

Artful dynamics

**How a visual arts distance learning environment
might matter for notions of artist-self**

Dale Fitchett

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Dale Fitchett

October 2016

Dedication

For Mary McKinlay Fitchett
1926 – 2017

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Ethical approval:

Ethical approval (Number 13/16) was granted for the interviews in this research on 23 April 2013.

Abstract

Artful dynamics

How a visual arts distance learning environment might matter for notions of artist-self

This research explores how notions of artist-self are enacted in a postgraduate visual arts learning and teaching environment that relies substantially on an online platform and distance delivery. Tertiary institutions increasingly offer education via distance learning as a response to fiscal constraints and a globalised and digital world. This shift offers challenges to pedagogical models such as those associated with studio-based visual arts education. Since this ontological learning approach can be seen to privilege the physical presence of participants and a shared engagement with the physicality and materiality of art practices and art objects, distance delivery of a visual arts programme is likely to call into question seemingly inherent characteristics such as notions of proximity and presence. Similarly, and of significance for this research, the studio-model is a means of enabling and perpetuating practices, behaviours, and subjectivities in relation to a specific discipline, and so it becomes important to explore how notions of artist-selves might be performed for participants in distance learning.

This investigation interweaves experiential cases with reflexive theoretical engagement to explore dynamics at play in performances of notions of artist-selves in relation to a postgraduate visual arts distance learning and teaching environment. The research is underpinned by a notion of subjectivity as relationally performed, and accordingly, one that is fluid, contingent and ontologically multiple. Foucault and actor-network theory's relational approach to understanding social phenomena, and their reflexive practices and modes of analysis, provide perspectives for both the conceptual approach to this research and its empirical engagement. They afford a means to explore postgraduate visual art students' experiences of distance delivery, and subsequently to question how particular subjectivities might be performed in those experiences, with a view to making the interplay of distance and performances of notions of artist-self visible. The research manifested not only performances of simultaneously multiple and fragile notions of artist-selves but also different and multiple notions of distance. It then sought to explore how these were performed in an interplay between their relationally complex material networks, and to account for other spatial, temporal, and conceptual relations and practices made visible in these enactments. Since various entities were enacted to perform notions of artist-self and distance through differing means, the research suggests that any lack of notions such as proximity and presence, presumed by some as fundamental to visual art education, do not, on their own, matter. Therefore, the research

proposes that the differences that might define distance delivery are not the differences that matter in performances of notions of artist-self or in visual arts education.

Accordingly, as visual arts educators, we need to acknowledge the power of relational networks as a means of questioning and understanding how our pedagogical practices, such as studio-based models and distance delivery, are relationally enacted and perform. By eschewing an understanding of our pedagogical practices as cause and effect relationships between entities and embracing a relational understanding, we can better comprehend, and realise and expand the potential of our learning and teaching practices.

Chapter 1 Considering the situation

1.1 Introducing the research

This research investigates how notions of artist-self are enacted in a postgraduate visual arts programme that is taught substantially via an online learning and teaching network, so that distance delivery and its dynamics can be explored and considered differently. Increasingly, tertiary institutions have to accommodate a globalised and digital world and fiscal constraints, by offering education via online delivery or distance learning. This includes art and design education, which relies normally on a studio-based or experience-based model of learning and teaching. While some of the pedagogical practices embedded in this approach can be translated into an online environment, many cannot. In addition, some characteristics are likely to be called into question in any attempts to combine a studio-based pedagogy with online learning, such as notions of proximity and presence, particularly as the online mode of delivery is commonly associated with notions of distance.

Elkins (2001) informally but usefully mapped the history of studio art education from ancient times, focussing on curricula or 'the experiences a student might have had ... in various academies, workshops, and art schools' (p. 7). His aim was to understand how contemporary art school practices evolved. The most obvious vacillations in the curricula over time were the varying emphases on theory and practice, and how the practical component was taught. While the empirical component of art education has always been important, some art educators, for example, Atkinson (2002), still argue for visual arts education to be underpinned by, as he called it, the 'experiential ground of art practice' (p. 166). In the tertiary sector in New Zealand, visual arts education currently uses the studio-model and is, therefore, still firmly 'grounded in experience' (Atkinson, 2002, p. 10). At the core of this pedagogical approach is a studio environment where students share a physical space within the academic institution, engage in their creative practices, and, as Schön (1991) described it, learn through doing.

This learning and teaching model relies on art processes and products being created in the shared studio space and discussed with the student cohort and teaching staff. Learning arises through the creation of artefacts and events. It also arises through subsequent dialogue and critique about aspects of the making processes, the media itself, and the viewer or user experience as well as about theoretical and conceptual contexts and critical frameworks. Therefore, as Jacob (2013) observed, this environment enables 'knowledge building to be carried out in the practice of individual and collective work' (p. 111). The inclusion of both individual and 'collective work' in this pedagogical approach draws on historical master-pupil models, whereby formal training is undertaken

in studios or large workshops through an apprenticeship-type system (e.g., Adams & Kowalski, 1980; Bain, 2005; Elkins, 2001; Mishler, 1999; Selkrig, 2009), as well as philosophies arising in the *École des Beaux-Arts* environment (e.g., Carroll, 2006). Thus, the notion of the studio in a contemporary academic environment refers to a physical place for art practices, and for learning and teaching, as well as to a pedagogical approach (Crowther, 2013), but is ultimately underpinned by sharing experiences in a particular place. Consequently, it can be defined in terms of an ontological as opposed to an epistemological approach to learning and teaching (Shreeve, 2015).

Implicit in these ideas of a studio and studio-based pedagogical approaches are notions of proximity and presence. Alpers (1998/2014) described the studio as both an experimental and 'experiential site' (p. 404). Studio practice presumes the presence of materials and processes with which students engage materially, visually, bodily, and aesthetically. Therefore, as Alpers (1998/2014) noted, not only is the studio 'a place where things are introduced in the interest of being experienced' (p. 408), but 'studio experience is by its nature in and of the present' (p. 411). In addition, studio practice also presumes that the interweaving of these materials and processes in certain practices are to do with the matter of 'making present' (Nickelsen & Binder, 2008, p. 170) not only the practices but also the 'imagined' (Nickelsen & Binder, 2008, p. 173) in the form of a design or artwork, be that an artefact or an event. The experiential and experimental nature and presence-making of studio practices also has a discontinuous temporal component, which Elkins (2008) referred to as 'the slowness of the studio' (p. 5). This mode of practising not only underpins creative practices but is also part of the learning through doing and being in this pedagogical approach. However, in the academic environment, aspects of these studio-based processes come under scrutiny. On the one hand, these processes are shared experiences, so that learning takes place with and from other participants in the working spaces. On the other, for visual arts assessment, there is a pedagogical focus on art processes as well as the final products (e.g., de la Harpe et al., 2009). In addition, it is important that postgraduate students in a research environment understand and articulate these processual aspects as part of their artistic research. This reinforces a reliance on presence so that all in the environment can witness, experience, and engage in these processes to understand fully the nature of individual students' research projects.

Notions of a studio remain variable and range from the idea of the shared workshops of mediaeval times to an isolated and singular space. However, a studio is the location that society most often associates with an artist and their occupation. Portrayals of the artist's studio in European painting since the beginning of the 17th century (Alpers, 1998/2014) also contribute to these perceptions. Bain (2004a) investigated the workspaces of artists in the community and found that having a studio 'performed a valuable role in occupational identity construction among contemporary visual artists' (p. 171). She

therefore argued that the studio was a site of identity construction for an artist, and a means of sustaining an artistic identity, albeit one that is unstable. This suggests that the studio-model of learning and teaching, by replicating and privileging aspects of a recognised occupational and professional environment as well as subsequent ways of being in an academic situation, has implications for visual arts students and their notions of themselves as artists.

The university is, as Nicoll (2008) noted, a 'specific and significant site' (p. 164) for generating and perpetuating particular disciplinary knowledge, behaviours and roles in society, which in this instance are in relation to the visual arts. In addition, a studio-based pedagogical approach is employed not only to generate successful educational outcomes in relation to the discipline, but also to enact particular behaviours, and so will be implicated in performances of particular subjectivities. As Steyerl (2013) argued, the academic visual arts environment is considered a 'buffer zone for artists', a 'sort of in-between space' that is 'not yet a site of work' but 'still a place of education' (p. 226). This liminal space, where occupational environments and practices are replicated in a studio-based pedagogical approach, will have a part to play in performing participants' notions of themselves as artists (or not). Therefore, when notions of distance, such as those inherent in online delivery, call into question the normality of pedagogical practices relying on presence and proximity in the studio, different dynamics are likely to arise. To explore such vagaries, students' own understandings of their experiences in this situation need to be examined, specifically with regard to the relationships between performances of notions of artist-selves and distance delivery.

In this chapter, I will now discuss the experiential background to the research topic and focus outlined above. I will then briefly outline the theoretical and methodological perspectives of Foucault and actor-network theory (ANT) that underpin this study, and which are discussed in more depth in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively. I consider how various notions of artist are addressed in some literature, as well as selected pedagogical practices in the postgraduate visual arts environment, and some potential issues arising from the translation of a visual arts studio-model of learning and teaching into an online or distance delivery situation. I then briefly discuss propositions arising from this research, and finally describe the structure of the thesis.

The outline of what is included in this chapter suggests both overview and detail, implying it is more than an introductory chapter. As I later mention, the organisation of this thesis reflects the gradual unfolding of the research project as it materialised and as it was realised. Therefore, while the aim of this chapter remains to situate the research project, it also locates us in an arena of initial thoughts in an attempt to understand the situation prior to the intervention. This decision also signals a commitment to methodological sensibilities and processes in terms of attending to the role of experience, the value of

minutiae, and the practices of tracing, describing, and storytelling. As is discussed later, Foucault and ANT's recognition of the material relationality involved in constituting phenomenon and society requires an engagement with minutiae to examine material practices in local situations. Law (2007) responded to critics of ANT's obsession with 'material minutiae' by affirming this as a means to understand the practices that generate phenomena (p. 9). Similarly, while discussing his investigation of disciplinary practices, Foucault (1984b) emphasised the need to describe these practices with 'great attention to detail' (p. 183). '[N]o detail is unimportant' as it is details that reveal foundations, not so much for their meaning, but for their relationships with power, and how they enable action, as well as a subsequent understanding of how these relationships happen (Foucault, 1984b, p. 184).

1.2 Situating the research as an experiential case

My interest in participants' experiences of distance or online delivery of postgraduate visual arts degrees arises from my teaching on the Master of Art and Design (MA&D) in the School of Art and Design, Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies, at AUT University. I am also a practising artist and a founding member of an artist's collective known as *Jersey*, which celebrated ten years of exhibiting in the community in February 2010, (e.g., Artists Alliance, 2015; Delikan, 2010, February 17). The MA&D is a two-year full-time programme, although it can be undertaken on a part-time basis. It is driven by students' individual art or design research projects. These are predominantly practice-led, which means that the thesis comprises both practical work and a written exegesis, generally with an 80:20 weighting. I currently teach on the first year of the MA&D (the Postgraduate Diploma in Art and Design), and supervise practice-led MA&D research projects in visual arts and some design disciplines. On-campus, the delivery of the MA&D programme to students is managed in 'Strands' divided along disciplinary lines i.e., Visual Arts, Fashion Design, Spatial Design, Graphic Design, and Product Design. A further Strand, the 'Off-campus Strand', supports a range of disciplinary approaches, and categorises students differently, namely, as distant from the University's campus in Auckland City since they are able to undertake their study from home. Their engagement with the programme, lecturers and peers, as well as each other's art practices, takes place predominantly at a distance and in an online teaching and learning environment rather than a shared, institutionally provided studio space like their peers in the other Strands.

Our MA&D qualification was first delivered to students at AUT University's Auckland campus in 1997. In 2003, a team of four staff (including myself) developed, designed, and then launched the Art & Design Postgraduate Network (known as ADPGN and later changed to ARDEN), an online teaching and learning environment using the open source

platform Moodle. One of the principal functions of this network was to provide an accessible, centralised information and communication system for all postgraduate research students and staff in the School of Art and Design. Another key function was to enable delivery of the MA&D programme to students who were located 'off-campus' in regional towns throughout New Zealand. Advanced art and design education is not available in these locations, and many aspiring postgraduates are unable to relocate to the major cities because of, for example, employment, financial, and family commitments. Therefore, one aim of the network was to reduce the perceived geographical and physical distance between participants in the learning and teaching environment. This aim is implicitly met, since online connections, according to Turkle (2011) 'were first conceived as a substitutive for face-to-face contact when the latter was for some reason impractical' (p. 130). Yet others like Reed (2010) have questioned 'the fantasy of obliterating distance through technological means' (p. 2). However, because this teaching and learning network was one of the core modes of delivering the programme to students at a distance, it also needed to be pedagogically and socially more complex than a straightforward technological system designed to disseminate information.

According to Fox (2002) who referred to Hodgson's broad categorisation, distance learning models can either simply disseminate information or have a 'development orientation which develops the "whole person"' (p. 81). The MA&D network was designed with the latter categorisation in mind. Our objectives included the perpetuation of a community of practice with a focus on shared peer learning which is consistent with the ontological approach of studio-based pedagogical practices. To assist in meeting these complex pedagogical and social aims, and to encourage a sense of community among these students, several modes of delivery were combined whilst ensuring that timetables and coursework deadlines reminded synchronised with the programme delivered on-campus. These modes and practices were reviewed and refined over time, but they always included weekly online discussions (synchronous and asynchronous, in groups and individually) and individual tutorials held by phone and Skype. As well, there were face-to-face activities such as three or four days of intensive residencies, held four times a year either in a regional town or at the Auckland City campus. The advantages of this blended model of delivery (the combination of face-to-face and online activities) are well discussed in some literature (e.g., Gerbic et al., 2009; Jeffery, Milne, Suddaby, & Higgins, 2012; Stacey & Gerbic, 2008). Since its launch, our online learning and teaching environment including the network, practices, and associated staff, has enabled over 110 students to complete postgraduate art and design qualifications from home, in towns and rural locations throughout New Zealand (for example, Whanganui, Nelson, Tauranga, Kerikeri, Napier, and Invercargill), and also in the Cook Islands.

Even though, as Turkle (2011) observed, 'networked technologies designed to share practical information were taken up as technologies of relationships' (p. 157) since their

inception, the use and consideration of online learning and teaching environments and communities of learning, particularly in art and design education, were not extensive in 2003 when we began. Although Lave and Wenger had coined the term 'communities of practice' in 1991, they continued to pursue these ideas of 'situated learning' during the rest of that decade (e.g., Lave & Wenger, 1991). Art history and theory courses began to embrace online delivery early on, yet not many postgraduate studio-based visual arts degrees were offered online. While some academic art and design studios did avail themselves of online communication networks, they tended to do this to instigate collaborative projects (e.g., Broadfoot & Bennett, 2003) rather than support students' individual research projects. However, there were some early examples. For instance, Lavery (1988), when discussing the establishment of distance postgraduate programmes, referred to a Master of Fine Arts by independent study offered by Syracuse University. In addition, the College of Fine Arts (COFA) at the University of New South Wales developed online courses in art and design from 1997 (R. Bennett & McIntyre, 2004). Although Alter (2014) noted that there are 'still relatively few universities' in Australia that 'offer ... purely distance education in Visual Arts units and degrees' (p. 49), she mentioned RMIT University and Curtin University as examples embracing this mode of delivery. Nazzari, Cinanni, and Doropoulos (2014) confirmed that Curtin not only offered the only 'fully online art degree' (p. 96) in Australia but had taught a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts and Visual Culture online in 'various incarnations', for twenty years (p. 95).

While AUT University's MA&D programme cannot claim twenty years' experience of online delivery, the institution responded at the time of the network's inception, like many academic institutions, to opportunities afforded by an increasingly digital and globalised world. It was able to offer postgraduate education via contemporary modes of delivery such as an online platform, thereby making it possible for those residing outside metropolitan cities to engage in postgraduate art and design qualifications. AUT is the only New Zealand University to have offered postgraduate visual arts research-based education via online delivery successfully for such an extensive and sustained period. More recently, other institutions have introduced what is referred to as 'low residency' models. This factor as well as the researcher's engagement in this situation make it an appropriate experiential case on which to base this investigation, particularly in the light of Foucault and actor-network theory's empirical approach to understanding social phenomena, which are briefly outlined later in this chapter.

For pragmatic reasons, I mostly refer to the particular learning and teaching environment and pedagogical approach we developed as online delivery or more significantly, delivery via distance, a notion that became more important as the research progressed. Because I am interested in the distancing associated with this mode of delivery and the disruption to notions of proximal distance considered inherent in the studio-based model, I will not

emphasise the on-campus or face-to-face aspects of the programme, although these are referred to at times. As mentioned earlier, some aspects of the studio-model of learning and teaching cannot be translated directly into an online environment. While adaptations are possible, for example to notions of studio-based practices and the critique, which is briefly discussed later in this chapter, all modes of engagements with people and practices, including social, artistic, and pedagogical are, in some way, disrupted by distance and therefore technology. On a practical level, students are physically and geographically distributed, which has implications for their engagements with peers, staff, and the programme. The production of their artworks takes place in individual private spaces provided by the students, as opposed to the shared spaces provided by the academic institution. These private spaces vary greatly, ranging from purpose-built studios to the corner of a room designated for other purposes or shared with the household. These spaces are unlikely to have the overlay of the institution upon them, and they may not even be clearly identified as studios for artistic practices. In addition, it is unlikely that peers and staff will visit this workspace.

Instead, regular weekly learning, teaching, and other social interactions are mediated by technology. This raised issues concerning the inequalities of the digital divide with, for example, variable internet access. Disparities were evident in different geographical locations (such as between Auckland and rural locations or the Cook Islands), as well as in varying individual technological skill levels among students (e.g., Duggan, 2009; Spennemann, 2004; Wright, Dhanarajan, & Reju, 2009). In addition, the presentation and representation of individual art practices, processes, artefacts, and art events are predominately via digital images. This involved photographing artworks and creation processes, uploading the images onto the network, and viewing them on a computer screen. While the Moodle platform supported the studio-based pedagogical model to some extent with the provision of galleries and the facility to upload visual material into discussion forums, as Duggan (2009) confirmed, 'any interaction within Moodle, such as forums, chat rooms, and instant messaging, is all text based' (p. 226). Consequently, while phone and Skype tutorials utilised the spoken word, online synchronous and asynchronous group discussions of studio practice, theory, and research methodology were largely via the written word. Thus notions of the studio, the studio-based pedagogical model, and notions of presence are called into question in this mode of distance delivery.

The disruptions implied in a relationship between distance delivery and visual arts education in the tertiary sector bring many specific, complex but also interesting challenges. Generally, as Jeffery et al. (2012) noted, 'there has been considerable reluctance among academics to engage with online learning' (p. 4). This has also been my experience in visual arts and design postgraduate education. Leaving aside the issues of an increased workload and the need to adapt to new modes of teaching, visual

arts lecturers seem uncertain and concerned about the idea of the potential remoteness of students, their practices and their artworks due to them not being physically present and part of the usual shared studio. They seem apprehensive about this lack of physical presence and physical engagement with the artwork and thus the materiality of both the artwork and the processes involved in its creation, which as mentioned, form part of the research process in a visual arts postgraduate research degree. They seem to believe it is only presence and our sense of touch that convinces us of the reality of an object and its materiality (e.g., M. Butler & Neave, 2008). Consequently, these ideas lead to, as Nazzari et al. (2014) affirmed, an 'uncertainty' about whether artworks can be 'adequately appraised' when encountered via an online learning and teaching network, and without 'a direct encounter' with the artwork itself (p. 95). Others support these lecturers' concerns, for example, McHugh (2014) who used the haptic and tactility to argue for the 'continuing importance' of the studio in tertiary education (p. 30). While this apprehension has not overwhelmed my experiences in this situation, nor that of a few colleagues, the frequent enactments of uncertainty and displays of reticence and resistance to distance delivery by other colleagues made me wonder about the experience of visual arts students in these circumstances. Students seemed to accept and consider this mode of delivery a viable alternative to enable their postgraduate visual arts study.

By taking into consideration student experiences in the situation described, this endeavour is not a comparison of on- and off-campus or distance delivery of the MA&D programme. Nor is it an evaluation of the success or otherwise of either delivery mode, although it is acknowledged there are both similarities and differences in the practices arising from and experienced in each. Instead, of interest are the experiences of visual arts' participants, and a questioning of their experiences of notions of artist-selves in relation to the practices of distance delivery. Having noted that a visual arts studio-based pedagogy is an ontological approach, and privileges and replicates the occupational environment most often associated with performances of notions of artist, it seems as art educators, we often take-for-granted the perpetuation of notions of artist in our pedagogical practices. Is it a matter of course that the subjects we educate in a studio-based pedagogical model are performed or recognise themselves as artists in the processes? However, and more pertinent to this enquiry, for those engaging in the MA&D programme via distance where most experiences are considered to be at a remove, how might participants' notions of artist-self be performed (or not) when the environment calls into question characteristics such as notions of presence, which are inherent in situations associated with perpetuating notions of artist? Therefore, is it a matter of course that the distancing of many entities and practices of the studio-base pedagogical model, as a result of the online delivery of visual arts education, has implications for how notions of artist-selves might be performed? Equally, is it a matter of course that online pedagogical practices are associated with practices of distancing?

There is an assumption here that the different practices and entities in a specific environment have implications for performances of different subjectivities. Accordingly, underpinning this research is a conception of the self or subject as an unstable entity. The subject is not a product of its own making alone, and it arises from 'the collaborative practices of its figuration' (Battaglia, 1995b, p. 2). Therefore, the subject is a malleable 'form', and it is not possible to ask who or what the subject is in a general sense. It is only possible to ask how the subject is enacted and enacts, and to examine the practices involved in these enactments. As Battaglia (1995a) suggested, there is also a need to 'attend to the location of agency' (p. 4), particularly where the actions of an environment are part of the societal engagement with experiences or senses of a self. These ideas are briefly introduced in the following sections.

1.3 Considering subjectivity with Foucault

The assumption in this research of the subject as an unstable entity is aligned with a Foucauldian framework. The ideas of Foucault informing this research are discussed in detail in the following chapter. However, a brief outline follows. Foucault rejected the idea of a specific 'theory of the subject' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 33). For him, the subject is fluid and contingent. It is not a given, and nor is it autonomous or fixed. Therefore, the subject 'is not a substance. It is a form, and this form is not primarily or always identical to itself ... in each case [each different form of the subject], one plays, one establishes a different type of relationship to oneself' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 33). Over his lifetime, Foucault investigated a number of different modes to understand the constitution of the subject. He confirmed he had 'always been interested in this problem [the hermeneutics of the subject] I attempted to see how ... the human subject defines itself as a speaking, living, working individual' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 25).

Many scholars who have turned to Foucault's ideas on subjectivity as a basis for their study have focused on his earlier writings on power as domination (Wain, 1996). Here subjectivity is constituted through both domination and objectification by others, and through discourses and practices (Best & Kellner, 1991). In attempting to understand how a subject might be enacted in an academic institution, many have prioritised the situation's inherent disciplinary power (see also Mayo, 2000) as well as authoritative power. This has also led to some debatable propositions, for example Weir (2009), who suggested that Foucault only focussed on the 'third-person, or ascribed, category identity' rather than the 'first-person, subjective, affirmed identity' (p. 533). These studies have neglected to acknowledge that Foucault's notion of power is also productive and therefore, inherently encompasses the idea of agency through, for example, resistance. Practices of resistance became significant in the unfolding of this research, and in the dynamics under investigation.

Foucault's later work on the ethical self or care of the self is also important since Foucault broadened his practices to incorporate technologies of the self with the understanding that the self is also created as individual 'through ethics and forms of self-constitution' (Best & Kellner, 1991, p. 61). As Flaming (2006) noted, 'to be ethical, we should be concerned about ourselves and our relationship with other selves, or the other.... For Foucault, the self's relation to itself is the prime ethical practice' (p. 221). This mode of subject constitution also allowed room for agency in enactments of the self. Consequently, some studies referred to Foucault's ideas when considering subjectivity's relationship with technology, an entity that is enacted in online delivery. For example, Dervin and Riikonen (2009) investigated the construction of selves and identities through podcasting or, as they framed it, 'ego-casting (i.e. broadcasting about one's *self*)' (p. 1, emphasis in original). While they adhered to notions of a contingent subject open to mediation by the technology itself, they also argued that new technologies are being used increasingly in an ethical sense, that is, to take care of oneself. Similarly, Aycock (1995) investigated self-fashioning on the internet by examining postings on a newsgroup. He highlighted a Foucauldian position on the discourse of power at play in the use of the internet, and argued this technology has implications for self-constitution (see also Abbas & Dervin, 2009). Nevertheless, as Harrer (2005) argued, there is 'conceptual continuity' between Foucault's different positions on power relations and self-constitution (p. 75). Accordingly, when considering subjectivity, Foucault (2003c) suggested all the following questions be taken into account: 'How are we constituted as subjects of our own knowledge? How are we constituted as subjects who exercise or submit to power relations? How are we constituted as moral subjects of our own actions?' (p. 56).

To understand subjectivity, Foucault (1984/2003a) talked of 'analysing the relationships that may exist between the constitution of the subject or different forms of the subject and games of truth, practices of power and so on' (p. 33). In analysing these relations, Foucault established an approach that acknowledged the subject's embeddedness in the relationships creating society. Therefore, given the contingency of the subject, he needed to ask *how* the self might be constituted in any given circumstance. He wanted to 'try and show how the subject constituted itself, in one specific form or another ... through certain practices' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 33). To understand the subject as it is enacted 'through certain practices' Foucault turned to the empirical, or as Marshall (2001) argued, he turned to experience to reveal the answers to these questions. Writing under the pseudonym Maurice Florence, Foucault explained 'it is a matter of proceeding back down to the concrete practices by which the subject is constituted in the immanence of a domain of knowledge' (Foucault, c 1980/2003, p. 3). The aim of this is to elicit 'the processes that are peculiar to an experience in which the subject and the object "are formed and transformed" in relation to and in terms of one another' (Foucault, c 1980/2003, p. 3). Accordingly, and importantly for this project, in order to explore how

different notions of the artist-self are performed in the concrete practices of a specific learning environment known as distance delivery, it is necessary to explore modes of experience and to address how relations are experienced and performed.

1.4 Introducing an approach – Actor-network theory

The approach to the empirical component of this research is driven by the research focus, namely how notions of an artist-self might be enacted in a visual arts postgraduate learning environment that engages in distance or online delivery, as well as the theoretical perspectives implicit in this question as briefly outlined above (e.g., Crotty, 1998). While Foucault offered an approach to understanding subjectivity, others have subsequently built on his ideas. Of relevance for this research is a relational approach known as actor-network theory (ANT) and in particular, although not solely, I draw on the works of John Law, Bruno Latour and Annemarie Mol, which are discussed in detail in Chapter 3. Both Foucault and ANT shared some understandings of the constitution of society in terms of its relationality (although this is implicit rather than explicit for Foucault), of the production of knowledge and power, and of subjectivity and its inherent contingency, and fluidity. The relational nature of the social means that for both Foucault and ANT, subjectivity enactments are embedded in concrete practices and experience. This is important for this research as approaches to investigating the social must be a local and empirical matter, grounded in practice. They must deal with questions of ‘how’ rather than ‘why’ to understand the nature of things, that is “‘how” relations assemble or not’ (Law, 2007, p. 2; Foucault, 1984/2003a). In addition, inherent in a relational approach to understanding the social is, as Law (2007) noted, the importance of notions of action and consequently, performance. On the one hand, entities become ‘related’ when they ‘make others do things’ (Latour, 2005, p. 107), and so are only enacted within and because of these relationships. On the other, if relations are not always in process or repeatedly performed, phenomena or entities do not exist. This idea is inherent in the research question, which concerns enactments or performances of notions of artist-selves as subject positions, albeit temporary.

The ideas of Foucault and ANT are usefully discussed, and are combined by many as a research approach (e.g., Edwards, 2003; Fox, 2000; Kendall & Michael, 2001; Kontopodis, 2007; Usher & Edwards, 2005). For example, Edwards (2003) drew on Foucault’s ideas and ANT to ‘explore the emergence of lifelong learning as an actant through which particular subjects are mobilised in particular ways’ (p. 2). Similarly, Usher and Edwards (2005) explored ways the subject is mobilised in educational guidance counselling and talked of ‘ANT-ing Foucault’, therefore suggesting that both provide ‘conceptual resources’ for ‘thinking differently’ about phenomena (p. 408). As they explained, ‘Foucault’s subject positions and ANT’s networked actors both foreground that

the truth of individuals is not to be found in themselves but in relationships or positionings' with others (Usher & Edwards, 2005, p. 408). Accordingly, Foucault and ANT offer this research the opportunity to raise questions about how notions of artist-selves are enacted in the dynamics of distance delivery of visual arts education, and consequently to think differently about the nature of these social phenomena.

ANT, however, expanded on Foucault's ideas by extending the materiality of the social and of knowledge to include non-human as well as human participants. ANT's acknowledgement of the non-human as having a role in the social is of relevance for this research. The materiality of things is vital to those engaging in creative practices since practices in art concern themselves with materials and materiality. Also, by maintaining that knowledge is embodied in material form (Law, 1992), ANT is aligned with artistic research thinking, whereby knowledge is said to be embedded in the resultant artefact (e.g., Sullivan, 2006). Consequently, Fox (2000) pointed to the advantages of an ANT approach supported by Foucault's ideas for 'elucidating the detailed force relations amongst concrete practices and tangible materials' (p. 865). In addition, as Bolt (2004) noted with respect to creative practices, the assertion that objects are entities with agency 'enables us to revisit relationships between the silver, equipment and the artisan, and recast this relationship somewhat differently' (p. 76).

Acord (2010) also used an ANT approach to investigate how meaning is produced in the interaction between the artistic object and those involved in 'exhibition-making' or curatorial practices (Acord, 2010, p. 447). For her, the value of ANT was that it did not privilege the human over other aspects that 'come to bear on one another in any given situation of mediation' (Acord, 2010, p. 452). Similarly, Albertsen and Diken (2004) were able to study the 'connections between the artwork and its internal and external network' (Abstract, para. 1) through an ANT approach, as it acknowledged the materiality of the artwork, and the idea that the work of art is no longer an 'autonomous form' (p. 53). By recognising that it has agency, the artwork then has a place in shaping social networks. Therefore, as an approach to understanding and articulating how phenomena such as notions of artist-self might be enacted, ANT offers the possibility of making visible the actions of diverse, often taken-for-granted elements in a complex visual arts learning and teaching environment that are entangled with notions of distance. In addition, Fox (2005) confirmed the value of acknowledging the non-neutrality of the technologies of networked learning. He identified that ANT 'helps us to see the mutual dependence between human meanings and mundane technologies, and raised questions for networked learning in the context of higher education' (Fox, 2005, p. 108).

In line with Foucault and ANT, the cases considered for this research were experiential, namely students who had graduated from the Off-campus Strand of the MA&D. Unstructured, open-ended discussions or conversations took place to gather 'data stories'

(Lather, 2007, p. 140) which explored modes of experiences in the concrete practices of the learning and teaching environment. Once collected, conversations were transcribed. These stories were then interrogated to trace relationships between entities being enacted in practice, and to identify the practices involved in performances of subjectivities, in particular performances of notions of artist-selves as well as notions of distance. The material relational sensibilities of ANT and Foucault mean there is a need for the research process to be reflexive and to take account of the researcher's own practices (e.g., Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). This includes critiquing and exposing assumptions (Mitev, 2009) about not only the approach and methods but also about the phenomena presumed to be under study as well as what might subsequently be told (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Law, 2004). These matters are reflected on principally in Chapter 4 and then in Chapter 7, as entanglements between the intervention itself and performances of subjectivities became more evident.

The material relationality and performativity implied by Foucault and endorsed by ANT mean that any theories about the subject must arise for a local situation as opposed to theories being imposed upon it. Therefore, as an approach, ANT (and Foucault's approach) cannot function as a predictive framework (Law, 2007) which is the case for some other methodological approaches. Consequently, the identification of entities, relationships, performances of subjectivities, and practices in a situation ultimately manifest in the telling of stories, in 'various available styles of describing practices' (Mol, 2002, p. 6), or to use Law's (2000b) words, in different 'modes of ordering' (p. 23). Thus, the performances and interplay of the various stories subsequently told offer a means of making visible not only the entangled practices but also the complexity and multiplicity of subjectivity enactments and subject positions, albeit all contingent and unstable. Accordingly, in the case of this research, ANT and Foucault offer a means of exploring performances of subjectivities and performances of notions of artist-selves that support the subjective, the personal as well as the incoherent and the irreducible. This is how it is possible to question and consider how notions such as artist-self and their enactment happen in a distance learning and teaching environment or in other words, interact with performances of notions of distance. Consequently, ANT and Foucault also offer a means of examining and understanding distance delivery in a way that is not limited or bound by comparisons between on-campus and off-campus delivery, and by education per se. They offer a means to 'think the in-between' (Law, 2004, p. 63), and explore simultaneous multiplicities in the performances of subjectivities in the practices of experience.

1.5 Considering notions of artist

As suggested, for both ANT and Foucault it is not possible to theorise or presume the nature of entities or relationships between entities prior to an investigation, because, as Fox (2000) put it, 'rather their existence is what analysis would seek to explain by reference to nests of practice' (p. 858). Therefore, any assumption at the beginning of the study that the seemingly disparate practices that are briefly outlined in the next two sections might be involved in enacting and performing notions of artist-selves in a visual arts distance or online learning and teaching environment, is debatable. ANT acknowledged the 'profound uncertainty' (Sayes, 2014, p. 141) of what and how entities and therefore subjectivities are enacted in any event. As well, any event or situation itself cannot be regarded as stable, and will take 'different forms' (Law, 2007, p. 13) through their enactments. Therefore, as van der Velden (2011) discussed, there is a problem commencing research with entities already determined. However, Introna (2007) suggested it is possible to identify some co-constitutional entities producing the sites of practice. Therefore, the review of issues that follows is contingent on the empirical study, and the subsequent stories and orderings, and are therefore raised not as 'matters of fact' but rather as 'matters of concern' (Latour, 2004, 2005) in the light of my experience, and explored through some existing literature.

Accepting Foucault and ANT's frames of reference on subjectivity, and acknowledging the subject as a situated and relational self, means there are issues in attempting to categorise, identify, and recognise, in the case of this research, 'artist' as a subject position. There are also inherent paradoxes in naming and referring to either 'an artist' or 'the artist'. Not only would this appear to presume artist as a pre-existing and fixed entity but it also presumes the existence of a category called artist. Also by referring to a singularity, a conceptual coherence is inferred. This is an anathema in Foucauldian and ANT terms where the multiple performances of subjectivities are inherent in the relationality that produces the social. These matters are discussed further in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4. However, it is also evident to those of us involved in art practices, the art world and in art education, that anecdotally and in some literature, artist is a fraught occupational and professional label having few universally agreed definable parameters. The MA&D, as a postgraduate research degree, does not specifically teach art as a subject, and nor does it specifically teach how to be an artist. Nevertheless, due to the studio-based pedagogical approach employed in visual arts education, there remains an inherent presumption that there is such a thing as an artist, which is the object and subject of visual arts education, and that notions of artist-self are likely to be enacted in and by its practices.

Attempting to define artist

As Foucault noted, it is important to start from a position where the 'conceptualised object' is not a 'single criterion' but instead becomes the site of the investigation itself (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 127). Therefore, what follows is a brief discussion of some non-specific ways in which artist has been considered by others. This helps expose some of the uncertainties surrounding notions of artist, as well as the idea, as Kosmala (2007) noted, that the instability of the subject is 'even more prominent in the context of the arts' (p. 37). A mapping of the everyday usage of 'artist' as a name for a social category of individuals demonstrates the innumerable shifts in understanding over time. In the *Oxford English Dictionary* ("Artist", 2008) definitions tend to refer to an individual who is either skilled or proficient at a 'particular task or occupation', craft or trade. This implies that a measure of training and specialist knowledge is mandatory. However, the nature of the training and specialist knowledge is unclear, as the diverse range of disciplines listed under these definitions suggests it is not possible to identify an artist through disciplinary means. For example, the list included medicine, magic art, occult science, liberal arts, the creative or fine arts, music, performing and entertaining, and in reference to a con-artist, the practice of artifice. The *Online Etymology Dictionary* (D. Harper) pointed to the ancient Greek's use of the term in relation to the arts of the Muses, that is, history, poetry, comedy, tragedy, music, dancing, and astronomy, thus linking it to today's study of the liberal arts qualification, for example, a Bachelor of Arts. As the *Online Etymology Dictionary* continued, it was in the 1580s that 'artist' was used to denote 'one who cultivates one of the fine arts'. In the 17th century, the usage morphed again to include 'one skilled in any art or craft' (D. Harper), and here the list included professors, surgeons, craftsmen, and cooks. With each move to include another discipline, media, or range of practices, a residue of earlier understandings remains circulating in society. This leads to continued uncertainty about how to define, identify or recognise an artist.

The identification of an occupational category called 'artist' is relatively recent, emerging only in the 18th century (J. Cary as cited in G. Harper, 2010). This classification arose with the increased need for labour market specialisation in the Western world (G. Harper, 2010). However, in spite of this classification attempt, literature on studies of the artist as an occupational or professional category still evidence a breadth of possible practices. For example, Jeffri and Greenblatt (1989) listed fourteen artistic disciplines in their study of 1,237 individual artists in New York from 1985. They included 'painting, sculpture, photography, film, video, conceptual/performance art, poetry, play/screenwriting, fiction, graphics, music composition, architecture, crafts, and choreography' (p. 7). Similarly D. Bennett, Wright, and Blom (2009), while studying artist as academics, included practitioners such as 'an actor ..., an electro-acoustic composer/performer ..., a composer ..., a dance artist ..., a dramatist ..., a ceramics ..., an organist/harpsichordist ... and a songwriter/popular musician ...' (p. 4).

While the *Online Etymology Dictionary* (D. Harper) suggested today an artist was especially 'one who practises the arts of design or visual arts (a sense first attested 1747)', it is evident that this is not exclusively the case. This is why, perhaps, in contemporary society, the term artist is often coupled with an attributive noun such as dance, performance, sound, video or visual to clarify or specify the mode of 'art' being practised or one of the characteristics of the discipline employed. However, while notions of artist remain ambiguous and debatable in a contemporary context, most perceive that an artist does contribute to our society in some way, and that engaging in the creation of art is a social practice. This is reflected in the UNESCO definition:

'Artist' is taken to mean any person who creates or gives creative expression to, or re-creates works of art, who considers his artistic creation to be an essential part of his life, who contributes in this way to the development of art and culture and who is or asks to be recognized as an artist, whether or not he is bound by any relations of employment or association. (1980)

While this discussion gives an oversimplified understanding of artist, this might be because it is attempting to be all-encompassing and is not dealing with particularities. Although this everyday understanding of an artist lacks clarity and is itself unstable, it also fails, as Foucault (1969/2003) put it when discussing naming, to 'gesture' or 'finger point' at an individual with any certainty (p. 380).

