

Nomadic Encounters with Art and Art Education

DISSERTATION

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By

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Abstract

This dissertation is both a philosophical inquiry and series of case studies that explore how artists' practices navigate and negotiate the forces and intensities of chaos and the structuring order of the world to create the conditions for the emergence of something new in the artmaking process. The philosophical inquiry is rooted in Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concepts related to the *encounter*, both as a radical perspective on the emergence of thought, and as a concept to be put to work to create a new terrains of thinking through artmaking.

As a case study, this dissertation examines the artist practices of Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian, as well as a self-reflective inquiry on my own practice as an art student several years ago. These practices are approached as art-based counterparts through two philosophical paths. Deleuze's early writing conceptualizes a first power of thought as a pre-subjective emergence through the encounter. In his later writing with Guattari, Deleuze turns to the encounter as generative *nomadic* process which emerges as a productive, paradoxical engagement of territorializing and deterritorializing assemblages that gives rise to new expanses of thinking through which creation and learning takes form as artmaking.

The philosophical inquiry takes form through the various conceptual entwinements of the *nomadic encounter* in analyzing the artist practices in the case studies, which in turn raises questions surrounding how art educators might consider the

implications of these processes in creating a milieu through which new mindsets might emerge for teachers and students to experiment with these concepts through artmaking.

The primary thesis of this study is that artists and teachers are constantly struggling to create new terrains of thinking through artmaking in the face of the various systems and structures that reinforce a *dogmatic image of thought* and constrains the movements and flows of creative transformation. As such, this study looks toward a new *nomadic milieu* of art education, through which the subjectivity of teachers and students are co-constituted through an experimentation through the lived experience of artmaking—one that reconfigures a teaching and learning environment that is always on the lookout to disrupt our habits of thought, and avoiding adherence to predetermined outcomes in artmaking.

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PREFACE

CLIMBING CAPPANAWALLA

The trail coils adjacent to the loosely paved back road, “Burren Way” as it is called, leading past the base of Mount Cappanawalla, is marked by decades-old tire tracks, carving into the wild grass to form parallel dirt grooves, winding and ascending at an almost absurdly steep 60 degree incline. The path meanders for at least a half mile without any markers that would signify a destination ahead. The only index along the way is difficult to ignore: a sea of limestone debris to the right of the path. There are no other signifying indicators that would direct anyone to venture off the winding trail. Any casual observation would indicate that this field of scattered rock formations is certainly not a path, particularly due to the steeper ascent at the tremendous base of the mountain to which it leads. One might initially consider traversing this non-path as an act of nonsense, not just insofar as acknowledging that taking this path would assume an attitude of sense without ground, but also in the most empirical aspect of a physical limestone terrain that consists of literally fragmented and dispersed foundation.

Why have I never continue along where those tire tracks lead up the carved path that curls around the base? Why have I always wandered off that path to the vast uncertain non-path instead? Or, if it is a path, it is more akin to being swallowed into the sweeping mouth of Galway Bay than wading along a winding creek. This new non-path,

this field of openness calls forth. It is smooth space; deterritorialized space, calling one closer to skim along what feels like the edges of chaos.

I lived in Ballyvaughan once before, seven years ago. I was a post-baccalaureate student at Burren College of Art, which houses the studio art program for National University of Ireland, Galway. My intentions for enrolling in the program was to engage in an immersive studio academic environment and hopefully leverage that experience into enrolling in an MFA program, which I eventually completed at Ohio State University a few years later. While I was studying in Ballyvaughan, my approach to artmaking certainly did begin to open up from a more rigid, conceptual structure, to a looser and more emergent way of working, But I still thought of an artist's practice as one that involved sitting around in the studio hoping to discover an idea that was out there waiting to be harnessed and formulated into art. This is the conventional way of understanding how art is made. I assumed that everyone else was making art this way, so I should as well. The mindset was that art is different; artists are different. Artists are unique in that we possess creativity, again, in the conventional sense. With that creativity we discover what is out there though harnessing our 'gift' or 'talent'. In a way, I was going along with the traditional narrative that artists are unique because artmaking is radically different from everyday life. What I failed to realize back then was that the problem is not that art needs to be different from everyday life. It is that everyday life itself could be approached differently, and as such, it could be seen as one in the same with art.

There are three routes to the studio from the village center two miles away. The first is a narrow, two-lane corkscrew road, which is about the width of a one-way side-street in the United States. Take away sidewalks and add a 60 mile-per-hour speed limit,

and this road is a series of near-death experiences for any pedestrian courageous enough to follow the most direct route to the workspace. The second route to the studio is called the “wood loop,” which meets up with the Burren Way. It is the back route, and it offers every quintessential aspect of Irish charm imaginable along the way, including sheep grazing in the front yard of cottages, the small cottage housing the elementary school with an adjacent rugby and football pitch, and a cow pasture teeming with landmines of perfectly rounded dung that are easily mistaken for polished rocks scattered along the field. One learns very quickly to avoid stepping on any rocks whatsoever in this area. And this is just the first half-mile of the morning commute.

Once this unconventional village-path becomes a more concentrated, narrowed route, any indicators of the built environment ostensibly vanish. The trail winds through the more proper elements of the Burren—a surface of mud, grass and randomly strewn limestone rocks. The path ascends around one corner to a moon-like landscape diffused by the peculiarity of various plant species from both arid and temperate origins. And then only a few steps later, the path curves and dips into the lush, dark, heaviness of a miniature tropical forest, as if merging from one ecological microcosm to another in a matter of moments. Such incongruence is commonplace in the Burren.

The third path is the most ambiguous insofar as it is not actually path but a kind of field, in which one has to be willing to get lost in order to gain a new kind of bearing. This is the field that requires a certain ‘mindset’ to embrace. It is a field of experimentation, of courage to let the passage breakdown and fail at many points. It is a field of relying not merely on the self, but opening up to the various elements that in their own way are active in participating with the encounter of the passage. Most importantly,

beyond toying with the loss of direction, the field calls forth an immersion that involved giving up any sense of order in its navigation. It is a field that encourages a loss of the self. It is not a conventional, meditative or contemplative approach of becoming lost in thought; the field invites a new way of subject-less thinking. In this respect it is difficult to find order in movement and in language. It is an experience that approaches pure difference. It is a struggle to reconcile the fact that language will always prove inadequate in describing such difference. This kind of difference cannot be articulated, it cannot be apprehended.

The Burren is an environment infused with transformation. The limestone terrain is exposed by its history—a past literally embedded into its present. From the calcium-rich skeletal remains of marine life etched into this once Mediterranean sea-bed from 300 million years ago, to the shales, slitstones and limestone carried from the north through glaciation 20,000 years ago and arbitrarily deposited along the land, the region is a convergence of displacements. It is a paradoxical, zig-zagging historical process of Arctic and tropical formations, which from a viewpoint today suggests stability and fixity in its current temperate presence. But this is an illusion. The Burren is unremittingly undergoing a process of change, just as everything in the world; it is always in flux, in flow, and becoming something else. Sometimes the speeds and intensities of its transformation occur at a greater rate, such as the spring two years ago when months of heavy rains and winds created acute erosion causing massive rock slides. Other times the process is more gradual, but still noticeable in a human lifespan—the effects of cultural and technological change as another form of productive process, or climate change as a different, catastrophic demonstration of geo-morphological shifts. These are material

processes; encounters with forces and intensive differences (or intensities) of the chaos the world. Everything is affected by the vast multiplicity of assemblages that form the world. Human thought is no different.

“Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but a fundamental ‘encounter’... it is opposed to recognition” (Deleuze, 1994, p. 139). There is much to unpack in this passage. It asserts that thinking is an inherently creative act. Thought is shocked or jolted through an “encounter” with “something in the world that forces us.” What is that something, that force, if it is not to be discovered but rather created? It is not a recognizable image of thought. It is not preconceived, nor is it presupposed. It is not an picture based on identification, classification, or hierarchy. Those are the images that constrain thought, or constrain thinking of thought differently. Instead it opens up a new approach toward experiencing life. We are not at the center of existence as human beings. We are subjects among other active subjects or participants in the world (human, non-human, organic, non-organic), not of other objects. And Cappanawalla mountain exists as a part of that productive process just as humans do. It is affected by the forces, and speeds, and intensities, just as we are. Its movements are just much slower than ours, through its creation 500 million years ago, to its reshaping from volcanic activity 15 million years ago, to glaciation in the past 150,000 years, and various stages of tectonic plate movements, erosion, and sedimentation that continues today, and will continue for millions of years to come.

This is not a composition of stable entities. It is a processes of interaction between disparate elements forming a compound of encounters and relations. It resists attempts to grasp or define what it is, but rather it is more productive to approach such a process with

a question like “what can it do?” or “how does it function?” As humans we are not just an assemblage of the contingent virtual processing of genes becoming a being, but also the contingent processes of becoming that emerges through social, cultural, and political dynamics, and which alter and shape of the ongoing assemblage of a person. Thus, such an emergence is not simply between physical entities. Rather they are the interactions of systems and structures, the words and meanings, the desires and expressions that shape not just *our* existence, but the existence of everything in the world. The contingencies involved with these interactions are always a continual, emergent process with indeterminate boundaries. They are always in motion, always changing, always emerging—constantly enacting and shifting from within.

My experience, and my experiment traversing Cappanawalla every day was a convergence of a multiplicity of encounters. But it was not an attempt to converge art and life, as I may have tried to achieve eight years ago when I first climbed the mountain. In fact I distinctly remember standing atop the peak plateau at that time back in 2008, waiting for something to happen, just as I had been doing 1000 feet below sitting in my studio earlier in the morning. I was waiting for art to be discovered, as if it was a transcendent entity that simply required me to look hard enough, or to concentrate more intently to locate it. I find it interesting that back then I felt that this struggle took place on that peak, as if I felt that it required a positioning from above to have a full panoramic view of the structure of the world down below, or perhaps as if that would offer a completeness in thought that I needed for discovering what I was looking for in art. That is why so little actually did happen on Cappenawalla eight years ago. I was searching for unity, for cohesiveness, for order, rather than embrace *unknowing*—to undo what I think I

know, or what I think I ought to know. In fact, the most productive process is to acknowledge that we *do not know*, or perhaps, simply not even paying attention to knowledge in such a situation.

The two most direct paths from the village to the studio are very distinctive routes. The wooded loop of the Burren Way has arrows spray-painted on the stones and wooden posts to assure that one is going in the right direction. Trails of stones piled a foot or so high along the edges act as subtle guardrails to ensure that one stays on track. Like any city, town, or rural village, the paths are constructed to create order out of chaos—to territorialize the overwhelming vastness of the space. Even the field of limestone debris that covers Mount Cappanawalla shows hints of that territorialization. Trails in the heavy grass muddied-worn direct a common passage from hikers in the recent past. Some rocks seem to have shifted into a trail formation, hinting at intentional repositioning by humans over the years to offer a less treacherous passage. Or perhaps this appearance it is just my rigid image of thought envisioning and sensing order where there is none. Maybe I am so conditioned to search for spaces of territorialization, spaces of comfort amidst such openness, that I create the illusion of a pathway that seems most convenient, or most familiar.

But this time, eight years later, I resist taking that path, or at least the route that I think I see—the one that is already carved out for me. I am exploring a different passage. One that is unfamiliar, where the virtual emerges through experience, through experimentation, through letting go of my desperately tight grip on needing to know. Potentiality emerges through this openness to transformation—through becoming something else, something new. My daily experiences on Cappanawalla become one of

many exercises of relinquishing that subjective perspective that says “I am the one who creates.” Instead, the question is changed perhaps to “what might the world be like such that things that were not there before can come into existence?” (May, 2013). With this attitude, the perspective shifts from one that is subjective to one that is ontological—a creative ontology.

The intention of these most recent treks up Cappanawalla was not to seek out or discover of some creative thing pre-existing or waiting to be found. My experience was that of a different kind of creation—one that emerges from pure difference rather than recognition. There are potentialities that are real but they exist in a way that cannot be directly apprehended through perception. They have not been actualized, and they may never be actualized. That is the great challenge of artmaking, of learning, of living, of thought. Sometimes that potentiality emerges into something that we can grasp or understand. Often times it is never actualized in experience. The only way we can continue to embrace becoming is through creating more experiences, to continue to ‘roll the dice’ in thinking differently, and always looking for new ways to experiment in the world.

We can continue to know what everyone else knows, and remain on the paths that have been organized for us. At least that is comfortable. Or we can carve a slit in fence, or scale it, or burrow under it and take a thousand paths into the unknown, the unfamiliar, the unsettling. We can continue to create compositions of experimenting in experience by embracing a push toward chaos, and toward the creation of new paths—ones that might draw out something from the realm of infinite potentials into the realm of our actual

experiences. What if we embrace play, and chance and risk? What if we push towards undoing knowledge to create a different way of living?

This is a shift toward an aesthetic thought that is one in the same with artmaking. It embraces the courage and persistence as the process continually and productively breaks down, and we learn, as Beckett (1995) says, we learn to “fail better” (p. 132). And we continue to fail better until the potentialities and intensities of artmaking, of thinking, of living emerge and actualize something new, something that *does* work. This is an embracing of the repetition of the productive elements of past failures that create collective encounters of experience in learning. It is the past embedded in the present and fossilized into the new.

The fragile ground of scattered, limestone fragments present a newly familiar sensation of balance, placement, and pivot. The field appears so stable, but each step is a toss of the dice. Some of the surface is firmly embedded into the ground, but most of the stones lay atop one another, hinged as precariously as they were deposited from melting glaciers thousands of years ago. It seems like a treacherous passage, with jagged rocks teetering atop one another, hundreds of pounds, tilting to another side with a dense clunking sound that I have not heard anywhere else in my life.

Like so many sounds, smells, and feelings of the unique chilly-humid atmosphere seeping into my skin and bones, the experience of physical embodiment is specific to the Burren—unfamiliar in the years since I last visited, but instantly and eerily familiar when I returned. Exploring the Burren is like encountering a force much like that ‘something in the world that makes us think.’ It is impossible to grasp, it can only be intuited, it can only be palpated.

I have never been more productive in an artistic practice as I had in those four weeks at the artist residency in my return to Ballyvaughan. I surmise it is because I was unable to distinguish where everyday life ended and art began, or vice versa. I am convinced that is the result of specific kind of attitude, which opened all of my everyday experiences into artmaking, and open all of my art practice into life. There was no trick to it. The solution was not simply to go live in Ireland for a bit, or get out into nature. In fact, I spent hours each day in the studio. I spent hours walking through villages and the nearby city of Galway. I made paintings and drawings, I made sculptures and installations, I made photographs, I made site-specific works, I made performances, I made videos. I made them in so many of the places and spaces that I visited. I made at least one artwork a day, an entwinement of art and life.

The only explanation I have as to why this experience was so different is that I didn't stop to think about whether the activity I was engaged in was considered art or life. I just did it! It was unselfconscious. It was not about categorizing one thing or another. It was not about worrying if what I was doing would amount to anything—whether it was something that could be called art, or something that could be called time well spent in life. Those thoughts did not cross my mind. Looking back now, if I were to attribute defining categories or identification to what I made, I could certainly say that many of the projects that I made did not emerge really *as art*—not in the form of a finished, sensible or presentable outcome. But there were so many elements that kept repeating as I continued to experiment. The productive residue of the failures eventually became something else. It might have been something that may be called everyday life, or

something that might have been called art. I am avoiding calling it anything, at least for now.

These were all ideas that I had been exploring prior to this artist residency in Ireland. This was not some magical epiphany that unfolded over four weeks. The questions for art and teaching remain still as they did when I left. But in order to move forward in continuing to address those questions I had to experiment for myself. I have to practice what I am teaching. And, as the form of this practice-based writing now makes evident, I have not let go of engaging destabilizing situations that open up the risk, the fear, and the unfamiliar. But it also opens up the new, the invigorating, the *life*—as one with research, as one learning, as one with art.

CHAPTER 1

NAVIGATIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS

I chose to begin this dissertation with a personal reflection, not simply as a mode of recounting my experiences climbing Cappanawalla during a recent artist residency in Ireland, but to convey how the experience itself operates as a conceptual foundation that encapsulates the research questions I explore through this study. As I write this introduction I have been traveling back in time in my mind to the various moments throughout my life in which I have confronted obstacles and resistances as an artist. Each of these moments presented a crossroads of sorts, creating an awakening of self-awareness in artmaking—whether it was my astoundingly clear first memory of consciously attempting to ‘stay within the lines’ while drawing in a coloring book at the age of five; or whether it was the magical realization of the kind of limitless forms that intentional experiments in abstraction could create for the readily active imagination of a ten year old; or whether my all-too-often meandering and scattered interests in art as a teenager (which led to an alarming number of unfinished assignments) earned uncharacteristically mediocre grades in art class for the majority of my high school years. Regardless of whether or not I realized these moments were consequential at the time, each experience produced lingering questions about how I might navigate and negotiate the structuring effects of order that seeks in manifold ways to contain the seemingly infinite possibilities of chaos in artmaking.

These are questions that I am still wrestling with to such a profound degree that I am dedicating this study to addressing them, not so much in terms of how we might describe and explain these navigations and negotiations, but rather how they can be put to work more effectively to create a new mindset for teaching and learning in art education. While there will be sections of this dissertation that continues to rely on personal reflections of significant moments in my own life in artmaking, I wish to take a distanced approach for the vast majority of this study by examining how contemporary artists have addressed similar questions in their artmaking process, particularly through the art practice experiences of Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian. As a way of conceptualizing these lived experiences, I turn to the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, whose theoretical concepts have challenged me over the past several years to consider and reconsider my own resistance and obstacles that I have created through my habits of thought as an artist, student, educator, and researcher.

I acknowledge that this struggle is not one that has a determinable outcome, nor is it stable or fixed. Instead this is a process of active *becoming* that involves ceaseless consideration of my own habitual resistance as ways in which I might continue to open up to the transformational processes of Deleuze and Guattari's life-affirming concepts. Becoming is never a process that operates in terms of beginnings or ends, but rather it functions as movements and flows emerging from the middle, or as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) calls it, a *milieu*, or an environment that is not chaos, but order has yet to form within it (p. 21). At the same time it leads to the central problem, which is one of praxis: how one might navigate and negotiate this productive process in the world? As such, it would be productive not to consider this point in the study as a beginning, but rather as a

continuation of traversals and entwinements, through which a new mindset emerges as part of an ongoing dynamic and creative transformation in artmaking and art education.

Statement of the Problem

Artmaking is an ongoing negotiation and navigation of the forces of order and chaos. It has the potential to emerge in an infinite number of ways. Yet, one thing that all forms of artmaking share is the creation of something new or something that was not there before. In asking how this production of an artwork comes about, this study seeks to reframe the problem away from privileging the artist who creates, and instead address it anew by asking: what brings about the conditions that allow for such a creation to take shape? This shifts the problem from one of a human-centric, artist subjectivity to one of ontology (May, 2013). This does not efface the subject from the artmaking process. Instead, by focusing on the conditions through which art is made, it positions the subjectivity of the artist as always becoming through an attentiveness to the boundaries of order and chaos, in which experimentation with unknown forces and intensities lead to the creation of new terrains of thinking. As we will examine in this study, the emergence of thought and the generation of thinking are two distinct powers of creation in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy. It is a radically repositioning of the creation of the power of thought, and by extension the power of thinking, through what Deleuze and Guattari call the *encounter* with the unknown. The encounter is what creates the conditions for becoming of new cartography for thinking through artmaking, and it is the key concept that shapes this study.

While resituating this problem is significant as a new avenue through which we might gain a greater understanding of the artmaking process, this reframed perspective

generates substantial implications for teaching and learning through art. In an art educational setting, teachers and students alike can embrace a new mindset for learning through artmaking when the problem becomes reframed to an ontological and inherently creative perspective. As such, it explores a ruptures within teaching and learning in which the artist's becoming offers a fluid positioning of subjectivity, which allows for greater openness to experimental and experiential encounters with the unknown in an artmaking process.

We will examine the problem at the core of this study through both a philosophical inquiry and a set of case studies. Through a philosophical inquiry, we will examine Deleuze's (1994) core philosophy related to the encounter as a force that motivates a pre-subjective emergence of thought—a first power of thought. We will then turn to Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts related to the *nomad*, which is a productive, paradoxical engagement of constraining and mobile processes that engender the encounter and gives rise to the potential of new cartographies of *thinking*—as a second power of thought—through which creation and learning takes form in artmaking. We will also explore the ways in which art and philosophy independently create responses to order and chaos, and how both of these divisions of labor in thought can productively and detrimentally intersect and interfere with each other in through this process.

Through the case studies, this overall study will explore the relationships between these philosophical concepts and the process of two contemporary artists, Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian, based on interviews and essays related to their practices. Finally, we will explore a case study that reflects on my own practice as an art student

several years ago, which revisits the problem as it is refocused through the various lenses of the chapters of the study, and explores its implications for creating nomadic encounters in teaching and learning through artmaking.

Research Questions

This study is driven by three major research questions: How do artists' practices navigate and negotiate the forces and intensities of chaos and the structuring order of the world to create the conditions for the emergence of something new in the artmaking process? How does this process in artmaking function as an art-based counterpart to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts related to the encounter? How might art educators consider the implications of these practices in creating foundation for teaching and learning through which new mindsets might emerge for teachers and students to experiment with the material experiences of these concepts through artmaking? We will address these questions through an analysis of the philosophical concepts of Deleuze and Guattari to offer a comprehensive qualitative study that will reposition conventional ideas of artists' practices into new nomadic encounters of thinking through artmaking and art education.

The Methods of the Study

This study will take shape through two primary research methods: a qualitative philosophical inquiry and the case study. Eleanor Stubley (1992) describes the philosophical inquiry as a method of study in which "philosophy seeks to identify and evaluate the lenses through which we construct experience," and as a mode of inquiry that "exposes the concepts, ideas, and assumptions underlying our constructions" (p. 44).

By utilizing these lenses that critically expose our assumptions, we can create new perspectives of understanding experience.

Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical project is to challenge conventional modes of thinking. Deleuze's earlier work from *Difference and Repetition* (1994) reveals a radical perspective on the emergence of thought through the encounter, which creates a *field of problems* that exposes our reliance on the habitual *image of thought*, and posits its implications as leading toward how we might live our lives more effectively. Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) elaborates on the encounter as a concept to be put to work to create a new kind of thinking in life that is nomadic through our movement in space, time and in thought. Their final book *What is Philosophy* (1994) explores the relationship between art, philosophy, and science. They frame art as the creation of *sensations* on a plane of composition, and philosophy as the creation of *concepts* on a plane of immanence. The two planes cannot be one in the same—art cannot create concepts, and philosophy cannot create sensations—but they can engage each other through productive nomadic encounters. In this study, we will observe how Deleuze and Guattari's various concepts provide a philosophical framework through which artists and art educators can explore new terrains of thinking and production through an active experimentation of creative encounters with artmaking.

The second method of inquiry for this dissertation is the case study. The first two case studies examine the practices of internationally renowned artists, Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian. The third case study explores two of my own artmaking experiences as an art student that had a profound impact on me in relation to artmaking and learning through an art educational setting. The case studies function as a method of

engaging the practices of contemporary artists and art education as art-based counterparts of the philosophical inquiry of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of the nomad. It is useful to refer to the term *counterpart* in relating Deleuze and Guattari's notions of art and philosophy, which, as we will explore in depth in chapter four, is a way to remain consistent with the philosophers' assertion that each mode of inquiry operates through different divisions of labor in thought.

Additionally, the intention of this study is not to search for ways in which art serves as an illustration or description of particular philosophical concepts. Instead, it is important to view these transformative concepts as inherently innovative processes of the emergence of thought and creating the conditions for thinking differently. Art educators can benefit from turning to artists as embracing the creative morphogenesis of experimental and experiential encounters, which in turn can be put to work in new transformative processes within learning environments in artmaking. The implications of the case studies reveal these processes inherently taking shape in artists' practices, but through varying approaches and outcomes. Thus, the case studies are not examples of artists mirroring Deleuze and Guattari's concepts, but rather they demonstrate how artists present an infinitely rich variety of perspectives for creating new encounters in artmaking, and how this unpredictably diverse and generative spirit can be pulled forth and in many situations *emerge with* environments of teaching and learning.

The case studies include three examples of such artist encounters. As such, the qualitative descriptive accounts of these practices are not intended to yield any universal truths of how artists think and work. The small sample size demonstrates that these case studies are only intended to provide information from within their specific contexts, and

how such particular *moments of encounter* through an artmaking process serve as an art-based counterpart to the concepts discussed in the philosophical inquiry. Furthermore, the intention of the case studies is to examine how their analysis, in conjunction with the findings of the philosophical inquiry, might be beneficial in creating new modes of inquiry in an art educational setting. The purpose of these two methods of research working together is to engage in a conceptual analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical project as a way to offer insight on how artists create an environment of learning and creation through their practices, and how this might benefit art educators in creating similar conditions of experimentation in artmaking.

Nomadic Entwinements with Deleuze and Guattari

The intention of this dissertation is to turn to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concept of the encounter—both as a generation of thought and as a tool to be *put to work* as triggering a nomadic emergence of thinking—as a mode for creating innovative lines of inquiry into the artmaking process, and thus presenting a new mindset within art education. This study contends that Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts are tremendously useful for exploring and articulating new perspectives in artmaking and art education in a way that repositions the subject of the artist away from the position of a transcendent creator, and it reconfigures the subject of the teacher away from the position of the transcendent figure that bestows knowledge. Instead their locations both move toward a subject that is always becoming through active experimentation with encounters that negotiate the balance between order and chaos, and creates the conditions for the emergence of new realms of thinking in artmaking and art education.

Deleuze and Guattari present a radical alternative to constructivism concerning the emergence of thought. In order to understand more clearly the concepts of the encounter, chapter two will explore Deleuze's (1994) framework for this innovative position on thought, which challenges the conventional philosophical views of learning, education, and thought that dominated the 20th century. This repositioning of the emergence of thought privileges the experiential encounter through *virtual difference* over a constructivist positioning of negative difference based on identity and representation.

With this philosophical foundation of the encounter in place, chapter three will explore the various concepts associated with Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) notion of the nomad. It will address the many conceptual forms—qualitative multiplicity, the rhizome, lines of flight, deterritorialization, molecularity, smooth space—that Deleuze and Guattari present as an entwinement of nomadic processes working through the encounter.

In chapter four, we will return to Deleuze (2004) and Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) notion of art as the production of a *plane of composition*, and how it relates to philosophy as a *plane of immanence*. This analysis is pivotal in addressing what Deleuze and Guattari see as a problem with many Modern Art movements of the 20th century—particularly Conceptual Art emerging in the 1960s. Most contemporary art in the late 20th century and early 21st century is intrinsically entwined with questions spawning from conceptualism's legacy. The intention of chapter four is to *work through* those questions and posit ways in which this tension between Deleuze and Guattari's idea of art might be reconciled with contemporary artist practices after Conceptual Art.

Chapter five presents the first case study, which is an analysis of Taiwanese-American artist Tehching Hsieh's first one-year durational performance informally titled "Cage Piece" from 1978 to 1979. The first part of this study will examine Hsieh's early career living in Taiwan in relation to Deleuze's (1994) philosophical notion of thought emerging as a pre-subjective encounter with the world, as articulated in the philosophical inquiry of chapter two. We explore how Hsieh's life as an artist was constantly becoming as a navigation and negotiation of the environmental constraints of his dogmatic image of thought and the liberating experimental and experiential immersion through Deleuze's concept of difference. The second part of this case study will analyze Hsieh's first 'mature' performance artwork "Cage Piece," which was enacted after he moved to New York City. Here we will turn to chapters three and four of the philosophical inquiry to examine Hsieh's performance as an entwinement of freedom and constraint, and eschews the rigid idea-based processes of his earlier Conceptual Art-influenced works in favor of a paradoxical "opening of subjectivity" through thinking, triggered by an extreme mode of self-imposed encounters with art and life (Heathfield, 2009, p. 27).

Chapter six presents the second case study, which is an analysis of American artist Nina Katchadourian's installation artwork *Natural Car Alarms* (2002) as well as her ongoing series of works called *Seat Assignments*, which she began in 2010. This case study will focus largely on the deployment of nomadic encounters as described in chapter three, as well as an nomadic reconfiguration of Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) notion of art, as laid out in chapter four. Katchadourian's work explores play as an interaction of freedom and constraints in thinking and production generated by obstacles and limitations organizing systems and structures.

Chapter seven provides a self-reflective case study that analyzes two of my own artmaking experiences as an art student, both of which were produced in response to course assignments. The first example, from an art class informally called “Research and Development,” explores how we can engage in nomadic processes in artmaking without referring directly to Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts. The second example, from an art education class called “Artmaking as Encounter,” examines what happens when Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts are considered and put to work in an artmaking process. Both examples are significant moments of artistic development that still resonate to this day and have served as an inspiration for my research in art education to venture into the direction of this study.

Chapter eight concludes the study by presenting the implications for a new concepts or *principles* for art education that I call the *nomadic teaching and learning in art*. It will continue to examine an art educational setting at the university level, and addresses issues related to the systems and structures of higher art education, or ‘art schools.’ It investigates how art schools have generally developed over the past fifty years, through the first-year foundations programs to upper-level undergraduate and graduate education in the United States. The core issue explored through this chapter is the organizing structure of general education and art market (or ‘art world’) forces shaping contemporary art school settings at the university level. In these conventional art school curriculums the concentration of teaching is directed toward creates rigid habits of thought through teaching skills and techniques on one hand, and turning to art history and contemporary art examples as prior images on the other hand—both modes rely on teaching and learning that is determined by repetition of the same.

The study concludes with the presentation of principles of nomadic teaching and learning in art, setting up a new foundations in art for a forward-directed nomadic cartography, which privileges an education of problem-creation through self-experimentation that pulls forth new expressions of sensation in material or lived experiences. In the spirit of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts, nomadic teaching and learning is never defined by prescriptive instructions, but rather it is an environment through which the various manifestations of nomadic encounters detailed throughout this study can be put to work in practice in an art education that is future-driven toward new expanses of thinking to come.

My own writing in this dissertation refers to the nomadic process of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts, which is an exploration of how they construct and reconstruct the world, and by extension, how they are put to work as art-based counterparts through specific artist practices as well as teaching and learning experiences in art education. However, it is important to note that to the best of my knowledge neither of the two artists featured in the case studies, Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian, have referred to Deleuze and Guattari's concepts by name as a source of philosophical inspiration or information for their practices. As for my self-reflective case study, the examples of my artmaking from several years ago arose at a time when I was only vaguely familiar with Deleuze and Guattari and had only heard of two or three of their concepts.

Thus, instead of calling their concepts, tools, procedures, or calling their practices 'Deleuzoguattarian', the artists included in this study use other terminology—such as *obstruction*, *play*, or *rules*—that reflect and extend the synonymous nature of Deleuze

and Guattari's dispersal of similar conceptual terms. This is because nomadic encounters and processes are fundamental to thought, life, and the actions and behaviors of phenomena in the world. Artists are often working through these very operations without directly acknowledging or even having an awareness of them as Deleuze and Guattari's concepts. This is very simply due to the fact that these processes have always existed in the world. This gets to the core of the functioning of nomadic processes; they are, and always have been, working in the world, long before *A Thousand Plateaus* was written. However, this is exactly the philosophical endeavor for Deleuze and Guattari: combing for *minor* histories of philosophy that go against the grain of conventional philosophical practices, which they feel detrimentally focus merely on describing and explaining rather than creating concepts. This is why Deleuze and Guattari strive for an affirmative philosophy that seeks to create rather than to deconstruct or even critique. Thus, they affirm the forward-thinking potential of an intensive entwinement with concepts in the history of philosophy that they view to be "Interesting, Remarkable, or Important" in the sense that they are productive and useful for creating new concepts, and thus they oppose a philosophy that is descriptive and reifying of constraining habits of thought (Deleuze, 1994, p. 82-83).

The navigation and negotiation of the forces of order and chaos in artmaking is an unpredictable undertaking. As Deleuze and Guattari (1994) observe, "sometimes forces blend into one another in subtle transitions, decompose hardly glimpsed; and sometimes they alternate or conflict with one another" (p. 186). It encapsulates the recurring theme of this study that demonstrates an often paradoxical entwinement of seemingly opposing and contradictory forces—order and chaos, constraint and freedom, nomadic and

sedentary, the rhizome and the tree-root, logos and nomos, striated and smooth, territorialization and deterritorialization, molar and molecular—in which each conceptual pairing requires a dynamic and emergent co-presence and interplay to open up to a productive transformation of rigid habits and organizational structures of thinking. As such, I reiterate that new spaces of teaching and learning must be opened through experiencing and experimenting with these conceptual processes *in practice*. It is through this material practice of lived experience that embraces the encounter and creates the affirmative potential of constant disruption, rupturing, and stimulation of an active becoming that traverses the normalizing discourses in art education. But before these concepts can be considered for their transformative qualities in practice, we must rethink the *activity of thinking* in a radically new way—one that privileges the creation of the new rather than a presupposed image of the world. In the next chapter I will lay out the philosophical framework for reconsidering thought and thinking through an event of the encounter rather than as a dogmatic image that is based on identity and representation. This first step will set the tone for a shifting mindset away from a rigid system of preconceived notions, and toward to a nomadic cartography of a truly creative emergence of thought and a transformative becoming of subjectivity.

CHAPTER 2

ENCOUNTERING THE DOGMATIC IMAGE OF THOUGHT

In this chapter I will introduce Deleuze's notion of the encounter, and its relationship to the key concepts of the emergence of thought as presented in his earlier solo writing, particularly in *Difference and Repetition* (1994). We will examine why these philosophical concepts are radically different approaches to the prevailing constructivist frameworks of subjectivity, which culminated in the 20th century through structuralist and poststructuralist theory. We will then explore the core concepts of difference as intensities within a realm of virtual—but real—existence that compose the field of potentiality through the encounter, which triggers thought and opens up a becoming of thinking in the actual realm of meaning-making. Finally, we will see how Deleuze's philosophy of the creative potential of the encounter productively challenges our preconceived image of thought by embracing lived experience as a milieu for experimentation in engendering a destabilized thinking that opens up the potentiality for the creation of the new. This chapter is significant for two reasons. First, it creates a different foundation for subjectivity, one that emerges through a radical encounter that pushes thought to its limits. This is crucial for creating a conceptual framework that articulates how artists navigate and negotiate the conditions that create new magnitudes of thinking through artmaking. It is particularly vital in engaging in a mindset for how teaching and learning settings can become conceptualized as a milieu of experimentation

through a lived experience embraces the contingencies of the unknown in its creative transformation and challenges conventional habits of thought in art education. Second, this chapter will produce a conceptual framework for chapter three, which through Deleuze's collaborative writing with Guattari, presents the encounter as a nomadic process that is experimentally and experientially put to work.

Assumptions About Learning

If we take an example of a conventional classroom setting, we might say that there are teachers who have already learned concepts and it is their task to pass such concepts along their students. May (2005) suggests several assumptions to this common form of learning. Between the teacher and the student, there is the assumption that the teacher knows the information in a 'correct' way to be able to transfer it to the student. There is also the assumption that the teacher is being clear in articulating the concept, and the student is apprehending it in the way that the teacher intended. Thirdly, there is the assumption that the concept will be memorized by the student and retained as knowledge.

These examples are all surface assumptions in which the student is expected to learn what the instructor is teaching. Additionally, May discusses a deeper, more philosophical assumption based on this form of learning which creates what Deleuze (1994) calls the "image of thought" (p. 131). This image involves the identities, categories, and hierarchy of the transfer of information to from the teacher to the student:

It is the assumption that what is to be learned comes in discrete packets of identities. There are particular *some things* that need to be known. These *some things* may be related to one another or they may not. In either case, they are independent enough from one another to be isolated each to a sentence, a

paragraph, or a chapter. These somethings are then represented by the sentences spoken by the teacher or professor, and then arrive in your ear or on your paper.

(May, 2005, p. 111)

Effective learning in this sense requires that the identities imparted hold strong and are repeatable by the student. This form of learning is based on the presupposition that there are identifiable objects of knowledge that preexist to be discoverable, and we can achieve a direct transfer of this knowledge through the conventional teacher/student exchange described above.

In other words, through this model of learning we see a teacher student relationship in which knowledge is transferred as preconceived, graspable, and identifiable objects. If all goes well—if the teacher knows the information and imparts it correctly and clearly, and if the student apprehends the knowledge as the teacher intended, and that knowledge is then retained by the student—then the circle is complete. Knowledge has been passed from teacher to student, which can then be passed along once again, continuing the lineage of carrying on information through generations of educational learning through a *repetition of the same*.

A Different Kind of Learning

Deleuze's philosophical project seeks to challenge these fundamental assumptions of learning based on this conventional transfer of knowledge in terms of discovering or mirroring preexisting, identifiable phenomena in the world. This is one of the major themes of the study in terms of creating a new mindset of teaching and learning. Instead of thinking of learning as something that is conveyed by a direct line of transferring identifiable objects of knowledge, Deleuze (1994) presents a way of learning that is

enabled through an immersion into a “problematic field” (p. 165), that connects the realm of “actual” existence with the “reality of the virtual” (p. 211). But before we address those concepts, I want to set the tone for how Deleuze approaches learning by presenting a familiar experience for most of us in life, and how that process of learning differs from the example of the conventional teacher/student exchange of knowledge.

Deleuze (1994) uses swimming as an example of articulating this form of *differential learning* in relation to a direct transfer of knowledge (p. 165). Those of us who have learned how to swim would most likely recall that such a skill is not acquired in a classroom or by instruction given outside of the water. There is a minimal amount of information that can be conveyed by an instructor to the student who is learning how to swim. The instructor might be able to use words and imitable motions to describe the mechanics of swimming— for example, keeping your head down, back straight, arms bent, or legs kicking. Those instructions are perhaps quite helpful in refining proper form, but they will not teach the student how to keep afloat and propel herself forward. There is a different kind of learning involved with swimming that connects what Deleuze (1994) calls “distinctive points” of the body with those corresponding points of the water (p. 165). This forms a “problematic field” through which “the threshold of consciousness” becomes “adjusted to our perceptions of the real relations” (p. 165). However, these problems that are presented are not identifiable, nor are they tied to any corresponding solution. Problems, in this sense, are not grounded in representation, but rather they arise to *push thought to its limits* as it is confronted with what is unfamiliar and unknown to previous experiences.

As such, Deleuze (1994) insists that “learning always takes place in and through the unconscious,” which allows consciousness to emerge through the conjugation of distinctive points in the field of problems (p. 165). The swimmer experiments with her body through an immersion with the water in the sea. While any description that the instructor offers in a lesson might point the swimmer in the right direction, the actual learning is not through a conscious apprehension of information, but rather through an unconscious, experiential and experimental interaction between various functions of the body and sea.

Similar to Deleuze’s swimming metaphor, I recall my discovery of two different ways of learning about painting as a child through my experience with the famous American television program *The Joy of Painting* hosted by Bob Ross. In the program, the mild-mannered Ross would softly and broadly talk through various techniques in creating imaginary versions of realistic landscape scenes. He would discuss the kinds of brushes to use, the colors of paint and the variety of mixtures and solutions to create a certain color and texture combination, the hierarchy of layers (thick over thin), and the different application of marks (short dabs, concise strokes, or broad sweeps). It was a how-to guide to making a perfect traditional landscape painting. The viewer at home was encouraged work along step-by-step with Ross as he executed the painting in 22 minutes. As an adolescent I would watch the shows over and over, but I would not painting along. Through this observation, I learned of certain ‘rules’ for painting: how mix colors, add the right dilution of oil or turpentine, load a brush with paint, dab the canvas with the brush, and so on. However, I never *truly learned* how to paint until I experimented with the materials on my own. What I did learn was impossible to convey through the

instructions on *The Joy of Painting*, and that involved the subtle movements and flows that can only be inferred through a lived experience of *doing it myself*. It involved the ineffable moments that I had acquired through repetition of a lived experience of mark-making with painting. This was the immersion into the problematic field, which presented entirely new sensations through painting—of pressure, intensity, speed and slowness, rhythm, and flow. These are elements of learning that can only be *sensed* and learned through experience and not through instructional teaching.

Thus, the question for Deleuze (1994) is not one of representation as imitation or mirroring, but rather through an actively shared relationship of experience: “we learn nothing from those who say ‘Do as I do’... our only teachers are those who tell us to ‘do it with me’” (p. 23). We cannot just watch or listen and learn, but rather we must become immersed into the field of problems that only an active engagement with experience can present to our thought. This is the key element to understanding Deleuze’s particular notion of difference, and it becomes a recurring mantra for how this study creates a new milieu for art education as a shared endeavor of a lived experience in thinking through artmaking for teachers and students. It is not based on identity or repetition of the same, but rather it emerges through our experimentations in experiences as a repetition that generates something truly novel.

What is the Dogmatic Image of Thought?

Deleuze’s overall philosophical project focuses on how we might shift perspectives on approaching thought in various situations in life. Williams (2003) interprets the primary question of Deleuze’s ontology in terms of “how do we move forward best?; how do we learn best?” (p.4). To frame it in even simpler terms, I would

say that Deleuze is asking *how can we truly think differently?* This is a question that artists are inherently striving to address through their practice. Just as in life, artists often finds themselves in a balancing act between creating something new and different, while simultaneously remaining tethered to the constraints of the prevailing styles, trends, and expectations of the art market and the art world. In regard to all aspects of life, Deleuze (1994) is concerned with our reliance on what he calls an “image of thought” that is “a dogmatic, orthodox or moral image” (p. 131). This is a constraining mode of thinking insofar as we identify and classify our experiences with phenomena through pre-established structures of given concepts.

Deleuze (1994) implicates Kant’s notion of ‘common sense’ and ‘good sense’ as the driving force behind this image. Common sense involves the “partition of concepts” and a “hierarchization” (p.33). It functions as the faculty of recognition through representation. Deleuze uses the example seeing a cow in the meadow (p. 135). Common sense gives us the ability to recognize the cow based on how it matches our preconceived notion of a cow stored in our minds. Deleuze views “good sense” as the “measuring of subjects” to ensure that what one is seeing is a cow and not a cat or a chair (p. 131). In essence, good sense differentiates between various phenomena that we experience. For instance, if I apply a mixture of pigment and oil onto the surface of a canvas with a brush, I am making a painting and not a photograph or sculpture. Common sense tells me that there is a partition between painting, photography, and sculpture. Good sense tells me that what I am making is a painting and not a photograph or a sculpture.

Both common and good sense work together to *stabilize* our experiences in accordance with a dogmatic image of thought. This isn’t necessarily a problem for

Deleuze. If we did not possess common sense or good sense, we would not be able to adequately function in society. To a certain degree we need these classificatory senses, and we need the image of thought to be social beings. What troubles Deleuze isn't the fact that this structuring of phenomena exists. The complications arise when representation is so heavily relied upon as a given that it becomes impossible to see any phenomena functioning outside of the image of thought. In other words, it is not so much the image of thought that is the issue for Deleuze as much as it is that the image of thought has become dogmatic in our reliance on it in the way we think.

Instead, Deleuze presents the emergence of thought as ongoing, active, and creative, but from a position that avoids adhering to social constructivist binary oppositions that seek to stabilize us in particular categories of being. The question that concerns this study is focused on how we can disrupt and dissolve our dependency of thought that so heavily relies upon common sense and good sense. How is artmaking and art education falling into this trap of the dogmatic image of thought, and how can we break free from its captivity? These dualist perspectives such as semiology, structuralism, and deconstruction function as an expanded framework of Kant's notion of good sense and common sense, which position the subject as a cultural construction. Before we further examine Deleuze's creative philosophy of thought, I will provide a closer examination of 'social constructivism' as it developed and proliferated in the 20th century, and why Deleuze is intent on challenging its major philosophical tenets.

As the study of signs (words, images, and texts), semiological perspectives originate not in philosophy, but in anthropology. Saussure (1974) determines the relationship between signs (signifier and signified) as an arbitrary system that lays the

foundation for human subjectivity: “there are no pre-existing ideas, and nothing is distinct before the appearance of language” (p. 112). According to semiological perspectives, language is a transcendental ground upon which the subject is formed. Saussure presents the structure of language as built on negative differences, insofar as we can only recognize phonetic sounds in words based on what they *do not* sound like. For example, the word ‘boy’ is recognized in its place within language precisely because it is different from similar sounding words like ‘toy’ or ‘ploy’. This is how words acquire their arbitrary quality as signifiers—the phonetic quality of ‘boy’ has no direct relationship to the concept of ‘boy’. Thus, the meaning of a concept is determined by its linkage to an arbitrary, phonetically unique word (or sign), and its position in differential relation to other words in a language system. As such, the negative difference of signifiers is what produces meaning in language.

Postwar France became the epicenter of the rise of structuralism, which expanded Saussure’s semiotic roots through the application of linguistic concepts to the social sciences. Levi-Strauss (1974) continued to develop an anthropological examination of semiology, Lacan (1966) applied structural concepts to psychoanalysis, and Althusser (1971) developed structuralist theories based on Marxism. As Best and Kellner (1991) observe, “structures were governed by unconscious codes or rules, as when language constituted meaning through a differential set of binary opposites, or when mythologies codified eating and sexual behaviour according to the systems or rules and codes” (p. 18). Through structuralism, the organization of society and culture could be analyzed through its underlying “structures, rules, codes and systems” (Best and Kellner, p. 19). This asserts that only way we can make sense of the world is through the identification of

differential relations between signs and the closed system of social structures that result from such classification and hierarchical organization.

The objective of structuralism is to create scientific methodology for the study of society and culture. On one hand it ushers in a new decentered conception of the subject, not as an autonomous, free-thinking individual, but rather one that is constituted as the effect of relations of language and social systems. In such a structuralist regime, human subjectivity becomes inherently determined by belatedness, insofar as we can only make sense of being human through the preexisting structuring of semiological or societal systems. This dismisses material forces in the world and experiences of the human body—and its senses—and instead privileges the human-constructed conceptual frameworks. In this respect, it is both humanist and anti-humanist. Signs are human creations, but since they are abstract and arbitrary they also construct human subjectivity as *given* or already determined.

The project of structuralism redefining human subjectivity has become a point of contention to poststructuralist theorists. Instead of positioning subjectivity strictly as a product of semiological and social systems, poststructuralists posited a contextual production of the subject, which as Best and Kellner (1991) observe, “stressed the dimensions of history, politics, and everyday life in the contemporary world which tended to be suppressed by the abstractions of the structuralist project” (p. 20). Best and Kellner further explain,

unlike the structuralists who confined the play of language within closed structures of oppositions, the poststructuralists gave primacy to the signifier over the signified, and thereby signaled the dynamic productivity of language, the

instability of meaning, and a break with conventional representational schemes of meaning. (p. 21)

Derrida's (1976) notion of difference as 'différance' unravels the limitations of structuralist systems and instead privileges the free play of signification. By positioning difference as deferral, Derrida asserts that no text is what it is intended to be. It always becomes a trace of itself and thus can never be fixed as an ultimate meaning within a semiological system. While deconstruction shares with Deleuze the intention to destabilize the authoritative semiotic structuring of our reality, it still remains lodged within the closed system of linguistic signification as the constitutive force for human subjectivity.

