. The idea was conceived as a means of disseminating information safely while living in the city of Buenos Aires, when

³⁵⁴ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'. October (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 79.

³⁵⁵ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 223.

³⁵⁶ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 226.

³⁵⁷ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 9.

³⁵⁸ G. Kester, (b) *The one and the many: Contemporary collaborative art in a global context* Durham, Duke University Press, 2011), 114:3, 115.

³⁵⁹ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New Jersey: Verso Books, 2010) 123.

³⁶⁰ Google Sites, Augusto Boal: Invisible Theatre (n.d.) <https://sites.google.com/site/augustoboalyo/home/invisible-theatre> (accessed 24 August 2022).

Argentina was governed by a military dictatorship. One such ‘situation’, (a term used by Bishop)³⁶¹, involved actors, from the Invisible Theatre Group, translating through a dramatic act, a humanitarian law that legislated that for people who were poor, they were entitled to a main meal in a restaurant if they were carrying a specific identity card. The scene was acted out in a restaurant, during a busy lunch period, the actors played their roles, while the restaurant staff played theirs, although they were unaware that they were involved in the scene or providing pertinent information to others within the vicinity³⁶². Bishop calls this, participation by stealth, but as a political necessity incorporating everyone in the space, into the work, despite their unawareness.³⁶³ .



Figure 3.22: *Invisible Theatre* Augusto Boal circa. 1970

A relational installation developed by Rirkrit Tiravanija, *Untitled – Tomorrow is Another Day* 1996 (Figure 3.23)³⁶⁴ attracted criticism from Claire Bishop for not extending the work to all, labelling it being micro-utopic, which describes work not made available to all members of society, as opposed to utopic, where it is open for all to take part. Due to the inaccessibility, Bishop felt she could not provide an appraisal as the specifications regarding visitor access, she felt impacted the

³⁶¹ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, 123

³⁶² C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, 124.

³⁶³ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, 124.

³⁶⁴ Published in 2018 Rirkrit Tiravanija, *Untitled (Tomorrow Is Another Day)*, 1996, materials and dimensions variable, Kölnische Kunstverein, Cologne, Germany.

Contemporary art's struggle for usefulness: An investigation into the (non-)uses and use-values of six artworks from Sonsbeek '16: transACTION

Pieter Smits <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Contemporary-art%27s-struggle-for-usefulness%3A-An-into-Smits/45296edbaeea5a2eaf2e0c654be9aef3879a25bd/figure/12>

authenticity of the work³⁶⁵. The work initially exhibited in the Kolnischer Kunstverein, Cologne during the winter period, consisted of a replica of Tiravanija's New York apartment, constructed in ply and inclusive of some of his personal belongings³⁶⁶. Visitors could partake of a meal, watch television, have a shower and enjoy the companionship of others within the space or simply observe these activities from the fringe³⁶⁷. The work was intended to be available for visitors for a period of 24 hours over seven days, however a settlement of nearby homeless persons, was moved on by law enforcement officers after gallery staff had raised concerns about them maybe seeking admission and not adhering to the time allowances³⁶⁸. Indeed, the exhibition curator Udo Kittelman, had remarked following the conclusion of the display, how pleasing it was that the staff had managed to abate any vandalism or untoward activity due to the restricted access to *Tomorrow is Another Day*³⁶⁹. Bishop's thoughts on this relational concept, that the exclusivity, (as stipulated by the gallery not the artist), prompted the following question, "if relational art produces human relations ..., then the next logical question to ask is what types of relations are being produced, for whom, and why³⁷⁰?" Responding to Bishop's inquiry, British artist Liam Gillick proposed that the role of the critic is not to determine whether artworks house inclusivity, but to recognise, essentially in a participatory construct, the diversity and complexities inherent within the formation that exist to support the collaborations that occur³⁷¹. In answering the inquiry, the resolution would be, according to Gillick, that relational work would produce opportunities to create connective exchanges among participants who choose to take part. The act of the encounter, irrespective of who or how many are engaged, are significant and the

³⁶⁵ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'. *October* (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 76.

³⁶⁶ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'. *October* (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 70.

³⁶⁷ G. Kester, (a) *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (Updated edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 2011), 105.

³⁶⁸ G. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, 105.

³⁶⁹ *Tomorrow is Another Day* was staged at the Serpentine Gallery in London in 2005, the title was reworked as, *Tomorrow is Another Fine Day* 2005, however the exhibit was accessible only in gallery hours.

³⁷⁰ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'. *October* (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 65:2.

³⁷¹ L. Gillick. *October* 115/Winter pp. 95–107. (October Magazine. Ltd, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2006), 99 https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.usq.edu.au/stable/40368419?seq=2#metadata_info_tab_contents accessed 29 May 2021.

most meaningful element of the work for the artist and the participants, as it relates to the creation of bonds and exchange ³⁷².



Figure 3.23: *Untitled Tomorrow is Another Day*, Rirkrit Tiravanija 1996

3.2.2 Relational antagonism – Thomas Hirschhorn's monument works

Despite Bishop's engagement difficulties with Tiravanija's, *Tomorrow is Another Day* artwork due to accessibility restrictions, she applauded Thomas Hirschhorn's exhibit at the Documenta 11 festival, (held in Germany) titled *Bataille Monument* 2002 (Figure 3.24)³⁷³ as it provided a window into the struggles and misfortunes experienced by a proportionate number of members of a specific community. The artwork paid homage to French philosopher and artist Georges Bataille, who theorised that those in society who were marginalised or enduring mental illness, were unsupported by government bodies, due to capitalist policies that were in place³⁷⁴. To showcase the ideals of the monument's namesake, Hirschhorn employed Turkish nationals (who were German residents, but finding it difficult to assimilate) to assist with the construction of the work³⁷⁵. The Bataille Monument, was located within a Turkish community, some distance away from the Documenta 11 Festival's

³⁷² L. Gillick. October 115/Winter pp. 95–107. (October Magazine. Ltd, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2006), 101 – 102, https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.usq.edu.au/stable/40368419?seq=2#metadata_info_tab_contents accessed 29 May 2021.

³⁷³ A. Gardner, & C. Green, Post-North? Documenta 11 and the Challenges of the “Global” Exhibition, Thomas Hirschhorn, « Bataille Monument, (Bar) Documenta 11, Kassel, 2002. Photo: Werner Maschmann, courtesy the artist?, <https://www.on-curating.org/issue-33-reader/post-north-documenta11-and-the-challenges-of-the-global-exhibition.html#.YYh9AroRXIV>, accessed 6 November 2021.

³⁷⁴ M. Mocatta, ‘Georges Bataille’s Experience’. *Philosophy Now Magazine* (Issue 127, 2018), https://philosophynow.org/issues/127/Georges_Batailles_Experience, Accessed 30 May 2021.

³⁷⁵ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, (New Jersey, Verso Books. 2012), 3.

main staging area. This meant that for those hoping to orchestrate a visit, they were required to employ drivers from the Turkish community, who were familiar with the neighbourhood³⁷⁶. Hirschhorn also employed members of the community to work within the monument for the duration of the festival³⁷⁷. Bishop terms this aspect, Relational Antagonism³⁷⁸ and stated that Hirschhorn's work provided an insight into the suffering of others by his work inciting discomfort for the audience, by highlighting the socio- economic and political issues of the Turkish community.



Figure 3.24: *Bataille Monument, Thomas Hirschhorn 2002*

This element of the work provided Bishop with a yardstick for measuring substance as opposed to open-endedness in Tiravanija's work that she feels has no perimeter from which to base or determine an appraisal³⁷⁹. Overall, Bishop sees Hirschhorn's practice as authentic to the participatory model, as it incorporates antagonistic principles or activism, and deliberately highlights social inequities, or makes known that which is often concealed³⁸⁰. The work is also less process orientated and definitively structured³⁸¹. Hirschhorn for his part, determines he is 'not a political artist', but an 'artist who makes political art'³⁸².

³⁷⁶ G. Kester, (a) *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (Updated edition, Berkley, University of California Press, 2011), 61.

³⁷⁷ R. Wessel, 'When art is a community project: Documenta exhibit unites a struggling German neighbourhood' *The Christian Science Monitor*. (13 Sept. 2002), <https://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0913/p16s03-alar.html>, accessed 25 June 2021.

³⁷⁸ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'. *October*, (110/ Autumn, City University of

³⁷⁹ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'. *October*, (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 70.

³⁸⁰ G. Kester (b), 2011. p. 61.

³⁸¹ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'. *October*, (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 77 – 78.

³⁸² G. Kester, (b) 2011, p.181:1.

An example of the structure referred to by Bishop is the timetabling of events such as lectures, a staple feature of Hirschhorn's installation works. His contribution to *The Bijlmer- Spinoza Festival* 2009 held in Amsterdam (Figure 3.25)³⁸³ was appraised by Bishop during her second consecutive viewing of the project. She noted the eclectic visitor demographic and their harmonious exchange, despite their obvious diversity. Bishop determined that the project's scheduled activities, irrespective of content, allowed for a meditative and calming space³⁸⁴. She felt the audience did not frequent the site necessarily for an educational experience, but one that provided opportunity for social interactions certainly, but also for personal reflection and to surrender to the quietude³⁸⁵. The sensation described by Bishop, echoes the ethos regarded by Hirschhorn as authentic engagement. He encourages his audiences to engage in active thought, stating that he feels this is the most important element of an art project, to awaken reflective activity. in the viewers. Hirschhorn cites Andy Warhol's, print, *Electric Chair* 1964 (Figure 3:26)³⁸⁶ as, the inspiration for altering him to the power of reflection as an active observer and participation³⁸⁷.



Figure 3.25: *The Bijlmer- Spinoza Festival*, Thomas Hirschhorn 2009

³⁸³ T. Hirschhorn, *Gramsci Monument* (2013), <http://www.thomashirschhorn.com/gramsci-monument/> (accessed 8 November 2021).

³⁸⁴

³⁸⁵ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 263.

³⁸⁶ S. Sherwin, Andy Warhol's *Electric Chair*, 1964: a dark mirror to pop art, *The Guardian: Art and Design* (March 24 2017) <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/mar/24/andy-warhol-electric-chair-1964-pop-art-american-dream> (accessed 23 September 2022).

³⁸⁷ C. Bishop, Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics. *October*, (110/ Autumn, City University of New York, 2004), 62.

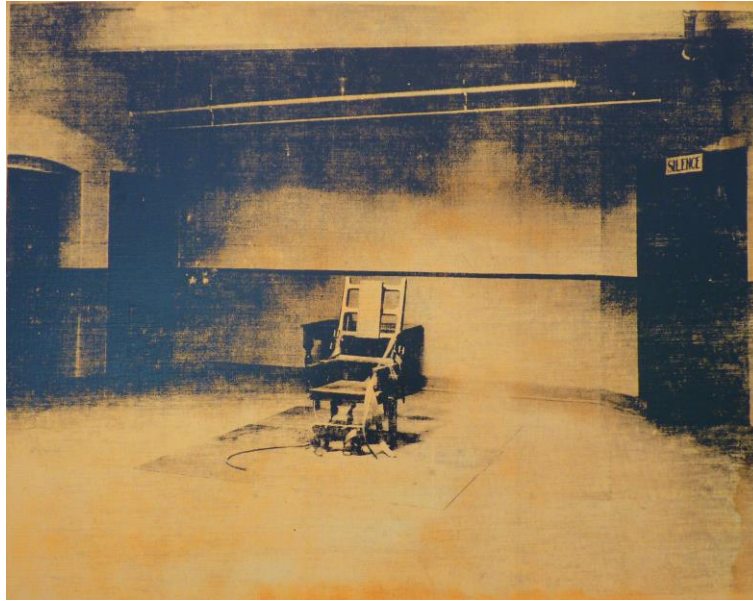


Figure 3.26: *Electric Chair*, Andy Warhol 1964.

Hirschhorn's series of 'monuments' referenced a historical theorist or individual that shaped the direction of the work, the content and the manner in which it was presented. Over the duration of thirteen years, Hirschhorn produced, in conjunction with residents, a series of four monuments. *The Spinoza Monument*, 1999 (Figure 3.26)³⁸⁸ situated in the Red-Light District of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, *The Deleuze Monument* Avignon, France 2000 (Figure 3.27)³⁸⁹, *Bataille Monument* Kassel, Germany 2002³⁹⁰ (Figure 3.28)³⁹¹ and the *Gramsci Monument* 2013, New York City, USA 2013 (Figure 3.29)³⁹². Collectively these monuments show Hirschhorn's interest in the theories of historical figures that he believes are socially significant in a contemporary context, but are not given the appropriate recognition.

³⁸⁸ Dia, *Spinoza Monument*, Amsterdam (The Netherlands) 1999 (n.d.)

<https://www.diaart.net/gramsci-monument/page51.html> (accessed 22 September 2022).

³⁸⁹ Afterall, Thomas Hirschhorn: Deleuze Monument (n.d), <https://afterall.org/book/deleuze-monument>, accessed 8 November 2021.

³⁹⁰ Dia., 'Thomas Hirschhorn: Gramsci Monument July 1, 2013–September 15, 2013, Forest Houses' Exhibitions and Projects, diaart.org/exhibition/exhibitions-projects/thomas-hirschhorn-gramsci-monument-project, accessed 21 August 2021.

³⁹¹ A. Gardner, & C. Green,

Post-North? Documenta 11 and the Challenges of the "Global" Exhibition, Thomas Hirschhorn, « Bataille Monument, (Bar) Documenta 11, Kassel, 2002. Photo: Werner Maschmann, courtesy the artist?, <https://www.on-curating.org/issue-33-reader/post-north-documenta11-and-the-challenges-of-the-global-exhibition.html#.YYh9AroRXIV>, accessed 6 November 2021.

³⁹² T. Hirschhorn, *Spinoza Monument*, Midnight Walkers City Sleepers, 1999. <https://kunstkritikk.com/another-monument/>

Hirschhorn selects the specific communities in which to situate his works to underpin his philosophy³⁹³ which suggest that site is an active element of the work in both the physical landscape and the derived emotional engagement³⁹⁴. The importance of site is reiterated in the analysis of American professor Mirwon Kwon, theorising that within the sphere of the contemporary arts, site is a defining element of the project, potentially impacting the meaning that occurs among the intersection of the artist, the participants and the environment³⁹⁵.



Figure 3.27: Spinoza Monument, Thomas Hirschhorn 1999



Figure 3.28 Deleuze Monument, Thomas Hirschhorn 2000

³⁹³ T. Hirschhorn. Dia. Gramsci Monument. Previous Monuments. (2013), <https://www.diaart.net/gramsci-monument/page51.html> accessed 29 May 2021

³⁹⁴ N. Thompson, N., Seeing Power: Art and Activisms in the 21st Century (Kindle Edition, Brooklyn, Melville House Printing, 2015), 33.

³⁹⁵ A. Dimitrakaki, 'The Spectacle and it's Others' in J. Harris ed., *Globalization and Contemporary Art*, (West Sussex, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 203.



Figure 3.29: *Bataille Monument*, Thomas Hirschhorn 2002



Figure 3.30: *Gramsci Monument*, Thomas Hirschhorn 2013

In comparing Hirschhorn's theories with those of Tiravanija's and Bourriaud's, they differ in that the Hirschhorn references the term 'form', believing that the work is derived from form and that form is retained throughout the duration of the situation³⁹⁶. Bourriaud however, defines relational networking as 'formations'³⁹⁷ which explains the aesthetic of the encounter, or the inclusion of participants situated inside the work that is constructed within the relational frame³⁹⁸. Tiravanija, in his attempt to develop work that levels social diversities and inequities, applies an open-ended principle to his art's practice creating safe spaces in an endeavour to create comfortable connections³⁹⁹. This thinking aligns with the ideals that shroud the

³⁹⁶T. Hirschhorn, *Tribute to form* (2012) <http://www.thomashirschhorn.com/tribute-to-form/> (accessed 22 September 2021).

³⁹⁷ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 17.

³⁹⁸ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 19

³⁹⁹ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 193.

Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project. Bishop's affiliations however, lean towards the work of Hirschhorn's in that the participatory platform is an opportunity to showcase social and cultural inequities, providing an incite of diversity for the broader community looking on, as opposed to, as she perceives it, a platform that acknowledges diversity but in a superficial manner that does not serve those in society, who are marginalised⁴⁰⁰.

As the arts have evolved to a place where there is space for all perspectives to be considered, (this can be traced to Duchamp's theories, in that subjectivity within the arts is fluid and adaptive in relation to personal perception and experiences). regarding the garden project, I would concur with the notion of form initially, however I am more inclined to believe that the form will dissipate and give way to intrinsic matter that occurs with human interaction. As such, it would not be applicable to continue to utilise the term form, as Kaprow did in his *Happening* sequences or Hirschhorn did for his *Monuments*. The term formation, is more apt here, as formation denotes the ongoing growth of diversity and connections encompassed within the collective. My interest in evolving this concept, beyond that of its history, is to explicate the period of time spent with the garden participants, working on the composition and direction of the garden, that may or may not relate to *personal* experiences and perspectives, and ultimately extending the notion, beyond the initial site. My intention in creating a project in conjunction with others, is to investigate an open, cohesive series of exchanges, actioned through ongoing open discussions and by provision of produce yielded from the garden site. (Figure 3.30)⁴⁰¹. These 'lasting encounters' supported by relational practice, have the capacity for maturation when anchored in empathy and regard in relation to the acceptance of the diverse perspectives of others. This concept illustrates the desired primary aesthetic of the encounter (Figure 3.31)⁴⁰².

⁴⁰⁰ C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New Jersey, Verso Books, 2012), 7.

⁴⁰¹ T.Hethorn, Journal Entry, Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project 2021.

⁴⁰² T.Hethorn, Journal Entry, Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project 2021.



Figure 3.31 Journal Entry Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project 2021.

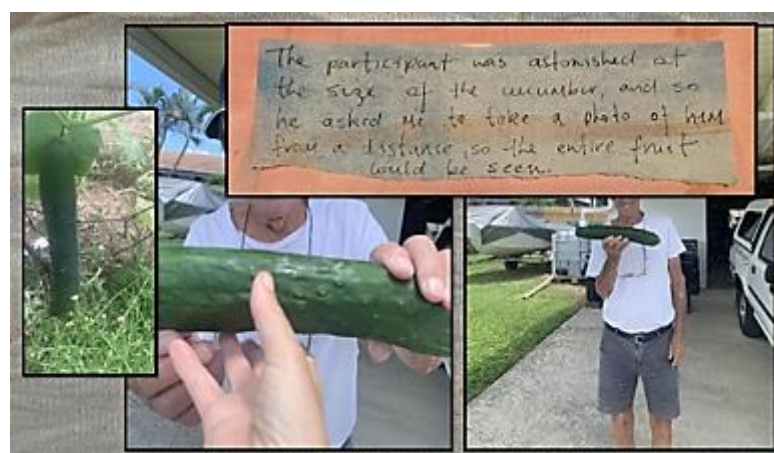


Figure 3.32 Journal Entry Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project 2021.

In conclusion, the history of Relational Aesthetics or participatory practices, which emerged in the early stages of the 20th century has historic links with Marcel Duchamp, his *Readymade* works and underlying theories. Duchamp determined that audience members played a substantial role in the validation of art, and that the physical access to, and placement of artworks were important in allowing viewers to appreciate work in its entirety. Duchamp aimed to create a new way in which art could be interpreted. This was crucial to the evolution of the arts, as it provided new ways for artists to incite exchange with audiences and develop connections that were traditionally absent. Alan Kaprow extended on these connective principles through his *Happenings* series, by creating work in conjunction with his audience through the *Happening* sequences, effectively positioning participants within the work. Kaprow erased the line between artist, artwork, and audiences, through the co-creating approach of making work. Performance artists, adopting this same ideal as Kaprow,

created scenarios called *Events* that involved audiences within the work, guiding the aesthetic and the Fluxus group were prominent also within this field, influenced by the social and political upheaval of the era. This gave audiences an opportunity to engage and subsequently decipher the information presented through the performance experience. While critic Claire Bishop, feels disengaged from the relational work developed by Rirkrit Tiravanija due to the work being process-orientated or micro-utopic, she does concede that artists such as **Augusto Boal** and Thomas Hirschhorn adopted practice that sought to convey messages in a sometimes-fraught environment, to both educate audiences, in regard to cultural and social inequities and to build personal resilience. This provided a platform for critics to engage and a measure from which to offer an analysis. For this endeavour however, the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, the underlying processes align with those of Tiravanija, through interviews, gardening activities and sharing of produce, the project holds a secure space for the social encounter, or for ‘formations’ to occur, that ultimately recognises diversity, with a view to providing an empathetic space to develop understanding and appreciation for alternate perspectives.

CHAPTER 4: CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE

This chapter will investigate contemporary artists who are engaging with participatory and relational practices, to understand the evolution of the aesthetic⁴⁰³, and to provide an analysis of the concept when situated within a community while addressing the specific community need. This is a seminal element of this exegesis, identifying and subsequently developing understanding of personal perspective (like their garden) and the manner in which people choose to interact with these spaces while instigating the human encounter (the relational aesthetic outcome for this project)⁴⁰⁴. American journalist Florence Williams defines a positive engagement with natural elements as, ‘place matters’⁴⁰⁵, a reference to both nature and an environment where humans derive comfort and enjoyment⁴⁰⁶. Williams enforces this statement further by drawing on the research of American environmental professors Rachel and Stephen Kaplan who suggest that place consistent with being situated within a natural environment, supports a variety of positive characteristics. These include sharper resilience, bolstered personal wellbeing, heightened creativity and when collaborating with others, the capacity to engage fruitfully⁴⁰⁷. The aspect of place, will be discussed further in this exegesis through the studies of American professor Mirwon Kwon, whose research is underscored by American professor Lucy Lippard’s definitive notion of ‘place’⁴⁰⁸ as a holistic integration of history, culture, nature and ideology, that supports self-identity through familiarity and resonance, providing a robust sense of knowing established from the relationship with the nominated site.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰³ Essentially during the global lockdown due to the Covid pandemic.

⁴⁰⁴ M. Miller. *The Garden as Art*, 109.

⁴⁰⁵ F. Williams, *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier and More Creative* (New York City, W.W Norton and Company Inc., 2007), 5.

⁴⁰⁶ F. Williams, *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier and More Creative*, 4.

⁴⁰⁷ F. Williams. *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier and More Creative*, 4.

⁴⁰⁸ L Lippard, *The Lure of The Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentred Society*, (New York City, The New Press, 2007), 7 as cited in M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012), 108.

⁴⁰⁹ M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012), 108. https://monoskop.org/images/d/d3/Kwon_Miwon_One_Place_after_Another_Site-Specific_Art_and_Locational_Identity.pdf, accessed 6 June 2021.

To underscore ‘place’, Williams draws on the photographic images of American photographer Lucas Foglia. His work, *Esme Swimming, Parkroyal on Singapore* 2014 (Figure 4.1)⁴¹⁰ is a capture that merges humanity and nature in the context of harmonious existence⁴¹¹. This photograph was included in a retrospective titled, ‘Human Nature’, 2018 (Figure 4.2)⁴¹², that convey a conflicting ideal in that while it may be impossible to guide nature, the question remains, why would we want to? The photograph asserts that the beauty inherent in the environment and the value of planting green species in the age of climate change, showcases the possibilities of discerning choices, even within a busy and progressive state such as Singapore⁴¹³. The photograph is a reflection of the implemented *Green Plan 2030*, 2012 (Figure 4.3)⁴¹⁴ legislated by the Singaporean government⁴¹⁵. The policy concerns the development of easily accessible urban parklands for residents to enjoy leisure activities and the government’s commitment to plant one million trees by the year 2030⁴¹⁶.



Figure 4.1: *Esme Swimming, Parkroyal on Singapore*, Lucas Foglia 2014

⁴¹⁰ Artsy, Lucas Foglia, Human Nature: Esme Swimming, Parkroyal on Pickering, Singapore 2021, <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/lucas-foglia-esme-swimming-parkroyal-on-pickering-singapore>

⁴¹¹ L. Foglia, Wild Spaces: Human Nature (n.d), <http://lucasfoglia.com/human-nature/> accessed 1 June 2021.

⁴¹² L. Foglia, Wild Spaces: Human Nature, Esme Swimming, Parkroyal on Singapore 2014, <http://lucasfoglia.com/human-nature/>, accessed 1 June 2021.

⁴¹³ L. Foglia, Wild Spaces: Human Nature (n.d), <http://lucasfoglia.com/human-nature/> accessed 1 June 2021.

⁴¹⁴ Today Online Singapore Green Plan 2030 (n.d) <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/experts-laud-ambitious-spore-green-plan-2030-some-urge-more-climate-change-education>

⁴¹⁵ Singapore Green Plan 2030, *Introducing the Green Plan* (2021) <https://www.greenplan.gov.sg/>, accessed 3 June 2021.

⁴¹⁶ Singapore Green Plan 2030, *Joint Segment on Sustainability* (2021) <https://www.greenplan.gov.sg/cos/>, accessed 3 June 2021.



Figure 4.2: *Human Nature (Installation view) Lucas Foglia 2018*



Figure 4.3: *Digital photograph taken from the booklet the Green Plan 2030, Singapore Government 2012*

Foglia's photographs hold the capacity for productive learning and thought which prompt questions that arise on viewing. This can encourage dialogical practice or discussion with others, an important component of participatory art⁴¹⁷. Another example of this is the ongoing collaborative project developed by American artists Mark Dion, J. Morgan Puett and their son Grey Rabbit Puett, entitled *Mildred's Lane* 1998 – ongoing⁴¹⁸ (Figure 4.4)⁴¹⁹. The 94-acre site hosts a restored farmhouse situated in a rural common in Pennsylvania, surrounded by a functional fruit orchard which is utilised as both a nutrition source and a learning space for horticultural

⁴¹⁷ N. Thompson. 'Living as Form' in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*. 2012. (New York City, Creative Time Books, 2012), 33.

⁴¹⁸ N. Thompson, 'Projects', *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*, 145 – 146.

⁴¹⁹O, Duffy, 'Reassembling Time: The Alternative Pedagogy of Mildred's Lane' Schoolwatch, (October 2016), <https://www.artandeducation.net/schoolwatch/77604/reassembling-time-the-alternative-pedagogy-of-mildreds-lane> 8 November 2021.

practice. Both practicing artists and interested visitors are welcome on the site⁴²⁰. The farmhouse and common land have been transformed by Dion and his family into a space that accommodates diverse creative projects and sustainability practices that are site specific, including the farmhouse restoration⁴²¹. Dion's partner explains the collaborative ethos as... 'coevolving new pedagogical strategies by practicing a generous and rigorous engagement with every aspect of life. It is a working-living-researching experiment'...⁴²². It is this very ethos that anchors the project within the charter of what Swiss theorist, Etienne Wenger terms a 'Community of Practice', the three characteristics of practice being present (that being domain, comfort in engagement and space for reflection). The outcomes are derived through an application of the dual processes of recorded intellectual dialogue (workshops between participants) and the resultant tangible product (artworks conceived from discussions and collaborations)⁴²³. The rationale for this is that it is crucial to continue the promotion of the arts, specifically within communities, as creativity has the potential to inform, provide alternate perspectives for understanding and elevating the community mood⁴²⁴.



Figure 4.2: *Mildred's Lane, Mark Dion, J. Morgan Pruett, Grey Rabbit Pruett 1998 - ongoing*

⁴²⁰ J.M. Puett, & J Morgan Puett, *Mildred's Lane* (n.d), <http://www.jmorganpuett.com/mildreds-lane>, Accessed 18 April 2021.

⁴²¹ J.M. Puett, & J Morgan Puett, *Mildred's Lane* (n.d), <http://www.jmorganpuett.com/mildreds-lane>, accessed 18 April 2021.

⁴²² J.M. Puett, & J Morgan Puett, *Mildred's Lane* (n.d), <http://www.jmorganpuett.com/mildreds-lane>, accessed 18 April 2021.

⁴²³ E. Wenger, 'Communities of practice and social learning systems: the career of a concept' in C. Blackmore, ed., pp. 1 – 16, *Social Learning Systems and communities of practice*, (Springer Verlag and the Open University, 2010) 1, 9, 10, < <https://wenger-trayner.com/resources/publications/cops-and-learning-systems/>>. accessed 1 December 2020

⁴²⁴ M. Ledwith, & J. Springett, *Participatory Practice: Community Based Action for Transformative Change*.