Attempting to categorise artist

With the recent rise of the creative industries in the Western world (V. D. Alexander & Bowler, 2014), the scrutiny of the arts has increasingly come under the microscope of sociologists as well as continuing to be investigated in the traditional areas of philosophy, cultural theory, and art history. This comes in the form of a relatively new specialisation called 'the sociology of arts' (V. D. Alexander & Bowler, 2014, p. 2). Most of the literature referred to acknowledged the inherent difficulty in identifying and classifying a class of individuals called artist.

As an example, Jeffri and Greenblatt (1989) initially suggested definitions of an artist using employment and income as criteria were quite stable and it was only when these criteria were not employed, that definitions become 'slippery' (p. 6). However, their research subsequently revealed that this was not the case. Their study showed that while 'nearly 78 percent of the respondents considered their primary occupation to be "artist" ... 39 percent earned their major incomes in non-art-related occupations' (p. 9). In addition, over half of them earned US\$2,000 or less (in 1987) even while still categorising themselves as artists (occupationally and professionally). This result led Jeffri and Greenblatt to re-establish and test a definition of 'professional artist' that was not based solely on employment and income. Their loosely characterised definition comprised

different components called “The Marketplace Definition,” “The Education and Affiliation Definition,” and “The Self and Peer Definition” (Jeffri & Greenblatt, 1989, p. 9). The first definition encompassed an occupational component, the second, a professional component, and the third covered a more subjective approach to the question, which incorporated recognition by self and others. Other sociologists, such as Frey and Pommerehne (as cited in D. Butler, 2000) also sought to classify populations of artists. Their eight criteria recognised similar aspects, namely

amount of time devoted to artistic work; earnings from artistic work; reputation among the general public; recognition among other artists; quality of artistic work; membership in a professional artists group or association; professional qualifications (especially educational credentials); subjective self-identification as an artist. (as cited in D. Butler, 2000, p. iii)

The artists in Jeffri and Greenblatt’s study chose to define ‘professional artist’ (both as a categorisation of themselves and a general classification) in terms of ‘the amount of time devoted to one’s work, peer recognition, and having an inner drive to do the work more often than making an income, professional affiliation, and education’ (Jeffri & Greenblatt, 1989, p. 10). Thus these ‘professional artists’ themselves eschewed the traditional occupational and professional criteria for defining the classification. This confirmed Coxon and Davies’s idea that the arts sit as ‘a mediator between the occupational categories of “trades” and “professions” thereby occupying ‘a special, anomalous position in our society’ (as cited in Bain, 2005, p. 33).

In a more recent study, Lena and Lindemann (2014) also raised questions about the status of ‘artist’ in the United States, asking, ‘Put simply; who is an artist?’ (p. 71). Despite the substantial growth in employment in the creative industries, they argued that there was still a lack of agreement on who should be included in the social category of ‘professional artist’. They also highlighted other complexities inherent in the question, such as whether an artist could still be an artist if they were not practising or producing artworks, whether designers could be considered artists, and whether artist’s identities might only be ‘contextually dependent’ (Lena & Lindemann, 2014, p. 71). Furthermore, are those self-identifying as artists bounded by some collective and agreed understanding? Based on an examination of literature, Lena and Lindemann (2014) outlined a number of approaches used to study the artist in terms of population identification. They noted that these studies were not driven by an interest in defining the artist per se, despite some of them using what they defined as a ‘subjectivist approach’, which calls for self and peer identification (Lena & Lindemann, 2014, p. 71). Instead, the studies were driven by the artist as a ‘unit of analysis’ (e.g., Milbrandt & Klein, 2008), and more by the idea of the ‘artist-as-worker’ (Lena & Lindemann, 2014, p. 72). This included both the idea of the artist as an occupational or professional category and the artist as having a social role within the economy. Their subsequent study of arts alumni interview data from 2009 identified a group of respondents whose replies were incongruous, demonstrating ‘unique forms of dissonance over artistic membership’ (Lena &

Lindemann, 2014, p. 76). This group was comprised of 'individuals who indicated that they worked in (an) arts-related occupation(s) but said they had never worked as professional artists' (Lena & Lindemann, 2014, p. 76). While Lena and Lindemann's study found fault with both the 'human capital' approach and 'subjective' approaches of attempting to define a 'sociological category of artist' it also demonstrated the difficulties in defining 'artist' categorically (Lena & Lindemann, 2014, p. 83).

Exploring notions of artist

In discussing her study of professional visual artists in Toronto, Canada, Bain (2005) confirmed that the title 'artist' was construed in a variety of ways both within society in general and in the art world. She also noted that there was an 'inherent difficulty in distinguishing artists from non-artists and professionals from amateurs in a profession where there are no ... prerequisites or credentials to authenticate occupational status' (p. 26). In contemporary society as well as academic institutions, practising as an artist can still be variously interpreted anywhere from a profession to a hobby. This is perhaps why society responds to artists as a profession in a very different manner to other professional groups such as physicians (Adams & Kowalski, 1980). Bain (2005) concluded that the use of 'the qualifying term "professional", in the arts, is, for all intents and purposes, an empty signifier that does not guarantee quality or excellence nor signify a degree of economic and social status' (p. 34).

While most studies discussed have been conducted in the northern hemisphere, the situation is similar in the New Zealand context. There are community art courses and a proliferation of tertiary qualifications up to and including PhD level, but there is no agreed standard or indeed minimum qualification necessary before a label 'artist' can be claimed or bestowed on an individual. Nor, in New Zealand, is there a recognised society-wide professional body to license, regulate or enforce ethical codes. Consequently, individuals can call themselves artist whether or not they have academic qualifications, extensive practical experience, or are earning an income from their work. Equally, students who have completed an undergraduate or even postgraduate qualification in any of the disciplines that might qualify as artistic, do not necessarily refer to themselves as artist. This highlights further ambivalences and complexities in trying to explore how performances of notions of artist-selves as social phenomena might be interwoven with the practices in these sites that perform subjectivities.

The brief section above discusses some generalised ways in which notions of artist might be contextualised as well as some uncertainties that arise. However, these studies neglect to consider that notions of an artist are inextricably bound up with art, with definitions of what art might be, and how art itself might be manifest in society. While it is

outside the parameters of this research for an in-depth discussion, there are innumerable philosophical positions and corresponding debates on art and on aesthetics, and associated value judgements. These varying positions will have implications for general understandings within contemporary society. For example, how is art to be understood? Is it understood in terms of an artefact, or a process, or a performance, or an experience or an idea? Who creates art? Does an individual, a viewer, a contractor, a situation or an environment create artworks? Alternatively, are all these aspects involved in the production and reception of art? As Dutton (2009) observed, in our discussions of what we might call 'art', we can be focussing on any or all of these aspects, and therefore distinguishing between them becomes necessary for clarity. In addition, what is the function and meaning of art? Does it function as resemblance, representation, an abstraction, or art for art's sake? While Dutton (2009) proposed twelve 'signal characteristics of art' he also noted that 'many of these aspects of art are continuous with non-art experiences and capacities' (p. 52). This creates issues for boundaries between art and non-art. These boundaries have been challenged and re-positioned continually throughout history and as a result, so have practices, manifestations, and modes of participation. This is evidenced in, for example, long-standing debates about the relationships between art and craft (e.g., Mishler, 1999), and the shifts between object-based, site-specific, conceptual, and 'relation-based' practices (O'Donoghue, 2011, p. 3).

Consequently, with these shifting perceptions and relationships, there is, as Bain (2005) observed 'difficulty in distinguishing artists from non-artists' (p. 26) as well as debate on how 'artist' status might be affirmed (e.g., D. Bennett et al., 2009; Carroll, 2006; Elsbach, 2009). Therefore, the question of what an artist is still remains. Is an artist someone who sells their artwork, exhibits their artwork, or labours on their artworks? Is it someone who has a studio, has been to art school, or makes a living from the sale of artworks? Is it someone who is creative or self-identifies as an artist? Are any or all of these factors necessary for an individual to lay claim to the title or for the label of artist to be conferred on an individual. How might an artist be recognised, and what practices might be associated with the performances of any identification? As Lena and Lindemann (2014) asked, 'who is an artist?'

The nature of this research, by being based in the experiential modes of Foucault and ANT's practices and their notions of subjectivity, means that the topic and questions arising cannot be dispensed with in any review of the literature. However, other scholars have investigated areas that are related and that inform, but these tend to relate to notions of identity, such as identity shifts between the artist as maker or creator and as a researcher (e.g., Barrett, 2006; D. Bennett et al., 2009; Hockey & Allen-Collinson, 2005). Others have investigated the establishment of an artistic identity in relation to art and design education (e.g., Adams & Kowalski, 1980; Elsdon-Clifton, 2010; Tynan & New, 2009), in relation to art and design practices (e.g., Elsbach, 2009), and in relation to the

interplay between artist and artist as art educator (e.g., Hatfield, Montana, & Deffenbaugh, 2006; Thornton, 2005). Others have investigated aspects of the constitution and performance of artist's identities in the light of experience and grounded in practice (e.g., Bain, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2007; Kosmala, 2007; Mishler, 1999; Selkrig, 2009, 2011; J. L. Whitehead, 2008). Yet there appears to be little work on artist as subject, or more specifically, on how participants might or might not be enacted as artist in the fluidity and multiplicity of a postgraduate visual arts academic network and in particular, one that is potentially disrupted by distance delivery.

Nevertheless, with an ANT-ish approach to research, investigations can only attend to subjectivity enactments in practice. Consequently, investigations can only deal with what Latour (2005) called 'new topics' (p. 142), namely with phenomena, situations, and events that have not yet been spoken of, nor yet made visible or sensible (Mol, 2010). In addition, as subjectivity is understood in terms of experience, and relational performances and performativities, it is necessary to explore participant's understandings of their experiences of a particular environment. Therefore, the phrase 'notions of artist-self' is intentionally used in this research as opposed to 'artist'. While Ascott (1988) suggested artists themselves 'deal in uncertainty and ambiguity, discontinuity, flux and flow' (p. 8) in their practices, so too do their experiences of subjectivity in terms of notions of artist-selves. Therefore, the phrase 'notions of artist-self' highlights the multiplicity of experiences, the multiplicity of an individual's perceptions of themselves as artist (or not) in particular circumstances, as well as the multiplicity of processes and practices involved in the performances of these as subject positions. It also acknowledges the possibility of these being located in terms of Foucault's knowing subject (mentioned in Chapter 2) and ANT's 'knowing location' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 37) (mentioned in Chapter 3) and in turn, perhaps being a temporarily knowable subject. Consequently, in the case of this research, the intervention explores the dynamics at play in performances of notions of artist-selves in relation to the distancing associated with a postgraduate visual arts online learning and teaching environment.

1.6 Considering academic practices

These uncertainties and debates about the nature of artist as a possible subject position become more complex when considered in the light of issues arising from the specific academic environment outlined earlier in this chapter. However, as discussed at the beginning of the previous section, it is debatable whether or how these practices of the academic environment, and in relation to distance delivery, might interweave with performances of notions of artist-selves. Some of the practices in the distance delivery of the MA&D are considered briefly in the discussion that follows to contextualise them in the light of selected existing literature.

Visual arts postgraduate environment

The academic institution will reflect and perpetuate particular views of the institutionalised art world of which it is a part. However, Foster (1996) noted that the siting of the institution of art is itself contentious; 'not only the roles of the museum and the academy but also the locations of art and theory' (xiv). He discussed an 'ethnographic turn in contemporary art' and outlined how the institution of art had passed 'into the expanded field of culture' (Foster, 1996, p. p. 184). It is now not only defined in spatial terms, for example the studio and the gallery, but also as 'a discursive network of different practices and institutions, other subjectivities and communities' (Foster, 1996, p. 184). While Duncum (2001) highlighted a shift in the 1980s from pedagogical models based on art as self-expression to a more discipline-based approach, he also affirmed the more recent move from 'studying the art of the institutionalised art world to studying ... visual culture' (p. 101). While much is written on the subject of 'visual culture' (e.g., Mirzoeff, 1999; Sturken & Cartwright, 2001) it appears difficult to define. In addition, the concept arose in response to engagement with visual technology, and to different understandings of the social in the light of new technologies. As a result, Mules (2000) argued for a revision of earlier definitions of culture. Those of the 1970s and 1980s were based in poststructuralism, which tended towards a linguistic bias. As Jay (1993) demonstrated, French poststructuralist theorists sought to surround and subdue images by means of text (see also Grusin & Bolter, 1996; Jay, 1986; Jenks, 1995). These discussions on shifts in philosophical underpinnings of a pedagogical approach add to differing philosophical perspectives on aesthetics, and how notions of art might alter when engagements are mediated by technology (e.g., Fox, 2005; P. G. Taylor, 2004). While Eisenhauer (2006) argued that it was necessary to rethink subjectivity in relation to the emphasis on visual culture in art education, all these differing epistemologies and practices will have implications for students' experiences and performances of subjectivities and, in particular, notions of artist-selves in particular environments.

In the context of this research, while creative degrees are increasingly offered in the tertiary sector, the inclusion of studio-based practices in the academic research environment has not been without considerable debate. What has been questioned in the tertiary sector in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and latterly in Canada and the United States (e.g., Garrett-Petts & Nash, 2008), is the possibility and validity of creativity and art production (both process and product) as research (e.g., Eisner, 2006), and therefore new knowledge. Issues relating to research variously termed 'practice-based', 'practice-led', or 'practice-driven', and more recently 'artistic research' (e.g., Ambrozic & Vettese, 2013; M. Wilson & van Ruiten, 2013) in the postgraduate environment (as well as research methods and methodologies appropriate for creative practices) are often discussed with an emphasis on them fitting a university model (e.g., Carroll, 2006; Macleod & Holdridge, 2005; Newbury, 1996; Rosenberg, 2007). Conversely, many

authors and practitioners write in defence of artists and designers' approaches to the creation of new knowledge and attempt to validate them as academic models (e.g., Pigrum, 2010; Rosenberg, 2007; Sullivan, 2005, 2006; Tonkinwise, 2008; Tonkinwise & Lorber-Kasunic, 2006). For example, Tonkinwise and Lorber-Kasunic (2006) encouraged the acceptance of a more 'poetic understanding of making' (p. 9; see also D. H. Whitehead, 2003). As Biggs and Buchler (2012) noted, there is a 'diversity of approaches' to what constitutes artistic research (p. 3). Not only is this very visible debate in the literature likely to impact on students' experiences, the positions taken on these issues by institutions and individual staff members will have implications for how participants understand and engage in their artistic practices in the academic environment.

Alongside this debate are discussions about how knowledge is embedded in creative processes and the artwork in artistic research (e.g., Bolt, 2006; Carroll, 2006; Lyons, 2006; Sullivan, 2006; Tonkinwise & Lorber-Kasunic, 2006). These differing epistemological positions will have implications on pedagogy, on a postgraduate student's approach to their artistic research, and on the ways in which their creative practice might be understood in terms of new knowledge (e.g., Feast & Melle, 2010; Styhre, 2004). Duncum and Bracey (2001) presented the views of a range of art education theorists. They reflected on ways of understanding the nature of art and aesthetics in a world that might also be mediated by technology, ways of knowing in art (referred to in this case as 'knowing how' and 'knowing that'), and ways of knowing art through multiple lenses. Others identified different ways of knowing in art (and therefore research approaches) as 'knowing in', 'knowing about', and 'knowing through' (Rosenberg, 2007; Sullivan, 2005). These various debates with respect to creativity and art production, and how knowledge might be created, evidenced, and transferred will influence the postgraduate learning environment (e.g., Bill, 2004; Brown, 2001; Nimkulrat & O'Riley, 2009), and have implications for performances of particular subjectivities in this environment where knowing is mediated by distance and in turn by technology.

What also needs to be considered here is the artwork itself. In the postgraduate research environment, it has many roles. Therefore, the students' understanding of their artworks and the many ways in which they could establish relationships with these has implications for them as creative subjects. The artwork operates in the realm of academic research where it is evidence of new knowledge and/or theoretical production. It operates in the art world as artistic production, as an aesthetic object, as a commodity, and as an object of criticism. It will also operate as the artist's artwork, potentially as a representation of the artist-self, and a means of self-enactment. Understanding their artistic practices and artworks in the light of research and new knowledge will affect all postgraduate visual arts students. However, in the online situation where there is engagement with and through the technical, there are further issues in understanding how the artwork might be perceived, as there are additional registers of representation. As already noted,

processes and artefacts are presented via digital images. This adds to the complexity of understanding the production processes and the artworks themselves, understanding what is represented in these images, and understanding how they might be enacted in the learning and teaching environment. These different registers include the artwork itself, which remains unseen by peers and staff in the students' studio, and the image of the artwork that represents it as an artefact or a product or an event. This image also operates as an image of the artwork to represent the making process, that is, it operates as information. Then there is the potential for the image of the artwork to be seen as an artwork in its own right, that is, as a photograph. In addition, the artefact can potentially operate as a technique of the self as well as a representation of the artist-self and a presentation of the self. Such complexities in the material relationality of the situation will affect understandings, interpretations, and the possibility for meaningful critical engagement among the participants in the environment as well as how they present or understand their artwork and any notions of themselves as artist.

Engaging with technology

In this context, the idea that engagement with technology in some way influences our understanding of our self and the world is acknowledged. Some writers privileged the implications of the visual metaphor of technology and our engagement with it predominantly through the screen. Others focused on technology in terms of subject constitution (e.g., Trifonova, 2003). Some theorists referred to Heidegger's ideas where, 'technology is part of the "enframing" of the beingness which humans inhabit' (Mules, 2000, p. 1). Therefore, 'the essence of technology is by no means anything technological' (Heidegger, 1977, p. 4). For Heidegger, technology is a 'mode of revealing' (Heidegger, 1977, p. 13). We are mediated by technologies, which implicates them in enactments of subjectivities. Hansen, on the other hand, criticised discourses that fixate on the relationship between technology and subject constitution (Hansen, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). Instead, he suggested 'technology should be assessed according to its concrete experiential effects' (Barnet, 2003, p. 1). Others, such as Gergen (1996), proposed that the technological plays a part in dismantling the self. He argued that there was an 'increase of the presence of others' through technologies, and this has led to 'a loss in the credibility of subjectivity' (p. 2). While it is beyond the remit of this thesis to discuss these ideas in detail, what is relevant is the idea that our experiences of time and space might be reconfigured in a technological communication network will have implications on the constitution of the self and by implication performances of notions of an artist-self.

Friedberg (2006) argued that to understand technology, it is necessary to separate the materiality of technology itself from the assumed immateriality of the virtual. Our engagement with the material nature of technology is predominantly through a screen.

This screen or spectatorial space of technology uses images and symbols via an interface. While our experience of the screen and interface has been variously described as a 'visual spectacle' (McKie, 2000, p. 118), and 'a nexus point of ... information and projected identities' (Bartlem, 2005, p. 8), of note is that the materiality of technology itself remains concealed, hidden from the viewer. Its materiality is designed to be invisible. It is through the concealing of the materiality of technology that McKie (2000) suggested 'the individual is more able to suspend belief and participate in a digital context' (p. 118). Grusin and Bolter (1996) argued that the act of concealing is an attempt to fulfil the desire for immediacy thereby 'denying the act of mediation' (p. 315, see also Bolter & Grusin, 2000). While this idea of denying mediation is not new in Western visual representation, as in the use of linear perspective (for example Bolter & Gromala, c2003; Friedberg, 2006; Grusin & Bolter, 1996; Jay, 1986, 1993; Mirzoeff, 1999), there are implications for the user in the online environment. Grusin and Bolter (1996) argued 'the logic of immediacy leads one to erase or automatise the act of representation' (p. 328). While this suggests an uninterrupted or homogenised visual space, there is also the logic of hypermediacy to consider. Hypermediacy relies on multiplicity (e.g., Ulmer, 1991). It makes multiple acts of representation visible and suggests a heterogeneous space (Grusin & Bolter, 1996). 'The logic of hypermediacy calls for representations of the real that in fact multiply the signs of mediation and in this way try to reproduce the rich sensorium of human experience' (Grusin & Bolter, 1996, pp. 328-329). If it is the case that technology sets up the possibility for action at-a-distance (a notion addressed in Chapter 6), and for multiplicity, this will have implications for performances of particular subjectivities, and although theorised here as reproducing human experience, will have implications for students' experiences of technology in practice and for questions of experiencing presence.

Exploring notions of presence online

As discussed, traditional notions of presence inherent in face-to-face engagements are modified in the online environment, and this has implications for a number of factors including sustaining a valuable experience for participants, high-quality and effective engagement, meaningful and critical dialogue, the creation of a collaborative peer group or community, and a sense of self. The perceived sense of distance between participants is likely to disrupt engagement in the mediated space of the online classroom, thereby having implications for performances of particular subjectivities. Yet, some theorists argued that as this space is a place of communication, a co-presence is implied and therefore inherent as a result of participation in the technological network (e.g. Milne, 2003; Mules, 2000). Others argued for a different kind of presence when engaging in a digital environment, a mediated co-presence, a virtual presence. Mules (2000) suggested a new approach to 'being' human subjects, a need for a presencing through time and

space where the human subject can be both 'here' and 'there' at the same time with space now being experienced in terms of a 'collapsed ... temporality' (p. 3). Similarly, Bartlem (2005) drew on Grau's ideas of telepresence suggesting 'one can feel present in a distant location or virtual environment through human-technology interfaces' (p. 4). She stated that networked technologies allow one 'to experience a shared presence in multiple and remote locations at once' (p. 8).

Nonetheless, there is a need to develop social presence online (e.g., Kear, Chetwynd, & Jefferis, 2014; Stacey, 2000). With the lack of face-to-face contact in the online environment, there is an absence of visual clues from other participant's faces, their gestures, and their actual environment. While Stacey (2000) discussed the importance of developing social presence when attempting to establish high quality online participation, Jeffery et al. (2012) also noted that 'social presence is largely underdeveloped on most online environments' (p. 9). Others also addressed social factors influencing online experiences (e.g., Conanan & Pinkard, 2001; Milne, 2003; Roe, 2003; van Swet, Smit, Corvers, & van Dijk, 2009). Signifiers of presence are needed to establish a sense of immediacy, intimacy, and understanding between individuals. Milne (2003) argued that despite the 'assumed immateriality' (Conclusion, para. 1) of electronic communication, a sense of presence is vital for the success of applications like web-based education. She stated, "presence" is dependent on (and in part created by) rhetorical strategies and effects such as intimacy, immediacy, spontaneity' (Epistolary section, para. 3). While Grusin and Bolter (1996) argued, as discussed earlier, that the logic of immediacy is inherent in technology, experience often suggests otherwise. As Turkle (2011) noted, this can lead people to 'lose confidence that we are communicated or cared for' in the online environment (p. 288). These questions of the different experiences of presence will have implications for participant's experiences and notions of themselves.

Studio-based pedagogy and online practices

As mentioned earlier, the studio-based pedagogical approach relies on a collective as well as an individual approach where experiences, dialogue and critique of making processes, artworks, viewer experience, and theoretical and conceptual concerns are key learning and teaching modes. The crit(ique) or studio tutorial, is still the most pervasive teaching method used in tertiary art and design education, and its value (or otherwise) has been addressed by many scholars (e.g., Webster, 2006). Some suggested the crit is complex, contradictory and difficult to understand, and doubted its effectiveness for students (Elkins, 2001). Others suggested the crit fosters 'creativity, reflection, articulation and reasoning' (Docherty, Sutton, Brereton, & Kaplan, 2001, p. 236) and confirmed that it is an effective mode of giving critical feedback on artwork in progress (Conanan & Pinkard, 2001).

However, patterns of learning and teaching will alter when the studio-based crit is translated into an online environment where they are mediated by technology (e.g., Lester, 1993) as already described. Much of the concern about engaging with art-making practices online centres around the fact that the representation of artworks and processes is via the digital image (e.g., Patterson, 2005). This highlights questions of the presence and proximity of both individuals and their artmaking processes and artworks raised earlier in this chapter. In this context, Percy (2004) examined how the online crit is shaped by convention, and asked how effective it was in developing critical skills in the student, and its potential in the different learning environment. She suggested that the online crit fails to 'serve as a vehicle for students to express their learning through' practice (p. 152). Patterson (2005) did not question the crit itself but discussed strategies for engaging in it online. She suggested dialogue should focus on possible relationships between materials, techniques, and concepts, a replication of what is likely to happen face-to-face. This is an important consideration in artistic research where the process of making an artefact may be more important than the product itself in terms of evidencing a research process. As already discussed, the online context also raises the question of how materiality, learning, and new knowledge (e.g., Bolt, 2006; Sullivan, 2006) are understood via a digital image, and how the artefact is experienced and perceived via this mode.

Further uncertainties about participants' experiences arise in the online context where representations of, for example, learning, new knowledge, and the self, are not only via images but also via the written word as opposed to the spoken word. There is a good deal of discussion on the nature and role of writing in art and art education, and the difficulties art students encounter in writing about their artwork and processes (e.g., Bazerman, 2000; Mitchell, 2001; Turner & Hocking, 2004). Hockey and Allen-Collinson (2005) also discussed what they called the 'high degree of disjuncture' that research students experience when writing about and analysing their artistic making (p. 85). This is probably why Vickery (2004) also queried whether artists were reliable witnesses in terms of discussing their own art practices. Therefore, the students' ability to articulate relationships between their artwork and their ideas through the writing required at postgraduate level has implications for students' experiences and notions of themselves. However, as I experienced in the online situation and Patterson (2005) also observed, continual engagement with the written word (as opposed to the spoken) facilitates increased critical thinking. This could be influenced by the fact that text-based dialogue in online crits remains permanently available for students to revisit, reflect upon and review. In the face-to-face crits, the conversations are normally ephemeral (Elkins, 2001; Oak, 2000). In addition, writing plays a role in reflective practice, and therefore in subject constitution (Bleakley, 2000). Foucault (1982/2003b) identified writing as a technology of the self, as a means of self-care and therefore self-constitution (see also McDonald,

1996). This means that the various types of writing involved in the online context could enable performances of notions of an artist-self. Most of these acts of writing (in the form of both text and image) are visible to all participants in the online environment, although the platform allows for editing prior to posting, as well as after. Therefore, as Turkle (2011) noted, 'we can edit our messages until we project the self we want to be' (p. 12). As well as self-projection, this could also encompass the projection and representation of research, artwork, and processes posted online, which in turn potentially play a part in performing the self as a particular notion of artist.

1.7 Recounting propositions

As identified at the beginning of the previous two sections, entities, relations, and practices proposed prior to an intervention using the relational approach of ANT and Foucault should not be considered definitive or even as necessarily involved in how notions of artist-selves are performed in the distance delivery of visual arts education. However, some practices were considered here in an attempt to situate the study, as the researcher felt that prior to the intervention they raised potential 'matters of concern' (Latour, 2004, 2005) within the circumstances under investigation and the participants' experiences of these.

Foucault and ANT offered a means to investigate how performances of participant's notions of themselves as artists might happen in the distance delivery of a postgraduate visual arts degree and to consequently, explore and consider this distance learning model differently. This is valuable as it can call into question assumptions made about the studio-based model of visual arts education, which replicates and perpetuates the place most often associated with the occupation of artist. Notions of proximity and presence are presumed fundamental to this pedagogical approach, resulting in a tendency for visual arts lecturers' to eschew the potential of distance delivery. The theoretical and methodological sensibilities of Foucault and ANT played a significant part in this reflexive exploration, which afforded different and complex understandings of notions of artist-selves as well as performances of other subjectivities, including notions of distance, and how these might be interwoven.

As a consequence, what was made visible by this research was that the differences that are often referred to as defining distance delivery in relation to visual arts education as suggested above, did not seem to matter in the same way as study-participants' notions of artist-self were still performed in the distance learning and teaching environment. The lack of a shared studio and the supposed lack of presence and proximity in participant's engagement with the MA&D programme delivered via distance, with artistic practices and processes, both their own and their peers, did not matter in the enactment of notions of

artist-selves. This was because different entities, relations, and practices were enabled once the situation was investigated. Notions of artist-self were performed in relation to the distance delivery of a postgraduate visual arts degree, although they were rendered through different means, not reliant on the presence-making assumed in the shared academic studio. The significance of this understanding is the need to question the taken-for-grantedness of aspects of the visual arts studio-based pedagogical model, of distance delivery, and of performances of notions of artist-selves. The implications for distance delivery of visual arts education is to acknowledge the power of relationships rather than focus on entities that might specify a lack or differences, and to foster the relationality of practices interwoven in the networked environment so that their potential can be realised.

1.8 Structuring the thesis

This thesis is organised into eight chapters. It is, in a sense, a gradual unfolding of the study as it materialised. It draws on the sensibilities of ANT whereby the thesis reflects the story of the research journey in a wayfaring sense (Ingold, 2011) and therefore, is itself a mode of ordering. Consequently, while the question at the heart of the research remained unchanged, it is posed from different perspectives in response to engaging with the nature of the question, emergent understandings, and the need to negotiate shifts as differing perspectives were exposed and examined. The thesis includes my reflexive engagement with both the theoretical and methodological underpinnings, as well as the empirical intervention, and the theoretical ideas and questions arising from these. In each chapter, ideas are unfolded and explored more as stories, often dealing with minutiae as mentioned earlier, and accordingly do not necessarily offer standard introductions or summaries. In an ANT approach, stories must be multiple. This recognises, on the one hand, that there is 'no single answer, no single grand narrative' (Law, 2000a, p. 2), and on the other, helps reveal the complexity of phenomena which in this case, includes both the focus of the study and the research process itself.

The first chapter outlines the study, and situates it in terms of an experiential case and a proposed beginning. Chapter 2 introduces and unfolds Foucault's ideas concerning the constitution of subjectivities, his notion of author-function and his relational approach to understanding the subject, all of which inform this study. Chapter 3 considers actor-network theory (ANT) as an approach to understanding the social, and to understanding how subjectivities are performed, as well as relationships with Foucault's ideas. It also outlines practices involved in an investigative intervention into understanding performances of subjectivities, and into how phenomena are enacted with ANT's reflexive sensibility to materiality, relationality, and processes. Chapter 4 addresses the empirical intervention, describing planning, decisions, and processes, as well as reflections on issues arising during the various phases. Chapter 5 tells stories or vignettes of the study-

participants' experiences incorporating phrases (indicated by the use of double quote marks) from the conversation transcripts. Chapter 6 and 7 also tell stories as further modes of ordering. They are reflexive responses to matters revealed through the empirical intervention. Chapter 6 explores how distance delivery performs and is performed, while Chapter 7 proposes some practices in performances of subjectivities enabled during the research process, and explores some dynamics performed in the interplay between distance or online delivery and the participant's experiences of performances of notions of the artist-self. Chapter 8 concludes this study, albeit for the time being.

Chapter 2 Considering Foucault

2.1 Introducing Foucault

The work of Michel Foucault spanned a 30-year period until his death in 1984. His writing, lectures, and interviews are a complex body of work and consequently have been extensively interpreted, critiqued, refuted, and employed as the basis for further study. He addressed numerous themes including subjectivity, power, knowledge, discourses, and discipline. While these were all related to ways of knowing or understanding how knowledge is constituted in relation to these ideas, his work cannot be considered a finite project as it often lacks cohesion and synthesis. D. Taylor (2010) called his work unsystematic, while Rabinow and Rose (2003) described it as 'fragmentary – experiments, interventions, provocations, and reflections' (p. 2). Scott (2009) suggested his research was 'always experimental and in process' (p. 352), a result of the fact that Foucault was responding to and trying to understand present cultural and social practices, albeit through investigations of past events. Accordingly, Foucault's practice was reflexive in nature which also meant he often 'reread' his ideas, feeling 'obliged' to change his mind on important points as the research developed (e.g., Foucault, 1993). This led to aspects of his work being considered contradictory but as Foucault commented, 'My work takes place between unfinished abutments and anticipatory strings of dots' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 246).

However, the purpose of these provocations and interventions was always the same and this was not to provide answers. It was to open up thinking, dialogue, and debate, to call into question and provoke, and even to complicate, but always to help us think differently (e.g., Foucault, 2003b, 1980/2003b). On the other hand, the destabilising tactics of his provocations were also underpinned by an 'agenda of demystification' (Downing, 2008, p. vii). This provided an overriding agenda for Foucault's research. He outlined a number of times that his 'general project' was to develop knowledge of the subject (e.g., Foucault, 1993; Foucault, c 1980/2003). In response to a self-proposed question 'Why study power?' he explained, '... it is not power, but the subject, that is the general theme of my research' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 127). He clarified that his aim was 'to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings have been made subjects' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 126). In creating a history of these modes, Foucault was interested in understanding and making this process of subjectivity constitution visible.

Foucault's practices of reflexivity, of attempting to demystify, to question and think differently about social phenomena as well as his interest in subjectivity provide perspectives on both the approach to this research and on understanding the nature of subjectivity. Therefore, what follows is a reflexive engagement with Foucault's notions of

subjectivity and how they might be enacted, his questioning of the 'author' as a means to approaching notions of artist, and some of his approaches to undertaking his research which are of value in this endeavour.

2.2 Constituting subjectivities

Objectivising and subjectivity

Foucault's investigation into the constitution of the subject has been characterised, as with all his work, by shifts in opinion and approach. O'Farrell (2005) usefully mapped these shifts, arguing that his notion of the subject as fluid with the possibility of being modified by both itself and external circumstances, did not 'suddenly appear without warning' in his later work (p. 111). In a 1982 essay, Foucault identified that to date, he had employed three modes of investigating how human beings are transformed into subjects (Foucault, 1982/2003a). The first mode was the objectivising of the subject through the social sciences or theories of knowledge such as linguistics, biology, and economics. Viewing Foucault's work chronologically, Rabinow (1984) identified this as his second mode and referred to it as 'scientific classification' (p. 10). These discourses of language, life, and labour, like all the sciences, are a means of categorising, ordering, and attempting to explain the world. Foucault clarified this; 'I have tried to analyse ... theories of the subject as a speaking, living and working being' (Foucault, 1993, p. 203). Here he looked to understand the self through these discourses and to understand how the practice of them was involved in the constitution of the subject.

The second mode of objectivising a subject is through what he called 'dividing practices'. This is where 'the subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 126). Here he examined the practices of institutions of society to understand the workings of power and knowledge with respect to human relationships and interactions. He investigated the practices in institutions such as prisons and hospitals, 'where certain subjects became objects of knowledge and at the same time objects of domination' (Foucault, 1993, p. 203). Through the dividing and coercive practices of these social institutions, the human subject was categorised, objectified, and subsequently identified. Rabinow (1984) suggested the constituted subject, in this case, could be 'seen as a victim', the subject of domination and manipulation (p. 10).

In the third mode of objectivising, which was at the time his current mode, Foucault was interested in gaining an understanding of how subjects created or constituted themselves, or 'the way a human being turns him- or herself into a subject' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 126). Here Foucault acknowledged the possibility of the subject's self-creation and

investigated how this might happen. O'Farrell (2005) observed that there is evidence of the idea of self-transformation and the possibility of subjects working on themselves in Foucault's writing as early as 1961. However, it is through these modes of investigation that Foucault formed various ideas and shifting understandings of the self, thereby making the constitution processes of the subject visible.

This problem of the subject, the question of the subject, and how we can know and understand the self, has been fundamental to Western social and philosophical traditions (Danaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2000b; Rabinow, 1984). However, Foucault was sceptical of these metaphysical traditions as they perpetuated the notion of self as an essential or universal phenomenon. He argued, 'Nothing is fundamental. That is what is interesting in the analysis of society' (Foucault, 1984f, p. 247). Some suggested this position was in response to his own philosophical education (Anderson, 2010; Downing, 2008). Here the emphasis was on the subject as a pre-given entity, as one that was fixed and unchanging. This subject could give meaning to the world, and therefore be the originator of knowledge.

Instead, Foucault was interested in a subject who was the 'subject of experience' (Downing, 2008, p. ix). While Foucault acknowledged at one point that his 'usage of the word experience was very floating' (Foucault, 1984/2003b, p. 336), he clarified this in later work. He identified the interplay of the three conjoined domains of knowledge (or truth), power and ethics as what he was to call the 'field of experience' (Foucault, 2003b, p. 387) or the 'locus of experience' (Foucault, 1984/2003b, p. 60). However, he noted that the 'relative importance of these three axes is not always the same for all forms of experience' (Foucault, 1984/2003b, p. 61). In discussing this notion of experience, O'Leary (2008) explained that in French, the term Foucault used means both to experiment and to experience. Thus, 'experience is an activity of the individual rather than something that happens to the individual' (O'Leary, 2008, p. 20). Similarly, O'Farrell (2005) proposed Foucault's definition of 'experience' was 'a subjective event that transforms the way people relate to themselves and to each other and their surroundings' (p. 118). Accordingly, this subject was always specifically located and therefore in the arena of human experiences, and of historical, social and cultural practices. This approach was necessary because, for Foucault, 'there is no external position of certainty, no understanding that is beyond history and society' (Rabinow, 1984, p. 4).

Since this subject of experience is embedded in society and consequently changeable rather than being a fixed entity, Foucault's investigations needed to concentrate on how the modern Western subject was constituted, on how the subject functioned in relation to society (Rabinow, 1984). Therefore, his research to unravel and reveal the emerging subject concentrated on the question of how we can understand ourselves or 'our relation to ourselves' rather than who or what we are (Rabinow & Rose, 2003, p. xx). And as

Marshall (2001) suggested, proposing a 'how?' question is, in fact, a questioning of experience. It is an empirical question. In addition, by addressing how things happen rather than what things are, Foucault was able to resist the traditional focus on a substantive subject or the idea of a given fundamental human nature. Therefore, in asking how rather than what, he was able to dispense with the subject per se, or the 'subject itself' (Foucault, 1984g, p. 59). Foucault clarified his approach to gaining knowledge of the constitution of the subject saying,

What I rejected was the idea of starting out with a theory of the subject ... and on the basis of this theory, asking how a given form of knowledge was possible. What I wanted to try and show was how the subject constituted itself, in one specific form or another ... through certain practices. (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 33)

What is also evident here is that Foucault's notion of the subject was of one that is fluid and not always the same. Rather than being a given or an autonomous entity, the subject is instead contingent, unstable and dynamic, with the possibility of being constituted in various 'forms' and through different 'practices'.

Foucault further defined this notion of the subject, stating that it was not 'a substance. It is a form, and this form is not primarily or always identical to itself ... in each case [each different form of the subject], one plays, one establishes a different type of relationship to oneself' (1984/2003a, p. 33). This acknowledges the idea that for one individual there are different forms of the subject in varying circumstances. For example, one can constitute oneself as both teacher and daughter. Therefore, in asking the question 'how things happen' there is a possibility of identifying and understanding the relationships involved in the performances of subjectivity, and the different forms of the subject within particular practices and experiences, and in the case of this research, of performances of notions of artist-selves in relation to online or distance learning experiences.