To Deleuze, structuralist, and poststructuralist theories give us a partial picture of our experiences in the world. The intention of Deleuze's philosophy of thought is not to reject these philosophical ideas based on semiological systems. Instead his philosophy endeavors to give resonance to assemblages of relations between heterogeneous bodies and expressions in the world. This involves *all* matter—the human and nonhuman bodily forces that form a dynamic interaction in the ongoing formation of human subjectivity. Deleuze's philosophy does not subordinate or efface the position of the human in the world. On the contrary, as we will see, Deleuze reinforces human subjectivity through an emergence of becoming through the unknown sensations of the encounter that confronts our image of thought and pushes it to its limits to force us to become a thinking subject. Subjectivity emerges as an assemblage of human and nonhuman relationships and interactions, though it is not approached through the conventional dualist ways that we have come to understand through structuralism and poststructuralism. Deleuze instead

reframes subjectivity in a fluid and connective relationship with the affective elements of the world that are both known to our common and good sense and known only as senses that lie beneath or behind the image of thought.

For Deleuze, the constructivist image of thought creates a closed system of problems that only privileges solutions. This is the heart of his *ontology of difference*. Deleuze's primary question concerns how we might acknowledge or "palpate" the sensations—the indecipherable forces and intensities that exist in the reality of the world—but are unable to be perceived through the structures of identification and classification (May, 2005, p. 20). What might happen if we created conditions through which we could explore the areas beneath the constraints of the dogmatic image of thought? How might it change the ways in which we approach our lives if we experimented with what else there might be, even if we are unable to empirically or cognitively recognize it?

Deleuze's Ontology of Creation

Deleuze's privileging of ontology would seem counter to his philosophical project, considering the conventional definition of the term as the study of *being*. Ontology in this sense assumes a universal or ultimate essence of human nature. The predominant philosophical theories of the 20th century, such as structuralism and post-structuralism, have focused on a rejection of ontology for the same reason that Deleuze might: it relies too heavily on representation and fixed relations of concepts.

To avoid this ontological trap, Deleuze's approach to ontology privileges *creation* over discovery. Discovery implies preconceived structures that are waiting to be apprehended by human faculties. It involves capturing concepts by fixing them into a

system of hierarchal categories. Instead of viewing phenomena through a lens of discovery by identification, Deleuze reconsiders ontology an active mode of *concept creation*. May (2005) views this perspective as one that changes the question or the equation involved with ontological thinking: “Such an ontology would not only invert the traditional relationship between creation and discovery. It would also invert the traditional relationship between identity and difference.” (p.18) Rather than seeing identity as an end-goal in an ontological project, Deleuze sees the ultimate failure that results from seeking conceptual stability as a starting point for his ontology of creation. Instead of acting as a stabilizing force, Deleuze’s philosophical ontology disrupts the fixed framework of identity in its creation of concepts. This study examines a kind of ontology that positions the artist, the teacher and the student in a new relationship with dynamic mobility of an *always emerging subject* rather than an essentialist notion of fixed identity in being. Thus, Deleuze’s philosophical project establishes an inverse of the ontological equation. Rather than suggesting a life that answers to the structural limitations of ontology, Deleuze *creates* an ontology that is responsive, malleable, and open.

Encounters in Thought and the Creation of Concepts

The primary focus of Deleuze’s (1994) creative ontology is thought: “Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but a fundamental ‘encounter’... it is opposed to recognition” (p. 139) Thinking is a creative provocation that emerges from thought: “to think is to create—there is no other creation—but to create is first of all to engender ‘thinking’ in thought” (Deleuze, 1994, p. 147) Deleuze’s concepts surrounding the emergence of thought and the active

engendering of thinking is founded not in the recognition or representation of good sense and common sense, but in a pre-subjective emergence of thought that generates a thinking—as a second order of thought—that is truly creative. For Deleuze, this emergence of thinking through pre-subjective thought replaces the dogmatic image of thought. It gives rise through a milieu of experience in which experimentation creates the conditions for thinking and the generation of subjectivity. In this respect, learning is not grounded as a transfer of knowledge, which reifies transcendental presuppositions. Rather, it takes shape through the event of the encounter.

Encounters can only be apprehended as pre-subjective *sensations* that are pulled forth from the indeterminate realm of chaos. Sensations are intensities, or *percepts* and *affects* that create a force that activate thought. Percepts are palpations or perceptions of the unrecognizable forces impinging from the unknown realm outside of actual experience. Affects, in this sense, are the capacities to affect and be affected. They are lines that cut through the image of thought and create new pathways, terrains, and modes of thinking that leave behind old tracings of habits in life and lead to new mappings of living toward the future. Thus, learning takes form as an emergence through the *event of the encounter*—the shock that forces thought to the threshold of its habitual images and toward the creation of new concepts that produce innovative expanses of thinking. This is why the encounter that occurs when we come into contact with the intensities and sensations is presented as a force. It jolts thought into thinking. Deleuze (1983) asserts that these forces “are exercised on (thought) in order to constrain it to think... A power, *the force of thinking*, must throw it into a becoming-active” (p. 108, emphasis original).

One example of this force that constrains thought to think is taken from my personal experience of artmaking, which occurred a few years ago when I was experimenting through my painting practice with forms and layers using commercial painter's tape. I was working through various ideas of hard edge abstract painting, a kind of abstraction that has taken many formal and conceptual modes of process throughout the 20th century and into recent contemporary practices. In this particular instance, I was making painterly marks that were loosely created by my hand and brush, and juxtaposing this process with marks that were made with the hard edge of the painter's tape, which created an impeccably straight line that would be impossible for the human hand to achieve. I had run out of the one-inch width painter's tape that I usually worked with, but I had some wider two-inch tape that I generally used for actual house-painting tasks. I quickly realized that this tape was too wide to work with on the canvas that I was painting, so I decided to tear the strip down the middle in order to use each side as a hard edge.

As I made the marks down the hard edge side of the tape, my eye kept catching the unique contours that the torn edge formed on the opposite side. I noticed how interesting it was that the tears had no ostensible pattern. Sometimes the tear would curve to the left, and other times it would meander to the right. However, in relation to the mark-making experiments I was exploring, the most interesting elements that resulted from this makeshift process were the fine details of the rough contours that the tear would leave in the edge of the tape. It was entirely accidental and unexpected as a material effect that I had never considered before, and it produced a *problem* that my preconceived thought about painting as forced to confront. My intention of these painting

was to engage in a kind of oppositional dialogue between the imprecise marks of the loose hand and the straight edge lines of the masking tape. My image of thought had processed these two modes of painting through common sense and good sense. Common sense tells me that there is a separation between painting by hand and painting with a hard edge created from painter's tape. Good sense tells me that what I am making involves two distinct processes of painterly mark-making—one of imperfection and one of precision.

The emergence of the torn edge was a disruption to my notion of common sense and good sense. It was somewhere in between the two processes. It wasn't quite the movement of my hand through painting, but rather the movement of my hands through tearing. Yet, it still added a masking quality that the hard edge line offered, which continued to conceal the mark-making edges created by my human hand. It was something new that pushed my habits of thought about painterly mark-making to a lines of thinking about how I might approach painting: what happens if the hard edges become torn? What happens if I start to make painterly marks over the torn edges rather than the hard edges?

This is one example of a very common form of encounter with productive *problem-creation* in armaking. I am constantly engaging in shifting habits of making painterly marks on the surface. If I am painting a repetition of marks on a canvas that are familiar to the point of automation, and the mark starts to make a new shape that I did not consciously intend to make, I have been confronted with a new form of texture, flow, rhythm, speed, and pressure that I have never experienced though my conscious image of thought. My thought has been pushed to its limits by an encounter, but I do not know

how to make sense of it. There is no way of apprehending in thought what this new mark has made unless I am forced to experiment with thinking as to what this could be. All of this could take shape in a split second. It could lead to a new way of mark-making, or it could be dismissed once my conscious thinking has determined that there is no reason to continue to pursue this path of inquiry. What is significant is that my image of thought has encountered something new—previously unthought and unseen sensations of affects and percepts—and it has forced thinking to emerge out of my thought that has been pushed to its limits.

In the example of the experience working with torn edges of painters tape, my newly constrained habits of thought opened up new modes of thinking with the material processes in relation to my experiments with marking lines in painting. But it also disrupted and thus opened up new approaches in thinking toward my common sense and good sense notions of the marks created by my hand and those created by a hard edge. It generated a shift in those preconceived ideas about lines. As a result, it created new spaces of entwinement between previously established habits of thought and novel and unfamiliar experiences triggering new terrains of thinking.

Semetsky (2006) thus articulates the affirmative and creative actions of the encounter as such that: “thinking takes place in the disjunction—that is, negativity or a cut—at a structural level—yet, in its functional sense, it performs a constructive, conjunctive role of a positive synthesis” (p.37). The intensities and sensations of the encounter are pre-conceptual building blocks of disorganized singularities in the chaotic realm of potentiality. They are not grasped through representation or identity, but rather through *intuition* or *tendency*. It is a *palpation* rather than a recognizable apprehension—

which is why it can only be *sensed* as a sensation and not as an identifiable apprehension. Triggered by the intensities and sensations of the encounter, thought faces a *field of problems* and it becomes actualized into thinking as experience and experimentation through the creation of concepts.

Semetsky (2004) calls this actualization of the creation of concepts “the leap, the breakthrough, the very differential” which is carved by what Deleuze calls a *line of flight* (p.444). For Deleuze (1988), thinking is not passive, but rather the encounter with intensities generates the conditions for which “one must form a transversal or mobile diagonal line” for new vistas of thinking to emerge (p. 22). In other words, thought is forced to think through the encounter with the sensations of chaos, which activate lines of flight. These lines stream pathways of sensations into the formation of concepts. They band together as *blocs of sensation*, which become the substance of the concept. This still takes form at the pre-conceptual level—at the level of intuition—which creates the conditions for thought individuating into the actual realm—the realm that Deleuze calls the *logic of sense*, or meaning-making (Semetsky, 2004, p. 439).

For Deleuze, concepts are not so much associated with the more conventional sense of the term as ‘a general notion, or idea’. They are more process-based than the formulation of a notion. As such, concepts “do not consist in knowing and is not inspired by truth... rather, it is attributes like Interesting, Remarkable, or Important that determine success or failure” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 82). Thus, what is crucial for Deleuze in the creation of concepts is not how they explain or describe preconceived ideas or presuppositions of conscious thought, but how experiences through thought leads to a creation of concepts and how productively they open thinking up to what was previously

unknown and unattainable in thought.

As such, the concept is inherently creative in its production of presubjective thought that is entirely new, which thus leads to new terrains of thinking through active meaning-making. This becomes of paramount significance for art education in terms of creating a mindset that thinks less through presuppositions such as considering what is 'true' and focuses more on directing a teaching and learning environment toward what we don't know or what we cannot apprehend through our habits of thought. Thus, the question arises concerning what kind of concepts we could create that might allow us to approach the unknown realm that is unattainable through our dogmatic image of thought.

Difference and Immanence

Importantly, concept-creation does not take shape in a vacuum. Concepts are always created in relation to other concepts along a vast indeterminable ground of relations and connections. This foundation is a plane of immanence, which is not simply a collection of concepts, but more akin to a net that is cast that slows the speeds of intensities in the creation of links between concepts. It is where the relationships between concepts are formed. This is also where Deleuze's notion of *difference* becomes vital, but it is not to be confused with the conventional notion of difference in terms of comparing identities of concepts and objects as not-same. Instead of focusing on understanding based on difference that is determined by identity through negation, Deleuze focuses on difference that is *difference-in-itself* or *virtual difference*, which inherently founds identity.

The notion of difference, in this respect, is the key component for separating constructivist notions of difference from and a new kind of thinking through philosophy

as *concept creation*. Deleuze's difference does not exist in any transcendental beyond of the world. It exists in the real, and thus it is immanent, but it lies beneath or behind identities. Returning to the example of the event of the encounter of a new form of mark-making in painting, the difference that triggered new thinking was not based on a negative binary opposition of 'this mark, and not that mark.' In other words, it is not a transcendental rule of common sense and good sense that differentiated one painterly mark from another. Rather it was one of real *immanent* experience, insofar as an encounter with a mark that was unfamiliar to my predetermined habit of thought that fixes what a painterly mark *is* or ought to be. This jolt brought about by the unfamiliar is thought encountering virtual difference. It engenders new thinking to create identity associated with the unknown mark. In this respect, Deleuze's notion of virtual difference reverses the identity-creating difference schema found in conventional ways of thinking through difference. For Deleuze, difference creates identity, but the difference is not manifest within those identities. Those identities are what we do capture through the representational image of thought, which is the on the surface. Thus, I cannot apprehend how virtual difference makes that new painterly mark difference. I can only *sense* what virtual difference is doing, and as such, it can only be accessed through a palpation and not through identification. Deleuze calls this the realm of the *virtual*. It is real, and not transcendent. It is immanent in this world, but it is not actual realm of recognition.

The Virtual, the Actual, and Becoming

We identify, classify, categorize, and establish hierarchy through representation in the realm of the actual. All phenomena that are eventually grasped in the actual realm originate through difference in the virtual realm of intensities as percepts and affects. The

virtual is just as real of a part of us as the actual; it is immanent. But the virtual is irreducible to identity, so we can only sense or palpate its existence as sensations. Deleuze (1994) also refers to the virtual as the realm that creates an “intensive field of individuation” (p. 251). This is contrasted with the extensive field, which exists in the actual realm of what we consciously experience and perceive. Crucially, the intensive field gives rise to the extensive experiences through thinking as a lived experience. Thus, the virtual is intensive, and the actual is extensive. Intensities are synonymous with difference-in-itself, ungraspable and unidentifiable in actuality. Only extensive processes of thought can be apprehended through the active process of thinking.

This leads the most vital emergent activity of Deleuze’s ontology: *virtual differences are always entwined with actual differences*. The virtual always gives rise to the actual, but what happens in the actual similarly can contribute to which virtual sensations are extracted. Because the virtual is actualized through experience, this emergence is always a *material* process. It always happens in the world, whether it is virtual or actual, the sensations are still in reality of immanence as opposed to transcendence. Returning to the example of the encounter of the new and unfamiliar painterly mark, thinking is an activity that takes place in the actual realm of meaning-making. It can only emerge as thought meets its threshold by the productive problem-creation of the shock of the encounter. If virtual difference were not real, there would be no potentiality for the sensations to materialize as a new painterly mark. However, had I not been making the actions of the painterly mark-making in the actual realm, there would be no way for the new contingently varied painterly marks to present itself as a problem and thus an encounter my thought. It took a material engagement and by

extension, to engender new thinking. Therefore, both virtual and actual processes are co-present in the emergence of the new.

This is why Deleuze (1994) describes the process from the virtual to the actual as “actualization of a potential,” “individuation,” or most notably, *becoming*, as a process “emerges like the act of solving a problem” (p. 246). Though May (2005) clarifies that this is not the solution to a problem, since through this process “the ontological field remains,” but rather the process of becoming from virtual to actual is “a solution *within* the problem” (p. 88). May’s example of genetics is key to articulating how the ontological field of the virtual remains through the process of becoming:

Think of a gene not as a set of discrete bits of information but instead as part of a virtual field of intensities that actualizes into specific concrete beings. The gene is not a closed system of pre-given information that issues out directly into individual characteristics. Instead, the genetic code is in constant interaction with a field of variables that in their intensive interaction generative a specific living being.

(May, 2005, p. 88)

Here we see how becoming involves a co-constitutive relationship and connection between the actual and virtual. They are *co-present* in one another in reality, rather than two separated realities. The infinite potentiality of the virtual is always intertwining with the finite individuated objects and phenomena of the actual. Furthermore, the events of the actual affect the potential becomings of the virtual. Some sensations become actualized, while others remain as infinite potential. The new painterly mark that was made emerged out of the infinity of potential forms of the virtual realm. The sensations of the virtual could have materialized as a combination of different hues, textures, lines,

contours, speed, slowness, pressure, intensity, flow, and so on. Those infinite variations are still real as affects and percepts, but they just have not been materialized or individuated in the actual realm. They remain as *virtual potentiality*.

Becoming emerges as a fundamental concept over the entirety of Deleuze's career. It takes shape as a process of thinking from virtual to actual in his earlier works. In later works it shifts to a more politically-minded mode of subject formation and transformation. Deleuze calls this *becoming-other*. I will explore this latter notion of Deleuzian becoming further in this chapter. But it is key to note that Deleuze's pre-subjective foundation of thought in immanence reveals the subject that is always being formed through all modes of becoming. This process of becoming, or individuation of concepts from virtual to actual, importantly creates the ongoing facilitation and formation of the subject. We are in a constant tug of war between the image of thought of organization and order in the actual realm, and the chaos of the speeds and intensities of sensations, or the percepts and affects of difference in the virtual realm.

At the level of difference, we must always "make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought" along the plane of immanence (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 37). We are constantly encountering the realm of the chaotic, the real, or the undifferentiated zone of affect, but we are also often inextricably compelled to make sense of this through representation. The event of the encounter shocks thought to face the intensities of percepts and affect into blocs of sensation through which we engage in an experiential and experimental creative emergence of thinking. Within the actual, meaning-making realm of the logic of sense, we utilize our good sense and common sense to function at the level of recognition, identity, and representation. These linguistic, cultural, and

semiotic elements of sense are necessary for our ability to function in culture. Again, Deleuze does not reject this way of constructivist thinking, but he does significantly distinguish this as the purview of the actual and not the virtual realm of thought. The virtual cannot be apprehended or identified through language, but can only be sensed. As an artist, the encounter that produced a problem to thought in the form of the new painterly marks created a new pathway for thinking, which quickly incorporated it into sense and meaning-making. However, as we will see in the next section, thinking is an ongoing engagement with encounters with virtual difference. It allows for new thinking to emerge and keeps habits of thought from stabilizing thinking through the identities, categories, and hierarchies of representation. New thinking alone is not enough because it can easily be captured by habit. As we will see, we must engage in a repetition of new thinking as a way to keep the actualization of difference active and avoid falling into the trap of relying on the reifying organization of these processes back into image of thought.

Most importantly, Deleuze's core philosophical endeavor is to lay out a conceptual ground that can be put to work as we search for ways in which we might become closer to the process of becoming in everyday life. We must be self-reflective in acknowledging that thinking can either cling to the presuppositions of the dogmatic image of thought, or, as Deleuze advocates through his concepts, it can produce lines of flight to create fissures and fractures in ready-made organization of thought and open up to new creative cartographies in life. As an artist and an art educator these questions become focused on how we can create an environment of teaching and learning that embraces the lived experience of experimentation to palpate the virtual and pull its intensities and sensations into the actual. How can teachers and students create "do it

with me” moments in sharing the experience of traversing the dogmatic image of thought in an expression of virtual difference (Deleuze, 1994, p. 23)?

The Creative Transformation of Experimentation and Experience

Throughout this chapter the concept of encounter has often been framed in association with experience and experimentation. Experimentation is a journey into the unknown to call forth what is new and unfamiliar. However, it cannot bring about something new *in theory*; experimentation for Deleuze is a *material process*, one of action that creates an intensive change. Thus it requires experience as the lived environment to bring about the new through the encounter.

Experience in this philosophical sense is what Semetsky (2005) describes as the “milieu which provides the capacity to affect and be affective; it is a-subjective and impersonal” (p. 91). Experience is thus “the world” in Deleuze’s (1994) key passage “something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but a fundamental ‘encounter’” (p. 139). Experience is the condition through which the encounter rises to confront thought. It becomes a milieu for the emergence of thinking—as a combination of the terms “surroundings,” “medium,” and “middle” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. xvii). In discussing representation in thought, Deleuze (1994) calls for an awareness: “there is a crucial experience of difference and a corresponding experiment: every time we find ourselves confronted or bound by a limitation or an opposition, we should ask what such a presupposition supposes” (p. 50). Experience has the potential to become rigid and ordered in “a space with a single dimension and a single direction,” or unfettered in its vastness as “a pluralism of free, wild or untamed

differences” (p. 50). The openness with which we experiment with thinking that palpates virtual difference determines either how constrained or free our experiences become.

Experimentation and experience become complicated, but more conceptually potent, when we turn to Deleuze’s (1994) use the French word *expérience*, in relation to experimentation. It means both experience and to experiment, but as Williams (2003) observes, experience in this respect is an experience in difference through experimentation as a “radically multiple thing” rather than as an opposition of ‘experienter’ and ‘experienced’ (p. 76). It presents experimentation and experience not as entities that are identifiable, but instead as an approach toward the virtual. Williams (2003) describes *expérience* as

a particular pattern of waves forming on a sea in turmoil but without someone experiencing it. The experience is the connecting pattern that occurs when different perpetually shifting wave heights, lengths, colours and shapes combine for a moment into something more fixed before disappearing into new combinations. (p. 76)

This is the *lived experience* that experiments, not with difference in terms of oppositional or negative relations, but rather as an active engagement with multiplicity of infinite possibilities of virtual difference. We cannot identify this plane; it can only be experienced as sensations or palpations of the virtual. What happens too often with conventional notions of experimentation and experience is that the actual plane of organization conceals our engagement—our palpation—of the virtual. As Williams (2003) explains, “the damage occurs because, each time we fall back on to a thought in terms of oppositions and contradictions, we cannot experience real difference.” Thus, we

must search for ways to break through our habit of thought for true experimentation to create an experiential encounter.

Returning once again to my experience painting with the masking tape, I could have viewed this new opening of thinking through the encounter of the new painted mark as something to capture and assimilate into my dogmatic image of thought. I could have assigned it an identity, category, or hierarchy specific to the quality of the mark. In that sense, I would identify the mark as *not-hard-edge*, categorize it as a separate mark from hard-edge marks, and assign a value of the mark in relation to its positioning with hard-edge painting. Here I would be falling into the trap of thought that Williams describes above—the difficulty to open up to experiencing real difference. But as we recall, the virtual and actual are always co-present. It would be impossible for my thinking to not make some sort of sense in the actual of the torn-edge marks through representation. This is how we gain our bearings in our consciousness. However, we also recall from earlier in the chapter that Deleuze’s concern is not so much with representation *per se*, but rather our dogmatic reliance on it in the way we identify, categorize, and create hierarchies of thought.

If I turned toward experimentation and experience as a process of ongoing becoming, I would instead consider the torn-edge painterly marks, not as captures and closures in thought, but rather as a continued opening of thinking toward further new encounters. In this respect, my encounter with the torn-edge marks generated new pathways of thinking about mark-making, which in turn opened to new experimentation that pushed these unfamiliar marks in to even further moments of contingency—a repetition of the openness to difference. For instance, I began overlapping torn-edge with

hard-edge, to create a kind of hybrid mark between familiar (hard-edge) and unfamiliar (torn-edge). Or I experimented with the contingency of the way that the tape created the tear, and I would follow the direction of the tear in creating new tears. At one point, the canvas was filled with meandering trail of painted marks of torn-edge lines. While many of the actions were based in actual thinking of conscious decision-making, my leap into the unknown and the unpredictability of the direction of the tears demonstrated a continual openness to contingency in its various outcomes.

This notion of experimentation and experience as *expérience* presents a leap into the unknown rather than as an oppositional difference based on presuppositions that attempt to fix the movements of virtual difference. It is a creation that reflects Deleuze's productive affirmation through difference rather than negation through oppositional difference. Experience allows for experimentation to operate in the world as a material force, questioning what presuppositions are taking hold in thinking, seeking to break free from the grasp of the dogmatic image of thought, and opening up to the *multiplicity* of virtual difference. As Semetsky (2005) elaborates, thinking through *expérience* is "future-oriented, lengthened and enfolded, representing an experiment with what is new, or coming into being" (p. 93) In this sense, experimentation becomes vital for its endeavor for the new, and experience becomes the conditions or milieu through which experimentation engages with encounters that create the sensations and palpations in virtual difference in thinking. Thus, through the experimentation with the different pathways of torn-edge painted lines, it was not an attempt at securing control or determining a definition of what was happening. Instead it was one of looking forward to where else the experimentation might lead, or how many other pathways could be opened

if I continued to remain open to new encounters that might generate thinking and artmaking to come.

Importantly, it must be clarified that experimentation through *expérience* does not at all guarantee that new terrains of thinking will emerge through an encounter with virtual difference. That is always risk with experimentation, or else it would not be considered an experiment. As May (1991) explains,

Not only does life have to be discovered and affirmed from within a certain perspective; the perspective, too, can be either productive or repressive. And no one can decide for another, or outside of the process of experimentation, whether one's perspective or the discoveries made within it are life-affirming or life-repressing. (p. 34)

Experience and experimentation is always threatened by thinking that falls back into a dogmatic image of thought. As such, experimentation is always a dice roll. We can set an encounter in motion, but we do not know how the forces and intensities of becoming will create something new. There is always the risk of a line of flight leading to a reinforcement of order and organization that constrain truly creative thinking through difference.

Deleuze's framing of Nietzsche's notion of *eternal return* is pivotal here insofar as the productive process of creative affirmation allows for only difference in itself to return. In this respect the eternal return is the future, and as May (2005) describes, "there is nothing specific that has to be there in the future, but so much that can be. The future is virtual difference that has not yet actualized itself into a particular present" (p. 62). This is what makes the future a *throw of the dice*. We cannot know how the future will take

shape in actuality. However, the virtual, as pure temporality, contains the potentiality of the actual, spatial future. This is not a transcendent or essentializing perspective that insists that the future is already predetermined in the virtual present. There is no way of predicting how the future will unfold. The future is an entwinement of intensities and sensations, of percepts and affects. It is an asymmetrical intertwining of what we do to affect our future with what occurs that is out of our control.

The active engagement of *Expérience* palpates the sensations of the infinite potentiality of difference, and its dice throw becomes an affirmative leap into the contingencies of chance within the virtual, but without the intention for a particular outcome. A *good player* does not focus on what kinds of combinations are achievable through causality or probability, but instead embraces the unknown of the dice throw in one throw. Deleuze (1983) insists that this does not guarantee a productive change—which would presuppose a specific outcome—but it does present an affirmation in chance as letting go: “to affirm is to unburden: not to load life with the weight of higher values, but to *create* new values which are those of life, which makes life light and active” (p. 185, emphasis original). Thus the good player rolls the dice through as experimentation to brush against the virtual and cast aside the dogmatic image of thought. The *bad player* seeks multiple rolls of the dice until a *predetermined outcome* is achieved. This ignores the potential of difference, insofar as its intention is to bring about repetition of the same.

This does not mean that all rolls of the dice by the good player will be productive. While there is no assurance of new creative expanses of thinking through the dice roll, its vitality is affirmed through its generation of experimental thinking that embraces the movements and flows of becoming which is always ongoing. Crucially, it opens up

pathways for thinking to move beyond an emergence of thought gripped by the stabilizing forces of the dogmatic image of thought. As Williams (2003) elaborates, “the doctrine of eternal return is at the heart of Deleuze’s principle of forgetting, where to forget is to leave things behind through the affirmation of something that is not carried on” (2003, p. 77). This is what Parr (2005) calls *creative transformation*, which is produced through experimentation with an active engagement of “material forces and affects” as an opening an immersion into a kind of *forgetting* or *getting lost* in the movements and flows toward virtual difference (p. 59). Our habits of thought open up to difference as becoming, which replaces the traditional, stable being. Creative transformation leaves behind the rigid, inhibiting structures and embraces instability and mobility of a productive force of life that only emerges through experimentation with lived experience.

Experimenting in experience, or *expérience*, becomes a vitally catalyzing force for this study, not simply in terms of how experimentation is a key component of creating something new in artmaking. Beyond this significant dynamic, experimentation becomes indispensable to a different conception of art education because it is a material process in a lived experience of teaching and learning. Like swimming, art cannot be taught nor learned in the abstract as a description or an explanation. Art teachers and students must embrace the mindset of through which they are both immersed in the material engagement of experimenting with the conditions that give rise to encounters that push our image of thought to its limits, and generates entirely new domains of thinking through artmaking. Without the “do it with me” mindset that embraces the immanence of lived experience, experimentation loses its material capacity (Deleuze, 1994, p. 23). It

remains as theory, trapped in a “do as I do” abstract form of transcendental teacher/student learning (p. 23).

Becoming-Other

As detailed throughout this chapter, Deleuze’s philosophical endeavor is to privilege the fluid process of becoming over the fixed state of being. We may think that the world is composed of set beings, but these are just relatively stable perceptions, since different bodies and forces flow at various speeds and intensities. Throughout the history of philosophy, being has often been positioned as the ground or foundation of existence of the dynamic movements of life. For Deleuze, there is no grounding, essential humanism, or subjectivity that underlies becoming. There is only becoming.

There are two kinds of becoming that Deleuze presents throughout his philosophical writings. In this chapter we have examined Deleuze’s (1994) early notions of becoming in relation to his ontology of creation through the encounter. Here pure difference founds identity through the creation of concepts from the virtual realm of difference to the actual realm of sense and meaning-making. Deleuze’s later writing with Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) focuses on specific becomings: becoming-minority, becoming-woman, becoming-animal, becoming-imperceptible. These two earlier and later concepts of becoming are heavily intertwined, insofar as they both affirm fluidity of the subject. But they produce different effects—Deleuze’s earlier becoming is produced through the foundation of all thought as pre-subjective emergence in the virtual, while Deleuze and Guattari’s later utilization of becoming produces the emergence of a new kind of thinking that is prompted from the actual that engages with the intensities and sensations with the virtual to produce creative transformation in thinking. However,

we must keep in mind that there is no isolated or pure realm of virtual or actual. As we will see in chapter three, all becomings are nomadic insofar as the virtual and the actual are *co-constitutive* of each other. Without the virtual there is no actual, and without the actual there is no virtual. Thus, both conceptual notions of becoming involve one in the same process as an experimental and experiential encounter.

Since Deleuze's (1994) earlier notion of becoming is one of pre-subjective emergence through the encounter, it functions as a pre-conscious generation of thought. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) later becoming is a conscious move from the actual based on desire as a productive move toward change. The encounter of this latter concept of becoming creates something unpredictable through motivated action—it is a line of flight away from the entwinement of organizing lines and lines of disruption, and toward the indetermination of virtual difference that replaces that undercuts dogmatic image of thought. The virtual is still real, so this becoming is not a turn away from life. Instead it is life-affirming as it brushes against the creative forces of chaos. Thus this becoming is inherently aesthetic in its production.

Thus, the various becoming-other transformations that Deleuze and Guattari present are openings in life. They are lines of experimentation with flows of change along the strata between chaos and order. Becoming is an action that does not search for an empirical end goal, for example, actually becoming an animal. Nor is it directed in terms of allegory, insofar as becoming-minority is not a symbolic endeavor. As Colebrook (2002) contends, is a becoming that is a continual transformation of perspectives as “a possible opening for new styles of perception” (p. 137). This is why Deleuze and Guattari (1986) have taken such a great interest in the characters of Franz Kafka's stories as

experimenting with seemingly negative forms of alienation, such as becoming a beetle or a mole. The world is experienced through becoming-animal, which presents a new perspective of subjectivity. It is a perspective in which Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explain are becoming-minor:

Becoming-Jewish, becoming-woman, etc., therefore imply two simultaneous movements, one by which a term (the subject) is withdrawn from the majority, and another by which a term (the medium or agent) rises up from the minority. (p. 291)

No two specific becomings are alike, and there is no incorrect form of specific becoming aside from the impossibility to become-majority (white, heterosexual, western, male).

The key is embracing difference as process by mobilizing one's stable identities to create a subject that is fluid and free of the constraining forces of sameness.

This sets up the transition from Deleuze's earlier philosophical foundation related to the encounter with thought and the emergence of thinking to his later writing with Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) which develops a framework of searching for moments that might allow us to think differently through "potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight" (p. 161). Here we see *lines of flight* being framed in Deleuze's later work with Guattari as a conscious move rather than an effect in thought's pre-conceptual encounter with intensities. Herein lies the vital flexibility of many of Deleuze's ideas. They can be relocated to various situations within life.

Becoming is the process of actualization in thought, but it is also a conscious political and aesthetic move that enables us to always be actively and creatively transforming ourselves – learning, thinking, living differently and more effectively.

In this respect, on the level of the thinking subject, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call for us to live in a nomadic way. The metaphor of the nomad does not require that one adopt a physical nomadic lifestyle. Instead it is an attitude toward thinking differently. In the next chapter, I will explore the various ways in which nomadic thought relates to Deleuze's emergence of thought through an ontology of difference. In so doing I will link the concept of the encounter as described in this chapter as a virtual, pre-conceptual moment, with a more complex, cognizant process that traverses the virtual and actual realms in the experimentation of life and art.

CHAPTER 3

NOMADIC ENCOUNTERS

In the documentary film *The Five Obstructions* (2003), director Lars von Trier collaborates with this filmmaking hero, Jørgen Leth, to produce a series of five re-creations of the latter's classic art film, *The Perfect Human* (1967). Each remake is produced entirely by Leth, but von Trier inserts a different obstruction to which Leth must adhere. Examples include remaking the film with each shot lasting only twelve frames; remaking the film in what Leth considers the most deplorable living conditions in the world (the red light district in Bombay, India); or remaking the film as a cartoon (a medium of filmmaking Leth detests). All of these obstructions take Leth out of his comfort zone as a filmmaker. They each act to create the conditions for encounters that push Leth's thought to its limits, destabilizing his habitual approach to filmmaking. Each encounter is a roll of the dice, a lived experience through experimentation that produces new terrains of thinking, and without knowing what each particular outcome might bring as a work of art.

The obstacles posed by von Trier set off a chain reaction of intertwining processes for Leth. Each challenge activated his thinking in a different way. How can one re-create a film that was already considered by so many as a masterpiece in short-form filmmaking? The notion of a great film as a model in itself contributes to the problem of the stabilizing forces of the dogmatic image of thought. The obstructions were intended

to jolt Leth out of that complacency and force him into a new, active mindset in approaching not just the status of his own legacy established by *The Perfect Human* thirty years prior, but in creating an awareness that nothing is stable and fixed—everything is in-process, always fluid and moving forward.

In the end, Leth was visibly exhausted and bewildered by the process, yet he seemed to know very well why he was being subjected to these obstructions as a filmmaker. It was an opening up to new perspectives of thinking about artmaking. As Leth recounts, “the interesting thing about this project was that I never knew where it was leading me. That’s the beauty of it. That’s the beauty of art, really—that you don’t know where it will take you” (cited in Lundtofte, 2004). Here Leth embraced the unfamiliar path created by the obstructions, one in which he followed to pull forth new expanses of thinking as a creative transformation. It is never a straight line, but rather a zig-zagging path created by an openness to new directions that offer the potential to productively steer us from our habitual patterns of thinking. For Leth it stimulated a motivation to pursue these new and unsettling avenues of terrain through an activation of the dormant ways in which he had been approaching is filmmaking leading up to this encounter with von Trier’s obstructions.

This brief description of a very complex process of creating the conditions for a radical encounter with the dogmatic image of thought is an example of an art-based counterpart to Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) philosophical concept of the nomad. This chapter will begin by traversing two of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1994) major concepts of “geophilosophical” thinking: the *nomad* and the *sedentary* (p. 85). The nomad is characterized as unfixed, wandering, zig-zagging; whereas sedentary qualities

are viewed as stable, constraining, focused or rigid in operation. In terms of thinking differently, viewing these concepts through their binary relationship might present them as apt metaphors for a new creative way in which we might approach life. We could clearly imagine that opening up from a sedentary way of living to a nomadic approach might provide a new way of loosening how our lives are structured and how we might counter our habits of thought and behavior. Thus these oppositions would serve as a metaphorical signpost of reflection in how we might live more effectively. However, the nomadic encounter is more complex than a simple oppositional metaphor for reconsidering how we might live. For von Trier, the implication of a nomadic process was not one of recapturing the original. Instead he sought to engage with the conditions that create something new through experimentation in difference itself. It is an affirmation of difference rather than negation of past versions of his film. Each recreation brought about a response to an encounter that was not working from a model, but from a milieu—a becoming from the middle, a particular surrounding that did not lead to an end state or a final outcome. Instead it created an awareness that led to significant stylistic and structural departures in his subsequent films that was much looser than his meticulous productions prior to the encounters in *The Five Obstructions*.

Even if Leth's films created from von Trier's obstructions, or his subsequent films, did not produce any stylistic or structural change, the experience would have been no less of an encounter. As we saw in the previous chapter, there is no guarantee of any particular outcome when the good player rolls the dice. This is the risk that is always considered in experimentation. What matters above all else with this example is that the encounter facilitates a movement into the unknown and the unfamiliar that produces a

self-reflection through lived experience of the potential to change our habits of thought into truly new vistas of thinking. This chapter explores the active engagement of the encounter, not as a simple and straight path, but as complex and crooked lines that vacillate between order and chaos as those lived experiences open up innovative emanations of subjectivity.

Throughout this inquiry, I will introduce several paired concepts: rhizome and tree, territorialization and deterritorialization, molar and molecular, smooth and striated. It would be easy to view these concepts as over-determined, binary oppositions based on negative relations. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) present these concepts not as “a new or different dualism,” but rather they assert the employment of “mental correctives” to approach the terms as co-constitutive and transformative through a constant flow of entwinement (p. 20). This reverses the negative relationship of binary oppositions, and creates a productive and affirmative qualitative engagement. For Deleuze and Guattari, dualisms are “an entirely necessary enemy” (p. 21). We will always have binary oppositions functioning in the world. The object is not to eradicate such dualisms; without some kind of binary categorization, thought would fall into chaos.

Instead Deleuze and Guattari (1987) view their conceptual pairings as ways to acknowledge that these oppositions are the “furniture” already set in the world, but nomadic processes are “forever rearranging” those set positions (p. 21). They encourage us to experiment with this alternative way of approaching the world:

Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and

there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. (p. 161)

But how should we experiment, and where are these advantageous places that offer us opportunities to do so? How do we locate moments of deterritorialization, and how can we create lines of flight? A nomadic geophilosophy is the fundamental process that constitutes and reconstitutes the world as intensive and qualitative multiplicities. As such, they are lines that both define order and open up chaos in ways that are the product of human thought and action and out of our control. Nomadic processes are the effects of all human, non-human, organic, and inorganic elements of life. But vitally for artists, teachers, and students, they can also become tactics that are put to work in the lived experience that foments the experimental pursuit of the affirmation of chance in the eternal return of difference in repetition. This chapter explores Deleuze and Guattari's concept of nomadism from the perspective of its flows and movement through various systems of both physical phenomena and thought.

Deleuze and Guattari display a contentious relationship with language throughout their writing in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987). Their terminology is often ambiguous in certain places, and exceedingly particular in others. To Deleuze and Guattari, language is stratifying, but they also acknowledge that it is indispensable in order to function in society. As a result, they tend to become playfully experimental in their use of language, with much of their conceptual terminology reflecting the open and destabilizing nature of the very nomadic process about which they are writing. Deleuze and Guattari's use of concepts like sedentary, tree root organization, molarization, territorialization, or striated space are often done so interchangeably. For example, a concept like territorialization

might be more suitable for describing a physical space, but it is not exclusively used as a spatial attribute. Deleuze and Guattari assert that our habits of thought are just as much a territorializing process as the construction of a physical habitat. Similarly, molarization is more closely related to a political or institutional division, which involves an intertwining of overcoded information and territorialization. But a molarizing process can also be attributed to a physical closing of a geographical border of a neighborhood or city. As we will see in the artist case studies of Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian, as well as in the implications nomadic encounters presents for teaching and learning settings, my selection of conceptual terminology is one of putting these ideas to work, and as such, it becomes a very useful practice to experiment with actively revealing which concepts might fit with a particular context of an analysis as art-based counterparts to Deleuze and Guattari's concepts.

Logos and Nomos

Deleuze introduces nomadic distribution in his earlier solo work, *Difference and Repetition* (1994), through the concepts of *logos* and *nomos*, which are Greek terms that address essences and hierarchies of beings. The concept of logos can be quite simply summarized as a work or a law of reason, and it is based on relational difference.

Hierarchies are formed based on the logos or law, which is beyond or transcends the phenomenon being organized. Deleuze (1994) presents the nomos as the distributions of “the rules of analogy are all powerful,” and since “common sense and good sense are qualities of judgment, these are presented as principles of division which declare themselves *the best distributed*” (emphasis original, p. 36). Logos thus creates a predetermination of general laws, norms, or conventions.

In contrast, *nomos* is not separated from this hierarchical structuring, but rather than being organized by an external law, its ordering principle is created and distributed from within. Deleuze (1994) expresses the relationship between nomadic and *nomos* as “a nomad *nomos*, without property, enclosure, or measure,” and by distinguishing its distribution from *nomos*, “there is no longer a division of that which is distributed but rather a division among those who distribute themselves in an open space—a space which is unlimited, or at least without precise limits” (emphasis original, p. 36). The difference here is the creation of organizing principles that are extensive and top-down in its production of limits (*logos*), and those that are intensive, and self-produced in its creation of openings (*nomos*).

It seems that we are already starting to create binary oppositions with terms like *logos* versus *nomos* or extensive versus intensive. But as we will see with every pair of concepts that Deleuze and Guattari introduce in conceptualizing the nomad, there are more complex intertwining relations at play. While its distribution takes form as intensive operations of the *logos*, nomadic space does not remain intrinsic. Rather, it gives rise to extrinsic properties insofar as the distribution of the *logos* in an open field of movements and flows that disrupt and reconfigure the sedentary lines of the *logos*. As Colebrook (2010) vividly describes,

A tribe dreams about, crosses and dances upon a space and in so doing fills the space from within; the actual space – the material extension owned by this tribe that might then be measured and quantified by a State structure – would be different from (and dependent upon) virtual, nomadic space, for if the tribe moved on, danced and dreamed elsewhere, then the original space would already have

been transformed, given a different depth and extension, now part of a whole new series of desires, movements and relations. And if other tribes crossed that first space, the space would be traversed by different maps. On nomadic distribution there is not one law that stands outside and determines space; law is produced in the traversal of space. (p. 186)

This intensive production is a qualitative shift in space – one that can only be changed through further qualitative traversals. Along with the rhizome, this qualitative production is one of the two fundamental properties of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the nomad. In the next section we will explore the emergence of qualitative and rhizomic thought and action, which creates the conditions of nomadic processes. The movement generated by these two properties allows for a complex engagement between Deleuze and Guattari’s seemingly binary pairings examined in the sections that follow—between territorialization and deterritorialization, molar and molecular, and striated and smooth.

Qualitative Multiplicity

Firstly, it is paramount to consider that Deleuze articulates the nomad as a *qualitative multiplicity* as opposed to having quantitative effects. But what is a multiplicity? Is it simply a term for more than one, or beyond an oppositional binary? Deleuze and Guattari (1987) clarify the principle of multiplicity in terms of what it does not do: “only when the multiple is effectively treated as a substantive “multiplicity,” that it ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world” (p. 8). Instead Deleuze and Guattari insist that multiplicities possess “neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature (the laws of combination

therefore increase in number as the multiplicity grows)” (p. 8). As such, multiplicities do not increase or decrease quantitatively, but rather they become mobilized as a dilation and contraction through qualitative changes.

Quantitative properties are extensive insofar as they function in terms of reducible essences. Quantitative multiplicities can be built upon and broken down without the quality of the multiplicities changing. It is important to note that even terms such as ‘many’ or ‘several’ would not be fitting of a qualitative multiplicity because of their reference to enumeration within a homogeneous space. If we were to list a number of items, each item would occupy its own space in juxtaposition with one another as a quantitative multiplicity, each occupying distinctive external points in space, and are changed through spatially adding and subtracting, building and breaking down.

Qualitative entities, on the other hand, are defined temporally rather than spatially, and thus through their internal existence in duration, are not bound by juxtaposition in space. As such, qualitative multiplicities are virtual assemblages of intensities and sensations, and thus can only be sensed as affects and percepts. We cannot apprehend or determine their effects quantitatively, but their movements are affective within the actual realm through which “the line of flight” allows multiplicities to “change in nature and connect with other multiplicities” (Deleuze and Guattari, p. 9). Thus they play a crucial role in the ways in which sensations of the virtual are palpated through becoming in the actual. As we have seen in the process of actualization of the virtual through becoming, the movements of qualitative multiplicities poses a challenge for conceptual apprehension if perceived through the conventional notions of linear space and time.

Philosopher Henri Bergson's concept of duration helps to articulate this complex process. We think of time in such rigidly spatial forms as "clock time," which is easily conceptualized in thought and language. Bergson presents another experience of "inner time," which is "composed of sensations, emotions, and prehensions of qualities (not quantities) in a constant and indivisible state of flux" (Heathfield, 2009, p. 9). Inner time is the time of the virtual, as discussed in the previous chapter, and it resists any attempts of fixity, description, or definition through language. To approach any kind of adequate 'palpation' of a qualitative multiplicity in this sense, I will turn to Bergson's example of the various qualitative sensations of the experience of sympathy or 'pity' as a "heterogeneity of feelings" so that "no one would be able to juxtapose them or say that one negates the other" (Lawlor, 2012, p. 29). Bergson (2001) asserts that the sensations of feelings shift in the experience of sympathy, a qualitative change occurs: "The increasing intensity of pity thus consists in a qualitative progress, in a transition from repugnance to fear, from fear to sympathy, and from sympathy itself to humility" (p. 20). The term 'progress' is important in this intensive process insofar as qualitative multiplicities are creative rather than negative. There is no negation in duration. As Lawlor (2012) explains of the example of sympathy, "the feelings are continuous with one another; they interpenetrate one another," and as such, qualitative change involves immersion and entwinement rather than addition or subtraction (p. 30).

We could examine another simple example of the difference between quantitative and qualitative change, this time from the material world: the wood from a tree undergoes a quantitative change when the tree is cut down and the wood is chopped and divided for use as lumber. The qualitative material properties are still in tact even though the wood

has gone through a quantitative transformation; it has maintained its material composition as wood, even though it has ceased to be part of the tree. The wood continues to retain its qualitative properties as the lumber is quantitatively recombined and repurposed for building, for example, being cut into beams for a house. If that house is torn down years later, the wood still maintains its qualitative materiality, whether it is taken to a scrap yard, or if it is again repurposed for another built function. Throughout its existence under the material category 'lumber', the wood may have different extensive or quantitative forms, but it has not changed qualitatively. It can only be qualitatively changed if its material composition is altered through burning or rotting, it is still the same material qualitative properties that it was when it was part of the tree.

Qualitative multiplicities are intensive insofar as they are not reducible in the way quantitative changes are. This is why they are multiplicities. Again, they are not broken down from a larger whole, nor are they enumerated expressions that compose or describe a greater essence. To approach multiples in this way would be to do so quantitatively. Manuel DeLanda (1998) offers a description of intensive differences through an example of thermodynamics, in which two containers—one filled with hot air and the other filled with cold air—are separated by a wall (p. 31). When a small hole is opened in that dividing wall, a difference in intensity occurs. In this case that difference takes the form of an intensive change in temperature through the spontaneous release of air from one container into another. Since an irreducible, qualitative change has occurred in the air, the only way to change the air temperature again is to create a second intensive event, which would create a new qualitative change. The wood in the previous example of quantitative

altering is capable of changing qualitatively through a chemical reaction. Its material composition begins to change if it is burned or if it rots.

This creative metamorphosis emerging from differences in intensity is the primary activity in intensively generated properties of phenomena through a qualitative multiplicity. Multiplicities are irreducible but mobile in their creative transformation. The example of wood demonstrates qualitative changes of carving and cutting, affixing and breaking, increasing and decreasing. But the identity formed through a qualitative multiplicity is one that cannot be built or broken-down mathematically in linear time and space, but only changed through an intensive difference that creates something qualitatively new.