Projects like *Mildred's Lane*, are powerful statements on both the necessity for change in the manner we engage with the environment and for showcasing the might of the arts within the community, to educate, to develop a healthy personal wellness and to create a sustained community ethos⁴²⁵. The urgency for this is not only anchored in sustainable practice, but in the current condition of arts education also⁴²⁶. On a global scale, arts funding has been slowly dissipating as governments have determined that a deeper focus needs to be placed on the sciences and technology. There has been a noted withdrawal of fiscal support for creative endeavours resulting in changes to classroom curricula, citing that employment is not sustainable within the arts sector⁴²⁷. An example of negative community effects of diminished arts funding, occurred during Margaret Thatcher's conservative administration 1979 – 1990, in the United Kingdom⁴²⁸. The funding that had been channelled previously to local councils for establishing community projects was discontinued, resulting in residents withdrawing from their communities, which over time affected their wellbeing, sensations of good health and resilience⁴²⁹.

Following the defeat of the British conservative government in 1997, the Labor party implemented a cultural policy funded by the profits gleaned from the National Lottery to reignite the British economy through the promotion of arts programs⁴³⁰. On a national scale this created financial assistance for film and theatre industries, and at a local level the funding supported participatory community projects⁴³¹. This

⁴²⁵ T. Cruz, 'Democratizing Urbanization and the search for a New Civic Imagination', in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*. 2012 (New York City, Creative Time Books, 2012), 63.

⁴²⁶ P. Benton, 'University cuts risk losing Australia's next generation of artists' *National Association for the Visual Arts* (1 Dec. 2020), <https://visualarts.net.au/news-opinion/2020/university-cuts-risk-losing-australias-next-generation-artists/> accessed 25 June 2021.

⁴²⁷ A. Sears, & P. Clarke. 'Stop telling students to study STEM instead of humanities for the post-coronavirus world' *The Conversation* (29 Sept. 2020), <https://theconversation.com/stop-telling-students-to-study-stem-instead-of-humanities-for-the-post-coronavirus-world-145813>, accessed 25 June 2021.

⁴²⁸ M. Billington, 'Margaret Thatcher casts a long shadow over theatre and the arts', *The Guardian* (9 April 2013). <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2013/apr/08/margaret-thatcher-long-shadow-theatre>, accessed 3 June 2021.

⁴²⁹ M. Ledwith & J. Springett, *Participatory Practice: Community Based Action for Transformative Change*, 42.

⁴³⁰ C. Gould, Angles Online. Contemporary British Art and its Contested Publicness: The Case of the Artangel Trust Experimenting with Site in Britain Today. *Angles* [Online] 6. 2018. Accessed 25 June 2021. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.4000/angles.1040>

⁴³¹ D. Hesmondhalgh, M. Nisbett Oakley & D. Lee 'Were New Labour's cultural policies neo-liberal?' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. 21/1, (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2013.879126>, 97-114.

promoted the reunification of communities to support good health and restorative community partnerships⁴³². One example was a project developed by British artist,

Jeremy Deller, called *Battle of Orgreave* 2002 (Figure 4.5)⁴³³ which was an emotional re-enactment of the violent 1984 protest between the National Union of Mineworkers and their members in Orgreave, challenging the Thatcher government's decision to action pit closures⁴³⁴. Included in the re-enactment was more than 800 residents some who were involved, (both miners and police officers) in the initial clash. For these participants the event was extremely poignant to revisit⁴³⁵. British journalist Jonathan Jones, participated in the re-enactment to determine the artistic value of the work. Deeply moved by his involvement, Jones described the work as 'surprisingly traditional ... and having the sombre dignity of a baroque history painting', a reference to the heightened emotional dramatic elements of the work⁴³⁶. Resultant from his work on *Battle of Orgreave*, Deller was quoted as saying, 'I went from being an artist who makes things, to being an artist who makes this happen'⁴³⁷.



Figure 4.5: *Battle of Orgreave*, Jeremy Deller 2002

⁴³² G. Kester, (b) *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*. (Durham, Duke University Press, 2011), 197 – 198.

⁴³³ Public Delivery Jeremy Deller's *Battle of Orgreave* – This is what happened (2002) <https://publicdelivery.org/jeremy-deller-the-battle-of-orgreave/> (accessed 8 November 2021).

⁴³⁴ J. Jones, 'Missiles fly, truncheons swing, police chase miners as cars burn. It's all very exciting. But why is it art?' *The Guardian*, (19 June. 2001), <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2001/jun/19/artsfeatures>, accessed 4 June 2021.

⁴³⁵ N. Thompson, 'Projects', in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011*, (New York City, Creative Time Books, 2012), 142.

⁴³⁶ J. Jones, 'Missiles fly, truncheons swing, police chase miners as cars burn. It's all very exciting. But why is it art?' *The Guardian*, (19 June 2001).

⁴³⁷ N. Thompson. 'Living as Form', in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011* (New York City, Creative Time Books, 2012), 142

Projects like Mildred's Lane remind us of how interactions with natural environments have altered since the inception of the Land Art movement in the 1960s. To understand this more succinctly, the work of Robert Smithson will be analysed, and to parallel the analysis on Land Art, works by Alan Sonfist, Bonnie Sherk, Agnes Denes, have been researched to highlight the evolution of current empathetic understanding of nature spaces, and how these artists adopted a philosophy of giving back to nature, as opposed to removing items from site⁴³⁸. This element refers to the sustainable practice of some gardeners in this garden project.

This chapter will also investigate the ideal of 'the garden as art' showcased through the work of the following practitioners, British conceptual artist Jyll Blackley, American Fritz Haeg and Norwegian group Futurefarmers. These artists each engage in an alternative manner with plants, producing diverse garden aesthetics. However, all support the theory that gardens and horticultural practice, have the capacity for creating deep connections with others and the ability to incite calm and provide a space for reflection. These principles became evident in the research that was conducted to underpin the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*. Finally, a series of works that align with the discussion of community participation will be included in this chapter. Contemporary work by Suzanne Lacy, *Between the Door and the Street* 2013 (Figure 4.6)⁴³⁹, which was constructed in collaboration with Nato Thompson as curator, and as such reflect his philosophy of the arts as a way of disseminating knowledge. The collaborative work between Lacy and Thompson is pertinent to this research as it provides an appreciation of relational depth viewed through the lens of community. Rikrit Tiravinija's, contribution in an exhibit positioned on the streets in New York City, *Titan* 2020 (Figure 4.7)⁴⁴⁰ will be discussed as this work is significant, as it was conducted during the COVID pandemic and accompanied lockdowns and social isolation. This project extended a platform to New York City residents for exchange with both the creative arts and

⁴³⁸ E. Benson, Environment between System and Nature: Alan Sonfist and the Art of the Cybernetic Environment, *communication +1*: Vol. 3, Article 2 (2014) <http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cpo/vol3/iss1/2> DOI: 10.7275/R5HT2M7T accessed 21 August 2022.

⁴³⁹ S. Lacy: *Between the Door and the Street* (2013) (n.d.) <https://www.natothompson.com/work#/http/creativetimeorg/projects/between-the-door-and-the-street/>, accessed 7 November 2021.

⁴⁴⁰ M. Duron, 'Cutting-Edge Art Takes Over Soon-to-Be-Obsolete New York Phone Booths in Outdoor Exhibition' *Artnews*, (5 Nov, 2020,) <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/titan-phone-booths-exhibition-kurimanzutto-damian-ortega-1234575965/> accessed 21 November 2021.

other constituents, endeavouring to buoy their spirits⁴⁴¹. American art group Fallen Fruit also continued making art throughout the pandemic, expanding their aesthetic, and working as contributing artists to a major art exhibit, in Melbourne, Australia, the *International Triennial 2020* hosted by the National Gallery of Victoria⁴⁴². The work, *Natural History 2020* (Figure 4.8)⁴⁴³ showcased local parks and gardens, displayed with historic works belonging to the gallery⁴⁴⁴. Collectively what these artists and artistic outcomes represent are the expressions of each specific community providing an avenue for exchange and growth through a diverse means of messaging, representative of the various ideas and philosophies inherent in the spaces in which the artworks are staged.



Figure 4.6: *Between the Door and the Street*, Suzanne Lacey 2013

⁴⁴¹ M. Duron, 'Cutting-Edge Art Takes Over Soon-to-Be-Obsolete New York Phone Booths in Outdoor Exhibition' *Artnews*, (5 Nov, 2020,) <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/titan-phone-booths-exhibition-kurimanzutto-damian-ortega-1234575965/> accessed 25 June 2021.

⁴⁴² National Gallery of Victoria, Triennial (n.d) <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/triennial-2020/> accessed 21 November 2021.

⁴⁴³ National Gallery Victoria, 'Fallen Fruit Natural History', NGV Triennial (n.d), <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/fallen-fruit-natural-history/> accessed 21 November 2021.

⁴⁴⁴ National Gallery Victoria, 'Fallen Fruit Natural History', NGV Triennial (n.d), <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/fallen-fruit-natural-history/> accessed 1 June 2021.



Figure 4.7: *Ohhh ...Untitled*, Rikrit Tiravanija 2020



Figure 4.8: *Natural History, Fallen Fruit* 2020/21

4.1 Community art: The importance of place

Revisiting the ideal explored by Lippard that delineated the importance of place (unification of history, culture, idealism, nature and familiarity that assist with underpinning the self)⁴⁴⁵, American professor Mirwon Kwon theorises that place has an integral role in serving humanity. Kwon defines place as an entity that can link community members through a sense of familiarity and knowing, which in turn evokes comfort⁴⁴⁶. Kwon nominates the Chicago art festival, *Culture in Action* 1993

⁴⁴⁵D. Morris & P. O'Neill, Introduction: Exhibition as Social Intervention, (n.d) Afterall <https://www.afterall.org/article/introduction-exhibition-as-social-intervention> accessed 21 November 2021.

⁴⁴⁶ M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012), 90.

(Figure 4.9)⁴⁴⁷ situated in an urban centre, as a successful example of engagement and re-engagement with a known location⁴⁴⁸. The artworks involved were diverse in nature and materiality, using both traditional mediums such as paint (Figure 4.10)⁴⁴⁹, and theatre (Figure 4.11)⁴⁵⁰, and alternative methods like digital media (Figure 12)⁴⁵¹ and open forums on topics like the environment (Figure 4.13)⁴⁵² as avenues for learning and collaboration and to reinvigorate community spirit⁴⁵³. The work was specifically engineered to accommodate social issues pertaining to Chicago, localising the work to address concerns such as gender inequities, racial tensions and homelessness⁴⁵⁴. Seminal examples of participatory works developed for the festival include a work titled, *Flood* 1993 (Figure 4.14)⁴⁵⁵, developed by American arts group, HaHa⁴⁵⁶. The group along with volunteers, maintained a hydroponic garden in the window of a store front, donating the produce to HIV and Aids charities. As part of the same work, a service operated by health professionals providing educational and counselling information on sexual health issues, conducting seminars, and discussions, and disseminating resources to interested participants was conducted on site⁴⁵⁷ (Figure 4.20)⁴⁵⁸.

⁴⁴⁷ Afterall, Culture in Action, (n.d) <https://afterall.org/project/culture-in-action-1993/> accessed 21 November 2021.

⁴⁴⁸ M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012), 100.

⁴⁴⁹ Afterall, Explore Culture in Action 1993 (n.d.), <https://www.afterall.org/project/culture-in-action-1993/explore-culture-in-action-1993/> accessed 5 November 2021.

⁴⁵⁰ Afterall, Explore Culture in Action 1993 (n.d.), <https://www.afterall.org/project/culture-in-action-1993/explore-culture-in-action-1993/> accessed 5 November 2021.

⁴⁵¹ Afterall, Culture in Action, (n.d) <https://afterall.org/project/culture-in-action-1993/> accessed 21 November 2021.

⁴⁵² Afterall, Explore Culture in Action 1993 (n.d.), <https://www.afterall.org/project/culture-in-action-1993/explore-culture-in-action-1993/> accessed 5 November 2021.

⁴⁵³ M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012), 158.

⁴⁵⁴ M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012), 158.

⁴⁵⁵ M.J. Jacob, *Never the Same: Conversations About Art Transforming Politics & Community in Chicago & Beyond* (n.d) <https://never-the-same.org/interviews/mary-jane-jacob/> accessed 21 November 2021.

⁴⁵⁶ Comprised of American artists, Richard House, Wendy Jabob, Laurie Palmer, and John Ploof.

⁴⁵⁷ N. Thompson. 'Projects' in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 2011* (New York City, Creative Time Books, 2012), 142.

⁴⁵⁸ M.J. Jacob, *Never the Same: Conversations About Art Transforming Politics & Community in Chicago & Beyond* (n.d) <https://never-the-same.org/interviews/mary-jane-jacob/> accessed 21 November 2021.



Figure 4.9 Culture in Action, 1993



Figure 4.10: Culture in Action - paint, 1993



Figure 4.4.11: Culture in Action - theatre, 1993



Figure 4.12: Culture in Action – digital media, 1993



Figure 4.13: Culture in Action – community forum, 1993



Figure 4.14: Flood, HaHa, 1993



Figure 4.15: Flood - discussion, HaHa 1993

Another example of place being focal to the significance of the artwork, was executed by American collaborative arts duo, Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler who worked with residents from Chicagoan public housing apartments to develop the paint colour charts *Eminent Domain* 1992/1993 (Figure 4.16)⁴⁵⁹. The charts included colours such as *Subsidy Mint*, (Figure 4.17)⁴⁶⁰ *Authority White* (Figure 4.18)⁴⁶¹ and

⁴⁵⁹ Creative Capital, *Eminent Domain*: Mel Ziegler (2021), <https://creative-capital.org/projects/eminant-domain/> accessed 8 November 2021.

⁴⁶⁰ Creative Capital, *Eminent Domain*: Mel Ziegler (2021), <https://creative-capital.org/projects/eminant-domain/> accessed 8 November 2021.

⁴⁶¹ Creative Capital, *Eminent Domain*, Mel Ziegler. Creative Capital. 2021. <https://creative-capital.org/projects/eminant-domain/> (accessed 21 November 2021).

Homeless (Figure 4.19)⁴⁶² and were symbolic of both the bland living environments distinctive of government tenements, and the residents' economic hardships⁴⁶³



Figure 4.16: Eminent Domain, Kate Erickson & Mel Ziegler 1992/93

The underlying concept of the collaboration however, was to provide a voice to an enclave that previously had not experienced an opportunity to engender an opinion, this work provided several. Firstly, they contributed to a collaborative process, working with others in a social construct. Secondly, they engaged with a contemporary arts project. Investigating creative concepts and sharing ideas. Lastly, these contributions generated actual paint shades that were marketed and sold for a time in conjunction with the True Value Hardware chain in the United States, giving the collaborators a national platform that would inevitably reach others in similar circumstances⁴⁶⁴. The paint charts also incorporated an explanation as to the

⁴⁶² Creative Capital, Eminent Domain, Mel Ziegler. Creative Capital. 2021. <https://creative-capital.org/projects/eminant-domain/> (accessed 21 November 2021).

⁴⁶³ Creative Capital, Eminent Domain, Mel Ziegler. Creative Capital. 2021. <https://creative-capital.org/projects/eminant-domain/> (accessed 21 November 2021).

⁴⁶⁴ C. Holland, Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler @ MIT LIST. Big Red and Shiny: February 20, 2006 Magazine Reviews. accessed. <http://bigredandshiny.org/4287/kate-ericson-and-mel-ziegler-mit-list/>, 23 August 2021.

significance of the colour titles, allowing for others who were not aware of these circumstances, to engage with the experience of the public housing collaborators⁴⁶⁵.



Figure 4.17: *Subsidy Mint*, Kate Erickson & Mel Ziegler 1992/93



Figure 4.18: *Authority White*, Kate Erickson & Mel Ziegler 1992/93



Figure 4.19: *Homeless*, Kate Erickson & Mel Ziegler 1992/93

In a formidable display, American artist, Suzanne Lacy placed 100 limestone boulders of various sizes in locations throughout Chicago, in a work titled *Full Circle* 1992-1993 (Figure 4.20)⁴⁶⁶. The boulders represented 100 notable Chicagoan women, both historic and contemporary, whose names and achievements were scribed on to brass plates which were adhered to the surface of each boulder⁴⁶⁷. Lacy's experience in the festival incited deliberation on the part of the artist. She declared that 'what exists in the space between the words public and art is an unknown relationship between artist and audience, a relationship that may itself be the artwork.'⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁵ Eminent Domain, Mel Ziegler. Creative Capital. 2021. <https://creative-capital.org/projects/eminant-domain/> (accessed 23 August 2021).

⁴⁶⁶ S. Lacy. Performance/Installation. *Full Circle (1992-1993)*: Suzanne Lacy and a coalition of Chicago Women (n.d.) <https://www.suzannelacy.com/full-circle/>, (accessed 21 November 2021).

⁴⁶⁷ S. Lacy. Performance/Installation. *Full Circle (1992-1993)*: Suzanne Lacy and a coalition of Chicago Women (n.d.) <https://www.suzannelacy.com/full-circle/>, (accessed 5 June 2021).

⁴⁶⁸ M. Kwon, *One Place after Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2012) ,96.



Figure 4.20: *Full Circle*, Suzanne Lacey 1992-93

Lacy's way of working speaks to the notion of 'place', and familiarity, is a concept allowing for security and the capacity to see the familiar in a fresh context⁴⁶⁹. This concept is reiterated in Kwon's research, where she theorised that 'site' is a definitive characteristic in the contemporary participatory concept, so that through comfort, meaning can be extended through a shift in perspective⁴⁷⁰. This can be achieved seamlessly, as with the work *Endless Orchard*, 2004 – ongoing (Figure 4.21)⁴⁷¹, created by Fallen Fruit, which comprises the planting of fruit trees in neglected urban neighbourhoods. One of the intended outcomes is to provide participants with a renewed outlook on their immediate environment, for the purpose of inciting resilience and emotional wellness⁴⁷². This is achieved through tending to the needs of the planted trees and observing their growth through to fruiting, that is attributed to the care given⁴⁷³.

⁴⁶⁹ Ledwith, M., & Springett, J., *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 191

⁴⁷⁰ M. Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2002), 96.

⁴⁷¹ The Awesome Foundation, 'Urban Fruit Trails/ Endless Orchard' *Projects* (2016), <https://www.awesomefoundation.org/en/projects/57979-urban-fruit-trails-endless-orchard> (accessed 4 November 2021).

⁴⁷² Fallen Fruit, <https://fallenfruit.org/>, (accessed 25 August 2021).

⁴⁷³ E. Mueller, Fallen Fruit Interview, *Elements and Principles of 4D Art and Design*, Oxford University Press (n.d.) <https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780190225148/ch1/inter/i4/> (accessed 1 August 2022).



Figure 4.21: *Endless Orchard* 2004 – ongoing

Occasionally however, the introduction of a public art form, incorporated into a familiar place, does not always guarantee positive engagement and outcomes. American installation artist Richard Serra's work, *Tilted Arc* 1981 – 1989 (Figure 4.22)⁴⁷⁴ was located on the forecourt of the Federal Plaza Building in Manhattan, New York City, where the work made a formidable impact on the space, due to both the placement, and the bold metal aesthetic. The wall was constructed of Corten steel measuring at a height of 12 feet and 120 feet in length. The wall arced slightly and had a subtle tilt. The public's complaints about the work related to the space it covered as it effectively carved up the area and interfered with access to the building. The demonstration of divisive feelings was the polar sensation sought by Serra, as opposed to apathy⁴⁷⁵. The artist's philosophy was to provide his audience with an opportunity to renegotiate their relationship with the site⁴⁷⁶, that on encountering the work they may have had to stop and let someone else pass, proffering them a moment to acknowledge their environment and perhaps alter and extend their relationship with the familiar⁴⁷⁷. As the sculpture's placement was not well received by the public, and following a petition of 1300 signatures submitted to the city's

⁴⁷⁴ Wikipedia., *Tilted Arc* (2021), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tilted_Arc, (accessed 4 November 2021).

⁴⁷⁵ F. S. Kleiner, 'Europe and America after 1945', *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History*, 1017.

⁴⁷⁶ F. S. Kleiner, 'Europe and America after 1945', *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History*, 1017, para. 4.

⁴⁷⁷ M. Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, (2002), 133 -134.

administrators, the work was removed, pending an appeal by the artist. Serra challenged the removal in the courts, stating that his rights were infringed and that his work was censored, however a federal district court deemed that his argument was invalid, that the community have a right to receive work from their own perspective. This resulted in the work's permanent removal from the site. It was placed in storage warehouse, where it currently remains.⁴⁷⁸ American philosopher James Meyer nominates 'functional' site as the necessary blueprints and processes undertaken to support the 'literal site', which reflects the actual site where the work is anchored, such as *Tilted Arc* positioning outside the Federal Plaza Building, which was not well received by the audience⁴⁷⁹.



Figure 4.22: *Tilted Arc*, Richard Serra 1981 - 1989

The distinction between this site and works such as *Endless Orchard*, by Fallen Fruit, is that the notion of function is more openly apparent in their tree planting efforts. This is due to the natural composition of fruit trees that complimented their chosen site by housing elements of rhythm and harmonious ebb and flow. They also serve a purpose in the provision of nourishment to their co-creators and their

⁴⁷⁸ F. S. Kleiner, 'Europe and America after 1945', *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History*, 1016, para. 5.

⁴⁷⁹ J. Meyer, *The Mobile Site*, (2004), 200 – 201, https://bortolamigallery.com/site/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/TB_SpaceSiteIntervention_Kimberly-Paice_2004.pdf. (accessed 27 August 2021).

audiences⁴⁸⁰. Kwon interprets Meyer's beliefs as a trilogy of distinctive components⁴⁸¹ that should be present in a site-specific work, such as *Endless Orchard*. She nominates firstly, phenomenology which reflects the physical site⁴⁸², secondly, social/institution and cultural perspective that sees engagement evolve seamlessly⁴⁸³ and lastly discursivity, or the discussion around the site, that incorporates aspects of the site mirrored within the personal perspectives of the work, this aspect is in flux due to an ever-changing attitude in outlook that occurs through open discussions and observations with all concerned stakeholders⁴⁸⁴.

Regarding the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, the concept of familiarity was an important element for the relational outcomes sought, as it provides a substantial basis to furnish comfort which in turn promotes the capacity for growth. This aligns with the principles of Fallen Fruit's *Endless Orchard* project, and the outcome for participants to change their perspective and their attitude about their community. In seeking to imbue a sensation of re-engagement and re-establishment with a familiar site, creating enduring wellness is possible. This has occurred in the *Murarrie* project primarily through encounters with others and the ensuing garden discussions, which has prompted participants to develop a fresh perspective for their personal space and their neighbours, dispelling previously held notions of a well-known site.

4.2. Land Art

⁴⁸⁰ S. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*, New York City, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), as cited in M. Millar, *The Garden as Art*, 50 – 51.

⁴⁸¹ J. Meyer. The Mobile Site. 2004. pp. 200 – 20, (accessed 27 August 2021). https://bortolamigallery.com/site/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/TB_SpaceSiteIntervention_Kimberly-Paice_2004.pdf as cited in M. Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2002), 30.

⁴⁸² R. Audi, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, (3rd edition. Cambridge University Press, 1995), 779.

⁴⁸³ Plymouth University Press, Insight on Site-Specificity (n.d), <https://opening-contemporary-art.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/site-specificity/> (accessed 27 August 2021).

⁴⁸⁴ Plymouth University Press. Insight on Site-Specificity (n.d.) (accessed 27 August 2021).

Natural spaces as subject matter for an artist is not a new or contemporary focus, indeed ecology, Land Art, and the environment have been of interest to those in the arts since to the mid-20th century, including seminal American conceptual/land artist Robert Smithson, who in the 1960s and 70s had two parallel working methods that of 'sites' and 'non-sites'. Sites were those works executed outside in the environment such as *Broken Circle* and *Spiral Hill*.⁴⁸⁵ (Figure 4.23)⁴⁸⁶ Smithson, utilising heavy equipment, carved a half circle into the bank of a sand quarry, causing water to spill into the void. The remaining sandy forms that shaped the part circle resembled jetties; a sizeable boulder was placed in the midpoint of the central jetty. The sand that was removed from the void was shaped into a mound along with basalt and placed further into the landscape. Smithson carved a spiral into the sand mound that appeared to counter the spiral on the sandbank.⁴⁸⁷, although there is no surety in determining which direction either spiral is assuming⁴⁸⁸.



Figure 4.23: *Broken Circle/Spiral Hill*, Robert Smithson 1971

Professor Edward Shanken determined that this element of uncertainty mirrors Smithson's dual working methodology, that being the concept of randomness.

⁴⁸⁵ Holt Smithson Foundation, *Broken Circle/Spiral Hill* (2021), <https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/broken-circlespiral-hill>, accessed 1 June 2021.

⁴⁸⁶ Holt Smithson Foundation, *Broken Circle/Spiral Hill*, Water, earth, topsoil, sand, and boulder, Broken Circle: diameter: 140 ft. (42.6 m); canal: 12 ft. (3.6 m) wide, 10-15 ft. (3-4.5 m) deep; Spiral Hill: diameter: 75 ft. (22.9 m) at base, © Holt/Smithson Foundation, Licensed by VAGA at ARS, New York 2021 <https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/broken-circlespiral-hill> accessed 4 November 2021.

⁴⁸⁷ J. Frey, Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, *Robert Smithson. The Invention of Landscape* (2012), <https://artmuseum.is/sites/default/files/syningarskra/siegenpresseng.pdf>, (accessed 4 June 2021).

⁴⁸⁸ E. A. Shanken, 'Broken Circle and Spiral Hill? Smithson's Spirals Paraphysics Syzygy and Survival' *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative Research* 11/1 (2013), 6, doi: 10.1386/tear.11.1.3_1.

Shanken links this concept to the influences of entropy and to structure or orderliness, which he suggests are reflected in Smithson's selecting, gathering and displaying of natural materials called 'non-sites'⁴⁸⁹. The works titled 'non-sites' were collated samples, such as basalt, (Figure 4.24)⁴⁹⁰ soils (Figure 4.25)⁴⁹¹ and stones (Figure 4.26)⁴⁹² gathered from sites he had visited and engaged with, prior to them being displayed in a gallery setting along with the photos of his outdoor *Earthwork* and films he had directed that related to the large-scaled work⁴⁹³ (Figure 4.27)⁴⁹⁴. This communicated to audiences a succinct notion of the work's placement, construction and the materials utilised in the construction, providing them with a broad understanding of the crumbling of the original site and the changes brought about by human intervention⁴⁹⁵. In time however, the construction of large imposing earthworks was abandoned, as the realisation that extreme alterations to natural environments overshadowed the beauty of the natural world⁴⁹⁶. Artists opted to work with an activist, ecological mindset that celebrated the environment and as such, the contemporary ecological work was executed with a pronounced empathy for the fragile rhythms inherent in nature⁴⁹⁷. These artworks were then created as a constructive and urgent response to the climatic issues that began materialising across the globe⁴⁹⁸.

⁴⁸⁹ E. A. Shanken, 'Broken Circle and Spiral Hill? Smithson's Spirals Paraphysics Syzygy and Survival' 2013. p. 9. accessed 6 June 2021. *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative Research* 11/1 (2013), 9. pp. 3–14, doi: 10.1386/tear.11.1.3_1.

⁴⁹⁰ A. Barikin, Robert Smithson's *Crystal Lattices: Mapping the Shapes of Time* (n.d.) <https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/rocks-and-mirror-square-ii> (accessed 29 May 2021).

⁴⁹¹ R. Smithson, *Nonsite* (Essen Soil and Mirrors), 1969, <https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/2000.572.A-P/aceesed> 28 May 2022.

⁴⁹² Holt Smithson Foundation, *A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects by Robert Smithson* 1968 <https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/sedimentation-mind-earth-projects>

⁴⁹³ J. Frey, Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, *Robert Smithson. The Invention of Landscape* (2012), <https://artmuseum.is/sites/default/files/syningarskra/siegenpresseng.pdf>, (accessed 4 June 2021).