Performing relations

During his investigations into the constitution of the subject, Foucault became aware of, as he called it, 'the question of power' (Foucault, 1982/2003a). While O'Farrell (2005) highlighted that 'Foucault's ideas on power are notoriously changeable' (p. 98), she also acknowledged that some constants existed across his work. Similar to his stance on notions of the subject, Foucault argued that the phenomenon of power is not substantive. Again, Foucault asserted, 'these are not fundamental phenomena. There are only reciprocal relations, and the perpetual gaps between intentions in relation to one another' (Foucault, 1984f, p. 247). So power is not a thing or an entity (Foucault, 1982/2003a). Rather it is relational in the way it operates and manifests itself. Accordingly, he clarified his use of the word power, noting it should always be read as the expression 'relations of power' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 34). Sets of power relations are inherent and embedded

in all human interactions and experiences, both actual and potential. As M. A. Peters and Marshall (1993) noted, Foucault recognised that power relations exist at both the macro- and micro-level within society. They are inevitable and omnipresent as well as being multiple. Indeed, Foucault considered that a society could not 'exist without power relations' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 40). Foucault elaborated on his notion of power relations.

I mean that in human relationships, whether they involve verbal communication ... or amorous, institutional, or economic relationships, power is always present; I mean a relationship in which one person tries to control the conduct of the other. So I am speaking of relations that exist at different levels, in different forms; these power relations are mobile, they can be modified, they are not fixed once and for all. (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 34)

These relations work through all areas and levels of society, and affect all human behaviour and human actions. Therefore, they are in a constant state of flux. They are continually being performed, enacted, revised, and re-negotiated between both individuals and groups. Consequently, they are neither stable nor permanent. In addition, power cannot be possessed, and therefore it cannot be concentrated at either a point of origin or a point of domination (Armstrong, 2005; Caputo & Yount, 1993). Consequently, these relations of power continually circulate through society.

As the human subject exists within these complex relations of power (Foucault, 1982/2003a), Foucault was interested in the effects of power on the constitution of the subject. While power is commonly associated with ideas of domination and repression, in his later work Foucault rejected the notion of repression as a means of describing the effects of power (Foucault, 1984g). Elsewhere he implored us to 'cease ... to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it "excludes," it "represses," it "censors," it "abstracts," it "masks," it "conceals"' (Foucault, 1984c, p. 205). Instead, he wanted us to focus on the fact that power relations are productive. He identified a notion of power that is 'exerted over things and gives the ability to modify, use, consume or destroy', and power that 'brings into play relations between individuals (or between groups)' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 135). With an ability to modify and to bring into play, his notion of power relations can therefore be understood to be productive as well as constraining or repressive. Thus as Fox (2000) noted, 'without power nothing is achieved' (p. 858). This productive aspect of power was what Foucault emphasised in his later work.

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault, 1984g, p. 61)

As this suggests, the productive nature of power relations led Foucault to argue that power and knowledge were inseparable. If the exercising of power relations was 'a way in

which certain actions may structure the field of other possible actions' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 140), then forms of knowledge must be produced in and from these power relations. Alternatively, as Thiele (2003) argued, 'Power creates the background conditions under which the world becomes encountered and known' (p. 222). Therefore, knowledge is enmeshed in all social practices. Accordingly, knowledge itself is not autonomous, and it is not detached from its 'empirical roots' (Foucault, 1984g, p. 96). Furthermore, Caputo and Yount (1993) suggested 'knowledge is what power relations produce in order to spread and disseminate all the more effectively' (p. 7). What counts as knowledge in society is the product of certain power relations with different techniques of power producing different types of knowledge. Thus, there is no knowledge outside of these relations. Equally, there is no power relation without a corresponding knowledge relation. Foucault proposed that 'power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge' (Foucault, 1984a, p. 175). However, while power and knowledge are in a complex relationship, they should not be mistaken for the same thing. The implications of understanding knowledge in this way for this research is that any knowledge of performances of notions of artist-selves can only be understood in relation to the empirical situation and each person's experience.

Modes of action

What makes the multiplicity of power and knowledge relations productive is the way in which they operate in society. Since power is not substantive, hierarchical, or an entity to be possessed, Foucault (1982/2003a) argued that power relations are 'exercised' (p. 134), and as a result, they need to be 'put into action' (p. 137). Therefore, power only exists when, or as, it is 'put into action'. Foucault goes on to describe it as 'a way', 'a mode of action' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 137). In other words, it is a practice, which by virtue of its relationality, does not directly act on other entities. 'Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 137).

Relations of power become productive for human subjectivity due to the subject's capacity for action, by possessing the capability for reaction. This 'action upon action' can also be seen in terms of resistance in response to the exercise of power relations. 'This means that in power relations there is necessarily the possibility of resistance because if there were no possibility of resistance ... there would be no power relations at all' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 34). On the one hand, the act of resistance to power helps locate the power relations, and on the other, Foucault suggested 'forms of resistance' or 'struggles' against power 'categorise the individual' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 130). He further argued, 'It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects. There are two

meanings of the word “subject”: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge’ (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 130). This suggested ‘we are both *subject to* and the *subjects of* the workings of power relations’ (Downing, 2008, p. 2, emphasis in original). The subject is therefore constituted by the ongoing interplay of power relations within society. In addition, this subject is also constituted in relation to knowledge, as a knowing subject. It is through the interplay of these relations and the arising ‘games of strategy’ (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 40) that the self is constituted and one comes to understand the self. The productive effects of power relations are what enable the individual as subject within a local context. They also give rise to the production of knowledge about the individual, both for the subject and for others, thus providing the opportunity for recognition.

What is important about Foucault’s idea of how power relations are exercised is the idea that we, as subjects, are not put in a position of being repressed, of only being a docile body. We must act in response to an action before the networks of power are brought into being. This reaction and effort of resistance means that resistance itself is implicit in the operation of these networks. The act of resistance can be seen as a form of freedom, albeit a freedom within limits, or ‘a field of possibilities in which several kinds of conduct, several ways of reacting and modes of behaviours are available’ (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 139). Like resistance, freedom is a practice rather than a state of being, and practices of freedom are necessary for individuals to function effectively in society. Therefore, for Foucault, freedom and power do not oppose or confront one another. They imply each other in as much as freedom is only manifest when power is manifest and vice versa. He talked of a game, defined in terms of a ‘set of procedures’ (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 38), and a ‘complicated interplay ... [where] freedom may well appear as the condition for the exercise of power (at the same time its precondition, since freedom must exist for power to be exerted)’ (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 139).

As determined already, power relations give rise to subjectivities. With the certainty of agency implicit in this interplay, the human subject is not at the mercy of forces only outside of itself. There is the possibility for individuals to be aware of themselves in the interplay of power and freedom, and to choose how to act. They can engage in establishing a relationship with themselves, and as a result engage in a practice of transformation, a modification of the self and in self-creation. It was in his later works that Foucault moved to studying what he called ‘those forms of understanding which the subject creates about himself’ (Foucault, 1993, p. 203). He acknowledged the shift in interest to investigating this ‘practice of self-formation of the subject’ (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 26).

With practices of freedom arising through power relations and resistance, Foucault now proposed that this was a necessary condition for ‘individuals to be able to define

admissible and acceptable forms of existence' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 26). The idea that the subject could consciously engage in practices of freedom, and as a result be self-aware, self-reflective, and self-critical, recognised the possibility of agency and an ethical dimension for an individual. In defining an acceptable form of existence for oneself, an individual has an ethical and moral responsibility. For Foucault, ethics was defined as the kind of relationship one has, or ought to have with oneself (Foucault, 1984d). However, it was also defined in terms of freedom, where 'freedom is the ontological condition of ethics. But ethics is the considered form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 28). Therefore, ethics is also a practice as opposed to a way of being (Foucault, 1984e). It is a practice, 'an exercise of the self on the self by which one attempts to develop and transform oneself, and to attain a certain mode of being' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 26). As a practice, it 'determines how the individual is supposed to constitute himself as a moral subject of his own actions' (Foucault, 1984d, p. 352).

To conduct this exercise on the self by the self, to engage the 'reflective ... aspect of freedom', there is the need to know and to recognise oneself (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 29). As Fox (2000) noted, 'The self or subject acts upon itself, uses force upon itself and does so on the basis of self-knowledge' (p. 859). This ethical subject has, as a member of society, a responsibility not only to themselves but also to others. Therefore in the practice of ethics 'the main moral obligations for any subject is to know oneself, to tell the truth about oneself, and to constitute oneself as an object of knowledge both for other people and for oneself' (Foucault, 1993, p. 223). It is through this reflection and subsequent knowing that the subject establishes a relationship with themselves and with others. This subsequently constitutes the individual as an ethical subject.

In order to establish relationships to oneself, one must take up a practice of self-care. Foucault related his notion of care to that of a doctor's caring, which as a more complex practice, is 'a sort of work, an activity; it implies attention, knowledge, technique' (Foucault, 1984d, p. 360). Key to the practice of self-care is the constant engagement with self-reflection and self-critique or critical thinking (Marshall, 2001; Schirato, Danaher, & Webb, 2012). To be able to take care of oneself, the individual must reflect, and knowingly deploy techniques and activities which constitute the subject 'in an active fashion' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 34). These practices of the self result in how the subject will be recognised and perceived by both themselves and by others. These practices are what Foucault termed variously 'techniques of the self' and 'technologies of the self' (e.g., Foucault, 2003a). Kendall & Michael (2001) along with others, have highlighted the confusion caused among readers of Foucault in the use of the terms technique and technology which have arisen in the French-to-English translation. They maintained the term technique provided a more appropriate understanding of the

concept, as Foucault was drawing on the Greek term *techne* which, as McGushin (2010) argued 'usually translated as know-how or craft or art' (p. 135).

These techniques of the self refer to the specific behaviours and practices human beings employ to constitute who they might be, who they might become, and how they might be in the world. In attempting to understand the ways 'humans develop knowledge about themselves' (Foucault, 1982/2003b, p. 146), Foucault went on to identify four major groups of techniques or technologies they employ in the constitution of the self. These are techniques of production, of sign systems, of power, and then of the self. While noting that any analysis of techniques of the self was difficult because techniques of the self 'are invisible techniques' (Foucault, 2003a, p. 123), these groupings tend to be interlinked and seldom function independently or separately. Kendall and Michael (2001) suggested the very fluidity of the human subject 'has a *de facto* status which "prompts" the various techniques or technologies of self' (para. 2). Foucault proposed that techniques of the self

permit individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality.
(Foucault, 1982/2003b, p. 146)

On the one hand, individuals were to effect their own means in order to negotiate a subjectivity. Foucault believed that the constitution of the self should be a creative enterprise as he wrote, 'From the idea that the self is not given to us, I think that there is only one practical consequence: we have to create ourselves as a work of art' (Foucault, 2003a, p. 110). Since the techniques of self-activity arise within the exercise of power and freedom, constituting ourselves creatively was meant in terms of exercising a 'mastery over oneself' (Foucault, 2003a, p. 108). 'We should not have to refer the creative activity of someone to the kind of relations he has to himself, but should relate the kind of relation one has to oneself to a creative activity' (Foucault, 2003a, p. 110). In this regard, relating self-constitution to the creation of a work of art implies fluidity and a sensitivity to the idea of uniqueness (Kendall & Michael, 2001). Therefore, as Flaming (2006) argued our 'individual notions of aesthetics then allow for the differences between selves and others' (p. 222).

On the other hand, the subject is embedded in society, and is not autonomous, and so these techniques are not practised in isolation. As mentioned above, the practice of these techniques can involve others. As Foucault (2003a) argued, they are often connected to 'the techniques of the direction of others. For example, if we take educational institutions, we realise that one is managing others and teaching them to manage themselves' (p. 123). However, neither the techniques effected by the self nor those effected by others, arise in isolation. Foucault proposed that 'these practices are ... not something invented by the individual themselves ... they ... are proposed, suggested, imposed upon him by

his culture, his society and his social group' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 34). Foucault was not suggesting one becomes a slave to oneself or that these practices were only of benefit for the self. This is because the caring he spoke of is like the 'caring' that a doctor engages which implies taking care of others. This means the nature of caring for oneself and the care of others is essentially the same. Therefore, as part of an ethical practice, the 'relationship with others is present throughout the development of the care of the self' (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 30). As Revel (2009) argued, it is this idea of the inclusion of relationships with others in the care of the self that 'forbids a return to individualism ... and resists every temptation to towards the ... essentialisation of the self' (Revel, 2009, p. 49).

What is evident from mapping Foucault's understandings of the self, and acknowledging the self as situated and constituted through techniques of power (including resistance and freedom), and techniques of the self, is that a notion of a self that Foucault described is a 'relational subject' (Hallward, 2000, p. 101). Therefore, the self is one that 'exists only in the medium of relations' (Hallward, 2000, p. 93), and by implication, is one that is performed by these relations. The individual self has a specificity which is brought into being by the interconnections with and between three broad areas, namely 'relations of control over things, relations of action upon others, relations with oneself' (Foucault, 2003c, p. 55). These areas relate to the interconnected axes of knowledge (truth), power, and ethics (Foucault, 2003c) within a local context, and as discussions of Foucault's ideas show, these axes remain inescapably mediated by and through each other. However, the importance of the presence of these multi-layers of relationality is that they overrule the possibility of dependency and therefore singularity (Lemke, 2011) or an essentialist view of subjectivity. Therefore, the individual self is continually constituted through practices and forms of actions, that is, as a performance and a becoming, as opposed to assuming a particular and fixed way of being.

These practices and notions of action and performances in the constitution of subjectivities will be re-considered in the following chapter in the light of actor-network theory's ideas as well as in subsequent chapters where distance delivery is explored in relation to performances of notions of artist-self. Meanwhile, the next section discusses Foucault's ideas on what he termed the author-function, which are important to consider in the problems of understanding and recognising an artist-self in the process of the research.

2.3 Naming and author-function

Considering naming

Foucault's position on subjectivity makes it clear that he was not interested in identity per se, and indeed, was suspicious of the notion (Downing, 2008; Rabinow & Rose, 2003). This is because the identity of an individual is often viewed in essentialist terms whereby the individual is reduced to a fixed, unchangeable identity, which in turn implies that the subject is an autonomous entity. Foucault was also concerned that the act of classifying or organising individuals into identifiable groups could become a way of exercising power and therefore subjugating the individual (O'Farrell, 2005). He referred to these acts as a form of normalising power, made up of a normalising judgement and a normalising gaze (Foucault, 1984c). The act of classification and normalising therefore implies that individuals are the 'same realities ... more or less contiguous' (Schirato et al., 2012, p. 154). This does not allow for the differences between people, between their attitudes and behaviours that are evident in everyday life or for the various subject positions that are performed so that people function in society. Foucault's theorisation of a way of relating to both oneself and to others in the constitution of the self also demonstrated his refusal to reduce subjectivity to identity (Revel, 2009). Therefore, by attending to all Foucault's understandings on subjectivity including his ideas on ethical modes of action, of acknowledging the individual as a situated self within the discursive practices of society and the possibilities of using 'strategies of resistance and self-formation' (Mayo, 2000, p. 106), he has perhaps offered some means for a knowable subject. S. Hall (1996/2000) observed that what 'the evolution of Foucault's work clearly shows – is not an abandonment or abolition of "the subject" but a reconceptualization' (p. 16).

As mentioned above, embracing Foucault's ideas on how subjectivities are constituted, and on identity, could infer there are issues in even referring to a notion of 'artist'. Thus, there are uncertainties embedded in the research itself. The use of artist as a potentially all-encompassing and collective term could suggest the supposition of a pre-existing category or theory of the object under investigation. Foucault eschewed the idea of basing any analytical work or conceptualisation on an established theory, 'since a theory assumes a prior objectification' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 127). It is important to start from a position where the 'conceptualised object' is not a 'single criterion' but instead becomes the site of the investigation itself (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 127).

One way Foucault ensured this happened was in his approach to framing his questions. As mentioned, he 'granted a certain privileged position to the question of "how"' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 134). He asserted that by beginning with a 'how' question it was possible to introduce 'suspicion' about the existence of an all-encompassing concept

(Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 134). Therefore, in wondering 'how' any notion of artist-self might be enacted in relation to a specific environment, doubt is inherently cast on the term artist as a 'reifying term' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 134). Scott (2009) confirmed that asking how objects or phenomena appear as they do, rather than what they 'essentially' are, demonstrated a different approach to thinking about entities (p. 355). As Foucault implied, such an approach resists abstractions, resists engagement with theories, and resists any focus on the idea of fundamental concepts. Therefore, there is a need to concentrate on the concrete and the empirical and, as Marshall (2001) noted, Foucault's, 'question of experience is a "How?" question' (p. 83). Foucault, however, was clear that the point of asking how 'divisions' or categories and classification (for example, insanity) were realised was 'to get a better understanding of what ... and why [and] yield ... a fairly fruitful kind of intelligibility' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 247).

What is an author?

Nevertheless, Foucault himself asked in a 1969 lecture, 'What is an Author?' He did not attempt to define an author as such, but instead examined the notion of an author in terms of *how* one might operate. As Nesbit (1987) noted, authors are 'not necessarily artists' (p. 233) but Foucault's work here is of value in terms of this research as he limited his investigation by choosing to deal with the relationship between the author and the work or text, and what he called the author-function. Although he did not specifically refer to Barthes's work, Foucault's discussion should be seen in the light the 1967 essay *The Death of the Author* (e.g., A. Wilson, 2004). Barthes argued that a text (or as contemporary visual arts students are taught, a work of art) should only be criticised and understood in relation to itself. Therefore, the author or artist, their biography, character or intentions should not be considered in any analysis of a work. This approach privileged the text, or the language of the text, over the author or artist when attributing meaning to the work. Alternatively, as Huijter (1999) suggested, with this understanding, the spoken word and the written word do not begin with the speaker or writer. As Hudson (2009) suggested 'placing the teller ahead of the tale emphasises the ephemeral nature of all meaning' (p. 298). The position Foucault adopted denied the possibility of the author being a discrete and 'unique subject' (Danaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2000a, p. 153) or as Barthes would have it, the 'Author' was dead. This also emphasised the processual or relational nature of subjectivity and the significance of understanding the *how* rather than the *who*.

A. Wilson (2004) usefully led us through not only the context of Foucault's discussion in 'What is an author?' but also examined the logic of his arguments highlighting, for example, the sliding use of terminology and complex rhetorical moves within the lecture. One instance of the confusing use of terms cited by A. Wilson (2004) is the replacement

of the term 'discourses' with the term 'text' resulting in a loss of clarity. Despite his thorough reading of the text, A. Wilson (2004) argued that 'It remained entirely ambiguous whether "the" author-function was one phenomenon or several' and suggested 'the very concept of the "author-function" was never defined' (p. 350). Nesbit (1987), in proposing that a standard of measure for the author could be found in the law, argued that Foucault's author was 'disconnected from the procedures of everyday life' and suggested the author continued to function whether 'the state of knowledge recognised their existence or not' (Nesbit, 1987, p. 240). It is these uncertainties that may be why this text of Foucault's is often omitted from discussions of his work (Downing, 2008). However, there is value in examining it in terms of this research as the author-function can perhaps be seen, not only in epistemological terms but also in ontological terms.

Author-function

In his usual approach, Foucault set out to problematise the figure of the author or 'to make "the author" the site of an enquiry' (A. Wilson, 2004, p. 343). He explained how he viewed the 'question of the author' as 'a privileged moment of individualisation in the history of ideas, knowledge and literature' (Foucault, 1969/1977, p. 115). Purposely setting aside the subjectivity of the 'author as an individual' (Foucault, 1969/1977, p. 115), Foucault proposed that the notion of author be seen as a construction, albeit temporary. To acknowledge this, he coined the term 'author-function' and consequently saw this as a means of investigating and understanding 'author'. This term, he noted, also acknowledged 'the "author" as a function of discourse' (Foucault, 1969/1977, p. 124). He proposed that 'This "author-function" is not formed spontaneously through the simple attribution of a discourse to an individual. It results from a complex operation whose purpose is to construct the rational entity we call an author' (Foucault, 1969/1977, p. 127). The discourses are both endowed with and support the author-function. For example, they could include the poetic or artistic, but equally the author-function can identify discourses and authorise them to circulate within a society, for example, Freudian analysis (Danaher et al., 2000a). As A. Wilson (2004) proposed, 'it is precisely the author-function which *authorises* the very idea of "an author"' (p. 341, emphasis in original), thus enabling us to view it in ontological terms.

Foucault established limits for his analysis by examining the relationship between the text or the work and the author. One of his aims was, like Barthes's just discussed, to dispel the myth of 'author as genius, as a perpetual surging of invention' (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 390). Another was to emphasise both the instability and the interdependence of these notions of text and author (Downing, 2008). Therefore, the concept of the author-function served to make us aware of the relationality and therefore the performing involved in the

construction of the notion of authorship. However, A. Wilson (2004) observed that Foucault did not discuss the effect that this relationality of authorship had on the text. Nor did he address how a work might exist without a relation to an author (Downing, 2008). A. Wilson (2004) also highlighted how in Foucault's debate, the link between the text and the author sometimes disappeared, despite initially framing his argument to look at this relationship. Nevertheless, as A. Wilson (2004) concluded, 'Just as "the author" is a constructed "function" (not simply an existent or once-existent person), so "the work" is a constructed entity (not simply a natural or empirical given)' (p. 355).

In situating the author-figure in relation to text, Foucault made us aware of at least one relationship that makes it possible to understand author as a function. This implies there are other possible relationships that can be used to examine the notion of the author or in the case of this research, artist and how this might function. As an example, Barrett (2006) used Foucault's ideas on author-function to argue for a re-focusing of relationships which enabled a researcher to establish some critical distance in the discussion of their artworks as artistic research. This entailed the researcher shifting their focus from privileging the artwork to recognising and acknowledging the processes involved in studio practice as well as the outcomes as part of the research process. In addition, O'Leary (2008) argued that the text has the possibility to effect the human subject (as reader) using Foucault's notion of experience and its transformative effects. Therefore, in the case of this research, performances of notions of artist-self can be examined in the light of relationships with other discourses and practices, and within local circumstances, not only that of the text or artwork. In examining these relationships that support the author-function, Foucault urged us to return to the question of the subject, not in terms of an 'origination subject but to grasp the subject's points of insertion, modes of functioning and systems of dependencies' (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 390).

Performing subject positions

Another inherent uncertainty in using the term artist at the outset of this research is that this appears to presume that 'artist' as a category does exist. Moreover, it implies the possibility of attributing normalising characteristics to individuals, which in turn risks rendering a sameness to all individuals identified or categorised as such. In discussing his ideas on author-function, Foucault identified that a variety of different subject positions could arise in and from each discourse as well as within the relationships between individuals and aspects of this discourse. Each of these different subject positions or different performances of subjectivity give rise to not only different sets of ideas but also different understandings of the subject. Having already noted that he was not addressing the identity of the individual author, Foucault differentiated between the subject positions of the author, the writer, and the narrator.

The author, to whom we assign texts, is not the same as the writing subject or the fictional speaker or narrator in the text. Alternatively, the self in terms of the discourse surrounding the text is not the same as the self who undertook the task of writing at a specific time and place. In addition, these are not the same as the self that narrates the text wherein this self is required to 'conclude' or 'suppose' (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 386). It is within the 'scission', in the 'division' and the 'distance' between these that the author-function performs and operates (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 385). These different subject positions operate according to different rules within each of the discourses surrounding it. Therefore the author-function 'does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise simultaneously to several selves, to several subjects – positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals' (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 386). Foucault went on to identify that 'all discourses endowed with this author-function possess this plurality of self' (1969/2003, p. 386). This suggests that all discourses that an artist is performed by and engages in can operate in this way. Along with the subject positions discussed by Foucault, Barrett (2006) outlined some other, 'dispersed selves of the author' (p. 4) that can be recognised when examining, in her case, the artistic researcher. For example, she included the artist researcher who locates themselves in a 'field of theory and practice', and one who discusses their 'work in relation to other works' (Barrett, 2006, p. 5).

Performing a naming

Foucault also usefully demonstrated how the function of a name and therefore the potential act of naming can contribute to the instability of notions such as author or in the case of this research, artist. He argued that an author's name and a proper name are not just 'a simple reference' to an identifiable individual (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 380). While these names 'gesture at someone', they have 'other than indicative functions' (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 380). He maintained that the author's name and the proper name are 'situated between the two poles of description and designation' each being neither entirely in one mode nor the other (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 381). In addition, although these names resemble each other in that they look and sound the same when written and spoken, they function very differently. Therefore, they give rise to different understandings. In addition, there is not a direct relationship between each of the different type of names and what they name, that is, there is no equivalence. As A. Wilson (2004) noted, everyday usage can conceal these subtle differences between how names can function. While this is a strength of Foucault's discussion, A. Wilson (2004) also suggested this emphasis on the difference has suppressed 'a resemblance which is, in fact, the very condition of the 'author-function', for it is precisely as the bearer of a name that "the author" performs the cultural role which Foucault is attempting to disclose' (A.

Wilson, 2004, p. 357). From Foucault's discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that all acts of naming need to consider not only the purpose and the function of naming but also question any taken-for-grantedness, and acknowledge and embrace the fluidities in the name, and in the act of naming.

Implicit in the understanding of a function or more specifically the author-function, is its performing and performative nature. On the one hand, to function, an entity must perform in relation to other things. On the other, the subsequent functioning or performance implies that the entity has performed itself into being. While Foucault did not use the term performance specifically, this idea of performativity, which is implicit in the author-function, is evident in Foucault's outline of what he considered some of the important characteristics of author-function. Here he tied the function to practices that give rise to the discourses. He highlighted that 'it does not operate in a uniform manner in all discourses, at all times, and in any given culture' (Foucault, 1969/1977, p. 130). In addition, as already discussed, it is defined by a series of 'complex procedures' (Foucault, 1969/1977, p. 130), and it gives rise to 'a series of subjective positions' (Foucault, 1969/1977, p. 131). So not only does the author-function perform the author into being, albeit temporarily, it authorises, as A. Wilson (2004) proposed, the very notion of the author, whereby the notion of the author is itself a function or performance. As Downing (2008) concluded, while Foucault was looking to a literary discourse in his discussions on 'What is an author?' he was still examining his ongoing project, namely 'the question of the self' (p. 68). Again, the self is situated, contingent, and constantly, in this context, re-authoring itself. She suggested the self 'is not an author (as institution or authority) but an author-function' (Downing, 2008, p. 68) thereby acknowledging the performances in the constitution of subjectivities.

2.4 Intervening with Foucault

The value of Foucault's work for this investigation lies, not only in his ideas on subjectivity as already discussed but also in aspects of his approach to research. Of interest are both the 'rhetorical qualities' (Downing, 2008, p. ix) of his work and the idea that approaches in his work be considered a 'tool box'.

I would like my books to be a kind of tool box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area ... I would like [my work] to be useful to an educator, a warden, a magistrate, a conscientious objector. I don't write for an audience, I write for users, not readers. (as cited in O'Farrell, 2005, p. 50)

O'Farrell (2005) argued that trying to apply Foucault's whole toolbox would be unwieldy and problematic due to the complexity of ideas, and the fact that, as discussed, these ideas were constantly refined and revised. Therefore, as Oksala (2010) proposed, using his ideas as a tool kit means they can be applied to a broad range of questions while

retaining the flexibility to draw on numerous and diverse sources. Foucault endorsed this approach to utilising his ideas because he was not interested in developing unifying theories or proposing essentialist or fundamentalist notions.

Research and conceptualisation were not to be based on either assuming or establishing a 'theory of the object' under investigation (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 127), but instead, was to form part of a critical procedure. While Lemke (2011) outlined the shifts in Foucault's concept of 'critique', it is the later understanding that is of value for this investigation. In this case, the purpose of the 'critique' was not to find a single valid solution but rather it was to problematise the object or phenomenon under investigation, to create a writing of the problems as opposed to the solutions (Foucault, 2003b). Lemke (2011) noted that problematisation also determined the emergence and the 'conditions of existence' of the object itself (p. 32), thereby revealing the relational performances involved. As Foucault put it, he dreamed of a kind of criticism that would 'try not to judge but to bring an *œuvre*, a book, a sentence, an idea to life.... multiply[ing] not judgments but signs of existence' (Foucault, 1980/2003a, p. 176). This critical activity was, on the one hand, understood as an attitude and on the other, it was to be experimental and by default, experiential in nature (Foucault, 2003c). This also, as Lemke (2011) suggested, 'indicates the relational and collective dimension of critique' (p. 32).

The importance of Foucault's approach for this research lies in the fact that it makes it possible to challenge and question, 'what is' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 256), to analyse and 'criticise the present' (Foucault, 1984f, p. 250), to critique 'what we are saying, thinking and doing' (Foucault, 2003c, p. 53) in practice, in the real world. This is achieved by looking back at what was done, and by not searching for finite solutions but by trying to understand how, in this case, the participants in a particular situation known as distance delivery may or may not be performed in terms of notions of artist-selves.

While Venn and Terranova (2009) argued that 'critical work is diagnostic and analytic' (p. 32), Foucault reinforced that the ultimate aim of this mode of analysis was not to generate knowledge of 'what is to be done' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 256). As discussed, in terms of Foucault's understanding of the relational production of knowledge, this would be untenable. Instead, he emphasised that 'Critique doesn't have to be the premise of a deduction that concludes, "this, then, is what needs to be done." It should be an instrument for those who fight, those who resist and refuse what is' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 256). Therefore, as he demonstrated in his analyses, the result is to offer 'propositions' and 'philosophical fragments' rather than 'dogmatic assertions' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, pp. 246-247). In problematizing the phenomenon under investigation, the aim is to think differently about that entity so that any resulting understandings can be employed to give rise to further debate rather than being an end in themselves. This idea is reflected in the research design of this study.

As a consequence, Foucault's approach was considered a 'critique of ourselves' (Foucault, 2003c, p. 52) which again means empirical investigations are imperative for this type of activity. Therefore, engagement can only take place from an insider position, where one is 'always already involved in what it addresses' (Lemke, 2011, p. 33). This acknowledges the situatedness of social subjects (both researcher and researched) within a nexus of relations, and adheres to Foucault's advice that we need to 'move beyond the outside-inside alternative' (Foucault, 2003c, p. 53). While this idea is addressed again in the next two chapters in relation to actor-network theory and the investigation itself, it is of significance for this research as all of the participants including the researcher, are experiential cases.

Consequently, much of Foucault's work consisted of analyses within the institutions of society. However, the institutions themselves were not of concern, that is, they were not the objects of his analysis. Rather he was interested in the practices or 'regimes of practice' within these institutions (Dean, 1994, p. 78; e.g., Foucault, 1980/2003b). Practice in this case, is understood as 'places where what is said and what is done, rules imposed and reasons given, the planned and the taken-for-granted meet and interconnect' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 248). For example, Foucault was not interested in the prison or the asylum but instead he was interested in 'practices of imprisonment' or 'practices of illness' and their role in the constitution of the subject (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 248). Rather than studying these theories as abstract and universal, as already mentioned, Foucault was interested in investigations situated in the real world. 'The only important problem is what happens on the ground' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 255).

Likewise, it is important to note that this research is not interested in education, the academic institution, pedagogy or in art and the art world per se, but rather in how subjects might be performed as subjects of experience bounded by the relation between and within these institutions, and the ideas and discourses that circulate. To reiterate this point, under consideration here are the practices that arise within and as a particular environment, namely distance delivery of visual arts education, and how these might be interwoven with participant's notions of themselves as artists.

In discussing his approach, Foucault argued that history consisted of dispersed events, ideas, and practices rather than being a 'chain of uninterrupted continuities' (Foucault, 1968/2003, p. 395). It was these events that 'led us to constitute ourselves and recognise ourselves as subjects of what we are doing, thinking, saying' (Foucault, 2003c, p. 53). Thus, he coined the term 'eventualisation' to refer to this aspect of his analytical process. By basing the analysis on the notion of an event, it could be located specifically in both a time and in a place with the associated social, philosophical, institutional, political, technological implications (Foucault, 2003c). The reference to the term event not only

acknowledges the situatedness of practices to be analysed but also acknowledges the situatedness of the event itself within wider social practices and fields.

Foucault's practice of eventualisation meant 'making visible a *singularity* at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant, an immediate anthropological trait, or an obviousness that imposes itself uniformly on all' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 249, emphasis in original). The notion of singularity referred to here should be viewed in temporal terms. Consequently, the 'procedure of eventualisation' forms part of the critiquing process (Foucault, 1997/2003, pp. 273-274). However, in order to consider eventualisation, there needs to be a 'breach of self-evidence, of those self-evidences on which our knowledges ... and practices rest' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 249). In the case of this research topic, many questions could be raised. How much have we as art educators taken-for-granted notions of artist in our pedagogical practices? Is it self-evident, or a matter of course, that the creative subjects we educate perform or recognise themselves as artists in the process? Is it a matter of course that the distancing of many entities and practices as a result of the online delivery of visual arts education has major implications for the performances of notions of artist-self? Is it a matter of course that online pedagogical practices are associated with practices of distancing?

This approach of eventualisation involves 'rediscovering the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of force, strategies, and so on, that at a given moment establish what subsequently counts as being self-evident' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 249). As implied, analysing events entails identifying the 'multiple processes that constitute it' rather than expecting a single explanation of the cause of an event (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 249). The number of processes involved in the constitution of the event will not be known in advance of the investigation and nor will they be finite after the process. The resulting multiplicity will instead complicate 'our understanding of events, their elements, their relations and their domains of reference' (Biesta, 2008, p. 200). The outcomes of such an approach will not only expose what has been taken-for-granted, the assumed self-evident, but it will in turn offer the opportunity to destabilise what may have been taken-for-granted. Once more, there can be no finite solutions of what is found or what is to be done, there can only be propositions.

The next chapter introduces aspects of actor-network theory (ANT) that inform this project. ANT will be discussed as a means of understanding the social and accordingly, for understanding the nature of subjectivity, and as an investigative approach to comprehend performances of subjectivities. As will be seen, ANT's proponents acknowledged links with Foucault's ideas, especially concerning the constitution of the subject as a relational activity and the subject as constituted or performed through complicated and multiple series of actions. The 'work' of this action is a force that performs social networks, an emphasis that will become increasingly important in

identifying and exploring the dynamics at play in performances of notions of artist-selves in relation to the distancing involved in a visual arts online learning and teaching environment.

Chapter 3 Approaching an intervention

3.1 Actor-network theory's understanding of the social

Considering actor-network theory

Actor-network theory (ANT) began its evolution in science and technology studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s, initially in the work of sociologists Bruno Latour, Michel Callon and John Law. These theorists acknowledged their ideas developed in the light of other intellectual traditions where they drew on, for example, philosophies of science and poststructuralism including the works of Serres, Greimas, Foucault, and Deleuze and Guattari. Like Foucault, these sociologists were interested in how knowledge was produced. They called into question and rejected the essentialist and universalist foundations of traditional sociology along with dualist paradigms such as human and non-human, meaning and materiality, macro and micro, social and technical, structure and agency, and nature and culture (Latour, 1999; Law, 1997a, 2007). As Latour argued, the traditional 'philosophical tools' of the subject knowing the object had proved to be inadequate to understand the nature of the social (2014, p. 25). While this will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, this eschewing of the subject/ object divide was something that some say Foucault did not achieve. For example, it has been suggested that despite his engagement with the 'philosophy of the subject', he remained 'caught within its central terms of subject/ object and the paradigm of the knowledge of others as objects' (McNay, 1992, p. 166). ANT theorists were interested in redefining notions of the social and investigating new ways of understanding and describing how the social operated. Of significance for this research is that while both Foucault and ANT embraced the relationality of the social, ANT expanded this to include the materials of society, which enables us to consider, for example, distance delivery differently and examine how it might be constituted and how it might operate, which is discussed in Chapter 6.

While ANT includes the term 'theory' in its name, Law (e.g., 2007), Latour (e.g., 1999) and Callon (e.g., 1999) all argued that it should not be considered a theory per se. Even though Law (2007) conceded that it was 'possible to describe actor-network theory in the abstract' (p. 2), to think of ANT as a theory would risk assuming a priori understandings of the social, on the participants of the social and relationships between these participants. Moreover, to define ANT as a theory of what the social already is, would negate the need to investigate and explain what these sociologists felt was in need of explaining, namely the social order, 'what the social is made of' and how it is made (Latour, 1999, p. 19; see also Law, 1992; Latour, 1994). Consequently, society cannot be considered a pre-

existing or given entity. Rather, it should be understood in terms of associations or relations between entities whereby it is the effect of relations between the entities that in turn, give rise to the social. Or as Latour (1986a) put it, 'society is not what holds us together, it is what is held together' (Latour, 1986a, p. 276).

Since the social is the product of these relational effects, it cannot be a repository of knowledge. This means that knowledge cannot pre-exist or stand alone and be 'objective knowledge' (Latour, 2014, p. 28,). As Law (1992) noted, 'knowledge is a *social product* rather than something generated through the operation of a privileged scientific method' (p. 381, emphasis in original). Not only does this stance align with Foucault's productive relations of power, but it also maintains, as did Foucault, that theories and knowledge arise from the social as opposed to being imposed upon the social (Latour, 1996b). However, ANT 'abandoned' Foucault (Mol, 2002, p. 62) to some extent, although Law (2004) suggested the changes ANT proponents made were not necessarily inconsistent with the logic of Foucault (see also Law, 2007).

While accepting that knowledge was socially produced, Foucault also proposed that society coalesced under a 'single episteme', that is a set of strategies that informs knowledge systems at a particular time (Mol, 2002, p. 62; see also Law, 2001). However, this idea that society was logically ordered by these 'coherent sets of norms imposed in a single order' (Mol, 2002, p. 62; see also Law, 2004) was challenged by early ANT studies. For example, Latour's investigation into pasteurisation in France revealed a situation where society underwent a change because of science. Mol (2002) explained how, in this situation, sets of strategies and norms relating to science did not remain coherent once they came under scrutiny. By examining how scientific knowledge was produced in practice, Latour's study identified that science did not have the 'power to impose its order on society' (Mol, 2002, p. 62). He recognised that all the participants in the particular situation under examination were active entities, thereby revealing that scientific knowledge spread only when entities associated with it, that is, knowledge spread through relations. As a result, ANT moved on from Foucault by proposing the social world be understood as holding together because of the associations formed through relational practices (Mol, 2002). Hence, the metaphor of the network was proposed. However, the coherence of any network then becomes a 'material and practical matter, not a question of logic' (Mol, 2002, p. 64), as was the case for Foucault, because it only holds together through the associations made.

As discussed, ANT is both an approach to understanding the social and, by implication, subjectivity. It is also a means of engaging in social research, whereby it can be employed to reveal the relations that make up the social which consequently aid in knowing and understanding its deployment. As a practice, it has remained mutable, open to change and revision. This has been in response to reviews, criticism, the clarification of

misunderstood concepts and terms, and the misinterpretations of French-to-English translations. While Law, Latour, and Callon all acknowledged the inconsistent use of terminology, Callon (1999) concluded that ANT's potential for adaptability was due to the fact it was not a theory. However, the many thought-provoking debates and clarifications that have resulted, including discussions of the title 'actor-network theory' itself, are useful in garnering an understanding of the underpinning principles and frames of reference that can be employed under its umbrella (e.g., Callon, 1999; Latour, 1996b, 1999, 2005; Law, 1992, 1999, 2007). In addition, these ongoing explanations and re-interpretations have given rise to a range of different research approaches by an increasingly diverse range of users. However, this seems appropriate, as these all arise in and through practice, which is a sensibility that ANT supports (e.g., Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Latour, 1996b, 2005; Law, 2007).