Most importantly, intensive multiplicities are *productive* in their irreducibility. Such intensive differences thus give rise to extensive differences and boundaries. Just as Colebrook explains in the above section, a nomadic process is one of intrinsic distribution that creates extrinsic properties. In the example of Jørgen Leth's remakes in the *Five Obstructions* we see that the obstructions pushed his extensive, habitual thought to its limits, creating an intensive or qualitative change that extracted the potentialities of new approaches for each remake to individuate from the virtual into the actual. However, it was only 'new' as an actualized, extensive property. Each version had always existed in the virtual among an infinite multiplicity of versions. The obstructions created just the right conditions for each encounter with the virtual to actualize as the way it did. It could have resulted in an infinite number of different forms of remakes, but it didn't. Those infinite number of film variations still exist in the real, but they remain only as virtual potentiality.

Herein lies the significance of qualitative, intensive processes for artmaking, which is why the concepts related to the nomadic encounter become so vital for opening up to creative transformation. They become crucial concepts for artists who create the conditions to put encounters to work experimentally to extract sensations from the virtual to be expressed or palpated in the material realm of the actual. Throughout the artist case studies we will see the concepts related to these intensive, nomadic processes continually revealed as a catalyst for new terrains of thinking through artmaking, both in artists practices and in teaching and learning settings in art education.

At this point, we know that nomadic processes do not follow a conventional linear path of movement and inquiry based on classification, hierarchy, and representation. They are activated by an entwinement of intensive difference of the virtual and extensive lines in the actual. However, nomadic processes importantly do not privilege our traditional image of thought that presents a quantitative, extensive perspective on the range of examples presented above. However, if that image of thought is not based on convention and common sense habits, what image does it take? Deleuze and Guattari turn to the concept of the rhizome to address this question and to further create the conditions for an emergent nomadic process.

The Rhizome

Loosely taken from the botanical function of the rhizome, the theoretical rhizome unfolds a new image of thought that resists fixity and categorization. It is not to be confused with the arborescent structures of the tree and root, which is anchored in vertical and hierarchical linkages. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) contend that tree and root structures, “inspire a sad image of thought that is forever imitating” (p. 16). They view

this arborescent image of thought as a tracing, which brings us back “to the same” (p. 12).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) offer the concept of the rhizome as an alternative to the tree or root structure, which is horizontal and heterogeneous, with no central anchoring of thought. They steer away from thinking of the rhizome as a tracing and instead direct its process towards the idea of the map, which “produces multiple entryways” and “has to do with performance” that is “entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real” (p. 12). This gives us a sense of the dynamic and innovative potential of the rhizome. It is not rigid and constrained like the hierarchal tree with a centralized trunk and fixed extension of roots and branches. Nor does not mimic the preexisting images of thought though tracing over the same. Instead the rhizome is unhinged and fluid; its points of connection are dispersed in all directions. It is not grounded in presuppositions, but rather it is constructed or created through experience and experimentation with an active mapping though life that is “open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification” (p. 12).

It is important thus to note that rhizomes are not simply random connections, nor are they absent of an organizational regime. It would also not be accurate to position the rhizome in opposition to the tree or the image of thought. On the contrary, as part of a qualitative emergence, rhizomic and arborescent thought are instead co-constitutive of each other. Rhizomes *work through* conventional systems and structures of organization, such as linearity and classification. One example of how the rhizome traverses the qualitative multiplicities of the virtual and the reifying image of thought of the actual is

demonstrated through an exhibition I organized in 2014 called *Fragments of an Unknowable Whole*, which featured 74 artworks by 24 artists who were engaging in challenging the conventional notions of photographic practice from a variety of perspectives. Photography was presented in the exhibition less in terms of ways of reading or interpreting images and its cultural effects, but instead the works functioned together in the show to create a cartography of informing an active thinking about disciplinary work that privileges experimentation and transformation in the mapping of image practices. Instead of fixing knowledge by seeking to describe or explain, a rhizomic approach allows for spaces of distinctive, but often intersecting forms of inquiry to become positioned as a tool to be put to work to create qualitative transformations. In the case of the exhibition, it did not ignore photography as a medium, or a discipline of art, or its innumerable forms of interpretation and cultural relevance. Instead this rhizomic approach to curating an exhibition of photographic work operated from within the gallery and traversed disciplinary and interpretive forms of stratification to creating new cartographic connections.

Eschewing the dominant forms of representation in photography—the snapshot, the window to the world, the document, memory, stillness, death, image reproducibility—the exhibition looked toward *minor* practices that have been left out of the major canon of photography. It turned to artists who disrupted the conventional notions of the photograph—as an ongoing process, an object, a material, a virtual image, illegibility, emptiness, mobility, malleability of space—as ways to create lines of flight from its dominant attributed reinforced by the dogmatic image of thought. Significantly the works turned to other academic disciplines—chemistry, particle physics, astrophysics,

ecology, architecture, virtual reality technology—to create innovative hybrid photographic processes that destabilize the traditional domains of photography, such as portrait or landscape photography.

Most crucial for activating these works in the exhibition was how the spaces of qualitative multiplicity were opened up within the limiting confines of a gallery space. The works were arranged as a heterogeneous dispersal of themes and artists. While there were a number of themes presented throughout the exhibition, and all artists had at least more than one work included, there were no clusters of categories in the gallery grouped together spatially by specific topics or artists. The space of the gallery was an open floor plan, which allowed for any kind of starting or end point of the exhibition to remain undetermined. This allowed for patrons to experience works in ways that avoided a linear progression of predetermined directions through the space or spatially segmented classifications of themes of artists. Rather, by creating the conditions for engaging intersecting, zig-zagging, scattered paths, the exhibition space opened up a multiplicity of potential relations and connections based on the way that the viewer traversed the space, its themes, and the different artist practices. While the curatorial placement of the works were not random, they were formed as an experimental roll of a dice that had no predetermined outcome other than to embrace difference in the contingency of potential relations and connections formed by the viewers at the exhibition. As a result, most connections were made with works that are not viewable in one line of sight. What resulted was a dependence on memory, which encouraged the viewer to backtrack and revisit various works—to create new and different relations and connections in a repetition of viewing.

As the example above demonstrates, the rhizome does not function in opposition to another order of thought, but instead it emerges *with* and works *through* the dominant regime, using it as a launching point while carving new paths of inquiry that shift thought away from conventional perspectives. The content of the work and the layout of the gallery space for the *Fragments of Unknowable Whole* exhibition allowed for qualitative multiplicities to create potentially new experiences that disrupted conventional understandings of what photography *should be* and how an exhibition *ought to be* organized. The intention is not to efface or destroy these disciplinary perspectives, nor is it to build onto these conventional attributes in a quantitative way. Rather experiments in artmaking and curating as detailed in this exhibition demonstrate the ways in which we might create an awareness of how the rhizome imparts tactical lines of experimental de-stratification that qualitatively enables us to think differently.

Deleuze and Guattari view the concept of the rhizome as so crucial to their philosophical project that they refer to it as a *new* image of thought, one that “spreads out beneath the tree image” (Deleuze Neg, 1995, p. 149). However, its not an image founded on representation, but rather one that creates effects that can only be sensed as a heterogeneous dispersal of lines, always reconfiguring when broken, always organizing with sedentary lines, always bursting with lines of flight. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) reflect, “you can never get rid of ants because they form an animal rhizome that can rebound time and again after most of it has been destroyed” (p. 9).

Territorial Assemblages and Deterritorializing Lines of Flight

The rhizome is a new image of thought for Deleuze and Guattari (1987), in which relations and connectivity of heterogeneous phenomena form. It composed of qualitative

multiplicities in non-hierarchical dispersals along a *plane of consistency* (p. 4). The rhizome traverses the hierarchical organization of identifiable and categorized phenomena along the *plane of organization* (p. 269). These two planes do not exist independent of each other. Like all nomadic processes, the rhizomic plane of consistency and the tree-root plane of organization are always intersecting and intertwining. One could not exist without the other. Groupings of certain phenomena occur through this interspersing engagement of the plane of composition and plane of organization. This gathering along the axis of these two planes of the virtual and the actual are called *assemblages*.

Assemblages are not stable entities; they are composed of a multiplicity of heterogeneous relations that are an ongoing engagement in an asymmetrical relationship between what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call “a territorialized assemblage” (p. 312) and “deterritorialized assemblages” (p. 325). The various constitutive bodies and forces are constantly enacting and shifting from within, and thus varying the speeds and intensities of the assemblage. In doing so, they create what appear to be momentary positions of stability and fixed organization. This delimitation within an assemblage is called *territorialization*. These territories are molar frameworks on which we function in society. They occur in motivated ways such as the act of creating a home. Deleuze and Guattari present many elegant examples of this kind of assemblage production in territorialization. From the mundane human act of making a home our own, to the ways that animals engage in the creation of milieus to create both functional and aesthetic spaces, assemblages are the process of taking up a particular relation of speed, slowness, affectivity, and language which leads to its creation.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) turn to the musical *refrain* to offer an example of how a territorial assemblage takes form: “A child in the dark, gripped with fear, confronts himself by singing under his breath... the song is like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilizing, calm and stable, center in the heart of chaos” (p. 311). Another child “hums to summon the strength for the schoolwork she has to hand in,” while elsewhere in the house a “housewife sings to herself, or listens to the radio, as she marshals the antichaos forces of her work” (p. 311). For Deleuze and Guattari, the territorial refrain of the musical rhythm and repetition “draws a circle” to keep chaos at bay (p. 311). What happens when that circle is ruptured by, for example, an act of improvisation, with “different loops, knots, speeds, movements, gestures, and sonorities” (p. 312)? Does it allow in “the forces of chaos, destroying both the creator and creation” (p. 311)? In these examples, the territorializing refrain is a form of protection from the indeterminacy of chaos. But through experimenting with opening the circle drawn by the refrain—even by just small fracture—it allows us to experiment with the unknown of the virtual: “sometimes one leaves the territorial assemblage for other assemblages... interassemblage, components of passage or even escape... forces of chaos, terrestrial forces, cosmic forces: all of these confront each other and converge in the territorial refrain” (p. 312)

The territorial refrain is an example of the potential for creative transformation within territorializing and deterritorializing assemblages by demonstrating how its components can break down and mutate to establish new connections and relations with a multiplicity of other assemblages. However, it also demonstrates how territorializing habits align with our dogmatic image of thought.

In its most literal conception of territorialization in a physical sense, we engage in a production of space building a house or erecting a border around a city. But even such a physically determined, empirically fixed space never remains stable. A territory always involves a tension of movement and flux. In this literal sense, physical materials are always changing, often in the most nuanced ways, through erosion, decomposition, aging, and various other movements. From a more conceptually nomadic perspective, the territorialization of a physical space involves active entwinements of quantitative multiplicities of the virtual with its extension through the individuation of physical and empirical phenomena as well as social and cultural spaces in the actual realm of meaning-making. As such, nomadic encounters are always an ongoing production through an assemblage of asymmetrical engagement between a multiplicity of spaces.

As exemplified by this notion of refrain, we territorialize spaces, thoughts, and actions as a way to create a framework of stability and meaning. Though this is always short-lived; territories are never given. On the contrary, they are always in process or becoming. But territorialization is always a necessary and productive process; otherwise we would not have any organization or order amidst the chaos of experience.

Territorialization is the active construction and ordering of space. To territorialize is to form a habit, and through this habit we tend to build fixed identities of things and behaviors within a particular constructed territory. However, when that habit is broken, such as improvisation of a patterned whistle in the refrain, the territory becomes fractured or *deterritorialized*. This improvised drift can become an entirely new assemblage of rhythm and melody, and become a new territory. It can continue as an improvisation as well, as an ongoing deterritorialized assemblage following the movements and flows of

the tune toward the contingencies of virtual difference, and continually creating new and innovative melodies and rhythm. Here the deterritorialized assemblage of the improvised tune is traversing the territorialized plane of organization and brushing up against the rhizomic plane of consistency. Conversely, the improvised tune could work its way back to reconnect with the original melody and rhythm on the original territorial assemblage—as a *reterritorialization*.

Through the dynamic entwinement of assemblages, Deleuze and Guattari construct an active framework for creating an awareness of the lines of territorialization and dogmatic image of thought, and providing conceptual examples of the operations of the lines of deterritorialization and rhizomic image of thought can do to generate new terrains of thinking and action. These concepts are thus ways the unfolding and enfolding the forces that break away from sedentary forms into bodies and phenomena that affect or are affected. A concept that has appeared throughout this study thus far is the *line of flight*. As a key conductor for escaping dogmatic image of thought, it is crucial that we pause to examine its function in more detail within the context of territorialization and deterritorialization..

Deleuze and Guattari's nomadic philosophy calls for an escape from the reifying lines the dogmatic image of thought through a continual creation of the conditions that give rise to encounters which produce lines of flight. Deleuze and Guattari view the necessity of lines of flight as pure escapes from the constant pull of the dogmatic image of thought. They are not simply disruptions, but rather they are ways to dissolve and transform the grasp of the systems and structures of rigid order and organization. A line of flight is an escape from these co-constitutive systems as *desire*. However, this is not a

desire that arises from lack, but one that *looks forward* toward change. A desire based on lack is one that involves assimilating with reinforcing lines of the dogmatic image of thought. The desire that produces the line of flight is a desire for *change itself*.

Lines of flight are the creative escapes that transform spaces from how things are as dogmatic images of thought, to how the qualitative multiplicities of the rhizome are always emerging from within. They are vital to a teaching and learning experience insofar as they are truly innovative lines of thinking that escapes standardized regulations of classroom learning that privilege homogeneous outcomes. It is the most transformative of all lines nomadic process, escaping the territorializing and deterritorializing relationship altogether to form new assemblages beyond simply destabilizing the dogmatic image of thought. Thus, due to its radical affectivity, it becomes more susceptible to even more rigid reterritorializations. The line of flight is the ultimate productive escape produced by the nomadic encounter, but in doing so it leaves the entwinement of the nomadic process behind, not as a rejection of it, but as a creative offspring into new assemblages that affirms life as free from territorializing constraints.

In these next sections we will explore these nomadic processes, and how they are always at once intertwining and carving distinctive spaces in thought and practice. By examining each conceptual pair separately I intend to highlight specific functions of each, while still maintaining and engaging their inherently dynamic entwinement of qualitative multiplicities and rhizomic mapping of the nomadic processes and the production of lines of flight.

Smooth and Striated Spaces

The nomadic process is active in every respect. It involves intensive qualitative changes through an always mutating rhizomic mapping. Its experiential and experimental activity denotes a movement and flow of creation. This is considered more as mobile process rather than objects or structures of stability. We can always work with a map as a thing or a tool of navigation. But the act of mapping indicates an ongoing process. This sense of action, of doing, or of putting to work, is consistently echoed throughout Deleuze and Guattari's geophilosophical concepts. *Smooth* and *striated* spaces follow in a similar functioning to creating the conditions for nomadic activity. They encourage an active positioning of subjectivity along the stratum of the striated organization of space, as a locational tactic, to "find potential movements of deterritorialization" in an experimental movement that smooths a territory's rigid forms (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 161). In simple terms, smooth space is nomadic, the rhizome functioning in practice as irregular, unmeasured, and heterogeneous. Striated space is the stabilizing arborescent structure in practice as a linear and fixed crisscrossing and gridding of measured lines

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) turn to physical space of nomadic communities to illustrate smooth lines: "the dwelling is subordinated to the journey; inside space conforms to outside space: tent, igloo, boat... the stop follows from the trajectory; once again, the interval takes all, the interval is substance (forming the basis for rhythmic values)" (p. 478). While Deleuze and Guattari make clear distinctions between these operations, as we have seen in each of the conceptual pairings described in the above sections, they are not as binary as a smooth and striated dualism might indicate. Smooth

and striated spaces emerge as unique processes of nuanced operations specific to Deleuze and Guattari's necessity to present these terms as distinct concepts.

Similar to the dispersals that we have seen above in deterritorializing and molecular processes, one of the most important characteristics of smooth space is that it is not created to efface or replace striated space. Smooth space is itself a construction, but it transforms the space that it occupies qualitatively, rather than through a quantitative addition, and it does so through a productive creation of a new habitat as a dynamic and always changing process. Additionally, smooth and striated spaces can only exist in relation to one another. There are no purely smooth or entirely striated spaces. Rather they exist as a push and pull, a bleeding of constant reversal and traversal, in which the smooth and the striated exist simultaneously in the same space. Importantly, the smooth and the striated are not specifically distinguished by spatial contexts. They are often manifest as physical spaces, but they are also *the ways* in which spatial realms are utilized. The key indication here is the creative virtual forces in play, which produce what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call "the strangest of reversals," insofar as the creation of a striated space may also paradoxically form the creation of a smooth space or vice versa (p. 480). As such, it is not strictly a question of creating the physical and spatial context, as it is a mixture of differing modes in approaching and inhabiting space.

Deleuze and Guattari offer a helpful example of smooth and striated spaces in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987). The first is a quite tangible example of the difference in the construction of fabric and felt. Basic fabric patterns are woven by intersecting horizontal and vertical threads. One thread is fixed while the other is mobile—the latter passing over and under the former. Fabric is woven to a fixed dimension in width, with defined

surfaces of top and reverse sides. In contrast, felt is produced not by intersecting lines of thread, but by a pressing together of entwined fibers. There are no measured functions or boundaries that determine the creation of felt in the same way that instructs the weaving of a fabric. The fibers converging within felt are unpredictable as they form the material. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe, felt is “infinite, open, or unlimited in all directions” and thus “distributes a continuous variation” (pp. 475-76). Here we see two seemingly oppositional processes emerging in the creation of a material, one of fixed procedural functions of striated space and the other of open, heterogeneous entwinement of smooth space.

As stated in the introduction for this section, the relationship between smooth and striated spaces are not as simple as binary oppositions contradicting each other. Fabric may be striated and felt may be smooth, but they are not the only two ways to work with material fibers. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) assert, “there are many interfacing, mixes between felt and fabric” (p. 476). They turn to crochet as an example of a weave that opens smooth space in all directions but still operates from a striated center. Deleuze and Guattari also turn to patchwork as an example of the complex operations of smooth and striated spaces insofar that while it is additive (and thus quantitative in composition), it is also infinite and without center as “an amorphous collections of juxtaposed pieces that can be joined in an infinite number of ways” (p. 476). A striated quantitative structuring of adding blocks of fabric in the patchwork intertwines with the amorphous, infinite variations as “uniquely rhythmic values” in “nonformal space” (p. 476-477).

This indicates the tremendous power of the shifts and mixtures of smooth and striated spaces. In this instance a striated space strategically shifts and becomes entwined

with a smooth space. Vital to the functioning of nomadic encounters, this illustrates the key dynamic between these seemingly oppositional pairings, insofar as they rely on asymmetrical movements. Striated space can become smoothed as a means reaffirm organization. In the case studies, we explore this logic to demonstrate that the reversal of such an asymmetrical relationship is just as valid, insofar as smooth space can become radically striated as a means to reaffirm openness.

Another example of smooth and striated space is experienced through a game I often enjoy playing with my six-year-old niece. Children often make up games according to a logic that makes sense to them, but their rules are also malleable to various changes as the game progresses. I often play such games with my niece based on popular trading cards such as *Shopkins* and *My Little Pony*. The games would often begin with a strict set of rules—all cards were assigned a value number, and certain cards would have special kinds of powers (such as immunity to being captured, or doubling the value number of a subsequent card drawn). Importantly, there is an official way to play the game as indicated by the card manufacturer. But for my niece and I, it is much more fun to make up our own rules, which certainly allows for more flexibility in game play. The rules that we establish at the beginning of our version of the game operate through a rational logic, one in which Deleuze and Guattari (1987) would call “the games form of interiority” (p. 352). We begin play once the rules are established for our version of the game.

In a sense, these games are loosely based on a hybrid of the children’s’ card games *Old Maid* and *Go Fish*. We draw cards from each other as well as from a separate pile on the table. The objective of the game is to collect all of the other player’s cards based on logic of the modified rules. However, as the game progresses, we allow for the

rules to shift and loosen. This usually begins once one player has started to lose a significant number of cards. As a player's pile dwindles, those remaining cards take on new values and even more 'special powers.' As a lighthearted, mutually acknowledged form of blurring the rules to extend the experience of exchanging cards, the striated space of the original rules of the game becomes smoothed, with the rules being worn down through a deterritorializing line of improvisation. This smooth space of play benefits the player with fewer cards, and allows for the game to continue, but in doing so the game has become qualitatively changed—it has become a new assemblage. Since both players agreed to this improvisational shift, it was not a deceitful operation of smoothing of space by either participants. Rather, in this experience with my niece, the employment of creative tactics serves to prolong the activity of the game.

The smoothing space of the openness and strategically changing rules suggest what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call a "milieu of exteriority" (p. 51). As it shifts from interiority of the striated rules to the exteriority of the fluid and flexible trajectories of the smoothed game play, the experience opens up to a mobile and mutating entwining of territorialized and deterritorialized functions. As a game, it is an imaginative and experimental way to keep entertained, and without any concern for outcome (such as defeating opponent), it becomes less a competition and more a "do it with me" moment of strategically sharing an experience of qualitative change together through playfully deterritorializing the rules (Deleuze, 1994, p. 23). This example is significant to the study in the way it demonstrates how smoothed spaces can create innovatively new patterns of thinking in engaging with a learning situation. It seeks out alternative tactics that reframe the rules of engagement by smoothing its territorializing lines of organization. It also

demonstrates the ways in which we might deterritorialize striated spaces in creating new striations that can become smoothed on an entirely new lived experience of experimental encounters with a particular context.

Molar and Molecular Lines

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987), territorialization and deterritorialization are parts of a larger process of *molar* and *molecular* distributions (p. 41). As I mentioned above, secondary sources writing about these two pairs of concepts tend to refer to them interchangeably. But Deleuze and Guattari position territorialization and deterritorialization as co-constitutive parts of the emergent activity of molarization and molecularization. In forming the larger process of molar and molecular distributions, a second set of concepts is factored. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) refer to this second set as coding and decoding:

Forms imply a code, modes of coding and decoding. Substances as formed matters refer to territorialities and degrees of territorialization and deterritorialization. But each articulation has a code *and* a territoriality; therefore each possesses both form and substance. For now, all we can say is that each articulation has a corresponding type of segmentarity or multiplicity: one type is supple, more molecular, and merely ordered; the other is more rigid, molar, and organized. (p. 41)

Deleuze and Guattari assert that molarization occurs when “phenomena constituting an overcoding are produced, phenomena of centering, unification, totalization, integration, hierarchization, and finalization” (p. 41). Molarizing effects intend to stabilize identities of *being* rather than opening toward the emergence of *becoming*. Specifically, molar lines

express the structuring or territorialization of binary oppositions in thinking. They form the borders and boundaries of identification and classification: majority-minority, men-women, heterosexual-homosexual, white-ethnic, western-eastern, religious-atheist, and so on.

Taking an example of a city or community, if molar reification is a top-down territorialization of a community through the overcoding of rituals and regulations, then molecular distribution functions at the micropolitical level. This is where we see the distribution of power from at the generalized molar level put into action at the level of the local – family, community, school, and so forth. Molar lines are stabilizing, constraining and essentializing. Molecular lines cut into molar lines as an active process, one of doing rather than being. The individual functions of molecular activity loosen the molarizing structures from within. And while deterritorialization occurs at the molecular level, reterritorialization can serve as ways to reaffirm the molar initiative.

Molar and molecular processes are vital to the political potency of nomadic encounters. If we recall the conventional teaching and learning example from chapter two, we can see how molar lines and molecular lines would fit into the description of the two approaches to the learning process and would be constantly relating and connecting to one another. In that example, molarizing lines of segmentation construct the hierarchical student/teacher binary, in which the teacher imparts or transfers knowledge to the student as ready-made solutions to problems that reinforce common sense and good sense. Molar lines are the institutional norms of a classroom experience. They involve what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call “power centers” of “rigid segments” that normalize overcoded systems and structures of the classroom (p. 222). However, at the

level of lived experience of the daily activities between teachers and students, molecular lines come into play as *supple lines*, insofar as they supplement the lines of segmentation of molar lines. They are the “micro-cracks” in the molarizing organization, such as moments of experimentation by teachers and students to as a productive disruption (p. 198). For Deleuze and Guattari, these molecular or supple lines on the micropolitical level are grounded in desire. But as we recall from earlier in this chapter, as well as in chapter two, this desire is not out of lack. Instead it is a forward-looking movement that seeks transformation, toward “learning to undo things, and to undo oneself... the undoing of the subject” in the form of a “counterattack” to the overcoding of molarizing lines (p. 400).

The classroom environment is an example of the ways in which molar and molecular lines intertwine. A teacher may introduce a modified assignment that is out-of-synch with the dominant structure of the planned curriculum, which opens up new potentials for students to think differently. Conversely, a student might engage in a rigidly structured assignment from an unorthodox approach, thus destabilizing the teacher’s expected outcome of a learning situation. These moments underscore the supple lines of movements and flows of lived experiences that percolate from beneath the institutional lines of segmentation. Supple lines are lines of deterritorialization, of disruption. However, like lines of deterritorialization, they always become territorialized or reterritorialized. These lines are still formed and reformed within the molar and molecular system.

Thus, the third more potent and radical *line of flight* becomes the transformative escape from the rigid molar and supple molecular dynamic. As qualitative multiplicities,

lines of flight emerge from molecular dispersals, but they function outside of the cyclical molar and molecular systems of thought and order. Instead they create a new trajectory of nomadic movement that is always cutting through and never settling into a fixed definition or category of thinking. Like territorializing and deterritorializing operations, molar and molecular distributions are constantly entwined in defining, un-defining, redefining each other. The line of flight breaks free from that relationship to create new, transformative assemblages. They must always be moving and mutating to avoid molar overcoding and reintegration into an image thought. As such, the line of flight is the indecipherable conductor of the rhizomic image of thought, escaping the rigid and supple lines of ensnarement, but remaining immersed in life—always as a catalyst of desire for creative transformation toward a life to come. In a teaching and learning environment, a line of flight is not just a disruption; it is an active escape from the molarizing and molecular lines that become entrenched in the entwinement of the asymmetrical nomadic engagement. A line of flight is a creative transformation of a milieu—a radical overhaul of a classroom or curriculum, a thorough breakdown of hierarchical order between teacher/student binary, or even to such an extreme measure as a teacher quitting, a student dropping out. There are innumerable scenarios that a line of flight can produce, and as we see, not all of them may be ostensibly productive or may satisfy an ideal outcome. A line of flight is an experimental leap into unknown assemblages to come, and as such is a roll of the dice of *expérience* into virtual difference—an embracing of the affirmation of chance.

Self-Awareness and the Creative Potential of Encounters

We have explored in chapter two how encounters are forces or intensities that emerge as a pre-subjective process. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) present the encounter as a radical reframing of the emergence of thought. It is the force that generates all thought and initiates the powers of becoming from the virtual realm of difference to the actual realm of meaning making. As we have examined throughout this chapter, encounters can also become concepts that are a kind of tool to be put to work, employed to create the conditions for an unpredictable brush with the chaos of the virtual through nomadic operations of deterritorialized, molecular, and smooth spaces. In this respect, the encounter produces a second power of thought in the creative emergence of thinking. In these chapters we have seen several examples of encounters emerging both as a first and second power of thought, through a co-constitutive entwinement with forces of order and chaos. This emerges as distributions of qualitative multiplicities in a rhizomic plane of consistency opening up to deterritorialize and reconfigure the plane of organization of the actual. The nomadic process also involves a conscious and tactical engagement with creating a milieu for encounters to be put to work ways that give rise to innovative cartographies of thinking.

In the introduction chapter we briefly explored Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) frustration with the history of philosophy. We return to this topic here because it serves as both an apt example *and* a conceptual framework for the encounter in thought. For Deleuze, somewhere along its history, conventional philosophy had become fixated on describing and explaining based on presuppositions. As we explored in the introduction and in chapter two, philosophy gives us a common image of thought that frames what it

means to think. Deleuze (1994) rejects this the image of thought and calls for a thinking “without image” (p. 173). This becomes a tremendous conceptual challenge, insofar as without an image of thought, we have no order to be able to think the world. But this complication is exactly the point that lies at the core of Deleuze’s (1994) philosophy, as we recall this crucial passage: “Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but a fundamental ‘encounter’ ... it is opposed to recognition” (p. 139). Thought itself is pre-philosophical and is created by a force or encounter that is not recognized but is rather sensed.

The encounter becomes a vital force of creative transformation in that it actively jolts us into the creation of new thinking, but it also creates a *self-awareness* through lived experience for us to always be on the lookout to challenge the ways in which territorializing, striated, and molar lines construct our sedentary, dogmatic image of thought. We must keep in mind that the concept of the encounter discussed in chapter two is a pre-subjective force that pushes thought to its limits—as a first order of power of thought. This triggers new terrains of thinking as a second order of power of thought. In this chapter, we have seen the concept of the encounter being utilized as force that is put to work toward this same form of creative transformation of thinking, as a second order power of thought. It still calls forth sensations from the virtual realm. But as a nomadic process it emerges from an entwinement of actual and virtual forces. In the realm of the actual, we can create the conditions for the encounter—as a conscious experimentation through lived experience—to extract sensations from the realm of virtual difference. In other words, when the encounter is put to work, it becomes a force of disruption of our habits of thought, and pulls forth non-representational speeds and intensities from the

virtual into the actual. Here, the encounter creates lines of flight that escape from molarizing organization and moves beyond the supple molecular lines of the actual, and allow for the production of deterritorializing assemblages that potentially opens up new worlds of thinking that we never knew could be possible.

What is significant about the encounter is that while its effects might be deterritorializing, as a force of disruption its operation tends to be one of territorialization. The forces and intensities that trigger the encounter interrupt the complacency or habit of thought. The encounter functions as a striated wall or a territorialized boundary of resistance that interrupts up our familiarity in thinking. However, whether the encounter takes the form as a striation in a smooth space, or a greater striation in an already striated space, the power of its creative transformation is located in how its interruption forces thinking into action. Thus, the disrupting forces of the encounter are also the rupturing forces of supple, molecular lines and lines of flight, which open to new pathways of thinking. Our task as artists, teachers, and students, is to open up to nomadic encounters. They always create an asymmetrical entwinement between order and chaos, actual and virtual, striated and smooth. The problem for Deleuze and Guattari is that this asymmetry often weighs heavily on the side of order rather than chaos.

Nomadic encounters create the pathways through which experimentation can launch our thinking into yet-to-be-discovered assemblages that helps us to traverse the repressive ordering of the dogmatic image of thought. The intention is not to forget the molarizing segmentary lines of our habits of thought, but rather it is to be *self-reflective* in understanding how much of a grasp such constraining thinking has on us. We must

always be mindful of that side of our existence while constantly searching for opportunities to experiment through the lived experience of the nomadic encounters, which allows us to pierce and pry open our structuring patterns of thinking through representation. In this way, we are not discovering ideas that are ready-made in some abstract or transcendental realm. Rather, we are opening up the potential for novel thinking to emerge through an active experimentation that is immanent through our lived experience and mindful of how captivated we tend to become by the dogmatic image of thought.

Nomadic processes are always functioning to undermine striating organization by blurring the boundaries of hierarchy, categorization, identification, and representation. It is a subversive process that traverses those modes of order with speeds and intensities of sensation. In this next chapter I will explore how nomadic encounters function on a plane of composition that engages the qualitative multiplicities of the rhizome to pull forth the affects and percepts of sensation from the virtual realm of chaos into the lived experience of artmaking.

CHAPTER 4

ART AND PHILOSOPHY

To this point we have seen the ways in which nomadic encounters create qualitative shifts and rhizomic dispersals, and how the various contextual examples throughout this study demonstrate the creative transformations that emerge from these processes. As we have seen in the cases through the experience of both artmaking and those of everyday life, nomadic encounters create a milieu in which we can put these various concepts to work as affirmations of creatively processes that open the potential to produce new realms of thinking. This chapter serves as a further foundation to the subsequent case study chapters in examining the practices of Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian, as well as a case study of my own experiences of teaching and learning through art, which present examples in artmaking and learning that continue this correspondence between nomadic encounters and thinking anew.

As we briefly explored in chapter one, Deleuze and Guattari (1994) present a clear division of labor that distinguishes the creation of art, philosophy, and science. Deleuze and Guattari take a firm stance toward the operation of art, not as an object of reference through ‘opinion’ or a creation of concepts, but rather as a compound or *bloc of sensations*, which “implies the emergence of pure sensory qualities, of sensibilia that cease to be merely functional and become expressive features” (p. 183). Deleuze and Guattari stake their claim by directly pointing to several ‘errors’ of art practices in

Modern Art, such as various movements of early to mid-20th century abstraction, mid-century Abstract Expressionism, and particularly with Conceptual Art in the 1960s, which in its strictest form presents an operation in artmaking that is reciprocally at odds with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of art as a movement of sensations in its bodies and objects to create an affective transformation. Thus, Deleuze and Guattari have clear positions regarding a specific transformative power that art achieves in the extracting the forces sensation from the virtual into the actual through the expression of art. This chapter will explore these locations of contention within the context of Modern Art, but also work toward a middle-ground, which reveals more open-ended conceptual-based practices in contemporary art, that in many respects productively puts to work Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts as a way to traverse and expand upon their more inflexible notions of art. As such, this chapter seeks out disruptions of rigid theoretical structures as a way to both utilize and reconfigure Deleuze and Guattari's notions of art to demonstrate that they *do* productively contribute to the current artmaking and art educational discourses as important philosophers of contemporary art.

While this overall study focuses primarily on how the conditions of new terrains of thinking are created through an artmaking process for an artist, the ideas presented in this chapter will examine the both the artist and spectator's experience of art. However, it is important to acknowledge that the encounter of nomadic processes in philosophy and the encounter with the forces of sensations in art are just as vital in their creative transformation of the artist it is for one who experiences an artwork. Thus, it is valuable to examine how we experience art as observers, particularly in relation to how these philosophical and art concepts offer ways in which we can challenge our habits of

approaching and considering art. This in turn impacts how we talk and write about art, and more importantly how we present ideas and questions about the transformative potential of art in a teaching and learning environment. Thus it is vital for us create a well-rounded realm of perspectives as we step outside of our preconceived frameworks of thought, not only in terms of how art experiences emerge through its production, but also in respect to how artworks are experienced by viewers—which, significantly for teaching and learning, includes artists and art educators.

A Division of Labor: Philosophy, Art, and Science

Deleuze and Guattari (1994) are resolute in stating that there is a division of labor between philosophy, science, and art. They assert that “thinking is thought through concepts, or functions, or sensations, and no one of these thought is better than another, or more fully, completely, or synthetically “thought” (p. 198). As we have seen in the chapter two, philosophy is the purview of thought through concept creation along the plane of immanence. Science operates through the creation of functions—through representations and quantitative boundaries—along a plane of reference. Art operates through the compounds of sensations—percepts and affects—that are created on the plane of composition. To Deleuze and Guattari (1994), there is no hierarchy in this division of labor, or “brain-becomings,” as they are often are referred (p. 208). Philosophy isn’t viewed as privileged over art, nor is science more important than philosophy, and so on. Each mode of thinking occurs on its own plane.

However, this does not make them completely autonomous from one another. While Deleuze and Guattari insist that the three divisions of labor “are immediately posited or reconstituted in a respective independence” they each “give rise to

relationships of connection between them” (p. 91). For example functions of science and concepts of philosophy can create interruptions and entwinements with one another:

sometimes concepts are endowed with the prestige of reason while figures are referred to the night of the irrational and its symbols; sometimes figures are granted the privileges of spiritual life while concepts are relegated to the artificial movements of dead understanding (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 91).

Yet even if Deleuze and Guattari (1994) attribute these intersections as “ill-tempered judgments that are content to depreciate one or other of the terms,” they acknowledge that these are “disturbing affinities” that “appear on what seems to be a common plane of immanence” (p. 91). They are disturbing insofar as they are blurring the boundaries of the division of labor in productive ways. Still, Deleuze and Guattari are adamant that these connections “do not rule out there being a boundary, however difficult it is to make out” (p. 91). Science cannot create its hierarchical functions within philosophy’s purview because the plane of immanence is horizontal, and vice versa.

Art’s the *plane of composition* functions in a space that is not entirely horizontal or vertical, existing between the two planes of philosophy and science. Thus, art can find expression through the concepts of philosophy and the functions of science to create its specific aesthetic figures—colors, lines, textures, sounds, forms, melodies—but the expression of sensations can only be created on its particular plane of composition and not through the plane of immanence of philosophy or the plane of reference of science. Why are Deleuze and Guattari so adamant about separating these realms of thinking into three distinctive categories? Would this not fall into line with the dogmatic image of thought, which confines the world to limiting modes of classification?

To address this question, I will examine how these three divisions of labor address chaos and the realm of the virtual in different ways. As established in chapter two, philosophy is the creation of concepts, which brings forth the event of the encounter from the infinite movements along the virtual plane of immanence. This is the pre-conceptual emergence of thought, and because of its boundless multiplicity of movements, it is infinite in its potential. Science operates along the plane of reference, which deals with actual matters of fact. It uses functions to organize the references of the actual as a mode of thinking. Science is not about the emergence of thought, which is the purview of philosophy, but rather about an active thinking about the matters of fact existing in the realm of the actual. In its middle-ground between philosophy emerging from the virtual and science operating in the actual, art functions on the plane of composition to create compounds of sensation that re-approach the infinite forces of the virtual from a position in the actual.

As Deleuze and Guattari (1994) clarify, philosophy is “an image of Thought-Being,” while art is an “image of a Universe” (p. 65). Truly innovative art “wants to create the finite that restores the infinite” (p. 197). It does this by extracting “affects that surpass ordinary affections and perceptions” (p. 65). Similarly novel concepts created in philosophy “go beyond everyday opinions” (p. 65). As such, the focus of this chapter is to examine the relationship between art and philosophy (and to a lesser extent, science), and how the tension between these divisions of labor, create points of contention for Deleuze and Guattari in relation to Conceptual Art practices, but as we will see in analyzing its implications, this dynamic can also engage in a productive entwinement that reveals new realms of thinking through nomadic encounters with contemporary art.

Deleuze and Guattari's Notion of Art

As introduced above, Deleuze and Guattari (1994) assert that art is created on a plane of composition which serves as a framework that calls forth sensations from virtual difference into an *expressive* organization (p. 39). Importantly, the term 'expression' here operates in a similar way that 'palpation' does in the emergence of thought in chapter two. Sensations are the most vital matter to Deleuze and Guattari's notion of art: "the work of art is a being of sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself" (p. 164). We cannot grasp the sensations of art; we can only sense, express, or palpate them. Crucially, sensations are not subjective experiences, insofar as they do not emanate from within us; they are pre-subjective in this respect. This is why Deleuze and Guattari say that sensations are the "image of Universe" (p. 65). They are forces of movements and flows as pure intensities that are extracted from the virtual, and thus they are indecipherable through our conventional forms of apprehension or interpretation.

Art extracts sensations through the territorializing plane of composition. Sensation reveals its invisible forces through the territorial materiality of the artwork. The territory of the plane of composition slows the invisible forces, speeds and intensities of sensations—to compose them as something to be expressed through mediums, materials, colors, lines, values, contours, textures, sounds, melodies, and so on. Deleuze and Guattari (1994) insist that "the work of art is never produced by or for the sake of technique," and thus the plane of composition is not to be confused with the technical or formal composition of a work (p. 192). Instead, the plane of composition is a milieu, or a impersonal field of lived experience where of the various organizations of art production resonates through every work of art. Within this milieu of the plane of composition, the

artist creates a territory through which the intensive forces of sensations invade the material elements through the artwork, which Deleuze and Guattari view as “the work of sensation” (p. 190). As we noted in chapter two, sensations are composed of a “compound of percepts and affects” (p. 190). *Percepts* are the becoming of something beyond subjective perception: “they are independent of a state of those who experience them” (p. 190). They exist outside of a viewer, as Deleuze and Guattari, following Cezanne, refer to them as “the landscape before man, absent of man” or the “nonhuman landscapes of nature” (p. 169). Percepts are palpations of the unknown forces impinging from the realm outside of actual perceptible experience.

Affects are similarly non-representational, insofar as they are independent from objects or origins. Deleuze and Guattari (1994) assert that they are beyond the affections experienced in everyday. Affects are “no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them” (p. 164). They are the capacity to affect or be affected, as becoming for the artist or the viewer amidst an artmaking process or in the presence of an artwork. Affects and percepts, vibrating and oscillating as sensations are the elements, not of the subject-as-artist, but of “the Universe” that materialize along the plane of composition (p. 165). However, their generation of the material and movement through the body and the world is a becoming, extracting

new harmonies, new plastic and melodic landscapes, and new rhythmic characters that raise them to the height of the earth’s song and the cry of humanity: that which constitutes the tone, the health, the becoming, a visual and sonorous bloc (p. 176).

Furthermore, affects and percepts of sensations are always future-directed, insofar as they do not “commemorate or celebrate something that happened,” but rather they embody the “ear of the future” (p. 176).

These notions of the sensations of art as emerging from beyond subjectivity and as future-directed are of crucial importance for Deleuze and Guattari (1994). They declare that the materialization of sensation in art “is to wrest the percept from the perception of objects and from states of a perceiving subject, to wrest the affect from the affections as passage from one state to another: to extract a block of sensations, a pure being of sensation” (p. 167). Subjective experiences of affection and perception are dissolved through the infection of affect and percept in the plane of composition. For Deleuze and Guattari, this presents a passage of art’s emergence from a privileged human experience into modes of fluid existence: “All vision is becoming. One becomes universe. Becomings animal, vegetable, molecular, becoming zero” (p. 169).

Affects and percepts are beyond the artist’s subjectivity but this does not mean the artwork is not without an artist-subject. Deleuze and Guattari (1994) insist that “style is needed—the writer’s syntax, the musician’s modes and rhythms, the painter’s lines and colors—to raise lived perceptions to the percept and lived affections to the affect” (p. 170). Style plays a paramount role in creating the territory within the milieu for the plane of composition to extract sensations from virtual difference. From Van Gogh’s “becoming-sunflower” (p. 169) to Melville’s “becoming-whale” of Ahab (p.170), Deleuze and Guattari conceptualize a truly transformative and future-directed artwork that extracts sensations of percepts and affects that we have never known before, which exceeds “perceptual states and affective transitions of the lived” (p. 171). In addition, the

work of art for Deleuze and Guattari must “stand up on its own” and inhabit an autonomous, self-reliant position in the world (p. 170). Its existence is sustained in the “vibrating sensation” (p. 170) that functions as a new kind of language or “haptic vision” that is beyond representation (Deleuze, 2003, p. 129).

If we engage in a deeper examination of this first path of inquiry, we must acknowledge that Deleuze and Guattari are discussing a certain kind of stylistic artmaking that they feel works within the regime of art as they have conceptualized: it is a style that is between figurative art and abstraction that produces a non-representational language of becoming through art, and is drawn from artists like Van Gogh, Cezanne, and Bacon. Various other artmaking forms, such as abstraction, Abstract Expressionism, conceptualism, or any kind of representation-based art, like photography, are outside of this realm for reasons that we will address. Firstly, Deleuze and Guattari (1994) insist that that in art an artist like Cezanne or Van Gogh is not painting a resemblance of a landscape or a flower, but rather they are extracting “the pure sensation ‘of a tortured flower, of a landscape slashed, pressed, and plowed” (p. 167). Material here is being “exchanged” for sensation, not as in the exchange of sensation with representation, such as the “optical mixture of the impressionists,” but rather material here is presented as material style exchanged with sensation: “the violin for the piano, one kind of brush for another, oil for pastel” (p. 167).

Deleuze (2003) particularly addresses the practices of abstraction in the early to mid century, mid-century Abstract Expressionism, and Conceptual Art of the 1960s and early 1970s. He considers certain modern abstraction as working with a “symbolic code” that “reduces the abyss or chaos (as well as the manual) to a minimum: it offers us

asceticism, a spiritual salvation” (p. 84). In examples of Mondrian and Kandinsky’s paintings, sensations become too codified to mobilize and open up its forces to becoming. Here we see Deleuze’s aversion to binary operations return: “restore to man a pure and internal optical space, which will perhaps be made up exclusively of the horizontal and the vertical” (p. 85)

Abstract Expressionism for Deleuze (2003) conversely allows for the “opposite extreme of abstraction” in which “the abyss or chaos is deployed to the maximum” (p. 85). In this sense, there is no delimitation for the “transformation of form,” but rather it emerges as a “decomposition of matter” (p. 86). For Deleuze, Pollock’s chaotic all-overness of thrown paint becomes a “catastrophe” of the action of the painter around the canvas on the ground so that “the optical horizon reverts completely to the tactile ground” (p. 86).

With conceptual practices, and any practices that are dependent on representation, this begins to significantly limit an already dwindling number of style and genre based options for visual art to pursue according Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of art. Deleuze (2003) is especially firm in his rejection of photography as a creative force—in the ways that writing and modern painting has the potential to achieve. He sees photography as inherently fixing and reducing the movements and flows of the world to presuppositions and resemblance, which represents clichés as readymade perceptions of the image of thought: “what we see, what we perceive, are photographs” (p. 74). According to Deleuze, all art faces the dogmatic, stabilizing effects of preconceived *clichés*, which are epitomized in painting and drawing through illustration, and in writing through narrative reporting. Deleuze maintains that there is no escaping cliché because “not only has there

been a multiplication of images of every kind, around us and in our heads, but even the reaction against clichés are creating clichés” (p. 73). Clichés are always functioning to territorialize and reterritorialize the dogmatic image of thought. An artist must always work through the clichés that are ever present and unavoidable in artmaking. Writing about Francis Bacon, Deleuze (2003) insists that the canvas for a painter is never blank, but rather

everything he has in his head or around him is already in the canvas, more or less virtually, more or less actually, before he begins his work. They are all present in the canvas as so many images, actual or virtual, so that the painter does not have to cover a blank surface, but rather would have to empty it out, clear it, clean it... he paints on images that are already there, in order to produce a canvas whose functioning will reverse the relations between model and copy. (p. 86)

For Deleuze, clichés are *givens* that are already embedded in the canvas before the work begins. “Figurations” are the perceptions ingrained in our image of thought, as “photographs that are illustrations, by newspapers that are narrations, by cinema-images, by television images” (p. 86). These are the “psychic” and “physical” clichés, which “already fills the canvas, before the beginning” (p. 87). However, Deleuze insists that one cannot simply transform or eliminate cliché through artmaking. Doing so would be “too intellectual, too abstract: it allows the cliché to rise again from its ashes” (p. 87). Instead Deleuze contends that artists must rely on style to *work through* the unavoidable images cliché has already made present in the artwork.

Thus Deleuze (2003) turns to a middle-ground between figurative and abstract visual art as the an exemplar of art pulling forth sensations into the plane of composition

to create a truly new non-representational language. Deleuze heralds Bacon as the artist who exemplifies the expression of sensation as becoming-other through his decisive style that extracts “the Figure” from figuration (p. 48). Figuration is an expected outcome based on “clichés that are already lodged on the canvas before the painter begins to work” (p. 11), and is concerned with “representing, illustrating, or narrating” (p. 10). The Figure pulls forth the sensations from figuration that creates a disruptive and exorbitant “force exerted on a body” (p. 48), a force which “makes the invisible visible” (p. 49). For Deleuze, Bacon does this by animating the virtual sensations of the bodies he paints as mobile rather than stable forms. Centered within the frame without ostensible narrative context, Bacon’s figures become “deformations of the body” as “becoming-animal,” morphing and mutating across the triptych panels (p. 20). Yet, as we have seen with all becomings, it is not one of becoming an empirical animal, nor of taking on the representation of an animal, but it is rather the “animal as a *trait*” that builds to “a *zone of indiscernibility or undecidability* between man and animal” (p. 20). These tensions are created by Bacon’s style of painting—brushing, rubbing, and scrubbing—extracts the “sensation and rhythm” that affects not only the visual, but of all senses—the pressure and sound of the scream-sensation or the beast’s hooves-sensation, the smell and taste of the flesh’s meat-sensation (p. 37).