⁴⁹⁴ R. Smithson, *A Provisional Theory of Nonsites* 1968, <https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/provisional-theory-nonsites>

⁴⁹⁵ B. Finger, *Modern Art: The Groundbreaking Moments* (Munich, Prestel, 2012), 186.

⁴⁹⁶ *Art in the Land: A Critical Anthology of Environmental Art*. (Kindle Edition, New York City, E.P. Dutton 1983), Location 120.

⁴⁹⁷ *Art in the Land: A Critical Anthology of Environmental Art*, Location 2914.

⁴⁹⁸ *Art in the Land: A Critical Anthology of Environmental Art*, Location 1742.



Figure 4.24: Basalt, Robert Smithson 1968



Figure 4.25: Soils, Robert Smithson 1968



Figure 4.26: Stones Robert Smithson 1969.



Figure 4.27: Non-site Exhibit Robert Smithson 1968.

4.2.1 Alan Sonfist, Bonnie Sherk, and Agnes Denes

Ecological artist Alan Sonfist is a multidisciplinary artist, working with charcoal to create canvas works such as *Landscape of the Earth* 1969 (Figure 4.28)⁴⁹⁹, and with metals to cast fallen twigs into a sculptured form creating *Fallen Limbs Rising* 1975 (Figure 4.29)⁵⁰⁰. His most significant works however, are those constructed with items from the natural environment, such as the gardens titled *Time Landscape*, 1965 – 1978 – ongoing (Figure 4.30)⁵⁰¹, situated in the Borough of Manhattan in New York City. The plant species chosen by Sonfist are consistent with those from colonial times, for residents to investigate their botanical history and to create a juxtaposition with the manufactured aesthetic of an eclectic urban centre composed of constructed concrete forms and busy thoroughfares brimming with vehicles and pedestrians⁵⁰². The work, *Time Landscape* was inspired by occasions from Sonfist's childhood when he experienced fear while residing in a crime filled neighbourhood in New York City⁵⁰³. During these times, Sonfist sought comfort and safety in the city parks, among the groves of trees and leaf litter. He soon became enamoured with the concept of decay through watching the changes of the leaf litter that occurred as a natural process. This concept could have been influenced by Smithsonian's interest in entropy, however Sonfist, was only interested in the process that occurred naturally and in step with the seasons⁵⁰⁴.

⁴⁹⁹ *Landscape of the Earth*

1969, Alan Sonfist, (2000–2021) <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/632967>

⁵⁰⁰ A. Sonfist, *Sculptures: Bronze* (2014) http://www.alansonfist.com/sculptures_book_bronze.html accessed 4 November 2021.

⁵⁰¹ L. Zimmer, *Time Landscape* (17 June 2016) ArtNerd, <http://art-nerd.com/newyork/time-landscape/> 21 November 2021.

⁵⁰² M. Rosenthal, C. Field, (ed.), *Alan Sonfist, Indoor Out: Environmental Art*, (Gli Ori, Florence, Italy, 2010), Location 202.

⁵⁰³ M. Rosenthal, C. Field (ed.), *Alan Sonfist, Indoor Out: Environmental Art*, Gli Ori, Florence, Italy, 2010, Location 242.

⁵⁰⁴ A. Sonfist, (ed.), *Art in the Land: A Critical Anthology of Environmental Art*, New York City, (E.P. Dutton Inc, 1983), Location 1114.



Figure 4.28: Landscape of the Earth, Alan Sonfist 1975



Figure 4.29: Fallen Limbs Rising, Alan Sonfist 1975



Figure 4.30: Time Landscape, Alan Sonfist 1965 -78 - ongoing

It was similar thinking that guided Sonfist's contemporaries, artists, Bonnie Ora Sherk and Agnes Denes to create work that investigated a sustainable approach to regenerate disused urban spaces and provide constituents with an alternate and holistic outlook of their respective cities.

Bonnie Ora Sherk established her work, *Crossroads Community/The Farm* 1974 -1980 (Figure 4.31)⁵⁰⁵ in urban San Francisco, over seven acres of wasteland that was located partway beneath a busy freeway. The work consisted of participants working together to create an urban farmland, growing food items, raising animals, and using the space as an arena for education and performance⁵⁰⁶. Sherk determined, that without participants, the project would not have progressed, for this purpose it was necessary to choose a location that was accessible. The juxtaposition provided by this location was integral also, that being the contrast between the organic (the farm) and the built environment (the freeway) a deliberate aesthetic sought by Sherk. She viewed the modern, urban experience, as compartmented, feeling that residents lived a rather autonomous and insular existence. In locating the farm site to the city, amid the frenetic, urban energy, participants could see and feel that in working with nature and with others to grow food items to share, they would experience a sense of personal wholeness by challenging their own ideals, removing the metaphorical emotional walls erected as a coping mechanism for the stresses of modern life.⁵⁰⁷ The work then materialised as the cornerstone between theory and practice, as the residents extended themselves beyond that of their own lives, they incited a platform for societal reform.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁵ M. Blankenship., *Historical Essay, The Farm by the Freeway*, Photo by Vicki Pollard (n.d.) https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=The_Farm_by_the_Freeway accessed 19 August 2022.

⁵⁰⁶ L. Woynarski, *Towards Radical Coexistence in the City: Performing the bio-urban in Bonnie Ora Sherk's The Farm and Mierle Laderman Ukeles's Flow City*, *Performance Research*, (2020), 25:2, 126-133, DOI: 10.1080/13528165.2020.1752585 (accessed 7 August 2022).

⁵⁰⁷ Museum Art Archives, Bonnie Ora Sherk: *Crossroads Community, The Farm* (n.d) <https://museumartemil.net/projects/crossroads-community-the-farm/> (accessed 15 August 2022).

⁵⁰⁸ L. Woynarski, *Towards Radical Coexistence in the City: Performing the bio-urban in Bonnie Ora Sherk's The Farm and Mierle Laderman Ukeles's Flow City*, *Performance Research*, (2020), 25:2, 126-133, DOI: 10.1080/13528165.2020.1752585 (accessed 7 August 2022).



Figure 4.31 Crossroads Community: *The Farm*, Bonnie Ora Sherk, 1974

Agnes Denes' work appropriately titled, *Wheatfield: a Confrontation*, Battery Park Landfill 1982, (Figure 4.32)⁵⁰⁹ saw the artist sow wheat seeds over a two acre field in lower Manhattan, New York City. The work was developed in landfill that contained building waste from the World Trade construction site, necessitating assistance to clean it up, prior to planting. This site however, was conveniently located to the nearby Wall Street financial district, and in the shadows of the then Twin Towers⁵¹⁰. The proximity of the field to these buildings was intentional on the part of the artist, using the juxtaposition of a fundamental food source, (often difficult to sow in nations experiencing extreme drought conditions), contrasted theoretically against the backdrop of the city's commercial hub, where wheat was traded as a commodity⁵¹¹ and visually by a natural soft organism framed by a structured city block (Figure 4.33)⁵¹². The artist wanted to create a public monument, albeit ephemeral, to re-engage people's interest in human values. This element was symbolically channelled, by an opposing viewpoint that showed the *Statue of Liberty*, a friendship gift from France to the United States in 1886, looming over the

⁵⁰⁹ Agnes Denes Works, *Wheatfield - A Confrontation: Battery Park Landfill, Downtown Manhattan* © All photographs by Agnes Denes (1982) <http://www.agnesdenesstudio.com/works7.html> (accessed 9 August 2022).

⁵¹⁰ P. Hoban, Architectural Digest, *Agnes Denes's Prophetic Wheatfield Remains as Relevant as Ever* (2019) <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/agnes-denes-prophetic-wheatfield-remains-as-relevant-as-ever> accessed (14 August 2022).

⁵¹¹ P. Hoban, Architectural Digest, *Agnes Denes's Prophetic Wheatfield Remains as Relevant as Ever* (2019) <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/agnes-denes-prophetic-wheatfield-remains-as-relevant-as-ever> accessed (14 August 2022).

⁵¹² P. Hoban, Architectural Digest, *Agnes Denes's Prophetic Wheatfield Remains as Relevant as Ever* (2019) <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/agnes-denes-prophetic-wheatfield-remains-as-relevant-as-ever> accessed (14 August 2022). Photo by John McGrall. Courtesy the artist and Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects.

wheat. The *Statue of Liberty* itself, being a universally recognised motif of freedom and democracy⁵¹³



Figure 4.32 Wheatfield: A Confrontation, Battery Park Landfill Agnes Denes 1982



Figure 4.33: Wheatfield: A confrontation, Battery Park Landfill, Agnes Denes 1982

The work was situated within the concepts of the earth, staple food items and connection. While Wall Street was initially concerned about the work and the artist's intentions, people who worked in the financial district eventually came to visit the site during their breaks, telling the artist that they were hoping for rain to see the wheat crop reach maturation. At the time of harvest, one thousand pounds of wheat was collected, becoming the subject of, *The International Art Show for the End of World Hunger* 1990⁵¹⁴. It was then disseminated among people for planting, while

⁵¹³ National Park Service, *Statue of Liberty* (n.d.) <https://www.nps.gov/stli/index.htm> (accessed 13 August 2022).

⁵¹⁴ No applicable images available.

the stalks (hay) were donated to the New York City mounted police to feed the horses⁵¹⁵.

It is important to again reflect on the philosophy that differentiates the work discussed here in contrast to the work conceived during the Land Art period, as it signifies a shift in both the arts and societal thinking on the preservation of natural spaces. While Smithson's *Earthworks* were constructed by removing and manipulating site materials, while Sonfist's, Sherk's, and Denes' replenish and replace what has been lost over time, and while Smithson's carved spiral work is consistent of strong and tangible symbolism, the conceptualism of the latter artists, despite not housing a discerning aesthetic motif, does not make their work and accompanied statements any less powerful⁵¹⁶. The works are rich in concepts like memory, linking the historic and the contemporary in a contrasting environment, this denotes a link of the fragility of both natural spaces, and human connection and the continued need to nurture both⁵¹⁷. These are the aspects of the work which provided the inspiration for the inception of the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*. Drawing on personal history (memories) and incorporating collaborative effects with others and a natural environment align with elements of these artist's methodologies. A secondary element that transposes the world over, and as such relatable to a residential garden, in that plants and nature has the capacity to speak loudly and convey poignant messages to an audience⁵¹⁸. Where they differ however, is the socio-political elements and activism⁵¹⁹ that can seek to draw attention to social inequities. The garden project that is the subject of this study, seeks to showcase the encounter of the participants supported through gardening activities.

4.3 The 'garden as art' and contemporary participatory, community projects

Nato Thompson's theory on the participatory concept, states that there

⁵¹⁵ P. Hoban, Architectural Digest, Agnes Denes's Prophetic Wheatfield Remains as Relevant as Ever (2019) <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/agnes-denes-prophetic-wheatfield-remains-as-relevant-as-ever> accessed (14 August 2022).

⁵¹⁶ *Art in the Land: A Critical Anthology of Environmental Art*, in A. Sonfist, ed., Location 1106.

⁵¹⁷ *Art in the Land: A Critical Anthology of Environmental Art*, in A. Sonfist, ed., Location 1678.

⁵¹⁸ M. Miller, *The Garden as Art*, 115.

⁵¹⁹ N. Thompson, *Living as Form*, 21.

is no one method for either inciting engagement or for interpreting the formations that sit beneath the charter, relational or participatory work⁵²⁰. The spectrum is broad and the projects diverse. As such, the collaborations with contemporary audiences tend to align with the respective social climate. The following works discussed, have been chosen to showcase the variety of ways to engage an audience within a participatory arts strategy. This is inclusive of garden project or for the purpose of addressing concerns or ideas inciting discussion with others, even during periods of a global lockdown as were experienced during the recent Covid 19 pandemic.

4.3.1 Fritz Haeg, Jyll Bradley, and Future Farmers

Fritz Haeg's spectrum of work is broad, spanning from performance and dance pieces, such as (Figure 4.34)⁵²¹ to horticultural design, reflective of his vocations as both an architect and an artist. His gravitation towards sustainability and gardens, lead to the development of his *Edible Estate* concepts 2005 -2013 (Figure 4.35)⁵²², that are garden projects established in neighbourhoods across a span of traditional American suburbs. The idea saw the chosen residents removing their front lawns to create garden beds that would house market produce, to both share with others and to create a focal point within the community⁵²³. The artist sought participants within a specific neighbourhood who were willing to create a garden in their front yard and maintain it for a year, in conjunction with an online blog. This blog documented the yearly journey, including both positive and negative aspects, for example the physicality of maintaining a garden but also the positive connections

⁵²⁰ N. Thompson, *Living as Form*, 21.

⁵²¹ E. Schambelan, *Artforum*, the Whitney Biennial Whitney Museum of American Art, Sundown Schoolhouse: Animal Lessons, 2008. Performance view, New York. Photo: James Ewing. (2008) <https://www.artforum.com/print/reviews/200806/the-whitney-biennial-20396> (accessed 20 September 2022).

⁵²² F.Haeg, *Edible Estates*, regional prototype garden #1: Salina, Kansas (n.d) https://www.fritzhaeg.com/webpic/gl-pic/gl-pic-ee-salina/gl_ee_salina_proc110.jpg (accessed 16 August 2022).

⁵²³ K.L. Hinchcliffe, *From Land Art to Social Practice: Environmental Art Projects* by Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, Bonnie Ora Sherk, Mel Chin, Fritz Haeg, and Fallen Fruit Faculty of the USC Roski School of Art and Design, University of Southern California. May, 2017) <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2112739803?accountid=14647&parentSessionId=FR%2Bqk3KdvevwNwFLBU%2BL9XbfhKBdzX8%2F5pVHYqrAEc%3D&pq-origsite=primo> (accessed 9 August 2022).

created with others through the gardens existence. The project selected one yard, as a motivation for others to create similar gardens in their own respective yards⁵²⁴. Haeg established the concept in international sites also, such as the project in London 2007⁵²⁵, which saw him create *garden # 4* (Figure 4.36)⁵²⁶ commissioned by the Tate Gallery, located in a shared space within the grounds of multiple public housing complexes. This provided the residents with opportunities for gardening and to reap the rewards of their labour in the guise of fresh produce⁵²⁷. His final work in the *Edible Estate series #15* 2013 (Figure 4.37)⁵²⁸, was situated in Minneapolis the artist's hometown neighbourhood. This work resonates with the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, (Figure 4.38)⁵²⁹ in that the garden was situated in an accessible space for others in the neighbourhood, for both observing, learning and partaking of produce. Haeg's rationale for the removal of the grass from participant's front yards was nuanced, in that grass requires harsh chemicals to maintain a lush, green visage. These chemicals then permeate the water system, whereas fresh produce can garner results utilising organic matter. The lush American lawn is long been considered a status symbol of the middle class, so the removal of this was also about abating the class system within neighbourhoods, providing a space of equality for the creating of earnest connections⁵³⁰.

This element too, was profoundly reflective of the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, in that everyone was considered equal, while discussions ensued on social aspects like diverse culture, the participatory work saw people connect at a

⁵²⁴ F. Haeg, *Edible Estates* (n.d) <http://www.fritzaeg.com/garden/initiatives/edibleestates/about.html> (accessed 15 August 2022).

⁵²⁵ F. Haeg, *Edible Estates regional prototype garden #4: London, England – Garden Page* (n.d.) <http://www.fritzaeg.com/garden/initiatives/edibleestates/london.html> (accessed 16 August 2022).

⁵²⁶ F. Haeg, *Edible Estates regional prototype garden #4: London, England* (n.d.) <https://www.fritzaeg.com/webpic/gl-pic/gl-pic-ee-london/ee04-P1050920.jpg> (accessed 16 August 2022).

⁵²⁷ F. Haeg, *Edible Estates regional prototype garden #4: London, England – Garden Page* (n.d.) <http://www.fritzaeg.com/garden/initiatives/edibleestates/london.html> (accessed 16 August 2022).

⁵²⁸ F. Haeg, *Edible Estates Garden #15: Twin Cities, Minnesota* (n.d.) https://www.fritzaeg.com/webpic/gl-pic/ee-minneapolis/Olga-Ivanova_EE15_0912_026.jpg (accessed 19 August 2022).

⁵²⁹ T. Hethorn, *The Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, 2021.

⁵³⁰ K.L. Hinchliffe, *From Land Art to Social Practice: Environmental Art Projects* by Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, Bonnie Ora Sherk, Mel Chin, Fritz Haeg, and Fallen Fruit Faculty of the USC Roski School of Art and Design, University of Southern California. May, 2017) <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2112739803?accountid=14647&parentSessionId=FR%2Bqk3KdvevwNwFLBU%2BL9XbfhKBdzX8%2F5pVHYqrAEc%3D&pq-origsite=primo> (accessed 9 August 2022).

fundamental level. This was a poignant response to the lockdown measures in a bid to abate the Covid 19 surge, although the platform for connection was always anticipated to be that of acceptance irrespective of culture, gender, or religious affiliations.



Figure 4.34: Sundown Schoolhouse: Animal Lessons, Fritz Haeg, 2008



Figure 4.35: Edible Estates #1 Fritz Haeg, 2005



Figure 4.36: Edible Estates #4, Fritz Haeg 2007



Figure 4.37: Edible Estates #15, Fritz Haeg 2013



Figure 4.38: Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project, T. Hethorn 2021

Despite the conceptuality of artist Jyll Bradley's work, the installation, *Le Jardin Hospitalier* 2013 (Hospital Garden) (figure 4.39)⁵³¹ is an ethereal series of photographs, the beauty of which are heightened by the contextuality of the location. The work is housed permanently in the windowless corridor of the Hospital Roger Salengro in Lille, France, a city which has a rich botanical history. One of the first French botanical gardens sites was established in Lille in the 17th Century, a number of the species grown during that time were for medicinal purposes. The hospital context reflected the idea of caring for people using traditional and holistic approaches⁵³². The photographs were placed in large lightboxes which spanned from the floor to the ceiling, while walking through the corridor was reminiscent of walking through garden paths, providing comfort for both staff and patients. To echo the sense of serenity, the artist was inspired by the traditional principles of the Japanese floral art of Ikebana (Figure 4.40)⁵³³ and as such, the photographic subjects were arranged in accordance with the Ikebana method of leaving a space between plants for a butterfly to pass through. The rationale for this, is that the butterfly is then able to observe the arrangement from all angles, and thus Bradley wanted her audience to have this same multi-faceted outlook⁵³⁴. As such this work echoes the Duchampian theory of engagement, as referenced by Bourriaud, in that a broad vantage point enables a view of the work in its entirety⁵³⁵. The photographs are accompanied by a space to attain knowledge that offers seating and digital information on the photographed plants, the use of medicinal species and the botanical history of Lille⁵³⁶.

⁵³¹ J. Bradley, *Le Jardin Hospitalier* (2015) <http://jyllbradley.com/works/le-jardin-hospitalier-2011-present/> (accessed 8 August 2022).

⁵³² Le Presses du Reele, *Le Jardin hospitalier – Une œuvre de Jyll Bradley* (n.d.) <https://www.lespressesdureel.com/EN/ouvrage.php?id=4409&menu=4> (accessed 21 August 2022).

⁵³³ Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland Inc. (n.d.) <https://ikebanabrisbane.org.au/> (accessed 21 August 2022).

⁵³⁴ J. Bradley, *Le Jardin Hospitalier* (2015) <http://jyllbradley.com/works/le-jardin-hospitalier-2011-present/> (accessed 8 August 2022).

⁵³⁵ N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 29.

⁵³⁶ Le Presses du Reele, *Le Jardin hospitalier – Une œuvre de Jyll Bradley* (n.d.) <https://www.lespressesdureel.com/EN/ouvrage.php?id=4409&menu=4> (accessed 21 August 2022).



Figure 4.39: *Le Jardin Hospitalier*, Jyll Bradley 2015



Figure 4.40: *Ikebana arrangement*, Brisbane Ikebana Society n.d

The trek undertaken by artistic group Future Farmers, *Seed Voyage*, 2016 - 2017 consisted of an ocean journey, aboard the *RS-10 Christiania* (Figure 4.41).⁵³⁷ The ship was crewed by a rotating multicultural team of archaeologists, bakers, biologists, creatives, and sailors originating in Oslo, Norway and sailing to their destination of Istanbul, Turkey. Their intentions were to disseminate ancient seed species, like wheat and Finnish rye to seed merchants, and farmers they encountered at their ports of call, on the course of their travels. The ports visited on the journey

⁵³⁷ The Morning Boat, *The Seed Journey: The Futurefarmers bring the seed journey to Jersey* (n.d.) <https://morningboat.com/portfolio/seed-journey/> (accessed 22 August 2022).

were not necessarily pre-destined, the docking of the ship was guided by the crew's interests and the waves determined by the ocean current ⁵³⁸.



Figure 4.41: Seed Journey – RS 10 Christina, Futurefarmers 2016 – 2017

Prior to undertaking the journey, the Norwegian arts group, Future Farmers, spent time growing and harvesting the ancient grains that had been gathered from sites in the Northern Hemisphere such as Leningrad following the siege 1941-44 ⁵³⁹. The project known as the Flatbread Society 2012 - ongoing (Figure 4.42) cultivated the grains on a riverfront field in Oslo that also contained a bakehouse for the production of baked items⁵⁴⁰. This effectively embedded the group's ideals in history and the earth, and when on their journey, the connections spanned to that of the ocean, others from diverse cultural backgrounds, and time. The seeds were allegoric in that they represented the stories and memories of the people they encountered in the various ports who would recant tales and knowledge related to the ancient grains. At each port, a morse code message was sent, for interested parties to assemble, and a seed ceremony ensued. On the ship, the seeds were carried upright in small glass vials (Figure 4.43)⁵⁴¹ and the historic details were recorded as an archival record. During the seed ceremonies however, the seeds were transferred into

⁵³⁸ Futurefarmers, Seed Journey (n.d) <http://futurefarmers.com/seedjourney/> accessed 22 August 2022.

⁵³⁹ Futurefarmers, Seed Journey (n.d) <http://futurefarmers.com/seedjourney/> (accessed 22 August 2022).

⁵⁴⁰ L.Y. Yuan, Mold Magazine, (26. 02..21) <https://thisismold.com/seeds-issue/on-a-seed-journey-with-futurefarmers> (accessed 22 August 2022).

⁵⁴¹ Futurefarmers, Seed Journey (n.d) <http://futurefarmers.com/seedjourney/> (accessed 22 August 2022).

hourglasses and placed on their sides (Figure 4.42)⁵⁴² to reflect the passing of time, and for a brief moment time would actually stand still⁵⁴³.



Figure 4.42: The Flatbread Society 2012 – ongoing, Futurefarmers 2018



Figure 4.43: Seeds in Glass Vials, (picture on board), Futurefarmers n.d.

⁵⁴² L.Y. Yuan, Mold Magazine, On a Seed Journey with Futurefarmers: A reverse seed migration from Oslo to Istanbul (26. 02..21) <https://thisismold.com/seeds-issue/on-a-seed-journey-with-futurefarmers> (accessed 22 August 2022).

⁵⁴³ Future Farmers, Seed Journey (n.d) <http://futurefarmers.com/seedjourney/archive.php> (15 August 2022).



Figure 4.44: Seeds in an hourglass, (pictured during a seed ceremony), Futurefarmers 2018.

While not all elements of Future Farmers' project mirror the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, the notion of seeds being a time capsule⁵⁴⁴ and transposing across spaces, was an experience that occurred during the course of harvests. Seeds were retained from capsicums that were plucked and shared, and both resowed in the initial garden site, as well as given to others to plant in their own spaces, effectively extending the concept, beyond that of the original site. (Figure 4.45)⁵⁴⁵



Figure 4.45: Untitled Journal Entry, T.Hethorn, 2021.

4.3.2 Suzanne Lacey, Rirkrit Tiravanija and Fallen Fruit

⁵⁴⁴ L.Y. Yuan, Mold Magazine,

On a Seed Journey with Futurefarmers: A reverse seed migration from Oslo to Istanbul (26. 02..21) <https://thisismold.com/seeds-issue/on-a-seed-journey-with-futurefarmers> accessed (22 August 2022).

⁵⁴⁵ T, Hethorn, *Untitled (Journal Entry)* 2021.

Suzanne Lacey's *Between the Door and the Street* 2013⁵⁴⁶ (Figure 4.46)⁵⁴⁷. (This work was reminiscent of her earlier activation; *The Roof is on Fire* 1994)⁵⁴⁸ (Figure 4.47)⁵⁴⁹, involved various demography's, mostly women and a few men, who belonged to New York City's Brooklyn community, representing the diverse nature of the borough. Each group identified with a specific social issue such as ageing in a progressive society, (Figure 4.48)⁵⁵⁰ and held a differing perspective to other members that resided in the community⁵⁵¹. The participants were asked to dress in dark colours; however, all wore a yellow scarf to reflect the yellow curb markings and the yellow flowers planted in the pots on the street, denoting the Brooklyn landscape. The work was a collaboration between the vision of Lacy and the curatorial direction of Nato Thompson which was framed by the statistics that show women are impacted on an intrinsic level more so than that of a male by broad social issues, like poverty. These deeper sensations tend to affect a female's quality of life. The discussions were conducted by active participants who were positioned sitting on stoops, (a customary New York activity) while the audience (or observational participants) looked on while listening⁵⁵². This act of sharing in an open, but safe forum, allows for learning and subsequent understanding that may otherwise be dismissed owing to unawareness. This was a powerful, social exercise, having the capacity to impact the outlook of others or to have them form their own opinions, and for creating avenues for dialogical practice to ensue with a broader

⁵⁴⁶ N. Thompson, *Suzanne Lacy: Between the Door and the Street* (2013) (n.d.) <https://www.natothompson.com/work#/http/creativetimeorg/projects/between-the-door-and-the-street/>, accessed 6 June 2021.

⁵⁴⁷ S. Lacy: *Between the Door and the Street* (2013) (n.d.) <https://www.natothompson.com/work#/http/creativetimeorg/projects/between-the-door-and-the-street/>, accessed 7 November 2021.

⁵⁴⁸ The work, *The Roof is on Fire* (1994), saw high school students sitting in parked cars, in a garage space, holding discussions on pertinent social issues affecting their specific demographic, while community members and the media listened to their stories from the peripheral. N. Thompson, 'Projects', in N. Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991 – 1992*, 178.

⁵⁴⁹ S. Lacy, *The Roof is on Fire* (1993-1994) Suzanne Lacy, Annice Jacoby, and Chris Johnson <https://www.suzannelacy.com/the-oakland-projects/> 1994, accessed 7 November 2021.

⁵⁵⁰ S. Lacey, *Between the Door and the Street* (2013) <https://www.suzannelacy.com/between-the-door-and-the-street/>, accessed 7 November 2021.

⁵⁵¹ S. Lacy: *Between the Door and the Street* 2013 (n.d.) <https://www.natothompson.com/work#/http/creativetimeorg/projects/between-the-door-and-the-street/>, accessed 7 November 2021.

⁵⁵² N. Thompson, 'Between the Door and the Street, *Projects and Exhibitions* 2013 (n.d.), <https://www.natothompson.com/work#/http/creativetimeorg/projects/between-the-door-and-the-street/> accessed 6 June 2021.

audience, that reached beyond the initial site⁵⁵³. Thompson maintains the belief, that the arts sector has the substance to engineer a broader and empathetic philosophy that can shape the behaviour of constituents impacting the cities in which they reside. The manner of engagement with the arts, whether active or passive, provides the opportunity for personal interpretation, and the sensation of liberty⁵⁵⁴.



Figure 4.46: Between the Door and the Street Suzanne Lacey 2013



Figure 4.47: The Roof is on Fire, Suzanne Lacey 1994

⁵⁵³ M. Ledwith & J. Springett, *Participatory Practice: Community-based action for transformative change*, 29.

⁵⁵⁴ P. Schmelzer, Walker Magazine, Oct 23, 2013, *How Culture Shapes the Contemporary City: Nato Thompson on Urbanism, Social Practice, and the Creative Time Summit* (2013) <https://walkerart.org/magazine/nato-thompson-creative-time-summit-cities> (accessed 17 August 2022).