As a means of reflecting on its evolution, Law divided the practice of ANT into two phases, namely 'ANT 1990', which he felt was a somewhat 'arbitrary date' when ANT had attained an identifiable state, and what he called 'its diasporic creativity since 1995' (Law, 2007, p. 3; see also Law, 1997a). Both ANT in its earlier sense and post- ANT (e.g., Gad & Jensen, 2010) or after- ANT as it has been variously called, have now been usefully employed beyond the social sciences to understand a broad range of social phenomena in a number of different fields. This includes, for example, education (e.g., Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Fox, 2005), curatorial practices (e.g., Acord, 2010), organisational learning (e.g., Fox, 2000), knowledge management (e.g. Ekbja & Hara, 2008), art practice (e.g., Zell, 2011), tourism (e.g., van der Duim, Ren, & Thór Jóhannesson, 2013), Facebook (e.g. van der Velden, 2011), information systems (e.g. Doolin & Lowe, 2002), and gaming (e.g., Cypher & Richardson, 2006). This evolution and morphing of ANT practices and understandings mean that when employing an ANT-ish approach to comprehending phenomena arising as the social, it is particularly important to clarify the specific concepts and sensibilities of ANT that will underpin and thereby influence the investigation. A discussion of the principles relevant for this research follows.

Actor-network theory and the relationality of semiotics

At the heart of ANT as an approach to understanding the social are the principles arising from its allegiance to semiotic materiality. Law defined ANT as a 'semiotics of materiality' (e.g., Law, 1999, p. 2; Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 38), while both Law (2007) and Latour (1996b) positioned ANT with other versions of material semiotics including the works of Deleuze, Foucault, and Haraway. As mentioned, ANT understands the social in terms of associations or relations between entities. By holding to this relationality, the social is subsequently viewed as a heterogeneous system or network. However, as

Latour (1996b) emphasised, the notion of a network has changed since their initial use of the term. He warned that this heterogeneous ANT network should not be perceived in terms of a metaphorical network such as a railway network. This understanding of network is limited and inaccurate as it implies a sense of finality, as well as internal linearity and continuity. It does not allow for the fluidity, precariousness, and tension inherent in a semiotic web nor the ongoing complexity of the potentially free association between diverse elements that create the network. In any semiotic system or network, the relationships between entities sanction the idea of relational effects. Therefore, meaning or significance is only achieved in the relationships between entities, that is, meaning is not inherent in individual entities.

However, the proponents of ANT expanded their version of semiotics, advocating that not only meaning, significance, and knowledge were produced, as already discussed. For them, the productivity of relationality coupled with relational effects meant that everything is an effect generated within and by the network. As Law put it, this included 'society, organisations, agents and machines' (1992, p. 380). Thus, not only is the social and knowledge produced in the relations between entities but also the entities themselves are a generated effect. Again, the implications of this understanding are that the entities themselves do not pre-exist. Nor do they exist in isolation or in and of themselves. Rather they are defined and performed through the effect of relations with each other. Or more specifically, the relations are performative whereby entities are performed into existence 'in, by and through' the action of these relationships (Law, 1999, p. 4). This understanding assumes 'that nothing has reality or form outside the enactment of those relations' (Law, 2007, p. 2) which, as acknowledged by ANT proponents, shared links with Foucault (e.g., Law, 2000a; Moser & Law, 2003).

Even though ANT incorporated the term actor in its title, it is important to note that being performed into existence through relationality is not an acting out of some potentiality as is implied in the notion of acting where an actor follows a script. However, this does not preclude the potentiality of action itself, which is discussed later. What this does mean is that all relations and consequently all entities that make up the social are constantly being performed, are constantly in process and are therefore fluid and precarious.

By expanding the relationality of semiotics, this position that 'nothing has reality' outside of the enactment of relations eschews the traditional object/ subject divide (Law, 2007, p. 2). Therefore, when considering what makes up the social, ANT 'denies that people are necessarily special' (Law, 1992, p. 383), although this does not disregard that 'people count as a person' or that they 'are who they are' (Law, 1992, p. 383). Instead, ANT argued that materials and materiality be considered part of the social along with humans. As Latour (1996a) argued, 'sharing sociality with things' is what makes us human (p. 237). Equally, he noted that 'to be human requires sharing with non-humans' (Latour,

1994, p. 51). Law also observed how the social is always 'mediated through objects of one kind or another' (1992, p. 382). As an example, he contended that knowledge, while arising in and from the social, is always tangible. It manifests itself in, for example, language, skills, and artefacts, and so is always 'embodied in a variety of material forms' (Law, 1992, p. 381). Latour's illustration of the relationality between humans and the materials of the world is aptly summed up in his comment, 'Boeing-747s do not fly, airlines fly' (1994, p. 46). The social is therefore comprised of both humans and non-humans, of 'heterogeneous materials' including, for example, information and media, matter, and the organisation and ordering of this matter (Law, 1992, p. 381; see also Law & Hetherington, 2000). This approach denies the taken-for-grantedness of objects and their materiality in our experience of the world. Law and Hetherington (2000) argued that interest in the role of objects in our experiences had hitherto been invisible in the social sciences, although Moser and Law (2003) noted "'material relationality" is at least implicit' in the work of Foucault (p. 3). As Latour (2005) noted, Foucault's 1973 *The Birth of the Clinic* was an early attempt to 'materialise non-material technologies' (p. 76).

Since humans and non-humans interact to create the social, non-humans can no longer be considered neutral, inert or as only able to be controlled by humans (P. M. Alexander & Silvis, 2014). As Law (1992) noted, 'social agents are never located in bodies and bodies alone' (p. 384). Consequently, Latour (1996a) observed that non-human entities 'do *do* something' (p. 262, emphasis in original) and therefore have a performative role in the relations of the social. Therefore, when considering the social, ANT does not privilege the human participant over non-humans or material things. Humans and non-humans are approached with a generalised symmetry whereby both are considered to have the potential to produce the relational effects that create the social. More specifically, both must be treated with equal importance, and must be analysed and discussed in similar terms. This does not, as Latour (1994) suggested, mean falling into a 'materialistic trap' of attributing humanistic 'mores' to non-humans (p. 41). Nor does it mean a 'levelling' of the differences between humans and non-humans (Star, 1991/2007, p. 93; Latour, 2005). Instead, this can be seen as a means of dissolving the object/ subject divide as well as other dualist paradigms such as the social and the technical, and nature and culture. Therefore, Latour (1999) referred to this as a 'bypassing strategy' (p. 18). As a strategy, it denies differences between humans and non-humans at an ontological rather than an epistemological level (P. M. Alexander & Silvis, 2014; Law, 2000b, 2007). This is how the idea of relational materiality can contribute to an attempt to know and understand relationships between distance delivery and enactments of notions of artist-self.

An understanding of action

What becomes essential in the relationality and productivity of the social are the notions associated with action or what has been termed in ANT, translation and transformation. Early versions of ANT were known as a 'sociology of translation' (Callon, 1986/2007; Latour, 2005; Law, 1992) because translation was the term used to describe the changes that occur between entities that then create the social network. However, the term has often been misinterpreted. Latour (1994) argued that his idea of translation was not as it happens in the move between two languages that are inherently independent. Rather he meant 'displacement, drift, invention, mediation, the creation of a link that did not exist before and that to some degree modifies two agents or elements' (Latour, 1994, p. 32). Callon (1986/2007) also referred to translation in terms of displacement (see also Star, 1991/2007). Law (1999) defined translation as a means of making two entities that are different, equivalent. However, he clarified his use of the word 'equivalent' suggesting instead an 'equivalence', thereby implying a negotiation before the creation of a bridge between the two, and a potentially new entity as a result of the relationship (Law, 1999, p. 8).

Law (1999) also noted that in later versions of ANT, vocabulary such as 'translation' had become 'submerged', principally because perceptions of the term neglected to account for *how* the equivalence occurred (p. 8). This lack, he believed, contributed to early versions of ANT losing a 'capacity to apprehend the complexity' that is the social (Law, 1999, p. 8). Interpretations and implications of this and other terms, such as actor and actant as labels for entities, have been debated and are not necessarily evident in later formulations of ANT. As Mol (2010) noted, 'the quest for terms continues' (p. 260) in an attempt to accommodate the complexity of different situations. However, what does endure in ANT's approach to understanding the social are the principles underpinning these terms. In this case, it is the idea that processes are involved in the notion of action, and more importantly, it is the 'work' that is performed in these relations that creates entities (Latour, 2005).

In terms of the 'work' that performs social networks, ANT called for a different definition of action. This is one that does not reside in cause and effect (Latour, 1996a, 2005), is not understood in terms of 'inputs and outputs', nor one where an entity is understood as the 'point of origin of the action' (Latour, 1996a, p. 237). The action does not reside in a simple relationship between entities such as a link, as this limits the possibility of circulation. Rather, it resides in the act of relating, in the complexity of relationality itself. This definition is also one in which the responsibility for the action must be shared amongst entities. Because of the processes involved, Latour (1996a) asked us to consider this action as 'a mediation, that is to say, as an *event*' (p. 237, emphasis in original). This, he argued, means it is possible to utilise simultaneously two aspects of an

everyday notion of action, namely the idea that something new always emerges, along with the impossibility of creating something from nothing. However, it is essential not to revert to western anthropological traditions 'that always forces the recognition of a subject and an object, a competence and a performance, a potentiality and an actuality' (Latour, 1996a, p. 237).

Latour (1996a) leads us through this rendering of action as follows: '... to act is to be perpetually overtaken by what one does To do is to make happen. When one acts, others proceed to action' (p. 237). Of importance is the idea that this one act of doing elicits multiple simultaneous actions. On the one hand, the action overwhelms, thereby mobilising the entity. On the other hand, the act of doing something is also the act of making something happen, namely, making others do things. This means the action does not come from one position or source. It is both distributed and circulated in the creation of the network, similar to Foucault's notions of micro power (Kalonaityte & Stafstudd, 2005). Therefore, it cannot be attributed to one entity alone (Law & Mol, 2008). So not only is the action a 'situated process' but it is de-centralised and is shared with other entities (Knappett & Malafouris, 2008, p. xii). Thus, entities are mobilised by the action both in relation to themselves and in relation to others. In addition, as with Foucault's relations of power, this action may be in the form of resistance, of having, as Fox (2000) suggested, 'the capacity to act back, granting or refusing translation' (p. 863). The action can also be 'strategic or subservient' (Mol, 2010, p. 256), and it can also enable a decoupling of associations or a letting go (Mol, 2010).

This particular notion of action is central to revealing the social for ANT. It is only through these interactions that entities become associated or 'related'; that is they only form a relationship when they 'make others do things' (Latour, 2005, p. 107). In addition, this relating, this 'connection that transports ... transformations', is what induces these entities into 'co-existing' (Latour, 2005, p. 108). To reveal their existence as part of the social, entities must therefore both act and be enacted. They are both performative and performed. Law (2007) stressed the importance of the notions of enactment or performance inherent in a relational approach, namely, if relations are not repeatedly performed or in process neither they nor the entity will continue to exist.

In addition, since action is not about causality, or consequence, or the actualisation of some potential, the action must instead be the sort to 'make others do unexpected things' (Latour, 2005, p. 106). Of significance is the idea that action must be a 'surprise' whereby entities exceed themselves in intent and outcome (Latour, 2005, p. 45). Consequently, as Latour (2005) noted, 'Action is not done under the full control of consciousness; action should rather be felt as a node, a knot, and a conglomerate of many surprising sets of agencies' (p. 44). This action, or this event, is one where purpose is also transformed or translated (Latour, 2005). Latour (1994) described an 'event' involving two entities,

namely a car driver and a speed bump in a university campus. The initial action of the driver was to slow at the speed bump in recognition of the pedestrians on campus. However, this action translated into the driver slowing for the speed bump in recognition of the potential damage to the car's suspension. What is evident in this example is that not only do the driver and the speed bump exceed themselves in intent, but also together, they enact and reveal the car's suspension as an entity in the network. In addition, they enact the speed bump as a traffic policeman (Ingold, 2011).

While the transformative action between entities is important to enact and reveal entities, it is also necessary to perform the network. To put it another way, these entities created by the action must make 'a difference to the end result' (Law & Mol, 2008, p. 67; see also Mol, 2010). If the entity does not make a difference, it is not an entity in the network or the social (Latour, 2005). However, while it is the entities and the network that are enacted through and in these processes, it is not these that are necessarily of prime concern for ANT when understanding the nature of the social. What is of concern is what is happening and how. Therefore, to generate and make the social and its associated phenomena apparent, the event where translations or actions occurs needs to come under scrutiny. This could also be understood in the light of Foucault's practice of eventualisation which involves 'rediscovering the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of force, strategies, and so on, that at a given moment establish what subsequently counts as being self-evident' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 249).

This idea of action in ANT is, as mentioned earlier, similar to Foucault's notion of micro power in that it is exerted or exercised in local relations (Latour, 1986a), rather than coming from a single source. It is also similar in terms of, as Fox (2000) discussed, Foucault's notion of power as 'force relations'. He described force as 'the way power acts; it is integral to action' (Fox, 2000, p. 859). So while ANT proponents, on the one hand, recognised and understood this idea of 'power in action' (Vickers & Fox, 2010, p. 3), on the other they developed Foucault's notion of power further (Fox, 2000; Kalonaityte & Stafsudd, 2005). Latour (1986a) went as far as suggesting 'that the notion of power should be abandoned' (p. 277). This was to emphasise that the focus of understanding the social should now lie in the 'associations that hold together the social and symbolic actions' (Kalonaityte & Stafsudd, 2005, p. 6). Law (1992) concurred that the shift of focus should be the analysis of the interplay of action when he described ANT as a means to consider 'the mechanics of power' (p. 380). However, for both Foucault and ANT, the play of micro-power and the processes of action are pivotal to understanding the nature of the subject, which makes them of value in attempting to understand the dynamics in the interplay between distance delivery and performances of notions of the artist-self.

3.2 Performing subjectivities

Notions of subjectivity

ANT's approach to understanding the social not only questions certain assumptions about society and about knowledge, but also about subjectivity (Fenwick & Edwards, 2011). As already discussed, the eschewing of the object/ subject divide means that the human subject is not privileged over material entities in the role it plays in performing the social. As a consequence, subjectivity is not a 'property of humans, of individuals, of intentional subjects' alone (Latour, 1999, p. 23). All entities can be subjects.

While the term 'subjectivity' is widely used with differing understandings in different contexts, for ANT, the term aligns with its underpinning principles as already discussed, namely with a semiotic or poststructuralist usage (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Moser & Law, 2003). Therefore, as with all social entities, subjectivity only exists and has reality as the effect of relations with other entities, with consciousness as well as materials and nature (Kendall & Michael, 2001; Law & Mol, 1995; Whittle & Spicer, 2008). Moser and Law (2003) defined subjectivity in ANT terms as 'a location of consciousness and action, on the assumption that these are produced relationally' (p. 3). Subjectivity is understood to be an effect of action and therefore, an enactment (Law, 2002). As a result, the subject is 'continuously performed and performative' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 21). This means that, as with Foucault, the subject is contingent and fluid. It will not come to any situation 'ready-made' (Dugdale, 1999, p. 119), and it will not exhibit stable or fixed attributes and characteristics. Subjectivities are fragile and depend on a 'flood of entities allowing them to exist' through action (Latour, 2005, p. 208).

In addition, the subject is not centred in the social. It is not in a position to objectively make sense of the world, and nor is it, as mentioned above, centred on the individualised body (Asdal, Brenna, & Moser, 2007; Star, 1991/2007). This understanding of subjectivity also negates the idea of a socially 'constructed' subject. As Law (2004, 2007) and Mol (2002) both argued, a socially constructed entity is not feasible in a relational understanding, as any notion of construction implies a resulting fixed entity. Mol (2002) defined social construction as representing the 'view that objects have no fixed and given identities, but gradually come into being' (p. 42). She argued that while in their infancy they remain 'highly contested' and 'volatile', but on maturity they can be taken to be 'stabilised' or fixed (Mol, 2002, p. 42). This is not possible in an ANT approach as subjectivities are continuously performed.

As mentioned earlier, the practice of ANT is often divided into two phases (Latour, 1999; Law, 1997a). Earlier practices are said to have focused on an epistemological approach

to understanding the social, on 'objectivity' (Latour, 1999, p. 23) or on understanding 'how heterogeneous entities are drawn together to establish objects of knowledge' (Mulcahy, 2011, p. 99). As already mentioned, what these earlier ANT studies reinforced were Foucault's ideas that knowledge itself was not a fixed entity and that it was contestable, a 'circulating reference' of the social (Latour, 1999, p. 23). However, while reviewing ANT's development, both Mol and Law pointed out the potential afforded to ANT by abandoning Foucault's coherent and inherently closed epistemes. Law argued that Foucault's epistemes 'set limits to the conditions of possibility' as there was no way of breaking out of their strategies (Law, 2004, p. 159). Law (2001) also argued that Foucault's notion of episteme meant that when examining the ordering of the social Foucault's emphasis was on identifying similarities. However, the open networks of associations in ANT's social order meant that it could provide what Foucault could not, namely the potential to open up the conditions of possibility, which both Mol (2002) and Law (2001) identified as the possibility of difference and therefore multiplicity, as well as Foucault's idea of similarity.

Law (1999) believed the early versions of ANT tended to limit 'the conditions of spatial and relational possibility' (p. 8) and therefore lost, among other things, the capacity to talk about, appreciate and practice the complexity of reality. Mol (2010) reflected that to understand the nature of the social, of reality itself, it was necessary to move away from an epistemological approach, as this asked 'whether representations of reality are accurate' (Mol, 2002, p. vii). In addition, Mol (2010) suggested further vocabulary was needed to describe 'all forms of relatedness' that created entities, subjectivities and networks, including 'collaboration, clash, addition, tension, exclusion, inclusion, and so on' (p. 259). As some argued, these earlier studies of ANT prioritised a focus on the interactions and associations between entities in terms of defining networks, rather than focussing on the nature of the entity or subjectivity (Frederiksen & Tanev, 2014) and their enactments in practice which was the focus of the later, ontological phase. This latter phase, the ontological understanding of the social, underpins this research into understanding the performances of notions of an artist-self in relation to distance.

Ontological understanding of subjectivities

The development of this ontological understanding arose in response, as implied above, to issues experienced in a purely epistemological approach. As an example, Law (2006) described a study concerning the treatment of alcoholic liver disease in the health care system. Here, he and Vicky Singleton struggled to 'pin down the object of study and make it unambiguous and clear' (Law, 2006, p. 5). They had thought they could 'map out the "typical trajectories" of the patients' (Law, 2006, p. 3). Instead, interview results refused to overlay into recognisable patterns. In addition, any single description of the phenomena was tending to render others invisible. They discovered that there was no

'typical trajectory' or indeed 'typical patient' (Law, 2006, p. 4). They also gradually realised that the phenomenon they were trying to study turned out to be a 'moving target' (Law, 2006, p. 4). Interviewees addressed the condition in different ways, making it 'slippery', and 'one that changed its shape' (Law, 2006, p. 5). It did not appear to have a 'single form' (Law, 2006, p. 5). This was due in part to the fact that the researchers encountered phenomena being enacted differently in varying practices within the site of investigation, but also because phenomena were being simultaneously enacted across a number of interconnected networks. To account for the complexity they were encountering, they needed to ensure, as Latour (2014) put it, any one description or ordering of phenomena did not necessarily 'eliminate from existence the claim of another description' (p. 17).

Studies such as this, and in particular Mol's (2002) *The body multiple: Ontology in medical practice* led to a realisation and acknowledgement that not only is reality itself an enactment, but also there is not a single, shared reality. Rather there is 'the possibility that there are different and not necessarily consistent realities' (Law, 2006, p. 7). Law went on to clarify this.

This is not an argument that there are different perspectives on (a single) reality. We all know that this is possible. It is not, in other words, an argument about epistemology – about how to see (a single) reality. Instead it is about ontology, about what is real, what is out there. (2006, p. 7)

These contemporary practices of ANT have re-conceptualised the understanding of reality as not only emergent (Cordella & Shaikh, 2006) and as enacted (Mol, 2002), but also as multiple. Insights emerged about how the different networks that formed the social 'produce multiple versions of phenomena ... which may seem singular at first' (Gad & Jensen, 2010, p. 6). Mol (2002) suggested it was by focussing on the action of the performance (what is happening) rather than knowledge, that is, by focussing on entities as they are 'enacted in practices', that revealed the possibilities for a 'single object' to appear as 'more than one' or as 'not the same entity ... even though called by the same name' (p. vii).

While the possibility of multiple ontologies was observed in practice, Law (2004) suggested it was the very actions and processes of enactment and performativity that led to the understanding that enacted entities, including subjectivities, do not necessarily result in a 'convergence to singularity' (p. 158). Enactment, by its very nature, attends 'to the continuing practice of crafting. Enactment and practice never stop and realities depend upon their continued crafting' (Law, 2004, p. 56). Law understood 'difference and multiplicity to be chronic conditions' of enactment (2004, p. 158). While enactments happen differently across different practices, their association or link with the enacted object means that enactments are related and overlapping, that the ontologies that are produced are both multiple and simultaneous. As Fenwick (2010) noted, 'the key point is

multiplicity – not just multiple views, but enacting multiple worlds – multiple simultaneous ontologies’ (p. 119).

While acknowledging the multiplicity of reality, Latour (2005) initially resisted describing ANT studies in these ontological terms. He considered that the procedures of ontology itself tended to unify (Elder-Vass, 2014), thereby undermining the potential to recognise this multiplicity. Instead, Latour (1999) referred to this later work of ANT in terms of subjectivity as opposed to the objectivity of the epistemological phase, although he insisted there was room for both practices. He described subjectivity as ‘a circulating capacity, something that is partially gained or lost by hooking up to certain bodies of practices’ (Latour, 1999, p. 23). Elsewhere he talked of this in terms of the various actions, arising within practices, by which an entity ‘is *made to be* an individual/ subject’ (Latour, 2005, p. 213, emphasis in original). He referred to the resulting enactment as an ‘assemblage’ or ‘gathering’ of actions, which in turn ascribe attributes to the subject. Law (1999) agreed, noting that subjects take ‘the attributes of the entities which they include’ (p. 5). So on the one hand, ‘nothing pertains to a subject that has not been given to it’ (Latour, 2005, p. 213), and on the other, subjectivity is a property of this gathering.

This understanding of subjectivity encompasses not only the tension, exclusion and inclusion mentioned by Mol (2010), but locates subjectivity as enacted (or not) in practices, and therefore as potentially multiple. Note that this is potentially multiple rather than necessarily multiple as the actions of enactment can produce both similarities and differences (Law, 1997b; Mol & Law, 1994). In addition, this recognises that as the practices enacting subjectivity themselves interact and interweave in varied and ‘unpredictable ways’, there is the possibility of partial connections and ‘interferences between different realities’ (Law, 2004, p. 162).

Law (2004) credits Mol with establishing ontological ‘difference and multiplicity’ in the practices of ANT (p. vii), and examples of this are now discussed. Through her work on attempting to understand the disease atherosclerosis (known by the layperson in New Zealand as peripheral vascular disease), Mol (2002) maintained ‘no object, no body, no disease, is singular. If it is not removed from the practices that sustain it, reality is multiple’ (p. 6). By focussing on how atherosclerosis was enacted in practice(s), she identified that the disease appeared differently in the various situations or practices within the health system, that there was the ‘simultaneous existence of different objects that are said to be the same’ (Law, 2004, p. 158). For example, as this researcher has experienced through a family member, the atherosclerosis as mapped during scans of narrowing arteries by a technician is a different atherosclerosis to the one that the patient described to the vascular surgeon as causing pain in the legs when walking. Different again is the atherosclerosis that manifests in chronic non-healing foot ulcers, and the atherosclerosis that might cause the surgeon to consider the amputation of the patient’s

lower limbs. Mol (2002) argued that by foregrounding these different practices in which objects are 'manipulated' and enacted, this disease was not a single entity understood from different perspectives but rather 'the varieties of "atherosclerosis" multiply' (p. 51). While this is a medical example, it demonstrates how phenomena or notions of artist-selves, which are being explored in this research, can similarly be understood as not singular but 'multiple simultaneous ontologies' (Fenwick, 2010, p. 119). In another example, Law and Mol (2008) described enactments of sheep during the 2001 foot and mouth outbreak in the UK. They told stories of four different 'versions' of 'a sheep' as enacted through different practices, namely in veterinary practice, in epidemiological practice, in economic practice, and in farming practice. They demonstrated the sheep as multiple where a 'slightly different sheep is done in each practice' (Law & Mol, 2008, p. 65).

These examples demonstrate not only how the subject is enacted differently through and between practices but also demonstrates how their co-existence and perhaps fragmented enactments give them, in Mol's words, 'a complex present' (2002, p. 43). Mol (2002) talked of the 'complex relations between objects that are *done*' (p. 6, emphasis in original), but also argued that the 'multiple objects tend to hang together somehow' (p. 5). This coherence is necessary for the social to function, as can be understood in the case of atherosclerosis, where medical treatment needs to be finalised. However, Latour (1996b) linked the coherence of networks to 'Foucault's analysis of micro-powers' suggesting that the strength of networks comes from micro-powers or the dissemination of action, and 'the careful plaiting of weak ties' (p. 370). As well as being plaited through actions, this plaiting could also be seen in terms of different modes of ordering which are discussed in the next section. However, in a relational understanding of the social, the actions of this coherence is also another performance or network (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). While these examples highlight the complexity in undertaking research to understand performances of subjectivities, they also demonstrate how this becomes possible using a relational approach, which is addressed in the next section.

3.3 Intervening with a relational approach

Empirical practices

ANT assumes what makes up our world is 'vague, diffuse or unspecific, slippery, emotional, ephemeral, elusive or indistinct' and therefore, our world and our engagement that creates it, is 'complex and messy' (Law, 2004, p. 2). This has implications for ANT as an approach to intervening in and understanding this world. As Law and Urry (2004) argued, some social science research methods cannot deal with this complexity and

messiness, and nor with, for example, such ephemeral notions as 'the sensory, the emotional and the kinaesthetic' (p. 403). Often, methods are designed to smooth, to unify, and to simplify, in order to clarify our understanding of reality and the social. In addition, many 'do not resonate well with important reality enactments' (Law & Urry, 2004, p. 403). ANT, however, provides a set of 'conceptual tools' (Nespor, 2011, p. 17) which, as has been discussed, does not homogenise and so can accommodate a messy world as well as an ontological understanding.

While Latour (1999) described ANT as a 'very crude method', he also emphasised that the aim was to learn the nature of enacted entities without imposing 'an *a priori* definition on their world-building capabilities' (p. 20, emphasis in original). That is, as an approach, it can give the entities 'room to express themselves' (Latour, 2005, p. 142). As users of ANT, Fenwick and Edwards described it as 'a way to sense and draw (nearer to) a phenomenon' while at the same time recognising the complexity and uncertainty of that phenomenon (Fenwick & Edwards, 2011, p. 1). They also suggested the benefit of ANT is that the 'language can open new questions and its approach can sense phenomena in rich ways that discern the difficult ambivalences, messes, multiplicities, and contradictions' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2011, p. 1).

An implication of understanding the social as the effect of relations is, as Foucault discovered, that analyses cannot be understood in abstract terms. They can only be understood in the light of effects arising, and the practices from which they arise. As Pels, Hetherington, and Vandenberghe (2002) also argued, 'social relationships and practices, in turn, need to be materially grounded in order to gain temporal and spatial endurance' (p. 11). Therefore, investigations using a relational approach always need to be situated in the local and grounded in practice, or as Law (2007) qualified it in terms of ANT, 'grounded in empirical case studies' (p. 2).

While empirical case studies are a common research method, the ANT approach differs from some others. Gerring (2004) defined the traditional case study method as 'an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units' (p. 341). He defined a unit as 'a spatially bounded phenomenon' (Gerring, 2004, p. 341). For ANT, phenomena are not spatially bound, that is, they are not pre-conceived or single units. Nor is the knowledge arising from any study applied to any larger class of units. Tellis (1997), in his discussion of a case study methodology, is closer to the relationality and performativity of Foucault and ANT when he defined a unit of analysis as 'a system of action' (Introduction, para. 4). In an ANT approach, the site of practice for the empirical study will be revealed as a system of action in which the entities come to bear on and mediate one another in a heterogeneous network.

In addition, given that ANT is 'concerned with the *mechanics of power*' (Law, 1992, p. 380, emphasis in original), these investigations must deal with questions of 'how' rather than 'why', to understand the nature of things, that is "how" relations assemble or not' (Law, 2007, p. 2; see also Foucault, 1984/2003a). For both ANT and Foucault, it is necessary to ask what is happening, or the 'how' of a circumstance to understand the events and the phenomena created. As Gomart (2002) noted, describing 'entities in terms of what they "are"' risks being occupied by requirements of accuracy and mimesis (p. 97). Therefore, it is necessary to gain a 'sense of those case studies and how these work in practice' (Law, 2007, p. 2).

Consequently, as Foucault also discovered, the quest to understand subjectivity must be 'an empirical matter' and must be understood both in practice and as practice (Law, 2002, p. 3). Fox (2000) concurred that what makes Foucault and ANT 'complementary' is their shared 'interest in *concrete practices*' (p. 854, emphasis in original). While using Foucault and ANT to critique communities of practice theory in relation to organisational learning, Fox (2000) specifically addressed 'how actor-network theory works within a Foucauldian conception of power' (p. 857), a conception that, as has been discussed, is seen in relation to power, knowledge and significantly for this research, subjectivity. The experiential cases situating this research are both sites of practice and sites for practice, namely, distance delivery of AUT University's MA&D programme and the experiences of some participants, including the researcher, with a view to exploring relationships and dynamics between distance and performances of notions of artist-selves.

Theories and practices arising

As is evident from the discussions to date, ANT can be described as 'a set of assumptions' about the social, as well as about how the world operates (Nespor, 2011, p. 17). These assumptions have implications for investigations of social phenomena and for the research process itself (e.g., Crotty, 1998). As mentioned earlier, a relational approach means that theories arise from the social rather than being imposed upon it (Foucault, 1984/2003a; Fox, 2000; Law, 2007). Consequently, theory is, of necessity, embedded in practice and cannot exist in the abstract, that is, in and of itself. Conversely, as Law (2007) observed, 'practice itself is necessarily theoretical' (p. 2). This also means that since practice is inherently local and therefore specific and particular, any research results cannot be amalgamated into one theory or 'overarching explanatory framework' (Mol, 2010, p. 261). There can be 'no single answer, no single grand narrative' (Law, 2000a, p. 2) resulting from analyses. Therefore, any theories arising from the social cannot function in a predictive role, as is the case for other methodological approaches. As already discussed, neither Foucault nor ANT offer a theory of what to do or 'a theory of what to think' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 1).

A further consequence of ANT's understanding of the world is that, as a research approach, it 'rarely works by adding to what has already been established' (Mol, 2010, p. 256). Investigations will deal instead with what Latour (2005) called 'new topics' (p. 142), namely with phenomena, situations and events that have not yet been spoken of, not yet made visible or sensible (Mol, 2010). By adopting the ontological turn in ANT, which this research does, investigations must attend to enactments in practice so any supposed 'gaps in knowledge' could not be dispensed with in a review of literature. Consequently, every investigation will need to adapt to each new situation where different lessons will be learnt (Latour, 2005; Mol, 2010), and different theories will arise from each of the enacted and multiple realities.

By accepting that all entities are performative and 'enacted - in practice' (Law, 2007, p. 12), another implication of an ANT approach is that the engagement in the research process will produce further sets of relations (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). Consequently, the research itself will be performed as an enactment. It is accepted that research methods cannot be neutral and therefore will influence research outcomes. However, Law and Urry (2004) noted how an ANT approach to research will '(help to) *make* social realities and social worlds. They do not simply describe the world as it is but also enact it' (p. 390, emphasis in original; see also Law, 2004). Therefore, it is important in any investigation to acknowledge that while attempting to reveal and understand situated phenomena as enacted in and through practices, enactments of the phenomena will simultaneously be produced through the practices of the research itself or as Fenwick and Edwards (2010) put it, through the 'multiple ontologies of research practices' (p. 158). Examples in relation to this research are addressed in later chapters. However, this factor is another reason why, as mentioned earlier, an investigation cannot result in a 'single grand narrative', and why results are unlikely to be repeatable, and therefore deal instead, with 'new topics' (Latour, 2005, p. 142).

Mol (2002) went on to describe how 'attending to the multiplicity of reality is also an *act*' (p. 6, emphasis in original). This 'attending to' can be understood simultaneously as the act of engaging in the research, the act of revealing how reality might be enacted, and the act of revealing this through the research. However, Mol (2002) also suggested this 'attending' can be an act that 'may be done – or left undone' (p. 6). She used the term intervention as a metaphor to describe the processes of coping with the performativity of these multiple realities in research (Mol, 1999, 2002). She called it an intervention because it 'intervenes in the various available styles of describing practices' (Mol, 2002, p. 6). As reality is produced through practices, any one act of describing a practice is, as suggested above, an enactment or a revealing of a reality. Nevertheless, this one describing practice will simultaneously render another enactment or reality invisible. However, the potential of 'attending to', of acknowledging and engaging in these various

describing practices means (as is witnessed in the discussion of enactments of sheep in Law and Mol (2008)) that the multiple networks, enactments, and ontologies can be made visible in the research process. As Fenwick and Edwards (2011) suggested, 'using ANT implies that to theorise is to intervene and experiment rather than to abstract and represent' (p. 10).

The idea that an intervention is, on the one hand, 'as much embedded in these processes as it comments upon them' (Edwards, 2003, p. 3), and on the other, will itself be involved in enactments of the phenomenon being researched, has consequences for the researcher's role and position in the research. Not only is this person embedded in the practices under investigation, which is the case in this investigation, but they will also be enacted as researcher as well as an entity that helps create the social. Therefore, in a relational approach proposed by Foucault and ANT, it is not possible to presume or retain a critical distance or to critique from a position outside an event. There can be no position that 'pretends to the objectivity of an overall view' (Law, 2007, p. 3). In addition, the material heterogeneity and the eschewing of the subject/ object divide mean there can be no subject observing an object in terms of a single point of viewing (see also Hetherington, 1999).

A number of research approaches, particularly those of a scientific nature, adhere to the possibility and importance of establishing a critical distance and objectivity in the establishment of knowledge. Consequently, positions have arisen describing the researcher's position in relation to the research situation. A researcher with some 'preunderstanding' (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007) of the research situation is defined as having an insider position, while an outsider is where 'the researcher is not a priori familiar with the setting and people s/he is researching' (Hellawell, 2006, p. 485). In the humanities, many have argued there is value in conducting what is known as insider research (e.g., Brannick & Coghlan, 2007). Kanuha (2000) suggested when the researcher's knowledge is mediated by shared participation and experiences, the perspective offered will be 'subjective, informed and influential' (p. 441). Others such as Hellawell (2006) and Mercer (2007) instead proposed the idea of an inside-outsider continuum. Hellawell (2006) suggested the researcher should ideally be 'both inside *and* outside of the perceptions of the "researched"' (p. 487, emphasis in original). He contended that occupying this position led the researcher to develop a reflexive approach.

This idea of the researcher being on an insider-outsider continuum or 'spectrum' (Walsham, 2006, p. 321) would be similar in a relational approach where Star (1991/2007) also pointed to the 'strengths' to be gained from the 'simultaneous coexistence' of insider and outsider as 'permeable' conditions (p. 79). However, Haraway (1988) noted that it is important that an 'insider's perspective' is not 'privileged' in any way

(p. 576). This then necessitates a deliberate self-scrutiny on the part of the researcher, where assumptions are exposed and challenged, and where the researcher needs to acknowledge and negotiate the relationship between the researcher and the researched, and how this might subsequently be represented (see also Law, 2004). This is addressed in the following chapter.

Another consequence of eschewing the subject/ object divide in ANT is that the object or the phenomena under scrutiny cannot be observed *per se* (Mol, 1999). As reality is both '*done and enacted*' (Mol, 1999, p. 77, emphasis in original), and potentially multiple, these simultaneous multiple practices and enactments mean there can be no singularity to observe. However, on this point, Law and Hetherington (2000) talk of a 'knowing location' (p. 37). This is where an entity becomes a 'point of surveillance' because they happen to be 'at the right place in a network of materially heterogeneous elements' (p. 37). For example, Edwards and Clarke (2002) imagine a learner in a flexible learning situation as being positioned spatially as a knowing location, while Fenwick and Edwards (2011) talk of a teacher as a knowing location produced in the 'pedagogical practices of her work' (p. 7). This particular location, therefore, concerns the 'enactment of the subject and object together' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 37). Fenwick and Edwards (2010) described how multiple enactments 'perform not only a thing – something known – but also a subject who is doing the knowing. They enact a knowing location with particular subjectivities' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 37).

This knowing location is similar to Foucault's notion of a knowing subject, one that is enacted, and comes to understand itself in relation to knowledge, as discussed earlier. This means that 'particular subjectivities' and notions of artist-selves will be 'enacted by particular alignments of things' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 37). However, this again points to the need for the researcher to 'always recognise the implications of their own interference' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 145). This includes critiquing and exposing the taken-for-granted assumptions (Mitev, 2009) about not only the approach to any intervention, but also about the phenomena – what might be important to study, what kinds of data should be gathered, what methods should be used and what might subsequently be told (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Law, 2004). Nevertheless, the multiple realities of the research, the researched, and the researcher that are enacted in the practices will themselves ultimately interact and overlap.

Tracing sensibilities

Law suggested ANT, like Foucault's approaches to understanding the social, are 'widely used as a toolkit' (Law, 2004, p. 157; see also Law, 2007). He defined ANT as 'a disparate family of material-semiotic tools, sensibilities and methods of analysis that treat

everything in the social and natural worlds as a continuously generated effect of the webs of relations within which they are located' (Law, 2007, p. 2). He also emphasised the importance of ANT's underpinning principles in informing its methodological approach, stating 'it might be better considered as a sensibility to materiality, relationality, and process' (Law, 2004, p. 157). As he inferred elsewhere, his use of the term sensibility was in preference to labelling ANT as a method, which risked implying that it could in some way be fixed (Law, 2000a) or that it might yield a singular reality (Law & Urry, 2004). Consequently, many described ANT as a reflexive tool (e.g., Gad & Jensen, 2010; Sheehan, 2011; Whittle & Spicer, 2008) while McLean and Hassard (2004) described it as a 'heuristic' (p. 498). Also, others such as Mifsud (2014) suggested it is the fact that ANT is considered a sensibility that makes enacting aspects of it useful for, in her case, education research. It is Law's understanding of ANT as a sensibility and reflexive tool, and not a method per se, that is useful for revealing and unravelling the multiple enactments of, for example, notions of artist-selves and notions of distance in this research.

To reveal the materiality, relationality, and processes in an enactment of any phenomenon thereby making it visible, it is necessary to look to the actions, translations, and effects in the relationships between entities. As Vickers and Fox (2010) argued, ANT provides the means for 'understanding and describing power in action' (p. 3). If entities do not act and do not make other entities act and move, or in other words, be productive and make a difference, there will be no evidence of their presence. If they do not act, there will be no trace of them and no information about them, or their characteristics or attributes (Latour, 2005). It is the 'methodological sensibilities' of ANT (Sayes, 2014, p. 142), the relationality, symmetry, and attention to materiality and process, that means it is only when actions and effects are traced that entities and networks are enacted, and the social is revealed. Therefore, as Latour (1996b) observed, 'No net[work] exists independently of the very act of tracing it' (p. 11, see also Latour, 2005). These acts of tracing make it possible to attend to the processes of enactment rather than focussing on what might be enacted, namely to focus on the how and not the who or what (Law, 2004).