For Deleuze, Bacon’s paintings are not of transformation, which “can be abstract or dynamic,” but rather they are of *deformation*. As a second category of the forces of sensation “deformation is always bodily,” and through its mutation—Bacon’s scrubbing and effacing—it proceeds to “subordinate the abstract to the Figure” (p. 50). The Figure in deformation is alone with the overbearing force of sensation, without preconceptions

or clichés, strictly isolated in form as chaos whirls around in the periphery. The deformation of the body reveals sensation as a new and twisted vision against representation, in the form of “the third eye, a haptic eye, a haptic vision of the eye, this new clarity” (p. 129). As Zepke (2005) affirms, “the deformation of the Figure only becomes a sensation through a deformation of the eye, a deformation necessary for the eye to become capable of this “vision” (p. 194). Deformation becomes a new non-representational, but visually produced sensation of escape from the body within the materiality of the artwork. For Bacon, deformation is the emergence of the scream or the meat as a resonance converging with the haptic vision of the eye.

Furthermore, in Deleuze’s (2003) analysis of the painter Francis Bacon’s art practice, the philosopher insists that the Figure of the artwork emerges as an oscillation between the forces of sensation and the form of the territory along the plane of composition. It is transformative insofar as it is the creation of new forms through the materiality of sensation. Deformation, is not the creation of new forms, but instead it is an indeterminable palpation of a twisting or a disturbance of the body, which is expressed not as territorial materiality of art, but rather as resonances, waves, vibrations, rhythms, or amplitudes which flows anew to the nervous system of the artist or the beholder. It releases sensations through a deterritorialization of the materiality of forms that capture sensations. Deformation becomes a new mode—a *haptic eye*—that traverses representation as we seek to work through cliché and to function within a milieu in which encounters propel thought to its limits beyond the dogmatic image of thought.

Turning to Deleuze’s (2003) concepts of transformation and deformation in connection with Bacon’s specific mode of painting provides a foundation to work more

broadly toward creating a mindset for how we might become more attentive to new approaches to artmaking. It is not about attempting to follow Deleuze's specific objectives of transformation and deformation as a way to paint in a way that resembles Bacon or Cezanne. This kind of prescriptive operation would directly oppose the spirit of Deleuze's philosophical project. Instead, we can pursue these concepts as pathways for traversing the senses to "make visible a kind of original unity in the senses, and would make a multisensible Figure finally appear" (p. 37). We can view transformation as a way to considering how experimentation embraces an artmaking milieu that creates a territory for slowing chaos and extracting sensations from outside of our lived experience in "the Universe," and to palpate those sensations by pulling them into our lived experience through the creation of the materiality of new forms (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 165). Conversely, we can experiment with those territories created through artmaking by deforming certain forms, interrupting and distorting their materiality, so that sensations emerge anew as the resonance of difference on our sensory organs.

What we see emerging through this analysis is a very detailed set of operations at play in Deleuze's (2003) analysis of Bacon's paintings, which adds specificity to Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) overall purview of art, not just as a division of labor that distinguishes art from science and philosophy, but also as creating a distance between many common modern and contemporary practices in art. In the following section we will examine a problem that I have encountered in my reading of Deleuze and Guattari in contemporary art. It stems from their notion of art as described above, which is in opposition to the major tenets of practices of the Conceptual Art movement in the 1960s and 70s, and its influence that has permeated through all forms of contemporary art since.

The Legacy of Conceptual Art

Considering the specific details of Deleuze and Guattari's rejection of certain art practices, it is clear that they are directing their critique at the operations of the Conceptual Art movement, which is generally chronicled from 1966 to 1972 (Lippard, 1997). This is a period in art that Alberro (1999) very broadly describes as

an expanded critique of the cohesiveness and materiality of the art object, a growing wariness toward definitions of artistic practice as purely visual, a fusion of the work with its site and context of display, and an increased emphasis on the possibilities of publicness and distribution. (p. xvii)

The intention of Conceptual Art was to clearly distance itself from the pervasive movements in the preceding decades—particularly Abstract Expressionism in the 1940s and 50s, as well as Minimalism and Pop Art in the 1960s. It is also significant for this study to acknowledge that Conceptual Art emerged concurrently with, and in response to the social, political, and cultural climate of the 1960s.

A vital socio-political component of Conceptual Art practices was its critique of commodity culture and institutions, which played a significant role in defining the modes of practice and presentation of artists in the movement. Lippard (1997) described Conceptual Art practices as “unfettered by object status” (p. vii). This is typified by privileging the idea over form, material, or objecthood, which are conventional qualities of the artwork positioned by Conceptual Art practices as a problematic symptom of the modernist notion of aesthetic form and experience. Lippard characterizes this radical shift in addressing the art object as “dematerialization,” in which the output of Conceptual Art is no longer required to possess a physical form to be a work of art (p. vii). Instead the

work might have resulted as a set of instructions or a performance. It might have been preserved by photography or video documentation, which was considered at the time to be unconventional mediums of art output. In other words, for Conceptual Art practices, the work itself was ephemeral or secondary to the ideas by which it was constituted.

In addition to the notion of the dematerialized art object, a second relevant characteristic of Conceptual Art was its relationship to the emergence of structuralism in the social sciences and humanities in the 1960s. The two movements shared a similar endeavor, both turning to systems and language in approaching the structures of human experience. As we observed in chapter two, structuralism questioned the philosophical notion of the subject. It turned to the semiotics of Saussure (1974), who presented subjectivity as a system of differential signs that exists prior to, and as such, structures human experience, and the anthropological research of Levi-Strauss (1974, 1995), whose structural analysis positioned subjectivity as a causal result of these systems.

Structuralist theories were emerging as Pop Art and Minimalism were redefining art in the first half of the 1960s. Pop Art responded to high modernist notions of art by incorporating elements of mass media and mundane objects and images, often referring to production and consumption of postwar consumer culture. Minimalism turned to industrial modes of production to create, as Judd (2002) framed it, a “new three-dimensional work” that supplants painting and sculpture (p. 91). Furthermore, the minimalist object-status was established in relationship to what Morris (1968) termed the “strong gestalt sensation” of the beholder (p. 226).

It seems beyond coincidence that the ideas of the Conceptual art project were taking hold concurrently with structuralism in the second half of the 1960s. It was

certainly a rejection of Clement Greenberg's ideas of Abstract Expressionism functioning to revealing art through the purity of medium specificity; it rejected Pop Art's return to representation, while radically and obliquely expanding upon its appropriation of popular and consumer culture; and it dissolved minimalism's art object, already stripped to its most simplified elements. Buchloh (1990) traces this evolution of structuralist thought through modernism noting the appearance of language as a component of Cubism, and into other art practices of the first half of the 20th century. In these modernist instances, the structuralist influence is limited to "mapping a linguistic model onto a perceptual model." (p. 107). Buchloh further indicates the structuralist direction that Conceptual Art expands upon in its emergence:

because the proposal inherent in Conceptual Art was to replace the object of spatial and perceptual experience by linguistic definition alone (the work as analytic proposition), it thus constituted the most consequential assault on the status of that object: its visuality, its commodity status, and its form of distribution. (p.107)

The Conceptual project proposed that language was a medium, but while the use of words were of great importance in creating the work, the use linguistic signs of information were of even greater significance. Thus the distanced, scientific rhetoric of presentation through the systems and structure of language served to replace the modernist modes of visual and affective experiential qualities of an artwork.

Conceptual artists called into question the nature of art and artmaking. Their practices eradicated the author as much as it did the consumer of the artwork, in what Buchloh (1990) describes as an

attempt to replace a traditional, hierarchical model of privileged experience based on authorial skills and acquired competence of reception by a structural relationship of absolute equivalents that would dismantle both sides of the equation: the hieratic position of the unified artistic object just as much as the privileged position of the author. (p. 140)

Conceptual art was a reflection and response similar to the widespread acknowledgement in academic disciplines to the ‘investment’ in structuralist theory in the social sciences and humanities throughout the 1960s. As Meltzer (2013) asserts, “it is... in the wake of this turn that we have come to see ‘signs everywhere,’ and to think meaningfulness as delimited by ‘signification.’”(p. 13). This structuralist turn is one toward an anti-humanist perspective of reality, in which the subject has been replaced by “a mere effect of preexisting systems,” and instead has come to “conceive of identity categories as based on a structural notion of difference” (Meltzer, 2013, p. 15). This difference, determined by the relationship of humans to underlying organizational structures, was a common deployment of Conceptual Art through its extensive examination of language.

Deleuze and Guattari and the Problem with Conceptual Art

As noted earlier in the chapter, Deleuze and Guattari make a very clear distinction about the function of art as extracting sensations of affects and precepts through expression. Deleuze and Guattari consider Conceptual Art to be a process that delegitimizes art because it attempts to rigidly create concepts and functions, which is the purview of philosophy and science, respectively. By dematerializing the art object, it also dematerializes the extraction of sensation, which is reliant upon its materiality.

Deleuze and Guattari (1994) list several problems with the major tenets of Conceptual Art, which attempts to “bring art and philosophy together” (p. 198). They criticize Conceptual Art’s intentions to work along a “neutralized plane of composition... so that everything takes on a value of sensation reproducible to infinity” (p. 198). As such, this neutralized plane is reduced to a “generalization of materials” such as text and photographs, which thereby “transforms sensation into information,” and makes its art indistinguishable from our habitual perceptual and affective processes (p. 198). Because of this shift of the plane of composition toward information, “sensation depends upon the simple “opinion” of the spectator who determines whether or not to “materialize” the sensation, that is to say, decides whether or not it is art” (p. 198). Zepke (2006) offers an insightfully detailed art historical breakdown of each of the errors that Deleuze and Guattari levy against Conceptual Art. But the above summary of these contentions related to Conceptual Art depict its practices as a product of information that, as Deleuze and Guattari (1994) conclude, exert “a lot of effort to find ordinary perceptions and affections in the infinite” (p. 198). In other words, they take issue with Conceptual Art practices as endeavors that are opposed to one of creation of new ways of experiencing the world through the expression of opening up new terrains of affects and percepts.

Even Conceptual Art’s political intention of dismantling the conventional notions of art and objecthood fail in relation to Deleuze and Guattari’s ideas of art becoming a productive and intensive force for transformation. Deleuze and Guattari instead view Conceptual Art is a practice of negation in the form of critique through dematerialization, rather than specific materializations of sensation that they embrace in art. They further contend that while Conceptual Art practices attempt to eradicate the conventional

hierarchical, privileged, and exclusive status of high art leading up to the 1960s, they fail to strive for a productive and qualitative change in the systems and structures of contemporary culture. Thus, to Deleuze and Guattari, the failure of Conceptual Art is revealed through its inability or unwillingness to create a new way of perceiving or apprehending the world beyond our habitual approaches to understanding reality, such as our dogmatic reliance on the fixed image, information, opinion, or operational processes.

The implications of Deleuze and Guattari and Conceptual Art on contemporary practices in this chapter focus on a relatively short span of time in art history. Though Deleuze and Guattari first published their treatise on art, philosophy and science in 1991, the focus of their 'errors' of art are aimed at specific moments in the Conceptual Art movement. Many art historians follow Lippard's (1997) timeline of Conceptual Art to a six-year span of 1966 to 1972. Thus, there was nearly a twenty-year gap between the art historical end of the movement and Deleuze and Guattari's treatise on art. However, since the influence of Conceptual art has been prevalent in nearly all forms of contemporary art from the early 1970s into the 21st century. As critic Roberta Smith (2010) observes of Conceptual Art's influence on contemporary practices, "it's hard to think of a supposedly past art movement that feels more present" (as cited in Goldie and Schellekens, 2009, p. 10). Deleuze and Guattari's condemnation of Conceptual Art thus becomes problematic if we are to examine contemporary art through their particular lens of art in relation to philosophy and science. As such, an analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's rejection of Conceptual Art is significant to gain an understanding of points of contention they may have had for contemporary art since the 1970s.

Reconciling Deleuze and Guattari with Contemporary Art?

Contemporary art is often said to have been born out of the operations of Conceptual Art, so much so that many art historians refer to contemporary art interchangeably with post-conceptualism (Alberro and Buchman, 2006; Osborne, 2011, 2013). Post-conceptualism in this sense carries the legacy of Conceptual Art, insofar as its practices are inspired and draw from the ‘concept’ and ‘idea’ as being privileged in artmaking practices. This is certainly the case in the politically-minded art practices extending and strengthening conceptual themes into the 1980s and 90s, a period in which O’Sullivan (2010) observes, “involved attention to the signifier and indeed an emphasis on art as sign (albeit one often in crisis)” (p. 189). Its legacy has lived on insofar as it is nearly impossible to consider a work as contemporary art if it does not address a conceptual idea, either in addition to, or privileged over the works aesthetic or material concerns.

Osborne (2013) gives a broad summation post-millennial contemporary art as a “*convergence and mutual conditioning* historical transformations... and the social relation of art space...that has its roots in more general economic and communicational processes” (emphasis original, p. 28). He further observes, “these convergent and mutually conditioning transformations take the common negative form of processes of ‘de-bordering’: on the one hand the de-bordering of the arts as mediums, and on the other, the de-bordering of the national social spaces of art” (p. 28). The implications of this notion of contemporary art for a scholar of Deleuze and Guattari reveal a tremendous obstacle on one hand: it has the potential of carrying on the semiotic, structural, poststructural positionality of histories, social sciences, and technology, in addition to the

dissolution of borders of mediums and spaces are still fundamentally opposed to Deleuze and Guattari's notion of art. On the other hand, Osborne's summation of contemporary art is strikingly connective to nomadic processes in its description of transformative histories and spaces and porous boundaries. This connection between contemporary art practices and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts surrounding nomadic processes is a vital path of inquiry that we will explore in the remainder of this chapter. Additionally it presents a fertile path of exploration that creates an opening to productively address this discrepancy between Deleuze and Guattari's division of labor between philosophy and art.

As noted above, Deleuze and Guattari present an unusually rigid notion of art, and we see how this can lead to a rather unproductive tension in relation to examining various practices of contemporary art—particularly art practices from the 1960s through to this moment. However, this study is not focused on turning to Van Gogh, Cezanne, or Bacon as models to follow for creating a path of exploration in artmaking and art education that fits Deleuze and Guattari's rather narrow conception of effective modes or styles of extracting sensations through which art ought to be produced. That would fall into the trap of slavishly following the fixed axioms that Deleuze and Guattari detest about the history of philosophy. Instead, we must take a different approach that puts Deleuze and Guattari to work to traverse their notions of art by plugging in what elements might work for us, and attempt to create “unheard music” with it (Deleuze, 2004, p. 77).

With this in mind, we can instead pull forward the concepts of art from Deleuze (2003) and Deleuze and Guattari (1994) that work for us in building upon a productive process of creating the conditions for new expanses of thinking through artmaking. But

we can also explore how these notions can create a new kind of assemblage with the philosophical concepts related to Deleuze's (1994) encounter with the dogmatic image of thought, and Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) nomadic processes.

In order to reconcile Deleuze and Guattari's notion of art with the variety of practices within contemporary art that Osborne (2013) describes as a "convergence and mutual conditioning historical transformations," we must work with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of both art and philosophy as a kind of nomadic entwinement in itself (p. 28). In true Deleuze and Guattari style, we will pull the concepts from their ideas related to art that are useful for us in examining the nomadic potential of contemporary art. We must acknowledge that there is a specific kind of art that Deleuze and Guattari have in mind when discussing their notion of art, but that should not limit us from focusing on their most significant elements of their argument on art: that it expresses sensations that are self-produced outside of subjectivity, it can be creatively transformative and/or deformative, and it is future-directed.

A Becoming-Other of Art

As we have seen in the previous sections of this chapter, many of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts related to the nomad permeates throughout their discussion of art. Sensation in philosophy is the exact virtual matter as the sensation described in art. The difference in how sensations are extracted and expressed is determined by the plane that seeks to capture its forces. For philosophy the net is cast as the plane of immanence, and for art it is the plane of composition. Regardless of which plane attempts to slow the forces and intensity of sensation, it is always existing in the virtual realm of difference, which is why we can only palpate or express it. Philosophers extract sensation in the

creation of concepts, while artists do so by extracting blocs of sensations in the territorializing frame.

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) nomadic tenets of territorialization and deterritorialization are vital for understanding how the plane of composition functions for emergence of becoming in art. They turn to architectural framing as the foundation for artistic production. It constitutes the delimitation and territorialization of chaos: the edges of a painting, screen or photograph; the surface and space of a sculpture; the bodies of a performance; or the walls and floors of an installation. Territories provide the frame through which sensations emerge, which opens the potential for expression through deframing or deterritorialization. Just as we see with Deleuze's disruptive functioning of philosophy, artistic processes similarly proceed as a double cutting, insofar as they slice through chaos to create order. But they also cut through the territories they produce as an intensive and expressive force. This is a simultaneously destructive and creative movement invoking "the strangest of reversals" of transformation and deformation, territorialization and deterritorialization (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 480). Grosz (2008) elaborates upon this double cutting as "breaking up systems of enclosure and performance, traversing territory in order to retouch chaos, enabling something mad, asystematic" (p. 19). Becoming in artmaking disrupts the conventional recognition and apprehension of the image of thought through a productive, returning process of territorialization and deterritorialization and transformation and deformation.

The becoming-other of art is not a way to represent, mimic, or create an image of the world. It does not produce what already exists from the past or experiences in the present. Instead it is inherently future-directed. Sensation is extracted in art for the

creation of the new, as transformation of material form or deformation of the body's escape from representation; as affects we have never been affected by, and as percepts we have never perceived. Grosz (2008) declares that sensations expressed in art anticipate the future by "preceding and summoning up sensations to come, a people to come, worlds or universes to come" (p. 79). This capacity for producing creative transformation is the driving force of my desires as an artist and as a teacher as a common endeavor to both practices. Again, it is important to note that this is a desire not based on lack, but as a desire for the transformation from negative, static, binary relationships to affirmative, nomadic traversals of the emerging subject through new cartographies of thinking through artmaking. Such nomadic encounters in artmaking create new subjectivities as a destabilization of the fixed essences of molarizing regimes in art, education, and life. While it is productive in cultivating a new kind of subjectivity, it is also inherently unsettling. It makes the familiar strange by drifting away from ordering mechanisms of cultural construction and closer to the indeterminacy of chaos.

In this respect, this study is not devoted to delving too deeply in analyzing Deleuze and Guattari's notion of art in terms of their analysis of specific artists or movements, or the certain mediums (painting) and ways to experiment (color and line) that are most suitable examples for extracting sensation from the virtual. We must instead focus on ways to activate Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts in convergence with their notions of art to explore certain practices emerging in contemporary art. This presents a pathway to consider production through artmaking or a mindset for art education that is focused on creating new assemblages of the co-constitutive emergence

of art and subjectivity, one that is future-oriented, and one that embraces creative transformation.

In considering the creative transformation of artmaking, we do not have to reject realism in painting or photography for touching upon representational in art. We do not have to turn our backs on abstraction that Deleuze considers overly optical or catastrophically chaotic. We have seen conceptual practices mutate into a dizzying array of tremendously innovative pathways in its divergent processes in the past 50 years. While there is indeed a vast amount of artwork that ventures too close to uncritical representation of cliché or popular opinion that mirrors the concept creation of philosophy and the function creation of science, we are also seeing that some of the most transformative, deformative, and future-directed expression of sensations found in practices of contemporary art is happening on the fringes of Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) three divisions of labor of art, science, and philosophy, through which a "rich tissue of correspondences can be established between the planes" (p. 199). We will see two examples of this kind of contemporary art practice in the case studies devoted to Tehching Hsieh in chapter five, and Nina Katchadourian in chapter six, in addition to my own experiences as an emerging artist, in chapter seven, exploring such traversals of the three planes of thought through art production. Such production is part of a tendency to embrace hybrid of forms, objects, materials, images, painterly markings, while demonstrating an awareness of art history and contemporary art, as well as various fields within the expanded arts and humanities, social science and natural/technological sciences, which converges attentive styles and forms of appropriation with the expression of sensations as nomadic assemblages.

Artists are the creators of new worlds through nomadic entwinement that often emerges by scouring the territorialized worlds of the past and present to generate deterritorialized worlds to come. This targets the core the co-constitutive actual/virtual dynamic for art, insofar as it is to “create the finite that restores the infinite” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 197). This does not have to exclude geometric abstraction, photographic images, or language, as long as we are mindful or self-reflective of the molarizing effects of the dogmatic image of thought, and that we experiment with the extraction of sensations of virtual difference, which creates new worlds of thinking through the expression that art opens to artists, teachers, students, spectators to becoming-other in artmaking—the creation of percepts of a perception to come, and affects of an affection to come.

As such, in establishing a way forward that releases us from the potential bind of adhering any one kind of formula attributed to artmaking, we can turn to a phrase from O’Sullivan (2010) that encapsulates this pathway forward in art, insofar as an expression of sensations can be “both asignifying *and* signifying” (p. 193). It is the extraction of sensations from the unknown realm of virtual difference, but it also attends to the multiplicity of open-ended networks and terrains of lived experience that the event of the encounter engenders. It the rhizome as an image of thought that embraces and disrupts the history of art, intersects and interferes with the “brain-becomings” of the realms of philosophy and science and disciplines outside of art—other narratives, other histories, other materials and representations—as a deterritorializing assemblage that opens up to new expanses of future-thinking and becoming of future-worlds.

In this respect, we are seeing Deleuze's (1983) notion of difference and repetition through Nietzsche's eternal return operating through these artist practices: "it is not the 'same' or the 'one' which comes back in the eternal return but return is itself the one which ought to belong to diversity and to that which differs" (p. 43). In other words, while the elements of art historical practices and artifacts from popular and mainstream culture have their origin in a re-presentation, they are emerging in fluctuating assemblages of virtual difference. What returns with the repetition of the past is something new, something that is becoming at different speeds and intensities, new moments that are not confined by a dogmatic image of thought of the past or present, but rather it is releasing and opening up to various mutating, appropriating, deforming and disruptive images of thought that have yet to have their moments.

The creative transformation and deformation through artmaking is also crucial for creating an attentiveness to the sensation expressed in autonomous real existence as an external force of the virtual: "the being of sensation is not the flesh but the compound of nonhuman forces of the cosmos, of man's nonhuman becomings" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 183). The question then remains in relation to how we might embrace a milieu for framing a territory so that speeds and intensities of sensations to slow enough for our stylistic reach to attempt to make its fragments material. This milieu is *expérience*, our modes and styles of experimentation in the lived experience of touching upon sensations. We cast that net over chaos as a territorializing frame of composition, and through that experimentation with experience—the roll of the dice—the artists' subjectivity emerges. The challenge in expressing the extraction of sensations is resisting our dogmatic image of thought that has conventionally reiterated the primacy of subjectivity in the emergence

of labels attributed to artists, such as art talent or genius. This reframes the ontology of art's emergence, not as something that an innate subjective power must pull forth, but rather art becomes a force that emerges *along with* the subjectivity of the artist as a lived experience of experimentation of the expression of the sensations of virtual difference in repetition.

The sensations expressed through nomadic encounter with new assemblages in art provides a vital opening toward reframing the way we interpret and discuss art (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 196). It shifts the mindset away from pre-established categories and representations of interpretation, and moves toward a discourse of art that embraces a desire that is future-oriented in seeking creative transformation that produces people and worlds to come. This affects not only how art is produced, but also how art is experienced, how it is written about, how it is discussed, how it is taught, and how it is learned.

In the subsequent chapters I will present artists' case studies of Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian as well as examples of my own experiences as an art student that demonstrate how artists and art educators have carved these new terrains of thinking about the production and experience of art. With those examples in mind, we will return to this line of inquiry in the concluding chapter to explore a new way forward for art education. At its core, such a path of inquiry will demonstrate how artmaking is an experimental and experiential move that intends to rupture our dogmatic image of thought, problematize our habits of order and structure, and embrace the transversal becomings through a nomadic encounter with the chaos of the virtual.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY ONE: TEHCHING HSIEH

On September 23, 1978, Tehching Hsieh closed the door to the newly built cell in his studio—two walls of steel bars affixed to the two adjacent walls of the space. He would remain in the enclosed space for 365 days as part of a durational performance artwork titled *One Year Performance 1978-1979*, informally called “Cage Piece.” The only furnishings kept in the cell were a bed, a sink, and a bucket, which would be replaced everyday by a friend commissioned by Hsieh. The friend also brought the daily food and a regular change of clothing, which would sustain the artist throughout the project.

Hsieh used no form of communication for the entire duration of the work. He did not speak, he did not permit himself any reading or writing materials, and he would not engage in any other form of entertainment, such as watching television or listening to the radio. However, the work was not without an audience; the studio was open to the public once or twice a month, but in keeping to the rules of the performance, Hsieh refused to communicate or even make eye contact with those who did visit. Without windows to see the changing daylight into night, and without a wristwatch or a clock, the only method of passing time was by making a mark on the wall each day approximated by his daily food and bucket delivery.

At the beginning of the performance, Hsieh shaved his head and donned a uniform similar to that of a prisoner: white coveralls with an embroidered patch on the left side of the chest listing his last name and an identification number, 93078-92979, which indicated the beginning and end dates of the performance. He issued a typed statement on letterhead from his studio declaring the basic parameters of the work. Another document was distributed as a calendar marking the days on which studio visitation would be open to the public. Each of the joints of the steel bars of the cell were affixed by seals signed by both Hsieh and an attorney to ensure that no physical breach of the structure could be made during the performance. The attorney also issued a witness statement to certify that all of the seals were intact when Hsieh entered the cell to commence the performance. Similar witness statements would be signed at various junctures throughout the duration of year.

Hsieh's first year-long durational performance concluded on September 29, 1979. From a physical perspective, he appeared to be the same person who had entered the space one year earlier. The only outwardly apparent difference was that his hair that was shaved at the beginning of the performance had grown out to his shoulders by the conclusion of the piece. While there are many lines of inquiry that could examine "Cage Piece" in terms of the physical effects of endurance and confinement, the work's significance for Hsieh is not primarily located in the external or empirical transformations resulting from the duration of the performance. Instead, the questions that Hsieh intended to raise through his work are more closely related to the ways in which subjectivity could be pushed to its limits in opening up to new pathways of thinking in art, through art, and ultimately as art. Hsieh's practice is an art-based counterpart to Deleuze's (1994)

philosophical concepts related to the encounter with dogmatic image of thought that engenders new expanses of thinking, as discussed in chapter two, as well as Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts related to the encounter as a nomadic process that is put to work in thinking, as discussed in chapter three. The focus of this case study is to analyze Hsieh's artwork in terms of its relationship to the varying nature of how an artist relates to these two philosophical paths of inquiry pertaining to the emergence of thought, and the generation of thinking as thought is pushed to its limits. On the one hand, the process of Hsieh's maturation as an artist inherently engages with Deleuze's notion of thought emerging as a pre-conceptual encounter with the world. On the other hand it demonstrates how an art practice (particularly in Hsieh's mature works) can reveal Deleuze and Guattari's concepts surrounding nomadic processes as experimental tools to be put to work toward creating new terrains of thinking through artmaking. Both of these philosophical perspectives are crucial in exploring the development of Hsieh's practice as it evolved from his early experiments in Taiwan to his more mature durational performances following his move to New York City.

Importantly, Hsieh addresses questions about the image of thought and creating the conditions for new thinking through his own particular methodology and vocabulary in his practice as an artist. As noted in the introduction chapter, Hsieh had no knowledge of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts before or during the making of his performances, and as such, he never referred to their terminology in relation to his own practice. As we have seen in previous chapters, Deleuze and Guattari's concepts are nothing new in philosophy, nor are they new in describing the immanent materiality of intensive processes in the world. Thinkers like Spinoza, Hume, Nietzsche, and Bergson have all

constructed various lines and pathways for Deleuze and Guattari's late 20th century philosophical locations. What is new about their concepts is how they become conceptually entwined and reconfigured in particular ways to question the constructivist thought—from Plato, to Descartes, to Kant, and into the 20th century, with structuralist and poststructuralist theory—a dualist lineage that has become firmly ingrained in society and culture, and how Deleuze and Guattari's concepts challenge our habits of organizing the world around us through such a rigidly constructivist image of thought. Artists are in unique positions to create productive and truly innovative art-based counterparts to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts, insofar as they question and challenge constructivist mindsets, and their practices inherently involve the creation of a milieu through which their negotiations and navigations of order and chaos through the artmaking process.

As we will see in this section, not only is Hsieh constructing his own operations and related terminology that work along similar operations of nomadic processes, but significantly, he is also creating new mutations and cartographies that embody the flexibility and geomorphic capacities inherent in Deleuze and Guattari's intentions for their concepts to be put to work. As such, we will see how Hsieh is working through many of the processes described in previous chapters, but it is not implemented step by step with Deleuze and Guattari's concepts in a prescriptive way. Hsieh is not following a recipe of nomadic processes, but rather he is creating new pathways for us to consider how Deleuze and Guattari's concepts can be experimented with in a lived experience that activates in as-of-yet unknown worlds through thinking, life, and art.

While the focus of this case study centers on “Cage Piece,” it is contextually

valuable to offer a brief summary for each of Hsieh's subsequent durational performances. For *One Year Performance 1980-1981*, informally titled "Time Clock Piece," the artist punched a time clock installed in his studio for every hour, day and night, for one year. He photographed himself every time he punched the clock, and following the conclusion of the performance, he edited each of the frames into a six-minute film. Once again Hsieh wore coveralls (this time gray-colored, resembling a worker's uniform) for the entire year, and shaved his head at the beginning of the performance to document the passage of time.

In *One Year Performance 1981-1982*, or "Outdoor Piece," Hsieh was not permitted to enter any buildings or any other shelter, including cars, trains, boats, or tents for the duration of the performance. He roamed the streets of Lower Manhattan for all four seasons with just a backpack, basic supplies, some cash, and a sleeping bag. He traced the lines of his travels with red pen on a photocopied map of the city—one for each day of the performance—and marked the time and locations in which he ate, slept, and defecated.

One Year Performance 1982-1983, also know as "Rope Piece," was a collaboration with fellow performance artist Linda Montano, in which the two artists were tethered at the waist by a two meter-length rope. The artists, who did not know each other prior to the start of the performance, lived attached by the rope together for the year, and wherever one artist went, the other had to follow. They were required to stay in the same room at all times—including the bathroom—and they were never allowed to make intentional contact with each other for the duration of the performance.

The final year-long performance, *One Year Performance 1985-1986*, was

informally titled “No Art Piece.” Through this durational work, Hsieh prohibited himself from experiencing art in any way. He could not make art, talk about art, or even think about art. He could not go to galleries or participate in any art discussions, though he could be in contact with fellow artist friends, as long as they did not discuss art. This work was the precursor for what would become Hsieh’s final durational performance of his life, which was titled “Earth Piece.” Breaking from the previous year-long durational parameters, this final work was to last thirteen years, from 1986 until his birthday on December 31st, 1999. He declared that he would resume making art during this time, but would not show it publicly. At the conclusion of the thirteen-year duration, he issued a statement that read “I kept myself alive. I passed the December 31st, 1999” (Heathfield, 2009, p. 58). He completely stopped creating art from that point forward

The Dogmatic Image of Thought

Hsieh acknowledges that his decision to enact “Cage Piece” resulted as a reflection of the conditions he was facing in both life and art in the late 1970s. Four years prior to the start of this first durational performance, he jumped ship on a voyage from China to the United States, and began living as an undocumented immigrant in New York City. He was 24 years old when he arrived, but he had already devoted himself to a life of art since his teenage years. In this section I will explore Hsieh’s maturation as an artist in Taiwan and his early years in New York City to the autumn of 1978 when he began “Cage Piece.” His art-based experiments over this time revealed varying forms of negotiations and navigations through the social and cultural environments that attempted to shape and control his life. In this section we will explore how the early stages of Hsieh’s career as an artist in Taiwan were preoccupied with an engagement between the

forces of order and chaos, through which his idea-based process directly led to his artmaking production. In his later durational performances that were created following his move to the United States, the inverse occurs in ways in which thinking and art are generated through new approaches to his process. In these mature works made in New York City, the generation of art and thinking become co-constitutive. While these later durational performances were still idea-based, their conceptual framework took form as self-imposed rules and obstacles strategically situated to trigger new pathways of thinking through art encounters.

The intention of this section is to examine Hsieh's formative years in relation to Deleuze's creative ontology through which thought arises as a pre-conceptual encounter based on a virtual difference-in-itself rather than through representation. The formative years of Hsieh's life as an artist were structured by an environment that relied heavily on learning and problem solving in terms of objects of recognition that determine thought and action—occurring through his education, through his workplace, and even through an art-historical context. As a continuation of the analysis from chapter four, in which we traverse constructivist notions of thought and the influence of Conceptual Art practices of the 1960s and 70s, we will explore how Hsieh attempted to negotiate his process in relation to a mode of thinking based on 'common sense' and 'good sense' through his art practice. Additionally, we will examine how this negotiation eventually led to a shift in process for Hsieh toward a more consciously motivated experiential and experimental inquiry, which created the conditions for a new cartography of thinking that emerged with and through his artmaking.

In chapter two we detailed Deleuze’s notion of the dogmatic image of thought through the lens of conventional modes of learning. In this foundation of learning subjectivities of the student are shaped and solidified based on presuppositions of concepts and forms that exist in the world prior to one’s subjective apprehension of them. Hsieh readily acknowledges the way in which his experiences in life had produced a significant tension between those presuppositions and his early artmaking. In 1967, he dropped out of high school in reaction to the prescriptive structure of his learning environment. He recalls that his high school experience was “too repressive to breathe because education was only for enrollment at college” ” (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 332). Hsieh says that it was a “release” to leave such a rigidly outcome-oriented environment to pursue art on his own (p. 332).

However, his freedom from the strictly organized system of experience was short-lived. Within a year he was quickly thrust into an even more intensely rigid structure of life through three years of compulsory military service. Tellingly, this regimented environment was reflected in Hsieh’s art production. Instead of turning to art as a form of experimental, open-ended escape or resistance to military life, the works he made during his service demonstrate a conformity that directly reflected the rigorous conditions to which he was subjected on a daily basis. Hsieh’s works from this time involved a strict repetition of painted marks in military colors. Each of these works were signed only with his ID number. In another early piece, he painted a red circle on each page of a thirty-page sketchbook. For each page, he dipped the brush in the paint, filled in the circle, and turned to the next page. Hsieh recalls that it took only four minutes to paint circles into every page of the book. This early discipline in painterly mark-making demonstrates the

almost machine-like automation in Hsieh's artmaking process. What distinguished the regimented actions of these works from his later durational performances was the focus on mirroring or reflection of the conditions with an object-based form of outcome—painted works on two-dimensional surfaces. Hsieh never posited the process or the end product of these paintings in relation to the emergence of productive thinking, which was a central component of his mature work. Rather, these early works were similar to the idea-based operation of Conceptual Art from this time, in which the work always originated *from* thought and proceeded rationally to its conclusion. While the production of these paintings demonstrated the marks of repetition and heavily structured order in Hsieh's life, there is little evidence to suggest that they engaged in the radical fusion of art and life in the later durational performances, which created the conditions to produce new directions for Hsieh's thinking process.

Instead, these early works presented Hsieh's art practice as an operational reflection of his circumstances and a mirroring of the dogmatic image of thought. His life was so rigidly structured that his art could serve as little more than a reflection of his existence. In this respect his reliance on Kant's notion of 'good sense' and 'common sense' produced by the effects of a life that was becoming so heavily reliant upon the dogmatic image of thought that it was seemingly impossible for him to see any other way of approaching his practice other than to repeat the rigid functions of his life through his art. To Hsieh, what was missing in his practice at this early stage was the emergence of thinking through art as something ongoing and active, rather than foreclosed upon by the stabilizing effects of a closed system of thought.

Hsieh recalls the feeling that his work was suffering from the fact that the art scene in the region was out of touch with what was happening concurrently in the United States and Europe in the late 1960s and early 1970s. He recalls that

The whole environment in Taiwan was very oppressive; there was little chance to catch exciting avant-garde art from the Western world. I did hear of something called Happenings and Conceptual Art. Only the names, that's all. I didn't know any more than that. (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 322)

Interestingly, Hsieh's process closely reflected the practices of Conceptual Art in the West at that time. While he was hoping to engage in the same ideas that many artists in the United States and Europe were addressing, in many respects, he was already independently working through many of the same questions posed by the Conceptual Art movement, which primarily operated through a critique of materiality and the art object. As such, his early paintings were manifest as a closed loop of production in which thought was the structural basis for the production his artworks. Regardless of how irrational the initial idea may have been for painting circles or lines on paper or canvas, the procedures of the repetitive action consisted of a rational and logical follow-through to the work's completion. This is an example of Conceptual Art in its strictest sense, as Lewitt (1967) declares, "all the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine than makes the art" (p. 79).

It is perhaps not coincidental that Hsieh's eventual rejection of painting occurred concurrently with the conclusion of his military service. Once again released from a strictly ordered regime in his life, he felt the need to venture into new realms of process

and production. In this respect, these early experiments with painting were a pivotal moment in Hsieh's evolution as an artist. He felt that the combination of painterly mark-making and the rigidly idea-based process could not address the kind of freedom he hoped to explore in his artwork. Hsieh recalls that "painting had posed a limit in the expression of my art" (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 322). While he admits that he was not sure what he was searching for beyond painting, he knew that the outcome of these early works foreclosed on the open-endedness that he was compelled to explore through his practice in a way that this analytical, idea-based process of his painting practice was unable to address.

Here we see the dogmatic image of thought being questioned through Hsieh's shift in inquiry through his art practice. Painting was confining him to the ontological trap of fixing thought to a system of identifying categories. Identity, in this sense, was the stabilizing end goal of Hsieh's investigation through painting, through which his inquiry produced results that served as a mere reflection of the conditions of his life. Just as we see in Deleuze's philosophical rejection of the dogmatic image of thought, the ultimate failure for Hsieh in seeking fixity of identities through painting emerged concurrently as the starting point for an art practice that was akin to Deleuze's ontology of creation. Hsieh could tell that his process was too firmly entrenched within the actual realm of good sense and common sense. Thus, he began to seek out ways to disrupt the stabilizing framework that his inquiry was forestalling through his rigid conceptual paintings, and in order to open that path of inquiry he had to turn away from the art object as a final output, and toward the body in artmaking through a sustained experimentation in performance. Here we see the emergence of Hsieh's search for a process akin to Deleuze's concept of

expérience, in which experience is the milieu for the materialist operations of experimentation. As indicated in chapter two, experimentation in this respect is an encounter into the unknown of the virtual that attempts to disrupt our habits of thought. This turn in Hsieh's practice toward experimentation with the virtual plane of consistency is a pivotal moment that gave rise to addressing the limit of expression through his artmaking.

If we examine Hsieh's struggle with the image of thought in relation to Deleuze's concept of difference and repetition through Nietzsche's notion of the eternal return, we see in the artist's early work a practice of repetition without difference. In chapter two we saw the productive forces of the eternal return creating difference. Hsieh was caught up in a continual repetition of the same patterns of his oppression. In this respect, we see the return of the same reified by the constraining and limiting image of thought, which prevents the creative transformation of the nomadic encounter, and of change through repetition with difference. Hsieh's shift in thinking toward change was not one of action, since his paintings were active processes that addressed the conditions he was facing as struggling artist in Taiwan. Instead the move toward creative transformation was located through posing new questions for experimentation through a self-reflective awareness of the limitations of his painting. For Hsieh, it was a logical step to addressing that desire for change through artmaking. His turn toward creating the conditions for opening nomadic encounters in his final works in Taiwan and his later durational performances in New York City indicate a shift toward a traversal of the social and cultural constraints to generate the forces of life through an affirmation of chance rather than a repetition of the same. In the next section we will see how this search for Hsieh leads to an experience

through experimentation with the material forces of the world and intensities of the virtual to draw forth sensations in a move toward artmaking that became new, different, and most certainly, alive.

A Jump as Encounter

Hsieh's first major performance work, "Jump Piece," specifically addressed his emerging inquiry into experimentation beyond the repressive constraints of the image of thought. In this performance, Hsieh leaped from a second floor window to the ground fifteen feet below, with the impact of the fall breaking both of his ankles. He documented the performance with a Super 8 film camera and a series of still photographs—though only the photographs of the event remain. Heathfield (2009) describes this act in contrast to Yves Klein's similar take on the artist's 'jump' in his photomontage *Leap into the Void*. Instead of reflecting Klein's affirmative gesture of flight, Hsieh's leap was an act that "traumatically resonates—through his life and ours—with the brutal facts of gravity and the splintering of bones" (p. 14). From this assessment, Hsieh's body became a performative medium of action. Through this shift in location of the artmaking outcome, the idea for the piece became secondary to the contingency of the process in the form of the unpredictable limits faced by the body when met with a sudden trauma precipitated by the jump.

Heathfield (2009) notes that in the wake of Conceptual Art's "cerebral, cool, and sanitary" destabilization of art's objecthood in the 1960s, Hsieh's early performative works shared more of an affinity with the prevailing re-materialization of the artwork of the early 1970s, in which artists explored "physical, cultural, and psychological risk... through the surfaces and materiality of their bodies" (p. 16). In this respect, "Jump Piece"

is viewed as the artist “breaking and questioning the body-as-object through the “traumatic” event or through the use of conditions of abjection” (p. 16). However, unlike artists exploring Body Art in the United States and Europe at that time, Hsieh’s early performances were not imbued with cultural questions of the limits of the body. Rather, works like “Jump Piece” resulted from what Hsieh calls an “inner struggle” related to art and thinking: “I tried this piece because I knew that painting had posed a limit in the expression of my art. I needed to do some experimental works” (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, pp. 333-334).

Here we can turn to Deleuze’s example of learning to swim as a corollary to Hsieh’s encounter with the world producing an experiential event through difference rather than through the structuring effects of the dogmatic image of thought. Instead of approaching his art practice as identifying direct objects of knowledge of the actual realm, Hsieh was turning toward an experiential and experimental immersion into a field of problems of the virtual realm. In this sense, the “distinctive points” of his body was engaging with the corresponding points of matter, in the form of the height of the second story window, the gravity that pulled his body down to the earth, and the concrete surface of the ground (Deleuze, 1994, p. 165). This conjunction of a multiplicity of singular points created an experiential entwinement that resulted in a mode of learning or outcome different from what he had produced through his earlier paintings. In “Jump Piece,” the literal force of gravity and impact produced a material encounter with the world through an intensely visceral *expérience*, which called forth the sensations of the virtual, and opened up a new embodied realm of experience through artmaking.

Looking back, Hsieh dismisses these early performative works as “bad art,” but acknowledges that they provided significant moments for opening up his practice to experimentation with the unknown in artmaking. “Jump Piece” indicates the first point in which Hsieh was breaking away from a reflection of his environment—as seen earlier mechanical paintings—and instead moving toward exploring new relationships with art and subjectivity by disrupting the everyday habits and routine of his life at the time. These early performative works produced in Taiwan revealed a vital component to Hsieh’s process that could open toward new modes of experimental immersion with the matter and material of the world. However, as we will see in his lived experiences following his move to New York City, these works also served as a framework for affirming chance by casting the dice through *expérience*, which would lead to future works that focused on pushing the body and subjectivity to extremes as a way to open up new expanses of thinking through artmaking. It indicates a greater drive toward bridging the gap between the body and mind through which a new kind of relationship between thinking, subjectivity, and art could emerge.

In these early performance works, thought still produced the framework and the violent conditions for the body to create an encounter with the materiality of the concrete world. This reveals a shift of location in the outcome of artmaking, from the closed-system of the object-oriented surface of the early paintings in Taiwan, to the intensive turn toward the artist’s body through a sudden encounter in the final works before immigrating to the United States. Hsieh’s experience in New York City, further shifted that process from a body-oriented outcome to one in which a greater push toward the

limits of subjectivity would create the conditions for thinking to emerge as one in the same with art.

When Thinking Becomes Art

This section will explore the social and cultural environment that served as the catalyst for the emergence of “Cage Piece,” as well a detailed account of the conditions through which the work was conceived as an idea and enacted as a performance four years after Hsieh’s arrival in New York City. This section will primarily be presented through lens of Hsieh’s own words through past interviews, as well as the critical analysis of writer Adrian Heathfield, who collaborated with Hsieh for the publication, *Out of the Now: The Lifeworks of Tehching Hsieh* (2009), which documents the career of the artist from Taiwan to New York City. With a descriptive and critical framework of Hsieh’s work in place, the subsequent sections of this case study will return to the chapters of the philosophical inquiry to explore how the navigation and negotiation of “freedom and constraint” within his process offers a unique art-based counterpart to Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts related to nomadic encounters with order and chaos (Heathfield, 2009, p. 26).

Hsieh viewed New York City as an escape from an art scene in Taiwan, which he considered to be out of touch with the movements emerging in the West. He felt that New York City would provide a receptive environment for the type of contemporary art experimentation that he desired to create. Like most artists working at the time, he faced the difficulties of creating the time and means for art production while earning an income to live and work in New York City. Additionally, Hsieh’s experience as an immigrant was one of both isolation and liberation. He acknowledges that at the time that “culture

shock and the language gap deepened my experience” in attempts to find new directions as an artist, while simultaneously struggling to assimilate his life into the culture (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 324). But he also embraced the spirit of this new cultural scene in which he had become immersed: “New York’s multiculturalism and freedom impacted me. These elements drove me as an artist, to face my own matter and the essence of life introspectively” (p. 324)

What distinguished Hsieh’s experience from most other artists in New York City at the time was the fact that his undocumented status in the United States posed a new level of struggle and negotiation between artistic independence and basic human rights—between visibility and invisibility. He was required to be cautious about his presence in the city. As an artist he used the pseudonym “Sam Hsieh” during his first five years in the United States. He recalls, “if I had uncovered myself a lot at that time, it would have drawn attention from the immigration authorities” (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 332). Hsieh viewed the idea of exploring his first durational performance through “Cage Piece” as a response to the conditions he was facing in both life and art at the time.