Figure 4.48: *Between the Door and the Street (detail)*, Suzanne Lacey 2013

In November 2020, American artist, Damián Ortega and American curator Bree Zucker collaborated with 12 artists to create a collective exhibit entitled, *Titan* 2020 (Figure 4.49)⁵⁵⁵. The works, were mostly made up of text and displayed in midtown Manhattan, New York City, over three months repurposing redundant phone booths as the display supports. Tiravanija was just one of the exhibiting artists. The phone booths were a significant component of the collective as they were synonymous with the city. This proved to be an effective component of the work, allowing participating audiences a platform to become re-acquainted with their city as a substantial hub for the arts, given the closure of galleries and theatres due to the pandemic. The exhibit had been conceived and arranged approximately 12 months prior to being displayed, and as such the outdoor telephone booth settings had always been the original sites on which to showcase the work. However, it proved an effective tonic for the residents who had been in lockdown for an extended period⁵⁵⁶. The phone booths too played a significant role, as they had always been a notable urban feature in the landscape of the city.⁵⁵⁷ The timing proved opportune as Ortega felt that the viewing of virtual works over the course of the COVID lockdown was

⁵⁵⁵ *Titan, ringing in the Changes*, (n.d.) <https://titan.kurimanzutto.com/> (accessed 25 June 2021).

⁵⁵⁶ M. Duron, 'Cutting-Edge Art Takes Over Soon-to-Be-Obsolete New York Phone Booths in Outdoor Exhibition', *Artnews*, (5 November 2020), <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/titan-phone-booths-exhibition-kurimanzutto-damian-ortega-1234575965/>, accessed 25 June 2021.

⁵⁵⁷ M. Duron, 'Cutting-Edge Art Takes Over Soon-to-Be-Obsolete New York Phone Booths in Outdoor Exhibition', *Artnews*.

inciting malaise among those working in the art sector and their respective audiences⁵⁵⁸.



Figure 4.49: Titan Exhibit, New York City, Damián Ortega, Bree Zucker 2020/21



Figure 4.50: Ohhh ... Untitled, Rikrit Tiravanija 2020

⁵⁵⁸ M. Duron, 'Cutting-Edge Art Takes Over Soon-to-Be-Obsolete New York Phone Booths in Outdoor Exhibition', *Artnews*. (5 November 2020), <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/titan-phone-booths-exhibition-kurimanazutto-damian-ortega-1234575965/>, accessed 25 June 2021.

The work exhibited by Tiravanija within the collective was titled, *Ohhh... Untitled* 2020 (Figure 4.50)⁵⁵⁹ featuring three posters, each with a differing text, but with a similar political message: *Remember in November* 2020 (Figure 4.51)⁵⁶⁰; *Febreze for Fascism* 2020 (Figure 4.52)⁵⁶¹, a citation borrowed American political strategist, Arwa Mahdawi that she used to define Melania Trump's indifference during her tenure in the White House⁵⁶² and *Imposters of Patriotism* 2020 (Figure 4.53)⁵⁶³, a reconfiguration of words used President George Washington, in his farewell address to the nation in 1796. His words read, 'guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism' ⁵⁶⁴, a timely reminder of the divisive policies of the Trump presidential administration⁵⁶⁵. The *Titan* exhibit, opening during November 2020, coinciding with the American Presidential elections and serving as subliminal prompt to enact a necessary change of government, and as a response to the city's eventual removal of the phone booths, (to be replaced by wi-fi hubs) a previously synonymous symbol of the New York City landscape⁵⁶⁶.

⁵⁵⁹ Titan, Rirkrit Tiravanija, (n.d) <https://titan.kurimanzutto.com/artists/rirkrit-tiravanija> accessed 5 November 2021.

⁵⁶⁰ M. Duron, 'Cutting-Edge Art Takes Over Soon-to-Be-Obsolete New York Phone Booths in Outdoor Exhibition', *Artnews*. (5 November 2020), <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/titan-phone-booths-exhibition-kurimanzutto-damian-ortega-1234575965/>, accessed 5 November 2021.

⁵⁶¹ M. Duron, 'Cutting-Edge Art Takes Over Soon-to-Be-Obsolete New York Phone Booths in Outdoor Exhibition', *Artnews*. (5 November 2020), <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/titan-phone-booths-exhibition-kurimanzutto-damian-ortega-1234575965/>, accessed 5 November 2021.

⁵⁶² Mahdawi, A., 'The five most terrifying performances by women at the RNC – ranked!' *The Guardian*, Australian ed., (29 August 2020), <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/aug/29/trump-inner-circle-five-most-terrifying-performances-women-rnc>, accessed 17 April 2021.

⁵⁶³ Titan, Rirkrit Tiravanija (2020) <https://titan.kurimanzutto.com/artists/rirkrit-tiravanija>

⁵⁶⁴ Washington's Farewell Address to the People of the United States. 106th Congress 2nd Session Senate Document no. 106—21. 2000. p. 29. Washington, USA. accessed 16 August 2021. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CDOC-106sdoc21/pdf/GPO-CDOC-106sdoc21.pdf>

⁵⁶⁵ The Parthenon, EDITORIAL: Modern America is George Washington's worst nightmare (21 March 2018). <https://marshallparthenon.com/16521/opinion/modern-america-is-george-washingtons-worst-nightmare/> accessed 16 August 2021.

⁵⁶⁶ M. Duron, 'Cutting-Edge Art Takes Over Soon-to-Be-Obsolete New York Phone Booths in Outdoor Exhibition', *Artnews*. (5 November 2020), <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/titan-phone-booths-exhibition-kurimanzutto-damian-ortega-1234575965/>, accessed 25 June 2021.



Figure 4.51: Remember in November Rikrit Tiravanija 2020



Figure 4.52: Febreeze for Fascism Rikrit Tiravanija 2020



Figure 4.53: Imposters of Patriotism, Rikrit Tiravanija 2020

Tiravanija's work in the *Titan* exhibit was indicative of the mood of the community, in that his chosen text, communicated the necessity to alter the American political landscape, and to do so with the notion of community and cohesion at the fore. This was a specifically poignant message to the American people, presented in a manner that adhered to the social restrictions brought about by the COVID pandemic, and addressing the socio-economic uncertainty generated by the 2020 Presidential elections⁵⁶⁷.

Fallen Fruit's work exhibited in Palermo, Spain titled *Theatre of the Sun* 2018 (Figure 4.54)⁵⁶⁸, included a room that was papered with their digital work carrying fruit motifs, symbolic of the transient nature of fruit and an allegory of the transient nature of humans, although not one that is always readily accepted⁵⁶⁹. The artists believe that as seeds can be shifted by the wind, or fruit can be traded as a commodity, that the idea of humans crossing borders should also be regarded as a natural act⁵⁷⁰. The work also included maps of Palermo that showcased native fruit trees, directing audience members to places within the city where they could pluck fruit for free, believing fruit is a natural resource that belongs to everyone and as such should be a shared commodity⁵⁷¹. The work by Fallen Fruit included in the National Gallery of Victoria's Triennial 2020/21, *Natural History*, (Figure 4.55)⁵⁷² reflected that of their work in Palermo, due to the use of similar printed fabrics that were adhered to the walls of the gallery's 16 and 17th century exhibition rooms.

⁵⁶⁷ D. Ortega, & B. Zucker, *Titan: Curatorial Text*, (2020),

<https://titan.kurimanzutto.com/about/curatorial-text>, accessed 16 August 2021.

⁵⁶⁸ Manifesta 12, 16.06.18 – 04.11.18: *Theatre of the Sun* (2018), <http://m12.manifesta.org/theatre-of-the-sun-2018/index.html>, accessed 6 November 2021.

⁵⁶⁹ Manifesta 12, 16.06.18 – 04.11.18: *Fallen Fruit* (2018), <http://m12.manifesta.org/fallen-fruit/index.html>, accessed 6 June 2021.

⁵⁷⁰ Manifesta 12, 16.06.18 – 04.11.18: *Theatre of the Sun* (2018), <http://m12.manifesta.org/theatre-of-the-sun-2018/index.html>, accessed 6 June 2021.

⁵⁷¹ Manifesta 12, 16.06.18 – 04.11.18: *Fallen Fruit* (2018), <http://m12.manifesta.org/fallen-fruit/index.html>, accessed 6 June 2021.

⁵⁷² R. Nelson, The Age: *The Arts and Culture*, December 18, 2020, NGV rises to the challenge with beautiful, thoughtful Triennial exhibition (2020) <https://www.theage.com.au/culture/art-and-design/ngv-rises-to-the-challenge-with-beautiful-thoughtful-triennial-exhibition-20201218-p56opj.html> (accessed 6 June 2021).



Figure 4.54: Theatre of the Sun, Fallen Fruit 2018

This work was both specific and significant to the local community, as the images used, were captured within the city of Melbourne and reflective of that climatic space. The photographic images, original work by the Fallen Fruit artists, David Allen Burns and Austin Young was recorded during a Victorian research tour at the beginning of 2020, just prior to Covid 19 reached pandemic status. The artists conducted visits to the Melbourne Botanical Gardens, the Cranbourne Gardens, the Collingwood Children's Farm and the respective surrounding neighbourhoods, choosing species of Australian native flora, inclusive of plants, flowers and fruits to be photographed and then subsequently printed to be utilised as a support backdrop for a selection of artworks chosen from the gallery's collection, that related specifically to Australian historical events, including colonialism. This allowed audiences to question how they viewed Australian culture and society in relation to race and gender, and what changes are required for inclusivity?⁵⁷³. Highlighted also was the impact to natural spaces that has occurred with the everchanging urban landscape such as the growth of cities and the transitory nature of humans. The work incorporated a deliberate narrative, by using a familiar aesthetic, that of Australian Flora to relay the history of the country, and to use this history as a learning tool to acknowledge the injustices from the past and to assist with moving forward by adopting inclusive social practice⁵⁷⁴:

⁵⁷³ National Gallery Victoria, Virtual Tours, *Triennial 2020: Natural History*, Fallen Fruit <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/virtual-tours/triennial-2020-fallen-fruit/>

⁵⁷⁴ National Gallery Victoria, 'Fallen Fruit Natural History', *NGV Triennial* (n.d), <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/fallen-fruit-natural-history/> accessed 1 June 2021.

‘As artists, we are interested in how people, plants, and animals are represented in various natural settings, landscapes, and gardens. By drawing from the NGV Collection, the immersive artwork also becomes a story about the formation of colonial Australia itself, and how people and plants from other places have naturalized within the Indigenous landscape’⁵⁷⁵

This quote further reiterated a similar allegory messaging that was delivered through the work developed for the 2018 Biennial in Palermo⁵⁷⁶, that being the belief that diversely, rich multi-cultural societies are only possible when people are afforded the freedoms to travel beyond borders and settle in new environments, much like the way seeds are carried in the wind⁵⁷⁷

The rationale for including this specific work of Fallen Fruit’s in this study, aside from it being a seminal contemporary example of garden-based relation aesthetic artwork, was a comment made by a participant during the interviews conducted for this exegesis, which forms the research that supports this project. He reflected on a memory of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens the same gardens which inspired Fallen Fruit’s *Natural History* exhibit:



Figure 4.55: *Natural History*, Fallen Fruit 2020/21

‘I have a memory of a time I spent in Melbourne, I didn’t know the city very well,

⁵⁷⁵ Fallen Fruit, *Triennial: Virtual Tour* (January 20 2021), <https://fallenfruit.org/triennial-2020-fallen-fruit-virtual-tour/>, accessed 26 June 2021.

⁵⁷⁶ Manifesta 12, 16.06.18 – 04.11.18: Fallen Fruit (2018) <http://m12.manifesta.org/fallen-fruit/index.html>, accessed 6 June 2021

⁵⁷⁷ Manifesta 12, 16.06.18 – 04.11.18: Fallen Fruit (2018) <http://m12.manifesta.org/fallen-fruit/index.html>, accessed 6 June 2021.

and they have a food garden in the Botanical Gardens and you can pick the fruit. I picked an apple, a Pink Lady, and it tasted so good, it gave me a sense of belonging to a place I was unfamiliar with, and I will never forget that feeling' – Garden Participant # 12⁵⁷⁸

To summarise this chapter, contemporary collaborative projects that have endeavoured to educate an audience on the current state of the environment on a global scale, were discussed. Artists such as Alan Sonfist, Bonnie Ora Sherk and Agnes Denes, are practitioners that used participatory methods to inform their audience, using sustainability as a way to incite personable encounters. These methods also proved successful in addressing social issues, such as loneliness experiences in large urban spaces, delivering a succinct message to their audiences. Participatory projects that incorporate the environment, delineate the theory of participation, which provides a notion of identity for those participating. For large-scaled exhibitions like *Culture in Action* situated in Chicago, the works created were specifically invested in local concerns, suggesting that even work on a grand scale can still create profound connections, as humans have a primal and organic relationship with their immediate surroundings.

These are the places where we reside and establish our community networks and supportive partnerships, as such we resonate deeply with our surroundings. These are crucial elements of the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* for if they are absent, then the connections cannot be maintained, or will appear superficial and there will be no solid basis from which to grow personal wellness and resilience. For artists such as Suzanne Lacy, Rirkrit Tiravanija and the Fallen Fruit group, they acknowledge, through their respective works, that connections, especially throughout unprecedented global lockdowns when residents are forced indoors, are even more important to maintain for ongoing personal wellness. Therefore, collective art projects are necessary as a vehicle to underpin connections and therefore assume the capacity to reposition a communities' understanding of itself

⁵⁷⁸ Garden Participant #12, APPENDIX: Interviews, Page 221.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH ANALYSIS

This chapter will discuss the analysis of the central research premise of participatory art practices and offer an insight into daily rituals, (in this instance gardening), and how this can constitute a creative process. It will be demonstrated that this art strategy supports a sensation of wellness and identity as well as generate social encounters. These outcomes have been determined from the primary research data that was generated using an autoethnographic approach and devising ethically approved interview questions (UniSQ Ethics Approval no. H20REA094) to provide original research content. The data will be presented using a mixed method approach, drawing on both qualitative (primary data collected for this study), and external secondary data. Using the resources of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and a global study actioned by Professors Soga, Gaston and Yamaura, showing data supportive of the notion that gardening activities are beneficial in the attainment and maintenance of good health, provide a support and substance to the primary data collected. While the external quantitative data was not collected specifically for this study, it is important to include within this document, to provide weight to the argument and specific outcomes that were the targeted goals for this research project.

The notion of and the outcome of the garden ‘as’ artwork, in conjunction with the primary research undertaken for this exegesis, has revealed through the interview responses how the two concepts are connected. Participant interview queries were designed to incite responses which would both deepen personal connections and reveal the inherent relationships and historic practices adopted by those directly involved in the garden project. The interviews conducted with participants were a necessary element of the process to determine the outcome to the following research questions:

1. *In the current age of assumed societal insularity, is it important or even possible to create and sustain personable and connected neighbourhood relationships, specifically via the creative act of shared horticultural practice?*

2. *In what ways can relational and/or participatory practice be measured to determine success in this project?*

In addressing the first research question, the theories of Etienne Wenger, and established set of principles must be incorporated as a basis from which to move forward. These principles outline the ‘Community of Practice’ – that being implementation of commonality in terms of domain, (both the neighbourhood and the garden), a sensation of community, and references to personal ideals of familiarity, engaging in earnest dialogue, and a safe space that allows for reflection and diverse opinions that arise. These principles defined by Wenger, were applicable for this specific community project, having emerged from modern social theory, in an endeavour to understand human learning and the willingness to learn, within a social context. The principles were established to ensure a safe environment in which to conduct the learning and social exchanges⁵⁷⁹, in the instance of the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, this was the conducted interviews and discussions. It was important to apply a framework with some fluidity to this project, (Wenger himself defines the Community of Practice system as a simplistic component within a broader and more profound structure)⁵⁸⁰, as the study was impacted by the Covid 19 lockdowns. On occasions mandated social distancing due to instances of the virus detected in the community, impacted the processes in place and as such alternative avenues to conduct interviews, swap garden items or engage in a communal manner with people in and around the physical garden, were required.

I had to adopt reflective practices to determine what was needed to learn to specifically address the above questions, ascertaining how this may serve further research on the concepts of Relational Aesthetics, participatory projects and whether these ideals can serve the personal wellbeing of those that choose to engage – and indeed understand if this notion is an important one. The questions were framed in such a way as to garner responses that would provide insight into whether

⁵⁷⁹ Wenger, E. (2010). Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems: the Career of a Concept. In: Blackmore, C. (eds) *Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice*. Springer, London. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-84996-133-2_11 (accessed 21 September 2022).

⁵⁸⁰ Wenger, E. (2010). Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems: the Career of a Concept. In: Blackmore, C. (eds) *Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice*. Springer, London. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-84996-133-2_11 (accessed 21 September 2022).

participants perform ritualistic practice with historic links, this was incorporated to reflect the autoethnographic approach.

This is relevant information for this project, as those that continue to engage with connections from their respective pasts, are more likely to be comfortable developing and maintaining connections with others in their community⁵⁸¹. It also suggests that their chosen practices are an effective avenue to engage with others, as people are often interested to learn alternate and successful gardening methods⁵⁸². The research was also geared towards understanding whether social connections could manifest, in a suburban environment through gardening practice. It was necessary to establish also, whether those who seek out natural environments do so as because it provides them with a beneficial platform that they feel supports their physical and emotional wellbeing. This is integral to the research, as the investigative premise is to determine whether gardening activities and the accompanied relational practice holds healing properties, for those living a busy existence. Lastly, I was seeking responses that addressed the second research question – the ways in which relational and participatory practice could be measured to determine success. This was underpinned by the consideration as to whether a garden is a substantial stage on which to support the relational concept in terms of creating a collaborative and communal hub and to showcase a garden ‘as’ artwork,

The background for the creating of a garden project was initiated and guided by my interests in collective and purposed activities, specifically those undertaken in a natural environment, where the garden produce, once harvested, can be shared beyond the initial garden site, and have neighbours reciprocate if they chose to. This action illustrated my understanding of the concept of community, believing that connected residents create healthy, safe and supportive neighbourhoods which essentially underpins well-being.

My interest in community networking, supported by the theories Relational Aesthetics, and an autoethnography methodology allows for investigations to be

⁵⁸¹ J. T. Caccioppo & W. Patrick, *Loneliness Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection*. 250.

⁵⁸² T. L. Scott, B. M. Masser & N. A. Pachana *Positive aging benefits of home and community gardening activities: Older adults report enhanced self-esteem, productive endeavours, social engagement and exercise*, *SAGE Open Medicine* Vol 8, (2020), 2.
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2050312120901732> accessed 20 November 2021.

fundamentally drawn from personal experiences⁵⁸³ – in my case being raised in a working-class suburban neighbourhood in Brisbane in the 1970s, when neighbour's relationships were fuelled by shared produce that had been grown in backyard vegetable plots or secondary bottled items such as jams or relishes. It is these aspects of primary human need – nourishment and companionship – that sit at the heart of this project and will resolutely be central to the creation of a cohesive neighbourhood network.

5.1 The Autoethnographic approach

The chosen autoethnographic methodology allows for dialogical prompts drawing on my personal experiences and using them as a measure against those of participants, seeking both familiarity and differences. This will provide the necessary qualitative data to garner an understanding of participants, their garden activities and manner of social exchanges and to decipher if there are any connections between these practices. It is also important to gain clarity and appreciation into whether others gain a sense of personal wellbeing from their gardening activities. In this instance, the autoethnographic approach permits me, the researcher, to draw on these lived experiences, and allows me to establish a relational formation from which to grow knowledge and address the research question. In reflecting on these outcomes, I framed the participant research inquiries in the formulation necessary to gather the pertinent information that served this specific endeavour.

The autoethnographic method has been successful in that it was an applicable guide, providing an empathetic pathway to gather informative and creative knowledge that served the relational concept that is at the foundation of participatory arts practice. This relates to my childhood memories of sharing garden items with neighbours, and having neighbours share surplus with my family. The relational outcomes will be measured through the provision of produce from the initial garden site, and the reciprocal activities of the participants. These activities, captured through digital stills, are either the gifting of home grown produce from garden sites, or the creating of a meal or food item which is then shared.

⁵⁸³ C. Ellis. T.E. Adams. A. P. Bochner. 'Autoethnography: An Overview', Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 12/1, para.,5, (Jan.2011). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>, accessed 12 March 2021.

5.2 Mixed method approach to analysis

The chosen supportive methodology of autoethnography indicates a qualitative research analysis would be useful way to provide a substantial overview⁵⁸⁴. However, the human-interest element of the project suggests a more balanced approach would provide comprehensive research outcomes.⁵⁸⁵, so the research should be explained by employing a mixed approach. Essentially, this would look like quantitative data collated by government bodies, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on a national level and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on a global scale, utilising statistics to support the notion that community residents exercising cohesion and social networking, generally enjoy a more rigorous sense of identity, which promotes positive wellbeing and robust physical and emotional health. In comparison, statistics would also suggest that in communities where members are less active, the trajectory shows an inability to maintain optimistic perspectives⁵⁸⁶. The mixed method approach allows for the qualitative data, (personal stories shared by participants) to be measured also through quantitative statistics, supporting the claims made in the interview response. It will also establish a clearer overview of this community and how they view social connections and the impact of engaging in gardening activities or time spent in a natural environment. The quantitative data supports the claim that for ongoing good health, time spent in nature coupled with collaboration practice is definitively beneficial.

5.3 Qualitative research

This research collection informs the direction of the project as well as the substance to validate this study, (a participatory project in a suburban community) the approach is fundamentally empathic that supports productive results. These results, elucidate understanding of diverse opinions, and assists with the identifying

⁵⁸⁴J. du Preez, 'Locating the researcher in the research: personal narrative and reflective practice', *Reflective Practice*, (2008), 509, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1462394080243149>, accessed 10 June 2021.

⁵⁸⁵A. Burke Johnson, & A.J. Onwuegbuzie, 'Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come', *Educational Researcher American Educational Research Association*, 33/7, (Oct. 2004), 16 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3700093>, accessed 10 June 2021.

⁵⁸⁶J. Cacioppo & W. Patrick, *Loneliness: Human Nature and the need for Social Connections* (New York City, W.W. Norton and Company, 2008), 15.

of problems that may arise, as well as offering solutions. An example of this is was provided by a garden participant when abating concerns raised about her beehives by her neighbours:

‘I give away honey, and plants to my neighbours, one of the children who I gave honey to drew me a picture of bees that I keep on my fridge, it makes me smile. This relationship however, did not start well, the neighbours were concerned by the bee hives being so close to their children’s’ play area. This was resolved by, me alerting them to when I would be collecting the honey, and then me providing them with honey when they wanted it. So far, the arrangement has worked quite well’.

Participant #1⁵⁸⁷

It uncovers historic practice, and can determine contemporary thought that relates to social change⁵⁸⁸, this aligns with quantitative research data collected from agencies such as the ABS and the OECD. The collection methods for qualitative research included interviews, which were initially structured, or ongoing informal discussions that were unstructured, but the content of which assisted with deepening the studio practice⁵⁸⁹. Australian professor Brad Haseman describes the qualitative methodology as ‘discursive prose’⁵⁹⁰ in that the research is personal, heartfelt and richly emotive. This provides a balanced research presentation when paired with the statistical data, producing substantial findings in support of the relational concept⁵⁹¹. Haseman believes that the researcher can impact the participant responses through discussion resulting in considered research, while the participants and their

⁵⁸⁷ Garden Participant #1, APPENDIX: Interviews, p. 198.

⁵⁸⁸ C. Ellis, T.E. Adams and A. P. Bochner, ‘Autoethnography: An Overview’, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12/1, para.,2, (Jan.2011). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>, accessed 31 October 2021.

⁵⁸⁹ H. Smith & R.T. Dean, ‘Introduction’, in H. Smith & R.T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. Ed. 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 4.

⁵⁹⁰ B. Haseman, ‘Tightrope Writing: Creative Writing Programs in the RQF Environment’, in H. Smith & R.T. Dean (eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 126.

⁵⁹¹ M.D. LeCompe. & J.J. Schensul, *Analysis and Interpretation of Ethnographic Data: Mixed Methods Approach: Ethnographer’s Toolkit*. (Book 5, 2nd Edition, Plymouth, AltaMira Press, 2013), 27–29.

engagement, impacts the researcher, guiding and the outcome through harmonious, relational dialogue⁵⁹².

5.4 Quantitative research

Quantitative research incorporates data that supplies an understanding based on the weighting of opinions, and assists with the identification of patterns within the responses obtained through discussions and interviews, such as the research conducted in the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*. The analysis was conducted by calculating the participant's responses and providing the measure as a percentage. These percentages were then measured against a meta study that had been conducted by Professors Soga, Gaston and Yamarura, to determine whether gardening practice assists with abating a depressive mood and general malaise, for those in busy urban locations. That study was much more comprehensive than the one conducted for this research. Participants were selected from a global pool with a sliding scale of illness, both physical and psychological, and were provided with a variety of times allotted in a gardening space. The results indicate that even momentarily, interactions with nature are advantageous and beneficial for the improvement of overall ill health concerns⁵⁹³. This data was important to highlight as it supports the claims determined in this research. It also suggests that irrespective of where the urban centre is situated, humans appear to have inherent need for connections, with both others and the earth⁵⁹⁴.

5.5 Primary data and supporting secondary data

5.5.1 Primary data - response examples – long-term residents of Murarrie

Prior to conducting interviews with participants in relation to their gardening practices, it was necessary to establish whether the community had undergone

⁵⁹² B. Haseman, 'Tightrope Writing: Creative Writing Programs in the RQF Environment', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean ed., *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 126–127.

⁵⁹³ M. Soga, & K. J. Gaston, Y. Yamaura, 'Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis', *Preventive Medicine Reports*, Vol 5 (Mar., 2017), 93, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2016.11.007>, accessed 9 June 2021.

⁵⁹⁴ F. Williams, *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier and More Creative* (New York City, W.W Norton and Company, Inc., 2017), 47.

changes in relation into the built landscape⁵⁹⁵ and to determine if these changes had impacted residents and their previously established social connections or perspectives of their community and neighbourhood. It was also interesting to see if participants, in recognition of being impacted by changes, had put measures in place to abate this. The qualitative data collected was stacked against the quantitative data taken from the ABS and OECD to establish an understanding of the evolution of suburbia and how people have adapted to these changes, and whether it has the capacity to impact general wellness. The qualitative data was collected from seven long-term residents, each having resided there from a period of 25 to 45 years. The questions, beyond the number of years they have lived in Murarrie, relate to the changes within the community that they have noticed and how they may or may not have been impacted. For example, this could relate to changes occurring within their community social groupings, if indeed that was important to them. The purpose for these specific responses was to substantiate the concept, that it is necessary to establish and maintain connections within the boundaries of one's residential hub. This ideal establishes one of the fundamental aspects of this study, in that community connections are sought for both companionship and supportive outreach. This in turn may support a sense of one's community identity, security and comfort⁵⁹⁶. Below are opinions provided by two long-term residents, the statements are their responses to the question; *can you explain what the suburb looked like previously?* (Responses were sought in relation to changes in the built environment, and if there were any sensed ramifications). Their responses reflect personal impacts resultant from the changes that have occurred in the community, and an adaptive strategy employed to abate these effects.

‘There were fewer homes and only the one bridge over the river... the residential model has changed from medium to high density, there is so much more traffic, it's so much busier and louder. I feel sad because it used to have a rural essence here, there were paddocks and horses, but that has all gone now. There are so many apartments and townhouses too which feels a little like my privacy has been invaded. It makes sense however, as we are located approximately ten kms from the

⁵⁹⁵ Resulting from current Brisbane City Council town planning policies, a number of houses have been demolished and apartment blocks erected on quarter-acre plots which have been subdivided.