These traced effects then manifest descriptions, which in turn reveal phenomena's enactments and performances of particular subjectivities. Alternatively, as Latour (2014) put it, 'You have to show what it does if you wish to say what it is' (p. 16). In other words, to reveal the traces of actions, it is necessary to engage in Mol's 'describing practices' (Mol, 2002, p. 6) mentioned earlier, to engage in giving accounts and telling stories of how things happen in practice. While Latour (2005) emphasises ANT's aim to foreground description, he avoids the terms 'story' and 'storytelling' used by Law and others in favour of the 'textual account'. This is to distinguish the resulting narratives from a fiction and therefore demonstrate that 'accuracy' and a sense of accountability have been considered (Latour, 2005, p. 126). Stories remain the favoured term in this research

because, as Latour (2014) added, accountability is only possible 'in so far as the set of situations and trials out of which they slowly emerge, may be recounted' (p. 35).

Latour (2005) elaborated on this act of tracing when he differentiated between the 'network that is drawn by the description' and the 'network that is used to make the description' (p. 142). This differentiation was perhaps to negate the notion of a tracing as a copy or representation (e.g., A. D. Martin & Kamberelis, 2013). Latour (2005) defined the latter network more like a metaphor, as 'a tool to help describe', or to use Law's word, a sensibility, 'to check how much energy, movement, and specificity' is able to be captured in the description (Latour, 2005, p. 131). Latour compared this sensibility to the role of a perspectival grid in painting. The relationship between the phenomena under study and the network as a tool is the same as the perspectival grid is to the resulting painting, that is the grid is 'not *what* is to be painted' (Latour, 2005, p. 131, emphasis in original; see also Latour, 1999). As implied in previous discussions, ANT cannot tell the shape to be described before it is told (Latour, 1999). Law (2004) put it differently noting it is never clear what is or is not 'waiting to be made clear' (p. 138). Consequently, ANT can be used to 'describe something that doesn't look at all like a network – an individual state of mind, a piece of machinery, a fictional character', despite the fact that the tracing of the associations between entities arises from networked effects (Latour, 2005, p. 142).

A number of performed and performative processes and practices are involved in the tracing and subsequent telling which reveal the emerging stories and performances. On the one hand, as already discussed, the intervention practices of the research process are themselves simultaneously practices of enacting, details of which are addressed in later chapters. On the other hand, practices such as recognition need to take place, and the processes and acts involved in recognising are also concerned with performance and enactment (Law, 2000b). In addition, the processes and acts of describing also encompass performance and enactment (Mulcahy, 2011). The implication of this is that what is revealed in the tracing (that is the recognising) and what is revealed in the describing, cannot be the same as, or equivalent to each other, and nor can they be the same as what gave rise to them. Despite these enactments revealed in the recognising and in the describing not being the same, they are, however, not separate from each other either. They are related, not only to each other but also to the actions and entities from which they arose. Mol (2010) defined them as 'simultaneously interdependent' (p. 259) which means, to use a phrase coined by Marilyn Strathern (1991/2004), that 'partial connections' will always remain.

Consequently, to reveal enactments, a single story cannot be told, otherwise the complexities of reality will be rendered invisible. Describing practices must be various and stories must themselves be multiple, as Mol comprehended in her use of the metaphor of intervention. Therefore, Law (1997b) talked of telling 'many small stories' (p. 9).

Elsewhere he talked of using ‘alternative modes of storytelling, alternative understandings of the specificities and materialities of embodiment’ to make the textures of the phenomena ‘thicker’ (Law, 2000b, p. 10). The textures will be thicker because different lessons will be learnt from the different stories about what an entity or phenomenon might be, and these similarities and differences will realise the complexity and enrich understandings with layers of possibilities (Mol, 2010).

Law (1992) argued that ANT’s eschewing of ‘the synchronic’ in Foucault’s notion of power and consequently the social, enabled it to tell ‘empirical stories about processes of translation’ (p. 387), as well as stories of ‘particular translations through time’ (Law, 2007, p. 6). Mol (2010) referred to these empirical stories as ‘variously dispersed ordering modes and modalities’ noting that ‘while Foucault was primarily interested in their form, ANT researchers insist on the work involved in “ordering”’ (p. 262), particularly in the ontological phase of ANT. This emphasis on empirical stories and ordering means it is possible to attend to something that is of value to this research but for which ANT has been criticised. This is the possibility to focus on the ‘local, contingent and processual’ (Mifsud, 2014, p. 6), or the ‘strategic, relational and productive character of smaller-scale heterogeneous actor-networks’ (Law, 2007, p. 6). Here the limits of possibility can now be set by the specific and the particular, namely distance delivery, to understand performances of subjectivities or performances of notions of an artist-self. This is in contrast to Foucault whose possibilities and discourses came in what Law (2000b) called ‘very large chunks’ (p. 17), although he also argued that ANT could be seen ‘as scaled-down versions of Michel Foucault’s discourses or epistemes’ (Law, 2007, p. 6).

However, this focus also means that for ANT, the social can, as Law and Moser (1999) argued, be understood as ‘a set of stories’ (p. 250). Ingold (2011) also talked, of a ‘storied world’ whereby ‘the things of this world are their stories, identified not by fixed attributes but by their paths of movement in an unfolding field of relations’ (p. 160). Similarly, for Ingold (2011), stories do not exist but rather they occur through the act of their telling. Although Ingold did not agree with all ANT’s principles (e.g., Ingold, 2008), he concurred when he proposed that ‘the things of which the story tells ... do not so much exist as occur; each is a moment of ongoing activity’ (Ingold, 2007a, p. 90). With the stories themselves being productive as well as bound up in the action and practices they tell of, it is important, as Law (2000b) pointed out, not to ‘separate the performance of the storytelling from whatever it is that it tells about’ (p. 14). Not only would this privilege the one doing the telling, in this case the researcher, and pretend a critical distance but it also cuts or denies the partial connections between stories of enactment and denies the effects of the relations between entities. While multiple simultaneous ontologies will be rendered visible, enactments, performances, or realities, as Law (2004) noted, ‘get settled through an explicit negotiation about metaphors for telling and metaphors for being – though they are only settled for the time being’ (p. 138).

While performances and storytelling are interwoven through the remainder of the thesis, the subsequent chapters engage with the empirical research. As discussed, any intervention and attempt to understand social phenomena needs to be grounded in experiences and experiential cases. Therefore, modes of ordering are used in the next chapter to recount some of the researcher's experience in the practices of this specific intervention, and in the following chapter, to present vignettes of study-participants' experiences of the distance learning and teaching environment, and their experiences of notions of themselves as artists in relation to this situation.

Chapter 4 Practising an intervention

4.1 Planning an intervention

Describing an intervention

As outlined, the approach in this exploration is informed by Foucault and ANT's notions of subjectivity, which are understood as fluid and contingent, and by ANT's ontological turn, which acknowledges the performances of simultaneous multiple realities and multiple ontologies. Accordingly, there can be no definitive notion of artist-self per se, but rather the possibility of many artist-selves enacted simultaneously and differently. However, although the performativity of this is understood in terms of, for example, Foucault's author-function and ANT's action, artist is also understood in society in terms of a singular practice and by a singular name. Consequently, in keeping with a Foucauldian and ANT-ish approach, the question then becomes 'how' notions of artist-selves might be enacted in relation to a particular environment.

As discussed, the only way to understand this 'how' is to examine the question empirically, as grounded in case studies. This should also be in the environment where the uncertainties and ambivalences or the 'matters of concern' (Latour, 2004, 2005) initially arose, which in this case is in the AUT MA&D programme delivered to off-campus students, and in the light of the practices arising in and as this site. However, despite identifying a specific site, with an ANT approach it is still not possible to presume that this 'situation' is in any way a 'bounded entity' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 145) as there is always the potential for interference from a multiplicity of interwoven and overlapping networks. Equally, the logic of a bounded site in this research is negated because students are distributed geographically and physically for the majority of their engagement with the programme. This factor, as well as the non-hierarchical and non-linear nature of an ANT network, means it is possible to enter or intervene in any network or social situation at any point (Fountain, 1999). As Fenwick and Edwards (2010) also confirmed in their review of ANT studies in education, a variety of 'entry points' could be used to focus ANT-ish studies (p. 149). Therefore, in this research, the experiences of individual students are used as cases to focus the study. Although ANT does not privilege the human participant, Nespor (2011) confirmed the use of 'high-status participants' as 'entry points' to intervene with ANT (p. 18).

As discussed earlier, an ANT approach means that the researcher is embedded in the research itself. Despite the impossibility of establishing a critical distance with ANT's (and Foucault's) understanding of the social, the researcher's position in relation to the sites of

practice in this research raised a number of issues during the design and implementation of the intervention. This researcher had lived experience of the learning and teaching environment and was embedded in its practices. Consequently, multiple social positions were enacted, such as a team member involved in the development of the online delivery of the MA&D, online participant, lecturer, research project supervisor, and Strand leader. In addition, the nature of the MA&D programme delivery meant students and academic staff experienced shared social occasions. Four intensive three- or four-day residencies were held each year in both Auckland and in provincial towns (sometimes students' hometowns), where the researcher (as a staff member) and students, their families and friends frequently socialised during, for example, student exhibitions, shared meals, gallery and studio visits, and other general social occasions. Furthermore, those volunteering to take part in the study could potentially identify with the researcher as being part of similar social networks in the art world and the academic world, as they knew the researcher to be a 'sometimes' practising artist as well as a research student. What follows is a discussion of issues that arose when considering practising this intervention. It includes a brief description outlining how study-participants were recruited and how information was gathered, and then a more detailed discussion of decision-making and issues arising.

The empirical component of this research draws on material in the transcripts of conversations between the researcher and graduates who studied their MA&D through the Off-campus Strand. The purpose of the conversations was for study-participants to relate personal experiences and critical instances that might have influenced their perception of themselves as artists during their postgraduate experience, or that could account for performances of notions of the artist-self in this situation where delivery of the programme is substantially online or via distance delivery. Potential participants were sought via an electronic invitation circulated through the researcher's personal networks. After responding, interested parties received an information pack clarifying the research aims, research design, and selection criteria for study-participants. This also included a participant information sheet (see Appendix B), consent forms for the interview conversations, and a list of participant details to be gathered in an initial short discussion. The receipt of a signed consent form confirmed a willingness to participate in the study, and respondents were accepted on a 'first come, first served' basis. Participant details were then gathered in a 20-minute phone conversation in mid-2013. At this time, study-participants selected a pseudonym so that privacy and confidentiality could be maintained throughout the reporting processes of the research. Details gathered in this initial conversation were recorded in note form, and then sent to study-participants to verify and return. The longer conversations (approximately 50 – 60 minutes) were held either in a face-to-face situation (six) or via Skype videoing (two) in the latter quarter of 2013 and early 2014.

Conversations were recorded on audiotape so that the participant's point of view and personal perceptions would be retained in the narratives. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, one and a half by the researcher and the remainder by an independent transcriber. All transcriptions were checked against the audio recording and corrected by the researcher. This step proved necessary as the transcriber was from a different discipline area and had missed some of the 'linguistic conventions' that the researcher and the research participants shared as a result of being part of the same community (Roth, 1996, p. 182). The study-participants then received a copy of the transcript to edit and verify before any interpretation took place. As part of the 'ethical management' (J. Taylor, 2011, p. 16) of the research process, they were invited to add further critical reflections or revoke responses to clarify their stories. Several took advantage of this opportunity to provide clarification, either by adding to the transcript, revising and re-sending initial information or by sending additional thoughts in an email.

Intervention modes and implications

Once the decision had been made to use individual students' experiences and stories to focus the study, it was still necessary to decide the approach, finalising who to include and how to conduct the study. A number of students or cases from the same cohort could be followed by mapping practices of enactments as they unfolded on a day-to-day basis. This approach could use, for example, ethnographic methods such as participant diaries, and what Venturini and Guido (2012) called the 'usual toolkit' of ANT, namely observation and interviews (p. 2). Alternatively, graduates or past students whose pedagogical relationship with the researcher had ended, could be interviewed, or there could be a combination of both approaches. Ultimately, the decision to seek only MA&D graduates was based on considerations of the researcher's embeddedness in the learning and teaching environment, and the potential study-participants' relationship with the researcher.

The practice of using past participants to understand a situation is reinforced by Foucault. In discussing his method of analysis, he noted that a study should be approached 'from the angles of what "was done"' (Foucault, c 1980/2003, p. 4). In addition, current students were excluded because of the researcher's involvement in the situation on a day-to-day basis, for example, as their lecturer and coursework assessor. This was deemed necessary to safeguard existing and developing pedagogical relationships. In addition, involvement in the research could increase students' perceptions of their workload, or alter the pedagogical emphasis or their focus on their own research projects. Furthermore, students could feel forced to participate, as cohorts were relatively small, with recently an average of only 15 – 20 students across the PG Diploma and the MA&D years. Feelings of coercion could also arise as a result of the inherent power differentials

in the various roles the researcher played in the academic environment (Hellowell, 2006), and it was considered important not to position students so that they believed 'that it is in their best interest' to volunteer (McConnell-Henry, James, Chapman, & Francis, 2009, p. 7). Nor should they feel benefits or reprisals were attached to participating, thereby challenging perceptions of equitable and fair treatment (McConnell-Henry et al., 2009).

Another consideration when using current students as participants is that the research process would position or enact the researcher simultaneously as both teacher and researcher, potentially multiplying the types of gaze the students would be subjected to. Inherently, art students and particularly their artwork are under the gaze of an audience. However, as Sanders (2006) implied, this audience is not necessarily neutral and can, therefore, in the viewing 'assume new subject positions (such as voyeur or judge)' (p. 95). This could place the students in an ambiguous and vulnerable position. In addition, the learning and teaching environment subjects students to a variety of academic gazes. Firstly, their processes, artworks, and progress are continually evaluated and assessed, albeit ostensibly according to learning outcomes. Secondly, in the postgraduate research environment, there is the possibility for lecturers and supervisors to use the engagement with the student's research as a means of keeping up to date with current dialogue on topics of interest (Hockey, 1996).

Moreover, the nature of the online delivery of the programme can potentially complicate the nature of these gazes further. For example, Ascott (1990) discussed the role of the computer in an artistic and educational environment, seeing it not only as enacting a 'set of behaviours' but also as 'the agent of passive voyeurism' (p. 243). Similarly, McKie (2000) described a 'digital voyeurism' which she linked to the type of 'emotional distance' this environment engenders (p. 115). Not only can all online participants, including lecturers, revisit images of work, images of work in progress, and class conversations posted online, but there is also the potential for individuals to 'lurk' unseen and at any time in online spaces, including during synchronous and asynchronous teaching sessions of which they may not be part. Sackville et al. (2006) described this as another type of academic voyeurism.

Furthermore, the research situation itself places the student within the gaze of the researcher. Despite understanding that all these practices are inherently linked, a desire to understand and differentiate some parameters between these notions of academic voyeurism and the research process (Mercer, 2007) or to understand, as Lather (2007) called it, the 'ethics of the gaze' (p. 7), also contributed to the decision to interview MA&D graduates rather than currently enrolled students. It was important that the intervention did not disrupt or have implications for current students' MA&D pedagogical experiences and achievements.

While the decision to invite graduates meant study-participants were outside the academic institution where the researcher worked and therefore, could potentially be more open with their responses without fearing reprisals, there would, nevertheless, still be latent power differentials present. This was not only because the researcher was still part of the academic environment but also because the principal relationship they had experienced was pedagogical, that of student - lecturer and student - leader. In addition, there were new social relationships evolving as the researcher had maintained social contact with many of the graduates and an interest in their careers since they left the university.

Also as McConnell-Henry et al. (2009) noted, researchers often feel anxious about the possibility of coercing participants. Indeed, the recognition of these established relationships did cause the researcher concern that an invitation to graduates may make them feel, in some way, obligated to participate or conversely, not be willing to contribute. These concerns were not realised and later, when thanking study-participants for volunteering, all expressed their interest in the topic and saw value in the research. Several added that their contribution was an opportunity to give 'something' back as they were appreciative of the support received during their study. While these comments were unexpected, this desire and perhaps need on their part, to engage in acts of reciprocity could equally be viewed as coercion.

This instance is also just one example of the uncomfortable position the researcher often found herself in during the empirical component of the research. This discomfort could be discussed in terms of an attempt to negotiate the perceived continuum between an intellectual and emotional distance (see also Zembylas, 2003), and of being mindful of ethical research practices. However, in an ANT approach, it reveals the relationality in the research process itself, namely the researcher's emotions as potential entities in the network. While other research approaches discuss this in terms of the complex issues arising when research engages with participants known to the researcher (see also Brannick & Coghlan, 2007; B. Hall, 1979; McConnell-Henry et al., 2009; Mercer, 2007; Śliwa, 2013; J. Taylor, 2011), this similarly acknowledges the inherent relationality in the social.

McConnell-Henry et al. (2009) also suggested that 'the participant may volunteer as they perceive the research process to be a forum for venting or debriefing, free of judgement ...' (p. 7). The researcher's ongoing responsibilities as Off-campus Strand Leader within the MA&D programme meant this could have been an issue. Law (2000b) discussed a study where his interviewees saw his engagement in the research as a prelude to what they perceived as the 'more important task of making balanced judgements' with respect to the issue under investigation, whereas this was not his intention at all (p. 19, see also Law, 2000a). Not only did they see his role as documenting a project that had 'gone

wrong' but also that the study provided an opportunity to 'learn from our mistakes' (Law, 2000a, pp. 25, 21). To pre-empt a similar situation arising in this research, it seemed important to clarify what the study and the conversations might and might not encompass, prior to the graduates giving consent to participate. J. Taylor (2011) suggested that this strategy also helped establish 'a safe research environment' (p. 13). Therefore, the participant information sheet (see Appendix B) not only stated the aims of the research, but also noted that the empirical study was not a review of the programme itself nor the mode of delivery per se. Other mechanisms for review and feedback had been provided while the students were enrolled. However, this stipulation did not preclude study-participants from commenting on and describing instances when their experiences of aspects of the programme and mode of delivery effected their potential enactments as artist (or not). On reflection, these supposed parameters of the research may have also been to deflect a critique of the learning and teaching environment for which the researcher was responsible.

Nevertheless, the idea that conversations could be free of judgements, be they explicit or implicit, disparaging or complimentary, was inherently unattainable, especially given that these judgements may well prove to be entities that played a part in enactments of subject positions. Indeed, the ensuing conversations with study-participants contained many examples of such 'judgements' and it was the researcher's responsibility to negotiate how these comments were heard, and subsequently traced. An example of the influence of latent power relations and an implied judgement by a participant of herself in relation to the researcher as lecturer follows. This study-participant spoke of the "freedom" she now perceived she had when engaging in her art practice. Being out of the academic environment, she felt she had "no-one to answer to, I'm just doing what I enjoy". She then added "and it [her art practice] has fallen back a bit - crafty sort of - and I always think of you and I always think you'd be horrified". While the researcher laughed (with the participant) at this comment, the allusion to power relations and the influence of the academic environment are evident.

However, there are instances when the researcher did not 'hear' implied judgements without being enacted into other subject positions. In the following example, a number of entities including implied criticism, a sense of responsibility and a desire to defend, enacted the researcher as Strand Leader. A study-participant pondered aloud the reasons for a circumstance in which he found himself. Several possible explanations were proposed, one of which was; "And I do wonder whether we were in the infancy years [in terms the distance delivery of the MA&D programme]. That the course itself [has] evolved [since then]". In the ensuing conversation, the researcher suggested one of the other reasons proffered was a more likely reason for his circumstances, adding "We did start in 2004, so it's [the distance delivery of the programme has] been going for quite a while". It was somewhat reassuring as a researcher employing the sensibilities of ANT,

to note Latour's (2005) comment: 'There is nothing less natural than to go into fieldwork and remain a fly on the wall' (p. 136). Therefore, such instances of the performance of emotions and emotional responses need to be acknowledged, examined, and mapped in the complexity of potential enactments.

Despite the fact that an ANT approach eschews hierarchical relations within a relational network, the participants in the study know nothing of this idea. In their roles as study-participants they may well perceive themselves as the object of the study, or 'the research object' (Lather, 2007, p. viii). This again raises the issue of subjecting them to an academic gaze. Therefore, it may not be clear to them that there are subtle differences between the researcher's multiple and simultaneous gazes upon them. These could include, for example, as an individual, upon their experiences and stories, upon their performed subjectivities as knowing locations (Law & Hetherington, 2000), and upon their understandings of how notions of artist-self might be performed in a distance learning and teaching environment. In addition, study-participants are likely to perceive the researcher's position as one of power, which subsequently enacts the researcher as the 'privileged party' in the research relationship (Śliwa, 2013, p. 188). J. Taylor (2011) also referred to Burke's notion of 'privileged eavesdropping', a situation that can arise when a researcher interviews those they already know. This idea of the researcher as privileged eavesdropper became evident during one of the conversations. The study-participant was describing other people's reactions to and comments about her M&AD thesis outcome (namely her exhibition of artworks and her exegesis), and comparing them to comments made to her earlier in the MA&D journey. At the end of this story, she added, "we don't normally talk about those experiences, no". While the context of this comment is not included in any stories told, it demonstrates how the research process itself can position participants vulnerably and can, therefore, be perceived as a type of bullying (Lather, 2007).

This research also involved inquiring into participant's memories of their personal experiences in the environment, and recording and transcribing their individual stories. These words, their personal narratives of creativity and their potential enactments as artists (or not) would be evaluated for worthiness, and then used as data to be interpreted. Outcomes would then be presented as the researcher's work as well as for the researcher's benefit and gain. Study-participants would remain anonymous and gain little in comparison to the researcher. It was hoped that the decision to recruit graduates might establish some distance on such issues. However, the fact that the researcher was professionally responsible for the learning and teaching environment and that she had an existing relationship with potential study-participants, meant that the research situation clearly revealed itself as a complex ANT network, as discussed in the previous chapter. As noted already, the researcher often experienced discomfort and unease during the empirical research where she continually found herself made to act and be enacted as

other entities. Perhaps as evidence of the researcher's perspective on intervening in the learning and teaching situation, and by implication, in the research process itself, is a study-participant's observations made in one of the conversations, "I know you're very big on not trying to let your ideas take over things". The complexities of these actions needed to be acknowledged for all relations in the research practices and in the implications for trying to trace and tell stories of performances of particular subjectivities.

4.2 Engaging experiential cases

Proposing selection criteria

While the study-participants were to be graduates of the online delivery of the MA&D programme, a further selection criterion was required to examine the question of how notions of artist-self might be enacted. This asked them to consider how they might identify their creative practices, namely to consider how these were positioned in terms of artistic practices. In turn, this suggests they would need to reflect upon themselves in relation to an artistic identity. The request to reflect upon an identity might seem at odds with the nature of the research, that is, to understand how certain subject positions might be performed in a specific situation. Nevertheless, as discussed earlier, it is necessary to presume the entity or phenomena under investigation will, at some point exist (or not) in order to unravel the uncertainties and ambivalences of any subjectivity enactments.

In addition, potential study-participants would know little of the research design, and as Law (2000b) observed of a group of his interviewees, they 'knew nothing and cared even less of actor-network theory' (p. 19). Similarly, these study-participants were not expected to know or engage with the philosophical ideas of ANT, Foucault or their notions of subjectivities and possible enactments. Therefore, to engage them in the research process, it was necessary to provide some understanding of the lens through which any notion of artist-self might be examined and therefore how they might need to think of themselves. Thus, when outlining the nature of the research in the participant information sheet (see Appendix B), it was noted that identities were considered 'unstable, multifaceted and that they shift ... in response to different circumstances'.

Another reason for the establishment of this selection criterion was to give the study-participants permission to engage in performances of subjectivities within the research process itself. As Sanders (2006) observed, a research process can often position study-participants in ways that suggest they may be 'unauthorised' to know themselves (p. 93). However, while this request 'authorised' them to know themselves, it might, on the other hand, 'authorise' particular subjectivities and influence the potential stories participants

tell. In addition, by accepting this selection criterion and the invitation to take part, study-participants will have been enacted as artist in the research relationship, albeit momentarily, and in terms of Foucault's knowing subject mentioned earlier. Also as Law (2000b) suggested, drawing on Althusser's notion of interpellation, 'the subject instantly recognises itself when it is addressed' (p. 15). Of significance is the fact that it is the act of being addressed, and in this case, it is the act that is the criteria, rather than the actual words that reveals the 'recognition and location' of this subject (Law, 2000b, p. 15).

As well as an entry point for the intervention and an act of being addressed, the request for potential study-participants to consider and tentatively identify a subject position in terms of artist from their understanding also acted as a 'catalytic prompt' (A. Douglas, personal communication, 1 April 2015). Identity is considered both temporary and unstable, as well as related to subjectivity. Weedon (2004) proposed identity as a 'limited and temporary fixing for the individual of a particular mode of subjectivity as apparently what one *is*' (p. 19). S. Hall (1996/2000) also defined identities as 'points of temporary attachments to ... subject positions' (p. 19). However, he goes further by not only seeing them as 'practices which attempt to "interpellate" ... us ... into place as the social subject of particular discourses' but also as the 'meeting point, the point of *suture*' between these practices and the 'processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be "spoken"' (S. Hall, 1996/2000, p. 19, emphasis in original). By being temporary and produced between practices and the processual, identities are therefore relational and contingent, as well as potentially enacted multiple across different practices (S. Hall, 1996/2000; see also Tilly, 2002). As Somers (1994) observed, perceiving identity in this way, as relational, means that it is destabilised as a 'categorical entity' (p. 606), which is an important point for this intervention.

The albeit temporary positioning the practices of this research actioned in study-participants will, of necessity, involve processes of self-recognition (Weedon, 2004) and identification (S. Hall, 1996/2000). It is suggested these activities relate somewhat to Foucault's practices of self-care discussed earlier. If this is the case, then as McNay (2009) argued while discussing Foucault's technologies of the self, these practices are 'in no sense a recovery of authentic experience or an assertion of genuine identity rather it is a liminal process which seeks to explore ways of being beyond the already known' (p. 67). In addition, S. Hall (1996/2000) suggested identity is 'constructed through ... difference' (p. 17), and being relational, this difference, for Hall, was performative and one of play. Therefore, by nature, identification itself is always 'in process' and contingent (S. Hall, 1996/2000, p. 6). It also is bound up with the processes of difference whereby it can be thought of in relation to what one is not (Weedon, 2004). However, J. Butler (2001) suggested the 'incoherence in identity' enables one to 'affirm others who may or may not "mirror" one's own constitution' (p. 27). On this point, however, J. Butler (2001) argued that the temporality and processes of recognition inherently decentre the individual,

meaning that self-identity cannot be achieved, that is, 'one can only give and take recognition on the condition that one becomes disorientated from oneself by something which is not oneself' (p. 28).

While the request by the researcher for study-participants to consider and tentatively identify a particular subject position meant they needed to engage in the fraught processes of identification and recognition, it also required acts of naming, to be realised not only privately but also publicly to the researcher by, in the first instance, accepting the invitation to participate. Lippard (1990) discussed how sociality is grounded in naming whereby names are 'at once the most private and most public words in the life of an individual or a group' (p. 262). She goes on to describe naming as 'the active tense of identity, the outward aspect of the self-representation process, acknowledging all the circumstances through which it must elbow its way' (p. 262). Although Lippard did not describe it as such, this elbowing of circumstances implies a relationality in the process.

While the process of labelling and naming is often said to suggest singularity and deny the complexities of an entity, Law (1997a) also insisted that 'naming does work. It does analytical work' as well as political work (p. 6). This refers to the idea of work as a practice, in the sense of action and its productiveness discussed earlier. By perceiving naming in this way, this process can be seen as a relational mode of identification rather than to a categorical mode, which would render it fixed (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; see also Somers, 1994). Elsewhere, Law (1999) confirmed this when he equated 'forms of naming' (p. 4) with the relating of stories, inherently linking this process to the relational rather than the categorical. Hence, this request for practices of identification and naming could prove to be an appropriate entry point for the intervention as long as the relations between different subjectivities performances (be they in the form of an identity) were recognised, along with the implications of such a 'catalytic prompt' on subsequent subjectivity enactments.

Although the participant information sheet (see Appendix B) specified that the research was interested in how the phenomenon (artist) 'unfolds, is maintained or even falls apart in this environment', examples of the complexity of engaging in these processes were evident early on in the empirical study. One study-participant advised that he found this process difficult, countering, "when is one an artist?" He later pondered, "Are there degrees of being an artist? Can you be a dormant artist?" Another study-participant also experienced difficulties negotiating the suggested relational and categorical modes of identification, and enactments of subjectivities and identities. She initially advised that she could not contribute to the research, as she did not consider herself an artist at any time during her postgraduate experience. This was in spite of being interested in the questions under investigation, and confirming she investigated notions of artist in her own MA&D research. On the one hand, her response indicates the inherent power relations in the

research process, whereby not perceiving oneself as an artist was thought to be 'incorrect' which in turn led her to believe her experiences were worthless in terms of contributing to the study. On the other hand, this indicates she may have experienced J. Butler's (2004) disorientation from oneself with failure to achieve, in this case, a 'particular' self-identity. In addition, this study-participant's engagement with plays of difference during this initial identification phase forced her to position herself perhaps categorically rather than ontologically, locating perceptions of herself through processes and acts of resisting.

Another reason for study-participants to consider themselves in relation to their creative practices was that students on the MA&D programme undertook projects in a range of art and design disciplines, for example, fashion design, graphic design, and product design as well as visual or fine arts. The researcher had observed, over the years, that when the cohort engaged in both art and design practices, there was a tendency for students to differentiate between these and position themselves more clearly in one or other discipline. This identification process was often ongoing and could again be understood in terms of plays of difference, discussed above. It could be a means for students to understand how their practices did not function in relation to others, so they could perceive and understand how they operated for themselves.

Conversely, it is also evident that artistic and 'designerly' practices share similarities as well as differences, especially when they are embedded in a postgraduate research environment. In both practices, a sense of inquiry and a research question must be inherent. Several study-participants raised this issue during our conversations and indicated a growing awareness of these similarities during their MA&D journey. However, the requirement for study-participants to consider their own practice in the light of artistic endeavours did not automatically preclude so-called 'designers' from the study. Indeed, one study-participant, whose practice involved the design and creation of garments, expressed delight that the research 'authorised' her to identify her practice on her own terms, and as artistic. She described how she was "boxed as a designer" particularly by those she worked with in her paid employment, and lamented this fact.

Other more pragmatic selection criteria for study-participants included, for example, a specification that they should have graduated within five years of the invitation. Setting a specific time-period was necessary, on the one hand, to manage the number of initial invitations. On the other, students graduating before this may feel removed from the situation and have forgotten details of their experiences. However, this did not mean that the details recounted would not, in themselves, be selective, discriminatory, and dependant on the nature and content of ensuing conversations. In the event, this criterion was not activated as the initial invitation round yielded enough respondents who were selected on a 'first come, first served' basis. Another criterion specified respondents

might be excluded if conversations could not be conducted either face-to-face or via Skype videoing. This did not eventuate either, as all who expressed interest were suitable for inclusion in the study on this point.

Considering cases and processes

In all, eight MA&D graduates were selected to take part in the study. While eight study-participants could be considered a small number in an empirical study, this is not necessarily so for all qualitative research (Mason, 2010), or for an ANT-ish approach. Decisions on sample size or case numbers are often driven by the notion of saturation, especially in non-ANT qualitative studies. Saturation is the point where the issue or phenomena under investigation cannot be further elucidated by the collection of more data. Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, and Spiers (2002) argued that saturation is one of the 'strategies for ensuring rigour' in qualitative research (p. 17). While Mason (2010) confirmed this was an appropriate guiding principle for qualitative study, he also acknowledged that the concept and its manifestation are still 'hotly debated' (p. 1).

Another principle often used to guide sample size is the frequency of evident data. However, Mason (2010) also noted, 'one occurrence of the data is potentially as useful as many in understanding the process behind a topic' (p. 1). This is the case for an ANT approach, because as Latour (2005) advised, 'every single interview, narrative, and commentary, no matter how trivial it may appear, will provide the analyst with a bewildering array of entities to account for the hows and whys of any course of action' (p. 47). Therefore, as Morse et al. (2002) suggested, another means of ensuring this notion of effective saturation in qualitative research is that participants need only be suitable, consisting of, 'participants who best represent or have knowledge of the research topic' (p. 18).

For ANT, the suitability and number of cases are not driven by some outside or arbitrary notion or source. Decisions on how to limit the research can only be driven by the nature of the intervention at the empirical level. For Latour, this idea of saturation will be evident in the textual accounts or stories. The explanation of phenomena under investigation can emerge only once the actions and effects are traced, and 'once the description is saturated' (Latour, 1990, p. 129). In the case of this research, this will happen through the interweaving of stories told of the multiple ontologies of enactment, and therefore, the number of cases selected would not influence the results of the study. Given this, the decision on the number of cases for this research was to some extent, made on a more pragmatic basis, that is, eight people responded to the initial round of invitations, and eight conversations were a number that the researcher could feasibly manage in the timeframe of the study.

Following the receipt of the signed consent forms, a short phone conversation (no longer than 20 minutes) was organised with each study-participant. Reasons for this discussion included building rapport and initiating the research process. It was an opportunity for all participants to get a feel for their different roles, and to develop a level of trust in the new situation. Although McConnell-Henry et al. (2009) suggested 'when the researcher and participant have a pre-existing relation the stages of rapport building are rapidly accelerated' (p. 3, see also J. Taylor, 2011) the researcher, in particular, felt the need to negotiate this new role. While the researcher had some understanding of the participants' experiences in the situation, it seemed important to demonstrate her interest in hearing their stories from their perspective, and to establish an environment where they felt comfortable verbalising these, as they wanted to tell them. It also provided an opportunity to highlight the impending data collection process which was through conversation and unstructured questioning, or as Lather (2007) called it, gathering 'data stories' (p. 140).

This initial conversation was also the place to address queries or concerns the volunteers might have about the research process, and to gather some personal details. These details included the participant's geographic location while studying, age upon graduation, and the nature and dates of previous academic study, the details of which may or may not have a part to play in their stories. The time was also used to introduce aspects of the topic such as how the study-participants described their art practices, and whether they considered themselves an artist (or not) before, after or during their experience of the distance delivery of the MA&D, and how these notions of their artist-self might be manifest.

While this process of naming and subsequent identification of relations enacting this naming might imply that study-participants needed to establish a sense of a fixed artistic identity, this did not eventuate. Each participant's response elicited a range of differing potential network entities providing data that was referred to in later discussions. This 'bewildering array of entities' (Latour, 2005, p. 47) involved in processes and actions of performances of notions of artist-selves included a means of making a living, the ability to research independently, age, art student, artistic skill, autonomy, being a student, career re-assessment, a clear sense of purpose when creating artwork, completion of MA&D qualification, confidence, contemporary art practices, creation of projects, doubt, exhibiting regularly, fear, individualism, justification, loss, a notion of a hobby, peer learning, philosophical traditions, practice-based traditions, providing meaning to life, public responses to artworks, receipt of MA&D parchment, recognition from others, resistance to labelling, selling artworks, serious intent, the skill to articulate ideas and art practice, the art world, and the limitations of an undergraduate degree ("something was still missing"). In addition, and in keeping with an ANT sensibility, one study-participant directly acknowledged the actions in the network that is the research process, in one of

her enactments as artist. During both conversations, she commented, “this research is helping make me remember I am an artist”. Others also inferred this.

To assist in establishing rapport during these early conversations, as already mentioned, notes were taken rather than recording and providing a verbatim transcript. However, to emulate later processes, these were written up and sent to participants to verify, and clarify as necessary. All study-participants prepared for this discussion, with many emailing their personal details and thoughtful responses both before and/ or afterwards. While this was unexpected, it may have been because discussion points were indicated beforehand. It also demonstrated their respect for the research process itself, as well as their interest in the topic under investigation. However, it could also have been due to residual power relations. Whilst students, it was expected they provide an agenda, plus images and analysis of artworks in progress prior to any phone or Skype tutorials, along with a summary of the session afterwards. In addition, several study-participants raised pertinent issues, which were discussed in the later conversation. This flexibility in the research process is an opportunity afforded by ANT, because it is possible to learn from the data (e.g., Latour, 2005; Mol, 2010) that emerges from specific situations and consequently, an intervention can evolve during its unfolding.

The eight study-participants wanted to be known as Eliza, Everton, Fidel, George, Gertie, Kitty Plum, Mary Smith, and Susan, the pseudonyms they selected for privacy. However, a degree of ‘ethical tension’ (Walsham, 2006, p. 327) remained. Despite the researcher adhering to these accepted protocols to ensure confidentiality, it was still possible that students or lecturers involved in the online delivery of the MA&D might feel they recognise someone through the mention of specificities of artistic practices, student details, and quotes from conversations. This is due to the relatively small number of students in each cohort, and the fact that many cohorts developed a close, supportive community during their enrolment. Therefore, in some instances, potentially relevant entities and events needed to be distorted or purposely rendered invisible to maintain privacy (see also Moser & Law, 2003). Given this, what follows are brief details about the study-participants, which, as already mentioned, may or may not have a part to play in their stories.

All study-participants graduated in either 2012 or early 2013, having completed the MA&D course in late 2011 or during 2012. Some undertook their study full-time, some part-time, while others needed to take leave of absence during their candidature. As a result, lengths of enrolment in the programme ranged from two to five years. This meant that study-participants did not necessarily study concurrently and so were part of a number of different cohorts. By virtue of responding, study-participants positioned their creative practices and outcomes in relation to the field of art, and indicated they were prepared to speak of their experiences of postgraduate online or distance delivery and

enactments of notions of artist-self. Study-participants lived in a variety of New Zealand locations during their MA&D enrolment, including Auckland, Lower Hutt, Nelson, New Plymouth, Whakatane area, Taupo, Tauranga, and Whangarei, with several shifting towns during this time. There were six women and two men. Ages upon graduating were one in their 30s, three in their 40s, three in their 50s, and one in their 60s. As this range of ages implies, all have had a broken academic journey. All had been employed in the workforce at various times between leaving secondary school, gaining their undergraduate and their postgraduate qualifications. Four study-participants had lengthy periods of time (8 – 32 years) between their previous art and design academic experiences and enrolling in the MA&D. The other four completed an undergraduate art and design degree (variously named Bachelor of Visual Arts, Bachelor of Applied Arts etc.) in the previous 18 months to two years. None of the study-participants had studied at AUT University before embarking on their postgraduate qualification. Because they did not staircase through this university, they were equally unfamiliar with institutional requirements and the environment they faced upon enrolment.