Four years after arriving in New York City, he was working multiple jobs washing dishes for local restaurants, and when he was not devoting the majority of his days and night toward earning a less-than-respectful undocumented immigrant’s wage, he spent nearly all of his free time in isolation in the studio. This was his refuge from the unfamiliar culture outside of the confines of his studio walls. But within those walls, he still struggled to come to terms with his lack of productivity as an artist in those first years since emigrating from Taiwan. Hsieh’s undocumented status of these years had required him to engage in what already had been a form of studio isolation. Hsieh viewed

this time as an entry point for considering life and art as a way to generate a new terrain for thinking in his artmaking process. Heathfield (2009) views this ambition in taking a radical, durational approach to artmaking as a way in which Hsieh “simply reframed the actual conditions of his art practice at that time—its general inertia, its marginal and speculative nature, its lack of productivity and visibility” (p. 24). As Hsieh casually recalls, the project emerged as an organic extension of this struggle: "one day, after work, I was walking back and forth doing my thinking in the studio. Suddenly, I thought ‘why don't I make the process of thinking about art in my studio an artwork?’ He articulates that his decision to create the “Cage Piece” was thus a philosophical one:

my illegal experiences in the States did make me consider those who live at the bottom of society. I intended to transform this consideration into a philosophical approach. A person living at the bottom might show his pains and his resentments politically. But as an artist, he should have the ability to transform basic living conditions into art works in which to ponder life, art and being. (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 326)

While there has not been a substantive body of scholarly writing about Hsieh’s durational performances, the writings that have offered a detailed analysis of “Cage Piece” tend to approach the work as a radical rejection of the subject through the strict implementation of extreme isolation (Heathfield, 2009; O’Donnell, 2014; Ward, 2006). Heathfield (2009) recognizes this from the point of view of Hsieh’s status as an undocumented immigrant, wrestling with “a situation of alienation and privation, with self-subjection and with notions of freedom and escape” (p. 25). But he is careful to stress that this is not a literal reading Hsieh’s work as an act of self-imprisonment to

atone for his “illegal” status. As Heathfield notes, “journalistic readings of the “Cage Piece” around the time of the performance tend to approach it in a literal mode, assuming it can be seen as a *representation of* something (prison life, criminal atonement) more than an enactment and *experience with* something” (p. 26). Heathfield (2009) instead focuses on the paradoxical nature of the artist’s performance as a “mode of subversion,” not in terms of counter-resistance of external forces, but rather as an “interrogative opening of subjectivity” in the form of a “willful giving over of his agencies (as) an investigation of existence in bare conditions and of subjectivity as subjection” (p. 26).

Heathfield (2009) views this paradoxical dynamic of revealing thinking through subjection as operating through Hsieh’s “relation to constraint and freedom,” more specifically, “freedom’s relation to the practice of thought and art” (p. 24). Stripping his freedom to the barest of existence, thinking became the only active form of expression for Hsieh throughout “Cage Piece.” Thus, as Heathfield suggests, thinking for Hsieh must “proceed with whatever resources it already has contact with or access to” (p. 26). Without any way to express thinking in the present, Hsieh’s subjectivity subsisted as either “forced back into memory or projected forward into distant futures” (p. 26). It was a space of thought that had to rely on the past to sustain itself, but which could only be expressed or acted upon in a future to come.

In this sense, the subjectivity of the Modernist notion of the genius artist is forestalled by the lack of expression of Hsieh’s thinking within the artwork, which instead forced the work to inherently take form as a “refusal of expression and of exteriorization of any kind of insight that is found within the artist” (Heathfield, 2009, p. 26) The parameters of the performance limited Hsieh’s subjectivity to the extent through

which a different kind of future-directed thinking emerged from an experience with art. But as a work of art, “Cage Piece” had to reciprocally rely upon the “interior landscape” and “self-regenerating machine” of Hsieh’s muted act of thinking as its only form of expression (Heathfield, 2009, p. 26). As Hsieh succinctly frames it, “what is important to me is that people can see that in this special period of time, one year, the artist’s thinking process becomes a piece of art” (as cited in Tovey, 2012).

“Art Time” and “Lived Time”

Within the constraints of “Cage Piece” thinking took on a new sense of urgency, one that was not coinciding with life, but rather an urgency through which thinking *becomes* life as an artwork. Hsieh refers to this as “art time,” which was different from what he calls “lived time” in which the work was “very clearly a piece of art, but this art has a life quality: that is its rhythm. The time of the performances is art time, and my life has to follow art” (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 334). As “art time” Hsieh explains that

thinking was the focus of this piece and was also my way of survival. While doing this piece, thinking was my major job. It doesn’t matter what I was thinking about, but I had to continue thinking, otherwise I would lose control not only of myself but also my ability to handle the whole situation, (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 334)

For Hsieh, “art time” opened a space through which “the artist’s thinking process becomes a piece of art” while concurrently creating a space of looking forward in art (p. 327). He stresses in his recollection of the work, “I was so concentrated on thinking about art” (p. 329). The cyclical operation of the spaces of thinking that Hsieh created was his attempt to “bring art and life together in time, and to be in this as a process” (p. 329). As

such, when Hsieh discusses “Cage Piece” he often refers to a notion of moving forward, whether it was thinking that sustained the day-to-day survival of existence in the cell, or thinking through art toward a future of artworks to come.

Hsieh explains that the motivation of his art was “related to the content of my thinking” (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 328). Through this process a progression or creative inertia toward future performances occurred:

this kind of thinking gave me energy to go forward... like in Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea*... in this piece I knew I caught a big fish but I had a lot of process to do. To bring back this fish, I had to make more pieces of work and it would take over my whole life, and I knew it wouldn’t be easily finished. (p. 328)

Here we see the building of a practice through the experience of the “art time” that he created beginning with “Cage Piece.” For Hsieh, the artwork itself could be the process of thinking about how to move forward as an artist. He explains quite simply that “during this first piece I thought a lot about how my work could be developed,” and much of the thinking in “Cage Piece” involved looking toward the next step in artmaking: “everything I do is a progression, an evolution” (as cited in Bajo and Carey, 2003).

This progression through “art time” led to “Time Clock Piece,” which began less than six months following the conclusion of “Cage Piece.” Though this second performance Hsieh’s relationship with time, space, and thinking shifted dramatically. His bodily constraints were modified; he could exit his studio, and he was allowed to be mobile. But he was unable to venture far from his studio if he had to return to punch the clock every hour. His parameters were expanded, but they were still constraining. In relation to everyday life outside “art time,” his newly found mobility created new

disruptions in thinking. If he had to punch the clock every hour, he could not sustain a normal sleeping pattern, and that created serious limits to the cognitive functioning of his thinking. He could not longer embrace the long days and nights of solitude of unfettered thinking. Instead his once unlimited time for thinking in “Cage Piece” was interrupted in “Time Clock Piece” every hour on the hour, day and night.

Each of Hsieh’s year-long durational performances followed this progression through his evolution as an artist. Each work had specific constraints that necessitated the emergence of thinking that forced new relationships with art, space, and subjectivity: from the isolated and confined interior space of “Cage Piece,” which generated a limitless duration of thinking; to the heavily regulated and disruptive relationship with duration and spatial proximity in “Time Clock Piece”; to a turn outward toward an overwhelmingly boundless social exterior space in “Outdoor Piece”; to a contraction of social space, the boundaries and negotiations of human relations through duration in “Rope Piece”; to the outright rejection and effacement of the subjectivity of the artist, first as a maker in “No Art Piece,” and then as a public figure in “Earth Piece.” With the focus of Hsieh’s thought incessantly trained on the question of what the next step in the progression would be, the experiential nature and forward-thinking process of each performance created the conditions for the emergence of subsequent performances to come.

A Nomadic Opening of Subjectivity

This analysis section of the case study will work with the above framework provided by both Hsieh and Heathfield (2009) as a starting point for a further investigation into the “Cage Piece” performance in relation to the various ways in which

nomadic encounters produce the conditions for creative transformation through an artmaking process. Through this analysis we will explore the production of spatial and durational tensions at play within intertwining nomadic, sedentary, smooth, striated relationships, and through the emergence of a complex series of relocations of the margins and the center in a repetitive practice of creating a qualitatively new, nomadic thinking. As introduced in chapter three, Deleuze and Guattari present the concept of the nomad as a form of experimentation through active entwinements between striated and smooth, territorialized and deterritorialized, molar and molecular spaces. An immanent experimentation through experience (*expérience*) with these spaces is effected as geophilosophical tactics that enable the potential for new modes of thinking, which provide escapes from a sedentary order of thought. Hsieh's "Cage Piece" serves as an art-based counterpart to the ways that Deleuze and Guattari's nomad operates as a productive engagement through the affirmative deployment of seemingly oppositional concepts.

To begin this analysis, we will return to the concept of logos and nomos, from chapter three, to examine the unique approach of order and structure within Hsieh's "Cage Piece." For Hsieh, life in the United States as an undocumented immigrant was experienced as a preoccupation with logos, in its relationship with an external law that transcends the phenomena that it organizes. Hsieh's life in New York City was structured by this external law most significantly through his undocumented status, which not only limited the kind of work he could seek, but more so by the constant threat of being detained by immigration officials and deported back to Taiwan. As we will see in the following sections, this had a tremendous impact on Hsieh's subjectivity and his

artmaking, insofar as he struggled to reconcile his existence with the molarizing lines of the logos, which establishes and delimits social and cultural identity.

The concept of nomos has similarities to logos insofar as it also relies on an organizing structuring. However, nomos differs from logos in the way its hierarchical principles are distributed, which is from within the process itself rather than from an external force. This makes nomos an intensive production of organizing principles. Crucially, logos and nomos are not binary oppositions; they are dependent upon one another as intertwining relations. As such, if we examine the conditions leading to the creation of “Cage Piece” from a nomadic perspective, we would say that the molar rules and regulations of the logos create a territory. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) assert, molarizing lines of segmentation “ensure and control the identity of each agency, including personal identity” (p. 195). They refer to identity as a territorializing construction to reinforce stability—a “sedimentary rock” (p. 41). Thus, the logos of the molarizing lines of society and culture in which we live attempts to quantify and territorialize our identity in various ways—gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and so on. Deleuze and Guattari oppose this stable notion of identity, and turn to the supple lines and lines of flight of the nomos as production not of fixed identity, but of a subjectivity that is always becoming.

As an undocumented immigrant, Hsieh’s identity existed in an ambiguous space in relation to the society and culture in which he lived in New York City. If identity is a territory, then Hsieh’s identity was inherently deterritorialized in relation to the stabilizing norms of the logos of his societal milieu. However, as indicated in the above section, this was not a deterritorialization in a productive sense for Hsieh. In terms of

identity, Hsieh did not fit into the territorializing categories of the society and culture of his lived experience. It affected his life in various adverse ways, and as he acknowledges, it had a detrimental impact on his productivity as an artist. In a certain respect, Hsieh's lived experience with an ambiguous sense of identity may have been a significant reason for his turn to creating a radically territorialized existence through "Cage Piece." However, this intention was not one of creating a territory for establishing an identity that would fall in line with the molarizing lines of the logos. Rather for Hsieh "Cage Piece" was a double cutting of the territorialization through which a line of flight could rupture through, to open up the emergence of a new mapping of subjectivity.

Returning to Colebrook's (2010) description of the nomos as the tribe that "dreams about, crosses and dances upon a space," Hsieh's creation of "Cage Piece" constructed a space of constraint that "fills the space from within," and as such remapped the milieu of the logos, giving it a "different depth and extension" generating a subjectivity that was "part of a whole new series of desires, movements and relations" (p. 187). Most importantly these spaces gave rise to future traversals and the creation of "different maps" and mappings to come for Hsieh. (p. 187). This is clearly demonstrated by the continued mapping that he generated in the progression of each of his durational performances in his mature work from New York City.

"Cage Piece" demonstrated a speculative awareness of the impending forces of the logos. Hsieh's implementation of extraordinarily rigid regulations through his performance created a radical reinforcement that pushed to the extreme limits the external laws and regimentation of the identity-determining nomos within society in every aspect of the work. Hsieh was not living under the control of any direct institutionalized

constraints in New York City. His time in the military in Taiwan had long since passed, and while there was always the risk of detainment and legal ramifications if immigration officials had apprehended him, he was never imprisoned as a result of his undocumented status. Yet, for “Cage Piece” Hsieh instilled the operations of institutional organization and its effects: the shaved head and uniform indicated a militaristic or prisoner identity; the notarized letters and witness statements embody the precise and rigorous procedures of the legal system; and above all, the various restrictions and deprivations he experienced allude to the interferences and obstructions of freedom and human rights played out in society and culture in which he was living. However, the self-imposed nature of these constraining forces were distributed not through the molarizing lines of segmentation of the logos, but rather it was generated intrinsically through the performance itself as a work of art.

These operations functioned through an intensive and immersive engagement of both the logos and nomos—of the external laws of the society and their entwinement with the productive transformation intrinsic to the rules and regulations of the performance itself. “Cage Piece” as nomos created a new map that traversed and intertwined with the preexisting map of the logos that had organized Hsieh’s existence in the first four years living in New York City.

Revisiting Qualitative Multiplicities of the Rhizome

The entwinement of logos and nomos in Hsieh’s intensively distributed organization was vital to the emergence of qualitative multiplicities within the performance. The map generated by “Cage Piece” did not rest atop or replace the map of the life in which Hsieh had been immersed during his initial years spent in New York

City. Such a framework would have been a quantitative addition of two preexisting entities coming together with their conceptual and experiential composition remaining in tact. Instead the map that “Cage Piece” created was co-constitutive with the experience in life and art of Hsieh’s first years in the United States. It is the creation of “art time,” which as noted above, is different than what he calls “lived time” (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 334). Hsieh asserts that within “art time” his performance was “very clearly a piece of art, but this art has a life quality: that is its rhythm. The time of the performances is art time, and my life has to follow art” (p. 334). The concept of qualitative multiplicity can be useful in analyzing how a morphogenesis emerges from the differences in intensity through a productive process.

Here we could consider the DeLanda’s example from chapter three, but in this instance it could be worked into an intensive engagement of logos and nomos. If the logos subsisted as the external laws affecting Hsieh’s life in New York City, and the nomos took shape as the self-generated principles of “Cage Piece,” an intermingling of the two forces would create a difference in intensity. In this respect, Hsieh experienced an intensive change in life, in which a qualitative transformation occurred through the intrinsic distribution of the parameters of “Cage Piece.” This intensive difference could not be reversed or broken down quantitatively; it could only be changed through another qualitative distribution.

In this sense, we could view the subsequent one-year durational performances as ways in which a continual progression of qualitative change emerged over the next twenty years of Hsieh’s life as an artist. “Cage Piece” opened up new spaces of qualitative thinking for Hsieh. Its intensive multiplicities were productive in their

irreducibility, and they gave rise to a new line of extensive differences—whether the experience created a new perspective on life and freedom of thinking, or led to the emergence of the future performances that would create further intensive differences in life and art.

This intensive transformation in Hsieh’s “lived time” through “art time” can be further examined as an art-based counterpart to Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concept of the rhizome, which stresses mapping over tracing in an active “experimentation in contact with the real” (p. 12). While many of the components and operations in “Cage Piece” were based on the ordering structure of the logos—experience in the military, threat of prison, and various laws and regulations affecting his life as an undocumented immigrant—the performance did not emerge as a simple tracing of the world. As noted above, Hsieh created a new kind of map that was entwined with the structuring of his life up to that point. The rhizome is not made up of random connections or a total lack of organization. Instead it is the process of a qualitative emergence co-constituted with the arborescent ordering systems it traverses through its mapping. For Hsieh, “Cage Piece” was a tool that was put to work as a transformative operation rather than a method for determining stability or fixity. For Hsieh, the rhizome was a space in which a new “life quality” could be created within “art time” (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 334).

Deterritorializing Contemporary Art

As we saw in chapter three, the conceptual pairings of nomadic processes are often used interchangeably, since Deleuze and Guattari often deployed their concepts as ways of disrupting the stabilizing effects with language. One could just as easily substitute ‘territorialization’ for ‘striated’. Often times, the use of a particular nomadic

term is determined by the context of the situation in which it is operating or functioning. Analyzing Hsieh's "Cage Piece," we might feel more drawn to considering its nomadic encounters as one of striating space and smooth space. 'Striation' is certainly appropriate term in relation to the obsessively stringent rules, regulations, and procedures that determine the framework for the performance. However, qualitative emergence that resulted from the self-imposed striated spaces is what allows for the concept of 'smooth space' to indicate an optimal conceptual counterpart to the creative transformation that occurred through Hsieh's opening up of subjectivity and freedom in thinking. It portrays an open field of problems and potential, or an infinite terrain of zig-zagging breaches in the fabric of striated organization of thought.

Of course, it would not at all be incorrect to describe the above effects as deterritorializing or molecular. In the second case study, 'deterritorialization' feels more apt terminology in describing Nina Katchadourian's process. Still, there is no rule that states one nomadic term should be preferred over another. In fact, while much this analysis of "Cage Piece" will proceed from a position of striated and smooth spaces, it would actually be more apt to begin a brief analysis of territorialized and deterritorialized spaces in relation to the physical built environment of "Cage Piece," and the effects it imposes physically and in the habits of thought in Hsieh's experience.

As we explored in chapter three, territorialized assemblage is the active construction out of a milieu of a multiplicity of assemblages. Territorializing assemblages create identities, determining the boundaries of a space, but they also normalize the roles of the inhabitants or participants within it. A space is deterritorialized when those boundaries of the territory become ambiguous or destabilized, thus shifting the relations

of the subjects inhabiting the space. Hsieh had physically occupied his studio as a live/work space for some time prior to the start of “Cage Piece,” although in this first performance his living space was separated from his working space. In this respect the studio space was territorialized according to the conventional notion of an artist studio as a site of artistic production, but not necessarily a space of everyday life. “Cage Piece” is a striking example of the dynamic, asymmetrical interplay of territorialization and deterritorialization of a space and its inhabitants. By building a cell in his studio, Hsieh deterritorialized the normative conception of both a studio space and a living space. The borders of art production and life were blurred to the point through which art and life became one in the same.

Hsieh’s performance as a work of art was unlike anything ever attempted to that point in the emerging contemporary movements of performance art, body art, or post-conceptual practices. His practice inhered along the margins of art discourse of the 1970s and 80s, a time during which performance and body works gained sustained popularity and critical attention. Much of this stems from Hsieh’s refusal of functioning, at the time, within the economies of artistic practices as visible and digestible to an art audience. Even the anti-aesthetic operations of Conceptual Art of the 1960s, and the ephemeral nature of performance art of the 1970s found value as art commodity, regardless of their initial intentions. The year-long length of Hsieh’s performances alone incomprehensibly exceeded the most protracted of performance art works of the 1970s and 80s. Additionally, Hsieh’s decision to perform the works either in the private space of his studio or the public space of the streets of New York City operate outside of the sanctioned spaces for the display of art.

Fundamental to the marginal existence of Hsieh's performances, its documentation (in the form of photographs, videos, maps, announcements) was initially archived as a private collection of the artist until only the last decade or so. For many years the only mode for an art audience to preserve Hsieh's body of work was through the dissemination of a cultural memory, which gradually faded as the public image of the artist disappeared into an intensely private thirteen-year practice as part of his fifth and final performance from 1986 to 1999. Hsieh's reticence to discuss the intentions for these modes of distribution (or lack thereof) allow little in answering the why's of a work like "Cage Piece." What is more important to this study is *what it is doing* or *how it is working* rather than why he was doing it. As a work of art, "Cage Piece" deterritorialized the notion of durational and corporeal limits in a work, to such an extent that it took nearly three decades for the art world recognizing its radical implications for contemporary art.

Hsieh's durational performances have not transformed the art world today by any means. Art's value as a commodity is stronger now than it has ever been. Hsieh's intention was not to efface some element of art from within, as Conceptual Art attempted to achieve through its dematerialization of the art object. Rather, as Heathfield (2009) suggests, Hsieh's legacy as a contemporary artist may reside in how he "created the terms of his own invisibility within art spaces, economies and discourses, from which he emerged at the turn of the millennium" (p. 12). As such, Hsieh's practice could be seen as an exemplar of how Deleuze and Guattari describe the nomadic dynamics of deterritorialization, not as a destruction or replacement of a territory, but as an intensive engagement in which a cut in the territory is made as supple lines or molecularization. As

described in chapter three there is a complex asymmetrical relationship between territorialization and deterritorialization as a co-constituting process. Hsieh's work was deterritorializing in its evasion of comprehension within the discourses of contemporary art during the 1970s and 80s. But in turn, the post-millennium contemporary art narrative of the past ten years has reterritorialized these performances as part of its art-historical canon, evidenced by the surge in scholarship and museum retrospectives devoted to Hsieh in the past ten years.

Smoothing Striated Spaces of Thinking

“Cage Piece” confronts Hsieh's struggle with operating within the schema between order and chaos in both thought and action. It embodies the complex and often contradictory operations of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical notion of nomadism. As we examined in chapter three, nomadism is characterized as unfixed, wandering, zig-zagging; whereas sedentary qualities are viewed as stable, constraining, focused or rigid in operation. It arises through the productive emergence and interplay of smooth space and striated space. If striation involves a tightening of boundaries and rules within a milieu, there are few better examples than “Cage Piece” as an exemplary art-based counterpart to this philosophical dynamic. The parameters of the work formed a rigid contraction of the physical boundaries of the space and marked a striation in the molar overcoding of its boundaries. At only 11 by 9 feet in area, the cell offered extremely limited physical mobility for Hsieh. Though even as such a confined space, it created an outlet for Hsieh to change his perspective in imagining the area as a neighborhood environment: “In order to make the space inside the cage bigger, I treated the corner with my bed as “home” and the other three corners were “outside.” I would walk “outside”

and then come “home” (as cited in Heathfield, 2009, p. 327). As such, the extreme striation of the physical space created an opening, a smoothing that enabled thinking to take on new perspectives in embodying the space—even if it was just an imaginative escape.

More importantly, this anecdote from “Cage Piece” creating a microcosm of the city reflects Deleuze and Guattari’s refrain, insofar as Hsieh’s daily routing became a territorializing repetition. Even as the striated space of the confines of the performance opened up smooth spaces of subjectivity, we still witness the ways in which nomadic processes are continually fracturing and mutating in their entwinement. Here, Hsieh finds a territorial refrain of marking the boundaries of his neighborhood within the space, going ‘outside’ for a morning stroll to the corners, or coming ‘home’ to the bed in the evening. The interaction of smooth and striated spaces is a mutually engaging entwinement that produces not only new and innovative ways in which people inhabit spaces—as territorialization and deterritorialization—but also how similarly emergent spaces of thought—nomadic thought—might be generated through such experiments and experiences. As an ongoing qualitative transformation, this push and pull constantly redefines spaces of subjectivity.

Of vital interest to this case study is the oscillating entwinement of creative virtual forces at play, which produce what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call “the strangest of reversals,” insofar as the creation of a striated space also paradoxically forms the creation of a smooth space (p. 480). As such, the rigid self-imposed spatial and psychological constraints of “Cage Piece” might at first glance be viewed in opposition to the open-ended, zig-zagging mode of nomadic inhabitation. Hsieh’s presentation of the work took

on a rigidness that bore the markings of bureaucratic and legalized structuring. The letter of declaration was typed on a professional-looking letterhead issued, signed by Hsieh, and issued from the address of his studio as if it were a legal document binding the artist to his agenda. Above all, the cell itself was an extreme striation and territorialization of space in its rigid delimitation of physical space. Through these elaborate and extreme physical, procedural, and legal verifications, Hsieh set into motion a number of conditions to the extent that he was forced to become a prisoner in his own studio. But within these extreme limitations there were always supple lines and lines of flight seeking to escape the molarizing order and into a future-oriented life of smoothing space.

This reflects the often contradictory, co-constitutive operations of nomadic processes. Hsieh's studio became an asymmetrical, spatial entwinement of the striated and the smooth. However, as stressed in chapter three, the distribution of striation and smoothing refers not just to shifting physical qualities of space in itself, but also in how these emergent spaces affect its inhabitants, and importantly, how subjectivity of its inhabitants is generated along with the ongoing nomadic entwinements.

For Hsieh, the effects of the physical space were a key component to the transformative operations of "Cage Piece." The striating effects of the parameters of the performance produced the molarizing effects of the space that overcoded the milieu of Hsieh's lived experience in the form of the extreme self-imposed rules and regulations—the elimination of access to the outside world through talking, reading, writing, and physical mobility. As Heathfield (2009) articulates, Hsieh's "opening of subjectivity" in "Cage Piece" emerged "in the very place of its somatic negation, in physical and linguistic constraint" (p. 27). Here Heathfield echoes Deleuze and Guattari's nomadic

creation of subjectivity as not an object of possession, “or even a property of the self that experiences it, but something found intimately at the limits of that subject’s endurance, at the limits of experience” (p. 16). In this respect, the sensations of the plane of composition created by Hsieh do not arise from within, but rather they are extracted through the interplay of material tensions and constraints produced by an experimentation with his lived experience.

The creation of the radical territorializing conditions gave rise to an encounter pushing Hsieh’s thought to its limits, palpating and expressing sensations unfamiliar to his lived experience, and paradoxically opening up worlds, opening up thinking, and opening up subjectivity. As Heathfield (2009) suggests, this new thinking in Hsieh’s “art time” was “not a theoretical exercise, but an embodied practice... not a project of transcendence but a matter of immanence” (p. 28). The extreme territorialization and striation of the physical and expressive parameters of “Cage Piece” forced Hsieh to open his subjectivity “to the contingencies of experience, to thoughts he cannot realize, name, write, or communicate, *there* he may approach being “free” (p. 28). But this freedom was not one of establishing an identity in accordance with the segmentary lines of the *nomos*. On the contrary, it was a freedom *from* that identity, one that instead opened up a freedom of creative transformation in thinking *through* art, thinking *with* art, and thinking *as* art.

Thinking as Expression

The radical overcoding of duration, communication, and physical mobility striated Hsieh’s “lived time” into “art time,” to the extent that the only material expression of sensations in artmaking was through thinking. As such, it opened up to the

smooth spaces that challenged his habits of thought. Thinking became the expression triggered by the self-imposed encounter, which echo Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) nomadic tactics:

Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continua of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times.” (p. 161)

This is how experimentation in the conventional sense connects with *expérience*, which creates the conditions for new cartographies of thinking to emerge in nomadic processes.

As an initial theory of making thought the content of artwork, Hsieh's idea for “Cage Piece” had to be enacted in some way. As Deleuze insists, “no theory can develop without eventually encountering a wall, and practice is necessary for piercing this wall” (as cited in Foucault, 1980, p. 206). Hsieh's idea was put into practice as an experimental act operating at the level of conscious action as a way to extract sensations from virtual difference. For Hsieh, this radical striation of subjectivity and territorialization of somatic space paradoxically created a deterritorialized, smooth space of thinking within the nomadic “opening of subjectivity” through the “art time” of “Cage Piece” (Heathfield, 2009, p. 26).

Hsieh maintains that the experimentation through the experience of “Cage Piece” was productive in its generation of a process through “art time,” which led to the emergence of both the progression of subsequent durational performances, as well as the nomadic encounters that created a new freedom in thinking. While Hsieh asserts that his

experience with “Cage Piece” led to creative transformations in his practice, such experimental immersions into the virtual realm of difference are not affirmations of life from an abstract or transcendental perspective. As we examined in chapter two, *expérience* is an experimentation in the materiality of lived experience. It involves the affirmation of chance with the dice throw that is immanent and constantly embraces the perspective that the good player who is never searching for specific outcomes. The intention is not to create a certainty or a product, even as an artwork or a gateway to create future artworks. Instead the intention of an immersion into *expérience* is to create an affirmation of chance through the repetition of difference. It touches upon chaos through expression or palpation and brings about the potential to produce a creative transformation of thinking that breaks the habits of the dogmatic image of thought.

Even if Hsieh did not think about art throughout “Cage Piece,” or if that thought did not lead to the creation of “Time Clock Piece,” the process would still be considered an affirmation of chance through experimentation, insofar as whatever new kind of thinking that emerged from such an lived experience would be the result of a material encounter with the intensities and sensations of the virtual realm of difference. Furthermore, as we will see in the next section, the conditions that Hsieh constructs give rise to the event of the encounter, but they do so in unique ways that underscore the movements and flows of how Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophical concepts actually function through a lived experience. Deleuze and Guattari never intended for their concepts to operate in prescriptive ways. Instead they are to be put to work as fluid and flexible cartographies for generating unexpected new worlds of thinking.

Becoming-Other

As an undocumented immigrant who created the parameters for an artwork of self-confinement, Hsieh occupied a unique positionality to become immersed in a milieu that would potentially push his subjectivity to its limits. Hsieh insists that “Cage Piece” was not an act of political resistance against dominant social structures. Instead as indicated in the above sections, he has framed it more as a push further in the other direction toward a more rigid and stringent striated space. In doing so, he created a greater marginalization of his subjectivity by territorializing a more fortified center. As Heathfield (2009) posits,

in this way, Hsieh is figured somewhat in the guise of the trickster, a familiar character in movements of resistance, whose modes of subversion is a kind of talking back through the inversion of assumed and dominant values. Without legal rights in “the land of the free” Hsieh plays out his lack of rights by choosing to imprison himself. (p. 26)

While Heathfield suggests that this positioning might “delimit the address and affects of his work to a particular politics of active resistance,” the performance was not enacted to discover a particular solution to any of the struggles that Hsieh had been facing in life (p. 26). Rather, it was one of creating a field of problems to open up a freedom for thinking to be affirmed as an artistic endeavor. As Heathfield contends, far from serving as an outwardly directed statement, “the performance is itself questioning, within a discourse of freedom and constraint, what the terms—philosophical, cultural, political—of such an agency might be” (p. 26). In this sense, ‘freedom’ and ‘constraint’ could be synonymous with nomos and logos, deterritorialization and territorialization, smooth and striated, or

chaos and order. “Cage Piece” was a location for an immersion into the nomadic entwinement of problems created by the artist’s self-imposed experimental and experiential milieu that gave rise to the event of the encounter.

This nomadic entwinement was inherently bound by this productive and affirmative dynamic that was more tactical and subversive than a direct attack of the dominant axiom, insofar as it opened the potential for a radically new becoming of subjectivity that was directed toward creating future-worlds rather than as direct counter-response to his conditions. This zig-zagging of striated and smooth entwinements in thought and space through a constant, radical oscillation of the center and the margins, creates a relocation of the subject beyond the dualist other into the becoming-other, which echoes Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) description of the complicated and paradoxical “strangest of reversals” that striated spaces might open up for smooth spaces (p. 480). It is an act of pushing subjectivity to its boundaries from an asymmetrical starting point at the margins. In this sense, Hsieh disengaged from habits of identity as an undocumented immigrant imposed by the molarizing lines of the logos, and embraced the contingency of the line of flight, which escapes from the molar/molecular paradigm. But it was not an escape from life. On the contrary, “Cage Piece” was radical immersion in the immanence of lived experience, as an intensive expression of sensation through the materiality of thinking as art and an opening of new worlds of becoming-other of subjectivity.

As detailed in the chapter two, Deleuze’s geophilosophical endeavor privileges the fluid process of becoming over the fixed state of being. For Deleuze, there is no grounding, essential humanism, or subjectivity that underlies becoming; there is only

becoming. With this in mind, if we examine the development of Hsieh's career as an artist and his engagement with subjectivity in "Cage Piece," we would see in Deleuzian terms that he was always embracing becoming—from his rigid idea-based military paintings, to the radical engagement with the body in "Jump Piece," to the materialization of "Cage Piece" five years later in New York City. Hsieh's life as an artist emerged through certain speeds and intensities, but through these works, he was encountering events of becoming that took him in new directions of thinking and artmaking through a negotiation of chaos and order in life experiences. The subject is always intact, but not as a being. The subject here was constantly becoming as an accumulation of experiences in which Hsieh was actively experimenting to create a cartography of new terrains through supple lines and lines of flight from within the constraints of his habitual image of thought.

As we explored in chapter two, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) present another kind of becoming: becoming-other, which is creation of motivated transformations producing lines of flight that experiment in life with flows and intensities between chaos and order. It is not a physical or empirical transformation, nor is it a symbolic gesture. It is a transformation of subjective positioning in life brought about by a desire that is based on the emergence of subjectivity that is forward-looking toward change itself. For Hsieh, this desire was based on a transformation of 'lived time' into 'art time.' In 'lived time' his subjectivity was territorialized through his status as an "illegal" by the logos of society. During this time his work suffered from the various constraints (both internal and external) that kept him marginalized as an undocumented immigrant in New York City, and unproductive as an artist in his studio. "Cage Piece" was the encounter, or the set of

constraints and obstacles, that released Hsieh from “lived time” into “art time,” in which the territorializing and striating effects of the performance paradoxically triggered the emergence lines of flight toward a smooth space of thinking.

As noted above, the parameters of “Cage Piece” forestalled Hsieh’s subjectivity in the moment-to-moment present, and as such his thinking could only be positioned, in a linear sense, backward toward memory or forward to the future. Deleuze’s concept of desire occupies a vital position as an affirmation of creative transformation. This desire is not positioned as an opposition to a majority-determined past, which for Hsieh delimits his othered subjectivity not only as an immigrant, but also as one considered by society as an “illegal.” Considering the ardor with which Hsieh discusses his struggle with art in the few years leading to “Cage Piece,” it seems very likely that he was just as anguished about his displacement as an unproductive artist as he was regarding his status as an undocumented immigrant—perhaps more so. As such, desire as a productive force became the catalyst for becoming-other, not just in life and art as separate entities, but more so as an experimental immersion of art and life as one in the same lived experience. This nomadic reconfiguration of subjectivity affirms “Cage Piece” as an engagement with a politics of lived experience that is inherently artistic and creative in the sense that it produced new cartographies and innovative qualitative multiplicities of thinking—as an intensive creative transformation of thinking as art.

As an art-based counterpart to Deleuze and Guattari philosophical concepts, Hsieh’s “Cage Piece” embraced creative destruction. In order to move forward in life affirming action one must create new supple lines and lines of flight in thinking. That means destabilizing, and even effacing certain modes of experience is a way to

foreground and deterritorialize our habits of thought. Heathfield concludes that “Cage Piece” “proposes that for one to practice freedom it may require a giving over of the properties of the self, it may in fact involve a limiting of one’s own freedom” (p. 29). While such a condition is productive in cultivating a new kind of subjectivity, it is also inherently unsettling. It makes the familiar strange by drifting away from ordering mechanisms of cultural construction and closer to the indeterminacy of chaos. For Hsieh, it involved a staggering degree of self-imposed physical and social constraint to create a nomadic opening of subjectivity into the productive forward-thinking cartography of futures yet to come in both art and life.

CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDY TWO: NINA KATCHADOURIAN

In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work.

When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art.

Sol Lewitt – *Paragraphs of Conceptual Art* (1967)

1. Conceptual artists are mystics rather than rationalists. They leap to conclusions that logic cannot reach.

2. Rational judgements repeat rational judgements.

3. Irrational judgements lead to new experience.

4. Formal art is essentially rational.

5. Irrational thoughts should be followed absolutely and rationally.

Sol Lewitt – *Sentences of Conceptual Art* (1969) (Excerpt)

The two above passages from Sol Lewitt present a seemingly paradoxical account of the operations of Conceptual Art. In the first passage, “all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair,” Lewitt is

asserting that artmaking is determined only by the ideas that construct the framework for its production. This is precisely what Deleuze and Guattari reject about Conceptual Art, insofar that it is doing the work of philosophy by creating concepts rather than sensations. Considering Lewitt's statement "the execution is a perfunctory affair," there is no brushing up against the unknown of the virtual, no conditions through which sensation might emerge. In this respect, the idea seems to function as the rational framework that artmaking follows without expression to the endpoint of the process.

Just one year later, Lewitt writes of the Conceptual artist as a "mystic" and a creator of "irrational judgements," which might be considered contradictory to the earlier statement of the rigidity of the idea as the rational "machine that makes the art." Here we see the notion "irrational" following a path that relates to the unpredictable operations of experimentation and experience through encounter of the virtual in Deleuze and Guattari's conception of art. However, a closer reading of the accompanying sentences in Lewitt's latter statement suggests instead that the "mystic" or "irrational" quality applies to the "idea" presented in the former statement. Sentence five reifies the operation of Conceptual Art from *Paragraphs* by claiming that "irrational thoughts should be followed absolutely and rationally." Thus the original "idea" that "becomes a machine that makes the art" is an irrational one, but the process that follows this irrational idea must consist entirely of absolute and rational procedures.

Similarly, at first glance, Nina Katchadourian's artwork could be viewed as a return to Conceptual Art's principles of the "idea" that "becomes a machine that makes the art," but it is a return not of the same, but a return of difference. In this respect, the idea-as-machine in Katchadourian's practices is constantly interrupted by self-imposed

disruptions and rearrangements of the image of thought, through playful insertions of new irrational ideas, and through repeated throws of the dice that open up to difference in its repetition, which creates new modes of thinking through artmaking. In this case study, we will explore two of Katchadourian's major works, *Natural Car Alarm* (2001), and her ongoing series that she began in 2010, *Seat Assignments*. The analysis of this case study affirms these works as art-based counterparts to the creative transformation generated by nomadic encounters, as well as an example of the ways in which artists are turning back to what O'Sullivan (2010) observes as artmaking that is "assignifying *and* signifying" (p. 193). Rather than functioning as an irrational idea that generates a series of rational procedures, Katchadourian's process presents a dynamic entwinement of rational and irrational forms throughout—one that involves a constant territorializing and deterritorializing of both physical space and the geophilosophical space of the image of thought.

Katchadourian's work is an engagement with an intensive process of her particular artmaking encounters with nomadic operations—reading and misreading, arranging and disarranging, translation and mistranslation, decision and indecision, attention and inattention, understanding and misunderstanding—that disrupt and rupture the various taxonomies of images, language and objects. As Ollman (2008) suggests, her work generally focuses on "thwarted efforts to categorize and simplify, to define and know." Herein lies Katchadourian's challenge to the organizing structure of the dogmatic image of thought that constrains how we attend to the world. Her practice is one of attentiveness to the stabilizing operations of identity, categories, and hierarchy, in which she is constantly searching for the moments of slippage, tearing, and fracture that she

activates as a production of lines of flight from those systems and structures. More importantly, these lines of flight emerge throughout Katchadourian's artmaking as encounters that disrupt the territorializing effects of her own process—creating and following rigid limitations, defining the outcome of a work, or fixing a work with photography—and it thus creates the conditions for thinking anew about a particular artwork, or lines toward new directions for artworks to come.

Katchadourian's entire career as an artist has been dedicated to paying attention to the openings presented in order of the actual world through which nomadic encounters might engage the virtual. As an artist, she displays an active wandering or searching for these opportunities that might create the conditions for such new modes of thinking. This kind of thinking is a horizontal movement and flow, rather than an upright or vertical posturing. Deleuze (1983) finds an influence in Nietzsche's challenge to the latter form of thought, and it is through this horizontal flow of wandering or *walking* that Deleuze and Guattari (1987) present the rhizome as an indecipherable, qualitative multiplicity that replaces the dogmatic image of thought. If, as Dronsfield (2012) ponders, we were to attempt to describe an image of the rhizome, "we can give it the image of the walk, and Deleuze and Guattari do exactly that... with no beginning no end no origin no destination the walk, made up of only lines, is a rhizome" (p. 411). Katchadourian's attentive movement through organizing systems and structures opens up encounters that disrupt organizing environments and interrupt her own habits of thought, and by extension creates the conditions for new thinking toward modes of artmaking that articulate a movement that weaves in and out of rhizomic dispersals.

Bird Calls and Car Alarms

One example of this rhizomic mode of inquiry for Katchadourian is found in an artwork from 2001 called *Natural Car Alarms*. The project was borne from her experience during an artist's residency in Trinidad. While there she traveled to a small coastal beach village called Grande Riviere, which presented a trail into a remote rain forest. The vegetation in the forest was so densely settled with various disorienting ephemera and stimuli—unfamiliar sights, smells, textures, air pressure, and particularly the sounds. To Katchadourian, everything about the environment was unknown and radically far removed from her experiences to that point, even in relation to the familiar sensory input of the beaches just a few miles away near the village. While immersed in this heavy and darkly thickened alien setting, she heard an incomprehensibly familiar sound: a car alarm. For several hallucinatory moments, she was convinced that what she was hearing was the electronic sound so commonplace in her home neighborhood in Brooklyn. After those few moments of utter sensory displacement, her irrational sense began to make way for common sense, and she realized that what she was actually hearing was a bird singing in an uncannily familiar tone that precisely replicated a common car alarm sound. Even after the realization of the sound's origin, she recalled keeping the two readings of the sound intertwining in her senses: "I tried to stay with both interpretations for as long as I could, and I also made a mental note to remember the error for later" (Katchadourian, n.d.).

This experience in the forest is another example of what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call the "strangest of reversals" through an entwinement of the processes of nomadic encounters (p. 480). The territorializing sound of the car alarm firmly lodged in

her habits of thought spontaneously created a deterritorializing experience as an immersion into the unknown forces of experience of the virtual, which opened up to the sensations of becoming surrounding her with encounters that forced her to think. It was a deterritorializing immersion into the new, which created a dissolution or ‘disorientation’ of her image of thought. This is an experience of becoming-other through her practice, in which she is always playing with the milieu, “trying to understand it and see it from another angle,” but also trying to avoid a reterritorialization of the experience for as long as possible (as cited in Dobey, 2013, para. 4).

Most importantly for Katchadourian is how her practice opens up an awareness or a recognition of the qualitative multiplicity of the virtual, in which the potential for creating an environment for becoming through artmaking is everywhere—as Bogue (1989) articulates “that all moments of the world are moments of becoming” (p. 29). These moments of becoming emerged from the forest as *Natural Car Alarms*, which in a newly territorialized form (by the casted net of the plane of composition) as an art installation was presented outside of Museum of Modern Art’s PS1 contemporary art institution in Long Island City, New York. The work consisted of three cars with modified alarms, each fitted with samples of birdcalls that sounded astonishingly similar to the common six-tone electronic sirens. As a public installation, the work encapsulated the ongoing becoming of nomadic encounters—in this instance, it was through the territorialized plane of composition of art created a deterritorialization of the milieu of the streets of Long Island City.

During the exhibition, people in the neighborhood would hear the sounds of the common car alarm, but the sirens were a bit off from the very distinctive sounds of the

alarms that were ubiquitous throughout the city. Just as the bird calls were misinterpreted as car alarms by Katchadourian in the forest, the people in proximity to PS1 inversely misinterpreted the bird calls as car alarms in the neighborhood. The slight difference created moments of disorientation in the form of what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) would call the “vibrant affective sensation” that art expresses (p. 170). This was particularly noted even when dogs walking in the area had an instinctively visceral response to the car alarms created by the bird sounds. Katchadourian recalls many people who viewed the artwork suggested that they would never hear a car alarm the same way again.

Katchadourian’s practice as an artist produced a milieu in which nomadic encounters could emerge through *Natural Car Alarms* by opening an awareness to disrupting her habits of thought and generating an intensive dynamic between territorializing and deterritorializing assemblages. It underscores how an instance of error or misinterpretation is a force of becoming that creates new locations of thinking through the deterritorializing effects that traverse different spaces—an experience of natural and urban environments destabilized through an interplay of territorialization and deterritorialization of not only the physical spaces, but more importantly in challenging our habits of thought within a milieu of lived experience.

For Katchadourian the entwinement of nomadic encounters is a key dynamic as an art-based counterpart to Deleuze’s notion becoming through difference and repetition. By engaging with the eternal return through experiential dice throws in her practice, she embraces the irrational idea that sets art into motion, as emphasized by Conceptual Art, but it departs with the movement’s lack of follow-through, which simply privileges the

idea as the “machine that makes the art” (Lewitt, 1967). Instead for Katchadourian, the idea is immersed in experience, which generates experimentation (*expérience*) as a material process of ongoing becoming through a constant intertwining of the irrational and rational—between deterritorialization and territorialization. As such, Katchadourian’s artmaking functions along the lines of recent practices both a-signifying and signifying. *Natural Car Alarms* is signifying through its found ephemera—bird and car alarm recordings, the use of automobiles, its placement in everyday public spaces. It is a-signifying through its deterritorializing effects, simple in its familiar tones of car alarms and birdcalls, but complex in its strange reversals vacillating between known and unknown experiences.

Encountering Systems and Structures

Katchadourian recollects that her particular negotiation and navigation of order and chaos began at an early age, when she would spend summers in her mother’s native country of Finland. She recalls that her maternal grandparents, who maintained a small house on the island of Porto off the coast of Helsinki, “had a huge affect on my work, because of the way that I saw them observing the natural world there” (as cited in Barry, 2006, p. 10). Without running water or electricity during her childhood stays, her experience during the summer months was very different from life in Stanford, California, where she lived during the rest of the year. Life on the remote Finnish island entailed constant attention to the surrounding bio-systems as an organization of safety and survival in such an isolated and vulnerable habitat. Katchadourian recounts how her grandparents

would obsessively record all kinds of stuff that would happen there. My grandfather would take daily barometer readings, he would listen to the weather report five times a day, he know the Latin names of every plant and every tree, he knew birds and where they nested... He was a maniacal record keeper, as was my grandmother. In some ways her method was more about rendering the natural world. She was an artist: she used to draw tiny, careful studies of plants... where you can sense her looking very carefully at things (as cited in Barry, 2006, p. 10).

This experience taught Katchadourian a new way of *paying attention* to various environments that not only involved meticulous identification and classification, but also attention to the way such organization creates deeply stringent habits of thought and behavior in various milieus.

Paradoxically, the rigid systems and structure of daily chores on the summer island often triggered a liberating form of minor resistance for Katchadourian. The constraints of the rules and daily routines led to tactical lines of flight that she recalls would “facilitate play and also discovery” (as cited in Dobey, 2013, para. 3). It is also relevant to note that Katchadourian was allowed an abundance of free time to roam play in the vast fields and forests of the island. After all, these were the summer months in which children become immersed in the open-ended exploration and discovery of their environments, more frequently than any time of the year. Thus, her summer experiences presented a uniquely distinctive balance of freedom and constraint in her way of life on the island. On the one hand it was filled with free play and exploration of the natural setting. On the other hand, she learned the rigid operations of her grandparents’ careful observation, “watching their relationship to things, observing what they observed” so that

her experiences on the island created a particular mode of thinking through which she had been “taught to look at (her surroundings) very carefully” (as cited in Barry, 2006, p. 11).

Still, as a youth, she sought ways to extend that play as an engagement with the strictly organized principles that allowed the family to create a sense of control over the natural environment in which they lived. Whether she was raiding the meticulously organized tool shed to find materials for play, navigating the small family boat beyond the carefully directed routes, or mischievously relocating the precisely categorized bird houses for various projects (before returning them), Katchadourian created escapes from the rigorously ordered environment by playfully subverting the systems and structures from within. O’Sullivan and Stahl (2006) refer to this as the creation of a “counter-cartography” through producing “a different terrain (difference within the terrain)” and “exploring irregularities of that terrain” (p. 151). This form of exploration (however harmless it may be in the larger scheme of life experience) is a politics that reflects a child’s playful negotiation and subversive resistance to family rules as very significant molecular lines cutting into the segmentary lines within the micropolitical context of the family dynamic between parent or grandparent and child. Play, in this sense, creates the supple lines and possible lines of flight through the encounter with the entwining of molar and molecular systems and structure.

Becoming-Child

Katchadourian gives an example of discovery through a form play that we all explore as children, but which she still views in her art practice as research:

This idea of play is one bound up very closely with research, and so I am speaking about the simple gesture of picking something up and turning it over and

over and over in your hand. You are playing with the thing, but you are also trying to understand it and see it from another angle. There are all sorts of ways in which this investigative mindset manifests itself. Maybe you don't know it's research you're doing at the time, but it's always research towards something (as cited in Dobey, 2013, para. 4).

Here the notion play becomes Katchadourian's key terminology for articulating the qualitative multiplicities that she is encountering through her artmaking process. Play could be effectively translated in Deleuze and Guattari conceptual terminology as an immersion into experimentation of lived experience of the dice throw, which is without concern for particular outcomes. Her interest is more framed in terms creating the conditions to give rise to the potential to engage in the world through the affects and percepts of sensation—seeing and sensing the world through perceptions and affections never experienced before.