⁵⁹⁶ J. Cacioppo, & W. Patrick, *Loneliness: Human Nature and the need for Social Connections* (New York City, W.W. Norton and Company, 2008), 7

city, and close to the bay and the coasts but it has detracted from a place that was once much friendlier, family orientated and more community minded'. Murarrie long-term resident participant # 1⁵⁹⁷

'Many of the homes that were here, have been demolished and apartment blocks have been built. An almost entire street has had the homes knocked down and apartment buildings have been built. Some split blocks have smaller homes on them, but there is no room for gardens.... Some of my older friends have moved away, but I make a point of getting to know people. I am the president of the Neighbourhood watch, I was a founding member, I think it's important to get to know people and they know us and we can keep an eye on each other'. Murarrie long-term resident participant # 4⁵⁹⁸

5.5.2 External, supportive, secondary data

In quantifying the participant sampled responses that relate to the impacts felt by changes in the urban landscape, it is important to bolster the relevance of this data by use of statistical information collated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (I have collected this data from the ABS and presented below in a pie chart Figure 5.1)⁵⁹⁹. The quantitative data determines also, that the changes occurring in urban spaces will continue to impact residents and their sense of wellness, with the anticipated growth in traffic activity which will see a rise in pollution levels. The effects of this are heighten further, due to the construction of apartment buildings on cleared house blocks, and fewer local, or accessible green spaces. This information attests to the necessity of engaging in gardening practice or time spent in natural spaces as a beneficial strategy for maintaining an individual's sense of connection to the environment (as both place and psychological space) and collectively to each other in the community.

⁵⁹⁷ Murarrie long-term resident participant # 1 APPENDIX: Interview p. 249.

⁵⁹⁸ Murarrie long-term resident participant # 4 APPENDIX: Interviews p. 251.

⁵⁹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 1996 Census Data: Brisbane City archived (1997), <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/96bcp305051996?OpenDocument&tabname=Details&prodno=96bcp30505&issue=1996&num=&view=&> 25 June 2021. Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census Community Profiles; Murarrie (2021), https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/SC32099?opendocument accessed 25 June 2021.

In accordance with the ABS census data collated in 2016, the dwelling structures consistent with the landscape in Murarrie, have shown an increase in demolitions and the building of townhouses and apartment buildings. In comparison, the census data collected in 1996 supports the notion that houses, as a structure have been on the decline within the suburb. These statistics suggest that there are now fewer dwellings with backyards spaces, which can be play places for children, or to create a garden and/or a place to relax with friends or family members. This data correlates with the qualitative information collected from participants, all long-term residents reflecting these changes within the landscape in their interviews, which suggests that it does impact residents, please see sample responses above. These graphs provide evidence that as suburbs are altering, and at a heady pace, the green spaces are declining. As such these open spaces of personal reflection, connection and relaxation have a substantial impact on how individuals live and engage in such areas on a mental and emotional level. It was important to showcase this data, as underpins the need to adapt within our communities to abate the ramifications of the changes and to maintain a valid sense of well-being. These statistics are applicable for those in local councils to ensure constituents have access to green spaces. An example of this was reflected on in Chapter 4 when reference was made to The Singapore Green Plan⁶⁰⁰.

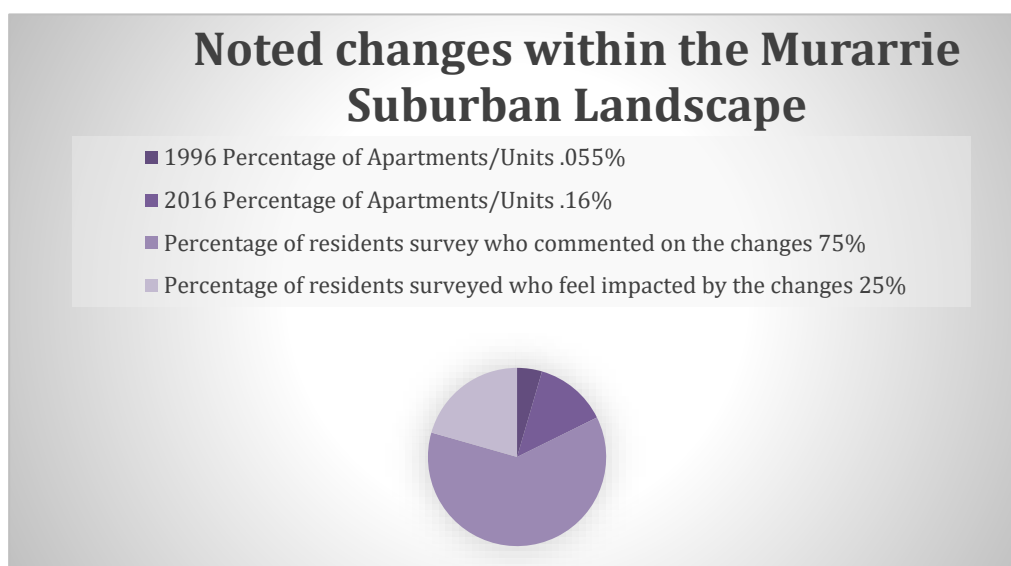


Figure 5.1: Changes in the Murarrie Suburban Landscape, ABS 2016

⁶⁰⁰ Singapore Green Plan 2030, Introducing the Green Plan (2021) <https://www.greenplan.gov.sg/>, accessed 3 June 2021.

The figures collated by the OECD support the global trend of urban growth, showing an ongoing expansion of urban centres. These figures show that over the past forty years the number of residents living in cities has doubled and this growth will be progressive. It is estimated that 48% to 55% of the global population by the year 2050, will be living in a city (as reflected in Figure 5.2 below)⁶⁰¹.



Figure 5.2: 2050 Population density, OECD

On a positive note, citizens who do reside in a city centre have greater access to services and internet infrastructure, however they also have substantial exposure to pollution and greenhouse emissions, which can impact their health and quality of life⁶⁰². The statistics prove that strategies to abate these effects should be implemented by council agencies, for residents, it would seem that time spent in a garden or park, can provide a sensation of good health. This has been further evidenced through the studio project for this exegesis and the various related participatory garden projects discussed at length as evidence of positive community engagement outcomes

5.5.3 Garden participant response overview

⁶⁰¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. *OECD Regional Wellbeing* (n.d.) <https://www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org/>, accessed 30 June 2021.

⁶⁰² C. Hamilton, H. Turton, *Determinants of emissions growth in OECD countries*. Accessed 12 September 2021. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0301-4215\(01\)00060-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0301-4215(01)00060-X) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S030142150100060X> accessed 12 September 2021.

The interview questions and responses explicate the participant's garden practices and ideas on the benefits of engaging in them. Some of the stories reflect the personal history of the participant. Oftentimes during the course of the interview, the participant, following a period of reflection, would provide a response with the realisation, that their practice incorporates an historic reference. It appeared that while people enjoyed drawing on and discussing their memories, the enjoyment related more to the pleasing sensations that were evoked, as opposed to the images they were recalling. The garden interviews were conducted with 24 participants, with the discussion lasting for approximately 30 to 60 minutes. The interviews that were conducted in person, incorporated a tour of the respective gardens. I observed on a few of these occasions a profundity that I was not anticipating, in that some participants noted a re-engagement with their space when viewed through the lens of another.

The responses are verbatim and have not been altered in relation to grammar, as it was important to retain the integrity of the participant's responses. The responses are reflective of the philosophy of the comforting sensations found in nature, and the manner in which gardening can support interconnectedness with others. These notions are the underlying principles of the exegesis, with the responses included in the creative journals or Volume II of this research project.

5.5.4 Response examples from garden participants

'I love trees, a garden needs to have trees to provide shade and interest and to bring birds to the yard. I grew up in Western Queensland where there were a lot of trees that we used to climb as children. I can remember the birds at dusk flocking to the trees, having my own trees now I can recall that time that I loved as a child and watch it play out. I also think it's important to grow your own food, that is extremely satisfying. My grandfather who lived in Toowoomba had a beautiful, thriving vegetable patch and I would help him weed and water. I always loved watering. I think having a garden has an affinity with the idea of home'. – Participant # 1⁶⁰³

⁶⁰³ Garden Participant #1 APPENDIX: Interviews, p. 198.

‘I love being able to grow things, but I am really impatient. Flower gardens are like a canvas you plant flowers for their look/appeal and it is a never- ending landscape when they grow, die and you change plants around for different looks. Much like someone painting they can change things around to make it look different. Yes, an organised look is fantastic but I can remember when I went back to New Zealand when my son was killed and I stayed in this cottage on a farm. The fields around this cottage were in full bloom with daffodils and the colour was just sensational. There was no rhyme or reason to how they were planted just masses of plants in the fields. In such a sad time sitting on a bench in the middle of such beauty was somehow quite calming’. - Participant # 6⁶⁰⁴

‘...I introduced myself to new neighbours by bringing them some produce from my garden. I gave them passionfruit and red pawpaw. A man who lived down the street knocked on my door and inquired if he could take the cumquats that were on my tree. A friend of my dad’s used to take them to make jam, but due to illness she couldn’t take them this year, so they were just left. Anyway, this man saw them, and asked if he could take them as his wife makes jam. Of course, I said yes. A few days later, the man knocked again and this time he bought me some jam made from the cumquats.’ – Garden participant # 14⁶⁰⁵

‘... often people walking past will stop and talk to me about my garden, I will invite them in to pick vegetables or flowers and I am happy to offer cuttings and or advice if asked. One day a man driving past my yard, noticed my garden, he stopped and asked if he could pick a bouquet for his wife’s birthday’. - Participant # 24⁶⁰⁶

5.5.5 Research presented in a quantitative mode, primary (qualitative collected for this study) and secondary external data

⁶⁰⁴ Garden Participant #6 APPENDIX: Interviews, p. 208.

⁶⁰⁵ Garden participant # 14 APPENDIX: Interviews, p. 225.

⁶⁰⁶ Garden Participant #24 APPENDIX: Interviews, p. 246.

When presenting the qualitative research (the primary data collected to underpin the garden project and accompanied document), in a quantitative mode, the suggestion that project participants found gardening to be beneficial and supportive in maintaining a healthy equilibrium, can be determined with clarity. The quantitative results calculated from the collected qualitative data (derived from the Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project participants), is presented below (Figure 5.3).

Information gathered from the interview process with garden participants	Percentage of responses in the affirmative
Garners a sense of serenity and/or physical wellness from gardening activities.	60%
Enjoys visiting the gardens of others or public gardens	65%
Draws on nostalgic knowledge and implements within their own garden	52%
Has a specific emotive memory of a garden	76%
Has encountered social connections through gardening	52%
Enjoys growing a specific plant item (this may relate to a specific memory)	44%
Was comfortable in sharing gardening knowledge with others	40%
Participates with others in the swapping of produce and or secondary products (seeds, or jams etc)	52%

Figure 5.3: Percentages denoting positive experiences of garden participants

Professors Soga, Gaston and Yamaura cite the World Health Organization's (WHO) guidelines that proposes personal well-being transcends the absence of a physical or mental health condition relating also to the identification of life satisfaction and being part of a supportive social network⁶⁰⁷. The professors enacted a meta study⁶⁰⁸ to determine what health benefits, if any were achieved by those who participated in the research. The data was collated from a variety of global studies,

⁶⁰⁷ M. Soga, & K. J. Gaston, Y. Yamaura, 'Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis', *Preventive Medicine Reports*.

⁶⁰⁸ Meta analysis is a quantitative and systematic study, that compares previous data with current data to determine outcomes. This specific research undertaken draw results from looking at a cross section of the community. Participants, both males and females were involved with a broad age grouping. Some were suffering from depressive illness, whilst others endured high sugar counts and circulatory and heart diseases. M. Soga, & K. J. Gaston, Y. Yamaura, 'Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis', *Preventive Medicine Reports* Vol 5 (Mar., 2017), 93, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2016.11.007>, accessed 9 June 2021.

with participants identifying as having ‘urban lifestyle’ health issues, such as obesity, diabetes (type 2), depression and/or anxiety and stress. It is estimated that illnesses of this nature will continue to rise, due to the number of people who reside in an urban centre globally, the increased pollution that comes from this specific environment⁶⁰⁹, changes to work hours, (not necessarily in the work space but conducted after hours) and leisure activities associated with being online as opposed to outdoors⁶¹⁰. The outcomes produced by the extensive studies determined that there was ‘robust evidence for the positive effects of gardening on health ... gardening can improve physical, psychological, and social health’⁶¹¹ The professors’ work suggests that access to a garden can have profound effects on the expenditure undertaken by health sectors in treating illness generated from residing and working within a contemporary, urban setting⁶¹². In comparison with the results collated by the professors, the responses provided by the Murarrie Garden participants had no systematic inclusion process; however, the outcomes derived from both studies reflect the identification by participants of sensations of personal wellness, both emotive and physical that relate specifically to their gardening practices and experiences.

⁶⁰⁹ OECD. *Cities and Environment* (n.d), <https://www.oecd.org/regional/cities/cities-environment.htm>, accessed 26 June 2021.

⁶¹⁰ OECD. ‘Chapter 5: Working hours: latest trends and policy initiatives. *Employment Trends*. (n.d.) ,153. accessed 26 June 2021. <https://www.oecd.org/els/emp/2080270.pdf>,26 June 2021.

⁶¹¹ M. Soga, & K. J. Gaston, Y. Yamaura, ‘Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis’, *Preventive Medicine Reports* Vol 5 (Mar., 2017), 93, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2016.11.007>, accessed 9 June 2021.

⁶¹² M. Soga, & K. J. Gaston, Y. Yamaura, ‘Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis’, *Preventive Medicine Reports*.

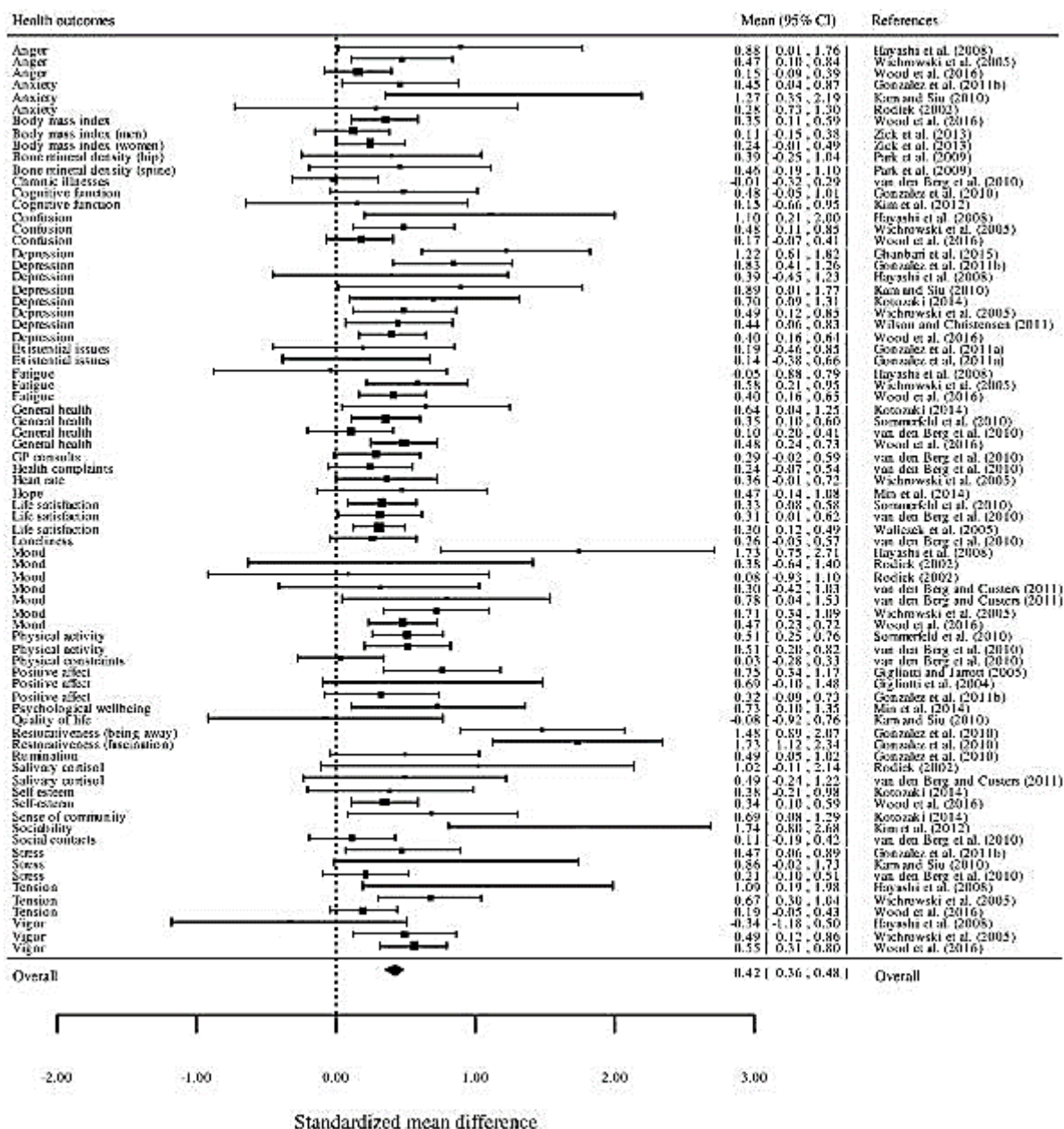


Figure 5.4: Meta analysis results – Health outcomes

The above table (Figure 5.4)⁶¹³ is from the study undertaken by Professors Soga, Gaston and Yamaura which shows their meta-analysis results: The results of the 76 comparisons and the meta-analytic estimates are shown. Most studies reported positive effects of gardening, there were no reports of notable negative side effects

⁶¹³ The figure stipulates the positive health benefits as analysed by the study of M. Soga, & K. J. Gaston, Y. Yamaura, 'Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis', Preventive Medicine Reports. 96.

suggesting a significant benefit of gardening activities on personal health outcomes.

As determined by the documented responses from the project's participants, it can be assumed that gardening practice, and/or time spent in nature, is a conduit for the sensation of wellness. This notion of wellness, when incorporated with the act of sharing, either home grown produce or profound dialogue, (the sharing of garden knowledge was not as significant, however this was due to people being not terribly confident in their gardening prowess, as opposed to disinterested) shows people are interested in this type of exchange. This is supported through the study conducted by Professors Soga, Gaston and Yamaura, the meta-data collated shows that participants in their garden study showed improvements in mood and physical health concerns and a perceived change in their social connections, attesting to feeling less lonely. It is important to include this in the research, as it mirrors the findings determined by this garden study that is situated in this specific part of the world.

The responses collected from long-term residents of Murarrie showed that the alterations occurring in the contemporary urban lifestyle have impacted residents. These changes have occurred because friends have moved away, more apartment blocks have encroached on their sensations of space, infrastructural changes, such as the building of a new cross-river bridge, have prompted busier roads, with traffic present for longer periods throughout the day.

To summarise, the utilisation of a mixed approach to analysis, has been effective in this instance to determine the outcomes to the research questions. This is due to the emotive and considered interview responses from the participants, which have guided the creative practice and revealed a willingness in wanting to forge connections for both the purpose of their wellness and that of their fellow community member. It has also revealed that connections grounded in the swapping of food items are particularly profound. The statistical data is important also, as it provides clarity for understanding the results and reinforcing the qualitative data that had been collected.

These results suggest that gardening is a profitable endeavour to create relationships that in turn provide a sense of resilience, identity and wellness for all concerned. This notion also was presented in the meta study conducted for the

University of Tokyo by Professors Soga, Gaston and Yamaura. Their findings show that it is important for those residing in urban, residential environments to spend occasions working in a natural garden space which assists with maintaining good health, helps relieve sensations of loneliness or depression, offers opportunities for gentle exercise outdoors, and provides opportunities for learning and engaging creatively. The study mirrors my own research goals in that gardening is a substantial platform to support the encounter, as it provides a creative outlet and can be measured in the reciprocal gifting of home grown produce which is imperative in an urban environment, essentially as our cities grow, it is necessary to maintain a sensation of community. Overall, what the garden 'as' artwork demonstrates is that the actual garden's produce is a vehicle to enable engagement within a community where previously there was potentially none. In this case, *The Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* becomes an original research prototype for how our Australian communities, in times of technological and Covid isolation, can come together through an everyday familiar activity forging new relationships that reshape how we see, use, and feel about our public spaces alongside each other.

CONCLUSION

The central focus of this exegesis to implement a creative cohesive concept that deepened a community's relationship with itself. This was achieved through the acts of sharing garden produce, discussions on garden practice and the sharing of personal stories. The latter was significant to the research outcome of engagement, as the sharing of stories provided participants the opportunity to see and regard their spaces with a fresh perspective. This was the primary image sought, the collective actions of engagement and acceptance generated by participants for the purpose of creating art. The garden project was supported using a practice-led approach, that provided a platform to generate outcomes and definitively further participatory theory. The practice-led framework was specifically efficacious⁶¹⁴, as the encounters that occurred via the interview process and experimental nature of the gardening activity, supported opportunities to resolve any issues over the course of the project. This aspect gave an insight into the depth of the relations that have been established through undertaking the garden 'as' participatory artwork.

The research and interview process conducted with community participants was to formulate outcomes that addressed the following research question:

1. *In the current age of assumed societal insularity, is it important or even possible to create and sustain personable and connected neighbourhood relationships, specifically via the creative act of shared horticultural practice?*
2. *In what ways can relational and/or participatory practice be measured to determine success in this project?*

An integral approach to determine the findings, was reached through a mixed method by way of using qualitative data obtained through interviews and ongoing discussions and presenting this data in a quantitative mode to provide the necessary clarity and support for the concept of both gardening activities and participatory practice that was the crux of this study.

⁶¹⁴ H. Smith & R.T. Dean, 'Introduction', in H. Smith & R.T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. Ed. 1, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 9.

In summary of the research component of *The Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project: Constructing Community Cohesion through Horticultural Practice*, Question 1 responses were sought through the creation of the garden in both a public and private space. This incorporated the participatory efforts of neighbours and friends through the swapping and/or receiving of produce, the performing of maintenance tasks and informal discussions of both horticultural practices and ritualistic history and experiences shared by the participants during the interview process. This process represents new research pertaining to this concept, of determining the ‘garden as artwork’. By using a fundamental entity like a garden as a conduit for increased connectiveness amongst the community in which it is situated, has supported the notion that it is a substantial relational stage from which our ever-populated spaces can become meeting points for shared experiencing creating inter-connected-ness. In this case the garden not only becomes a place to grow food for nourishment, but acts as a meeting point for people to gather, share and connect through their individual stories. This is one of the reasons why the garden in this instance, is ‘not’ an ecological arts project that deals with socio-political environmental concerns. Rather the garden, becomes a neutral space for participants to feel physically connected through sharing in a safe space, in our current world of endless disconnection through technological advancement.

These elements of the project are the ones that facilitated learning for both the artist (as researcher and participant) and participants (as co-creators and relational subjects). It is important to acknowledge the evolutionary role of the artist in a relational staging, as traditional ideals are being reconfigured, by remaining in step with contemporary society. These components collectively created an evolving participatory artwork that allowed for the interaction and interconnectedness of community members. The research presented within this exegesis was supported by the activities, conducted in the field, producing a conceptual and cohesive work.

The relational ideal associated with the artwork was researched through historic and contemporary practice and theories of Relational Aesthetics, developed by Nicolas Bourriaud in the latter period of the 20th century his theories developed following his curatorial experience at the *Traffic* exhibit in Bordeaux France in

1996⁶¹⁵. This exhibition was seen as a seminal experiment that saw artists develop scenarios for the express purpose of creating a dialogue between the artist and audience – essentially bridging the gap⁶¹⁶ that was the experiencing in traditional exhibition settings, such as galleries, where the artwork is placed away from the viewer, creating a distance observation.

The relational and participatory concept has historic links to the Duchampian readymade, when Marcel Duchamp recognised that the audience played a significant role in the recognition of artistic form, thus working in conjunction with the artist. The concept evolved further through Allan Kaprow's *Happening* sequences which influenced Fluxus events and performances which required co-creators or participants to play a functional role in activating the scene.

The purpose of creating scenarios and incorporating cohesive practices was firstly to acknowledge the importance of creative activities within daily life, and secondly to use this creativity as a means to bolster personal health, resilience and self-identity which in turn has the capacity to permeate the community as a whole, creating healthy, connected neighbourhoods.⁶¹⁷ This is primary focus of the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*. The depth of participation was measured through the exchanges these images were captured the digital photographs, and displayed in accompanying creative journals, that show participants interacting by either sharing produce or assisting with garden maintenance tasks. Sometimes participant's photographs of their garden spaces and produce were shared, for inclusion in the journals, deepening the aesthetic outlook. This aspect extends the participatory concept as the photographic display has been collated through a shared contribution. Professor Cacioppo documented the importance of conducting healthy social relationships as the prime entity that underpins wellness⁶¹⁸. The *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* adopts this notion, noting that the gardening practices have also presented opportunities to create good health both through

⁶¹⁵ N. Papastergiadis. 'Collaboration in Art and Society: A Global Pursuit of Democratic Dialogue' in J. Harris ed., *Globalisation and Contemporary Art* (1st Edition, West Sussex: Willey-Blackwell, 2011) 276.

⁶¹⁶ N. Bourriaud, *The Radicant*, 11.

⁶¹⁷ M. Ledwith, & J. Springer, *Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change*, 16.

⁶¹⁸ J. Cacioppo, & W. Patrick. *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connections* (New York City, W.W. Norton and Company, 2008), 15.

physical activity in an outdoor environment and by engaging with the healing and nurturing properties of nature⁶¹⁹. This point was alluded to by some of the participants during the interviews and ensuing discussions that took place.

The role of nature, is featured in a rich historical body of work, drawing on the philosophy that supported the *Entropy* series by Robert Smithson, who acknowledged the ebb and flow within society through his large scaled works situated in the environment. Alan Sonfist too, utilised natural spaces, but in a way that allowed for nature to play a dominant role, the modifications remaining in step with organic and harmonious seasonal changes. This ideal was discussed further using examples of the work of American artists Bonnie Sherk and Agnes Denes, both practitioners explored the concept of using urban wasteland as a site for planting food staples and creating connections. Investigating contemporary models of ‘gardens as art’, the work of Fritz Haeg and Future Farmers was examined, as too the conceptual work of Jyll Bradley. While the aesthetic in each respective work was diverse, the element of networking was present in the philosophy of the artists. In drawing correlation to the work conducted in the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project*, participants also had the capacity to engage deeply with their spaces and realise the significance of place through familiarity which gave comfort and confidence, and a solid platform on which to grow understanding and re-engagement. It was through the research conducted by Mirwon Kwon, that it became apparent that in seeking a robust aesthetic in a participatory exercise, the element of place and respect for place, must be substantial as it is the substructure in which all other aspects of the formation rests.

To validate participatory practice as a meaningful component of the visual arts is to recognise the creative qualities generated by cohesive community networking, evidenced peripherally in digital captures, but primarily and profoundly sensed by participants who are engaged in an exercise that continues through recollections and the resulting ongoing sensation of wellness. The unique aspect of this specific project is positioned within the ideal that as a participatory undertaking, it is not necessarily a public artwork. This does not detract from the validity of such a study however, as

⁶¹⁹ F. Williams, *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier and More Creative* (New York City, W.W Norton and Company, Inc., 2017), 4.

the designated outcome of relational experiences has manifested, both with other people and with the natural environment. Related to this project are two distinctive creative components that situate the work in a unique position within current arts practice; these are the actual gardens and the inherent design principles adopted by each gardener that showcases their own ideas. These design elements have been shaped by each participant's nostalgia alongside their personal knowledge. The second component relates to the human encounter and cohesion that arises from the relationships experienced with both the garden and other participants. This tends to ebb and flow in a pattern that echoes what is occurring in the natural environment. To summarise, a response has been formulated to the second research question, that investigates whether a suburban garden, and the activities that take place in this type of environment, are substantial enough to create a network of social connections. The evidence is supplied in both the participant responses and through the act of shared produce which has been an ongoing process throughout the writing of this exegesis.