Study-participants described their artistic practices in the initial discussion by a number of means, including as an application of customary techniques, conveying principles and values of a Maori worldview, drawing, an engagement with media from the perspective of painting, an engagement with the female body, filmic but not limited to that, focused on the experiential, installation, an investigation of the creative process, an investigation of the phenomenological experience of everyday life, the maintenance of practice traditions/ customs/ philosophical worldview of ancestral weavers, not imaginative, not involved in fine arts, not limited to costume and textile art, painting, photographic, project-based, Raranga (weaving), representative of a specific cultural group, sculpture, situation-based, stitching, textile based with an emphasis on the body in motion, traditional whakairo (woven pattern), underpinned by the concept of whanaungatanga (relationships), using natural resources, and as a visual vehicle for narrating stories. While these are some of the ways study-participants identified their artistic practices, as mentioned earlier, these details may or may not be called into question by notions of distance or appear as entities in the networks that perform notions of artist-selves.

4.3 Performing data stories

Using interview conversations

The decision to focus on MA&D graduates' experiences as cases had implications for gathering information during the empirical study. As study-participants were no longer part of the academic environment, data gathering methods such as field observations,

which are common in the situatedness of ANT, would not be possible. Instead, an interview situation was employed, or rather a conversation generated through unstructured and open-ended questioning, that is gathering data through storytelling.

With ANT being grounded in practice, and considering the social a heterogeneous network of human and non-human entities, studies with an ANT sensibility often employ a multi-method approach to gathering data, whereby not only observations and interviews are utilised but the materials of the social such as documents and artefacts are included. For example, Beyes and Steyaert (2011) drew on the ontological turn of ANT and used the 'first-hand experience of the artists' work, documentation, and published work on ... events, and interview and conversation material' (p. 105) to reflect upon and tell stories of artistic interventions as a 'threshold where art and action research meet' (p. 100). Gehman, Trevino, and Garud (2012) used understandings from ANT to study how values work, that is, the enactment or the 'emergence and performance' of values to explain action within organisations (p. 84). They collected data from archival records, which included newsletters, press releases, annual reports, emails, minutes, observations, and interviews.

However, this research worked solely with data from the conversations with study-participants (as well as the researcher's experiences). Fenwick and Edwards (2010) suggested that working in this way was uncommon with an ANT approach, particularly in their field of education research, although they did refer to Mulcahy's work on the co-constitutive nature of 'pedagogy, spatiality and identity' in the education of student teachers which relied on transcripts (Mulcahy, 2006, p. 55). However, there are other precedents in ANT studies. For example, Edwards and Clarke (2002) drew on ANT and Foucault (as well Deleuze and Guattari), and used interviews to explore the importance of spatiality in providing flexible learning opportunities as well as its 'significance for knowledge building and identity' (p. 153). Meyer (2008) also used interviews to undertake an ANT-ish approach to investigate the 'partial connections' performed between amateurs and professionals working in a natural history museum, whereby he analysed identities and practices, and 'the ways in which partial connections are articulated, performed, and protected' (p. 40).

The nature of talk

The type of talk in the interview situation in the empirical study, namely an unstructured and more of a storytelling approach, is driven by the sensibilities of ANT. Without embracing an ANT approach, which offers the possibility to observe and participate in action, there is a risk that an interview-only study would be, as Walsham (2006) suggested, 'merely accessing opinions' (p. 121). As Latour (1999) noted, 'actors know

what they do and we have to learn from them not only what they do, but how and why they do it' (p. 19). Therefore, listening to the talk of what study-participants do is important in developing an understanding of the entities or 'things' involved in these events and consequently what is happening, as opposed to what they mean.

As discussed earlier, while the researcher was interested in how notions of artist-self were performed in relation to the distance environment, the study-participants may have no interest in subjectivity or enactments of subjectivity. Mol (2002) discussed the work of Pool, a medical anthropologist, who was interested in how villagers talked about a particular disease. He found the stories he was told were not about the illness itself but were about much more. He discovered it was important for the researcher to listen to the stories (in his case illness stories) told of specific practices as they were embedded in the local. Therefore, the researcher should not become trapped in his or her own language or the language of the topic. In other words, to learn about the illness, Pool could not expect villagers to use the language of the medical profession. Similarly, in this research, the study-participants cannot be expected to talk of subjectivity in the same terms as the researcher.

The following example demonstrates how, when attempting to address the topic directly, difficulties were experienced although much more was revealed. After a study-participant (S-P) told how they "struggled most of the time with working out what was going on with the[ir] [art]work", the researcher asked how this might have influenced "how you felt as an artist or did it not have any affect at all?" Their reply was

S-P: Oh, that is a tricky question. I think it was a confidence thing more than anything else. But in terms of did it affect my feelings of being an artist, probably not so much. Yeah, I'm not sure how to answer that.

Earlier this study-participant linked his ability to establish "a clearer purpose" and outline "what his practice is" with notions of artist-self. However, here there seemed to be a need or desire to separate the struggle (the not knowing or being able to identify), and the purpose and practice of the artwork itself, from the artist. Besides, the difficulty of considering this in the relationality of artist as a network reveals the slipperiness of the naming itself, as well as the tentativeness in any enactment of a subject position. On another occasion, the researcher posed a similar question to a study-participant about her perception of herself following her description of how it was "more exciting" to be with other students in an on-campus situation. She replied, "I don't know? I don't know if I thought about *myself* [emphasis in conversation] that much, I thought about my artwork ... although my artwork was very personal I guess I tried to separate myself from it a little bit". While the telling of stories was encouraged in the interview conversation rather than the talk being about subjectivity and performances of subjectivities per se, these examples demonstrate that there were still instances in the ensuing conversations where the researcher attempted to directly engage study-participants in discussions about their

understanding of subjectivity and their understanding of enactments of notions of artist-self.

Participating with conversations

This storytelling approach to gather data is comparable to narrative inquiry, and has some similar advantages and disadvantages. As Sinclair Bell and Duff (2002) noted, narrative or storytelling allows the possibility for understanding other's experiences, for obtaining 'information that people do not consciously know themselves', and to illuminate the 'temporal notion of experience' (p. 209). However, participants will undoubtedly include and exclude aspects of their experiences or events that might undermine the story they are trying to tell or 'the identities they currently claim' (Sinclair Bell & Duff, 2002, p. 209). While discussing narrative inquiry, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) proposed that storytelling be viewed as both a 'phenomenon and a method' (p. 2), and this is the same when using it in an ANT-ish approach. Therefore, in a relational approach, where the social is considered storied (e.g., Ingold, 2011; Somers, 1994), and 'narrative is an ontological condition of social life' (Somers, 1994, p. 614), the unfolding narratives will generate an understanding of the relationality of social phenomenon, and the experiences and subjectivities will also be performed and enacted through the telling of these narratives.

As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) pointed out, both the researcher and the study-participants enter any intervention 'in the midst of living their stories' (p. 1). Consequently, there are complexities involved in using storytelling as a means of gathering data. The interview conversation becomes a crucial place of participation that is itself part of the empirical work. Esnault, Zeiliger, and Vermeulin (2006), in their work on the use of web-based tools to cultivate collaborative communities of practice, perceived the interview of humans as an important part of a participative process as well as a means of 'enrolling' these people in potential networks (p. 304). However, it is also a place of negotiation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) as well as a 'place of exchange' (Latour, 2014, p. 15). Mishler (1999), in his study of 'craft artists' narratives of identity', also acknowledged the interview situation in narrative inquiry as a place of negotiation, a place where there is a continual negotiation of what is spoken of and how. Similarly, Thompson (2012), during her work with online communities, concluded that the researcher must 'collect data *with*' the study-participants (p. 97, emphasis added). By drawing on ANT, her aim was to 'explore the enactment of deleting and ambivalences created for work-related learning practices online' (Thompson, 2012, p. 95). While she used interviews, she also included non-humans in her participant list, for example, the delete button, the toolbar, and passwords. Consequently, she devised a number of heuristics for 'interviewing' these objects. By recognising the participatory nature of her role, she acknowledged the

researcher must speak “with”, “by”, “through”, and “as” these entities’ (Thompson, 2012, p. 97). While Pels et al. (2002) affirmed that objects need spokespersons and stories for them to ‘acquire social lives’ (p. 11), Latour (1986b) argued that any group of entities, be they human or non-human, only becomes evident when spokespersons constantly ‘speak for’ (p. 31) their existence (see also Latour, 2005).

The nature of this participatory relationship, of this place of negotiation and exchange means, as Mishler (1999) observed in his work, the stories gathered must ‘therefore be viewed as co-produced’ (p. xvi). They are not stories told by the study-participant to the researcher but rather stories enacted and performed by all participants in the process of the conversation. Strathern (1996) argued this from a slightly different perspective. She noted how the very act of participating in an event means ‘participants replicated one another in the fact of their participation’ (p. 524). These actions of participating in the research process are acknowledged in this study by using the term study-participant (see also Fadyl & Nicholls, 2013), and by using henceforth, Latour’s term for the enacted researcher as ‘participant-observer’ (2005, p. 136). Therefore, consistent with ANT sensibilities, these participants are also implicated in each other’s narratives (e.g., J. Taylor, 2011), and also in each other’s different subjectivity performances. Or as Bartlett (2013) suggested, participation is ‘a subjective process in itself’ (p. 6). This ongoing relationality and enactment will be revealed through the talk and the storytelling, and indeed is evident in the transcript excerpts mentioned so far.

As discussed earlier, stories do not exist but rather they occur through the act of their telling (Ingold, 2011). Talk is both a performance and performative (Law & Moser, 1999), but in addition, talk is also ‘another set of specificities’ (Moser & Law, 1999, p. 203) to be considered. Laurier and Philo (2003) also identified how talk as an activity is one of the ways of attending to what one does. That is, talk itself attends to the work. Rather than talking directly about an activity, the talk can *be* the work, namely, it can be ‘talk which occurs *in* the work and *is* the work’ (Laurier & Philo, 2003, p. 89, emphasis in original). While Laurier and Philo (2003) were concerned with the talk in workplace work, this idea of the talk being the ‘work’, is similar to ANT’s actions which activate networks and therefore the possibility of performance and enactment through the telling of stories. It is also similar to Foucault’s discussion of author-function whereby what is of interest is how entities such as a text or talk function or perform rather than what they are.

An example of the work talk does in enacting entangled subjectivities in the interview conversation follows, beginning with the study-participant’s (S-P) comment and the participant-observer’s (P-O) reply.

S-P: And the crash and burn thing – you can certainly feel like you’ve got things totally wrong. And probably the one experience was, do you remember I put that big long line of - ?

- P-O: Yes. That's when you - yes. I think what you're referring to is the work you presented at mid-year in the PG Dip Year?
- S-P: Yeah. Because I had them here in my classroom and I was trying to work out a way of conveying an idea of time
- P-O: Yes
- S-P: And I put those up, just sort of Blu-tacked up and they were quite raw looking and seemed to work in my room. But then I came [to AUT University in Auckland] and I think I got a piece of string and put them up in this perfectly straight line. And I think both you and [*fellow lecturer's name*] raised your eyebrows at it. And it was a shock to me. I'd thought I was presenting something quite valid. Yeah, it was quite a shock to get that response. Whereas if I'd been doing that on-campus and maybe discussed ideas as I was going along I might have adjusted things. But then you can argue that I was too - quite dependent on other people's viewpoints.
- P-O: Maybe, yes. Maybe. What we're trying to do, obviously, is help you develop your own level of critical thinking. Yes
- S-P: Yes.
- P-O: So that feedback from tutors, while that was a shock to you, was it a shock because you hadn't thought of the feedback that we gave you?
- S-P: Yes
- P-O: Or you hadn't thought of it in those terms? Is that what you mean?
- S-P: No - I had an idea that what I was doing was valid work and -
- P-O: I just have to say, [*study-participant's name*], it was valid work. But it was doing other things that you hadn't thought about, perhaps?
- S-P: Yes. And it wasn't really a deep exploration either.... [There were] A lot more things I could have gone through before presenting that piece of work. And that's the thing, I suppose. Sometimes when you're by yourself, well for me, I probably forget that I need to keep pushing things further.

As is evident from this exchange, the study-participant is simultaneously enacted not only as a study-participant but also as an off-campus student, a participant in a common experience with the participant-observer, an art student, a school teacher, a researcher, a creator and exhibitor of artwork, someone who felt they had done something wrong, someone who felt shocked and perhaps hurt, an on-campus student, someone dependent on other's feedback as well as a reflective practitioner. Equally, the participant-observer was enacted not only as the participant-observer, a listener and co-producer of the conversation but also as a participant in a common experience, a

teacher, a critic, and a defensive teacher. These enactments arise and are performed within the turn-by-turn negotiation and exchange of the participatory conversation.

An earlier discussion implied this interview conversation might not be considered 'field observation' in a traditional sense. Ingold (2011) outlined 'the field' as a term which implies the researcher 'retrospectively imagines a world from which he has turned away in order, quite specifically, that he might describe it in writing' (p. 242). However, what is now evident in this research is that the participatory and performative nature of the interview conversation means that it becomes part of the empirical field. In addition, it was found during this research that the possibility for 'field' observations was richer because it was conducted with people the participant-observer knew well and had shared experiences with (e.g., J. Taylor, 2011), and in a situation where facial and verbal cues and bodily gesture could be read. Latour (2014) spoke of the tellingness of gestures in implicating the material world. In addition, when incorporating storytelling and gestural cues, the possibility for a turn-by-turn conversation increases whereby the participant-observer can respond to matters arising from and in this field.

An example is the role laughter played in all conversations in the empirical study. Laughter enacted multiple subjectivities including, for example, a shared acknowledgement of a knowingness about both each other and of a shared particular situation (as witnessed above), as self-deprecation, as a deflection of embarrassment in the current situation, as remembering past instances, and perhaps as a means to soften comments. One of the many instances of laughter and a shared knowingness arose as the participant-observer wondered aloud to a study-participant whether working in a studio had implications for her notions of artist-self. The study-participant replied;

S-P: Having a studio seems like a very "artist" thing to do

P-O: Did you have a studio?

S-P: It wasn't - it was a spot at school that I had my stuff

P-O: It was a cupboard

[Comment prompted by a memory of discussions and photographs of a specific cupboard-like space. This was followed by a lengthy bout of laughter from both participants with overlapping words such as 'being in it'.]

S-P: I did a lot of it [art practice] at home

As Verran (1999) argued, laughter is important as a means of knowing 'ourselves as participants who tell stories as part of our participation' (p. 151). In addition, this demonstrates aspects Ingold (2011) encouraged, namely an expansion of 'the field' whereby 'an inquisitive mode' is a practice of 'being with', and 'a practice of observation grounded in participatory dialogue' (p. 241).

Reflecting on conversations performed

As already outlined, interview conversations took place in the latter quarter of 2013 and early 2014 with six being held face-to-face in the towns where the study-participants currently lived and two via Skype videoing. Interview conversations commenced with the participant-observer asking whether a brief reminder of the chronology of the delivery MA&D course was required. This was personalised for each study-participant (for example, where they attended residencies and whether their enrolment status was full-time, or part-time), and included details such as the timing and nature of residencies, online classes, and coursework. Four requested this reminder while three said they could remember although several said they might require a prompt. In one case, the conversation began with the participant-observer asking about an issue raised in the earlier discussion, namely asking for the study-participant “to expand on” her position on artistic identity proposed at that time.

This strategy of beginning the conversation with a ‘story’ of the way the MA&D programme was delivered, was intended to help put study-participants at ease, and also to model storytelling as an unstructured interview approach. While the provision of a storied chronological timeline has been shown as beneficial for focussing interviews (although in slightly different circumstances e.g., Guenette & Marshall, 2009), it will have influenced how the resulting stories unfolded. While the participant-observer’s opening chronology was punctuated with comments and questions, most study-participants attempted to unfold aspects of their stories in a quasi-chronological manner, apologising if they “skipped ahead” or clarifying details when timing was unclear, for example, which “final exhibition” was being referred to, the PG Diploma year or the Thesis year.

Except for the one mentioned above, all conversations ‘proper’ were initiated by a similar question. The wording of this varied slightly depending on the preceding conversation, and was driven by the participant-observer’s desire not to refer to her notes but rather to emulate the idea of an ongoing conversation. The ‘entry point’ or opening question asked if the study-participants remembered and could relate any instances or occasions during their postgraduate experience via online or distance delivery when their perception of themselves as artists or their identity as an artist was affected, influenced or enabled, positively or negatively. The framing of this entry point or ‘catalytic prompt’ built on the initial selection criterion, discussed earlier, where they were asked to consider how they positioned their creative practices in terms of artistic practices. The request to describe instances or occasions refers to Foucault’s and Latour’s focus on events discussed earlier. While two study-participants initially responded with another question, conversations began as follows:

- S-P 1: Well initially, I didn't agree with the term artist, I didn't think I was an artist. I came as a kairaranga or a weaver. At that time, there were problems with the word artist.
- S-P 2: *[after a question]* I'm not sure I felt like I was an artist until the end, I felt like I was a student - like I never would have considered myself as an artist I would of [sic] always said I was a student - I think?
- S-P 3: Yes. It was strongly influenced by meeting the other [students] and listening to the other practitioners. And being able to identify with things they were saying about their own practices that I could relate to in a way that I didn't think I would have been able to. Because I had worked in a commercial area, I was kind of fighting that. *[... continues – intentionally cut here]*
- S-P 4: *[after a question]* My identity as an artist - Well, positively. *[P-O: Or negatively?]* I think, definitely positively throughout the process. And I guess, the thing that stands out would be a bit of a shift from considering myself as someone who is studying art, or studying to be an artist, possibly, to feeling more like someone who is an artist. *[... continues – intentionally cut here]*
- S-P 5: Well I think so. The clay pieces that I did and even sort of taking them into [the forest] – just all of the little projects that I did to try and understand what I was writing about and trying to understand the losses that I was trying to evoke with my work - and just the places where I exhibited. *[... continues – intentionally cut here]*
- S-P 6: I think the whole way through the process my identity was influenced. I came in with quite a specific set of goals as to what I wanted to achieve. And that was tied up with the fact that I was struggling as to who I was as an artist at the time.
- S-P 7: At first, when I began, I felt quite intimidated by the entire process and probably, just even going up to the orientation for those four days. It was like, "Wow. What have I got myself in to?" I think, the fact is that I wasn't a tutor, that I was actually probably coming straight from a degree into an environment where a lot of the peers were actually tutors from around the country, a lot of them *[... continues – intentionally cut here]*
- S-P 8: *[asking for expansion on earlier stated position]* Yeah, sure. I think because my position, in terms of my artistic identity, is, I

suppose - I don't necessarily consider myself an artist. I've always thought that that label itself was kind of a mythical thing that sometimes people will readily attribute to themselves even without a great deal of experience or education. [... continues – intentionally cut here]

These partial responses quoted here evidence the 'work' of the opening question as a 'catalytic prompt', and demonstrate that any sameness in the question posed did not action a corresponding sameness in either the individual study-participants or their responses. This is because the provocation came in the midst of not only each person's living stories but in the midst of the stories that were the emerging research process as well as the emerging interview conversations. In addition, the telling of these stories enabled a process of 'self-description' which as Strathern (1999) identified, not only 'encourages social entities to proliferate', but also creates entities that are unique and 'radically distinct from one another' (p. 172).

There is also evidence of the 'work' of the talk in the sense of the stories being enacted at the time of the conversation with phrases such as "I don't necessarily consider", "I think", and "I guess". These partial responses above also reveal a variety of different actions at play in the telling itself that becomes the enacting. There is declaring and disagreeing. There is hesitancy, uncertainty, and tentativeness ("I'm not sure", "I think so", and "I suppose") along with a reflexiveness ("a bit of" and "more like").

These responses also demonstrate, as Pool and Law discovered (discussed earlier), that the study-participants did not necessarily speak of the same things as the participant-observer or even have the same intention for the conversation. In addition, they talked about much more than was asked, endorsing Pool's findings and demonstrating that, as Strathern (1991/2004) noted, 'there are always potentially "more" things to take into account' (p. xiv) when trying to investigate the complexity of phenomena.

Study-participants also spoke of differing 'things' and responded to different aspects of the prompting question. Some responded by starting to tell of instances and situations while others responded to the implicit request to engage in processes of self-description and self-identification. Equally, most seemed to have prepared their responses and given thought prior to the conversation, of how they wanted to relate their stories. On the one hand, the range of practices, relations, materials, and specificities implicated could cause the participant-observer to wonder, as Law (2006) did in one of his early studies, why the interviewees sometimes seemed to 'talk about the wrong things' (p. 5). On the other hand, the relationality of the interview situation enabled that very place of exchange (Latour, 2014) and of negotiation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) discussed earlier, producing, as Latour (2005) suggested, a 'bewildering array of entities to account for the hows and whys of any course of action' (p. 47).

The actions revealed in the study-participants' initial responses included recognition and identification not only of subject positions named as weaver, student, artist, identity, and artistic identity, but also the uncertainty and fragility of these subject positions ("possibly" and "more like"). Recognising and identifying other entities such as struggles, artworks as projects, and others as like-minded practitioners, also took place. There is evidence of othering, positioning, naming, distancing, resisting, belonging, relating, and comparing. There is evidence of being influenced, being open, listening, understanding, struggling, being intimidated, and having doubt, and fear. In addition, there is reference to the making and creating of artworks, installing artworks, evoking, and writing. All these actions can also be seen to operate as Foucault's techniques of the self, discussed earlier. The array of entities both performing and performed include residencies, travel, peers, practices, peers as tutors, self-confidence, achievement, misconceptions ("a lot of the peers were actually tutors"), self-recognition and attribution, art, employment, artworks and their underpinning concepts, art media, art-making and installing, academic qualifications, artistic experience, personal goals, personal histories, place, study, and the academic environment. Also, the subject positions already mentioned above can be seen as entities, as can the actions, a result of the fact that they oscillate between 'action as determined and action as determining' (McLean & Hassard, 2004, p. 509).

Even the first few words of the stories told here imply multiple forms and notions of artist-selves. Some suggest a sense of universality, and include artist as a concept, a label, and a name, and even as something that is mythical. It is also a name that can seemingly be attributed to oneself or claimed without completing a recognised process of learning. Artist is also seen in a form that is a feeling, or a 'felt-identity' (Hockey & Allen-Collinson, 2005). This was in relation to a perceived state but it could also be complete ("I felt like I was an artist") as well as partial ("feeling more like someone who is an artist"). It is a learned state and therefore a becoming state ("studying to be an artist"). As well as being implicated as generic, particularly when a label, 'artist' is also shown to have specificity in relation to an individual ("who I was as an artist" and "my artistic identity").

Multiple temporalities and spatialities are also apparent, and are seen in relation to other actions and entities ("initially", "at that time", "the end", "throughout", "at first", "I don't", and "when I began"). While a sense of temporal processes is implied by these phrases, the term 'process' was, however, used explicitly by several study-participants in their response. It could be argued that the storied chronology of the MA&D programme delivery provided by the participant-observer gave rise to the use of this term. However, the term arose in conversations that did not begin with this chronology, and it was not used in any conversation prior to the study-participant's utterance. What was not clear though, was what processes or practices the study-participants were referring to here. Are they related to processes of academia, or learning, or creativity, or art-making? Are

they related to processes involved in the actions outlined above? Alternatively, are the processes related to performances and enactments of subjectivities, or techniques of the self and practices of self-care? Consequently, there does not appear to be one single process being referred to, but rather multiple, overlapping and interfering processes. These processes seem embedded and enabled as personal experiences, where their actions in relation to the individual rendered seemingly both positive and negative (“intimidating”) emotions, as well as different forms of experience. The study-participants also seemed to possess, as Hockey and Allen-Collinson (2005) suggested, ‘an awareness of their selves in action’ (p. 80) both within and as their experiences.

4.4 Ordering modes

As can be seen, even from these initial responses, there are similarities, differences, and multiplicities performed and enacted across the stories performed. The question then becomes how to handle the contradictions and multiplicities in these ‘data stories’ (Lather, 2007, p. 140), especially having discovered, as Law (2006) also did, that ‘trajectories offered by one interviewee didn’t plug into trajectories suggested by another’ (p. 5). For ANT and other qualitative research approaches, the data is not able to ‘speak for itself’ (Ponti, 2012, p. 2; see also MacLure, 2013). Therefore, as discussed in the previous chapter, there is a need to engage in Mol’s ‘describing practices’, to engage in giving Latour’s textual accounts, and Law’s story telling of how things happen in practice, in order to understand the constitution of social phenomena. However, as Ingold (2011) noted, ‘any act of description entails a movement of interpretation’ (p. 237). This movement involved in interpretation is similar to the action and work that has been discussed in an ANT understanding of the social whereby entities do not exist ‘out “there” but involve interpretive *work*’ for them to be revealed (Fox, 2006, p. 435, emphasis in original). Fox (2006) discussed Garfinkel’s notion of ‘interpretive work’ noting how this work is ‘an ongoing practical accomplishment’ (p. 442), and as a practice, does not take place ‘in the head but in accountable practical action’ (p. 435). This movement or action creates a space for interweaving the ‘data stories’ (Lather, 2007, p. 140) engendered and gathered, with the stories to be told. As with all acts of tracing and describing, what is revealed in each of these is not the same, and nor are they the same as what gave rise to them.

Interpretative work in traditional qualitative analyses frequently engages in an analytical process called coding whereby the researcher looks for ‘patterns or order in a body of data ... by identifying recurring themes, categories or concepts’ (MacLure, 2013, p. 165). However, as discussed earlier, the process of naming and categorising has a tendency to reduce specificity, difference, and complexity (e.g., Law, 1999; Somers, 1994). The act of coding also implies a presupposition about the sorts of patterns that might be found. In

addition, the nature of the coding exercise may not recognise the importance of one occurrence of data (e.g., Mason, 2010), and it may negate the possibility of learning from the data (e.g., Latour, 2005; Mol, 2010) at the empirical level.

MacLure (2013) confirmed that the practice of coding a body of data 'offends' (p. 167) in poststructuralism, or as is the case here, in an ANT-ish and Foucauldian approach. As she argued, when coding, 'things are condemned always to contract the same sorts of relationships to one another' (MacLure, 2013, p. 168). However, she does not call for the abandonment of coding as an analytical practice as it affords an opportunity for the 'immersion in, and entanglement with, the minutiae of "the data"' (MacLure, 2013, p. 174), an approach endorsed by ANT and Foucault, as already mentioned. Instead, she proposed that the practice be treated as 'an experiment with order and disorder, in which provisional and partial taxonomies are formed, but are always subject to change and metamorphosis, as new connections spark among words, bodies, objects and ideas' (MacLure, 2013, p. 181). This links to Foucault's practice of 'methodological codification' which, Dean (1994) argued, 'is best regarded as a summary that revisits and clarifies analysis after the event rather than a rationalistic plan put into practice by analysis' (p. 2).

In addition, this 'experiment with order and disorder' as part of the interpretive work is similar to ANT's insistence on orderings through telling stories. Due to their temporal and spatial ontologies, these orderings are not only 'momentary' (Law, 1997b, p. 6) but they also oscillate between and into further re-orderings. This, therefore, authorises the need for multiple stories or modes of ordering to describe phenomena and comprehend their complexity, because, as Ingold (2011) put it, 'the single line presents a gross oversimplification' of any phenomenon (p. 70). However, each different mode of ordering will produce different and specific forms of a phenomenon as '[t]hey produce certain material arrangements. They produce certain subject positions. And they produce certain forms of knowledge' (Law, 2001, p. 2). Consequently, McLean and Hassard (2004) suggested there were problems in producing ANT stories, namely how to decide what to include and exclude, make visible and invisible, make absent and present, and to privilege and to other in the descriptions and stories. However, this is the same for all qualitative accounts which are, as Rappert (2010) noted, 'characterised by absences' (p. 571). In addition, he talked of 'secrets' being revealed and concealed in research accounts (Rappert, 2010). While Rappert's discussion was focussed on autoethnography, this research could also be considered in a similar light because of ANT's 'methodological sensibilities', namely, it could be considered as a partial narrative of the self thereby enabling the possibility for the participant-observer to conceal 'secrets'.

The answer to the question of what to include and exclude in an ANT account, however, again lies in the empirical because processes of including and excluding imply and perform each other in the performances of themselves. As Law (1992) argued, these

decisions are 'an empirical matter. But since no ordering is ever complete, we might expect a series of strategies to coexist and interact' (p. 388). Law (2001) also explained how these strategies, or modes of ordering as he called them, are more often than not implicit rather than explicit, and likened them to a 'Foucauldian mini-discourse' (p. 1). Similarly, Foucault discussed the different 'sets of relations' by which a site or emplacement could be described or defined (e.g., Foucault, 1984/1998; Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986). Therefore, with the knowledge that strategies, modes, and orderings or stories will co-exist, interact and interfere, it is then not the patterns in the collected 'data stories' (Lather, 2007, p. 140) we look to in our interpretative work. Instead, we look to the ordering, and stories described, and attend to, as Law (1997b) argued, the 'patterns that subsist *between* those stories, patterns that will often not reduce themselves to the chronology of narrative, patterns that do not form a chronological narrative - because there is no narrative' (p. 8, emphasis in original). Or as Latour (2005) perhaps flippantly put it 'the solution to relativism is always more relativity' (p. 122). Consequently, the next chapter engages in accounts and initial modes of ordering arising through the conversations between the participant-observer and the individual study-participants. However, this chapter ends with a partial narrative of the self, which is ordered to reveal further practices in this intervention, and to acknowledge interferences and interactions with the participant-observer and her story.

4.5 Relating a personal story

The majority of the thesis is written in the third person, but I will speak in the first person here. This attempt to minimise my 'voice' might suggest I perceive myself outside the situation under examination, at a remove in the research process, and as being able to retain a sense of critical distance. However, this is not the case. As discussed, I use Latour's (2005) term 'participant-observer' (p. 136) to acknowledge my embeddedness in the research, and the idea that it cannot be understood as an objective endeavour. As both participant-observer and author, I am a fellow participant in the process, in terms of both the intervention itself and the telling of this. Similarly, Vickers and Fox (2010) deliberately described themselves as 'author-researcher[s] in the third person', and cited studies demonstrating that this is a 'common practice in ANT accounts' (p.11). However, as a participant, I do not want my 'insider's perspective' privileged over the study-participants' perspectives and experiences (Haraway, 1988, p. 576). This research is not about my experiences, but it undeniably has everything to do with my experiences, as I taught for twelve years in the specific learning and teaching environment that gave rise to the research questions. Consequently, my use of the third person is an attempt to avoid privileging my experiences or my position as author (e.g., Foucault, 1969/2003; see also Vickers & Fox, 2010). Despite activating these strategies, I remain uncomfortable about these matters, some of which are mentioned at the beginning of the next chapter.

Similarly, Roth (2002) discussed authorial suffering in relation to editorial power. As I write this thesis until it is 'finished', I also experience a sense of authorial suffering, and it is at the hands of the editorial power I wield over this work as well as my struggle with the power inherent in both the learning and teaching situation and the research situation. To treat all participants equally, I also need to tell a story about myself. This could be couched as a confession, a revealing of secrets. This then means I am subjecting myself to the type of power and gaze I subjected study-participants to when engendering their stories, requesting a confession of sorts (e.g., Mayo, 2000). In addition, perhaps the act of confessing and the act of writing it here perform these acts as Foucault's techniques of self-care (e.g., Bazerman, 2000; Bleakley, 2000; Foucault, 1982/2003b; Gannon, 2006; McDonald, 1996; Pollock, 1998), and as a 'confession to others' (Foucault, 1993, p. 208). However, for me, they are both and they are neither.

I had a lengthy relationship with each study-participant for at least 24 months. I encouraged and assisted them to write and present their applications. I interviewed and accepted them onto the programme. I taught and assessed, mentored and challenged, and supported them through the first year of the degree. In many cases, I also supervised their thesis projects. I engaged intensively with their art practices. I travelled with them through the vicissitudes of learning how to undertake a research project, and the vulnerabilities associated with creating, articulating and exhibiting their artworks. I witnessed suffering and jubilation. I met family and friends. Consequently, I thought I had some understanding of their journeys and would not be surprised by their stories. However, I was surprised.

While being open to surprises is necessary in an ANT approach, what I was not prepared for were the actions these stories engendered in me. This was in relation to my sense of fair-mindedness and sense of responsibility, which I presumed went with my professional roles. The various enactments of a sense of responsibility made me do, as Latour (2005) suggested, '*unexpected* [emphasis added] things' whereby my actions as participant-observer were exceeded in both intent and outcome (p. 106). Their stories, so generously and openly unfolded between us, performed, for me, perceived faults, flaws, and inadequacies. While I understood the power and influence inherent in pedagogical relationships, I experienced difficulty engaging with these 'data stories' (Lather, 2007, p. 140) without seeing them in terms of apparent personal shortcomings. So this confession becomes in part, as Besley (2005) suggested, 'a declaration and disclosure, acknowledgement or admission of a crime, fault or weakness' (p. 85). However, the materiality and relationality of Foucault and ANT's notions of subjectivity mean the ongoing performances of my multiple senses of responsibility throughout the research process are only part of multiple networks enacting my subjectivities as an individual, teacher, supervisor, or Strand Leader. While Besley (2005) suggested the confession 'is

partly about making oneself known' (p. 85), it is also in ANT terms, about enacting an albeit momentary 'knowing location' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 37; see also Usher & Edwards, 2005). According to Usher and Edwards (2007), however, in order to learn, I need to be enacted in this 'knowing location' (p. 112).

Law (2000b) also puzzled about the personal in his writing, and 'the problem of the public and the private' particularly in 'ethnography or history' (p. 1). Interestingly, for me (as my Master's thesis research involved seventeenth-century still-life), he drew on Alpers' (1983) work on 'the art of describing' outlining how seventeenth-century Dutch Vanitas 'subsists in a space of tension' (p. 6). The painting both 'depicts' and 'performs' this tension. He suggested 'if we choose to write about ourselves' or engage in practices of 'self-reflexivity' (linking to vanity) we similarly depict and perform tension which introduces 'noise' and creates 'sites of self-indulgence' (p. 7). While tension is inherent in the research process, and in investigations relating to performances of particular subjectivities, the tension needs to be enabled to perform on multiple levels and not only as obfuscation and self-indulgence. On the one hand, my use of the third person is also a means of attempting to resist self-indulgence. On the other, I willingly embrace Law's (2000b) solution to these dilemmas, which is also a methodological sensibility of ANT. This is to engage in, as discussed, a number of different modes of ordering, by which Law (2000b) meant different 'stories; interpellations; knowing locations; realities; materially heterogeneous sociotechnical arrangements; and discourses' (p. 23). Again, in doing this I also acknowledge that, as Hetherington (1997) would have it 'ordering is not just simply something we do ... it is something we are in (p. 35).

Chapter 5 Performing through vignettes

5.1 Preamble

The use of vignettes as a mode of ordering and as a strategy to describe and give an account in the presentation of aspects of research is not uncommon (e.g., Mulcahy, 2006; Roth, 1996). Vignettes have been ordered around events, as in the case of Beyes and Steyaert (2011) who used vignettes of 'artistic interventions' or art projects as a basis for their research (p. 100). They have been ordered around objects, as was the case for La Jevic and Springgay (2008) who included 'vignettes from student journal entries and images' as well as narrative vignettes in their analysis (p. 73). In addition, they can be ordered around individuals, a strategy used by Hellawell (2006) where he presented 'case-study vignettes' (p. 489). The vignettes told in this chapter can be likened to Hellawell's vignettes as the individual study-participant is privileged in the telling. However, a distinction needs to be made between the 'data stories' (Lather, 2007, p. 140) gathered during the conversations between the study-participant and the participant-observer, and the vignettes told here. They are not the same. The vignettes that follow should be considered as 'snap-shot stories' (Mol, 2002, p. vii). As with the relationship between the image in the photograph or the 'snap-shot' and its referent, these stories are not the individual study-participant's stories but rather the participant-observer's re-telling of aspects of each conversation.

The telling of vignettes can be used as a means to simplify, and Latour (2005) employed this strategy to clarify, for the reader, what he called a 'horrendously difficult' point (p. 59). Similarly, Gehman et al. (2012) used vignettes to identify patterns, themes or 'similarities among the four different entanglements' through which the phenomena they were investigating emerged (p. 90). However, the purpose of the vignettes here is not to simplify but rather they are used to intensify and therefore reveal complexity. Bain (2007) likewise used the recounting of vignettes as a strategy to 'reveal the complex and embedded gendered relations of fatherhood for contemporary Canadian heterosexual male visual artists' (p. 249). The aim of the vignettes in this chapter is to evidence instances and arrangements of differences and multiplicities of performances, of potential materials, entities, relations, and enactments both within and across the stories. They act in the role of vignettes by giving accounts of the experiences of participants in the study as opposed to explicitly engaging with the research question. They are, to use Law's (2000b) words, different 'modes of ordering', 'stories; interpellations; knowing locations', and different performance of 'subject-positions and object-positions' (p. 23). Equally, to borrow from Ingold (2011), these vignettes should be considered as drawings or 'little pictograms by means of which we tell particular stories about ourselves and about our understanding of the world we inhabit' (p. 114).

The content of the vignettes will not be specifically discussed or theorised in this chapter, although aspects will be referred to in subsequent discussions. Instead, they are laid out to engender states of puzzlement (e.g., Latour, 2005). They are laid out in order to reveal matters, which, as Moser (2008) put it, 'are *of concern* or *importance*' (p. 99, emphasis in original). Latour (2004, 2005) discussed the need to differentiate between 'matters of fact' and 'matters of concern'. 'Matters of fact' need to be perceived as 'matters of concern' so that uncertainties and ambivalences are identified in order to open up the possibility for debate and contention. In addition, 'matters of concern' should not be too hastily reduced into 'matters of fact' as this reduces the possibility for multiplicity and complexity. Therefore, these vignettes are told to expose uncertainties and ambivalences, and spaces and relations in and through which subjectivities might be enacted.

As with any mode of ordering, these vignettes will involve othering, an act that simultaneously makes some things absent while bringing others into presence (Law, 2004). In addition, any inherent disjointedness in the original data story unfolded in the conversations may be made coherent in the re-telling here. Equally, any original coherences may be rendered incoherent. Therefore, these vignettes should not be considered representative of every students' experience, nor representations of either the individuals or any specific performances of subjectivities, although this telling will be, and will perform different and multiple subjectivity enactments.

The act of telling of these vignettes raised other 'matters of concern' for the participant-observer. Consequently attempts are made not to privilege any one story over another by ensuring all vignettes are of a similar length ($1,000 \pm 50$ words each). However, the inclusion of these in alphabetical order by pseudonym will inherently set the order of encounter for a reader. In addition, these vignettes are the participant-observer's stories. These (and subsequent) stories were not reviewed by study-participants. Those indicating on the consent form that they wished 'to receive a copy of the report from the research' stated in later discussion that they expected to read the completed thesis online once published. However, endeavours are made to recognise the study-participant's 'voice' through the incorporation of exact words or phrases (indicated by the use of double quote marks) from the conversation transcripts. While the intention is to try to tell these stories in a neutral and non-judgemental way, there are inherent risks that relating negative experiences and quoting phrases in isolation will compromise or cast a negative light on study-participants' stories, experiences, artworks, research projects, and subjectivity enactments (or not). Thus, the decision not to theorise these stories in this chapter was also out of respect for the study-participants. Therefore, while these vignettes will undoubtedly misrepresent aspects of study-participants' experiences, it is not their intention. Nor should they undermine what was, in every case, a successful journey culminating in all study-participants graduating with their MA&D.