This experiential encounter is an affective becoming of affects and percepts, insofar as experience is the milieu that extracts sensation through an openness to experimentation in a lived experience with what is new and emerging. Here we see the foundations for the rhizomic wandering as a child that is generated in Katchadourian's artmaking process. The experience opens up experimentation, to *expérience*, as an immersion of the virtual, qualitative multiplicities of the rhizome. Hickey-Moody (2012) reads Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual figure of the child as the basis for all becomings, which are “traversed by becoming-child, an iteration of the affective register and a wonder at and of worldly surround: a new awareness” (p. 283). This awareness of becoming-child is crucial for us as adult artists, art teachers, and students. As we will

continue to see in subsequent chapters, it opens up an ongoing self-reflectivity through the immanence of a lived experience that engenders new pathways of thinking beyond our dogmatic image of thought.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) articulate that “a child coexists with us, in a zone of proximity of a block of becoming, on a line of deterritorialization that carries us both off—as opposed to the child we once were, whom we remember or phantasize, the molar child whose future is adult” (p. 324). Becoming-child is not a reflection of how we once were as a child, nor is it an example of an empirical child. Rather it is an a-subjective qualitative multiplicity of affects that creates the milieu for escaping molarization. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) turn to the story of Freud’s infamous example of Little Hans, not by pathologizing the child-subject through psychoanalysis, but as a way to see the boy’s attempts to negotiate the lived experience of sensations and the field of problems it opens for him.

Instead of trying to make sense of Hans’ anxieties, as Freud does—particularly his fear that he will be bitten by a horse on the street—Deleuze and Guattari view the boy’s statements not as a fully realized concept, but rather an assemblage of affects. Deleuze and Guattari’s concern is in the way Freud and Hans’ father rush to attribute rational thought behind the boy’s statements about horses. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) point to

whether Little Hans can endow his own elements with the relations of movement and rest, the affects, that would make it become horse, forms and subjects aside. Is there an as yet unknown assemblage that would be neither Hans’ nor the horse’s but that of the becoming–horse for Hans? (p. 258).

Deleuze and Guattari view this as experimentation in becoming that is measured by the qualitative multiplicities of affects and percepts of sensation as of yet unconstrained by the molarizing operations of identification, categorization, and hierarchy.

Of course we cannot function in life simply through affects and percepts. The example of Little Hans demonstrates how the child's deterritorialization of a situation is quickly molarized by his father. For Deleuze and Guattari (1987), life is an ongoing, asymmetrical entwinement between molar and molecular, or territorializing and deterritorializing lines. However becoming-child is a way to experiment with "a composition of speeds and affects on the plane of consistency" that isn't yet overcoded and territorialized by molarizing organization (p. 258).

Here again we can revisit Deleuze's turn to Nietzsche's eternal return through the dice throw, as initially presented in chapter two. Importantly, Nietzsche's conception of the eternal return originates in Heraclitus' view of the world, which, strikingly relevant to the correlation between artmaking and becoming-child, is viewed as an "innocent becoming" through "play as artists and children engaging in it" (as cited in Bogue, 1989, p. 29). As Bogue (1989) articulates, the eternal return is this throw of the dice "like the play of the child and the creation of the artist" (p. 29). Deleuze (1983) further articulates that "man does not know how to play" in the dice throw:

Even the higher man is unable to cast the dice. The master is old, he does not know how to cast the dice on the sea and in the sky. The old master is a 'bridge', something which must be passed over. A 'childish shadow', feather or wing, is fixed on the cap of the adolescent... fit to revive the dicethrow (p. 32).

It is this ‘childish shadow’ that follows Katchadourian’s artmaking practice, and she frames her problem of thought similar to how Deleuze’s dogmatic image of thought operates. Katchadourian is searching for ways in which lived experience of thought is not dominated by pre-established rules, but rather can be opened up to the new cartography of thinking, or as Nietzsche (1961) phrases it, to an “innocence and forgetfulness, a new beginning, a sport, a self-propelling wheel, a first motion, a sacred affirmation” (p. 55). But as Bogue (1989) clarifies, the eternal return is not a complete immersion into the child-like realm of aimless play, or the immersion into chaos for the artist:

Two moments may be distinguished in the child’s play or the artist’s creative efforts: a moment of absorption in the game or creative activity, and a moment of distanced contemplation of the game or creation... one first participates in becoming and thereby affirms it; then one recognizes that all moments of the world are moments of becoming, that the very being of the world is becoming, and one affirms the fact that every instant is the return or becoming anew of becoming (p. 29).

Katchadourian opens up to the ‘child-player’ in her practice, allowing her to embrace this innocence and forgetfulness as an absorption in the creative activity. However, she possesses the distanced contemplation of the structure of play itself, not as aimless or eternally wandering, but as an affirmation of becoming as movements and flows that call forth the qualitative multiplicities of the affects and intensities of the virtual into the actual realm through expression. As she asserts in describing her mode of inquiry, she is always searching for “a way of being flexible and open-ended with the way you are going to explore and play” but at the same time there is a certain “rigorous” operation to play:

It's not enough to mess around with things and leave them half done. It sounds so dire, but you have to play one-hundred-and-ten percent of the way, or you never reach that point when things transition from being more than a fun experiment in the world to becoming an artwork (as cited in Dobey, 2013, para. 14).

Play for Katchadourian is a vital mode of exploration of her lived experience. It is not aimless, but its self-reflective contemplation of becoming also avoids looking for predetermined outcomes of the bad player who constantly roles the dice in search of a particular result. As such, through this inquiry the playful experimentation of becoming-child generates a recognition "that all moments of the world are moments of becoming" (Bogue, 1989, p. 29). All work for Katchadourian is future-driven, one of following through or to "follow your impulses all the way" without letting the boundaries of convention of the dogmatic image of thought "talk (artists) out of things" (as cited in Dobey, 2013, para. 15.). For Katchadourian, this means following the nomadic encounters created by moments of misreading, mistranslation, or misunderstanding within a particular rational system of thought.

Play as Research

The entwinement of play and research is paramount to Katchadourian's engagement with nomadic encounters in artmaking. For *Natural Car Alarms* to take form as an artwork, she had to embrace both the rational and irrational and territorializing and deterritorializing processes through play and research. Play is the becoming-child mode of the eternal return for Katchadourian. In this process, it was the disorientation stemming from the inability to decipher or articulate the experience of the bird sounds in the forest. It was also the continuation of that misunderstanding that Katchadourian

passed along to the spectator in Long Island City as the work became manifest as an exhibition at PS1. However, the nomadic encounter in the process was also the production of a milieu that palpates affects and percepts, which engages experimentation as a material process through which thinking emerges.

Experimentation for Katchadourian is the “distanced contemplation” (Bogue, 1989, p. 29) that produces research, which, as she reveals, “there are all sorts of ways in which this investigative mindset manifests itself” (as cited in Dobey, 2013, para. 8). But importantly, this distanced contemplation is always engendered and entwined with lived experience. Research in this sense is the *expérience* through which she creates the conditions for new terrains of thinking: “Maybe you don’t know it’s research you’re doing at the time, but it’s always research toward something” (para. 8). This is Katchadourian’s navigation and negotiation of chaos and order, through which she asserts that there is no such thing as entirely aimless play, but rather it functions as a constant and “productive tension between freedom and constraint” (Katchadourian, n.d.). In this sense, research is a way to cast a net over the chaos of unbounded play.

In *Natural Car Alarm* research turned toward the territorializing operations of identification and classification, though which Katchadourian worked with The Macauley Library of Natural Sounds at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology to locate the bird calls from their archive of animal sounds. She also set out to record various car alarms in her neighborhood in Brooklyn to create another archive or classification of sounds. Through their collaboration, Katchadourian and the scientists created an accurate representation of the bird sounds heard in the forest. This was installed in the three cars used for the PS1 exhibition. This territorializing act of locating, isolating and installing

the sounds from the various archives of the natural, urban, and laboratory environment could certainly be viewed as an overcoding function of molarizing processes. However, such a territorialization—identification, representation, and categorization of the molarizing image of thought—is tactically employed as a way to create a consciously motivated encounter as a means to deterritorialize and extracts and expresses the sensations in the virtual to create a becoming-other in the neighborhood surrounding PS1 space in Long Island City.

This push and pull—between familiar and strange, readability and illegibility, information and misinformation—is the space where Katchadourian’s work becomes most disruptive to the image of thought. She intentionally seeks out a certain system or structure that

looks like something that is trying to impart information in a way that will be logical, that will fall into line with a system that is familiar. But the piece doesn’t behave that way, it switches its form of logic, it makes connections based on shifting criteria, which flies in the face of what an informational system should do (as cited in Barry, 2006, p. 6).

For Katchadourian’s process as an artist, *Natural Car Alarm* is not a project that has a beginning and an end. It may be viewed as a stand-alone artwork in the conventional linear, art historical sense. However, it is an artwork that is always operating from the middle as a qualitative multiplicity in the plane of consistency of the rhizome intersecting with the plane of organization of image of thought within the actual. To paraphrase Bogue’s (1989) framing of the affirmation of the eternal return for artmaking, Katchadourian demonstrates an artist’s practice as a recognition that all moments of an

art practice are moments of becoming, that the very being of the art practice is becoming, and one affirms the fact that every instant in artmaking is the return or becoming anew of becoming in artmaking (p. 29). Katchadourian is ceaselessly creating the conditions for becoming through her artmaking process, constantly engaged in a form of play that is “always a balance between freedom and restraint” (as cited in Dobey, 2013, para. 6).

Such a rigorous form of play as an awareness of the potential impact of creative disruption and destruction is present in all of her works. A sampling of Katchadourian’s projects over her career includes: dissecting routes from a New York City subway system map and rearranging them as tangled mass of thin paper strips (*Handheld Subway*, 1996); a cyclical ‘collaboration’ with a spider, in which she mended a discarded web with red thread only to have her work repeatedly discarded and pristinely repaired by the spider’s thread (*Mended Spiderweb*, 1998); an attempt to create a language of popcorn by translating the popping frequency into Morse code (*Talking Popcorn*, 2001); or an audio tape in which she edited out any language-based utterances and piecing together only the pauses in speech and background noises from the Apollo 11 radio transmissions (*Indecision on the Moon*, 2001).

Katchadourian’s projects do not directly build on one another in a quantitative accumulation of work. Instead her body of work shifts qualitatively through various supple lines and lines of flight that deterritorialize and irrationally reterritorialize systems of thought, particularly through an ongoing disruption of conventional notions of mapping, language, nature, animal taxonomies, and human genealogies. In fact, Katchadourian’s website has an option to search through her body of work as a way of locating these various themes, which serve as lines of non-linear connections that weave

throughout the dozens of projects over her career. The result is a nomadic entwinement of various mediums—sculpture, photography, video, sound, text—intersecting with themes organizing systems that her work constantly seeks to disrupt—language, taxonomy, kinship, geography—woven together through an engagement of intensive molecular dispersals hiding in plain sight by grounding itself in molarizing operations of artwork categories.

Importantly, this entwinement of deterritorialization and territorialization in Katchadourian’s various works ultimately operates in modes of irrational logic throughout—triggered by failure, accident, rupture, fracture, misreading, mistranslation, or misinterpretation—which creates lines of flight as escapes from the reifying cycles of molar and molecular lines within her process. Instead of stabilizing thought by creating fixed positions based on measured difference, the lines of flight created by Katchadourian’s works instead create new assemblages of zig-zagging nomadic relations and connections. Twisted subway routes relate to illegible popcorn language through a common connection of their own futile logic. Bird call car alarms create a perplexing shift of recognition in the same way that familiar radio background static of a space mission feels eerily puzzling without its human voices. This speaks to the “flexible and open-ended” engagement of Katchadourian’s process that, upon closer inspection, involves a playful and rigorous experimentation through her lived experience in seeking out milieus through which nomadic encounters arise, not just within a particular work, but throughout her entire body of work which “recognizes that all moments of the world are moments of becoming” (Bogue, 1989, p. 29).

On Katchadourian's website, there is a list of works that are excluded from the relations and connections within the rhizomic-clustered themes of her oeuvre. This is titled 'Miscellaneous', which links to projects such as an early (and more rigidly conceptually executed) collaborative work that organized different parking lots at a college separated by the colors of the cars (*Carpark*, 1994), and a collection of discarded slices of audio cassette tape found throughout New York City over the span of several months (*Songs of the Islands: Concrete Music from New York*, 1996/1998). Among these relative outlier works is the ongoing project that Katchadourian began in 2010 called *Seat Assignments*. This demonstrates that even some of her own projects are nomadic lines of flight within the territorializing assemblages of her entire body of work. Yet, as we will see in the next sections, a series like *Seat Assignments* only seemingly occupies a space outside of Katchadourian's earlier intertwining themes. Instead *Seat Assignments* creates new deterritorializing assemblages from within the habitual patterns of her practice and push further to create new connective lines of flight—as improvisations that escape out of territorializing refrains—that continues to expand her work as an art-based counterpart to the nomadic encounters that are constantly entwined in a productive rhizomic dispersal.

Nomadic Encounters at 30,000 Feet

Katchadourian's photographic series *Seat Assignments* could be seen as a departure from the themes of her work of the first fifteen years of her career. While most of her projects have focused on themes of language, mapping, nature/culture relationships, taxonomies, and genealogies, *Seat Assignments* is a move in a new kind of direction, dominated by questions surrounding the conditions and context for image production, and the potential for disrupting the territorializing operations of photography

through entwinements of nomadic encounters. Many of Katchadourian's earlier works, such as *Mended Spiderwebs* (1998), utilized photography and video as a means of documentation for a material process—either as a document of an art-object, performance, collaboration, or a site-specific installation. *Seat Assignments* depends on photography for its existence as a 'finished' artwork in the conventional sense pertaining to the display of artwork in a monograph or an exhibition. This might potentially be concerning for an analysis of an art-based counterpart to Deleuze (2003) and Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) notion of art and philosophy, which rejects photography as a mechanism that attempts to fix and stabilize the world in a mode similar to the territorializing operations of the dogmatic image of thought. This section of the chapter will demonstrate that despite the departure in practice for Katchadourian, and its reliance on photography as art output, *Seat Assignments* is an exemplar of a constant process of *becoming-other*, not just of the production of art, but it is also a useful example of how Deleuze and Guattari's concepts themselves are always inherently becoming in their shifting contexts within thinking and artmaking.

In a way, *Seat Assignments* is a site-specific project; its art encounters take place entirely in the confined space of the airplane, but as a series, the project has emerged from over one hundred and fifty different flights. The procedures of the process are simple: equipped only with a mobile phone camera, Katchadourian works with various found ephemera that is only contained within the plane to create photographed assemblages of objects, images, fellow passengers, and even herself. Since the works are created entirely on the plane, her timeframe for working is limited to the duration of the given flight on which she is traveling.

Katchadourian states that the original intention for the production that led to the *Seat Assignments* series was not to make an actual artwork, but rather it was a way to stave off boredom. She recalls her thoughts from flight in which the idea first occurred to her,

here's all this time and usually I and most of us are just sitting there trying to make it go away, trying to pretend that the time isn't happening to you, that you're in a point A going to point B and what happens in between more or less you're trying to erase. So I thought it would be interesting to actively and almost maniacally make things during this time" (as cited in Somerset, 2011, para. 2).

Katchadourian quickly realized that the interest and motivation for the activity became something more than an activity of occupying time or engaging in play in itself. The limitations she set—the obstacles and interferences—of time and materials became the foundation for the creation of a series of simultaneously lighthearted and profound works of art that called forth the sensations of the virtual through the expression of art within the commonplace and humdrum activity of air travel. Katchadourian addresses her motives for such a peculiar process as an interest in “the situations where there are limits and boundaries to what's possible and how you find your way around those obstacles, how you think on your feet.” (as cited in Somerset, 2011, para. 14)

What has resulted is a diverse project of over fifteen series of photographs depicting the ways in which Katchadourian negotiated and navigated those obstacles. *Buckleheads* show distorted portraits of unsuspecting nearby passengers reflected in her seatbelt buckle; *Sleepers* similarly depicts fellow nearby passengers, but in these works they are in various positions of sleep during the flights; *Provisional Shelters* is composed

of miniature habitats cobbled together from crackers, chips, wrappers, and hollowed-out bread and cheese; *Sweater Gorillas* are made from Katchadourian's favorite black sweater with which she often travels, crumpled on her lap in an arrangement of folds that shape uncanny resemblances to a gorilla's face. Her most well known series to emerge from *Seat Assignments* is *Lavatory Self-Portraits in the Flemish Style*, in which she takes 'selfies' in the airplane restroom mirror donning toilet seat covers, paper towels, and inflatable neck-rests presented to recreate a dramatic visual style commonly depicted in 15th century Flemish portrait painting.

Straight From the Page of a Magazine

Katchadourian's most favored materials from *Seat Assignments* are the various airline magazines commonly distributed during flights. However, rather than conventionally perusing the publications through simply reading and browsing the photographs, she puts the images from the articles to work in her artmaking by incorporating other found materials and ephemera from the aircraft cabin to create curious illusory bricolage compositions of three-dimensional objects placed atop two-dimensional imagery. *Birds of New Zealand* is made of a travel guide found en route to New Zealand, in which images of the country's native birds are modified by the placements of candies and nuts to create ornate embellishments of the eyes, beaks, or feathers; *Proposals for Public Sculptures* includes the display of a lemon peel positioned as if appearing as a monument at the center of the field from a photograph of a baseball park, or a row of peanuts lining an image of a hotel entrance; *Landscapes* depicts altered environments found in magazine article images, such as pepper scattered over an scene of

a mountain as smoke from a billowing volcano, or a pile of salt transforming an image of a night sky into a cosmic spectacle.

Katchadourian's most effective magazine works display more complicated and grotesque transformations, which venture beyond simple moments of humor and levity. *Disasters*, depicts scenes of skiers racing from an avalanche of crushed peanuts and highways crushed by a similar fate. An image of an airplane is depicted in one work with crushed pretzels billowing from its engine, and in another, with pepper scattered as smoke spewing from its wing. Magazine pages featuring images of a cabin window and a cockpit windshield are punctured with Katchadourian's finger, resembling a monster bursting through to terrorize the passengers and crew. Many of these works in the series are a reflection of the fear and anxiety of humans' lack of control in the face of natural disasters or flying in an airplane—situations which Katchadourian feels at times can be “very anxiety provoking to imagine things going wrong” (as cited in Hunter, 2013, para. 14). She explains that the darker works of *Seat Assignment* are a way of coping, which makes it

an absorbing and distracting project that when I'm really dug into making something, I'm very content. I'm really happy, I'm really absorbed, I'm really in the moment, I guess you could say, and I don't sit there worrying of feeling kind of squashed in my seat or anxious or uncomfortable if it gets turbulent or any of those kinds of things (as cited in Hunter, 2013, para. 16).

In this respect, the process of engaging in the work of *Seat Assignment* for Katchadourian is one of creative transformation, in which the immersion into the milieu through which an art encounter might emerge creates a new mindset toward her experience of air travel

and artmaking. It emerged into something beyond her original intention of staving off boredom and into a material process of experimentation as an active force that creates intensive change in the creation of the new.

Just as the unexpected sound of the misheard bird call in the forest opened up a deterritorialized space as an encounter with Katchadourian's habit of thought, the initial activity on the flights, to stave off boredom or anxiety, triggered an encounter that opened her to a transformation thinking through the experience as a palpation of sensation. Herein lies the nomadic process in the encounter of her experience, which opened up the *expérience* in which a new kind of thinking would emerge, not just about what passing time could be as a passenger on a flight, but a new perspective of how encounters create new lines of flight in which the lived experience of everyday situations and materials can become art.

Creating Something From Nothing

Katchadourian's initial impulse for creating the work for *Seat Assignments* was how she might be able to make something from nothing. However, the work is not manifest without Katchadourian's self-imposed encounter:

The rules of engagement are that I only work with what I naturally have with me and what I find on the plane. I'm not allowed to bring any complicated props and things that skew the project too much towards something that I may as well have just made in a studio. So it's important to work within the limitations of the airplane's space and with materials that are part of that environment (as cited in Somerset, 2011, para. 3).

These limitations are a vital component for Katchadourian, insofar as in their absence she would be without any bearings to move toward the encounter. Nomadic productivity is always an intensive process in which territorialized and deterritorialized spaces become entwined.

The experience of flying on a commercial airliner is a strong example of space becoming territorialized. In recent years it has continued to become an increasingly confining physical space, with less room for mobility. In this space we are presented with limited range of activities, such as reading, sleeping, talking, listening to music, or watching a movie. Finally, there are specific ways in which we should behave in the space of an airplane, such as a certain sensitivity toward personal space and privacy, partaking in activities that will not be distracting to others, or increased awareness since 9/11 of what one must do to avoid appearing suspicious. The official and customary rules and regulations territorializing the space of a commercial aircraft are viewed by airlines and various regulatory agencies as an efficient way to ensure that order and organization prevails over uncertainty and chaos during a flight. In other words, these rules, regulations, and limiting constraints take form as the logos for air travel.

Katchadourian's activities instead open to the intensive emergence of the nomos. While harmless to the overall safety and experience of fellow passengers on the flights, they are deterritorializations of the organizing space and habits formed by commercial air travel. She partakes in a subtle straddling of the boundaries of conventional and disruptive behavior and spatial mobility for a passenger. It is worth noting that Katchadourian has never been accused by any passengers or flight crew that her work was in any way invasive, distracting, or suspicious to others during the flights. Her

intention is not to cause interruptions for others, but rather create an interruption in her own habits of experience during air travel. However, in order to create a deterritorializing experience, Katchadourian must construct the territorializing limits that produce the art encounters, which create the conditions for new thinking and new artmaking to emerge.

This again points to the often paradoxical and always co-constitutive process of nomadic encounters. *Seat Assignments* takes form as an interweaving engagement between territorialized and deterritorialized spaces. The territorializing limitations that Katchadourian imposes creates the conditions for encounters to open up a deterritorialization in thinking. The supple lines and lines of flight are cuts in the fabric of her image of thought in a way that forces her, as she phrases it, to “think on your feet” (cited in Somerset, 2011). Thus, it is not a full immersion into chaos, but rather an encounter with the virtual that creates a shift in mindset toward artmaking in ways that Katchadourian would have unlikely been able to achieve in the absence of such an encounter.

If we return the discussion of art and philosophy from chapter four, we see Katchadourian creating an entwinement between Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophical nomadic encounters with their notion of art through materializing the expressions of sensations by folding and unfolding rhythms and movements that express sensations. The plane of composition that Katchadourian creates—the territorializing assemblages of limitations and rules of engagement—becomes the frame through which sensations emerge for her through the artmaking experiences. The plane of composition, as a territorializing frame, calls forth sensations of percepts and affects that allows

Katchadourian to open up an exploration of the potential for expression of thinking anew or to ‘think on her feet’.

Here again Grosz’ articulation of the double cut from chapter four is paramount to Katchadourian’s practice in *Seat Assignments*. Its territorializing operations of the encounter—as limitations and rules of engagement—slice through chaos and creates the plane of composition, while its deterritorializing effects produce an intensive and expressive force. This is what Grosz (2008) calls the “converse movement” in which the double cut generates a creative destruction in artmaking, “breaking up systems of enclosure and performance, traversing territory, in order to retouch chaos, enabling something mad, asymmetric, something of the chaotic outside to reassert and restore itself in and through the body, through works and events that impact the body” (p. 19). In this respect, sensations, as what Grosz calls, “pure intensity, a direct impact on the body’s nerves and organs,” become an intensive force, bringing the body closer to the imperceptible affective capacity from the virtual which opens up the becoming-other of the artist (p. 22).

Beyond the affective transformations of nomadic encounters that deterritorialize the organizing habits of thought, this ‘retouching of chaos’ and ‘madness’ of the creative destruction of art encounters becomes manifest in the way Katchadourian opens up to the strange and irrational mutations of the organizing principles of the source images in the common airline publications. This is where Katchadourian turns to the creative potential of photography.

As we explored in chapter four, Deleuze (2003) firmly rejects photography as a creative force by lamenting its fixity and reduction of the movements and flows of the

world to presuppositions and resemblance, which represents clichés as readymade perceptions of the image of thought: “what we see, what we perceive, are photographs” (p. 74). Katchadourian disturbs the particular clichés within the time and space of the photographic image by interrupting and exorbitantly adorning a grotesque style to the photographic intention presented in its original context as illustrative and reporting narrative of clichés—portrait, landscape, documentation, still life, etc.

In the *Seat Assignment* series called *Top Doctor's in America*, she absurdly embellishes the images from an article sharing the same title, in which the formal, studio portraits of the doctors are disfigured by an application of pretzels, nuts, chewed gum, onion slices, and lemon peels, that create three dimensional masks, horns, growths and tumors protruding from the two-dimensional images of the heads of the posing subjects. The assured poses of the doctors morph disconcertingly into outlandish miscreations, as Katchadourian's points, tongue firmly planted in cheek, to something perhaps more sinister behind the blind reassurance of trust in subjects of authority.

Her *Creatures* series produces further ruptures and exaggerations of subjects from the found airline magazine images, which create monstrous subjects: two-headed dogs and double-torso rock climbers (both aided by the reflection of a seatbelt buckle pressed adjacent to the plane of the magazine page); a poodle with massive, cartoonish 'livesavers' candy eyes; a twisted chocolate bar creature reclining next to a seemingly unfazed companion on a patio; a banana stem lurching from the bottom of the sea toward a seemingly vulnerable scuba diver; or a perched kitten protruding a menacingly bulbous tongue, provided by Katchadourian's finger tearing through a hole from the reverse side of the page. Katchadourian's physically disruptive excesses of the images deterritorialize

the ostensibly harmless subjects and scenes of the photographs, unfixing them and releasing creative lines of movements and flows that produce new, mad and irrational contexts.

Katchadourian's active entwinement of the territorializing and deterritorializing effects in the philosophical nomadic encounter is a dynamic engagement with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of art, insofar as the stabilizing function of photography and its preconceived operations of cliché are dislodged through a deterritorialization of figuration. Katchadourian's self-imposed limitations produce the encounters that create the conditions for the emergence of sensations from the virtual in a disruptive and deforming isolation of the Figure on the plane of composition. Through this process, the 'strangest of reversals' of the intertwining, co-constitutive operations of territorialization and deterritorialization once again shift as Katchadourian's destabilizing activities return to the organizing operation of photography through her use of the camera phone as a mode of fixing the forces of the nomadic process.

The photographs that comprise the *Seat Assignments* series serve less as a stabilizing document (which Deleuze rejects as uncreative), and more as modes of witness to the cartographic, zig-zagging processes of the nomadic encounters that Katchadourian creates for herself. They function through rhizomic connections, not as random operations, but also not without an organizational regime. The images are readable, but they are disruptive and inaccessible in the way their legibility becomes mutated through the encounters Katchadourian experiences. Beyond their documentary potential, the photographs are a witness into a nomadic encounter of the artmaking process itself. Its presentation as a series of photographs is not so much to create a

visceral encounter with the sensations of the virtual for a viewer, but rather it operates as a portal for the spectator to peer into the creative transformations of the movements and flows of an artist's experience through the artmaking process. It is signifying in its output as a readable photograph, but simultaneously asignifying as a glimpse into the irrational and unpredictable operations of the nomadic encounter for the artist. From this perspective, a viewer can touch upon the unfamiliar and strange processes of an artist affected by the encounter. However, the viewer can only palpate artist's affective experience with experimentation. After all, Katchadourian's own encounter is not a full immersion into the virtual, but rather it is also only a palpation or expression of the intensities and sensations of difference. In other words, the photograph for the viewer is the actual result of an artist's encounter with the virtual. As such, the viewer also experiences something new, as a witness of the forces of the encounter with the virtual. The limitations and rules of engagement are part of the presentation of the work, and while it requires a text to communicate (it's operations are not inherently readable within the works themselves), the story of the series' creation itself serves as the 'strangest of reversals' as a philosophical-based counterpart to an art encounter—just as Deleuze and Guattari turn to whistling children and housewives, root trees and rhizomes, and patchwork patterns as language-based metaphors as modes of articulating nomadic processes.

A Multiplicity of Encounters

As we have seen in the two case studies presented in this dissertation, it is impossible to articulate how encounters specifically materialize from the virtual realm of difference to the actual realm of thinking. To pinpoint the event of the encounter would

be to fix it in space and linear time, and thus would reify its event as an image of thought. Deleuze and Guattari do not present their concepts in the form of a how-to guide or a prescriptive formula. Instead, as Maggiori suggests, the operation of their concepts “does not make a mountain but it allows the birth of a thousand trails that... lead everywhere” (cited in Colombat, 1991, p. 12). From those trails, Colombat (1991) insists “it is only through that condition that they can be borrowed or “captured” by other experimenters, such as artist, scientists, architects or musicians,” and as such their concepts “allow one to indefinitely create others” (p. 12).

As noted in the introduction chapter, neither Tehching Hsieh nor Nina Katchadourian have directly referred to Deleuze and Guattari in reference to the process or discourse surrounding their artmaking. Instead, as we have seen in the artists’ descriptions of their respective practices, they work with their own terminology—such as art time and lived time, or freedom and constraint—which generate the conditions for the same creative transformations that Deleuze and Guattari describe through their concept of the encounter.

As we have seen in the various examples throughout this overall study, most of Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts are not their own; they have been extracted and pulled together into new assemblages from philosophy’s history. Their concepts create an encounter of their own that “forces us to think” about predominant practices of constructivist philosophy that has been codifying these creative processes of the world into closed systems and structures of thought (Deleuze, 1994, p. 139). The encounter it triggers is one of a great awakening in thinking.

In this respect, it is clear to see how such vastly different artist practices and processes can create the conditions for similar desires as creative transformations that challenge the dogmatic image of thought and embrace the movements and flows of nomadic encounters. As stated in the introductory chapter, the common problem all artists face is how artmaking comes about through various negotiation and navigations of the forces of order and chaos. Despite their different backgrounds as artists, both Hsieh and Katchadourian directly address this problem through their artmaking practice. The terminology that they choose to describe this problem is uncannily identical: Hsieh reveals his thinking through subjection as a “relation to constraint and freedom” (Heathfield, 2009, p. 24), while Katchadourian approaches her work as a “curiosity about the productive tension between freedom and constraint” (Katchadourian, n.d.). This tension between order and chaos or constraint and freedom is revealed at every step throughout an artist’s process—it is always immanent as the lived experience of artmaking, even if it is seemingly lurking in the background

Hsieh’s earliest artworks mirrored the systems and structures of his young adult experiences with high school and military life. As a rigid example of Conceptual Art, his “irrational thoughts” of painting circles and lines were “followed absolutely and rationally” to its logical conclusion as an art output (Lewitt, 1969). The simple actions, lack of duration, and the absence of focus onto thinking as art in his earliest works suggest a strict adherence to a practice that reified the image of thought of his environment rather than as a challenge to transform it. Katchadourian refers to her early years as a diverse balance between play as free-form exploration of ideas, and careful observation of the systems and structures imposed by her grandparents during her

summer stays in Finland. Even with a less regimented background than Hsieh, Katchadourian's early works, such as *Carpark* (1994), reflect a similar adherence to the rational follow through of the strictest operations of Conceptual Art.

For both Hsieh and Katchadourian, a shift occurs following these early experiences in which the procedures of the artist mobilizes from one of full control over a process to creating the conditions that embrace the unknown as a way to stimulate a different kind of thinking through artmaking. For Hsieh this occurs in his final works from Taiwan, particularly in "Jump Piece," which demonstrates a leap into the immersive field of problems through experimenting with a material and bodily experience of calling forth the intensities and sensations of the virtual realm of difference. For Katchadourian, this occurs through a synthesis of the organizing systems and structures on one hand, and the open-endedness of play on the other hand, to form an ongoing becoming in artmaking through an entwinement of territorializing and deterritorializing encounters.

Hsieh's *One Year Durational Performance 1978-1979* and Katchadourian's *Seat Assignments* both display an immersive engagement with the unknown forces of the virtual and meaning-making of the actual. They construct and embrace sets of rules and limitations to control and constrain social and bodily functions and create the "strangest of reversals" through encounters with qualitative multiplicities emerging from an entwinement with the virtual plane of consistency to the actual plane of organization (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 480). Hsieh's "Cage Piece" displays a radical shift toward duration in performance as a dedication of 'lived time' into 'art time.' It involved the construction of rigidly striating rules and regulations as a "somatic negation... in physical and linguistic constraint" that opened up to the expression of sensation

(Heathfield, 2009, p. 27). Hsieh's idea for the work became a striating machine that, rather than following through absolutely and rationally in a continued striation, instead created nomadic encounter to open subjectivity up to the indeterminacy of virtual difference. What emerged in this smooth space of "art time" was a freedom of thinking as expression of the sensations of the virtual into artmaking.

Seat Assignments creates nomadic encounters through a similar tension of freedom and constraint, but it does so as an ongoing experimental vacillation between territorializing and deterritorializing spaces throughout its production. Whereas "Cage Piece" reveals the smooth spaces of thinking triggered by an encounter with the striation of its initial rules, *Seat Assignments* involves play as a way of "thinking on your feet" to deliberately engage with the intertwining push and pull of territorializing and deterritorializing forces. In this respect, Katchadourian's *Seat Assignments* more aptly relates to Hsieh's overall series of durational performances, insofar as each performance involves a territorializing recalibration through moving forward as an artist in a progression from one piece to another. Like *Seat Assignment*, Hsieh's entire series of durational performances opened up the contingent movements and flows of nomadic thinking and ongoing relocation of subjectivity.

As such, both series embrace the dice throw of repetition with difference, and without concern for specific outcomes. Their process is a cast of the dice through *expérience* toward the unknown and indecipherable affects and perfects of sensations of the virtual. Hsieh's "Cage Piece" offered no guarantee of creative transformation of thinking and new forms of subjectivity. In a certain sense, if Hsieh had been focusing on predetermined outcomes, he may have not felt a necessity to move forward with "Time

Clock Piece” or any of the other subsequent durational performances. Instead he viewed the works in terms of an ongoing becoming of thinking and subjectivity toward future casts of literal repetitions of year after year that brought the difference of affective movements and flows of intensities and sensations into returning emergence of striation and smoothness, of freedom and constraint, interiority and exteriority, and of time and space.

Katchadourian similarly casts the dice through *expérience* within a milieu of affect that creates the conditions for everyday materials and images to become art. Her rules of engagement construct the limitations as further territorialization of the physical and behavioral constraints of the space, which opens up the paradoxical reversals for deterritorializing spaces that open up thinking through obstacles—more particularly for Katchadourian, it forces her to think on her feet. This inclination of movement in thinking—moving around, through, within, or across the limitations and rules—is the activation of nomadic processes. For Katchadourian, the entwinement of order and chaos stimulates a variation of qualitative shifts in thinking about perspective—from found objects, to magazine images, to restroom selfies—and thinking through various emotions—humor, anxiety, perplexity, wonder.

One notable separation between the two artists lies in their distinctive social locations that led to the motivation for their works. Both Hsieh and Katchadourian are operating from within a context of making productive use of the constraints of time and space. For Katchadourian, it is a struggle for making use of an environment that is not conducive for artmaking. Hsieh’s struggle is one of a lack of productivity within a space that serves as a refuge from the constraints of an external world outside of the studio, as

well as the constraints that external world imposes on an undocumented immigrant. Katchadourian's struggle arises from a lack of freedom that is contingent upon of the constraints of the airplane—and it crucially arises from a position of privilege to choose to experience the constraints that are inherent in air travel. For Hsieh, the struggle arises from the constraints of society giving rise to a motivation that is based on a desire of a creative transformation of subjectivity in response to a molarizing assignment of identity. As such, "Cage Piece" becomes less of a constant push and pull of subjectivity, and more of a full thrust of subjectivity to its limits through "subjectivity as subjection" (Heathfield, 2009, p. 26). It builds on a figuration of a nomadic cartography through a further push toward a radically rigid striated space, not as an oppositional resistance, but rather as a disengagement from cultural determinations of identity and a life-affirming move toward becoming-other.

While Katchadourian's starting location is grounded from the position of enjoying basic rights as a United States citizen, the nomadic encounters she produces though *Seat Assignments* offers a similar mobilization of stable identities of habits of thought in creating a subjectivity that is no less becoming-other than Hsieh's. Her process is not only a constantly entwined, co-constitutive engagement with territorializing and deterritorializing mundane spaces and the habits of thought they reify, but as a double cut, it also produces a creative destruction of Katchadourian's own image of thought about artmaking in such a context, which as Grosz (2008) explains, involves calling forth sensations by "breaking up systems of enclosure and performance, traversing territory, in order to retouch chaos, enabling something mad, asymmetric" (p. 19). Hsieh also engages sensations of "pure intensity" as a transformative aesthetic force in its creation of

thinking as expression of brushing against chaos. The strict negation of mobility and communication in “Cage Piece” is also a negation of subjectivity in the present. As such, Hsieh’s affective capacity lies only in thinking back to a past or toward a future to come, and the expressions of the sensations of the virtual are manifested in a future-thinking desire of creative transformation.

Importantly, the case studies of Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian focus on nomadic encounters as ways in which both artists navigate and negotiate order and chaos through their artmaking process. It centers on how artists create the conditions for transformative modes of thinking through the practice itself. Hsieh and Katchadourian’s pieces would likely not make very good examples of nomadic encounters for a viewer or audience engaging in an artwork in a museum or gallery. This is primarily due to the fact that both *One Year Durational Performance 1978-1979* and *Seat Assignments* are exhibited as photographic documentation of the artists’ encounters. Even still, as we saw above and in chapter four, it is possible to make an argument for photography’s capacity to participate in a nomadic process rather than to stifle it and fix it into place.

Nevertheless, as stated in the introduction chapter, these case studies are focused on nomadic encounters producing creative transformations that challenge the dogmatic image of thought in the artmaking process itself. As such, they serve as a foundation for developing a discourse related to their implications for teaching and learning in art education. In the concluding chapter of this dissertation, we will explore the potential for Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts to do just that. The art-based counterparts of Hsieh and Katchadourian’s artmaking process give us a glimpse into the work of nomadic encounters and the way its related concepts challenge the dogmatic image of thought. At

this point we will turn to how these processes can be put to work in a pedagogical environment to create a shift in mindset that opens up to the creative transformations of nomadic thinking and artmaking.

CHAPTER 7

LEARNING THROUGH NOMADIC ENCOUNTERS

This chapter will examine two personal examples from my endeavors as an art student that opened my lived experience in artmaking to questions pertaining to an activation of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts. They are two moments along a crooked line toward my maturation as an artist that have revealed the strange reversals and entwinements of territorializing and deterritorializing assemblages, through which nomadic encounters have produced the conditions for challenging my dogmatic image of thought and creating new mindsets toward thinking and artmaking. By turning to examples of my own experiences as an art student, this chapter will demonstrate the first-hand account of how my navigations and negotiations connect and relate to creating new cartographic lines that paradoxical paths and attempt to break through the territorializing assemblages of the dogmatic image of thought and the infinite profusion of indeterminate sensations within the virtual realm of chaos.

In the previous chapters of this study, we have seen a number of examples from both artmaking and everyday life that have put Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical nomadic practices to work, activating self-reflection and awareness toward challenging our dogmatic image of thought. This heterogeneity of approaches that we have explored, both within and between artists' practices, privileges Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of qualitative multiplicity within a rhizomic image of thought that traverses the dualisms of

representation. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) insist, representation and the image of thought is an “entirely necessary enemy” (p. 21). We need it to be contemplative of the organization to our actual world through the logic of sense of meaning making. However, these ordering structures can very easily become dogmatic, and representation all too often obscures the molecular lines that touch upon virtual difference. It is up to us, however, to acknowledge how complacent we become through mirroring and reproducing sensations as affections or perceptions of representation, rather than palpating or expressing affects and percepts as “a freeing of the molecular” from within molar lines of organization (p. 346). This involves a self-awareness produced through our lived experience of experimentation to create the conditions through which thought is jolted by the event of the encounter with the virtual, which engenders new terrains of thinking that disrupts and dissolved our dogmatic image of thought. As such, art education has the potential to produce new mindsets of learning, not just in terms of artmaking, but also as ways of becoming more attentive to how nomadic processes can create the conditions for living more effectively and thinking differently in life. In this respect, art and life are always engaged in a nomadic entwinement as a constant dilation and contraction of the virtual and the actual.

The examples of Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian’s artist practices demonstrate that art is certainly not immune to the segmentary lines that reify the image of thought. Hsieh struggled for many of his early years as an artist to overcome a process of artmaking that was tethered to predetermined outcomes. Katchadourian learned early in life that the systems and structures that reified thought were always susceptible to slippages and fractures, but finding those openings requires ongoing wandering thought

lived experience to continue to explore ways to embrace those disruptions in her practice. Indeed, the boundaries between art and life become significantly blurred in relation to the struggle to disrupt sedentary habits. In this respect, art education is a crucial realm of exploration that allows us to become attuned to how nomadic encounters can create the conditions that similarly challenge our sedentary habits of thought in teaching and learning in artmaking. But as Deleuze (1994) insists, this experimentation cannot exist only in theory. It is a material practice that requires an engagement through lived experience. In the subsequent sections of this chapter, I will present moments as an artist and art student that articulates experiences in which I have encountered intertwining forces and intensities of smooth and striated spaces in art education settings. They are glimpses into my own artmaking that has led to this overall study, and has allowed me to build a framework to address why Deleuze and Guattari's concepts are significant for thinking art education anew. However, this reflection is not one of a transcendental subject extrinsic to the environment of learning, but rather as Deleuze conceives through *expérience*, it is an ongoing immersion into the immanence of the lived experience of artmaking as a construct of becoming through the actualization of virtual difference.

Re-creation as Creation

During my studies as an art student I recall two classroom experiences that were tremendously revealing back then, and have quite tellingly remained formative to this day due to their direct impact on the themes of this dissertation. The first experience was in a special topics art seminar course informally titled "Research and Development." While the syllabus did include some art theory texts, none of the readings or discussions in the course directly referred to Deleuze and Guattari by name. Furthermore, I took this course

with only a brief and vague introduction to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy prior to engaging in these assignments. In other words, I cannot recall a moment during the course when I would have made any connections between Deleuze and Guattari's concepts and the questions I was attempting to address through the seminar's projects. The second experience, which we will explore in the next section, was in an art education seminar called "Artmaking as Encounter", which was a course that explicitly worked through Deleuze and Guattari's concepts in the readings, discussions, and assignments. This section will analyze my experience with a specific assignment from the "Research and Development" course. It demonstrates that, while Deleuze and Guattari were never spoken of by name during the course, many of the questions and processes engaged through our assignments were still inhabiting lines of experimentation that created the conditions for nomadic encounters to challenge our image of thought through our art practices. As such, it is important to explore the benefits of creating an environment in which nomadic encounters emerge even if the language of the concepts of Deleuze and Guattari are not directly engaged.

While "Research and Development" was never presented in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts, its overall themes did have similarities with a course that might be designed specifically to engage in nomadic processes. The course objective was to foster an opening-up to activities and discourses that focused on process in artmaking, in which students engaged both individually and collaboratively in loosely constructed assignments that attempted to take us out of our 'comfort zones' in our practices. The first few smaller assignments were approached as kind of warm-up activities leading to the more destabilizing projects presented later in the course. These

early assignments required us to expand our knowledge base of topics outside of our familiar ideas and working methods in our practices. One such project involved producing and presenting a zine on a topic that is of interest to us, but not directly related to our current artist practice. Since I was examining the literature of Henry David Thoreau at the time, I created a zine explored the life and work of another American literary figure, the poet Frank O'Hara. Another early project was called the 'cover art' assignment (similar to a cover song in music), which required us to re-create an artist's work in our own style. It forced us to pull in outside elements from another artist's way of working into our own artmaking experience. For this assignment, I created a hybrid sculpture of three different works from artist Robert Smithson's career. I viewed these early assignments as a kind of middle ground, in which new ideas would enter into the framework in my artmaking practice. However, instead of triggering change, I would find ways to quickly assimilate them into my familiar modes of working. I found myself stepping back and reflecting as an external observer, distanced as a subject engaging in the assemblages and multiplicity of signs—as textual and historical contexts—but the result ended up being an unsatisfying quantitatively repurposed and repositioned for the final output.

These early assignments did generated self-awareness and reflection of those habits of my process, but they did not disrupt my image of thought in such a way that produced a qualitative creative transformation in my thinking through artmaking. In my experience as both a student and teacher, creating situations that ease the student into the more deterritorializing assignments does not adequately fulfill Deleuze and Guattari's call for radical immersion into a new modes of thinking through artmaking. Returning to

Deleuze's swimming analogy, an encounter does not happen gradually, as if thought emerges by slowly wading through the shallow end of the pool toward the deep end. Deleuze's (1994) encounter is a leap into the deep end, creating a shock or a jolt of thought through a sudden immersion into a field of problems.

The major assignment for the "Research and Development" course presented a very different foundation for the creation of encounters than the earlier assignments, insofar as it opened up subjectivity to an immersion into virtual difference as that leap into the deep end that ruptured my habits of thought through artmaking. The assignment was informally called the "re-creation project," which continued with the theme of incorporating the production of other artists into our own work, but in doing so, it required an engagement with another artist's lived experience. The assignment was structured as a face-to-face collaboration between two students who would partner up to describe to each other, without any visual references, the process of a current work in their studio. My partner was a painter who was working on an abstract piece at that moment. He articulated the details of the work while I frantically transcribed his paraphrased words to my notepad. The assignment then stipulated that I make an artwork that would 're-create' that painting based on his linguistic description through the medium that I was comfortable working with, which at the time was photography and video art.

In the describing his work, my partner recalled that the catalyst of the painting came from a vision from a recent dream that he experienced based on a colorful swirl of an oil slick that he observed in a puddle on the day prior to the dream. In considering the finished work, he was able to portray the lines and forms, as well as the colors and value

of the composition. However, the exercise revealed the limitations of linguistic communication to describe the moments of artmaking that remain ineffable. He was unable to adequately convey the experience of the accumulation of the material layers of paint as a responsive movement from a meditative engagement with the perceptual memory of experiencing the oil slick as he saw it in the street, and its convergence with the fragmentary and distorted experience of the dream vision of the scene. He noted that he intentionally worked with a ‘loosened’ approach toward recollection through mindfulness exercises, in which the snippets of memory became more and more indistinguishable, vacillating between actual experience and dream experience. He described how there were never moments in which he was searching for a particular image to emerge in his thought. If a fragment of memory from the actual experience emerged into his thoughts, he would paint that, and he would paint it similarly if a moment from the dream memory popped into his head.

Making matters more complicated for his description, my partner was not attempting to paint the images that he recalled, but rather he was trying to evoke the feelings associated with those images. This is more materially and formalistically conveyed through the painted marks—as thick, thin, assertive, tentative, broad, concentrated, and the like. As a result, each layer of paint gradually built material spaces, textures, surfaces, and topographies on a shifting ground of mutating recollections, oscillating between the memory of the dream and that of the actual perceptual experience, as both memories dilated and contracted on the canvas. The finished canvas was described as a condensation of a wavering echo of marks, lines and forms to create a core

of shifting colors (both bold and muted, revealed and concealed), surrounded by a muddied accretion of overlaying grays and browns at the periphery.