For the selection of artists choosing to maintain societal relevance they recognise that there must be an adaption in the method of conveyance to continue reaching their audience. In this instance that audience are neighbours and community members. An effective approach could be a discussion to understand how they may view creativity and what it is to be creative and to share knowledge as to how it can be incorporated within their daily rituals, like tending to a garden. In this way, the artist facilitates their own learning through their role as participant which, in this case, has provided a platform to evolve and share the ideals of creative practice with others in the community. The responses are grounded in the sharing of produce grown by some and the acceptance of produce by others. The findings in an external, secondary study, that was used to bolster the primary qualitative data, was quantitative data that was collated in a global study conducted by Professors Soga, Gaston and Yamaura. Their research outcomes suggest also, as stipulated in the participant responses investigated for this project, that time spent gardening or in an outdoor environment assists with maintaining sensations of wellness to navigate sensations of loneliness or feelings of depression⁶²⁰. It also provides an outlet for gentle exercise, activities that are important in the everyday, which became

⁶²⁰ M. Soga, & K. J. Gaston, Y. Yamaura, 'Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis', *Preventive Medicine Reports*.

imperative during the COVID-19 lockdown when being forced to stay at home was isolating, heightening the notion of loneliness for many people.

As the findings were supported by a mixed approach to analysis, statistics collated by both the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the OECD, (again secondary quantitative data used to support the primary qualitative data) suggest that our suburban landscape is changing. Our green spaces are dissipating and the backyards that were so prevalent during my childhood in the 1970s are becoming less of a feature. Participants have recognised these changes, both in the built landscape, and in infrastructure features, especially as the suburb is located on the rim of the inner city. Some participants supported the notion that time in their gardens and occasions interacting with others, was an important element to keep in their lives to remain well, given the changes they have experienced in their surroundings. The OECD data suggests these types of activities should be maintained as our cities evolve, noting that while city residents have a greater access to services, they also endure a greater exposure to pollutants, both in terms of excess traffic noise and the emissions that are generated. These modern pressures need to be countered through gentle activities, such as gardening, to ensure continued physical and emotional health.

Personal observations garnered through this research project, have shown that those who engage often in their garden spaces are well-versed in the harmonious characteristic of plants and gardens and are open to engaging also with others and their distinctive garden spaces. Resulting from this, the *Murarrie Neighbourhood Garden Project* has achieved the outcome of creating a cohesive network to establish a sense of personal wellbeing, both physically and emotionally for those individuals in the community who have had a temporary or long-lasting engagement with the garden. Importantly what the garden has proven, through a Relational Aesthetics model, is that using a familiar activity and space (a functioning garden) creates an artistic platform for a deeper impression on an audience, impacting significantly on the artist, participants and wider communities' daily lives in evolving experiences that are lasting.

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APPENDIX: Interviews

Interview with artist - Tiffany Lee Brown

Terri Hethorn

Doctoral Student at USQ – DCA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

School of Creative Arts – Faculty of B.E.L.A, USQ

This data will be compiled to underpin the practice-led research involving a participatory artwork. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses.

Participants have the choice to only answer questions that are the most pertinent to their own practices/interests or all the questions. This freedom to participate ensures that the answers are relevant and in-depth. Participants at any time can withdraw their participation in this DCA research by emailing the interviewer. While the responses will underpin the research, the work aside from my own copy will not be published.

What is your process for making work?

I would say my work is very process orientated process oriented but it's not a particular process it's all over the map and it's more of a meta process in that I am interested in the process of having a process. With participatory arts you have a lot of opportunity to blur a lot of different boundaries, which is appealing to me, so the process depends on the piece and at this point I'm not even really making art very much or stuff that I call art. Nowadays, I am much more likely to be calling it ritual or doing it solo and so I have stepped back from it. I had a fascination with what is art, and who gets to decide what is art and all those boundaries around artness, but after exploring that for a time I think maybe I am just was done with it, I might be done with art in some ways.

Are you interested in how the viewer perceives the work?

I am highly influenced by Burning Man culture and in Burning Man culture there are no spectators supposedly, everybody is a participant, everyone's a principle. So, if you take that approach, everybody gets to be a part of making something, so it changes all the time.

Do you believe your work is governed by historic rules and or methodologies that you consider when making artwork?

Another large influence on me is my background in theatre, I came to the visual arts through performance and theatre and I think that informs everything I do rather profoundly. I think there's a greater awareness within the performing arts that the audience is crucial in making a piece happen. We are used to that, we know that if someone in the audience gets up and is sick in the middle of our show that's going to change the show, whereas visual artists and writers, (I'm also a writer that's my profession, my everyday job is mostly writing based) I feel like visual artists and writers can get caught up in making their own little perfect project or piece of writing or whatever it is doesn't have to be a literal object, and then placing it in front of the audience, and then maybe they will write some theory piece about how the audience engages with the object.

But when you are coming from a theatre/performance background, I think there is often a little more looseness we know things are happening in a time-based fashion and that among

the factors influencing the development of a participatory piece are going to be who's there, what their mood is, and for me it is, well where am I? What's my mood? So, I have done a lot of work that feels heavily risky and that's why I do it, to just be like can I show up in the world? Sometimes with people, sometimes the audience is the trees, I spend a lot of time in the woods, can I trust myself to really be in the moment. I work with what's there I use found objects in a found environment perhaps or sometimes it's prepared objects that I bring with me but I don't know what I'm going to use or I don't know what I'm going to say, Can I do that? Do I have the nerve? To get out there and do that? That to me is exciting space. I have also come from improvisation music, I was in bands as such where there was a lot of raw improv also some of it more structured where you have a few elements and you know what it is going to be like and then you kind of jam and you don't know what's going to happen. It's very exhilarating when you get into it. So, regular performance and artwork and traditional theatre and stuff seem really very tame once you've done this high wire act.

What are some recent projects you have done, or are currently working on?

I don't know where I am headed with it right now, I feel like a lot of my work is more direct engagement with people and more solo time like I have this ongoing project called Manifest Destiny, 2007 – ongoing, that involves found objects in the environment and I use the objects to create the word HOME. Sometimes I document that and sometimes I don't, this has been going on for 14 years, 14 years I've been doing this. I don't think I have ever shown it, it has been in portfolios that grant panels have looked at, I have hundreds of photographs. That is an example of the way that I'm the only participant, usually, unless there is another person around or my son. I had a child 10 years ago and that really changed how I viewed a lot of this artwork as well. My creativity become a lot more one on one focused and engaged with him. A community walk with labyrinth for solstice community and nature is what I am doing more of now, I have just stepped outside the art world. I don't hate the art world.

Is the relationship of the artist to object and object to viewer important to you?

If there was a human there then I would be engaging with them, it would have spirit, participatory art, what I like about it, it is you are never going to top Cut Piece that was amazing, the influence of Fluxus and John Cage at that time. People were influenced by Zen, and randomness and the result would be different if they were given direction. Like at kindergarten, a teacher might say dip your hand in the paint and put it on the wall, and that's okay, that makes an art piece, and a lot of the time social practice will take that approach. I tend to be attracted to places where, the weirdness of humanity is a material, and you don't know what people are going to do.

Do you believe your work or processes change each time it is viewed depending on who the viewer is and what experiences they bring to the work?

I'm not sure if the processes change, but I do. My processes would typically be having some objects or potential plans, an example of this is the Easter Island – ongoing, project that I did for a number of years.

On one occasion, I show up at this art space in New York City in the Bronx, it's just a couple hours before showtime, and the guy who runs the art space is delayed on his plane, so he gets somebody to let me into the building, I had bought materials like a DVD so that I could project these objects that participants had made for my project, over the course of years, so having slides of the past experiences and these things that people had made, and pictures from of earlier gatherings that we had had.

But I got there and I couldn't figure out the tech in the space, it was a cool space called Synthetic Zero, so I thought that's okay I don't have tech, but what else do I have. I had invited people to bring things to the gathering, someone was bringing a cake, which I don't remember why, but I thought that's great, we will have this cake. There was also a ladder, in fact I generally like ladders, I have used them in theatre productions when I was younger, in traditional theatre, and I found during the Easter Island project, I generally used a ladder because it's something that people have in whatever space you are using somebody's random loft in Oakland, or some you know art space in college, or a Chapel in Arizona. So, there was a ladder in this place, and I got it out and I looked at what the lights were like in there and I thought this was good lighting and so I can just climb this ladder.

Later, the guy who runs the place did come in and he helped me with the digital, and so I was able to use some lights and video. But the point was to just show up with some amount of preparation, because I had to fly into New York, I didn't have a bunch of stuff with me, on that project I would bring bins of things that people had made with me and flags for people to write on, although I think I did bring flags with me to that show.

Do you have a specific intention for how your work should be read or viewed?

I just making it up as I go, and the process such as it is, is the process is the process of creation, and letting people be a part of that, letting it be horribly transparent in all of its vulnerable ugliness.

I am going to show up and instead of presenting you with a nice clean art piece, I'm going to flail around and blather and maybe play some improv music and engage you in some conversation and the next thing you know you are making an art piece. That is the one thing, if you work this way, it just life real life, like non-art life, you have to ask for help.

If I show up, when I did the same project with Seattle, I ended up collaborating heavily with the woman that ran the space, her name is Vanessa de Wolf and she is an amazing artist in her own right. So, with her she clicked in and totally understood my ideas and we cocreated a participatory performance piece. Some of which was mostly me performing and then at last I started to draw the audience in. These were all very small audiences, it was only about, say two dozen people. And so, we're making something together like your community garden, but there is a constant tension because the participants or audience they don't always realise that we are crossing a line. That they don't always know that they are going to get suckered into this craziness, necessarily and that is part of the fun, but sometimes it scares people. I used to perform at the Richard Foreman Mini-Festival in Portland, that was put on by Performance Works North West, I was in that festival for almost the 10 years that they ran that festival, It was highly successful, and each artist gets about 10 or 15 minutes to perform

and 5 to 7 days before the show, the organisers give you some weird dialogue from Richard Forman of the Ontological-Hysteric Theatre Company and some instructions, like you have to use this word or phrase, and then you have to make a performance piece out of this crazy wording from Richard Forman. They give you props also, one day they put this luminous suitcase on my porch and it was full of feathers. So, I had a few days to create this performance piece. That is my favourite thing, I love that, and the trademark of my performance is, that I always bought my audience in.

I would write letters to members of the audience, and have the ushers hand them out to people at random. I would use fancy script lettering, and write what it was that I wanted them to do. For example, I would be on stage and pretending to throw a ball, and everyone that had a letter had to stamp their feet. It was only about a third of the audience doing it, because they were the ones with the letters. So, the people sitting next to them would be a little confused, I would just do it on an impulse, so by the tenth year of that festival the letters were recruiting the audience on to the stage. So, I would have them come up and I would say I am going to blindfold you, and someone is going to ring a bell by your ear.

There was a guy outside the theatre one year, I started chatting to, he had been to the festival the year before, and he said to me, you gave me one of those letters and you tried to make me do stuff, I got so freaked out, and so I said alright, and I handed him a letter, and you know, he did it. He didn't have to, but he opened his letter, and his role was really intense. He had to come on to the stage, and they were ringing bells around him, it puts you literally in the spotlight, and he was terrified by this kind of thing. After I talked to him, and we chatted and I gave him another letter, he decided to take the plunge, and it was really beautiful. He had this opening of an experience that would not have happened if we were all staying in our little boxes, where our roles are clear, it is the opening of the roles itself that is uncomfortable but revealing and potentially transformative.

He might get a different feeling about who he is and think well am I really that person that hates that sort of thing, and can't get up in front of people? Or is he actually the guy who can do that. You are never going to know unless someone hands you a letter and invites you up on stage. So, for whatever reason sometimes that has been my role, and I have been really interested in blurring the boundaries between art and audience.

Some of that has been played out now, social practice has become a big thing, but I feel like when I was starting to do it in the 1990's it was challenging, and it can still be a challenge depending on the environment.

Do you believe the environment you make the work within effects the work?

I am very into what people term site-specific in art and performance art, but I feel like my work is more site responsive, in that the environment itself is part of it and this comes from my theatre training. My undergraduate education was in theatre, dramatic art and performance and theatre studies at Berkley University in California.

In that environment you are learning about stage sets and how to design them, and how theatre works and how the Ancient Greeks did it. I acted a lot and that was my focus but directing is what I fell in love with. As a director I really got to think about space, that's when it really started for me. We had a black box theatre which is just a black box, and you can stick some chairs in there and have a show, so it could be quite flexible, however no one at UC Berkley was using it in a flexible way. They had the were easiest to point one way and the chairs over there, and that really struck me and I thought I'm going to do it differently, I'm going to put the chairs and the audience over in the corner, and bring in some risers and stack them really steeply and have the audience tower over the stage, and the other half have

to sit on the floor. Next to which I have people planted there, who do the sound effects for the show, but they just look like audience members, until a phone rings on stage and the phone is ringing in the audience with you.

Or what does it mean if the door that you came in through as an audience member, is now transformed in the grand door that is now opened up by an actor or character? So, for me space is extremely important working with it and being aware of it, I guess primarily came from my theatre training. I found myself wanting to expand the space and stretch its use and make the audience more aware of where they are and not just suck the audience into a cool story with cool actors, but sometimes startle them and make them aware, again discomfort is the way to make awareness happen. It's not like the chairs are where they are every time a graduate student puts on a show here. The minute you walk in to that room, you are aware of that space. I had a videographer make a video of walking to the theatre space, and that was projecting as you came in.

Space to me is a big element; space-built element, nature and the natural environment, I am very aware of that and I guess I feel so of grateful to it and sometimes I feel like it gets a short thrift. In traditional theatre and various shows, like I'm going to paint this thing, put it in a frame and its going to go to a gallery and hang it on a white wall, and you know that's exciting, it's fine, but for whatever reason I'm more attracted to responding to an actual space and the vibe of that particular space and what it is I feel in that moment. But I am not rich and famous, so it's not that my approach is something that everyone feels is fantastic, but you have to follow your own obsessions. I read about Allan Kaprow, long after I started my own practices, but he influenced artists who influenced me. A lot of my influences came naturally, from doing work and collaborating with people and then I found out it was part of an Avant-Garde tradition.

Do you believe a participatory based practice is considered valuable in today's artistic environment?

I think that participatory art practices have the potential to disrupt the static art establishment. The problem is not that societies don't appreciate art enough, but the problem lies in the art world in that art world has allowed itself to become, not entirely, but a lot of it to be this very elitist concept. I think all of that has a place, but I think that the art world in general has set itself up as a place for things that aren't very accessible, that are difficult to understand and there is too much focus on the conceptual and people are not into it, and they don't want to fund it. So, I think that participatory art has the capacity to democratize and give a commonality to art. So, if you are part of the creation of art, then you will inherently understand how the art works because you helped to make it. Art can't be for super fancy people, because most of us aren't super fancy we are just in there making the art too.

I think that there is definitely a place and room for people to be highly specialized, extreme technical crafts people and be excellent at the art that they make, but when the art world is over dominated by that, then we all lose that opportunity for co-creation which allows people to feel like they are a part of something, they are invested in it, they are helping make it, they are helping understand how the processes and the materials work because they have to get their hands dirty too.

I think social practice is positive development over the last, however long it has been. I was in the Portland art scene and it started investigating social practice and related art around maybe 2007, and I thought it was a healthy move forward. Things started to change too, in that our local granting body, the Regional Arts and Cultural Council developed a new category in their granting applications. Prior to that, those of us doing this type of work, we

had to say we were multi-disciplined or multi-media and our grant applications were a lesson for the painters that were sitting on the grant panel, that this work that we were doing is actually art, and it does have a discipline and a rigour and a history. I saw things like that develop, and I think that it has the potential, participatory forms and activist forms have the ability to make art far more inclusive and diverse. Not to say that it is what is happening, but it certainly does have the potential and I would like to think of the arts as being something everyone can participate in, even those I wildly disagree with.

A lot of art discussion is dominated by liberal academics and that's a group of people who spends a lot of time in college, and they know how to speak in a certain academic way and by definition, I think that alienates people. It adds to the splitting, and here in America certainly, the partisanship that divides our culture, that snooty separation does not help. In some areas of our culture, people are doing that, but they just don't call it participatory art. It might be something at your church, where everyone is reading a bible verse in front of 200 people so it's happening in other areas of the community and in more conservative communities, it is just not being called art.

I think people do recognise art in the everyday, and I think those of us in academia or intellectual liberals are the ones that fail to recognise the everyday as art, that's on us. If the person doing it is creating joy, and receiving joy feeling joy, it doesn't matter if they call it art or we call it art.

For some context, I live in a small town in the woods now in Oregon, surrounded by ranches. so, I see more of a small-town art scene, it is quite a lively art scene. A lot of it is quite literal and representational and figurative, it is landscapes that someone has painted. It is like the old-fashioned art that my fancy art colleagues in big cities wouldn't even look at, and some of it is really lovely. It has influenced me being in different places and influenced me to be more open minded.

Interviews with Garden Participants

Garden Participant # 1

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Female

Aged 60 – 70

Worked in the Service Industry, now retired

Raised 4 children alone following marriage breakdown

Lives in a house on the Brisbane fringe, situated on half an acre.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I love trees, a garden needs to have trees to provide shade and interest and to bring birds to the yard. I have a red cedar and an Albizia that I am very proud of, they have the most beautiful flowers that cover the canopy. I grew up in Western Queensland where there were a lot of trees that we used to climb. I can remember the birds at dusk flocking to the trees, having my own trees now I can recall that time that I loved as a child.

I also think it's important to grow your own food, that is extremely satisfying. My grandfather in Toowoomba had a beautiful, thriving vegetable patch and I would help him weed and water. I always loved watering. I think having a garden has an affinity with the idea of home.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I really enjoyed visiting the public parks in Adelaide, I love the wildflowers that we can't grow here in Brisbane. I used to walk with my friend around the neighbourhood, we would look at other people's gardens and would bring secateurs to take cuttings that had grown through the fence. I don't walk now because I need surgery on my knees.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

I have very fond memories of calla lilies growing in my grandmother's garden, I loved the white colour and the form of the flowers, so I continue to plant them in my own garden to maintain those memories from my childhood.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

I have beehives now, and I belong to a bee club. We have weekly meetings and open days on a Sunday and we also exhibit at agricultural shows and I get to meet a lot of people on those occasions. I give away honey, and plants to my neighbours, one of the children who I gave honey to drew me a picture of bees that I keep on my fridge, it makes me smile. This relationship however, did not start well, the neighbours were concerned by the bee hives being so close to their children's' play area. This was resolved by, me alerting them to when I would be collecting the honey, and then me providing them with honey when they wanted it. So far, the arrangement has worked quite well. I also have chickens, and I give away the eggs too. When my grandchildren were younger, they loved to play in the garden whilst I worked, I really enjoyed that. I used to volunteer too at IndigiScapes, the native gardens and playground in the Redlands, I met a lot of people through that experience, we were all just home gardeners wanting to volunteer and learn more about native plants.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel weary but accomplished and satisfied. I don't have any set plan for my garden, I just plant what I like and then watch as nature takes its own course. I love to sit on my back porch, with a coffee and watch the sun filter through the trees as it sets. I enjoy that a great deal.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love to grow camellias because I love the colours, but they are very fussy. I love to grow geraniums and off course the lilies that I mentioned earlier, and I love trees they give shade and a home to animals, and give children something to climb.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Don't be in a hurry for things to grow, let nature do its own thing. Sometimes it looks like something has died, but it's just nature repairing itself, be nurturing, use grey water and mulch as it is sustainable.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes, I am open to both giving and receiving, I think that this exchange is important in the community for creating openness with neighbours and friends and ensuring people are getting fresh, organic food items

Garden Participant # 2

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Female

50 – 60

Para Professional

Widow with two adult children

Raised family in a suburban home, situated on a larger than average sized block.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I find gardens visually amazing. I enjoy a garden with a variety of plants, I have an interest in the botanical sciences and often ponder why it is some plants look the way they do.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I enjoy visiting public gardens, especially the botanical gardens which I find very serene.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relate to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

My nana and my mum were very keen gardeners, and I have very fond memories of them gardening and also enjoying their gardens. My nana loved roses and grew varieties that were named for the members of the British Royal Family. The last rose she tended prior to her becoming too unwell to provide the required care for roses, was called Princess Diana. My nan too was a gardening purist, and always planted her sweet peas on the 17th March. Even today when I smell sweet peas, it inspires memories of me playing in her garden.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

Not really, when I visit a public garden or park, I like to go alone and spend time looking at the plants. In that regard, I have a connection with plants as opposed to people. However, I love to draw plants, and I do share my artwork and drawings with others. Years ago, I lived next door to a lovely couple whom liked to garden. They would bring me items like lemon butter and passionfruit butter they had crafted from fruits they had grown in their garden.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel refreshed and recharged, I feel as though my senses are invigorated, as I enjoy the colours, textures and smells that are incorporated within gardens.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

My mother had a garden full of flowers that would be considered very old-fashioned today. She had these gerberas that were singles, and I loved them as a child, so I like to grow those in a pot so I know that she is close to me. Prior to the settling of my Nana's estate, I was able to take two plants, one was a bottlebrush which continues to flower, and the other was a rose called 'Candy Stripe', which produced pink and white blooms. It flowered just the once like this however, the following year it produced tiny red roses and when I looked at it, I found that the graft had died, but the initial plant was ok, and that is why it produced the red flowers. So, I like to keep those traditions happening, it's both satisfying and creates lovely memories.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

If you are planting bulbs in Queensland, put them in your fridge crisper prior to planting, you will have a greater success in producing flowers then. In relation to a garden, you only get out of it what you put in. A garden is a metaphor for life in that way. Sometimes the busyness of life sees your garden suffer, like your well-being. Gardens provide the space required for contemplation.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I would be grateful to receive items yes, but I cannot return the favour as I have no time to spend in the garden now. My aunt in Victoria grows apples, and often times people will pop into her yard to gather a few for cooking, so I can sincerely appreciate the sentiment of sharing home grown organic food items.

Gardening Participant # 3

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Male

Aged 80 – 90

Born and raised in London, lived in Spain prior to immigrating to Australia in the 1990's.

Business Owner/ Now retired

Widower, has recently moved from a suburban block to a retirement village.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I enjoy the presentation of a garden, gardening in Australia is very different to England and Spain, as the visual is very layered. I enjoyed growing natives because they attracted bird life and butterflies. In England our gardens were not ornamental, they were working gardens used to grow food items, and in Spain the gardens were very small and we mostly grew bougainvillea for the bright colours, although people with larger gardens grew citrus fruits.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I love to visit the Botanical Gardens in the city (Brisbane). I can appreciate the work ethic behind the presentation of the gardens. The gardens are peaceful also and I gain a quiet pleasure from strolling through the different types of gardens.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood, or from another time?

in your life, that relates to your enjoyment or appreciation of gardens/gardening?
During wartime in London, we used our very small yards to grow vegetables for our meals. We would often swap vegetables with our neighbours for other vegetables that we were unable to grow, all the neighbours did this, we needed a community network to keep us going through difficult times. After the war ended, my dad got an allotment to grow other varieties of vegetables that we didn't have the room for in our small garden at home. I loved going with my dad to the allotment, he was a keen gardener and a skilled gardener, I will always remember the onions that he grew, they were his pride and he took great satisfaction in harvesting them.

Through gardening, have you established any social connections?

During the war as I mentioned previously, in Spain gardens are not cause for connections, but in Australia, people seem to be very interested in other people's gardens. There is a lot more room in Australia to grow things and really develop a beautiful layered space. When we lived in our house, people would pass by and stop to talk about the garden, I always gave them cuttings if they asked or provided advice too if queries were made.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I always felt very satisfied and accomplished. I was always utilising organic methods to grow my garden, and that too gave me a sense of accomplishment.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

In England, I always enjoyed growing vegetables, In Spain I was very proud of my palm tree, but in Australia, my favourite garden I loved to grow natives, Australian natives are exceptionally beautiful. My wife was a great lover of orchids, and we had a greenhouse where we tended to them. They were hard work, but yielded a beautiful reward when they flowered.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Yes, persevere and remember the more time spent in the garden, the more likely you are to have success. Remember though nature is not to be conquered it is to be respected and admired.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I would be very grateful to receive any produce, I cannot reciprocate as I don't have a garden in the retirement village.

Garden Participant # 4

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Male
Aged 50 – 60
Business Owner
Single no dependants
Lives in an inner-city unit with a balcony
Raised in suburban Brisbane in a home on an average sized block situated near grandparents.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

The tranquillity and peace, I loved my grandma's garden as I child, I still love it, but when I was a child, it had a mystical essence and I loved to play there. I also enjoyed helping my grandma in the veggie patch, we would harvest cucumbers and she would make cucumber pickles. She still makes it now, but not as often as she is older, I liked to help her make it but she has also gifted me the recipe so I can make it myself. The recipe belonged to her mum and has been handed down through the generations.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

Yes, I enjoy the Botanical Gardens in Brisbane, I find them very relaxing. My business is in the service industry, and it is necessary for me to be social and upbeat with clients, the public gardens help me to de-stress and unwind with my own thoughts. In my neighbourhood, if I am out walking, plants and gardens too can be a source of conversation with others in the community.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

I remember my Nan growing flowers and her garden looking very pretty in the springtime. It was a lovely place to play and it lent itself to games of whimsy and fantasy. The historic connections and memories can be extremely comforting.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

My workspace is full of plants and they do provide a talking point on occasions. People take cuttings as it saves money, but they bring me cuttings also and sometimes items that they have grown themselves.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I still enjoy spending time with my grandma in her garden, as she ages, it is often an emotive experience. She talks a lot about her garden, and how proud she is of her efforts, both currently and in the past. She took has some lovely memories of her mum's garden, so listening to these stories is important to maintain the connections to my past. After a day in the city gardens, I feel refreshed and ready to tackle another week of work.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love to grow lemons. I have a lemon tree in a pot on my balcony. There is nothing more satisfying then going to your balcony and harvesting a lemon to use in the kitchen, and knowing that it was self-grown.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice of from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Don't give up if things don't look like they are working, adapt your processes, this is advice from my Gran.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

People often bring me things from their gardens, I am very honoured to accept items that people have grown, I can share cuttings from plants if people would like them.

Garden Participant # 5

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

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Garden Participant no.
Female
Aged 40 – 50
Business Owner
Immigrated from Taiwan in 2015 where she resided in a city apartment block
Married with 2 children
Lives in a suburban new build, on a smaller than average sized block

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

A garden is very important in Australia, it's important to make good use of the space that you have. In Taiwan, there is not space for plants, but in Australia I can grow things that I can use for cooking, like ginger and herbs. I have a little patch of grass too; I love the dark green colour of the grass.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I love to look at other people's gardens when I go for a walk. My sister-in-law has a very large block of land and she grows many plants. She gives me cuttings, and that is where I get my Asian greens from, my neighbours give me cuttings also. A neighbour grew peas on her fence, and she allowed me to take some, I liked to visit there on my walk and pick some peas. I also love the Australian Natives and will stop and look if people have some planted in their yards.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

No, I don't have any memories really, I grew up in the city and have always lived in an apartment in Taiwan and we never had a garden. On the weekends though, we always spent time in the parks, we met friends and had picnics and really enjoyed the fresh air. It made us feel very happy and well and relaxed.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

Yes, I talk to a lady when I am walking, she has a beautiful garden, and she has many lemon trees. I love lemons and the flowers on the trees. I was asking her how could I grow lemons in my garden, in Taiwan, citrus fruits are used all the time in cooking. I have a neighbour who shares plants with me she goes to a church and whenever they have a fete, I go and buy plants.

How do you feel after spending a day being in the garden/nature?

I feel relaxed and happy, nature makes me feel peaceful. My son is working hard at university, and I get him to come and sit outside a few times during the day, to feel relaxed when he has been working hard.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love to grow items that I use in the kitchen, like herbs and ginger, and I love lavender the smell is so lovely.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Yes, plant your scraps. I have grown a paw-paw tree and a pineapple from kitchen scraps.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes, I would love to be involved, I would be very happy to both receive and share in return.

Garden Participant # 6

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

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Male

Aged 60 – 70

Separated, 2 adult children, 4 grandchildren

Business Owner, working full time

Raised in a regional area in New Zealand's North Island, by a single mother, youngest of 6

Migrated to Australia with family mid 1980's

Lives in a large house on the Brisbane fringe

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I love being able to grow things, but I am really impatient.