5.1 A story about Eliza

Eliza's decision to enrol in the MA&D was driven by the knowledge that, as she put it, "something was still missing" even after the completion of her Bachelor's degree (Visual Arts and Design), and several semesters as an "Artist in Residence". This perceived lack meant she did not see herself as an artist prior to her entry into the programme, although this perception altered during the time. In the initial conversation, her perception of artist-self was defined expressly in terms of gained confidences. This included the confidence to research ideas and art-making processes independently, to create her artworks more intuitively without an over-reliance on justification, and the confidence in her own abilities to make well-founded judgements of her own artwork and art practices.

Eliza's experiences can perhaps be understood in the light of 22 years as a self-employed craftsperson, and the shifts in perception she encountered in attempting to understand herself differently. Acknowledgement of these differences could well be partly encompassed in her comment that "something was still missing". In addition, her perception of education seemed to have influenced these experiences. Eliza appeared to have always valued the opportunity to learn, refusing to comply with her mother's request to leave school at 15 to work and supplement the family income. However, she noted that "being in a university type of environment was massive for me, coming from a working-class sort of background. But also, at the same time, it was exciting. Also, I felt really quite privileged, very privileged to be there". This may have contributed to her initially being "quite intimidated by the entire process" and to being unconfident as she embarked on her study at postgraduate level. However, her overriding motivation to learn helped foster her attitude to "see how far I can actually get in this environment".

Eliza's story is best described in terms of acts of doing. This became evident in the initial discussion where her notions of artist-self were viewed as a relationship with gaining confidences and of confidences gained. Her story repeatedly referred to notions such as doing, pushing, working, searching, learning and understanding, and in the process implies a relationship not only between these types of acts and actions but between the entities that gave rise to these. Eliza constantly questioned her practice, her ways of working and the resulting artwork in an attempt to understand them fully. While she realised, "Okay. I'm ... doing something here and it's actually quite interesting", what was "missing" in her practice was the conscious comprehension of what she, as the maker, and what the artworks with their materials, processes and viewing environment, were "doing", along with how and why. She continually questioned herself asking, for example, "What the hell am I doing? What am I doing?" and "Is this working? Is it not working?", and "Am I doing what I'm supposed to be doing in this environment?" (Read in isolation, these words might imply that Eliza's practice was not strong, but this was not the case. It was driven by a passionate social conscience arising from personal experiences and

solid research into a socio-political topic). Eliza felt she had been “actually searching for the answer for the couple of years”, trying to discover, through her making, not only the ways to discuss the what, how, and why of her practice, but also the ways to make her vision of her artworks, and the ideas she was trying to engage with, “work”. Even part way through the thesis year, this was causing anxiety “because I hadn't still got to a point where I could really confidently say what I was doing. I knew what I wanted to be doing but it wasn't working”. She talked of not fully understanding “how I was thinking the ideas through”, and the need to think “beyond what I keep thinking”, and “to think a bit differently”. She also talked of: learning and understanding her own ways of creating and making; the role of intuition in her working process; the function and purpose of her artwork, materiality, spatiality; how her artworks might “talk” or communicate the ideas and affect the viewer; and the implications and effect of the creator's intentionality.

Eliza believed that during the period of her enrolment she was “learning to be an artist, learning to think like an artist”. She was inclined to still think of herself as a craftsperson despite attaining a visual arts undergraduate qualification – “it wasn't enough” to alter her perception and this seemed to remain until she could answer the ‘what’, the ‘how’, and the ‘why’ of her art practice. She had generated an income through her craft practice, supporting herself and her family, therefore, in her “opinion”, being a self-employed craftsperson involved:

knowing your material, knowing how to work it with the tools. A little bit systematic and factory-ish. Once you get it - the customer dictates and vice versa. There's a relationship going on. If it sells, you make more. And you can be doing that same thing over and over and over again.

Therefore, her actions of doing, pushing, working, searching, learning, and understanding are not only in response to the academic environment, the art-making environment, and the art world, but also in relation to resisting her understanding of craft practices and objects, and her experiences “being” or living and functioning as a craftsperson. This brought about the realisation that an art practice could embrace intuition, and that she could trust in hers, and that to communicate her ideas effectively, the artwork (consisting of artefact and its environment) needed to create an emotion, to create “a feeling of experiencing something” rather than just mimicking. As she noted, “it took me a while to click that all I was doing was mimicking something”. While some of the “missing” links had perhaps been discovered, the confidences gained meant she eventually decided her ongoing art practice would require a supplementary income to support it. It would entail a constant “pushing beyond” already achieved boundaries with the inclusion of “other people's voices” in collaborative socio-political projects.

5.2 A story about Everton

Everton considered himself an artist when he commenced his MA&D journey because he had exhibited regularly for 26 years and operated a business selling his artworks. While he felt the same at the end, he acknowledged there was a difference, “there has been a period of doubting. I am trying to figure out what it means to me now”. He described how, for three – four years prior to enrolling, he worked full-time at his art practice. He then reached a point where he was “just selling art and producing art but I didn't really ... know why I was doing it any longer”. In spite of reading extensively and researching painting practices, processes and ideas, “I just couldn't narrow it down as to what I wanted to be or who I wanted to be in that process”. Therefore, he undertook the MA&D programme with “quite a specific set of goals”. There was a “desire to gain a greater knowledge as to what I was doing and why I was doing it”, and simultaneously, it was “tied up with the fact that I was struggling as to who I was as an artist at the time”. His aim was not to gain a qualification, as he could have “done business management”. Rather, “I was damned determined I was going to learn ‘the something’”. Consequently, Everton's story is associated with a desire to synthesise his ideas and his practice, along with the anticipation that this would answer his questions and in the process reveal who, what, and how he was as an artist. There was also an expectation that the academic environment would play a major part in resolving this for him.

Everton acknowledged that aspects of the academic environment in the PG Diploma year met several of his criteria. This included the online dialogue amongst peers and lecturers, and the provision plus engagement with textual material, which expanded and often challenged existing knowledge. However, he raised the notion of compliance. The act of complying was not an issue for Everton, but “it wasn't always very clear ... why we were doing some of the things that we were doing”. The situations he outlined implicated relationships between students' personally driven projects, coursework requirements, and academic regulations (“there was a lot of talk about the fact that this was *your* [emphasis is conversation] study ... but it never felt like that”). In turn, this had repercussions for interactions between peers and with lecturers. It would have influenced the student's ability to be self-reflective about their art practice. In addition, compliance potentially affected the notion of an individual project. “It was more like we had to tick off a few boxes because we all had to do the same type of thing”. This suggests strategies for creating compliance and the resulting acts of compliance may have been a means of enforcing a sameness, of limiting specificity between projects, and of negating individuality and “autonomy”. Compliance was important in the thesis year, where research reports and form completion are inherent in the process. Pertinent for Everton and his story was the connection between these actions for compliance, and his desired outcomes from the postgraduate experience. As he explained, “I didn't feel like it served any purpose to what I was wanting at the time ... [they were] your checks in the system. It

wasn't so much our reality of what we were wanting". He also referred to the artificiality of both the academic environment and the art world.

Everton's story can be described in terms of a search for answers to the question 'why?' This was in relation to his art practice and its place in the art world, and involved a desire to understand the nature of things (the what), the purpose, or function of things (what for), and the process of things (how it works). It also encompassed developing an understanding of himself in relation to these networks. How might they define or position him, maybe as an individual, but particularly in terms of his notions of artist-self? The inclusion of the academic institutional networks added complexity to his quest. Everton noted that his notions of artist-self were "influenced" throughout his MA&D experience and he raised instances where this happened, for example, compliance. However, he clarified this later, with a laugh, "ironically, everything I've said, this [comment] will kind of negate it". He then described his notions of artist-self as strong "the entire way through". Despite this, his "why?" question, originally personally driven and held in a deliberate way ("I was actually quite in control and quite in charge of what I was doing"), was reflected back at him. It was reiterated by the academic network, namely by discussions with supervisors, presentations to peers, by academic requirements, the nature of a research project, and the research process itself. The very questions Everton had intentionally posed as a legitimate challenge for himself were now being reflected iteratively, becoming an unnecessary and unwanted "frustration". "We just kept getting, 'Why?' And if you can't answer it the first time, chances are highly likely you're not going to answer the hundredth time". This had repercussions for him, including altering his perception of his ability to articulate answers; increasing senses of compliance; affecting the engagement with his art practice, productivity, and sense of purpose; and affecting discussions with supervisors.

At the end of his postgraduate experience, Everton still described himself as an artist, albeit one that was "disillusioned and disappointed". This was not in terms of his original expectations but in relation to painting and the art world. He had earlier commented, "I was quite determined I was going to be a painter" describing how he gravitated to those in the cohort "who painted or drew". Identifying with a specific medium and practice was important for Everton. Some in his cohort identified with the "catch-all phrase" of "multimedia artists", which he saw as resistance to "actually trying to define who they actually were". However, he described his disappointment; "it was the fact that suddenly I was looking at art in a different way". He found it "boring" and "dull". "So what it did is ... convinced me that I didn't actually have anything important to contribute to the art world, so therefore I didn't need to".

5.3 A story about Fidel

When asked whether she considered herself an artist on commencing her postgraduate study, Fidel replied, “Not really”, adding, “I felt like an artist in a class of students”. She clarified this later with laughter, saying she felt like “an art student trying to be an artist. No. Definitely an art student”. After her study, she refused the label of artist instead saying she perceived herself “differently”, defining this in terms of acquired academic and research skills, and of “being confident about the work [artwork] I actually did”. Fidel noted there were instances during her postgraduate experience when her notions of artist-self were influenced. She highlighted her engagement with her art practice and artworks, but this was specifically in relation to her research topic, which was driven by personal cultural histories. She described these instances as “just all of the little projects that I did to try and understand what I was writing about ... trying to understand the losses that I was trying to evoke with my work ... just the places where I exhibited [e.g. in the forest]”. It was, she felt, the “best time” in all her experiences of creating art. Rather than being reliant on a specific medium and its associated practices, her research during the degree focussed on a number of “little projects”. The artefacts she created and subsequently sited in culturally specific natural environments, explored issues related to her hapu’s (subtribe) lost histories, knowledge, artefacts, lands, and people. Not only was it the research into the artefacts, their creation, and the selection and engagement with the “exhibition” site that affected her, Fidel also mentioned experiencing “a sense of solitude”, and of being “able to look at or have memories of things that may have been”. On the one hand, she was investigating her ideas through making and experiencing her artwork as a member of her hapu might. On the other, this experience provided motivation and drive.

[I]t just evoked in me a need to try and express those things that I was feeling about the loss – you know, the loss that I was trying to evoke in my work. The losses through the losses of land, the losses of materials that we use, losses of places, of names, of rivers.

These experiences “helped me a great deal”. In addition, Fidel’s modes of practice and her research topic enabled her to draw on, and potentially communicate and share knowledge, the “significance” of this knowledge, “tikanga” (customs), and “spirit” (wairua) in her “little projects”.

As implied above, the purpose and function of Fidel’s research project and her artworks will have affected her notions of artist-self. She was trying to ‘evoke’ the hapu’s losses with a view to communicating knowledge. Her aim was “really just ... to get them to talk about it. To look at it and talk ... and hopefully for them [to] get some interest and [then] they [her hapu] might want to actually find out for themselves some of these things”. When asked if these projects were completed for personal gain, the answer was emphatic - “No, no!” Her objective was for her thesis, comprising both artworks and an

exegesis, to raise for the whanau (family) and hapu issues of the losses “in a way that hadn't been really addressed before”. It was not about just highlighting that there were losses but rather it was about clarifying what had been lost and the significance of this (for example, what had been on the land, where rivers had run and their names and the people “because nobody knows who people are any more”). The aim was to evoke and provoke, to generate discussion and through this, an understanding and appreciation of the foundation and importance of the hapu's collective identity rather than focusing on members' individuality. “There's a myriad of people that were here and that's why we're here ... all these people collectively helped to make sure that we were here”.

Fidel's artistic practice during her postgraduate experience involved projects that could “be used for some benefit” to others, implying the significance of community and notions of collective identities. However, another notion of artist-self was also evident in her story – one that operated in a perhaps more individual and personal way. She described how she could “get myself lost in artworks, other people's artworks. And so I think that because I've got that sort of head that I'm an artist”. On the other hand, however, as Fidel attained her art qualifications later in life, she questioned whether her age was a “barrier” to learning the skills she associated with being an artist. For her, she felt she had less time and energy to hone desired, or what she perceived as necessary, skills. She admired and respected the craftsmanship of other artists but her self-criticality and lack of confidence led her to doubt and therefore “regret”. (“I'm really sorry that I didn't actually do this a long, long time ago”). She talked of “that whole energy of being an artist” but noted that for her, “it takes a great deal of spiritual thinking, of materials thinking, of content thinking, of colour thinking, of composition thinking. It just takes a lot of thought to do all that. It's not something that happens overnight”. Fidel went on to explain, “I'd love to paint. I've always wanted to be a painter”. However, in the postgraduate environment, the doubt, perceived time pressures, coursework and research requirements, peer and lecturer feedback as well as the research project content meant the nature of her art practice (and associated outcomes) shifted her from painter to maker of “little projects”. A consequence of this, of not meeting some of her standards or expectations and perceptions of how an individual artist and their artworks might operate and function meant, “I thought less of myself”. On the other hand, however, given the experiences of her own “little projects” during the research process, she admitted she did not really know what she was “trying to compensate for”. Towards the end of the conversation, when asked if she perceived herself as artist, she replied with laughter, “Well, I've got the cheek and the audacity now to say yes. I think so”.

5.4 A story about George

When considering his perception of himself as artist, George remarked that he found this “difficult”. He countered with a question, “When is one an artist? If it is having artistic attitudes and sensibilities, then yes. If an artist must be practising then probably not”. He described his notions of artist-self following his postgraduate experiences in a similarly reflective manner saying he perceived himself as artist, but to this, he added, “much more so”. This was defined in terms of having “established a clearer purpose”, of having “more control over the making and process”, and being able to articulate what his practice was. His notions of artist-self were related to having a “clearer understanding of how to do this” as a result of “a deeper understanding of what the art world was all about”. However, if being an artist meant just being “locked in the studio just making, then no”. This was also because he tended to think of himself in terms of his principal occupation, namely as an art educator. George posed a number of questions about notions of artist during the initial conversation, which were discussed later, for example, “Are there degrees of being an artist? Can you be a dormant artist?”

What stood out for George during his postgraduate experience was “a bit of a shift from considering myself as someone who is studying art, or studying to be an artist, possibly, to feeling more like someone who is an artist”. Again, it was an increasing sense of purpose that contributed to this, and for George this was in terms of the relationships between his research topic and project, and his art practice. Despite a feasible research topic being an entry requirement, George felt at the beginning that no one in his cohort was certain about his or her topic of investigation or its parameters. While it was expected that initial research questions could be quite fluid, he noted that they could also be “blown to pieces through the process”. This “process” he referred to could include: academic processes; the processes of proposing, designing and completing a research project; and creative processes. However, he now understood that artistic research “doesn’t work that way at all. It’s not that straightforward”. In addition, George’s increasing “sense of purpose” was also related to his art practice and to “having some clear ideas about the ideas that the work might convey”. As he noted, “I struggled most of the time with working out what was going on with the work [artwork]”. He explained that posting photographs of his artwork and processes online for critiques and feedback was “challenging”. However, what proved difficult about this was “putting himself in the position of the viewer”, and struggling to understand his artwork. When asked whether this might have influenced his notions of artist-self, he replied

Oh, that's a tricky question. I think it was a confidence thing more than anything else. When ... you're uncertain about the way other people are going to read your work, then it's difficult on the confidence level. But in terms of did it affect my feeling of being an artist, probably not so much. Yeah, I'm not sure how to answer that.

Again he proposed notions of artist-self in terms of; "I think it's entering a state, possibly? Where you can juggle and deal with all of those issues and yet have a more solidified sense of purpose and what you're trying to achieve".

For George, embarking on the "task of studying again" after being out of the academic environment for so long, "subconsciously maybe, put me in that position where I felt like I was a student entering the course". It was his being "fresh" to the environment as well as the situation itself that accentuated this pedagogical identity. However, his motivation for enrolling was "so I could get back in touch with me as an artist a bit more". The more "comfortable" he became in the environment, "the more I could then shift my focus away from study and towards my art practice". The "actual things that helped that occur" were engaging in the requirements of the written paper in the PG Diploma year and "making [art]work". As he noted, "although it felt like study at the time, all of the reading of philosophy got me into the head space that I wanted to be in". Also "the more I did [art] practice the more that got me comfortable with myself as a maker, I suppose". George then referred back to his idea of "being a dormant artist" suggesting the initial stages of "the course drew me out of that dormant state".

George's story encompassed reflexivity and questioning notions of artist and his notions of artist-self. These can be described in terms of uncertainty as well as movements and passages between ideas, which reinforce fluidity and instability. He suggested notions of "scales", "degrees", and "states" of being with respect to artist, as well as an acknowledgement that his ideas might be "idealistic". His notions of artist-self in the conversation were couched in relation to possible understandings of what and how an artist might be. In addition, it related to his experiences as a learner in the postgraduate environment, and on the fact that he was provided with "experiences as an artist", for example, exhibiting artwork and "the pressure of having to produce [artworks] and that emphasis on studio practice". He also implicated the viewer in the relationships when he queried, "if an artist's locked in a studio making art and no-one ever sees it, are they an artist?" It was also associated with his understanding of his role and effectiveness as an art educator or as he phrased it, an "experienced learner". He outlined instances and opportunities in his life that he felt contributed to his notions of artist-self including developing artistic sensibilities and the external recognition of this ("the more you draw attention to that sensibility and focus on it, then perhaps there's an increase in assuming that state"). However, he also wondered whether maybe "being an artist is just assuming a role" or "assuming a position within society". Subsequently, there was talk of the possibility that the idea of an artist as we might know it, could one day disappear.

5.5 A story about Gertie

Prior to enrolling in the MA&D, Gertie would not have thought of herself as an artist. However, her notions of artist-self altered during her MA&D experience. This was because she was now producing work in a “non-commercial environment”, she appreciated the changes in her technical abilities, and she found she had a “common ground with other artists”. Gertie’s story needs to be seen in the light of her previous extensive employment in a commercial environment, where the people she worked with “had me boxed as a designer”. On a personal level, she was “uncomfortable” with this naming and was “fighting” it. Therefore, something that “strongly influenced” her perception of herself when moving into the academic environment, was meeting and “listening to other practitioners”. She was able “to identify with things they were saying about their own practices” and found she could relate “in a way that I didn’t think I would have been able to”. Even though there were both art and design practitioners in her cohort, this realisation made her feel “much more comfortable thinking of my practice in a more fluid artistic sense”. This did not happen immediately, however. Gertie had not been in an academic environment for many years and she recalled the first face-to-face meeting with the group. “I just remember being completely overawed by all these other people that seemed to be so articulate”. However, she pointed to the significance of some activities early on in the course, such as the reading material and subsequent online discussions as well as “being encouraged to look at photographs” of other practitioners’ works. This “started to just trigger off some different ways of thinking and viewing the way that I thought about my own work”. It was particularly during the PG Diploma year, that Gertie felt “No. I relate to all of these other people more strongly than I do to the design”.

The fact that the academic environment did not have some of the “constraints” of the commercial environment also facilitated a different approach to her practice, “enabling me to create objects of art”. These included no longer being “driven by that dollar”, having to “cut as many corners as you can”, and being constrained by the “time factor”. Gertie explained, in the commercial situation, “you don’t have time to think about why you’re doing what you are doing”, namely understanding the “deeper reasoning” behind pieces of artwork. Gertie felt in an academic art environment, time could be afforded to appreciate aesthetic qualities and consider artworks on a “number of different levels”.

There was also more freedom to explore during the creative process along with the possibility to learn through trial and error. Gertie noted that being encouraged and “being allowed to make mistakes, being allowed to experiment” played a “big part” in her developing notions of artist-self because she associated this approach with art practices. However, she laughingly described an early instance where “experimenting” with the aim of creating an artwork was misinterpreted by peers in an online critique. They did not understand how the image of her artwork related to the ideas in her developing research

project. Gertie explained how she was “absolutely horrified at the response” because she thought it was a “stunning piece of art”. Therefore, her notions of freedom in relation to the creation of artworks were challenged by the need for experimentation within artistic research to have parameters, and by the various possible functions of artefacts namely, how they might operate in the world. However, she affirmed the value of the online critiques to share “what it was I was wanting to explore”, to receive “encouragement to stay on task”, and then “find a way of expressing that”. This “helped me towards the end [of the PG Diploma year]”. It was then that Gertie felt her practice and its outcomes had reached “that artistic place. I had it in a place that I was really comfortable with”. However, shifting an industry mind-set where “you are not allowed to fail, you have to meet that bottom line”, to one of embracing exploration and experimentation, one where you are “allowed to make mistakes” was not easy. As Gertie described, “So it was putting all of that aside. It was actually really difficult and I have to say it was a *struggle* [emphasis in conversation] the whole way through”.

However, this “struggle” between operating, functioning, and understanding herself as artist or designer was, she thought “more pronounced in the second [thesis] year”. “That’s where it was really hard”. Not only was her research project in an arena that often readily situates itself in design (clothing) but one of her two supervisors was considered a designer. However, she felt that “at the same time I defined myself as an artist”. While trying to retain notions of artist-self, impinging on these were the relationships between her artefacts, the exhibition of these artefacts as an outcome of the research project, and the writing of the exegesis as a representation of the research process and the research project, all of which were to be examined. Gertie described the difficulty of managing the complexity of these relationships while simultaneously ensuring that the exegesis, the artefacts, and the exhibition of these reflected the project’s ideas. She described how “there were many areas pushing in on the ultimate result”. All these “areas” somehow needed to be incorporated but at the same time finely balanced (for example, there is a word limit for the exegesis). She described how “some areas tend to push a little harder than others, and then you look at the end result and you don’t actually like that from an artistic point of view”. However, she produced and incorporated a video as a further element in the final exhibition, which resolved her dilemma and reinforced a notion of artist-self. “I have to say, at the end, after the struggle and the angst of going to and fro, I look at that work and I see them ... as pieces of art”.

5.6 A story about Kitty Plum

Kitty Plum did not consider herself a “serious artist” prior to her acceptance on the MA&D programme. She described her art practice at that stage as “just a hobby”, and noted that even after completing a Bachelor’s degree in fine arts, she “just did it [made artworks] for fun”. It was upon completing the MA&D that she felt “qualified as an artist”. However, she added, “I felt like I was someone”. These comments infer Kitty Plum’s notions of artist-self encompassed the successful completion of higher academic qualification with the associated ideas of apprenticeship, of time spent, skills achieved, institutional conferment and recognition, as well as recognition of this qualification and her achievement by others. As well, there was a resulting increase in self-esteem and self-worth. The role of the successful completion of a qualification was re-affirmed when she linked a notion of artist-self (“I’m an artist”) with having her Masters “ticked off”.

Kitty Plum replied to the opening question of the conversation as follows:

I’m not sure I felt like I was an artist until the end, I felt like I was a student - I never would have considered myself as an artist. I would ... [have] always said I was a student - I think?

A pedagogical identity was apparent when she thought of herself in relation to the academic environment. When asked if this would have been the case if she were talking to friends at that time, she replied after a long thoughtful pause. “Well, I was an artist because I was able to do the course and I was practising my own work but ... I think I would have felt more like a student than an artist at the point”. While acknowledging her point about feeling like a student, Kitty Plum was asked whether there might have been any instances during her postgraduate experience when she might have perceived herself as artist. She described an assessment event, which she was not eligible to participate in, as she was not enrolled in the paper. However, as this was a public exhibition in an artist’s studio near her hometown rather than at AUT University in Auckland, and involved an opening for friends and family, she was given permission to exhibit her artworks along with fellow students. Therefore, she felt the act of participating when there was no academic obligation, “was me being an artist over being a student because I didn’t have to do it – maybe”.

Kitty Plum described how she felt “AUT” or the academic institution was “kind of over [emphasis in conversation] me, keeping me under this little umbrella saying, ‘Oh, I don’t know about this, I don’t know about that’”. She talked of being “pushed constantly which was hard and challenging”, and of being questioned, for example, “Why are you doing that? What does that mean?” or “What about this? What about that?” This came from others, including lecturers and peers but also probably from herself as this questioning process is implicit in any research, and in academic expectations. She noted how “you *just* [emphasis in conversation] want it to be over”. Consequently, Kitty Plum contrasted

this by describing how, outside of this environment, she did not have “to answer to anybody or justify myself to anybody”, and she could “do whatever I want”. She defined this in terms of both having the desire to do what she wanted and of having the freedom, of being independent or autonomous to do what she wanted (“of wanting to and actually being able to”). Reiterating this later, she said “and I can do *anything* [emphasis in conversation] ... because there’s nobody there, I don’t know about guiding me but, questioning me and making me think further”.

Kitty Plum also described how some of the language used by the cohort and within the academic environment, affected her. With the diverse practices, research projects and previous experiences of the cohort, she sometimes perceived others to be “so intellectual and so amazing”. “You know how you’d just sort of go along with it, and, because I didn’t understand some of the language and what they were saying, [it] made me feel sometimes, maybe less than an artist?” Kitty Plum wondered if the age differences between herself and some of her peers, along with the variety of careers, influenced her. Questioningly she said it was “slightly *daunting?* [emphasis in conversation] ... which could have made me feel -? Well no, it would of [sic], it *did* [emphasis in conversation] make me feel less of an artist”. When comparing herself with her perception of other students and their backgrounds, Kitty Plum said “half the time I just felt like a school teacher”.

Although categorising herself as a student, as is evident from the discussions above, Kitty Plum also referred to notions of artist-self. However, towards the end of the conversation Kitty Plum clarified an experience that she identified as a process of enactment as artist. “I felt like an artist when I had them [the photographs] printed and hung and it was *finished* [emphasis in conversation]”. This was the point just prior to the thesis examination when her final photographs were exhibited in a local gallery (in a rural location, not on the AUT campus) and her exegesis had been submitted a few weeks beforehand. She explained that during the academic process and the research process “you can’t see the end of it and then when it’s all finished you think ‘Wow, I’ve done this’, and at that point I thought I was an artist. Previous to that I *still* [emphasis in conversation] felt like a student”.

After the formalities of the initial discussion, Kitty Plum remarked how taking part in the research had prompted her to think of herself as an artist, or rather, it helped her remember that she was an artist. She raised this point again at the end of the longer conversation. “You’ve made me think about myself as an artist whereas I’d forgotten about it since completing the Masters. Well, not forgotten about it, it just - hasn’t been a priority”.

5.7 A story about Mary Smith

Mary Smith commenced postgraduate study immediately after completing her undergraduate art degree in visual arts and design. She did not consider herself an artist either at that time or during her MA&D experience. She described how “I didn’t feel comfortable with the handle [label artist]”. Notions of artist-self were framed “in terms of living from it, sustaining oneself from making art. I consider it means having artistic skills and having recognition from, for example, a dealer gallery and acknowledgement from outside sources”. Consequently, for the last six years during undergraduate and postgraduate study, Mary Smith said, “I have identified as being an art student and it wasn’t until I received my master’s certificate in the mail (a week ago) that I felt I was no longer a student”.

The longer discussion opened with a clarification of her “position, in terms of my artistic identity”, where Mary Smith reiterated, “I don’t necessarily consider myself an artist”. The term artist was a “label”, one that “itself was a kind of a mythical thing”, one “that sometimes people will readily attribute to themselves even without a great deal of experience or education”. It was this act of self-attribution, of “assuming an artist’s identity” from what she called “a subjective position”, that Mary Smith “always felt slightly resistant, slightly uncomfortable about”. She added it was “something that is quite difficult for me to do”. She reiterated her earlier sentiments, namely it “would be *somebody else* [emphasis in conversation] naming you as that identity”. She also felt it would be “slightly arrogant” to identify her “level of accomplishment” at that time with other artists she knew. She described the “respect” she had for people “who are artists”, highlighting the “amount of recognition” they have had, and the fact that these artists talked of “paying their dues for a very long time”.

Mary Smith acknowledged the role of the academic network in the enactments of a pedagogical identity by confirming that “having tutors and supervisors for guidance, sounding boards, makes it easier to assume the identity as a student”. In addition, the environment itself positioned her so that she was “still in the process of learning”. However, her perception of herself was not as any learner. She identified as an “art student”, reinforcing a relationship between “art” and “student”, and of being a particular type of learner. While on the one hand, she “really enjoyed the process of learning and expanding my skills”, on the other, the environment signalled to those outside the institution, and perhaps herself, that becoming an artist is “an ongoing learning process”. She explained, “I was really comfortable continuing my study in some ways because I could say that I was an art student”. She wondered, with a laugh, whether “part of why” she was an art student for so long might be because it was “easier” to assume an identity as “art student” rather than of a “self-proclaimed” artist. The label of “art student” felt “a lesser” burden, with fewer associated “expectations”. The academic environment implies

states of learning so she felt others outside the institution would make fewer assumptions about her artistic abilities. Mary Smith also perceived her age played a part in this as well noting, “especially being in your forties and being an art student, people are slightly mystified by it to the extent that they don't question it too much, they just leave you alone”. Later in the conversation, she suggested, “in some ways, maybe assuming the position of art student is slightly a bit of a sanctuary, maybe a bit of a cop out”. It was “kind of easier not to” “assume the position” of artist, but also “I suppose there's an element of fear to it”.

As well as recognising the implications of the academic network on her perception of notions of an artist in terms of a subject position, Mary Smith also identified with her mode of art practice, namely drawing. “I sort of see myself, I suppose, as a drawer”. This was not only because of her skills but again “in some ways” it was “easier” for her “to assume the identity as an illustrator or somebody who can draw”. However, not only did drawing provide a means of identification, it also became integral to her research project. She explored “the process of making”, “aspect[s] of how a drawing comes to be” as well as its relationship with the maker and their subjectivity (or as Mary Smith termed it “what an artist is”). The act of becoming “really intensively engaged physically and psychologically” with drawing, of “being really, really present at the end of the pencil”, influenced both her artworks, in terms of the way they looked and functioned, as well as herself as the maker. As an approach to making, this realisation was for Mary, “probably the most profound aspect of the process [postgraduate experience], in a lot of ways”.

Several times during the conversation, Mary Smith implied some notions of artist-self when discussing others outside of the academic environment that she named artists. She also related an ability to draw to other people's perception of how an artist is. “People want to know whether or not an artist can draw”, and “that's one of the boxes, almost, that people expect you to tick”. While she could, in fact, tick this box, she continued to eschew the self-attribution of a label of artist reiterating that it was the “externalised recognition of an identity rather than something that you attach to yourself [emphasis in conversation]”. At another point in the conversation, while describing the subject matter of a local artist's extensive art practice, she noted, “but that's not how I see *myself* [emphasis in conversation] as an artist”. She related this to her MA&D explorations and how she wanted her artworks to function theoretically and materially, namely so that “it makes us question things. And I would like my art practice to operate in that way”. Even though Mary Smith might not feel able to publicly name herself as an artist, there are many instances in her story where she readily compared and positioned herself amongst a range of artistic practices thereby implicitly revealing notions of artist-self.

5.8 A story about Susan

Susan “definitely” did not consider herself an artist prior to her postgraduate experience. Central to this story is Susan’s shift in her understanding of art (of “the creating of [art]work and the process of art”), and therefore of notions of artist-self. There was also a realisation that maintaining her sense of who she was and being thought of as an artist were not mutually exclusive, namely “one could maintain one’s self even as an artist”. Her sense of self is described not as an individual self, but as “made up of my grandmother, my great grandfather, and so on. I am the physical representation of many others. Old and the new”.

Susan is a customary practitioner, a kairaranga or weaver. By enrolling in the MA&D, Susan intentionally placed herself in a learning environment outside of these traditional practices, philosophies, and knowledge. Her aim was to experience and understand “contemporary” art practices in order to contribute to the education of current students of raranga (weaving). She explained how she and her colleagues “were striving to maintain a customary practice”. “We were there to continue a legacy that had been handed down and ... as far as we were concerned, at that stage, changing materials ... and changing the way we did things did not accommodate continuing the legacy”. However, they had so many students with “a desire to test and trial new materials, new mediums”, with many “turning up from practices that had already allowed them to do that”. Susan elaborated, “How could we accommodate that and the only way I could was, or even *understand* [emphasis in conversation] it, was to go through an experience myself”. Therefore, she elected to attend an academic institution and department that was away (physically and conceptually) from home, her whanau (family), hapu (subtribe) and iwi (tribe), and her customary practices. It “was everything I didn’t know about. It was *art* [emphasis in conversation], and I couldn’t talk about the problems / [emphasis in conversation] had with the word art unless I had actually had an experience in it”. Despite an inherent responsibility to uphold the tikanga (customs) of her whanau, hapu, and iwi, and that of Te Whare Pora (The House of Weaving), Susan “just felt I had to do it. ... For the future of raranga”.

There was a fear of contemporary practices and of terms such as art and artist being used in relation to customary practices, in particular, raranga. She later explained, “we [emphasis in conversation] felt at that time we were weavers and not artists”. Susan described how they “were afraid of it really”. Owing to a long history of losses for her iwi, there was “the fear of losing what others have spent years to revive and maintain ... by becoming an artist”. In addition, “we were afraid because for us at that time, we thought we would lose ourselves by going into any other art streams whether it be contemporary Maori art or not”. For Susan and her colleagues, “contemporary” implied not only the use of non-traditional materials, but also the move away from collaborative, and hapu- and

iwi-centred practices, “as bringing everyone *away* from that, and becoming *individual* practitioners [emphases in conversation]”.

While the situation she placed herself in brought Susan “so many challenges”, it did not challenge her feelings of herself as a maker. She was confident as a maker but what she was unsure about was the process of creating what might be termed an “artwork”. “I just wasn’t sure of the process, I suppose, of how, well, I didn’t even know the process, to be honest”. Susan decided to make some “contemporary pieces, which I’d never done before”. These samples used non-traditional techniques, not part of the legacy handed down to her. She described how “when I started, I fought it with every fibre in my body”. However, “at the end of that experience, I think that’s initially when I became an artist”. She described how through “the conversations that went down in the online sessions”, the critique sessions, and “through observing, listening and engagement [and] interaction” with peers involved in different practices (e.g. painters and sculptors), Susan realised “‘we’re actually all the same’ in relation to the process [to create work]”. The understanding that research projects and the creation of artefacts were driven by relationships between concepts, theoretical concerns, and materiality and material practices meant that Susan “put that fear away” and “started to tune in because I didn’t feel threatened anymore”. Consequently, “a whole new world just opened up to me in relation to valuing art” and “about art, how it works, what it is”.

The realisation that she was not “alone”, and that “we’re all the same” was pivotal to her experience. This also led to the understanding that “at the end of it all, I hadn’t lost *anything* [emphasis in conversation]. If anything I’d gained new insights which will definitely help for maintenance, for the legacy [of Te Whare Pora] to continue. I was just so astounded by that realisation”. She later described these new insights in terms of “acquired skills or practices of old” and “enlightenment, which is the essence of learning”. This was also partly due to the nature of Susan’s research project, and her eventual decision for her final artefacts to be exhibited and examined not on campus but at home, in her tribal area. Despite studying at an institution that was located away from home on a seemingly individual endeavour, “it [the final artefacts and exhibition] was *very* [emphasis in conversation] successful in relation to my own whanau, hapu and iwi”. “At the end of the day, what was created was very much about them, about everything we stood for”, a necessary essence of traditional practices. Not only did Susan come to recognise similarities in her practices of raranga and the artistic practices of her cohort, but she also realised that she was not alienated from her cultural heritage. She could simultaneously identify with and belong in several worlds. She described how she thought, “‘Oh, I’m not here on my own’. Physically I am but I am a representation of other individuals [ancestors]”. In addition, “the realisation was I suppose that being who you are can’t be taken away from [you by] where you go”.

5.9 Reflecting

As discussed at the beginning of the chapter, these stories will not be theorised here. However, the vignettes, in their various modes of ordering, do bear witness to simultaneous performances of subjectivities as well as multiplicities of different notions of artist-self. While these all appear as situated, they are at the same time performed as fragile, as emergent and partially formed. The continuities, discontinuities, fluidity, and complexity in the performances of subjectivities arise through 'partial connections' (Strathern, 1991/2004) and the subsequent tensions with other materials, people, and networks and, as Law (2004) also noted, the partial connections that happen 'within the same person' (p. 64). Consequently, these stories operate along the lines of Latour's notion of event and Foucault's notion of eventualisation to expose multiplicities that, in turn, complicate 'our understanding of events, their elements, their relations and their domains of reference' (Biesta, 2008, p. 200).

Yet, there are uncertainties and puzzlements (e.g., Latour, 2005) echoing through these vignettes just as they did through the conversations. These are in the nature of absences. On the one hand, it is acknowledged that the engendering of these stories will have performed as interventions, to use Mol's metaphor (e.g., 1999, 2002), and as a result, simultaneously enabled acts of othering. On the other, these absences could also have arisen from ANT's intervention practices of tracing and describing where equivalence or sameness is not possible between the nevertheless related networks and different modes of ordering. However, these puzzlements arose when attempting to understand relations performed between distance or the online delivery of a postgraduate visual arts degree and enactments of notions of the artist-self.

While these stories performed passages or movements between material specificities (Moser & Law, 1999) as expected, what was not anticipated was how the specifics of the delivery of a visual arts programme as considered in Chapter 1, were seemingly rendered to the margins in performances and enactments of study-participants' notions of artist-self. As one study-participant acceptingly observed, "that's the course as it was. So it's difficult to know how it would have been any other way". However, more to the point, notions of distance seemed to have been performed differently, notions of artist-self seemed to have been performed differently, and consequently different things seemed to matter in the experiences of relationships between distance and notions of artist-self.

This puzzlement enacted in ANT terms, 'a point of passage' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 41). Law and Hetherington (2000) described this as a 'place of privilege' (p. 41) because it is a node actions pass through to make other entities do things. Therefore, this puzzlement as a 'point of passage' in turn delegated action upon the research process itself. The question of how notions of artist-selves were performed in an environment

where notions of physical presence and proximity are called into question and seemingly disrupted, revealed that there were other relationships and practices entangled in the performances. This necessitated further explorations of how distance was performed as well as how different subjectivity practices were actioned in the conversations. It is only then that relationships between experiences of distance and of performances of notions of an artist-self could perhaps be explored further and understood. Therefore, the next chapter will, in the light of an ANT enquiry, 'order' and 'other' to explore and bring the material specificities of distance, in terms of this research, to the fore.

Chapter 6 Performing as distance

6.1 Considering distance

While it is not the intention of this research to compare delivery practices of the MA&D programme to students who are considered off-campus with those who are on-campus, there is an inherent difference between these two modes of delivery for the staff and student alike. This is the idea that the delivery is, as has been described to date, mediated by distance. However, as is now understood with an ANT-ish approach, the idea that relationships between entities might be ‘mediated’ needs to be revised (see also Barad, 2003). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the relationships that enact the entity or phenomenon known as distance, as it is understood in this research.