Without seeing that finished work my first steps toward attempting to re-create the painting began as a faithful interpretation of my partner's description of the formal elements of the painting. I had an image of what I thought the finished product might look like, and with little challenge I could have worked toward re-creating that as a similarly fixed image through creating relatively straightforward photograph. Perhaps I could have taken multiple images and layered them together in Photoshop to create a composite photograph that would reflect the shifting layers that accumulated through his process. However, and most importantly to me, the assignment did not specifically stipulate that my work had to come as close as possible to mirror the work that was described to me. Rather, the assignment was to 're-create', which presented to me a vagueness in the rules of engagement, but also allowed for an opening to stress the 'creation' part of 're-creating' a work. This was where the assignment importantly gave permission for the immersion into a milieu for nomadic encounters to open up the stability of the linguistic description of the work. This allowed for the movements and flows of abstract machines to direct the multiplicity of assemblages that construct a new creation as a re-creation. It produced the territorializing rules of engagement in requiring re-creation the work as a representation of the original, but it importantly did not foreclose on the field of problems of opening up to the unknown through the various paths that I could have taken in approaching the project.

The result was a collage of photographic images blurred and digitally cut to create marks that would build up a layer of the general formal descriptions of the painting. The

unfolding of the work involved an attempted immersion into the described experience of my partner's painting process as it constantly intertwined with an experimental immersion of my own experience in creating the conditions to generate new cartographies for thinking through how a re-creation artwork could emerge. On the one hand, the process generated a deterritorialized weaving through the territorializing lines of language, description, and representation through my reliance on the original creation of my partner's painting. On the other hand, I faced a deterritorialized entwinement through the territorializing habits of my own process as a photographer and video artist, and my own familiar ways of problem solving as an artist.

This was demonstrated through the interplay of how the source images for the composition came about. I wanted to re-create a similar experience of my partner's discovery of the oil slick in the street while simultaneously opening up a new and unpredictable experience of my own derived from my partner's account. The source images for the photo fragments came from wandering the streets in my neighborhood in search for various visual and sensed ephemera. I wasn't searching for an oil slick, but I did search for everyday moments that I would overlook on a normal walk—scenes that would stop me in my tracks in the way they stopped my partner. I gathered dozens of images of moments that triggered attentiveness to the experience of wandering in search for something unexpected within the mundane environments, such as a discarded sandal, a flower growing from a sidewalk crack, or a garden hose oddly wrapped around a tree.

The second step of image gathering was done later that night. I set an alarm to wake myself up at a time when I would likely be in a dream stage of sleeping, and when I awoke I would try to remember the dream that I was either in the middle of, or may have

had earlier in the night. The intention was to incorporate the visions of the dream into my own work, just as my partner had done for his painting. However, I could not recall any dreams from that night. Instead, I simply picked up my camera while in bed, and took photographs of the bedroom environment as the actual space through which my body inhabited while dreams usually occurred. Contrasted with the brighter, colorful images of the walk in the neighborhood, the bedroom photographs were dimly lit with murky and muted colors. These images, while not radically out of place or conventionally aesthetically beautiful, still defined normative categorization of objects and moments I would expect to direct my attention toward within the context of a neighborhood or bedroom scene. Still, I relied on my habits of thought by turning to my camera as the mode of capture with which I felt most familiar. My partner relied on direct observation to store his experience as a memory, which in the process of the painting became a key element as a fragmented and obscured reference.

My attempt to fragment and obscure the references of the photographic scenes was accomplished through digital post-production software. The images of these discoveries were processed through Photoshop and randomly blurred, distorted, and cropped to form indecipherable fragments of various shapes, color, and value. They became photographic bits with which I could create painterly marks on a digital interface. Each of these marks accumulated to compose a layer of a larger image that became shaped into an approximation of the general compositional elements—the lines, forms, colors, values—based on my partner’s description of the painting. I created several versions of these large layers of accumulated photo-marks. Each layer was created with different approach. Some layers displayed more resolutely formed shapes, while others

were composed in a looser, more ambiguous layering. Darker images of the bedroom converged with the more dynamic elements of the neighborhood fragments. The intention was to play with the two notions of creation embedded in the assignment: one of (territorializing) boundaries shaped by the descriptions of the original painting, and the other of re-creation of the original through (deterritorializing) experimentation as an immersion into contingencies of distorting and building a composition through various layers of marks and fragments.

The final steps emerged out of dissatisfaction with the stillness of the resulting work. The process of both my partner's painting and my re-creation was consumed with movement and emergence of intentions and contingencies. We had both played with ideas of how fixity and representation become undone by the unknown moments of misremembering, forgetting, mistranslation, and the ineffable. The experience of the assignment created dizzying twists and turns in which stable images broke up and dissolved, only to reappear as another kind of representation, and then disintegrate once again. It was cyclical and reciprocal process of territorialization and deterritorialization between two artist's ostensibly distinctive approaches to artmaking. As such, I felt that the work should express that mobility of process, which in the end resulted in an animated video of the layers built up as an oscillation that traversed my partner's described memory of the oil slick, the images of his described memory as experienced in the dream, and the creations that express my own experience that spawned from the unique engagement with his experience.

In one final immersion into the unpredictability of the unknown, I set up a closed-circuit video camera connected to a computer that displayed the interface of an image-

processing software. The sensor of the camera, pointed to the looping video, created feedback that was displayed on the screen of the image-processing software, which created a gradual degradation of the recorded image. The looping video continuously dissipated on the screen until it lost all recognition of the video that the camera was recording. Thus my response to the project took form not as an attempted re-creation of the finished painting, and not even as a constantly looping movement through the creation of the video, in which my re-creation would perpetuate repetition of the same. Instead it became an ongoing movement of emergence and destruction as a re-creation of experience and experimentation through memory, consciousness and unconsciousness, or descriptive and ineffable moments of artmaking.

Engaging Nomadic Encounters by Another Name

Considering this experience from a perspective of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts, if the assignment was too contrived and offered little room to embrace mobility in the process, I would not be able to touch upon the affects and percepts of the virtual to construct a milieu through which comingling territorializing and deterritorializing assemblages could emerge through the plane of composition. Instead, while the territorializing effects took form as the construction of the assignment, the image of thought of the representation of the original painting, and the familiar habits of my own process in approaching an artwork, these organizing processes became entwined with the deterritorializing forces of the mistranslation—in the form of the inability to replicate the experience of the process of the original painting through language, as well as the material and process-based challenges of translating the production of a painting to the creation of a photograph or video. Additionally, there was a reciprocal

deterritorialization of the original work as it encountered my habitual working process in its re-creation, while simultaneously disrupting my habits of thought in terms of how I normally would approach the process of creating a photograph or video.

This experience did not open up one encounter, but rather it opened up spaces through which the movement and convergence of assemblages created a multiplicity of encounters. Each encounter produced a new field of problems, which allowed for fresh pathways of experimentation to immersively engage with new becomings in thinking and artmaking. It allowed for the conditions to emerge through which my thinking vacillated between my own territorializing assemblages of familiar habits of production and the deterritorializing assemblages of the intensities and sensations of the unknown. As an artist, my response to these shifting entwinements was to embrace both the known and unknown—to immerse myself into an unfamiliar milieu of the painter, while experimenting with mutating practices of my home base areas of photography and video.

The fragmentation and flows of the process of the original painting became the compositional source material for the re-creation. However, the re-creation took form as its own assemblages of further fragmentations and flows, destabilizing the habits of the materials and practices that were familiar to me. Just as my partner was unable to fully articulate the virtual difference expressed through the process of his original painting, I too could never describe the moments of fissure and fracture in which the forces and intensities of the virtual escaped recognition and identification throughout the process of the re-creation project. This is what allowed the project to become so successful for me. It wasn't about taking the position of a transcendent subject trying to contain the spaces of representation, but rather it was to embrace a lived experience through immanence,

allowing my subjectivity to open up to working through the multiplicity of assemblages, and to alter my thinking toward an awareness of the transformative potential of nomadic encounters.

This assignment was a pivotal point in my own artmaking because it created a heightened awareness of how much I relied on representation in attempting to create an understanding of my partner's work. It initially underscored the limits of representation through descriptive language, particularly when explaining an art process, or even just the visual outcome of the finished painting. When that image of representation became fractured and fragmented through his description, it deterritorialized my grasp on that understanding. The element of the assignment that was crucial for me was its openness to what re-creation could be, and how it instilled in me a desire, in a Deleuzian sense, toward creative transformation through my own experience in the artist process. Without that mode of desire, the end result may have been to attempt to piece together the most accurate replication of my partner's description to produce the re-creation.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) discuss lines of flight produced by desire as “when you drill a hole in a pipe” (p. 204). The inability for representation to be effectively communicated in the “re-creation assignment” reflects how molarizing systems “leak from all directions” (p. 204). If I had been working through a desire based on lack, such to recover a lack of information, I may have been searching to fill in or patch those holes, following the molarizing lines of the dogmatic image of thought. Instead, by privileging the lines of flight of *creation* within the re-creation, I embraced a rhizomic image of multiplicity that affirmed contingency of experimentation without a particular outcome in mind other than to drill more holes in the pipe.

Desire in this personal experience was one of transformation in opening up to the creation that had the potential to emerge through a nomadic entwinement of territorialized assemblages of my image of thought (such as language, conventions of painting and photography) and deterritorialized assemblages of the supple lines and lines of flight (such as the unpredictable oscillations and hybridizations of the mediums or the various breakdowns of my intended operations) that were engendered through my own artmaking process in the assignment.

My partner's process was complex to begin with, which allowed for a greater ambiguity in his description of the work. I might have been faced with a much more decipherable task in my re-creation if the work he was describing was a straight photograph of a colorful oil slick in a puddle. However, the source of the re-creation was less about how complicated the description of the work, and was more about how it was put to work as a new creation. Again, this is where desire comes into play, as a catalyst for change rather than finding something that is lacking. If we become aware of the holes punctured in our habits of thought, it presents new potentialities. We can either patch them up to repair and reterritorialize the dogmatic image of thought, or we can experimentally spring more leaks to open new movements and flows that touch upon the multiplicity of the rhizome as a new image of thought.

My experience with this assignment demonstrates, in one respect, the inability to grasp through representation the intensities and sensations that are pulled forth by the encounters of the mobilized and territorializing frame of composition of artmaking. The virtual realm of difference, and its imperceptible and unpredictable undulations, is experienced through the experimentation of the artist—but that experience can only be

touched upon through expression or palpation. In another respect it demonstrated how that experimentation opens up contingencies from those mistranslations that pulls the process into unknown realms and carves new pathways of thinking that normally would not be produced solely through my habitual or comfortable approach to artmaking. Instead, the process shifted and mutated through encounters with territorializing and deterritorializing assemblages as it enmeshed with the constraining, but mobilizing rules of engagement of the assignment.

My engagement with the assignment also opened up a new awareness of my relationship with painting. I began my art career as a painter two decades ago, but switched to photography and video after a few years. This experience stirred up new questions about painting, its relationship to mark-making and movement, it's potential for hybrid processes in image-making, and consideration of the medium's increased flexibility in approaching locations of practice between the analogue and digital. It led to a continued experimentation over the next several months and years, which created an environment for encounters that continued to emerge, and thus augment those questions about painting and photography. In fact these questions became the foundation of my masters' thesis for my graduate studies in studio art.

There are “a thousand trails” that we could take in analyzing this assignment from a perspective of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts (Colombat, 1991, p. 11). When I made that work for the seminar several years ago, I was just becoming familiar with a few of their philosophical ideas. During the seminar group's critique and discussions of the assignment, there were no comments about ‘deterritorializing’ or ‘territorializing’. There was no discussion about challenging our ‘dogmatic image of thought’. There were no

thoughts about being a ‘good player’ or a ‘bad player’ in the ‘dice throw’ of ‘*expérience*’. Instead, as I examine my notes from the critique, I see phrases like ‘becoming productive through feeling uncomfortable’, ‘reveling in mistakes and accidents’, ‘looking in unexpected places to reveal new ideas’ or ‘obstructions stimulating stubborn responses’.

Considering the context of this specific seminar course, it is apparent that it was not necessary to delve too deeply into the terminology that we used to describe the experiences. While so many of the discussions were hovering around a treasure trove of concepts that Deleuze and Guattari had been theorizing for decades, their particular concepts as such were not immediately relevant to describe what the seminar was doing for us: opening up to encounters that triggered affective immersions toward the unknown of the virtual, and pulling forth the intensities and sensations of the new into thinking through artmaking. What is important to take away from this student example is that it does not necessarily matter whether or not we are discussing these concepts as Deleuze and Guattari would. What is most crucial about these situations is that even if we are not calling the process a ‘nomadic encounter,’ there is still, as Deleuze (1994) would reframe it, “something in the world that forces us to think” (p.139). This something in the world is creating a realm through which our habit of thought is not only challenged and transformed, but more so, it is triggering an awareness through lived experiences that we must always be vigilant to continue to experiment with disrupting dogmatic representation in art and life. We are not required to properly label what is happening to us, as long as we are critically conscious of the fact that something important and valuable is happening, and it is something that can be put to work to create new and transformative ways of thinking about our predictable habits of thought.

Embracing Nomadic Encounters as Deleuze and Guattari's Concepts

The second experience as a student that became a catalyst for this study was a five-day summer intensive graduate art education seminar called “Artmaking as Encounter.” This course served not only as my first substantive introduction to Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts, but also the first opportunity to consciously explore my work in terms of producing art-based counterparts to their philosophical concepts. The assignments for the course were relatively similar to those that were developed for the “Research and Development” seminar described above, and the overall theme of both courses was to work with various forms of obstructions or problems to create new expanses of thinking through artmaking. However, while both courses addressed the various ways in which artists inherently create problems, the “Artmaking as Encounter” course introduced specific concepts from Deleuze and Guattari’s writing, and thus opened up a philosophical element that challenged the habits of thought of the way in which we actually conceptualize these situations. For example, if we were to explain an entirely novel engagement with thinking as nothing more than a ‘new experience,’ without considering what it means to think anew, we might have overlooked its significance in relation to our conventional habits of describing and explaining our experience with new phenomena. The crucial effect of considering Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts is the awareness it creates about how much of a stranglehold the dogmatic image of thought has on our everyday modes of thinking.

In terms of my experience with this course, these concepts had to be put to work to reflect upon of the molarizing effects of philosophy and theory serving as describing and explaining preconceived givens of the world. The concepts became a

deterritorializing assemblage of mobilizing forces that produced an environment in which newly emerging assemblages would be created through a material experience in thinking and practice. However, what was significant about the “Artmaking as Encounter” course was how it approached Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts from such open-ended perspectives. Each morning we were introduced to a new term with a short one or two sentence quote from Deleuze and Guattari. The first day we were presented with the concept of the ‘strata’ along with a quote from *A Thousand Plateaus* that read “it is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 161). I remember being baffled with the ambiguity of such a sentence. I barely even knew what a ‘strata’ was aside from its assumed relationship to the word ‘stratification’. But through a morning discussion, in which we as a group came up with our ideas of what ‘strata’ might mean to us, we arrived with a bit of a clearer picture of an organization, equilibrium, stability, and most importantly, as a *system* of various forms of stratification.

However, discussing these terms in a classroom was not the primary objective of this course. “Artmaking as Encounter” was an active material engagement with spaces and objects that provided a milieu through which the generation of a lived experience would engender experimental encounters with what these concepts could do, not just for us, but more significantly, what they could do *to us*. The space in which the class would primarily experiment with these concepts was Thompson Library, which at eleven stories in height, it is the main university library. On that first day, we considered the idea of ‘strata’ within Thompson Library: how is it formed by the various organizing human and non-human, matter and signifiers, behaviors and practices. After exploring the space in

small groups with these key notions in mind, we returned with narratives of the signifiers of the strata of Thompson Library, which called forth a new kind of awareness of the organizing systems and structures all around us in the world.

These site-specific experimental experiences at Thompson Library continued throughout the week. Each morning we were introduced to a new concept in the form of an envelope containing thin paper cutouts containing brief quotes from Deleuze and Guattari. The concepts were not presented as pieces of a puzzle to solve, but rather fragments as openings into unfamiliar worlds contained in familiar words: smooth, striated, encounter, sense, lines of flight. Instead of framing these words as determining statements the class discussions and material explorations reconfigured the concepts in terms of questions: How can we smooth the strata? What is an encounter as non-recognition? What does a line of flight do to our thinking, or our practice? The class formed small groups for the material engagements at Thompson Library that included written documentation and narratives, photography, video, performances, sound pieces, drawings, rubbings, 3-D objects and installations. The major assignment for the class took form as an ‘intervention’ with Thompson Library. For this project the question that resonated most with my group focused the interstices of *sense* and *nonsense* in the library. The question emerged as how we might play with notions of sense and nonsense to create the conditions for the emergence of encounters that would create territorializing and deterritorializing assemblages that intervened with the assemblages of spaces, signifiers, practices and behaviors within Thompson Library.

For our group-based intervention in Thompson Library, two classmates and I began by wandering the book stacks of the massive building thinking how we might

engage with such a space that might playfully embrace Deleuze's notion of nonsense without venturing so far into absurdity that we would fall into an abyss of chaos. As we examined in chapter two, the tension between order and chaos often reveals itself in a teaching and learning environment as a tension between givens or presuppositions of common sense and one that is enabled through a "field of problems" within the "virtual realm of difference" (Deleuze, 1994). Bogue (2004) describes the organizing principles of the dogmatic image of thought as concealing "the genuinely 'new' ... imageless thought" of difference that "must be forced into action through the disruption of ordinary habits and notions" (p. 33). In Deleuzian terms, this latter form of thinking embraces becoming through virtual difference, which is an experimental approach toward living in relation to Deleuze's troubled relationship with the notion of good sense and common sense.

Throughout the week the class had observed and engaged with the various territorializing assemblages of good sense and common sense that converged as signifiers, behaviors and practices of what *ought to* take place in Thompson Library. The library is space of rigid structural organization of information, in the form of books, periodicals, audio CDs, DVDs, all meticulously categorized shelf by shelf, row by row, floor by floor through the Dewey decimal system. It is a quiet space, for studying, reading, and often times it can just be a space to take a break, or even nap. For many students it is an environment of isolation to get away from the dormitories or apartments in order to concentrate on schoolwork. For other students it is a place to meet up for quietly studying with a partner or in a study group. In other words, it is a built environment designated for serious scholarly pursuit and intellectual enrichment.

The first view one notices when walking into the building on either of the two west and east facing entrances is the hundred-foot tall, sky-lit atriums on either side of a massive gridded glass encasement of the first seven stories of the book stacks. This opens up a transparency throughout the building that is striking—one can look up from the lobby to see patrons exploring the stacks, and while looking down from the windows one can view people filtering through the ground floor. As a group searching to play with an intervention with Thompson, we took notice of this reciprocal visual openness and viewed the glass encasement as a fruitful interface through which we might explore the interstices of sense and nonsense. While I was discussing possible idea for the intervention with one of my group members, another member leaned up against the window of the fifth floor stacks looking down upon the expanse of open staircases and balcony workspaces overlooking the lobby. She casually exhaled a gust of her breath onto the window to reveal an amorphous imprint of fog on the glass, which gradually dissipated a few seconds later. Perhaps out of frustration and boredom at our inability to quickly come up with an idea for the intervention, she let out another gust of breath onto the window, this time marking a circle around the edges of the fog imprint with her finger. She did it a third time, marking a line through the center of the blotch of condensation on the window. The other group member and I took notice of these markings, and like curious children discovering window condensation for the first time, we all playfully started making fog imprints on those fifth floor windows. With our fingers we made scribbles, shapes, marked our initials, formed words, and even wrote the words ‘sense’ and ‘nonsense’ into the fog areas.

This playful act alone is one of nonsense in its conventional terminology as ‘foolish’ or ‘absurd’. However, this is not what Deleuze (1990) has in mind in his notion of nonsense: “for the philosophy of the absurd, nonsense is what is opposed to sense in a simple relation with it, so that the absurd is defined by a deficiency of sense and a lack” (p. 71). Deleuze insists that nonsense and sense “can not be conceived simply on the basis of a relation of exclusion,” and as such nonsense is not the negation of sense (p. 68). Instead nonsense is always “co-present with sense” (p. 183). This is why as we were making these impressions and marks on the window; we were wondering out loud to each other what people must think about the sight of three adults breathing on the glass in the stacks above. We became aware of the fact that these actions, as harmless and non-disruptive as they were, were not in line with the stratifying practices and behaviors of what patrons of the library should be doing. While we did notice few glances in our direction, and one or two passersby did stutter their step to see what we were doing, for the most part, none of the other patrons of the library seemed to make any visible indications that what we were doing was extremely unusual.

As such, we realized that an intervention at Thompson Library required a more complicated entwinement of sense and nonsense to generate deterritorialization of the space. Nonsense is a paradoxical and productive force of difference, which disrupts orthodox, linear or representational forms of thought. But since Deleuze asserts that it is co-present with sense, both forms are always intermingling as a nomadic co-dependency. Sense cannot exist without nonsense, and nonsense cannot exist without sense. If both sense and nonsense have a non-negating relationship, then our group decided that we should affirm both sense and nonsense to create our intervention. By

perpetuating the logical notion of sense, perhaps by taking it to an extreme form, it might paradoxically reveal a more intensive qualitative generation of nonsense. Thus, we aimed to push sense to its limits by adopting a logical, systematic approach to carry out our intervention through our disruptive actions of nonsense.

A Nomadic Encounter with Thompson Library

The video that documents our encounter fades from black to the sound of an exhale of a woman's breath, followed by a man's voice: "three and a half inches, by five and a half inches." The first scene is a pan of the massive open atrium space, displaying people walking through the lobby and book stacks, sitting at desks and lounging chairs with concentrating on reading their books and typing on their laptops—normal behavior within the library space. While the camera pans through the gridded shelf stacks and smooth rows of precisely aligned books, we hear another exhale, followed again by the man's voice: "three and three quarters, by five and a quarter." The camera cuts to a woman holding a clipboard, wearing a white lab coat, glasses, with her hair styled in a classically professional bun. She leans her head forward three inches from the window facing the atrium, deeply drags her breath in, and expels a robust exhale onto the glass surface. The man standing beside her, also wearing a white lab coat, quickly leans in with a tape measure in hand, presses it up horizontally along the diameter of the fog mark left on the glass announcing, "five," then tilting the tape measure vertically, he states, "by four and a half." The woman tilts her head toward the clipboard, and records the dimensions on her chart. The two then methodically move to the next window panel, and repeat the process once again. Then again, and again. It is revealed in the video that this process has begun on the top floor of the atrium, conducting this experiment on each

windowpane on the floor from left to right. When they reach the final pane, they move to the sixth floor and proceed right to left. This continues floor by floor, from the seventh floor to the first floor. In the end they took 106 measurements, one for each pane on the east-facing glass encasing of the Thompson Library stacks.

The paradoxical mode of nonsense is engaged in this process through a its own logic that is not in opposition to orthodox sense but rather it is sense on an alternative logic—sense with a fragmented or disruptive ground. The man and the woman in the video are depicted as scientists, wearing lab coats, recording precise measurements, through a linear and systematic operation. Functioning within the logic of sense, this is serious scientific behavior. However, within the paradoxical logic of nonsense this it produces questions in relation to orthodox sense: Why is this happening in Thompson Library? Why are scientists measuring the imprint of a breath on each windowpane? How can one even accurately measure such an amorphous and ephemeral marking of the condensation of one’s breath on glass?

Bogue (2004) describes the thought that encounters nonsense as “a thought of problems, and learning... the process whereby thought explores the domain of problems” (p. 333). As such, problems are valuable in terms of “their ability to generate new questions” (p. 334). The intervention project did create a disruption to a certain extent for many of the patrons of Thompson Library. Several passersby stopped to investigate what these ‘scientists’ were doing. Were they hired by Ohio State University to test the structural integrity of the glass panels? Were they conducting experiments as researchers from the chemistry or physics department? Strangers casually chatted with one another and pointed as they stood looking upward from the lobby floor, pondering with one

another about what to kind of meaning could be made from such an endeavor. However, most people who glanced up at the occurrence did not seem to display any curiosity at all. Some did a double-take or slowed their stride for a moment, but the vast majority of passersby who did look up at the process occurring in the book stacks did not seem fazed by what was happening. In one respect, the donning of lab coats customary for scientific research may have demonstrated a legitimacy of the process. Perhaps many passersby assumed that if they are scientists in lab coats, they know what they are doing—and that is their business. However, for those who did stop or even stutter or slow their stride, something clicked in their thought. It was a moment of affect and percept of sensation seeping through into everyday life. It was something that they could not make sense of through their dogmatic image of thought. The nonsense of the activity of the researchers served as a disruption of their thought—regardless of the degree of the disruption—which created an awareness of something intervening with the strata of Thompson Library.

For us as a group of three students exploring the interstices of territorializing assemblages of the space through Deleuze’s notion of sense and nonsense, it opened up a new kind of active and productive awareness of how much we consider the stratifying systems and structures as givens—or perhaps how the strata is so ubiquitous that we do not even recognize it until something shifts within its signifiers, behaviors, and practices.

The experience of being introducing to the playful and confounding language of Deleuze and Guattari is a deterritorialization in itself in thinking and habits of thought. The terminology becomes an encounter with unfamiliar ways that common words are used—and this is exactly Deleuze and Guattari’s intention. If we must use conventional linguistic signifiers to articulate radically new and unfamiliar ways of approaching the

emergence of thought and thinking differently, then working within the old and familiar systems and structures will not suffice. This is why the “Artmaking as Encounter” course changed my perspective on how I approached my process as an artist. Instead of creating work that explained, described, supported, or illustrated these concepts, it opened up to a new and tremendously challenging way of conceptualizing my experiences in artmaking. But more importantly, it provoked a deep philosophical curiosity into what an ‘intervention’ or an ‘interstice’ can become as an encounter of non-recognition that ‘forces us to think’.

The experience also triggered a significant moment of self-awareness of the movements and flow of the positionality of my subjectivity as an artist, not of one as an ‘I’, but as “an assemblage with the earth, space/time, speeds, intensities, durations, lines, interstices, hydraulics, turbulences, folds” (St. Pierre, 2004, p. 289). Territorializing and deterritorializing assemblages are always forming and reforming, and they are always immersed in an entwinement with a multiplicity of other assemblages—whether they human, non-human, organic or inorganic. As such, this course equipped me with a particular conceptual vocabulary that opened up an awareness of a particular perspective that *I* am an assemblage constantly becoming an artist, rather than an artist as a predetermined being reflecting certain habits of thought. I often think of the concepts of Deleuze and Guattari providing an opening to a ‘rabbit hole’ in this way. It jolts me out of my reliance on the dogmatic image of thought and reframes a new and open-ended relationship that is constantly thinking through palpating and expressing virtual difference in both artmaking and life. I am certain that Deleuze and Guattari’s writing will never cease to provide new and tremendously challenging modes of productive

disruption and constant mobility that generate becomings as creative transformations. As detailed later in the teaching implications section of this chapter, I am confident that if Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical ideas are even a fraction as resonant for future students as they have been for me as an artist and educator, then we would only see a production of more compelling terrains of experimentation in novel mappings of mindsets that produce truly innovative cartographies in artmaking and in life.

The "Artmaking as Encounter" seminar was also very well-suited to work with Deleuze and Guattari's terminology due to the makeup of the class. My classmates came from very different backgrounds within the arts, from art education, arts administration and policy, K-12 education, museum studies, etc. The art vocabulary that I was used to working with in an MFA program was considerably different than a classmate with a twenty-year career as an elementary school art teacher. Even among the other MFA students in the course, a classmate from the ceramics area approached conversations about artmaking from a relatively distinctive perspective compared to the terminology that I used coming from photography area. Introducing Deleuze and Guattari's concepts create a relatively leveled playing field in terms of working in a teaching and learning setting with a common vocabulary from the outset. Importantly, the experiences in this classroom of K-12 and university art teachers, artists, and education researchers indicate that Deleuze and Guattari's concepts are inherently relevant to all levels of art education. Whether one is an elementary art teacher or a professor for an MFA seminar, teachers and students are always facing the constraints of dogmatic representation in thought. This course offered a common but disorienting vocabulary that opened an engagement in a collective discourse about how these constraining lines of segmentation could become

destabilized. While the degree of the impact of the seminar experience varied from student to student, for many it was a true awakening of the creative potential of constructing a rhizomic image of active thinking as a tactic for infiltrating the territorializing constraints of the dogmatic image of thought. For some, the realization of how tightly our habits of thought can inhibit new thinking was profound in itself. But the real power of this form of self-reflection was found in putting these experiential and experimental processes to work by constructing new assemblages through the deterritorialized lines of flight that productively interrupt the molarizing lines of segmentation of spaces and the sedentary habits they produce.

Regretfully, the two transformative experiences described in this chapter are not examples common experiences for me as a student enrolled in an art-based university program. The reason I reflect on them in this study is because they were so unique in the way that they opened up new worlds that challenged my dogmatic image of thought. Most of my experiences did not produce such a qualitative change in my thinking as an artist. In the next chapter, we will examine the ways in which an art school or program tends to not only fail to produce new terrains of thinking through artmaking, but more so, even contribute to reinforcing a greater image of thought that inhibits creative transformation. However, we will ultimately examine what a teaching and learning environment could become if we reimagine these institutionalized systems and structures within art educational settings to reveal openings that traverse habits of thought, reconfigure the location of subjectivity, and reposition thinking toward material engagements with nomadic processes

CHAPTER 8

NOMADIC TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ART

The lived experiences I have encountered as a student, teacher, artist, and researcher have constantly navigated and negotiated the balance between the constraints of order and stability, while searching for ruptures in those systems and structures to extract from the plethora of transformative potential of chaos. This chapter is an expression of this experimentation with the unknown, or the future-driven potential of this ongoing material engagement between order and chaos.

In this chapter, I will express concepts for moving forward in art education. They have emerged in a parallel relationship to the processes they espouse. In other words, my own learning from a position as a researcher and teacher in art education has emerged through ongoing experimentation with the lived experiences that have engendered my subjectivity in teaching and learning environments. The concepts that take shape from this inquiry call for a similar experimentation with the lived experience that generates subjectivity for students through thinking and artmaking. However, for artists such expression is not in the form of creating concepts. Instead, the art student faces the task of creating material engagements that are expressed as art through the extraction of previously un-experienced and un-thought sensations.

As both a teacher and artist, I have engaged in the processes of both concept creation and sensation expression. My own nomadic encounters have emerged as

connections and relations of lived experiences in problem-creation through research to articulate the concepts that have been framed through the philosophical inquiry and the case studies of this overall study. But to truly express these concepts, I feel I must turn to my own voice, and the lived experiences I have encountered and experimented with as a teacher, rather than echo Deleuze's voice or speak so heavily through his concepts. To me, speaking with my voice is an affirmation of my emerging subjectivity through this process of learning in the lived experience of artmaking, teaching, and research. This subjectivity is always in-process or in the middle, and thus, this chapter is neither a culmination, nor is it a beginning. Rather it is one *moment* among the generative experiences of the past, and the anticipation of new thinking through productive experiences to come in teaching and learning through art. This does not mean that I will entirely avoid using Deleuze's terminology. Indeed, concepts like *nomad*, *encounter*, and *difference and repetition* are still featured prominently in this chapter. Rather than avoid Deleuze's terminology altogether or simply explain what the concepts mean for Deleuze, I will articulate what they do to me as an art educator who is actively engaging to reframe teaching and learning environments in artmaking.

Throughout this chapter I will also be shaping that voice through the concepts of scholars of pedagogy who for the most part have focused on the significance of this line of inquiry from a general education perspective. As a researcher in art education, I am interested on how these concepts can be put to work in a teaching and learning environment for artmaking. As such, these concepts create relations and connections that engage and entwine with Deleuze's concepts, but continue to be actively relocated in this chapter through my voice as an art educator.

The core of this chapter will explore the potentials for nomadic processes to function *in practice* by reimagining new terrains of artmaking in teaching and learning environments. The significance of nomadism has been echoed throughout this entire study. However, we cannot instill a nomadic conception of teaching and learning until we consider why a nomadic approach is relevant in reframing what art education could become. The term nomad is important in this context because it maps a constant movement in thinking rather than tracing a stabilizing prior image in thought. Nomadism is the ongoing process of creative transformation. It revises thinking through previously untraveled lines, which traverses and thus destabilizes systems and structures that attempt to capture and stabilize thought. Nomadic thinking is an immersion into the creative potential of unknown sensations. Those sensations can be extracted to the surface of thinking through an active questioning of knowledge as given or truth. It becomes a persistent problematizing of our assumptions of teaching, learning, and practice. And it continues to question the concepts and art created through the very nomadic processes themselves as a way to avoid new modes of capture and hierarchization. However, we cannot simply envision a nomadic teaching and learning environment as pedagogy without exploring its potential for actively functioning within contemporary art education practices.

In the sections that follow we will examine the ways in which nomadic thinking could reframe the conventional structures of art curriculum at the university level. Paramount to this inquiry is the insistence that there is no prescribed way to create a nomadic art educational experience in practice. Instead this chapter presents underlying pedagogical concepts that are fundamentally different to the way contemporary art

education curriculum is conventionally structured. The practices that are based on these underlying concepts are malleable and mobile in their approach through different teaching and learning contexts. These concepts will be introduced throughout this chapter, and we will see how they intertwine in various productive lines and paths of nomadic art educational environments. At the conclusion of this chapter I will frame these concepts into a number of *principles* that create the pedagogical framework for nomadic teaching and learning in artmaking. Through these principles we will see how the nomadic concepts come together in an art educational context through the various pathways introduced in the previous chapters, and reframed as pedagogical concepts in this final chapter. As we will see in this chapter, these principles are not the focus of the matter in practice, but instead they serve as foundational guides that will be helpful in articulating the concepts behind the practices that have been addressed throughout this study.

The Image of Curriculum

Before we can envision a nomadic teaching and learning environment in practice, we must briefly examine the current systems and structures that frame curriculum both in general educational practices and in art education. Exploring general curriculum structures gives us an idea as to how conventional principles of art education have become a tracing of the image of institutionalization of art pedagogy throughout the 20th century and into the 21st century. By challenging the assumptions of conventional educational structures, we can create a cartography that unhinges the tethers that bind art education to general educational curriculums, and begin to undo the habits that constrain truly inventive teaching and learning through artmaking.

Wallin (2010) provides a significant mapping of the epistemological lineage of the word ‘curriculum,’ which was originally derived from the Latin *currere*, meaning ‘to run’ (p. 2). Curriculum in this respect would be something that is active and forward moving. However, Wallin refers to the later Greek influence (*cursus*) morphing the concept of curriculum over time to become more aligned with the track *itself* that one runs on, rather than the *act* of running (p. 2). This notion of curriculum becomes reactive rather than active, and it instead presents an image of a predetermined “course to be run” rather than an open and fluid movement of running (p. 2).

This image of the predetermined track or *course* became the image of 20th century education, which privileged technical efficiency (Taylor, 1911), utilitarianism (Bobbitt, 1924), and instrumentation and progress (Tyler, 1949) of homogeneous student bodies organized and conformed to the normative standards of academic institutions. This evolved in the second half of the 20th century and into the 21st century toward reflecting neo-liberal corporatist ideals that has turned schools into what Cole (2014) describes as producing “learning that is market-ready” (p. 79). That is, the creation of repetitive, ends-means production imbued with “the influence of free-market neo-liberalism on thought, scholastic endeavor and intellectual integrity” and its impact on “the ways in which identity and character have been shaped through education” (p. 79).

The damage of this a priori image to thought is the presupposition that the subjectivity of the learner is a given, reified by habits of stabilizing connections of representation of a predetermined identity. It is not simply about problems having corresponding solutions. Subjectivity *itself* is treated as a prior, ready-made identity of pre-established values that education is seeking to capture in the learner. This

homogenizing subjugation of the learner produces what Oliver and Gershman (1989) refer to as a “predictable, efficient, and adaptive” structure of “technical knowing,” which forms in highly controlled settings that produces a subjectivity that becomes distanced from the lived experience of the world (p. 14). This form of learning alone represses the mobilization of thought beyond the pre-determined or ‘correct’ courses of knowledge into a different kind of knowing, or an “ontological knowing,” which privileges “feelings, vague sensibilities, and inarticulate thoughts” (p. 14).

These are the obstacles presented by what Aoki (2004) refers to as the “planned curriculum,” which stipulates an educational structure in which:

measures that count are preset; ordained to repeat the same—to dance the same, to paint the same, to sing the same, to act the same—a world in which proper names of students tend to be reduced to “learners,” psychologically enframed, where learning is reduced to “acquiring” and where “evaluating” is reduced to measuring the acquired against some preset standardized norm (Aoki, 2004, p. 418).

Here we can see the relevance of these questions in relation to art education, and as such, it is vital to consider that art education is also stricken by the very maladies described above related to reifying the organizational effects of technical knowing and the planned curriculum. In the next section we will broadly map the lines of modern and contemporary art foundations curriculums to search for fractures and fissures through which we might find modes of thinking that escape from the institutional stratification of art curriculum.

Conventional Foundations in Art

How have the systems and structures of higher art education taken shape throughout the 20th century and into the 21st century? How has the framework for pedagogy of the ‘planned curriculum’ and ‘technical knowing’ become transposed into teaching and learning art? It seems paradoxical that art education could fall into the trap of adopting a dependence on representation and the repression of difference that plagues the pedagogical questions of general education curriculum. Ideally, studio art programs in higher education present unique perspectives for artists to embrace the fluid navigations and negotiations of the structuring conformity of order and the whirling forces and intensities of chaos. More than any other field of study, art facilitates and mobilizes the endeavors that touch upon the unknown and the indeterminate while reconciling the immense pull of the fixity of predetermined thought. This study is not an in-depth analysis of the history of the evolution of studio art programs in higher education, or ‘art schools’ (as they are generally referred to). However it does acknowledge the general organization of conventions, styles, and skills learned in contemporary art schools for the preparation of students to enter into careers as artists. We must examine how artmaking in higher education suppresses what Semetsky (2004) calls the “education of the senses,” and how we might envision teaching and learning if such a practice in education were to be embraced in art school curriculum (p. 438).

At the undergraduate level, the focus is on centered on the technical and conceptual competence for developing artists. Most foundations programs instill a curriculum that follows, at the very least, the traces of influence of the Bauhaus instruction of 2-D, 3-D, and 4-D art and design. The basic objective of these programs is

to construct an extensive and rigorous advancement of the rudimentary skills and ideas that are introduced throughout the K-12 levels of art education. While there is no standardized plan of foundational instruction that all art schools are required to follow throughout the United States, many art schools operate through a broad structure of introductory studies through a formal and conceptual inquiry of surface, space, and time.

Foundations programs were born under the Bauhaus insistence that there are fundamentals and principles of art and design that everyone is capable of learning. Moholy-Nagy's Bauhaus-era writing on art instruction affirmed this position of functional learning of the principles of art by insisting that "the first step of creative production" is not "immediately interested in the personal quality of expression which is usually called "art," but its primordial, basic elements, the ABC of expression itself" (cited in Singerman, 1999, p. 113). As such, Singerman (1999) observes that the mid-20th century shift in foundation practices in the United States reflected a vision shared with Moholy Nagy's assessment that the objective of introductory university art instruction should not be about "the difference of being an artist but the sameness and sharedness of seeing and expressing as an artist... it is taught in ABCs, as the language of art" (p. 113). Most contemporary art programs across the United States implement some form of foundations coursework for first year (and often second year) students, even though the curriculum varies from program to program.

The intention of conventional foundations programs is to create a firm ground of skillful competence in the tools and forms of artmaking, and thus it falls into the trap of creating prior images of representation based on the formation of technical knowing. Foundations in this respect largely ignores the 'ontological knowing' that relates to the

tacit, intangible, and ineffable processes that embraces the unknown and indecipherable realms that produce the expression of our capacity to affect and be affected through artmaking. As such, the ABCs of the principles of art and design that Moholy Nagy laid out for the beginner university art student—which is still in wide use in contemporary art foundations programs—operates through a production of techniques and skills that frame the repetition of the same, rather than the expression of sensations in the repetition that creates difference in art making.

The objective for current foundations programs assumes that following the rudimentary development of the ABCs of art, the student advancing onto higher areas of art education and art practice might go on to make use of these tools to build a practice that may modify or work against these foundational tenets of art. Wilson (2008) views these rudiments as the “artistic rules, conventions, and skills” that we must learn before we can then turn toward “playing with those rules and images—stretching them and inventively recombining them to in one way or another to create something new” (p. 312). This leads to a fundamental question that arises from considering conventional art foundations in relation to a new way forward for creating principles for a nomadic teaching and learning environment for art education: should art education curriculums require foundational rudiments of ‘technical knowing’ of artistic skills for students? If advanced levels of contemporary art education serve to deconstruct or break with those rules, why should we start with any art rudiments in the first place? I argue that a foundations that proposes rules, conventions, and skills in artmaking represses the experimentation with material expression in a lived experience. It creates defined categories and hierarchies rather than opening up inventive lines of rupture and escape

from our presuppositions in thinking and artmaking. Instead, I propose radical reframing of foundations toward nomadic lines of teaching and learning, which privileges self-experimentation with problem-creation in the lived experience of artistic exploration—in other words, it presents an education of the senses that embraces ontological knowing.

Nomadic Teaching and Learning in Art Foundations

If we revisit chapter two and return to the metaphor of the learning process of the swimmer, we can begin to lay out the concepts for a new kind of foundation to pedagogy and art education. In this sense, true learning occurs when we are thrown into the experience of unknown and unrecognizable sensations that confront thought. We find ourselves in a truly new situation without foundation or any form of familiar representation to latch onto. In this situation we are faced with a *problem* or a *field of problems* that do not register with any prior experience. We must move beyond our presupposed process of thought that relies on resemblance to find a solution. In the example of swimming, our bodies do not resemble the waves of the water within which we have become submerged. We are unable to turn entirely to repeating an instructor's lessons we may have been given before entering the water. Instead we must invent new connections with the movement of our body and the movement of the waves of the water. Learning is of grave consequence in this context. If we do not move forward and create new pathways for becoming a swimmer, then we will drown. The conventional framework for foundations curriculum to art is causing us to drown in a metaphorical sense because it offers a different, more rigid image of learning than what the swimmer faces. This leads to the consideration of a series of questions to be explored in the following sections of this chapter: How can students and teachers embrace this different

kind of experimental and experiential learning when so much of foundations curriculum is weighed down by predetermined goals and objectives? How can we open up from the constraints of heavily pre-structured courses built on stringent fundamentals, manuals, demonstrations, and controlled lesson-plans that focus on narrowly defined, repetition-of-the-same outcomes determined by this a priori image of learning? How can new pedagogical directions emerge that unsettles and interferes with the capturing of the learning subject into a given representation of normative image of similarity? How can teaching and learning become an active and mobile process of running rather than the reactive, stratified image of the enclosed course structure? And finally, what would such an art foundation curriculum look like if we were to embrace these tenets of the emergence of subjectivity through self-experimentation of problem-creation with lived experience?

Instead of a foundation for art education built on the models of representation, common sense, and conformity, a nomadic foundation of art education could become a space of exploration that encourages the invention of novel concepts of expression. These expressions are previously un-thought pathways in artmaking through the active risk-taking in a material engagement of thinking toward the unfamiliar and the unpredictable. Such foundations could promote learning that triggers a productive crisis to thought through an active willingness to engage in terrains of lived experience that have yet to be thought. This foundation in art could be focused on embracing problems that are constantly producing new, increasingly unfamiliar experiences rather than questions that have already-known “correct” answers or previously-tread-upon ways of working. Foundations, in this sense, would not be the acquisition and building of skills or

techniques. Instead of the quantitative accumulation of knowledge and skills, a new foundation would embrace a qualitative loss. But this is not a negative loss based on lack. Rather it is a loss of comfort and complacency in one's way of thinking, and a loss of constant dependence of representation—that is, a loss of thought that resembles something prior or something familiar.

Students engaging in a different foundation for art education take on the role of the swimmer, with little productive or innovative use for outside technical instruction or prior knowledge. Students are forced to learn through the creation of new movements and new material expressions that are constantly repositioning and rearranging to keep from falling back into stabilizing modes of thought. In this respect, such a different vision of foundation for art education is indeed one of non-foundation. It is a ground that is unstable, constantly active and shifting, always porous and fluid, and creating new ways to respond to the plurality of problems that results from heterogeneous movement in thought and action.

This conception of foundations in art considers thought and the emergence of thinking through the experience of artmaking in a different way than through the conventional foundation. Instead of teaching the acquisition of skills and techniques of an artist, the fundamental intention of a nomadic teaching and learning art foundation is to *create new thinking*, and in so doing it leads to inventive paths of artmaking.

Conventional foundations in art creates an image that is continually repeated through representation, for example through habitual learning of formal techniques (the ABC's of elements such as line, value, color, surface, perspective), or the reproduction of master works or still life tableaus. This mode of learning is similar to the transfer of identifiable

objects of knowledge to be transferred from teachers to students. In this sense the student is, as Wallin (2010) asserts, is “inexorably linked to the presupposition of the subject as *given*,” and as such, reinforces students as subjects that seek a knowledge that is “representational, not inventive” (p. 98, emphasis original). This image of the subject as representation of a prior identity is a repression of the productive forces of thinking that allows for the emergence of subjectivity through lived experience. It closes off the freedom of thought to face its limits and venture into new unthought-of directions.

In this sense, a nomadic conception of foundations in art would privilege a shock to thought, unsettling the curriculum built to rely on the doxa of conceiving artmaking through representation and common sense. Subjectivity is not a ready-made entity that employs thought when exposed to something new. On the contrary, *thought precedes subjectivity*. It is thought encountering the unknown and unfamiliar sensations of lived experience that facilitates thinking, material expression, and the creation of the subject. This is a radical reframing of learning insofar as the subject is always in an ongoing process of emergence. Thought is constantly reinforced by a repetition of the same images of representation, the intensity through which subjectivity becomes slowed and stagnated. A constant experimentation in life that forces thought to inventively think and create new material expressions generates a dynamic subjectivity that is open to the fluid movements of becoming—a constant discovery and rediscovery of new cartographies of thinking in lived experience. With this in mind, we can see how a different conception of foundations in art could become a way to align with this emergence of subjectivity.

Foundations could become a process of meeting these unfamiliar moments and terrains that create the violence in thought head-on. Instead of falling back on capturing

the event through representation, we can embrace the act of what Semetsky (2007) frames as “expressing events” (p. 204). This expression is a constant invention through experimental immersions into uncharted waters of lived experience. Foundations could become a realm of subject formation that emerges from previously unknown thought, forcing new thinking as a “creative and multidirectional distribution” (Semetsky, 2007, p. 204). It could become a tool for thought pushed to its limits, attempting to create connections and relations from these non-thoughts of ineffable sensations. Foundations could become the catalyst of lived experience, which propels connectivity and expression of unthought sensations as a net cast over the chaos from which it emerges.

As we recall in chapter four, art is the material expression of the sensations that we cannot apprehend. Though sensations exist insofar as they always have the potential to come into material existence, externalized and expressed in the world as art. Thus, artmaking is always a *material engagement* with the unknown realm of sensations. We do not know how to directly apprehend these sensations, so we must experiment with the unknown realms of experience to think anew toward previously unthought, unfelt, unheard, and unseen material expressions.