Flower gardens are like a canvas you plant flowers for their look/appeal and it is a never-ending landscape when they grow, die and you change plant around for different looks. Much like someone painting they can change things around to make it look different. Yes, an organised look is fantastic but I can remember when I went back to New Zealand when my son was killed and I stayed in this cottage on a farm. The field around this cottage were in full bloom with daffodils and the colour was just sensational. There was no rhyme or reason to how they were planted just masses of plants in the fields. In such a sad time sitting on a bench in the middle of these was somehow quite calming.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I do not seek out public gardens as such but in my travels when I visit a property, I always look around at what is in the gardens including flowers and fruit trees etc. I remember in Canberra I would always take my time looking at what was growing in gardens and smelling the various roses to see if there was any scent to them.

Years ago, I had a whole garden of just various roses according to their colour. Orchids are another favourite of mine but in this country, they are hard to grow. Back in New Zealand I had some mature plants from Mum and looked after them with extreme care.

I can remember spending a whole day looking around the gardens in Singapore. England was also a nice place to look at flowers in the summer. Like New Zealand people use to always go

crazy in planting gardens with so much colour it was pretty to see. So, the short answer is I do not seek them out but when I come across them, I do take an interest. Sometimes just looking at what others have planted to give you inspiration is rewarding also.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

I grew up in a rich farming area, we grew our own food, we didn't have a lot of money and so it just made sense to grow what we could. I remember the freshness of the taste, even now. I cannot find produce in the supermarkets that taste as food as the fruit and veggies I had as a child. My mother too would bottle fruits, I used to love her preserves. There was a family down the street and they were even poorer than us, they had no food, and so the neighbours would give them any fruits or vegetables that they weren't going to use for themselves.

The four seasons were always something special. Maybe I did not appreciate some of the seasons growing up but later in life spring and autumn always took on something special. The colour that abounds in these times is always good for the soul and brings back fond memories. You associate things in flowers that always bring back memories even fruit trees evoke memories. These memories are always good memories (for me anyway) and when I see various flowers for instance, they remind me of my Mum and childhood. Whenever I see daffodils, I remember my son. Sunflowers always reminds me of you so association to thoughts memories are all around us.

One of my daughters has a love of Orchids and that stems from her love for my Mum.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

We used to swap vegetables with our neighbours, everyone in the street did actually, we would swap our preserved fruits too. When I grow vegetables, I like to give away what I don't use, I suppose that is social.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

Gardening has always been something that you are at ease when doing (Unless it is back breaking or heavy going).

It is especially satisfying when at the end of the day or when you have completed the task you were involved in you can stand back and admire what you have just done. This is more gratifying when you are adding colour into a garden via flowers and the like.

But when you say gardening, it also includes what you do to make a garden. I can remember numerous times building walls and placing rocks and water features to and in gardens before a single flower is planted and standing back to admire this is also gratifying.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love to grow potatoes, there is nothing like digging up potatoes you have grown yourself, washing them off, taking them into the kitchen and boiling them, and eating them with

lashings of butter. I also want to grow chockos, the climate here in Brisbane I believe is really suitable to gather a decent harvest, they too are good with butter and lots of black pepper. I love flowers also the colours of flowers are so beautiful.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Lessons learnt from my Mum were many in planting food for example when to plant and how to get stock for the future. There were many things she used to do like making her own fertiliser for both plants and flowers. I think she also taught me to be patient with growing things and they take as long as they take to grow.

The sad part about the time we live in now most people want instant gardens and colour and do not take the time to grow things from seeds.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes, I would be really thrilled to receive any items that people would like to share with me, I have little time though now to swap anything in return, but yes, I would be honoured if someone offered me items

Garden Participant # 7

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

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Female

Aged 70 – 80

Married 4 adult children, 6 grandchildren

Medical Professional, now retired and full-time carer

Raised in a rural area on a dairy farm, came to the to study and work in late teens

Lives in a house on a double block

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I like being outside, I love to watch things grow, I love flowers. It is relaxing and satisfying and so enjoyable. I have less time now to spend in the garden, but when the home assist person comes, I can go down to the garden and really indulge myself.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I do love to go to the Botanical Gardens in Brisbane City. My husband is very unwell now and I don't get the opportunity to visit gardens anymore. One of my favourite gardens I have visited is the Regional Gardens in Emerald. I like to look at other people's gardens when I am driving around because it gives you good ideas about how to improve your own garden. I joined a garden group on Facebook, because I don't get out very often now. Sometimes people swap ideas, its not ideal, but at least it is something.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

I grew up in Kilcoy on a dairy farm. I have very fond memories of my dad ploughing the hillside so that my mum could plant our vegetables there. We grew pumpkins, watermelons, tomatoes and potatoes, I would help my mum dig up the potatoes. If we didn't eat the vegetables, my mum would make it into soups. Around the house my mum grew gerberas, succulents and crucifix orchids, we didn't get to grow very much beyond vegetables, as it was also very dry, and we were on tank water. When I turned 8 years old, for my birthday I was given a piece of garden for my own. I had to look after whatever I planted there, I chose to plant gerberas because I loved the colours. I have things that belonged to my parents in my garden too, my dad's work boots which I am going to pot up, my mum's old kettle,

shelves that my dad made for my mum's orchards and the old baths from my parent's house. Old baths make very good garden beds, I have 3 that I have planted up, the one from my parent's old house, one from my old bathroom and one from a demolition site.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

I used to give away cuttings to my neighbours, but a lot of them have moved away now. I take cuttings and pot them and donate them to the small fair we have at the church. A lot of my social contacts now are through church, and we do spend a lot of time talking about our gardens. My friend who lives up the street is a recent widow; she was very lonely and so she started attending church with me and she really enjoys talking about the garden with other parishioners following mass. We also have a lovely garden at the church, and it provides us with something to talk about too.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel weary but accomplished. I love sitting in the garden at the end of the day and looking over what I have done, and what is growing well. Whenever I am feeling down, I know coming out to the garden will lift my mood, I really love it.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love to grow gerberas and succulents like my mum did, I love to grow grapes, chokos and passionfruit, I love climbing fruit vines. My grape vine is a cutting from my dad's grape vine, his plant was a cutting from his dad's grape vine. Mine it is still going strong, it is over 25 years old now, the original plant would be over 100 years. I have plants that I bought with me from the farm too. Some that my mum kept in the house, and a couple of her orchids. If you look after plants, they can live for a long time.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Yes, use a compost heap. I use a recipe that my dad used, with grass cuttings and even newspapers. The layers should be dry then wet when you are making it, then after a time stir it up. Keep 2 heaps going so you can use one and have one being prepared.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I love sharing and receiving items, it's so wonderful to be able to share something that you have grown yourself, or someone gives you something they have grown themselves. I pot things and give to my children to plant in the gardens of their new homes.

Garden Participant # 8

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
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Female

Aged 30 – 40

Brisbane born, suburban raised, spent time during childhood in Cairns and the Gold Coast
Single

Professional working part time

Living in suburban townhouse.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

They look beautiful, they are lively, colourful, I like to take photos and post them on social media because I think it is helpful in lifting other people's mood. I think also taking the photos is a form of artistry, and photography also is prosperity for the ages. I also like that in relation to gardening, people never give up. When we were kids, we used to plant corn with our mum, knowing that the grasshoppers would devour it. But we continued to do it together all the time, we used to say, maybe we will get corn this time, I cannot recall if we ever did, the significant memory was us doing something together, and our resilience.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I love visiting gardens when I am travelling, they are all so unique my favourite has been the garden on Toronto Island, I also loved Vancouver Island gardens and the grandeur of Versailles. I love gardens that are lush and well maintained and that have edged lawns. I don't have enough space to grow a lawn, so I just haphazardly place plants and hope that they grow. I keep weeds like dandelions because they bring the bees, I love too the texture of plants, they make for beautiful photographs.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

I loved my paternal nana's garden, she attracted frogs, and I would spend my time looking for them hidden away, when I was a child. She also grew alyssum everywhere and I plant that also in her memory. My maternal grandmother has a beautiful garden, but it is not cottage style, so I preferred the aesthetic of my other grandmother's garden as she had more flowers and her garden attracted butterflies. My maternal grandmother grows a lot of fruit, so in the summer she gives us oranges and mandarins, she is extremely skilled in producing a lot of

fruit on her trees. I did used to collect the gum nuts too from her garden when I was younger, I still love gum nuts.

Both of my grandmother's had ornamental items in their garden's classic items like arches, and little paths that would lead to a bench or a small statue.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

I don't know if you would term it a social connection, but there is a lady from work who will bring in cuttings from her garden, I took some rosemary, and she will ask me how it is going. She also brings in limes and I always take a few of those. Another work colleague posted a photo on her Instagram, and I really enjoyed her back story, it was to do with nesting magpies, and periodically I will ask her whether they are still around.

How do you feel after spending a day being in the garden/nature?

Sometimes, I go to my grandmother's house and I might help her in the yard, that feels good to be able to help out, and I like to spend time with her. My favourite time in her garden is on dusk, when I can lie on the couch on her deck and watch the sky through the trees, that is so beautiful, and it always makes me feel contented and relaxed.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love to grow bougainvillea because I love the aesthetic, I grow salvia to attract the bees, that is extremely satisfying. I am growing borage again for the insect life, and I have started planting a few natives, kangaroo paws, native daisies and grevillea ground cover, so I will just see how they go. I am fairly lazy in the garden, so I enjoy plants that do not require a lot of care.

I also plant succulents, they grow from a cutting, and require just about zero care.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Yes, use lucerne as a weed deterrent.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I would be really happy to receive strawberries, I love them! So, plant strawberries!

Garden Participant #.9

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
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Garden Participant no.

Female

Aged 30 – 40

Born and raised in rural NSW in rented accommodation by a single parent and grandmother.

Married, 2 very young children

Business owner working full time

Living in suburban home on an average block, owned.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I love gardens, they are relaxing to look at and to be in. They are fabulous places for kids to play and run.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

My neighbour has been working in her garden for a little while now, and I was going to ask her if I could come and have a look. She is working there fairly often and I just enjoying watching her, as she appears really happy. My youngest son goes to a Kindy where they have a bush tucker program, I like to see what the children are growing, they also take the children for walks in the local reserve, and sometimes the parents can attend too, I enjoy that and the kids love the animals.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

My mum loved her garden, she grew geraniums and snow peas which we would just sit in the garden and eat. We had a lot of fruit trees, the climate here in Brisbane is not very suitable for growing them, it's just too humid. We had apples, peaches and plums and citrus and my grandmother would plant blackberries. I used to think what a strong female presence I have to inspire me in this way.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

I talk to my neighbours on the other side sometimes about her garden, I just like watching what she plants and seeing the growth, so yes.

When we were young, we would give away buckets of blackberries to our neighbours.

My brother too has a really lovely garden, and when we visit, we tend to spend our time together outdoors, he has created beautiful spaces in the garden for his children, my kids really love it.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel energised and happy, I don't often get an opportunity to spend any time in the outdoors, but when I do, I always think I should be doing it more often.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love growing herbs; I love the idea of needing say some coriander or mint and just going out to the garden to get it. I would love to teach my boys how to grow strawberries, carrots and tomatoes, salad items. I also love tropical plants they remind me so much of being on holidays and places I have visited that I really loved like Thailand.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

No, not really, I don't know a great deal about gardening, only that I love plants.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I would totally love that! Thank you!

Garden Participant # 10

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Female

Aged 60 - 70

Born and raised in Adelaide, has lived in Melbourne, Sydney, Mackay, Brisbane, spent 2 years living in a catamaran moored in the Brisbane River.

Teacher/ Now retired

Married, full time carer for her partner.

Lives in the inner city on a large block.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I actually don't enjoy gardening, but I love gardens. I love trees I couldn't live without being surrounded by trees. I love the possums and the magpies that use the trees. I can get so lost in just watching the birds and the public gardens It is so good for my mental health, I love the colour, the peace and the serenity. It is very meditative.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

Yes, I love South Bank (Parklands in Brisbane), it is so lush and a real sanctuary. It is always changing too, so it is never boring. I like too that there is a plan to the gardens. They are planned in advance in relation to the seasons. I walk my dog every morning at South Bank, it is close to home, my dog Jett (an assistance dog) needs to learn to be around others, knows all the gardeners and workers there, and will often go for a ride on their buggies and they bring him treats. I have built up some lovely friendships with people who like to walk there every day too. We will often have a coffee together before going on with our respective days.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

I grew up in a rural area outside of Adelaide. My father grew all manner of fruit trees, apples. Oranges peaches, apricots we even had walnuts and almonds growing. So, my memories revolve around picking fruit from the trees when we were hungry during the day. My mother preserved a lot of the fruit too, so we would eat it out of season too. I hated the preserved fruit.

When I lived in Mackay, we grew fruit trees there too. More tropical fruits, mangoes lemons, bananas, lychees, starfruit, paw paws. We ate a lot of it, but we would also take it in to our

perspective work places and leave it for others to enjoy too, we planted a lot of natives that attracted the birdlife. It was a real sanctuary.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

Yes, I have made a lot of friends at the parklands of a morning. Whilst I don't garden there of course, our love of the gardens has brought us together. There is a homeless man that I met and he gets so lonely during the day. I tutor a young child who loves biros, so I asked my friend if during his day if he could collect biros for her. Her gathered over 100 from different places he had been to throughout the day, and I wrapped them up and gave them to her for Christmas. Another lady just lost her little dog, and so my dad painted a portrait of her dog for her, and she was really touched. I think these are really lovely experiences and I would never have had them if not for being in the gardens.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel very relaxed and ready for the day, it has become a ritual for me now and I not only love it, but I need it. When we travel, we like to stay in National Parks they are so serene and beautiful. My favourites are Wivenhoe and around the Riverina area.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I had a cousin in Adelaide who I grew up with. He became very ill a couple of years ago and I went to visit him. He loved agave plants, and he gave me some to bring home. I have them everywhere now, just from those 3 initial plants. He passed away not long after I visited and every time I go into the garden and see his plants, I think of him. I also love birds of paradise and grevilleas because they bring the birds. I have a little garden that a friend looks after for me, I keep a statue of the Goddess of Knowledge there, it is a nice space and it keeps me grounded.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

No not really, only take the time to enjoy nature and gardens they are so healing.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I would be happy to accept produce yes, that would be lovely. I haven't really got anything to give in return expect for agaves, they are growing everywhere this is a really good climate for them.

Garden Participant # 11

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
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Female

Aged 20 - 30

Born and raised in Brisbane, currently residing in regional Queensland for work as a journalist.

Has a partner, owns an inner- city apartment, but living in rental accommodation currently due to work circumstances.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

While I don't personally have a green thumb, I love experiencing all that nature has to offer. Whether it be sitting in a garden with a coffee and soaking up the sunshine, listening to the birds chirping or seeing bees help themselves to the nectar of flowers. Spending so much time at work indoors and surrounded by technology, it is incredibly refreshing to be outdoors in the fresh air.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

Yes, I do. I find it very therapeutic and especially love pet-friendly gardens so I can bring my dog Trevor along for the walk. He loves to explore the surroundings of gardens and take in all the different scents.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

Yes, I do. As a child I loved to play in my Nan and pop's gardens and would often make mud pies in the backyard.

My Nan used to educate me about the diverse range of flowers and succulents she grew and her garden was always filled with butterflies and lady beetles.

I also remember my big sister used to make me laugh by eating some of the flowers (which at the time I didn't realise were edible!) and it always made me laugh.

My Nan and mum used to collect ornaments and statues for my sister and I to create a fairy garden in our front yard under a large shady tree, which was also a place I liked to spend a lot of time.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

While I haven't created connections directly through gardening, I definitely feel like gardening has strengthened or only further benefited my relationships. For example, my partner loves to garden and takes a lot of pride in maintaining plants or watching them grow. I find it very appealing and heartfelt to see someone take such great care of living things whether it be plants or animals.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel relaxed after spending time in any natural setting or garden. Spending so much time at work indoors and surrounded by technology, it is incredibly refreshing to be outdoors in the fresh air.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

While I am not very experienced or successful at gardening, I would one day love to learn how to grow my own produce and sunflowers. I like the idea of growing my own produce and investing in a compost bin to live more sustainably. Perhaps learning these processes and tips would be easier by talking to members of a community garden.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Too much water can be deadly!

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I would like to donate any extra produce to a local farm or animal shelter to reduce waste and help a local business and/or charity. Another reason I would like to grow my own produce is because I like the idea of knowing where my food is coming from and that no chemical sprays have been used. Preparing food for loved ones using homegrown produce has always been a dream of mine as food brings people together and it feels so heartfelt knowing I made it with my own two hands.

Garden Participant #12

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
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Male

Aged 30 - 40

Born and raised in Cairns, lived in Weipa

Works in the Mines

Single, lives in mining accommodation, owns a townhouse that he intends to live in.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

It allows me to feel connected to the earth. As society changes, and technology becomes a bigger part of the day, nature helps ground me and helps me feel nurtured.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I love other people's gardens especially food gardens, I really appreciate the time it takes to nurture food plants, and so I respect the energy that people have put into gardens like that.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

I have lots of memories growing up of time spent in the bush with my parents and their indigenous friends. I know what I can eat and what I can't eat, that knowledge is really empowering, it is sacred knowledge, I could survive quite easily in the bush. I have a memory of a time I spent in Melbourne, I didn't know the city very well, and they have a food garden in the botanical gardens and you can pick the fruit. I picked an apple, a Pink Lady, and it tasted so good, it gave me a sense of belonging to a place I was unfamiliar with, and I will never forget that feeling.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

I spent some time in Northern New South Wales at a community space volunteering in the garden, I made a lot of friends from all over the world, because our connections were grounded in gardening and organic items, I feel like our bonds will always be strong. We were working together to grow food for others.

How do you feel after spending a day being in the garden/nature?

I feel alive, I feel grounded and grateful. I feel in the moment, it's very soothing.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love to grow medicinal herbs and tomatoes. Home grown tomatoes taste incredible.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

I have learnt that trees have a spirit, and they should be respected. In the mines, I work sometimes in the bush, gathering seeds to regenerate areas that have been decimated by the mining activity. We should all be planting seeds.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I would be happy to accept produce, and I can swap seeds and cuttings, I do that all the time with my friends.

Garden Participant #13

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
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Female

Aged 50 - 60

Born in North Queensland, raised in Brisbane.

Administrator

Single, no children, lives in suburbia on a regular sized block with her dad.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I love hearing the birds, I love the garden in the morning. Knowing nature is in control of itself and building a connection with that knowledge is really comforting. I couldn't live in the city; I need to be in the suburbs surrounded by a garden I need to hear the birds and the insects.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I love it! Looking around at other people's gardens, I find gardens beautiful. The aspects I find the most beautiful are the colours, the organisation I like neatness and order. I love too the contrast in plants, the qualities that they bring out in each other.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

Yes, I do, I have been to Kathmandu twice now, it is a very busy and chaotic place, they cater for tourists and as such it's extremely frantic. There are no gardens or greenery anywhere, and for someone like me who is used to a big garden and being surrounded by nature, it can be really daunting. Anyway, there is a garden that costs about 10 Euro to enter, it is very small and surrounded by four walls. The Nepalese don't use it, they don't know what it is to have a garden, only tourist to the area go in there. But it is extremely satisfying to enter a green space, albeit small, after being in the chaos. I am a regular attendant at the Carnival of Flowers, and I go to the Botanical Gardens in the city all the time, after my experience in Kathmandu, I am so grateful that here in Australia we celebrate nature and plants like we do. But it also gave me an insight into the Nepalese culture and the way they choose to live. I think they might be overwhelmed here in Australia with the big green spaces, it would be so foreign to them.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

Yes, I introduced myself to new neighbours by bringing them some produce from my garden. I gave them passionfruit and red pawpaw. A man who lived down the street knocked on my door and inquired if he could take the cumquats that were on my tree. A friend of my dad's used to take them to make jam, but due to illness she couldn't take them this year, so they were just left.

Anyway, this man saw them, and asked if he could take them as his wife makes jam. Of course, I said yes. A few days later, the man knocked again and this time he bought me some jam made from the cumquats.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel more balanced and calmer, I feel relaxed and content

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

I love to grow red pawpaw because I love to eat them. I also like to grow ginger and turmeric. My dad grows pineapples and passionfruit. He also grows flowers that my mum loved, like lilies and roses, gerberas and marigolds. My mum loved the colours and the scent.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Yes, everyone should grow food items and learn self-sufficiency. Gardens are also healing.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I am very happy to share items, I don't tend to take items in return, although I do enjoy cuttings. One of my friends gave me seeds to grow loofahs and I really enjoyed that challenge.

Garden Participant # 14

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
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Female

Aged 20 -30

Born and raised in Brisbane

Lives with her dad on a suburban block in an outer suburb of Brisbane, a trained chef, but currently unwell and not likely to return to work.

What is it about gardens or gardening that appeals to you?

Well, it actually started when I got sick. I was spending all day in bed, not only was I sick and in pain, but also very depressed. So, my dad built me a portable garden bed and kind of made me get out of bed to look after it. Once I filled one bed, he made me another and so on, to where we are today. It was also an affordable way to eat organic as well, because not a lot is known about my illness and what causes it, so it was all trial and error, and trying to eat as healthy as possible. Now I love it. I try to walk around the garden every day; it keeps my mind on something other than being sick and I love watching all the animals it attracts. Birds, bees, butterflies, lizards etc. Once you start a garden it becomes a lifestyle, a way of living. If that makes sense? Definitely a great distraction if nothing else.

Do you enjoy visiting other people's gardens or public gardens?

Yes, I love it. Even just driving by and ogling what other people have created. I hope one day every suburb has a community garden.

Do you have any specific memories from your childhood or adulthood that relates to your enjoyment of gardens?

In primary school we actually had a mini farm. I used to go there most of my breaks, I loved it. Home life not really a whole lot, we were either renting or renovating to sell, so everything had to be neat and tidy. My grandad has a big block up in Hervey Bay and we would go there. The first thing we did when we got there was walk around the garden, then he would pull out a jar of macadamia nuts from his tree and we would sit there and smash them.

Through gardening, have you established any social connections?

Yes, mostly on Instagram or occasionally people I used to work with asking questions about gardening. Instagram is pretty amazing though; you meet some pretty amazing people. They offer their advice or experiences, and vice versa. If they have extra seeds we swap, it's a community.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

Both good and bad, unfortunately. Mentally it feels great getting out in the garden and tidying up, getting my hands dirty, and connecting with nature. Also, you get a sense of accomplishment when you get to harvest food and herbs, and flowers that you have grown yourself, and it tastes better too. But, unfortunately with my illness the more I do the more it hurts so at the end of the day I am pretty sore and it can put me out for a week.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

Hard question! Umm I suppose its forever changing, there is always something new to discover. At the moment it's probably flowers, sunflowers, lavender and cosmos.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

If you are going to start a garden, start small and easy. Once you have that down pat, ass I more and so on. Before you know it, you will have a full garden. Soil is everything! You don't 'feed' the plant you feed the soil. Don't compare your garden to anyone else's. Everyone lives in slightly different climates and zones. And it takes time to build your soil, even if you start with good soil, it will always get better. Homemade compost is gold! And it diverts so much away for waste sites that would take years to break down in not ideal conditions.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I swap items with my neighbours and friends all the time, so I am already involved in this type of activity, we always have too much. (I need to work on my succession planting!).

Garden Participant # 15

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire

Ethics Approval No. H20REA09

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I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment.

Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Female

Aged 20 -30

Born and raised in regional Queensland

Lives with her mum on a suburban block

Professional currently on leave

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I find it relaxing and rewarding to see things grow.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I do enjoy it.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment of appreciation of gardens/gardening?

I think making a bulb garden with my mum that was my special garden when I was a little girl.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

No, I haven't, my connection is with my garden.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

Relaxed and good.

Do you have a specific plant that you like to grow?

Bulbs and flowers, some vegetables.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

When growing bulbs, try to wait till the soil is cold at night to plant them.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes, I would like that.

N.B. This participant was extremely unwell at the time of the interview, she provided her responses via email as she was not well enough to talk. I told her that she didn't have to respond, there was no pressure from me, but she truly wanted to express her delight she feels in gardening and gardens. Her responses appear as though she wasn't interested, however, she provided beautiful photos of her garden to accompany her responses, she wanted her photos to convey her connection to the garden and speak for her as opposed to her written words.

Garden Participant # 16

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire

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Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Female

Aged 50 – 60

Raised on a farm in Far North Queensland

Married

Retired professional, lives in Brisbane's inner city with a small garden

Mother of 3 sons and 1 grandson

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

The aesthetics of a garden is very relaxing and calming. I'm not a natural gardener but I do enjoy choosing the plants that will go into my garden. I enjoy the finished product. I also enjoy any food that is produced in my own garden – used either as fresh ingredients or making a big Italian tomato sauce.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I do enjoy visiting public gardens. It's a very relaxing pastime and can take me away from the issues of day-to-day life. The highlight was the Mirabelle Gardens in Austria (Sound of Music). Absolutely beautiful!

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relate to your enjoyment or appreciation of gardening/gardens?

I grew up on a farm and we always had an orchard of oranges, lemons, and cumquats. We also had a garden where mum grew all (or most) of our vegetables. I have great memories of mum making cumquat jam and rosella jam (and also pots of Italian tomato sauce). She would swap her jams etc for items from our neighbours.

Through gardening had you established social connections?

My fondest memory is of my grandson loving and picking his great grandfather's daisies. The look of pure joy and love on his face is priceless. We visit more often now, just to have this experience.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I grew up on a farm working all summer holidays – morning until evening, so I do see gardening “as work”! In saying that I do appreciate gardens and nature. When I do spend time in the garden, I feel a sense of achievement. I always enjoyed watering my garden in the afternoon when the boys were playing after school. There was a sense of peace.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

Whilst I love looking at ‘pretty gardens’ I most enjoy having herbs on tap!

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

My husband loves symmetry and it can be beautiful in a garden, I like to add something that doesn't always seem right. I like the element of surprise.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by [partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes! Love to!

Garden Participant # 17

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire

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Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Male

Aged 50 – 60

Raised in suburban Brisbane

Married

Retired professional, lives in Brisbane's inner city with a small garden

Father of 3 sons and 1 grandson

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

It varies from time to time. On some occasions, it is improving the street appeal of my property. At other times it is the ability to create beauty and colour with a flower garden. Often it is the enjoyment of growing foods you can use such as herbs and vegetables.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

Yes, from time to time. I don't go to open garden events, but if a friend/acquaintance has a garden they would like to share, I am happy to look. I do like to visit botanic gardens which I find interesting and peaceful.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relate to your enjoyment or appreciation of gardening/gardens?

My father has grown orchids for as long as I can remember. I would love going to his orchid house when they were in bloom, I still look after his orchids when my parents are away. I was very impressed that he created new hybrid plants by cross-pollinating.

Through gardening had you established social connections?

Not really, rather they are reinforced/helped along if visiting connections have a mutual interest. My father on the other hand joined various orchid societies and developed new and lasting social connections.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

A sense of achievement and also peace and calm. Various stages of gardening give different experiences. e.g. building a new garden leads to a sense of achievement. Reaping the fruits of the garden leads to a sense of accomplishment.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

No, it varies over time. Flowers, veges, shrubs, fruit. Over time a constant is the herb garden. I enjoy the ability to provide produce which we use in our cooking.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

I am naturally a person of order and symmetry. My inclination is to plant in straight lines and have a balanced look. What I have learnt is to mix colour and textures to bring more interest and depth. Mix flowers with foliage of different colours and textures.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by [partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes! Although I would require access to a community garden. My current garden is not conducive to growing food items.

Garden Participant #18

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
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Male

Aged 20 – 30

Born in regional Britain, immigrated at aged 10 to Australia, raised in an outer southern suburb of Brisbane. Prior to his arrival in Australia, participant spent time in both Kenya and South Africa.

Professional, works full time

In a long-term relationship, no children

Lives in an apartment, currently renting due to relocation to a regional Queensland for employment.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

The satisfaction of growing something. I love to grow flowers from seed, I find it very satisfying. I am able to lose myself in a garden, I am passionate about sustainability, and I endeavour to employ this practice.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I am a teacher, and I like to take the students into the school yard to look at the gardens and plant seeds with them, I think this should be more ingrained in the education sector, not just in science. Teaching kids to grow food items and experimenting with plants, what worked well? What didn't work well?

I enjoy looking at other people's gardens, I enjoyed different styles of gardens, seeing how other people create their gardens.

Do you have memories of a garden or gardening from when you were a child or even as an adult?