In our immersion with experimentation, we have no way of foreseeing how these expressions of events might come together. Experimentation is always a leap; it always involves risk and chance. Thus the expression of sensations is not a way to create stability or fixity. Therefore we must avoid producing images of representation; doing so would fall right back in line with the repetition of the similarity with prior images. Instead, artistic expressions emerge from unknown or a-signifying sensations that are beyond conscious meaning-making. This is how the swimmer learns to stay afloat. The

movements of the body and the movements of the waves are in a constant relational engagement, and only through experimentation within the experience of the unknown problem of can she create the novel thinking that form the network of actions to become a swimmer. It is the creation and mobilization of such expressions from self-experimentation at the limits of thought that allow us to move forward as genuinely productive learners through artmaking. Wallin (2010) calls this creation an “active force” that “marks an engagement with thinking in its most extreme artistic and philosophical forms” (p. 1). And because of its engagement with a lived experience, the creative potential for expression of these unfamiliar sensations that affects thought becomes vital foundation for different kind of art education to put into practice (Wallin, 2010, p. 1).

If we can conceive of a new way of thinking art education foundations from a conceptual pedagogical perspective, how might this look in practice? How might an actual foundations classroom take shape if we are to privilege an ‘ontological knowing’ over curriculum of ‘technical knowing’? In the next sections I will explore two paths of illustration of how nomadic teaching and learning in art foundations might look. Importantly, these examples are particular instances and scenarios for creating a different kind of foundation for artmaking. There are countless scenarios in which these overall concepts could plugged in as mutations and adaptations to various teaching and learning environments. It is important here to reiterate that while these examples are helpful in illustrating the potential for a different foundation in art education, they are not useful if the underlying pedagogical concepts are missed. As such, while exploring these illustrations I will continually point to how the concepts at work are rearticulating how

thought works differently in a nomadic teaching and learning environment for art education.

Opening Spaces of Problem-Creation for Students

As we saw in chapter seven, the most productive learning engagements I experienced as an art student searching for novel modes of thinking in artmaking was through the self-experimentation of problems through material engagements in lived experience. Through those experiences as a student, the most effective modes for exploring these spaces of thinking and artmaking were through a certain prompt or catalyzing question that allowed for a sense of direction through this material engagement.

One example of this new way forward in nomadic teaching and learning in art foundations can be presented through a return to my experience as a student in the “Artmaking as Encounter” course, in which we were introduced to a very short quote or concept that became a launching point for material inquiry at Thompson Library. For this class, the concept-based prompts, along with the material engagement with the library space, became the foundations for artmaking in this course. For example, working with the concepts of *sense* and *nonsense*, we were able to create the conditions for an encounter with the space in a way that gave us an open field of potentialities for artistic experimentation. However, this foundation struck a vital balance: while the library was expansive at twelve stories, it was still a finite space. Additionally, while the words *sense* and *nonsense* were vague enough to open into varied paths of material inquiry, they were also packed with specific cultural and historical meanings.

In this particular assignment, we were working with two concepts that were seemingly opposed to each other in their conventional meanings. But our sustained experimental engagement with *sense* and *nonsense* within the context of the Thompson Library space allowed us to push our own predetermined images of the two concepts to their limits, which opened up spaces of experimentation with unfamiliar realms of sensation, and expressed through the novel generation of thinking and embodied action that emerged from our immersive experience. Importantly, we did not turn away or reject our habits or assumptions of the terms. Instead we worked through those presuppositions. We created tensions with the terms by questioning why those assumptions were so strongly adhered to in the first place.

This particular foundational approach is not too contrived or limiting in its instructions or procedures as an assignment. It does not search for predetermined outcomes or repetitions of patterns of the same. What makes this approach to foundations unique is that it opens up inquiry to the unknown sensations of lived experience by raising questions that generate the transformative capacity in the freedom of the inventive activity of thinking. This is a fundamentally different foundational approach from the conventional mode of posing questions, which closes down or constrains flows of self-experimentation by providing externally-determined, homogenous rudiments that students lack and must acquire to move forward as artists. Thus, a nomadic foundation is a pedagogical framework that is not about building knowledge quantitatively, but rather it embraces the exploration of problems qualitatively as always fluid and mutating. Turning back momentarily to Deleuze's (1995) voice, he noted that in his own classrooms, a problem is not about understanding, but rather it is about how we "explore it, play around

with the terms, add something, relate it to something else” (p. 139). This is what nomadic learning could be in art education—an experimental, playful, integrative, and relational opening up into unfamiliar worlds.

In my experience in “Artmaking as Encounter”, the interaction between *sense* and *nonsense*—as an active material engagement within the space of the library—raised questions about the in-between spaces in both the material and conceptual realms at play in the exercise. Playing with the terms meant experimenting with their tensions, creating traversals, working through the cultural, political, or psychological presuppositions of the terms, and how we might begin to actively trouble and rupture those representations. Through a material engagement with the terms—breathing on the glass, scribbling the condensation with our fingers, donning the lab coats and clipboards, making precise measurements, systematically shuffling from window pane to window pane, encroaching on library patrons’ personal space—we were exploring those tensions between order and chaos at play, which resulted from the problem creation triggered by the careful posing of the concepts by the instructors.

As such, it is up to the teacher to ask *effective questions*, but importantly, they must not correspond to any particular answers or predetermined outcomes. Rather the questions must *lead to more questions*—the students’ ongoing problem-creation—which forces students to actively engage in uncharted terrains of thinking. It is a questioning that opens relations and connections in the lived experience of students’ self-experimentation that pushes thought to its limits and produces novel material expressions of these extremes through new, multi-directional lines of active and inventive thinking. This poses a tremendous responsibility on the teacher to similarly facilitate a balance

between freedom and constraint that offers a *sense of guidance*, and a trust in the openness of the process of students' experimentation with novel thinking and previously unthought expressions of sensation. For the teacher, this is the vital component to the principles of a nomadic foundation in art. Real learning does not happen through what the teacher instructs students to do. It is up to the students to self-experiment, by creating their own problems that arise from the teacher's questions rather than creating a direct line from point A (question) to point B (solution).

In this sense, teachers serves as what Wallin (2014) calls the "inventive conductor," which facilitates the space to open up multiple lines of thinking to occur (p. 121). Thus, the correlation between teaching in a nomadic art education and Deleuze's (1994) example of the swimmer becomes clear. Instead of closing down spaces for new thinking, teachers can facilitate an environment that permits the spatial and conceptual expanses in which the students face the waves of unfamiliar thought. Conventional teachers might attempt to explain to the students the mechanics of swimming within those waves, but this is only the transference of a prior image. This tells the students *what to do*. Nothing will be learned unless the students are afforded the freedom in learning to self-experiment within the lived experience though an immersion into the whirling chaos of the sea.

Exploring the Problem-Creation of Contemporary Artist Practices

Another way of reimagining foundations in a nomadic teaching and learning environment for art foundations is through mapping how modern and contemporary art themes in the 20th and 21st century have consistently tended to turn away from considering art practice in terms of a representation of what an artist *ought to do*.

Contemporary artists are certainly not required to have proficiency in accurately reproducing the world through the medium—representation as realism. They do not necessarily even have to demonstrate competency in the formal rudiments of art such as value, line, color, or scale—representation as an image of predetermined skills and techniques. Many contemporary artists eschew traditional materials and surfaces, and are often blurring the boundaries between mediums to the point where 2-D, 3-D, and 4-D fundamentals become dissolved into fluid and dynamic forms.

Instead, for modern and contemporary artists the driving force of an artmaking practice has been focused on *concepts* or *ideas*. However, we saw in chapter four that ideas in artmaking can venture too far toward uncritical representation of cliché and popular opinion. In other words, artmaking often has the tendency to follow established frameworks for its production, its reading, and its interpretation. The challenge for artists and for art education lies in how we can create new paths of inquiry that lead us beyond those established modes of thinking through artmaking so that new relations and connections of expressions of sensations through an artist practice can occur. One of these paths, as articulated in chapter four, proposes that productive and inventive contemporary art practices are those that create new worlds of expression that, as O’Sullivan (2010) reminds us, is “both asignifying *and* signifying” (p. 193, emphasis original). It is not a call for rejecting art history, cultural or political contexts, or other prior images of representation, but rather it turns to *working through* these modes of recognition, identification, and classification by subverting and rupturing how artmaking can move forward in truly novel and inventive ways. Through its traversals, asignifying processes create tensions and problematize rational readings of established modes of

signification. An asignifying process turns to irrational excursions that search for unknown or unrecognizable sensations, which extract the unpredictable, the unforeseen, and the previously unthought modes of thinking and expression. In so doing, the nomadic approach plugs into conventions, rules, and techniques as a way to rupture them from within. Thus, nomadic foundations in art education could turn to contemporary art practices as an exploration that prompts questions for students—a field problems that allows for immersion into the lived experience of self-experimentation that creates the conditions for asignifying sensations to become expressed through artmaking.

Nevertheless, it is a regular practice in current art foundations programs for the teacher to turn only to signification as a mode of instruction. Teachers introduce artworks made by establish ‘masters’ of art history as a model or ideal image for a particular medium, genre, or formal element. Admittedly, I have also been guilty of this practice as an educator. In my first year of teaching foundations for photography, I was given a planned curriculum to teach that listed particular artists to show to the class as an introduction to each of the genres of photography—landscape, portrait, documentary, fiction—through which the students would be making work of their own. To prepare the students for their art assignments I would show a selection from this major canon of art photography for each genre. This was intended to create a ground for the students with a broad survey of various approaches to addressing the conventional genres of photography through artmaking. However, what I had actually done was construct the perfect conditions for the students to embrace dominant regimes of representation and signification in relation to how one *ought to* approach each genre of photography through their assignment.

What I did not realize through building an archive of images and texts to familiarize the students with each genre was that all of these contextual examples I had shown were producing thought that was *given*. Through each example I was creating identifiable points of reference and stabilizing their experience of learning by pointing to specific classifications of how others have previously approached each particular genre. As a result, nearly all of the artworks turned in for the assignments of that first semester either adhered to a very rigid and conventional definition of each genre, or mimicked and reproduced the same approaches of the artists in the examples and texts that I had shared with the class.

I learned very quickly from my inability to recognize that, as a teacher, I was the one creating very specific systems of representation, and the students inevitably treated the examples and the readings as solutions to the problem of their assignment. It is a model of teaching that Elkins (2001) describes as “aimed, in short, at the masterpieces that hang in museums,” and which I have adapted to call the *masterpiece model* of art education (p. 71). The masterpiece model forces students to think about artmaking in terms of transcendental binary relationships. It focuses more on an external work of contemporary art or art history that creates a prior image for students, and it reproduces the teaching and learning environment in which the teacher presents a ‘correct’ solution to the problem, which becomes the object of knowledge for the student.

It should be acknowledged here that experiencing art is of course also part of a lived experience. I have had countless encounters with artworks expressing material sensations that have forced the assumptions of my thought to its limits and produced new lines of dynamic thinking that have been carried forward in lived experiences and

artmaking. Showing completed and refined works of art that the canon of art history deems successful may indeed produce similar shock to the thought of students, and it certainly could create the conditions for new thinking to emerge. However the way in which artworks are usually presented only as finished products runs the risk of building images of representation of ideal models of art—particularly for students who are being introduced to the various material expressions of art for the first time. My contention is that there are other ways in which foundations in art could engage in examining artists' experiences that does not rely so heavily on such a refined, image-based model of representation.

One such path for exploring these experiences is to turn directly to the processes of contemporary artists and their accounts of the movements of traversing habit through the risk-taking and experimentation in the lived experience of their artmaking. These examples would offer glimpses into this problem-creation and could serve as another kind of prompt for students to create their own unique conditions for experimenting in thought and lived experience with the unknown, while importantly resisting the reification of habits based on similarity rather than difference.

In the case studies presented in previous chapters of this study we have already seen many examples of these practices of experimental problem-creation in the lived experience of the emergence of thinking and subjectivity in artmaking by contemporary artists. For example, in chapter six we saw Nina Katchadourian's engagements with play in *Seat Assignments* as she embraced the child-like innocence and forgetfulness of the absorption of self-experimental activity. Yet she remained attentive to the transformative potential to thought and action that occurs when it becomes something beyond the

original intention of staving off boredom of everyday life experiences. Chapter five presents how Tehching Hsieh worked with another form of self-experimentation in “Cage Piece,” in which an intentional limitation or effacing of certain modes of lived experience created the unsettling conditions of thought that allowed for the emergence of a subjectivity opened to the practice of freedom. In chapter seven we saw how my own experiences with destabilizing the habits of familiar materials and practices triggered inventive paths of thinking through the multiple moments of rupture and leakage in representational and commonsensical notions of artmaking.

Yet, the most common way that conventional art foundation turns to examining contemporary art practices is to examine completed works, which most often involves imparting some kind of critical interpretation or value judgment. Again, this mode of teaching and learning is one of acquiring certain skills of interpretation and judgment, which follows the path of the subject of the student in terms of subject-as-*being*, one who is capturing and accumulating objects of knowledge. These descriptions of artworks frequently gloss over the process of the artist, and in turn it overlooks the moments of the generation of new thinking and the emergence of the subjectivity of the artist as the crucial core of the artmaking process. A nomadic foundation of artmaking could privilege an exploration of artists’ process *in the making* rather than examining the work as a finished product. This path would give a glimpse into those moments of tension when thought approaches its limits, and the ways in which thinking is mobilized and subjectivity emerges through the expression of those moments of encounter for artists. However, in following the spirit of productive difference in this new approach to foundation in art, it is vital to reiterate that these examples are not prescriptive. They

should not be procedures to be mirrored or followed by the student. Instead, as concepts, they should only be implemented to give the student a sense of the potential for creating their own self-experimentation through lived experience in the world. It allows for students to see contemporary art practices becoming mobilized without creating specific images of what artmaking ought to be.

One example of turning towards artist's own voices in a teaching and learning environment is to open up the classroom to artist talks and interviews. I began incorporating this as a graduate teaching assistant instructing photography and video foundations courses. Frustrated with the experiences in my photography courses becoming so heavily based on creating images of thought (as described in the previous section), I decided to shift my curriculum to make room for artists to share their process to the students in person. I began reaching out to fellow MFA students, inviting them come and give talks about their practice. Upon the invitation, I asked them if they might build their talks around the ways they have addressed problems that they have encountered in their work. Many of the students remarked on how the artist's active discussion of their moments of material engagement and emergence felt more productive and relevant to the artmaking process than other modes of learning about contemporary art that I still used with the class (including examining completed works from a textbook or projected onto the screen). The students also voiced how much they could relate to an artist sharing his or her thinking process emerging from the struggles and revelations, or the breakdowns and productivity that occurs through experimenting through their lived experience with artmaking.

After the talks, I would often mobilize some of the key problems addressed by the artists in the form of art exercises or assignments for the class. By transposing problems that the artists' raised into problems that students could contemplate to create their unique experimental engagement within the context of their lived experience, the exercises created new lines of forward-thinking production rather than a reproduction of prior images in the form of imitating other artists' techniques or processes. This approach to foundation in artmaking provides a different path toward creating problems or prompts for students to explore in their own practice. Again, teachers here serve a vital role by creating concepts that fosters productive problem-creation—that is, is a line of effective questioning that is different from a planned curriculum approach, in which predetermined outcomes are expected. The teacher in a nomadic foundation of art facilitates in extracting problems or prompts as an engagement that emerges *along with* the students who are undergoing their own challenge to their presuppositions of thought. Regardless of one's level of experience as an artist (students, teachers, or 'professional' contemporary artists such as Tehching Hsieh and Nina Katchadourian) we must all engage in this disruption of our representational image of thought in order to move forward in expressing sensations as art. We each do so in our singular or unique experiences through the creation of inventive mappings that think new terrains of material engagement with those sensations.

Teaching Problem-Creation in the Classroom with the Artist Interview

While it is productive for foundations students to engage face to face with artists visiting the classroom, the artist talk format may not be a frequently available option for teaching and learning in foundation courses. Teachers can instead turn to artists' sharing

their experimentation in the lived experience of artmaking through videos or texts of artist interviews. An example of facilitating such engagement in a foundations setting was an exercise that I used while teaching a course called “Expanded Media,” which was categorized as a 4-D foundations course focusing on video, sound and installation art. At various points in the semester we turned to examining an artist’s practice to introduce an artmaking exercise, and this particular assignment was one of many in which there was no planned visit for an artist to discuss their process to the class in person. Instead, as a class we read the text of an interview with the American artist Mark Bradford. Bradford’s work is frequently identified as abstract painting, but none of his materials or methods come from the historical tradition of painting—he does not use paints, artist brushes, or any painting mediums such as glazes, oils, or solvents. Instead he searches for found objects from his own life experience as a former hairdresser in his mother’s beauty salon in the South Central Los Angeles neighborhood where he grew up. They involve beauty supply materials or common household construction objects (paper, string, caulk, mesh, cording) found at hardware stores. He also turns to the environment of his immediate neighborhood for source materials, particularly the various forms of advertising signs posted on billboards, fences and telephone poles.

In the interview that we read as a class, Bradford discusses his active attention to “tricking the hand to take me someplace else” as to avoid forming habits of repetition of the same in his application of found objects (Bradford, as cited in Shiff, 2010, p. 75). For Bradford, this constant movement and disruption of patterns of habit is a way to “activate a new kind of reality” within his practice (Bradford, as cited in Shiff, 2010, p.75). There are several relevant passages in the text that refer to the way in Bradford addresses

movement and fluidity over stability and order, yet it is presented through his own thought encountering its limits within an experimental engagement with a specific lived experience. His subjectivity emerges out of a confluence of social, cultural, political, and geographical environments that is specific to the lived experience through which prior images of representation have conditioned and shaped his thought. His approach to artmaking is to traverse and create tensions with those material engagements within his cultural environment—creating a self-awareness in his movements and flows in thinking and action that are always attempting to dissolve categories of habit and behavior. This is achieved through a constant experimentation with the found materials from those environments. Bradford’s practice is quite literally an interplay of movements (the very physical gestures of his artmaking) that works through the lived material dynamic involving his body, his thought, and the various cultural forces and discourses that attempt to define or categorize his identity.

As an artist reading his interview, I could extract a number of problems that Bradford creates through the encounters that force his thought to its limits and stimulate new thinking, which he refers to as working “around the model,” to engage in a productive desire for creative transformation of reified habits of thought. These problems that Bradford encounters and reveals through the interview could just as easily be plugged into my artist practice as a way to challenge my own particular habits of thought: What is the relationship between design and chance in my practice? How might my work proceed if I worked *against* the materials (or if I worked *with* the materials)? How might the process unfold if I were to work chance backwards from its outcome? How could I infuse artmaking with my body without showing my body? All of these problems that

Bradford reflects upon in the interview through the production of new thinking—or thinking “around the model” of thought—have the potential to become problems that could be reframed as encounters to the presuppositions of the thought of art foundations students. They could facilitate new modes of thinking in practice, which has the potential to create new fields of relations and connections in the students’ particular engagement of lived experience.

For this “Expanded Media” exercise, the problems that Bradford created to force his unique presuppositions of thought into new lines of thinking were plugged into a teaching and learning setting to challenge the students’ own individual presuppositions of thought. Bradford’s problem that forces him to move beyond his image of thought is thus transposed as a problem or prompts that forces the students to move beyond their image of thought. As a foundational model of art education, it avoids assessing whether or not Bradford’s work that resulted from his problem-creation was successful as a finished work of art, and thus the assignment does not fall into the masterpiece model trap of following a prior image of an ideal of what we ought to do as artists. Instead, the intention of plugging Bradford’s problem-creation into a problem-creation for an art assignment or exercise for the class was to stimulate new thinking and experimentation in artmaking without relying on the reifying effects of representation.

In the case of this particular video art exercise in my 4-D foundations class, I turned to a passage of the interview in which Mark Bradford discusses material interference and representation by using beauty shop hair weave strips (translucent rectangular strips of paper). Bradford and the interviewer discuss how when juxtaposed as pixels making up the comprehensive image of the work, the accumulating strips

disrupt the hierarchy of the parts-to-whole relationship of the image. The strips themselves possess a materiality that competes for his sensory attention, and thus interferes with the sense of finitude of the image of the overall work.

For Bradford, this demands a constant movement of his senses that requires new lines of thinking about material and image in his practice. For the students, it reveals Bradford's particular problem-creation through his disruptive encounter in thought with image and material that generates new thinking and material engagement in the extraction of sensation in his artmaking. Bradford's emergence of thinking through this engagement in chance juxtaposition of material and image experimentation—and its emergence of material expression as art—is particular to his own preconceived habits of thought becoming ruptured into new terrains of thinking through artmaking.

Transposing Bradford's problem-creation into a problem that might challenge the students' particular preconceived habits of thought, I posed a prompt for the students to consider in their engagement with a two-part class exercise that explored the potential expansion of thinking toward working with video and installation:

1. How might the image interfere with material?
2. How might the material interfere with image?

The assignment allowed for the students' own self-experimentation with the problems to be enacted anywhere in the classroom, the public spaces and hallways of the art building, or in the immediate area that surrounded the building.

Working with video and installation, there are medium-specific and historically-based assumptions for both practices related to image and materiality. Such a problem might challenge assumptions about video being inherently image-based, or installation

being inherently material-based. But the intention was not to create reversals of binary oppositions. Instead the exercise was posed to trigger new lines of thinking that could venture in a multiplicity of directions. The intention in a nomadic process is always to embrace difference as traversals rather than difference as negation. There was no particular learning outcome other than to challenge our preconceived assumptions of the tools, materials, spaces and processes with which we were working as an introduction to working with video and installation. Rather than creating for the students particular definitions or rigid categories of what images and material are employed, captured, manipulated, and so on, the assignment allows for students to take risks experimenting with problems that do not register with prior experience. It opens up the potential to work through questions that did not necessarily have specifically defined terms to begin with in the class. As such, rather than creating sharply defined foundations of image and material for the students, and then having them disrupt those foundations, the nomadic approach instead plays with the terms without offering an authoritative definition of them. The act of thinking that arises from the fluid and emergent experimentation through the experience of unfamiliar terms thus becomes the new, mobile conception of foundation.

Here we see a similar process that unfolded in the “Artmaking as Encounter” assignment. The problem posed to the class borrows from a text that does not define the terms, but rather it offers insight into how an artist disrupts those terms through challenging his or her own conditioned habits of thought. Here it is the context of Mark Bradford’s statements on his process in the interview. For the “Artmaking as Encounter” class, the context for the terms *sense* and *nonsense* were borrowed as concepts from Deleuze. The problem presented to the students was not ‘do as Mark Bradford does’ or

‘do as Deleuze does.’ It was not an assignment of mirroring their concepts or their process. Rather it was extracting a problem and guiding the students through a prompt that plugs the problem into their own emerging practice. Each of the students had different assumptions of thought, and as such, they were each forced to think in new ways. But they were not identical ways of thinking, nor were they following Mark Bradford’s way forward in thinking through the problem. We all have different images of thought, and the new thinking that emerges from thought being pushed to its limits creates mappings that each follow different inventive lines of inquiry.

Reframing Bradford’s problem of material and image into a problem as a class exercise allows for the students to see how the artist addressed the tensions of that problem in his very particular context of painting and collage, as well as his specific cultural environmental background. Working with an example of a painter to introduce problems for a video and installation assignment perhaps further safeguards against the students mimicking Bradford’s inventive approach to his problem. Though, most importantly for this assignment the questions or prompts open up to the students to their own singular contexts and their emerging subjectivity. Each student plays with its terms, relates it to other terms and contingencies of lived experience, and explores it within the generation of their emergence as subject-artists.

As we have seen in the philosophical inquiry, there is always a risk of representational thought reclaiming and reorganizing these newly created directions in thinking and subjectivity. This is why a teaching and learning environment that solely relies on using examples from contemporary artist practices certainly has its limitations. As I have stressed in this chapter, above all else, a nomadic teaching and learning

environment in art foundations must be an active material encounter in the lived experience of the world to create the conditions for the generation of new thinking and action through the emergence of subjectivity through learning. However it must also be stressed that new modes of thinking can create new re-stabilized hierarchies of thought. As such, there should be no prescribed way to create such mobile and active concepts for a nomadic teaching and learning in art foundations. Exploring the process of other artists is one way to serve as a kind of guide to facilitate an engagement for students to create their own self-experiments with the unknown and the unfamiliar in thought. It is up to each art teacher to create their own curriculum that engages with these fundamentally new modes of thinking in foundations.

In the next sections, we will examine how nomadic teaching and learning can move forward beyond the foundations of art into the advanced levels of contemporary art education in the university. We will see how while upper level art curriculums propose ways to experiment with challenging conventional art foundation rules, norms and techniques, it also creates new forms of repression of transformational self-experimentation through the lived experience of productive difference. In this respect, nomadic teaching and learning in art foundations becomes vital framework (albeit, one in constant motion) for creating the conditions to move forward toward an ongoing process of self-reflection in problem-creation in artmaking.

Conventional Upper Level Art School Education

In conventional art schools, it is at the upper level stage of teaching and learning beyond foundations that the organizing structure of art school education is intended to become less cohesive and less tethered to conventional foundational theory for students.

As Elkins (2001) explains, “current art instruction doesn’t involve a fixed curriculum, a hierarchy of genres, a sequence of courses, a coherent body of knowledge, or a unified theory of practice” (p. 38). In this respect, art schools appear to provide the consummate academic setting through which constant experimentation toward creating the conditions for new paths of thinking that embraces the expressive forces of artmaking. Vidokle (2009) further echoes this assertion, insisting that art schools function as

one of the few places left where experimentation is to some degree encouraged, where emphasis is supposedly on process and learning rather than on product. Art schools are also multidisciplinary institutions by nature, where discourse, practice, and presentation can coexist without privileging one over another. The activities that typically take place in a school— experimentation, scholarship, research, discussion, criticism, collaboration, friendship—are a continuous process of redefining and seeking out the potential in practice and theory. (p. 193)

From this perspective, art school beyond foundations functions as an environment that encourages the opening of fields of heterogeneous relations that resists the constraints of conventional subject-object learning experiences. It is presented as a space of experimentation that privileges a productive immersion into a field problems and process-driven learning rather than privileging predetermined outcomes.

However, others argue that upper level art school education is not exactly the world of unfettered experimentation in thinking and artmaking. Madoff (2009), qualifies Vidokle’s ideal description of the art school as one that “goes only so far” before organizational social and political institutionalization inevitably inhibits the liberating movements and flows that generate such openness to artistic innovation (p. 274). Madoff

(2009) instead insists that the art school model as an experimental laboratory—one that is relatively free from the organizing system and structures of the rest of the academy and the outside world—presents a “false state of exception,” and that constraining forces are always at play, limiting its potential for unfettered experimentation and true creative transformation (p. 276). Madoff (2009) points to the “dominance of the marketplace” as the external cultural and economic force of control and conformity that affects the organization of art schools (p. 276). This involves, among others, curators and their galleries and institutions, critics and art media publications, and collectors and dealers, all of whom form interconnected lines of control and influence that determine the styles and trends that establish the hierarchical organization of contemporary art value systems.

These systems and structures are constantly permeating throughout the discourses of art schools, reinforced for students and teachers alike as an image of which styles, genres, and mediums are part of the accepted regime. Saltz (2015) points out that rather than art school becoming a space of experimentation through which new lines of artistic inquiry would emerge to escape from the dominant art regime, the opposite is tending to happen:

Galleries everywhere are awash in these brand-name reductivist canvases, all more or less handsome, harmless, supposedly metacritical, and just “new” or “dangerous”-looking enough not to violate anyone’s sense of what “new” or “dangerous” really is, all of it impersonal, mimicking a set of preapproved influences. (p. 347).

The styles and trends of the art world are instead serving as a model for what students ought to be making, and rather than serving as spaces of radical experimentation, art

schools are churning out artists who are reaffirming the very images that they could be resisting through truly inventive artmaking.

Saltz (2015) suggests that the works leading the way in the 21st century are made by younger artists, just out of graduate school, who tend to duplicate the styles of successful and established artists and art movements. How might the processes of emerging artists take shape if their art school environment were instead an environment for taking risks rather through self-experimentation—one that potentially opens up previously unthought and unseen material expressions that destabilize the dominant images of thought in the art world?

In addition to the glossy publications like as Artforum and Frieze (which fills most of its pages with exhibition advertisements from prestigious galleries and museums), websites like Contemporary Art Daily have taken become part of an explosion of online publications and blogs that feature high-resolution images of the most trendy exhibitions throughout the world. Popular art blog artspace.com even has a section called “Trend Report” devoted to tracking the patterns of exhibitions and auction sales in contemporary art. Saltz (2015) refers to the effects of this proliferation of information into neatly labeled trends as resulting in an “onslaught of copycat mediocrity and mechanical art,” insofar as it is prescriptive and follows an established and successful formula of market forces and art world styles (p. 347). But this further points to the way that art publications and influential blogs and online journals have become complicit in supporting and encouraging the market determination of dominant genres and practices by perpetuating high demand for this form of emulative production (p. 347). While it is greatly beneficial in this digital media age to have unprecedented access to the seemingly

unlimited variety of approaches to artmaking (both innovative and emulating), the sheer volume produced by that accessibility can become overwhelming to the point of producing a patterns of conformity that potentially inhibits production.

Interestingly, students of all levels of art school education tend to become exposed to the trends and styles of contemporary art on their own. As an art student, I recall spending just as much time, if not more time, studying the works of other artists than I did focusing on the emergence of my own artmaking practice. I scanned all of the popular art blogs and glossy magazines, perused through artist monographs at the library, devoured art critics' reviews of gallery and museum shows, and I visited exhibitions locally as well as partaking in semi-annual pilgrimages to the most sought-after shows in New York City. And this was all happening *outside* of my courses and critiques with faculty. But even *within* the formal seminar and critique structure of the art school, this pattern was all too often reinforced and I was exposed to more of the same images and discussions focusing on what was the most important and relevant art of the day. Discussions with art professors became a who's who of the art world: 'Your work reminds me of Vito Acconci's *Following Piece*... you should know about his work.' It felt like most of the conversations with faculty during my MFA studies took shape as a list of references of pre-approved artists or movements to which I might turn as a way to make sure my work is something different in a negative sense—as if to mostly avoid being labeled 'too similar' to a prior image.

No art school student today works naively outside of the contemporary and historical context of other artists' practices. But should art schools be the place to perpetuate the constant reification of the popular canon of modern and contemporary art

if students are already exploring this on their own? I argue that if this is already happening outside of the formal courses of university art education, then art schools could instead become a space for repositioning the way it approaches teaching and learning toward vehemently disrupting the reinforcing the representational image of what student artists think it *ought to be*. Nomadic teaching and learning in upper-level art settings could actively work through and create productive tensions with the tendency toward referencing established models of artmaking. By doing this, a nomadic model could further engage with an ongoing development of ontological knowledge and an education of the senses—that is, a curriculum that instills constant *self-reflection*, which acknowledges the reifying habits that always threaten truly novel expression in artmaking. As such, nomadic teaching and learning in upper-level art education could traverse these stabilizing images of thought through provoking increasingly intensive problem-creation through self-experimentation with thinking-to-come in lived experience of artmaking.

Nomadic Teaching and Learning “Beyond” Art Foundations

How could we create an educational environment that acknowledges the history and the concepts of artmaking, but instead of continuing to only reify this image, it could traverse the tensions between repetition of the same and repetition as difference? On the one hand, in foundations programs students are exposed to exercises that encourage repetition of the same, or creating habits that calcify predetermined connections. On the other hand, conventional upper level art education promotes a kind of difference that is susceptible to falling into the trap of endless series of negative binary relations between a ‘this and not that’ approach to artmaking, but often is just as vulnerable to looking to

contemporary art trends to further proliferate repetition of the same, or an imitation of prior images in artmaking. What is missing from all art education practices is a difference that is produced not in binary or oppositional terms, but instead created in a productive relationship with repetition.

As we have seen in the philosophical inquiry of this study, *repetition*, in this respect, is the constant experimentation into the unknown of chaos, and *difference* is the indiscernible relational field of sensations that produce the capacity to affect bodies through a lived experience. Repetition always involves the risk of forming habits of organizing forces—categories, hierarchies, and fixed identities—which perpetuate stability and similarity. This is why the necessity to always immerse oneself in self-experimentation produces an ongoing potential of pulling forth these sensations of new and unthought differential experiences into artistic expression. Nomadic teaching and learning at all levels of art in higher education could turn the focus from both repetition of the same, and repetition of negative relations of difference, into a productive experimentation of material engagements of real experience of *difference in repetition*.

In this sense, art instruction at the upper levels of undergraduate and graduate work could continue to work from teaching and learning experiences proposed for the nomadic revision of foundations in art, but it could be furthered to involve more intensive and hands-off approach from teachers. For example, as we saw in chapter seven, the “Research and Development” class was entirely composed of studio art graduate students. Yet while the exercises seemed fairly straightforward and uncomplicated on the surface, my classmates and I were eager to challenge ourselves by intentionally creating tensions with our preconceived assumptions of the assignments and questions. Rather

than taking a question at face value—as a preconceived image—we productively viewed a question or problem from a perspective of the potential to “explore it, play around with the terms, add something, relate it to something else” (Deleuze, 1995, p. 139). The “Research and Development” course was an opportunity for advanced level art students to constantly disrupt our presuppositions of what art *ought to be*. Sadly it was of the only courses out of the dozens of others that I took to fulfill the requirements of my graduate studies that truly facilitated an actively experimental environment in an advanced teaching and learning setting. Nearly all of the other courses from my advanced art studies were structured, in one way or another, as an advancement of the logical progression or extension of conventional foundations courses. In my experience, the only difference between upper level art education and foundations was that its instruction focused less on continuing to require the refinement of technical and formal skills, and more on discussions of theory and readings that took place in the abstract—that is, outside of the practice of lived experience of artmaking. There were discussions in these classes, but they were not actively being put to work. As Deleuze (1995) insists in the activity of his own courses, we should “never discuss,” but rather we must be actively mobilizing thinking “through various filters” (p. 140). Dynamic experimentation cannot be created in the abstract of thought or discussion. It must be *put to work* in a practice of lived experience. Courses like “Research and Development” and “Artmaking as Encounter” facilitated such an environment through which problems could be created to be actively explored through material engagements within a teaching and learning setting.

Does this mean that all upper level art education courses beyond foundations should only take shape as an adaptation of the practices of “Artmaking as Encounter” or

“Research and Development”? If that were to become the entire curriculum, I would argue that the experiences of engaging with these assignments would potentially become redundant, and the assignments themselves (as open and experimental as they may be) would be at risk of creating a new hierarchy of teaching and learning in art education. This brings us to a pivotal moment in considering upper level art education: is an advanced level or graduate level art education program even necessary for students beyond the foundations of a nomadic teaching and learning environment?

I contend that if art schools are to remain relevant in terms of embracing true learning at an advanced level of instruction, we must radically alter what this teaching and learning environment might look like. This means turning away from the conventional studio classroom setting that extends from general education and conventional art foundations models. If a nomadic teaching and learning environment for art foundations dissolves the learning of technical knowledge and privileges a learning environment that encourages ontological knowledge, then an advanced model must *also* continue along this path. It is important to reiterate here that the intention of a nomadic foundation of art is to reframe the position of the artist as one whose subjectivity emerges through ongoing experimental encounters with unknown sensations that pushes thought to its limits and creates new and innovative material expressions of thinking. The key term here is ‘ongoing’. The active experimentation in the material engagement with lived experience certainly does not end when foundations concludes at the one or two year mark of an art school program. Thus, nomadic teaching and learning in art foundations should not be viewed as simply a first step that students must take to move forward to other, higher levels of art education.

Nomadic foundation in this respect is not about acquiring skills in order to ascend to an advanced realm of art education. It is not about completion or achievement of a finite outcome. We must remember that the emergence of the inventive thinking that produces subjectivity is always in the middle—it is always becoming. Thus if the intention of nomadic teaching and learning in art foundations is to facilitate an ongoing production of problem-creation, self-experimentation, novel thinking, and the inventive generation of subjectivity, then foundations should not be something that has an end. As a continuous, self-reflective destabilization to our habitual images of thought in artmaking, nomadic art education is always oriented toward the ongoing emergence and reinvention of the subjectivity of the artist.

Fundamental to this ongoing emergence is a continued movement that fractures and fragments the systems and structures instilled by general education curriculum that constructs the *course* as the track itself rather than a dynamic action. That is, as students become more experienced with plugging the nomadic teaching and learning process into their own emerging artist practice, perhaps the conventional academic course structure—even the most productive courses that I have described above—could turn repressive to the students who have increasingly become more adept with their continual self-awareness and creative vigilance toward how thought becomes habitualized. Furthermore, students experienced in engaging the nomadic process have the potential to become more confident in self-experimenting with problem-creation that embraces the unknown sensations of a lived experience.

With this in mind, a nomadic conception of advanced level undergraduate and graduate studies could be viewed as a model akin to an artist residency, which gives

space and time for artists to self-experiment without any prerequisite courses, or classroom instruction environments. Artist residencies often invite visiting artists who engage in conversations with the residents and share experiences about their processes. These are moments of exploring problems, playing with them, adding something to them, or relating them to something else (Deleuze, 1995, p. 139). There are many art schools in the United States that do use a model similar to the artist residence as an academic program. The studio art program at Cranbrook Academy of Arts is an example of a graduate art school that does not require formal courses of instruction. Instead the program of study is composed of small reading groups, group critiques, and individual studio visits from faculty and visiting artists. However, the vast majority of the curriculum time at Cranbrook is dedicated to “in studio work time,” in which it is up to the student to explore problems through self-experimentation (Cranbrook, 2016).

Art schools exemplify both the productive and destructive tension between order and chaos. On the one hand it is a potential space to explore radically new forms of experimentation through artmaking—the creation of worlds yet to be experienced. On the other hand, that potential space is becoming increasingly foreclosed upon by various reifying institutional forces. In some respects, this tension functions as a kind of ongoing threat of conformity no matter how open a process might seem, and thus through an art education environment, both teachers and students must always embrace self-reflectivity in the form of continuous questioning as to whether or not their practice might be falling into the trap of representational habit-formation. An art school model similar to Cranbrook Academy of Art assumes that despite the relative autonomy for the freedom of time and space for self-experimentation, students are still at the stage as emerging artists

where they would benefit tremendously from the community of classmates and particularly from faculty in developing their artmaking practice. Teachers in this advanced environment of learning would have vital roles in continuing to serve as “inventive conductors” by similarly remaining self-reflective of their own lived experience as artists and educators. As such they would serve as a concomitant attendant *with* the students in traversing, creating tensions with, and working through prior images of representation in art—the rules, skills, conventions, trends, and style. Art teachers in this respect would prominently occupy a dual role as artists expressing sensations and educators creating concepts.

Most art educators are practicing artists, or at the very least, they have artmaking backgrounds. Art educators and art students share the same engagement in an experimentation with their own emergence of subjectivity through lived experience in the material expression of art. Artist teachers also face the same institutional, market-driven constraints that often privilege the repetition of the same, or difference as negation, over the contingency of difference and repetition as truly inventive movements and flows of thinking and artmaking. Thus, in their capacity as more experienced artists, teachers can serve as mentors or guides, as together with students, they share the struggle to continually disrupt habit-forming thought. Together they can explore ongoing self-reflection in their practice and remain vigilant in their mutual resistance to the reifying constraints of representation and common sense. In this respect, teachers serve as quintessential models of the “do it with me” approach to fostering a truly inventive learning environment that involves an active immersion within a field of problems (Deleuze, 1994, p. 23).

In addition to being artists, art teachers also occupy the role of educators, creating concepts through their own self-experimentation in the lived experience of teaching and researching. However these concepts take shape, they can become tools for students to plug into their practice, to see if it works, and to see what it does within the unique context of one's own self-experimentation. Art teachers as educators in a nomadic art program resist serving as transcendental subjects who impart knowledge by proposing problems that have ready-made solutions. Instead by working *along with* the students, art teachers create a mutual connectivity that allows for locating effective questions that work through organizational constraints that calcify thought—the rudiments of art, the art market, the trends and styles of the art world, and the systems and structures of educational institutions—by creating tensions with their terms and concepts, and opening experimental fields of relations and connections.

Principles of Nomadic Teaching and Learning in Art Education

As I articulated at the beginning of this chapter, nomadic teaching and learning is an integration of pedagogical concepts that are fundamentally different to the way contemporary art education curriculum is conventionally structured. In this section I will list the underlying concepts or *principles* that the practice of nomadic teaching and learning is based upon. As we have seen in this chapter, these principles are not the content of the practice, and thus they are not prescriptive. While the practices described in this chapter may be flexible and adaptable to various art education environments, these principles, as vital concepts, serve as the fundamental pedagogical foundation for nomadic art education:

1. *We are forced to think anew when we encounter sensations—or face a field of problems—that are unfamiliar to our conventional habits of thought. As such, thinking is an inherently creative expression and it is fundamental to truly inventive artmaking.*

Nomadic teaching and learning in art education is focused on a radical reframing of learning through the active force of thinking. In this sense, thinking occurs when our habits of thought are challenged. If we are always creating experiences that rely on what we already know or are already familiar with, then thought does not become disrupted. Instead we become trapped in a cycle of repetition of the same through lived experiences. However, when we encounter sensations that we have not thought before and if we have no prior corresponding image to represent those sensations, we are forced into actively thinking to attempt to make sense of this unfamiliar experience. To make sense through language, we must think new concepts. But to make sense through art, we must think through new material engagements with lived experience. The nomadic model of art education creates the conditions for students to force new lines of thinking through experimentation in a lived experience to actively and materially engage with unfamiliar sensations and produce material expressions that have been previously unthought, and thus truly inventive.

2. *Subjectivity emerges through an ongoing active experimentation with thinking through artmaking:* The intention of nomadic teaching and learning is for the ongoing questioning or creation of problems to rupture our assumptions of thought, insofar as thought itself is radically reframed as preceding the subject. This conception of education does not locate subjectivity as a pre-existing *being*, but rather it is always in the process of creation, or *becoming*. By creating problems that encounter previously unthought

sensations, we are forced to think differently by expressing sensations. This creative transformation of inventive thinking contributes to the ongoing emergence and reinvention of subjectivity. In artmaking, the engagement with sensations unknown to the prior images of representation forces thought to its extremes, which creates new thinking and material expression of art, and thus it creates new lines of subjectivity. But subjectivity can emerge in relative speeds and slowness. Active experimentation with effective problem-creation produces innovative thinking, which precipitates the emergence of a dynamic subjectivity of the artist. As such, truly novel becomings of subjectivity cannot be activated without an ongoing process of experimentation that is constantly exposing unknown sensations and disrupting presupposed assumptions.

3. Active thinking embraces the risk of experimentation in a material engagement with difference and repetition: This process of ongoing experimentation necessitates repetition, but not a repetition of the same, or a re-presentation of prior images. Rather it is a repetition that involves leaps into the unknown or unintelligible material experiences that impact the senses—a repetition of difference. This always involves risk because there are no predetermined outcomes if we are constantly experimenting with disrupting our assumptions. There are no correct answers for us to rely upon for reassurance. A nomadic teaching and learning environment allows for such risk to be explored by both teachers and students. It always must be actively put into practice as a material exploration. As such, the an educational environment that embraces risk and chance must replace one that adheres to fear of experimentation or one that looks toward the stability and inertia of outcomes that reaffirm an image of representation and common sense.

4. *Experimenting in thinking and artmaking always takes place through a lived experience:* We cannot experiment in the abstract; it must be put to practice. Experience in this respect is the plane or field of play for experimentation to think and express sensations through artmaking. Experience is thus an impersonal but material realm in which unknown sensations force thought to activate thinking and create potential lines of emergence of subjectivity. The active material engagement with inventive thinking and subject-creation, necessitates continual moments of risk-taking through experimentation. Expressions of art can only be created through a material engagement with this constant experimentation in lived experience.

Conclusions: Returning to Cappanawalla

The principles detailed above are a distillation of the underlying concepts that possess the very real capacity for artists, researchers, teachers, and students to embrace creative transformation through artmaking, but also through the affirmation of life emerging as positive relations of difference. This notion of difference is always positioned as *yes/and* rather than *either/or*, and as we have seen through this study, it manifests as an inventive force of thinking and the emergence of subjectivity as an inherently creative process. It is an aesthetic movement, but not one that travels on well-worn paths. They are difficult paths. Reflecting on my climbs of Cappanawalla mountain, traversing the zig-zagging trails that the intuition of my footsteps carved—the non-paths—never once do I wonder to myself why I never take the easy routes up the mountain that are already paved by desire lines marked by previous climbers. The paths I choose veer in unfamiliar directions, with unexpected steep inclines and hidden, sharply dipping crevices. The climb is always one unanticipated movement after another. There

are stumbles. There are some pretty hard falls. There are scrapes, bruises, blisters, twisted ankles, sore muscles, and bouts of shortness of breath, exhaustion, and even dehydration along the various climbs of the mountain. But there is always the invigorating notion of the possibility that nobody else in all the thousands of years of human presence in The Burren has climbed this mountain in this exact path that I am mapping with each climb.

This idea of creating new paths, new lines, new relations and connections that have never been marked before sticks with me after all of these years. I was thinking of this well before I discovered the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. But it was Deleuze who captured that notion of creating new lines of thinking in the form of his concept creation. As an artist, an art education researcher, and a teacher, I am now also able to take those concepts and plug them into the creation of new thinking and the emergence of subjectivity that productively rattles my thought through the sensations externalized in my artist practice, my transformative loss within the unknown field of problems in my academic life of learning, and my incessant determination to invent and reinvent new concepts that create the conditions for fertile disruptions for students to sense anew in their own emergence of subjectivity through artmaking. None of these activities are separate from one another. They inherently bleed together as a life: “How do we move forward best?; How do we learn best?” (Williams, 2003, p. 4). The effectiveness with which we consider such thoughts is dependent on the speeds and intensities of the lines that activate thinking, generate subjectivity, and become mobilized as what we do to navigate and negotiate the lived experience within order and chaos. This has been the constant theme of this study. Where do we plot our locations along the normalizing constraints of order and the indecipherable openness of chaos to create the conditions for

new cartographies of thinking through artmaking? The common path is worn because so many of us find the easy way to be the proper way, the correct way, or the safe way. The path off the trail is rough and treacherous because it hasn't had the chance to become refined, traced, or fixed.

The task of an educator is an incredible challenge even if the curricular path is well-worn—the easy path. It is an immense undertaking when a teacher is attempting to rupture the image of education from within—to create new paths with each climb. It must always embrace the repeated dice roll of not knowing. This is just as important for the educator as it is for the student. As Deleuze (1995) insists: “you give courses on what you're investigating; not on what you know” (p. 139). An art curriculum that embraces the unknown realm of positive difference produces subjectivities of teachers and students that think a world of yet-to-be-traversed paths.

If art truly does emerge as Elizabeth Grosz (2007) intuits, “when something of the chaos from which it is drawn can breathe and have a life of its own,” then art education is the starting point for this endeavor to set the tone for all paths of learning to truly breathe and to truly give itself life—in the humanities, in the social sciences, in the natural sciences (p. 7). Art education could take on the tremendous responsibility of laying the groundwork for artistic thinking of expressions, of concepts, of functions, all of which may seem unimaginable now. But if education can lead the way through the arts to truly think and create expressions of unknown worlds, it could open up those worlds to all of life, unconstrained from prior images, liberated from representation, unrepressed by common sense—as aesthetic becomings of thinking, subjectivity, and life.

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