I helped my parents when I was younger in the garden. My mum is a chef, and she would grow her own vegetables, which we would pick and use in our meals. I loved my grandmother's garden the very most, she lived in rural England and she used old objects as planters. She had an old toilet, tyres, teapots and old teacups in her garden, I always thought it was very artistic and theatrical, I loved playing there.

She also incorporated items like water features, it was very old English in style, she had a lot of roses. My mum grows roses now, just like her mum.

Through gardening have you established any social connections?

I have created a garden at work for the students, prior to starting the garden, I held discussions with other staff members to gain advice and or ascertain what should not be planted due to potential allergens. This activity has deepened my relationship with like-minded staff through our conversations and interests in gardening.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

Accomplished, relaxed. I love natural spaces, even doing the mowing as it allows me the time and space to think through any problems I may be having.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

I love growing flowers from seed. I also like to grow things like potatoes, tomatoes and passionfruit in trugs. I enjoy the aesthetic of trailing plants.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

No, only your garden should reflect your own tastes, you shouldn't follow any rules as such, my grandmother being spontaneous in the garden gave me such joy. I do like to share ideas about recycling however, I am passionate about sustainability.

Would you be prepared to involved yourself actively in the project? Either by the partaking of garden produce and or the swapping of produce items with other participants?

I would really enjoy working in the garden with others.

Garden Participant #19

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
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Female born 1940's

Raised Rural New South Wales, Youngest of 5 siblings

Worked in a medical field/spent time as a stay-at-home parent of 2/ now retired

Lives in a detached residence, on an average sized block.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I love to grow flowers and vegetables, but my interest comes in spurts. I like to be innovative in the garden, so I use my grandchildren's old toys to plant in. (Plastic swimming pool, swing frame to support climbing vegetables, old guttering on the fence to grow lettuces). I enjoy the notion of satisfaction I get when things go well.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I enjoy visiting my friend who has a lovely garden and who is very knowledgeable about plants and always gives away cuttings to friends and neighbours. She is not terribly well at present and has given me a number of plants that she did not want to be sold with the house, when the time comes, in case they were destroyed by the new owners.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood, or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment or appreciation of gardening/gardens?

My mum was a very keen gardener, and in the evenings during the summer, we would do a family walk around our town to look at people's gardens. As a child, I didn't appreciate these occasions, but now as an adult looking back the memories are very fond ones. My mum was always in the garden, we would assist with the weeding to be close to her.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

I spend a lot of time with my friend with the lovely garden and our conversation often drifts to gardening activities. Sometimes too, neighbours will walk past and comment on a plant in the yard and I will chat to them about it for a time.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel very satisfied, often weary but relaxed too. I love to watch things grow, and watering is very peaceful.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

I really enjoy growing vegetables and herbs, it's very satisfying going out to the garden to pick lettuces or tomatoes and herbs and using them in my meals. I love geraniums too, my friend has given me cuttings over the years, but only two have struck, they are doing very well, I love the one with the light pink flowers.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Grow what is easy for you. Pleasure comes when you have success in growing plants, if it is too difficult to grow something or the conditions are not right, then you don't enjoy it as much, it just feels like work.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes, I would enjoy that.

Garden Participant # 20

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Male born 1940's

Raised in Newcastle, New South Wales

Eldest of 2 boys, lost both parents whilst still in his teens

Blue collar worker/ Retired

Lives in detached house on an averaged sized corner block.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I enjoy mowing and keeping the grass tidy. I have an area at the side of the house where I keep my barbeque, I have a number of plants in there that I care for. My grandfather in Newcastle had a market garden, that I used to go to and pick vegetables.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

No, not really, but I am very happy to assist neighbours or friends with garden projects.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood, or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment or appreciation of gardening/gardens?

I have happy memories of raiding neighbour's fruit trees, we were never hungry during the school holidays or weekends, we always had fresh fruit to eat.

I have a very strong memory of our yard at home, my dad never worked in the yard, and it was always overgrown, I felt ashamed as a child about the state of our garden. One day when I came home from school, I found my dad working in the garden. He had mowed the yard and trimmed the edges, and it looked so lovely, this is a very strong memory. I never found out what happened that urged my dad to tidy the yard, but it was never untidy again, my dad worked religiously after that, every 2 weeks in the yard to keep it tidy. The memory of that prompts me to work on my yard every 2 weeks, I was given a ride on mower a couple of years ago, and that has been extremely helpful to me to maintain my yard, now that I am older.

Through gardening, have you established social connections?

Often times when I am working in the yard, people will stop and talk to me. Sometimes about the yard, sometimes about other things, sometimes too people will ask me to assist them with something in their yard, I am always happy to help.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel very satisfied. I will sit on my garden bench after mowing and whipping and enjoy the cleanliness of the yard. I think about my dad and that first day that he tidied the yard and that feeling comes back to me every time, it is a wonderful feeling, and I wanted my children to know it also, I hope they were proud of my efforts in the yard.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

No, I love a nice lawn though and I enjoy the colours of flowers that my wife grows.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

The way things look is important, if the yard and the nature strip is tidy, it gives you an enormous sense of pride.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

I don't have anything to swap, but I will assist with labour, I would be very happy to receive things like citrus fruits or passionfruit.

Garden Participant # 21

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Female

Aged 30 – 40

Married with a young son

Professional/Student currently on home duties

Australian born, suburban raised, lives in an inner- city townhouse, currently renting.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

I enjoy gardening for many reasons. Gardening helps me to relax. I really enjoy going out to my garden of an afternoon in the summer with a cold drink and watering the plants. I find it incredibly therapeutic - just taking a quick moment out of my day to stop and appreciate how lucky I am to be able to have a space - albeit small - that allows me to grow food for my family, reminisce over scents from my childhood of flowers that were in my grandmother's garden or that my mother would keep in a vase on the kitchen bench, or allow animals to explore and seek food or shelter.

I also love the design aspect of a garden. I enjoy seeking inspiration from others gardens and developing ideas that will make my garden more aesthetically pleasing.

Finally, although only a year old, my son has already shown interest in picking flowers from his grandfather's garden. I love watching his amazement as he explores the colours and textures of the plants. I love that he enjoys being outdoors in the garden and so I've really enjoyed coming up with different ideas to implement in my garden that will hopefully encourage his interest as he grows older (ie fairy garden, native bee hive, a herb garden for him to play with).

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I enjoy visiting both, however I am more interested in the efforts of home gardens and small community gardens. I really enjoy seeing other people's ideas and gaining inspiration for my own garden.

In saying that, I have been to a couple of flower shows and made a point of walking through famous gardens in my travels and have never been disappointed. I am amazed at how clever landscape artists are and can stare in wonder at some of their creations for hours.

Do you have specific memories, either from childhood, or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment or appreciation of gardening/gardens?

I have very fond memories of being in my grandmother's garden as a young girl. More often than not, I'd be playing with my sister and cousin amongst the animal garden ornaments and large rocks, pretending we were brave adventurers, as my grandmother would work tirelessly around us in order to maintain the beauty of her garden, filled with many different types of plants. However, in the rare moments we would offer our assistance, I learnt so much about her garden. I learnt what each of the plants were, when they grew throughout the year, all about the insects that would visit and (which was probably our favourite part) which plants were edible. I remember eating nasturtium leaves and sucking the honey from the flower with my sister and having parsley eating competitions with my cousin to see who would could eat the most without being sick. Some of my favourite memories are in that garden, which is what I believe began my love of gardening.

Through gardening, have you established any social connections?

When I was a young child, I would love to play with my sister, my cousin and my friend in my Nanny's Garden. We would pretend that we were on TV presenting a show about creating safe habitats for lots of different types of animals. It would involve planting exotic trees and plants and luring animals from all over the world, my friend was from El Salvador. In reality we were actually looking for ladybirds, weeding and watering, but it was a wonderful place to play with friends and be creative. Sometimes my sister and I recall those times and have a happy conversation about them. As an adult, I really enjoy learning about gardening from my mum and my father-in-law who are both keen gardeners. I have started a propagation station and since being able to have someone to share it with, my interest has grown, and I love the actual growing process. I have always loved looking at gardens, especially flowers, but since being able to share ideas, I've developed a keen interest especially in growing my own produce.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/or a natural space?

I do put a lot of emphasis on how well my garden is growing. If my plants are looking good, I feel an incredible sense of achievement and satisfaction. However, the frustration I experience when things do not go so well in the garden is just as intense. The discouragement usually doesn't last long though - a quick reminder that I am quite the beginner with an eagerness to learn about plants is all I need to enthusiastically get back out there and try again.

If I am purely in a garden for the sole purpose of taking in my surroundings, there isn't anything quite like an environment surrounded by the wonders of nature. I think it is very difficult - if not impossible - to replicate the peacefulness experienced when laying under a tree, looking up at the sky, birds chirping and flower buds falling. As I mentioned previously, it is incredibly therapeutic being amongst nature and taking a moment to just be still and appreciate your surroundings.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

I love growing flowers because of the colours and the scent, and I enjoy watching the bees. As my space is small, I really enjoy growing edible items that I can use in my kitchen, like

herbs and small fruits like tomato and capsicums. My husband loves peas so that is my latest endeavour to grow enough peas to fill a bowl for him.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

I try and pick-up tips that others offer me when discussing gardening. My father-in-law told me that rock salt is very good in assisting with plant growth.

I usually use Pinterest as a source for gardening information, particularly regarding how to make your own pesticides, fertiliser and other such products. I much prefer the idea of using natural ingredients as opposed to chemicals in my garden where possible.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes, I would be very happy to receive any produce or products that you would like to share with me, hopefully, I will have something that I can share with you also.

Garden Participant #22

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Female
Aged 50 – 60
Divorced, mother of 3 children
Brisbane born, urban raised
Administrator works full time
Lives in a suburban Townhouse, owned.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

The sense of calm they bring – no matter what kind of day I've had, as soon as I step foot in my garden the stress just seems to disappear. They also are visually appealing, especially a garden in flower.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

Very much – whenever I have travelled, I always visit gardens to see the different species of plants that can be grown in a different climate to where I live. You could be in the middle of a bustling metropolis but once inside a public garden you would never know it. I love any garden with a water feature and most public gardens have one – it gives a whole new feeling to a garden – it makes them more appealing visually and gives a greater sense of relaxation and calmness.

Do you have memories of a garden or gardening from when you were a child or even as an adult?

My Nana was an avid gardener – I spent many an hour sitting beside her whilst she dug in her garden. We talked about everything from the plants to her life of growing up on a sheep station and going to boarding school, to just life in general. I was only young but I never forgot her enthusiasm for new shoots on plants or the satisfaction she got when one of her prized orchids bloomed – she loved her garden and it showed.

Through gardening, have you established any social connections?

I talk to my friends about their gardens and shared things I am doing with mine. I am on a few Facebook Garden groups, as yet I have not conversed with anyone on this group, but I wouldn't hesitate joining in a conversation if it was relevant to something I was doing or I would post photos to inquire about a particular plant or a plant issue I was having.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

Refreshed, accomplished, calm, relaxed, inspired.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

I really like growing anything that can be eaten, vegetable, fruit or herb. I get a buzz out of eating my own produce even if it is just a garnish. It's nice to be able to enjoy the fruits of my labour. I know then that what I am eating is pure and tended only by me, no pesticides, just sunshine, water and care and then taking it from seed to plate.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Yes – you must have passion towards your garden, as much as it can be hard work the rewards are worth it – the visual rewards if you have flowers and if you have a vegetable garden the reward of fresh food. It's a great feeling to know you have nurtured something from a seed to a bloom or something you can eat. If you are not passionate about your garden it shows – you need to tend it constantly, water it, weed it, fertilize it – treat it as the living and breathing entity that it is and you will be rewarded in many ways.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project? Either by the partaking of garden produce and or the swapping of produce items with other participants?

Yes, that is something that interests me.

Garden Participant # 23

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Male

Aged 50 - 60

Irish born urban raised, immigrated to Australia in 1995, gained citizenship approximately 2011

Married, father of 3 children

Professional, works full time

Lives in an older suburb, post war home (situated approx. 9 kms from the CBD) on an average sized block.

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

Peace, tranquillity, satisfaction and a connection to the earth/environment

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

Yes, I do.

Do you have any specific memories, either from childhood or at another time in your life, that relates to our enjoyment or appreciation of gardening or gardens?

Yes, I do, spent a lot of time (not by choice but happy I did now) with my father planting and growing mostly vegetables.

Through gardening, have you established any social connections?

I talk to my friends and neighbours who are like minded about gardening.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

Satisfied, happy, and content. And usually, a bit sore!

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

I enjoy growing Australian natives, they don't require a lot of water, and they attract bird life.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

As I grew in Europe I have had to adapt and learn a lot to be able to succeed in gardening in QLD. I don't grow many veggies anymore due to the amount of watering required. I grow a lot more native and water (lack thereof) plants. Patience is the key and making the right plant choices for the environment.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden and or swapping produce with other participants?

I swap produce or cuttings with my friendship group and as such don't need to swap with others beyond that.

Garden Participant # 24

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Participant Gardening Questionnaire
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

This data will be compiled to underpin my research and support the idea of gardening as a leisure activity or being situated within a natural environment supports healthy connections with others, and provides a sense of physical and emotive well-being to the gardener. I will be creating a garden based on survey responses, endeavouring to establish a space that incorporates the ideals that participants may seek within a natural environment. Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

Male

Aged 60 – 70

Married 3 grown up children, 4 grandchildren

Manual worker, semi-retired due to ill health

Born and raised in regional coastal area of North Qld, moved as a newly wed to Brisbane, raised his family, moved to a rural setting following retirement.

Lives in a house, situated on acreage

What is it about gardens/gardening that appeals to you?

The beauty and perfection of nature, I really enjoy it when people compliment my garden. I like to give away cuttings and or vegetables that I have grown, there is enormous satisfaction in that. One day a man driving past my yard, noticed my garden, he stopped and asked if he could pick a bouquet for his wife's birthday.

I like too that birds that are attracted to the plant life, I feed them ritually at dusk, they wait for me to come, I enjoy being in the yard with my grandchildren too, hearing them play whilst I work.

Do you enjoy other people's gardens or visiting public gardens?

I prefer to visit public gardens, they are peaceful, I love the serenity that comes from a garden.

Do you have specific memories, either from childhood, or at another time in your life, that relates to your enjoyment or appreciation of gardens/gardening?

No one in my family gardened, but as a child I enjoyed being in the rainforest, I would always be in awe of the magnitude of the trees.

Through gardening, have you established any social connections?

Yes, often people walking past will stop and talk to me about my garden, I will invite them in to pick vegetables or flowers and I am happy to offer cuttings and or advice if asked.

How do you feel after spending a day in the garden/nature?

I feel accomplished. I can go and pick an apple from my own tree and eat, that is very satisfying. I didn't really know anything about gardening when I moved to the acreage, I started working in the yard, as I always did manual labour for work, and I missed it. There was a lot of trial and error, and over the past 7 seven years I have created a space that gives me enormous pleasure. This has been especially beneficial for my health, both physical and emotional.

Do you have a specific plant item that you like to grow?

I love to grow flowers, I love the colours and the perfume, I also enjoy picking bouquets for my wife and arranging them for her to see when she comes in from work.

Have you learnt anything from your gardening practice or from the practice of someone else that you would like to share?

Yes, prior to planting anything, always dig organic matter into your soil. It assists with nourishing your plants from the minute they go into the ground.

Would you be prepared to involve yourself actively in the project by partaking of garden produce and or swapping produce with other participants?

Yes certainly! I already engage with others in relation to the garden, I really enjoy that people can enjoy my efforts in the garden.

Interviews with Murarrie long-term resident participants

Murarrie long - term resident participant #1

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Questionnaire to seek data re demography of Murarrie
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

Participants were those who moved to Murarrie in or about the period from 1970 – 1988. This data will support the change in the demographic of the suburb, the area I have resided since 1987. I am seeking information in this context, qualitative in nature, that a long-term resident would be able to recollect and share. This will be supported by quantitative data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

When did you begin residing in Murarrie?

I moved here in 1993.

Can you explain what the suburb looked like at that time? Looking for data that suggest number of houses, approximate allotment size, environmental landmarks.

There were less homes and only the one bridge over the river, now there is two, and the living mode has changed to high density, there is so much more traffic. I feel sad because it used to have a rural essence here, there were paddocks and horses, but that has all gone now. There are so many apartments and townhouses too which feels a little like my privacy has been invaded. It makes sense as we are located approximately 10 kms from the city, and close to the bay and the coasts but it has detracted from a place that was once much friendlier and more community minded.

Were you friendly with your neighbours and or residents from nearby streets? If so, do you remain friends, have they moved away?

My husband was once the President of the Progress Association and we had many friends, but they have all moved away now, I don't know anyone here anymore and it has altered the way I conduct my life now. My partner lives elsewhere and I stay with him 4 days out of 7, I only stay in my own home during the days I work. My workplace is close to Murarrie so that makes sense but I feel more comfortable at my partner's home.

Murarrie long - term resident participant # 2

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Questionnaire to seek data re demography of Murarrie

Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

Participants were those who moved to Murarrie in or about the period from the mid 1970's to the early 1990's. This data will support the change in the demographic of the suburb, the area I have resided since 1987. I am seeking information in this context, qualitative in nature, that a long-term resident would be able to recollect and share. This will be supported by quantitative data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

When did you begin residing in Murarrie?

I moved here in 1976, I wanted to buy a house and Murarrie was the only place I could afford at the time. The suburb was very industrial and it was close to the port.

Can you explain what the suburb looked like at that time? Looking for data that suggest number of houses, approximate allotment size, environmental landmarks.

There was a lot of bushland, a few new houses, mostly on the average yard size at that time, (24 perch) there were a lot of industrial buildings on the river on the river, like the sugar terminal. The main road was the only one to the port and it was busy, but not like it is today with the two bridges.

Were you friendly with your neighbours and or residents from nearby streets? If so, do you remain friends, have they moved away?

I have a few friends that still live here, but not many only 1 or 2. I had a number of workmates that lived here also. I do think it is important to get to know your neighbours and lend a hand, if necessary, there have been four new builds at the end of this street in the past 4 years, and I have gotten to know these people fairly well. I'm interested in other people. There is a new couple that moved into their new home, but they did not want to get to know me, they said they were busy and not looking to befriend their neighbours, but you can only try.

Murarrie long - term resident participant #3

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Questionnaire to seek data re demography of Murarrie
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

Participants were those who moved to Murarrie in or about the period from 1970 – 1988. This data will support the change in the demographic of the suburb, the area I have resided since 1987. I am seeking information in this context, qualitative in nature, that a long-term resident would be able to recollect and share. This will be supported by quantitative data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

When did you begin residing in Murarrie?

I moved here in 1987. I had just gotten married and I wanted to live somewhere close to the train for work, and my sporting clubs and it was affordable.

Can you explain what the suburb looked like at that time? Looking for data that suggests number of houses, approximate allotment size, environmental landmarks.

At that time there were more houses, a lot have been knocked down now and apartments have been built in the vacant blocks. Some vacant blocks have been subdivided and two smaller homes built in the space.

Were you friendly with your neighbours and or residents from nearby streets? If so, do you remain friends, have they moved away?

My relationship with my longest neighbours remains the same. I think it's important to have people around you that you trust. I have extended myself to new neighbours and we have the occasional social function. We used to have Christmas street parties, but as new people came that tradition seemed to dissipate. I think getting on with your neighbours makes for a better home life, I am happy to help people with any chores, over the years I have received a lot of help with maintenance jobs etc.

Murarrie long - term resident participant # 4

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Questionnaire to seek data re demography of Murarrie
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

Participants were those who moved to Murarrie in or about the period from 1970 – 1988. This data will support the change in the demographic of the suburb, the area I have resided since 1987. I am seeking information in this context, qualitative in nature, that a long-term resident would be able to recollect and share. This will be supported by quantitative data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

When did you begin residing in Murarrie?

We moved here in 1975, so I have lived here for 46 years.

Can you explain what the suburb looked like at that time? Looking for data that suggests number of houses, approximate allotment size, and environmental landmarks.

There were a lot of vacant blocks and many factories like KR Darling Downs and AJ Bush, a fertilizer plant. There were many older homes, workers' cottages, the people that lived in those homes worked at the wharves or in the factories. There were many war service homes here too, near the railway line. A lot of them have gone now.

It is very different today, less industry and blocks that have been split. Many of the homes that were here, have been demolished and apartment blocks have been built. An almost entire street has had the homes knocked down and apartment buildings have been built. Some split blocks have smaller homes on them, but there is no room for gardens.

Were you friendly with your neighbours and or residents from nearby streets? If so, do you remain friends, have they moved away?

Some of my older friends have moved away, but I make a point of getting to know people. I am the president of the Neighbourhood watch, I was a founding member, I think it's important to get to know people and they know us and we can keep an eye on each other.

Murarrie long - term resident participant # 5

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Questionnaire to seek data re demography of Murarrie

Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

Participants were those who moved to Murarrie in or about the period from 1970 – 1988. This data will support the change in the demographic of the suburb, the area I have resided since 1987. I am seeking information in this context, qualitative in nature, that a long-term resident would be able to recollect and share. This will be supported by quantitative data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

When did you begin residing in Murarrie?

My parents were living here from my birth, I moved away in 2016, aged 23.

Can you explain what the suburb looked like at that time? Looking for data that suggest number of houses, approximate allotment size, environmental landmarks.

I've grown to love the suburb of Murarrie as it is in a convenient location and sits between the city and the bay.

It serves as a useful spot when running late for a flight as the airport is close by.

I remember walking up and down the Gateway Bridge many times which is a great way to stay fit and also offers spectacular views - especially at night time.

Its close proximity to bars, restaurants and cafes which were only developed in the last five to ten years, Murarrie has changed a lot from when it used to know as being an industrial suburb with lots of factories and depots in the area.

As a child I remember looking up at the Courier Mail building when driving past and thinking about how amazing it would be to work there.

Little did I know at the time that the building was used to print newspapers only but funnily enough I did go on to work as a journalist for Newscorp.

There are a lot of surrounding parks and greenery in the area and I have fond memories of jacaranda flowers blooming and filling the streets in the lead up to Christmas.

Growing up I remember many of the houses were one or two storey Queenslanders with large backyards.

However, this has changed a lot of the years too with many residents selling their properties and developers splitting them into two allotments.

It is bittersweet to see so many houses squashed into streets as it's become a much busier suburb with more modern buildings and it has been sad to see some beautiful ones demolished or changed significantly.

However, the growth of the suburb has highlighted its amazing potential and led to other opportunities such as the bar and eatery precinct which sits right on river.

Were you friendly with your neighbours and or residents from nearby streets? If so, do you remain friends, have they moved away?

Were you friendly with your neighbours and or residents from nearby streets? If so, do you remain friends, have they moved away?

As a child and teenager, I hated living in Murarrie because none of my friends lived in the suburb. As all my friends lived in the same area as at least one other friend I often felt left out as they were in walking distance from each other and had the means to catch up more regularly. However, during my teenage years, I did start to recognise that Murarrie was a central location to all of those areas.

For instance, it was a 15-minute drive from my friends in the Bayside area and my friends in Camp Hill, Cooparoo and Carindale.

Many friends from Bayside were unable to go to events on that side of town because there were no nearby train stations and it was harder for them to get to those suburbs than it was for me.

While there were no children in the area when I was young, my sister and I formed a relationship with the children of our next-door neighbours, who were in their early to mid-20s.

I remember they took us out to a nearby paddock a couple of times and taught us how to ride horses which we really enjoyed.

A lot of neighbours have changed over the years but our parents remain close friends with a few and we always wave or say hello when visiting.

Murarrie seems to have evolved quite a lot since I was a child and there is a real mix of demographics.

It has fast become a popular suburb for young couples and families with children to call home

Murarrie long - term resident participant # 6

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Questionnaire to seek data re demography of Murarrie
Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

Participants were those who moved to Murarrie in or about the period from 1970 – 1988. This data will support the change in the demographic of the suburb, the area I have resided since 1987. I am seeking information in this context, qualitative in nature, that a long-term resident would be able to recollect and share. This will be supported by quantitative data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

When did you begin residing in Murarrie?

In 1987, my parents bought here not long before I was born, I moved away in 2012, aged 23.

Can you explain what the suburb looked like at that time? Looking for data that suggest number of houses, approximate allotment size, environmental landmarks.

Murarrie has changed dramatically since I grew up there in the 90s. Yard sizes were generally pretty big and one particular thing I remember that set it apart from surrounding suburbs was that the houses themselves weren't too close together.

Since leaving home, the suburb has expanded greatly, both residentially and commercially. Many of the houses that have sold have been knocked down and had the plot split in two. I have also noticed more townhouses and units have been developed in the past five years or so.

Growing up, Murarrie was considered by many of my friends as an industrial type area and there was often the misconception that it was an area in which residents were of a lower socioeconomic background.

However, my experience of living in Murarrie for over 20 years was that it was the perfect place to live. The only noise was traffic (which I personally found quite soothing), although in recent times it has increased due to the second Gateway Bridge crossing. The location was convenient in that it was close to the city, airport, small beaches, major motorways, shopping precincts etc. without being emerged in the hustle and bustle. Prior to the current development it is undergoing, Murarrie had many areas of land that not only offered beautiful stretches of greenery and bush land, but also a wealth of Aboriginal historical sites.

I believe the sudden influx of new housing and facilities is as a result of the fact that Murarrie has finally been recognised as a good area to live, particularly for those seeking a suburban lifestyle in which to settle down and raise a family.

Were you friendly with your neighbours and or residents from nearby streets? If so, do you remain friends, have they moved away?

The one and only downside growing up in Murarrie was the fact that we didn't have other kids to play with.

Murarrie was very much an older community - either those who had been there since major housing developments in the suburb began in the 70s or families whose children had either flown the nest or were not far from doing so.

I did have one friend who I went to preschool with who lived at the other end of the suburb; however, they were living in a rental property and only viewed it as a short-term residence.

However, a couple of the neighbours we had growing up still live there to this day and I always enjoy seeing them when I visit my parents. It's a comfort to me knowing that they are there, I always feel a sense of nostalgia when I visit. The street in which I lived has started to change a lot more, but I'm very lucky that my favourite parts of the area have remained the same like the large park/reserve, I now take my son there to play.

Murarrie long - term resident participant #7

Terri Hethorn Doctoral Student at USQ – Questionnaire to seek data re demography of Murarrie

Ethics Approval No. H20REA094

Participants were those who moved to Murarrie in or about the period from 1970 – 1988. This data will support the change in the demographic of the suburb, the area I have resided since 1987. I am seeking information in this context, qualitative in nature, that a long-term resident would be able to recollect and share. This will be supported by quantitative data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Thank you for taking the time to support my research and provide responses. If any question is difficult to respond to, or if you indeed choose not to respond, please disregard.

When did you begin residing in Murarrie?

I moved here in 1976 with my family we had a young daughter, we had previously been living in a unit but our daughter needed a yard to play in.

Can you explain what the suburb looked like at that time? Looking for data that suggest number of houses, approximate allotment size, environmental landmarks.

There were a few houses, we didn't have any neighbours close to us. There were a lot of horse paddocks, so the outlook was somewhat rural. I believe the bulk of the land belonged to Brisbane City Council. There was a lot of industry too, I remember KR Bacon was here at that time. There was the fertilizer plant also, the smell was terrible, but they moved on in the mid 1990's.

Were you friendly with your neighbours and or residents from nearby streets? If so, do you remain friends, have they moved away?

It took me some time to navigate the community, it was a gradual process. But when my daughter started school, I joined the P and C and worked in the tuckshop to meet others. I am still in touch with one person that I worked with in the tuckshop. In 1985, they built a little church around the corner and I started going to mass there. I met a lot of people at church and a few of them still live here. I become really involved with the church community, but the church was demolished in 2012.

The altar was moved to the chapel at the Mater Hospital in Brisbane and the parishioners moved to a church in a nearby suburb. A couple of parishioners from Murarrie still attend church with me, and we are still good friends. My closest friend who I met when I first came to Murarrie has recently moved to a care facility due to ill health, she would share items from her garden with me, her house is empty now but her garden is tended by another neighbour, it still looks beautiful.