Having said at the end of the previous chapter that notions associated with distance as considered in Chapter 1 were seemingly rendered to the margins in the conversations with study-participants about their experiences of performances of notions of artist-selves, clarification is required since some notions of margin would also be an anathema to relational understandings of the social. In this case, margins should be considered more as Hetherington (1998) discussed them, namely as complex spaces that are “‘hidden” or submerged, like a water mark, within the sites of daily life’ (p. 126). He went on to describe margins as ‘sites of deferral as well as difference’ that are not ‘visible to all [but ...] are, rather, often constituted in practice and in the representations of that practice rather than in the ontology of things’ (Hetherington, 1998, p. 126). Consequently, if brought into proximity and made visible, margins can simultaneously be rendered as central.

While in this chapter, the aim is to make distance proximal, Latour (2014) warned that when coming ‘to grips with what is experienced in the world’ we are unlikely to encounter entities as ‘matters of fact’ but rather as ‘given in experience through many other modes’ (p. 25). He referred to Whitehead’s discussion on ‘how to avoid the distinction between two experiences of how “red” is being given’ (p. 25). A. N. Whitehead (1920) explained how, on the one hand, there is ‘no explanation of the red which you see’ (p. 97). It is either red or ‘you are ignorant of the entity red’ (A. N. Whitehead, 1920, p. 97). However, on the other hand, Whitehead established that red could be explained through a relational approach by discovering ‘interconnexions [sic] between red as a factor in nature and other factors in nature, for example waves of light’ (A. N. Whitehead, 1920, p. 97). Therefore, in trying to explain our experience of red, rather than defining what red might be, he suggested ‘the real question is, when red is found in nature, what else is found there also?’ (A. N. Whitehead, 1920, p. 41).

Similarly, in terms of this research, as the dynamics between distance or online delivery of a visual arts programme and enactments of notions of the artist-self were seemingly rendered in unexpected ways and by unexpected means in the conversations and vignettes, it becomes necessary to consider further modes of ordering to see what else might be found there. Accordingly, performances of distance in relation to the experiences of the circumstances of this research will be explored in this chapter.

6.2 Performing as distance

From an ANT perspective, any notion of distance will be one that is both performative and performed into being, a material entity specific to 'local circumstances' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 47) and the result of relational effects. Accordingly, Law and Hetherington (2000) talked of the enactment or 'the making of distance' (p. 43). They argued that distance 'demands communication and interaction. Its very possibility depends on communication or interaction. It depends on joining things up within – and thereby making – a single space' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 40).

This can be understood empirically in the case of this research when AUT University decided to deliver their existing MA&D programme not only by traditional face-to-face means but also by distance. This decision and its subsequent implementation enabled the institution and a new category of students to join, thereby creating a 'single space' known as distance delivery or the 'MA&D Off-campus Strand'. In keeping with Law and Hetherington's argument, AUT's MA&D programme and a potential postgraduate art student unable to regularly attend on-campus classes at the Auckland campus did not previously exist 'for each other' (2000, p. 39) until space was created that they could exist in together. This space was enabled and enacted through the interaction or 'work' of a number of entities including, for example, the possibility to study away from the University's Auckland campus, a new online learning and teaching system, different modes of learning and teaching, a technician to service the online environment, the student's personal computer and digital camera, dedicated staff, the instigation of residencies, the student's home or personal studio space, online classes, enrolment of specifically categorised students, administrative processes to identify these particular students from others, the student's ability to travel from their home to Auckland and fund this travel, new specific and suitable library services, and appropriate adjustments to the University's standard study fees.

However, in spite of these particular students and the programme creating a single space together, they do remain distant. Law and Hetherington (2000) noted how firstly, the very 'effort and the work involved in displacement' or the establishment and maintenance of this space, perpetuated distance (p. 39). Secondly, 'they were also distant *because they*

were connected together in a single world' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, pp. 39-40, emphasis in original). As Latour (2010) suggested, the work or action involved simultaneously enacts and subverts notions of distance (see also Murdoch, 1998). For example, the connection with the academic institution enacted the students in terms of a pedagogised self (Atkinson, 2002), similar to all other students. On the other hand, as a result of being in or part of this space they were enacted as 'different' from the 'normal' MA&D students and were continuously authorised as distant, as a distance or off-campus student. Thus, in terms of this research, the material specificities of distance have enabled it to be performed as a material entity, and as a physical and conceptual space.

Although distance may appear as a material entity, Young (2006) demonstrated, albeit in relation to rural distance and development, how distance as an entity "behaves" differently according to the particular configuration of its natural, technological, and social dimensions' (p. 253). Similarly, the 'data stories' (Lather, 2007, p. 140) gathered during this research evidenced how distance continually behaved and was enacted differently in the study-participants' experiences, evidencing Latour's 'bewildering array of entities to account for the hows and whys of any course of action' (2005, p. 47). Even when considered in terms of a lack of proximity, many more entities and relationships were revealed.

For example, George referred to an experience of distance, which he described as being "remote", and pointed to the physical and social separation that being distant revealed. He described working alone in his studio (his home garage) where it was not possible to engage in the 'collective work' (Jacob, 2013, p. 111) of the shared studio and get instant feedback from other students or staff on his developing artworks. Therefore, he suggested that it was "harder" being an off-campus student, noting how, "when I was locked away in the garage and I was grappling with something, I continued to grapple". Soliciting immediate feedback on his processes and artworks from others meant he could "maybe adjust my thinking based on the ideas of three or four different people".

While this example highlighted enactments of physical and social separation, it also produced a comparison between the study-participant and his on-campus peers in terms of perceptions of teaching and learning experiences as well as an idealised opinion of their experience in the institutional studio environment, namely, that these students enjoyed continuous engagement between staff, students, and their emerging projects. It also produced recognition of a reliance on the presumed collective aspect of visual arts studio-based pedagogy. On reflection, George suggested "maybe" the difficulty created for him in the lack of input from others was "not a bad thing", and acknowledged, "the learning was in the grappling". In this instance, it is evident the actions of distance were enacted as and through many entities and not just being "remote". This included, for example, having difficulty, having a garage as a studio, creating artwork alone, solitude,

grappling, a lack of immediate feedback and dialogue, reliance on input from others, metaphorical associations of identification such as being “locked away” (e.g., Cohen, 1999), social isolation, thinking, learning, and comparing.

In another instance, this similar space was enacted as a sense of isolation. Kitty Plum described an experience after the end of a group synchronous online critique. “You’d go away and you’d think ‘Oh!’ You’d feel a bit down maybe, but because I was so isolated ... I’d just go back off into my world and keep working and kind of think ‘Stuff them, I don’t care what they think’”. She clarified that this thinking was not because the sessions “upset” her “that much” or because she was “offended”. Rather it seems a spatial as well as temporal dislocation enacted at the end of an online class produced a set of behaviours for coping with the rupture from others, and produced a feeling of isolation, thereby performing the sense of rupture and isolation again. This in turn momentarily influenced her perception of herself, her peers, her art practice, and her artwork. However, this experience could also have been enacted, as with George, by a comparison with a shared institutional studio space, because Kitty Plum elsewhere referred to the lack of opportunity “if you wanted to go into a studio and talk to somebody and really see something”.

Conversely, Kitty Plum also described a notion of distance that created invisibility, which she considered “good in the fact that if you’re having a *crappy* week you could *just* hide and make nothing and talk to no one and it *didn’t* matter [emphases in conversation]”. Gertie similarly described how distance offered something different, and in a “sense” made the learning situation “easier” for her. It afforded “security” for her to have what she called emotional “meltdowns” as well as privacy to expend additional time, and “to put in the extra work, practising and experimenting”. Other study-participants also talked of a “freedom” offered by being distant, although this was defined in many different ways, for example, the ability to remain in their jobs whilst studying. While these experiences potentially derive from distance being performed as a separation and dislocation, they are however enacted through multiple means and with multiple outcomes. In addition, there is evidence of the work of distance simultaneously subverting these notions, as Latour (2010) suggested. Kitty Plum observed how distance was also enacted as a pleasurable coming together or as she put it that was why “coming together in those residencies was *so good* [emphasis in conversation]”. Similarly, Gertie identified these experiences as “just so refreshing”.

The stories told here, as well as some of those that follow, also implicate the separation activated by distance as a space of interaction, one that is continually negotiated between participants in the space. Moore (1993) defined this space as ‘a psychological and communication space’, which he called ‘transactional distance’ (p. 22). He was interested in theorising distance learning as a distinct ‘pedagogical concept’ in order to understand

the relationships and patterns of behaviour for those participating (Moore, 1993, p. 22). He differentiated between a minimum of three types of interaction which he called 'learner-content interaction, learner-instructor interaction, and learner-learner interaction' (Moore, 1989, p. 1). He was also interested in learner achievement and autonomy in the spatial and temporal dislocation of distance and consequently, this space as 'a space of potential misunderstanding' (Moore, 1993, p. 22). While distance learning theories are not the focus of this research, the instances described above demonstrate how the relationality that is active in this space is also experienced as transactional in Moore's terms. While Moore (1993) acknowledged the variability and relativity of this space of distance, Giossos, Koutsouba, Lionarakis, and Skavantzios (2009) maintained that transactional distance needs to be experienced to be perceived and so is specific and individual. Both George and Kitty Plum's stories above reflect the action of relationships between student and lecturer, students and their peers, and students and subject content or their own art practices. The stories also reflect the influence of these interactions on their experiences and reveal not only misunderstandings (for example, George's grappling) that Moore was concerned about in this environment, but also evidence how the experience of these interactions affect these individuals' relationships with themselves and therefore notions of themselves.

Distance was also manifested as an experience of traversing those distances between home and the University, to "come together" and attend the residencies. This could be described in terms of 'real distances' and 'real times' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 46), namely kilometres travelled and hours taken, thereby locating them as spatio-temporal experiences, as journeys and passages. Study-participants needed to travel by plane, bus, or car, or a combination of these modes to cover the distances from their home to the AUT campus in Auckland's central business district. As an example, Susan drove over 300 kilometres, which would take 3-4 hours. However, these journeys could also be enacted in terms of other spatio-temporal actions and relations, rendered differently in each study-participants' experience. Susan described her drive in terms of a solitude where "getting in a car and coming up by myself - well it was only me". Not only was she alone but she had to drive herself. She had to negotiate her way through Auckland City, identify appropriate car parking, and find her way around the AUT University campus, whilst monitoring and anticipating the time to meet commitments. All these actions and experiences were initially unfamiliar, and became implicated in enactments of temporal dislocations such as uncertainty.

Kitty Plum also described "coming to those residencies" in Auckland as "*daunting* [emphasis in conversation]". This was in spite of her experience of these residencies as being "so good" in terms of meeting with others. Kitty Plum had also attended residencies in a familiar regional town, which she found more "relaxed". Coming to Auckland was "a big effort" and "never easy". On the one hand, students needed to travel and arrive

prepared to stay for 3-4 days, and to take part in assessment events, such as seminars, presentations and exhibitions of their artworks. On the other hand, as Kitty Plum elaborated, it was also “a big cost which I also don’t think I ever thought about - the getting to Auckland, taking time off work, and having to pay to stay somewhere and eat for four days”. She then associated this factor with the average age of her cohort wondering whether “maybe that’s another reason why people do it [MA&D] in a later stage of their lives because they can afford it”.

Kitty Plum’s experiences of “coming to Auckland” also had implications for her thesis exhibition and its final location, which, as mentioned in her vignette, was held locally near her hometown. She had the option of exhibiting at AUT University in Auckland but the idea of bringing her artworks to Auckland “seemed quite scary”. “What happens if you get there and something goes wrong and you don’t know what you are walking into - it’s daunting?” In addition, she described exhibiting locally as “practical”. Therefore, not only was time and cost a consideration for individuals travelling to Auckland, but also there was a spatial and temporal displacement for their artworks brought about by moving them from the home studio to the unfamiliarity and uncertainty of institutional spaces, and an unknown exhibiting situation.

Other spatio-temporal displacements were also enacted by the action of travelling, which involved traversing social, cultural, and conceptual distances. Conversations revealed experiences such as a gulf between academic expectations of an undergraduate and a postgraduate degree, and comparing and perceiving differences between cohort members’ experiences and skills. Other social and cultural distances were exposed. All would have experienced differences between a provincial town or rural location and a metropolitan city, which were in this instance socially, culturally, economically, and ethnically more diverse. In one instance, this involved a shift between towns with a population of 46,000, to Auckland, some 850 kilometres away with a population of 1.5 million. For Eliza, the experience of negotiating this space was described as a “big flip-flop”.

The space that was created between the regional and the metropolitan also revealed differences in the types of engagement with art and the art world. Everton talked of a thriving art community being possible in big centres like Auckland and Wellington. However, he observed this “doesn’t exist outside in the regional areas, not so much. You take here, for example. I think I’d struggle to find anyone who would even want to engage in a dialogue in that respect”. Other study-participants described the art found in their home areas as “dumbed down regionalism”, as “decorative arts”, as “just gift-shoppy [sic], sort of pretty”. Even though these study-participants lived, practised, and exhibited in these towns, their joining with the institution enabled them to attempt to distance their own art practices from these descriptions of the art world where they lived. As Mary Smith

noted in an act of resistance following a description of some art practices in her hometown, “And I suppose I don't want to be in that category”.

As Young (2006) observed, ‘distance as a concept has been largely subsumed under the notion of space’ (p. 254), and subsequently often thought of in terms of bridging and separating, or in terms of this research, in the light of a lack of proximity. As can be seen in the accounts above, distance is revealed as much more. On the one hand, it is often enacted as and through simultaneously multiple spatial orderings. This is because, in ANT terms, an entity is performed through material relations where notions such as scale and size are not a given, and nor are they performed equally (e.g., Latour, 2011). Therefore, as Fenwick and Edwards (2011) commented, ‘What makes near and far, here or there, is not a static separation between two points that is travelled by some object’ (p. 9). On the other hand, however, the temporal nature of distance is also evident. While differentiating between notions of space and place, Tuan (1977) suggested there was a need to ‘think of space as that which allows movement’ (p. 6). Thinking of space in this way sanctions actions that produce relational effects. Similarly, F. P. Peters (2006) discussed movement through and within space in terms of journeys and passages, noting how this action ‘assumes the availability of both a spatial and temporal order’ (p. 69). Thus distance is performed and performs as both ‘spatial and temporal effects’ (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 47). However, as Pels et al. (2002) argued, it is only by being ‘materially grounded’ that practices ‘gain temporal and spatial endurance’ (p. 11). For instance, the discussions above reveal these spatio-temporal effects of distance when Kitty Plum experienced multiple discontinuities or dislocations once a group online critique session had ended, and when Eliza experienced her “big flip-flop” when traversing the distance between her home town and AUT University’s Auckland campus. However, as these examples also reveal, distance was performed socially, perceptually and culturally. Therefore, by being enacted as simultaneously multiple, and more than a physical and conceptual space, distance as an entity is inherently complex and should not be considered in terms of notions of proximity and presence alone.

6.3 Acting at-a-distance

Considering action at-a-distance

The spatio-temporal effects of distance discussed to date also reveal distance as a network as well as an entity. Latour (2005) proposed that ‘any site will be taken as an actor-network if it is the source of what acts at a distance on other sites’ (p. 222). Mol and Law (1994) similarly described a network as that ‘in which distance is a function of the relations between the elements’ (p. 643). While it is perhaps confusing to introduce

another conception of distance here, what is important is the notion of action at-a-distance (hyphenated unless quoted, to distinguish from the phenomenon of distance in this research).

This is an idea which Foucault (1977-78/2007) also discussed and is alluded to when discussing action earlier, namely 'an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 137). For Foucault, however, the notion of action at-a-distance was in relation to his understanding of the milieu or what he described as 'the space in which a series of uncertain elements unfolds' (Foucault, 1977-78/2007, p. 35). While the idea of the milieu is used in other disciplines such as biology and physics, he defined it further as 'what is needed to account for action at a distance of one body on another. It is, therefore, the medium of an action and the element in which it circulates' (Foucault, 1977-78/2007, p. 36).

While both ANT and Foucault's notions of action at-a-distance are about 'circulation' (Foucault, 1977-78/2007, p. 36), what is important for ANT is that these 'actions at a distance may be transported to bear on local interactions' (Latour, 1994, p. 50). It is their ability to act in the local that means their existence must be acknowledged. These actions can be distant spatially, temporally, conceptually, and materially. They are actions that are 'now absent' but can 'still be present, on condition that it [the action] be shifted, translated, delegated, or displaced' to other entities which act to 'organise, shape, and limit our interactions' (Latour, 1994, p. 50). This is possible for ANT because interactions have been dislocated to include associations with non-humans (Latour, 1996a). While ANT's acting at-a-distance links to Foucault through power or surveillance and control, Law (1992) noted that ANT approaches the idea differently by exploring the 'materials and processes' of the actions (p. 387). For example, Law (1986) discussed methods of long distance social control using the empirical case of Portuguese maritime expansion to India. Also, and perhaps more pertinent to this research, Doolin and Lowe (2002) alluded to the action at-a-distance or more specifically the 'control at a distance' (p. 74) that emails exert upon us with their insistent presence, absence, and call to action. Similarly, what has become apparent in the empirical examples of this research discussed thus far is that distance, as it is understood in this project, has been enacted as an entity while simultaneously being revealed as a network because it makes things happen at-a-distance.

Exploring acting at-a-distance

Distance as a mode of delivery for education enables technology as the principal interface for learning and teaching. Technology then has a role, as mentioned earlier, in the 'transmission' and 'transformation' that is fundamental for all education (Bartlett,

2013, p. 14). However, Bartlett (2013) went on to argue, with respect to digital technologies' effect on education,

technology is always much weaker than its advocates seem to believe....
The weakness of technology ... is that it never actually does do what is claimed, that its subjectivisation is actually of a bastard kind—it engenders what it does not want and wants what it cannot engender. (p. 14)

Nevertheless, the idea that distance can be understood as a network that can both enable actions at-a-distance as well as being acted on from a distance means its material specificities and practices in the light of this research, need to be examined further. Therefore, further stories of distance and consequently technology as networks and their involvement in things happening at-a-distance, are told to explore how performances of distance and notions of artist-self might be intertwined, and 'what else is found there' (A. N. Whitehead, 1920, p. 41) in terms of partial connections with other entities and networks.

The human-technology interface of distance delivery was involved in connecting the community of students and staff together for educational and social purposes. As already discussed, not only can this enable experiences of presence where one could feel present 'in multiple and remote locations at once' (Bartlem, 2005, p. 8) but it simultaneously enabled experiences of separation and absence. At the same time, the technology connected the students' artworks and art-making practices, and in a sense enacted them by making them visible across spatial and temporal divides. In addition, technology in terms of the students' computers, cameras, and phones enacted their homes as part of the academic institution, thereby rendering them both present and public. So not only were the cohort privy to each other's art-making spaces or studios located in the home via the photographs uploaded for online sessions, but also the act of logging on to the online network enacted, as Lai and Ball (2004) confirmed, the 'private home into a shared public classroom' (p. 27). Furthermore, the home environment was often visible in video images during Skype sessions where interruptions by family members and household routines were common. Family members and routines seemed oblivious to any spatial and temporal boundaries between either home and the classroom, or the availability and non-availability of the student because of the physical presence of the individual.

These type of interferences were also evident in synchronous sessions that involved typed chat. For instance, an online participant could be 'silent' for some time, which was indicated by a lack of interaction with the group. Kitty-Plum described how classmates would ostensibly "get lost" in the online environment or "disappear on you, you know, 'Oh the computer's crashed', [but] you [would] know, they've gone to make a cup of tea". This is also an instance where the consequences of the logic of immediacy, which Grusin and Bolter (1996) suggested was inherent in technology as discussed earlier, was enacted for some participants in the environment but not for others. However, as Lai and Ball (2004)

observed, this situation also challenged the 'boundaries between public and private, personal and shared, subjective and objective' (p. 27), but in ANT terms, it enacted these simultaneously. On one hand, the home, its occupants (humans and non-humans), and domestic routines and rituals were exposed to others and made public. On the other hand, the technology of the online environment was actioned as a 'barrier' enabling perceptions of 'exclusion' (Star, 1991/2007, p. 93), invisibility, security, and privacy as outlined earlier. This, in turn, delegated the home, its occupants, and routines to act at-a-distance and 'organise, shape, and limit' (Latour, 1994, p. 50) online participants' interactions which subsequently organised, shaped, and limited how distance (including technology) might perform and be performed.

Distance also acted at-a-distance to enact conceptually and materially different notions of home for off-campus students. Their distributed nature meant their different geographical and home locations assumed increased significance as, for example, a means of identification personally, culturally, socially, and artistically, thereby providing points of difference amongst the cohort, and projecting a sense of belonging to a variety of other communities and worlds. These perceptions of home encompassed physical spaces and places, and included the wider social and geographical area where students lived, as well as aspects such as family, friends, employment, and daily routines. The various individual notions and experiences of home became embedded in a high proportion of off-campus students' research projects and artworks, which was the case for seven of the study-participants. Aspects that became significant for their projects included the daily walk to and from work, personal experiences of cycling to and from work, personal experiences of rural economic decline, personal experiences of their domestic environment, relationships with family members in their own home, and individual iwi, hapu and whanau knowledge and traditions. Their research projects could not have been realised in the same way without their specific senses of home and their relationship with it being enacted and ordered at-a-distance.

Bain (2006) proposed that artists have 'strong emotional and physical ties to place' (p. 418). In addition, as Lin (2013) observed, contemporary artists are often being asked 'to realise site-specific projects whose contents and subjects aim for relevancy for the local' (p. 148), and for the study-participants this was their local. So did distance delegate action, which enacted notions of home and artistic research projects, and perform notions of artist-self, as might be suggested here? While this relationship between distance, place and notions of artist-self seemed to have been actioned implicitly as many of the study-participants' lived experience, most did not acknowledge it explicitly in their conversations, except for Susan where home and subjectivity were exposed by distance as unmistakably intertwined.

However, the various projects' relationship to personal notions of home and place not only influenced the production of study-participants' artworks, and the conceptual and material content. It subsequently effected the nature of feedback, the way it was given and received, and the production, experience and outcome of assessment events. Kitty Plum implied the 'work' or struggle involved in negotiating these relationships when she commented,

although my artwork was very personal I guess I tried to separate myself from it a little bit? It was about me but it - you know some of the comments and things, you couldn't take personally - it was about *the artwork* [emphasis in conversation] not directed at me.

This comment also points to Foucault's discussions on the author-function and the complex relationality amongst, in this case, the processes involved in the creation of artworks, the artworks themselves, what is told in the artworks, the artist, and the individual.

Nevertheless, a relationship with specific notions of home as place and notions of artist-self as suggested by Bain (2006), seemed to action for all these study-participants, the location of their final thesis exhibitions and examination. All elected to present their artworks in or near their hometown, physically estranged from their peers and the academic institution. Under 'normal' circumstances, these presentations would have taken place as a group exhibition in the institutional studio space at AUT in Auckland. Kitty Plum's decision to exhibit locally was driven partly (also refer to a discussion earlier in this chapter) by the research project content, and the fact that "I'd photographed [a particular person] here and I wanted it to be here". Susan described how "being able to actually exhibit or present it [the thesis exhibition] at home ... was just amazing. Being able to do that ... was really special". In addition, several study-participants commented about the selfishness of an artistic academic endeavour, for example, "it's quite a selfish thing, doing your Masters; it's all about *me* [emphasis in conversation] all the time". Did this idea, be that in spite of or because of, also contribute to the perceived need to reveal and share the research outcomes and the presentation of artefacts with those at home? As Kitty Plum noted, "I wanted friends and family to see it" and this would not have been feasible if she exhibited in Auckland, which was approximately 360 kilometres from home. For Susan, the imperative was for those at home to understand that she had not "gone away [from home] and ... done these pieces" where "the link between home and anything I know from home was definitely lost". While examinations are associated with academic processes, the study-participants in these examples seemed enabled to resist aspects of the institution's practices to some extent, and to identify other entities and networks enacted in relation to their thesis research outcomes.

This also implies that decisions about where to exhibit final MA&D outcomes could not only have been actioned by distance as a network, but they could also have been actioned at-a-distance by other network relations. This could include those between the

artwork and the individual who created it, as well as societal presumptions about notions of artist. Bain (2004b), while acknowledging that identity is 'provisional' and 'relational', argued that artists have a 'multifaceted and paradoxical relationship between invisibility and visibility' (which she called in/visibility) and their artistic identity (p. 419-420). This is due to a number of factors.

For example, as implied in earlier discussions, 'artistic labour' is seldom understood as 'real' work in society (Bain, 2005, p. 25), an idea perhaps evidenced in the comment above about artistic endeavours being selfish. In addition, romantic and idealised perceptions exist that accord creativity and creative abilities a 'special value', as mysterious, and a special gift (Bain, 2005, p. 30). This perception that creativity is gifted only to 'special' individuals has the potential to not only undermine notions of artistic labour as real work, but also to privilege and elevate the creative individual, thereby separating them from the majority of the population and placing them in the margins of everyday life (V. D. Alexander & Bowler, 2014; Bain, 2007). Understandings about artistic labour also partly result from the difficulty many artists experience in generating income solely from artistic practices, as discussed earlier. Income is often supplemented by engaging in other occupations such as teaching or working in the hospitality industry (Bain, 2005; Jeffri & Greenblatt, 1989; Lena & Lindemann, 2014; Selkrig, 2011). This supplementary occupation is then seen as the 'real' work potentially rendering artistic labour invisible. George reflected this when he commented, "So, yes, in terms of how I would describe myself, it would be more as an art educator than an artist". However, he acknowledged that his "experiences as an artist [enabled by the MA&D programme] bear a lot of weighting [on] ... my ability to be effective as an art educator".

In addition, much of an artist's production and labour are often physically invisible (Bain, 2004b) especially when these take place in a studio that is not shared or open to the public. Consequently, creative production is frequently solitary (e.g., Elsbach, 2009), and takes place outside traditional employment settings (e.g., Adams & Kowalski, 1980). Bain (2004b) also discussed how artists and their artwork are, more often than not separated, which resonates with Foucault's discussions on the author-function and complex relationships between the work, the author's name, the proper name, and the individual. In an exhibition situation, the artist is generally estranged from their artwork. While the artist's name is likely to be visible and will therefore, remain linked to the artwork, unless the individual is physically present the entire time the artwork is on display, the person themselves and the person as artist are rendered invisible. Therefore, could these societal perceptions of notions of artist have been acted on at-a-distance and delegated by the actions of distance in terms of this project, to enable the study-participants' need to render their artistic labour, their creativity, their artworks, themselves as well as their relationships with home, both proximal and visible, particularly to those at home? In addition, having been enabled to exhibit near home, were the study-participants also

enacted to challenge and resist the control at-a-distance of the academic institution as well as the invisibility that the notions of distance exerted? Therefore, did these resulting relations between the actions at-a-distance of these entities and networks thereby perform some notions of artist-selves?

Similarly, by exhibiting in a space they selected near home, did study-participants perceive that distance released them, albeit partially, from the bounds of the educational institution, and enabled them to engage in what might be thought of as the 'real' art world? As Everton experienced, the university was a "very, very artificial environment". Did distance afford the study-participants the opportunity to engage in Foucault's 'practices of the self and of freedom'? (Foucault, 1984/2003a, p. 40). Indeed, Kitty Plum experienced, as discussed in her vignette, a sense of "freedom", or as Foucault would have it, she practised "freedom", and consequently, a momentary understanding of herself as artist when she exhibited her artworks with her cohort when there was no academic obligation to do so. In this instance, lecturer and peer permission and approval, and the availability of space in the gallery, enabled this experience. Here the artwork was released from MA&D assessment standards and was enabled to perform differently from other artworks in the same exhibition. In addition, it was enacted as an entity in a network that performed a notion of artist-self. Did study-participants likewise experience a sense of freedom when given the opportunity to select their exhibition spaces?

Experiences and practices of freedom are frequently associated with notions of creativity. This includes the idea of "creative freedom" as mentioned by one study-participant, and the idea of freedom of expression whereby this 'supposed freedom' enables the artist to 'pursue individual creative expression' (Bain, 2005, p. 29). These ideas of artistic autonomy and creative freedom are often perceived as essential for artists and therefore are encouraged in art education (e.g., Hathaway, 2013; Thornton, 2005). As an example, Steyerl (2013) encouraged participants in art schools to engage in acts of freedom and resist what is perceived as necessary in artistic research, namely the 'boring production of knowledge' (p. 229). In addition, Kelly (2013) included, 'autonomous creativity' and 'expressive needs' as aspects of 'the artist's agency' (p. 19). Several of the study-participants referred to these ideas. For example, Everton commented, "I think the vast majority of artists probably believe that they are [artists], from within. They engage in a practice that is about creativity, it's about challenging creativity". He also compared painting and designing for a client, where "the expectation of painting" is that you feel "like you had that autonomy to do what you wanted". Mary Smith also commented, "I feel that having a studio practice that's entirely autonomous without peer review feels like being on the precipice of an engagement with an artistic identity".

The complex relations described here suggest that distance, in terms of this research, delegated actions at-a-distance spatially, conceptually, materially, and temporally to other

entities and networks, thereby implicating them in performances of subjectivities and potentially in enactments of notions of artist-self. However, it also revealed that there are actions at-a-distance from other networks. This, in turn, suggests there are many more things that matter in the enactments of notions of artist-selves in this environment, and the differences that might be associated with distance in relation to visual arts education, such as a lack of proximity to others, seem not to matter. These ideas are explored further in the following discussion.

Practising art at-a-distance

Visual arts practices are grounded physically and conceptually in notions of material practices. Therefore, Wilks, Cutcher, and Wilks (2012) suggested 'you cannot fully understand art without making art' (p. 55). The importance of the relationship between art and its material processes of making was implicit in all conversations, and was affirmed explicitly by Susan when she described in her vignette how "the only way" she could "understand" something new or different "was to go through an experience myself". Eliza too, stressed the importance of "making", noting how at a pivotal point in attempting to understand an aspect of her research project, "I had to [make]. I knew I had to. I knew I had to do that to get through to the next point". Engagement with these material practices is in turn associated with notions of artists. Bain (2004a) suggested that artistic identities are created and re-created 'through interactions with materials and imagined spaces' (p. 173). Similarly, Carroll (2006) argued 'the identity of the artist is what is constructed in and through the discipline' (p. 4). However, while the enactments of technology in the network of distance had implication for participants' experiences of time and space, as mentioned earlier, how did distance affect their experiences and engagement with their art practices?

There are a number of relationships implicit in the creation of artefacts in a postgraduate research environment, some of which have been mentioned already. On the one hand, as Borgdorff (2010) suggested, art practices are in themselves already 'technically mediated practices' (p. 52). Because these practices are embedded in materiality, the technical mediation he is referring to happens at 'a more abstract level of materiality' inherently entangling knowledge that is both technical and material (Borgdorff, 2010, p. 52). However, the materiality spoken of here needs to be understood as both the materiality of artefacts, and the materials the artefacts are made of and their properties (e.g., Ingold, 2007b, 2011). On the other hand, as already discussed, artworks in this postgraduate research environment not only materialise as an object, product or event, but must, as Steyerl (2013) put it, 'appear as an activity, a performance, a process, a form of research, or a production of knowledge' (p. 225). These two points indicate the complex nature of understanding materiality in art practices.

In addition, as mentioned earlier, many visual arts lecturers are suspicious of the 'aesthetic experiences' (Alter, 2014, p. 52) of creative processes and artworks when encountered as images in the online environment. Also, as Nazzari et al. (2014) discussed, there is 'uncertainty' about whether artworks can be 'adequately appraised' when encountered via a digital interface, and without 'a direct encounter' with the artwork itself (p. 95). While these ideas were evidenced in visual arts educators' experiences and concerns as discussed earlier, what follows are stories of study-participants' experiences of their art practices in relation to aspects of distance and technology as a network, to understand what else might be found there, enabled through actions at-a-distance.

Eliza outlined what she called, an ongoing "issue" with her textile-based practice and research project in the online environment, a struggle she described as "challenging". Even at the time of the data-gathering conversation, she still wrestled to explain and understand what had been happening at that time. Eliza felt the photographic images of her processes and three-dimensional textile-based artworks uploaded into the online environment for group critiques and tutorials were not developed enough to "somehow express an idea online". She therefore wondered if others could understand, at a distance, the ideas underpinning her project. As a result, she believed she pushed aspects of her artworks "too much" to the point where she was stating "the obvious". However, she also admitted that this overworking, and perhaps literalness in attempts to express ideas through materials and form might not have been evident to others viewing images of her artworks and processes online. She explained this as follows:

it was a very foreign environment for me to actually be in cyberspace, chucking stuff out [there], rather than people being physically in the room with the work and seeing it for what it was, being able to touch it.... I felt like, 'How do you replace that materiality of it? How do you get the tactile? How do you get that online?' So that was always in my mind, thinking, 'Is this a big part of my work?'

Not only did Eliza wonder how the lack of tactile engagement with the materiality of her artefacts affected others' understanding of her research, but also the situation caused her to question the nature and relevance of this materiality for her artworks, and for the research project as a whole. Whilst reflecting on this experience during the conversation ("but I'm actually thinking now"), Eliza believed that others seemed to easily comprehend artworks from magazine photos, "videos and YouTube clips", and so wondered whether this was only an issue for her since she wasn't used to engaging with artworks in an online situation. This comparison and perception of others' experiences could have contributed to her constant questioning of this situation. In addition, it put her in a position where she simultaneously had to engage in developing her own 'digital visual literacy' skills (e.g., Spalter & van Dam, 2008).

However, in the ensuing conversation, Eliza also pointed to other relations in this “issue”. She implicated a re-identification of herself and her practice (“I was probably moving away from craft”), and consequently a need for a different engagement with her created artefacts as art rather than craft (“I was trying to get the work to talk” versus “the functionality of an object”). She emphasised how her engagement with materials was now playful (“all of a sudden I was actually playing with materials”) as opposed to the materials only being related to function and therefore, in her case, income. She described a craftsperson as “knowing your material, knowing how to work it with the tools”. Here, as Ingold (2011) noted, frequently ‘craftspeople ... assert that good workmanship should be “true to the material”’ (p. 29). Given her previous employment, and engagement with materials and artefacts, Eliza had to renegotiate and redefine notions such as ‘art as occupation’ (Steyerl, 2013, p. 224) and also ‘labour, work and play’ (Maycroft, 2005, p. 1). As Eliza observed, she had “to think a bit differently” as a result of her changing artistic practice, and the academic environment she found herself in.

Eliza also noted how once the images of her artworks were uploaded online, distance and the technology positioned her, and actioned her to behave in different ways. Firstly, “It’s funny because I felt at that time that I was performing for the audience”. This resulted in a literalness when attempting to deal with concepts underpinning her artworks so Eliza could “perform” her ideas appropriately. Secondly, “I was the audience as well”. This, she suggested, was because the experience of viewing her images online alone, and then with others in an online critique “was something I hadn’t actually done before”. She described looking at these images in a mediated environment, “on the other side of the computer”, and how this forced her to perceive (“think” and “look” at) them “totally differently”.

Eliza’s experience of engaging with her artworks through multiple technologies suggests that the technology influenced or controlled the aesthetic. Alter (2014) argued, ‘screen-based digital presentations of artworks create a loss of aesthetic feeling’ (p. 53), which for Eliza included the tactile or haptic. Other study-participants also mentioned that they were made to view their artworks “differently”, or that they were afforded “a different view”, although experiences were described in different ways. For example, Fidel explained how despite putting time and effort into creating her artefacts, once the images were online she would critique her artwork, and see everything as “an error”. While she spoke of the usefulness of this mode for critique and feedback, she also described how “you see it, [the art]work up, and you think, “Oh god, did I put that up? Oh!” [*Whispered*]. And you see all the things that are wrong with it”. Mary Smith’s description also referenced the text that always accompanied images in the online environment in this research, explaining how the process was “quite helpful ... to actually photograph it, name it.... it ... brings up different things”.

Practices of showing and discussing processes and artefacts are, as discussed, a means of creating, experiencing, and understanding in a studio-based model of visual arts education. In addition, the need to be visually literate, to view and understand one's own artwork as an audience might, is an important capability for someone engaged in artistic research. However, it seems the added engagement with distance and technology enabled different perceptions, although the specificities of these 'differences' were not always made clear in the conversations. Nevertheless, these practices in the online environment requiring participants to upload and arrange their images and text to communicate meaningfully to peers and lecturers, operated in a sense, as an exhibition would, and as part of what Lauf (2013) called 'the mechanisms that constitute the staging of art' (p. 134). The participatory nature of this in turn seemed to aid processes of observation since, as Ingold (2011) proposed, participation itself is 'a condition for' observation (p. 129). In addition, Alter (2014) argued that it was these practices, which are essential in the online environment, that also shift participants from passive to active viewers and collaborators. Therefore, this process that the environment engendered could, to use La Jevic and Springgay (2008) words, have enacted an 'active participation' enabling students to mediate 'their own visual-textual understandings' (p. 85). Consequently, perhaps these practices, in turn, enacted different notions of proximity and presence.

The online environment and its associated practices required students to use the online images in ways that would communicate different aspects of the actual artefact and processes of making. As already discussed, this would have been complicated by the complex roles of the artwork itself in this situation, as, for example, artefact, process, research, knowledge, and the different registers of what might be represented in and as the image. Eliza referenced this when she described a struggle she had, whereby "I was trying to get the work to talk, the actual image of the work to do the talking". This struggle could also have been an experience of the dilemma faced when assuming that representation is possible at all. This is something Foucault and ANT would have challenged, namely, as Barad (2003) discussed, the assumption that there are 'two distinct and independent kinds of entities – representations and entities to be represented' (p. 804). For other study-participants, this requirement for remediation or attempting to represent actual artworks in other media (Bolter & Grusin, 2000) which was actioned by distance, similarly situated them in awkward positions.

Kitty Plum noted it was "hard", and "always quite tricky" photographing artworks to put online for critiques, tutorials, and supervision. She outlined three different experiences relating to this. Firstly, "sometimes things look *really* [emphasis in conversation] good when you photographed them, and in real life, they're not that great". Secondly, there was a possibility to "enhance photos and ... tweak things" in Photoshop. Lastly, she recounted how "I'd put an image up of a photograph I'd taken and it would come up on the screen

as an image, but there's no con[text], you know it's not hanging on the wall". Similarly, Mary Smith found it "a little bit challenging because at times photography doesn't necessarily represent drawing, or whatever sort of art, as it is in terms of the actual artefact". She spoke of the need to sometimes "actually manipulate the photographs to make them feel closer to the actual artefact itself". These types of experiences have led many lecturers, in particular those not experienced in this mode of delivery, to question the authenticity of the image, and to distrust the digital image in relation to the original artefact. As Nazzari et al. (2014) suggested, there can be 'difficulties associated with assessing an artwork, especially when the digital image can easily be altered to create fauxtographic versions of creative practice' (p. 100).

However, Mary Smith also spoke of a need, and the time it took, "to digitally represent yourself on the [online] forum as closely as you could to the actual work". Here an explicit association is made between a notion of self and the artwork, which could be understood as a need for some notion of artist-self to be reflected in the artwork and vice versa. While other study-participants did not explicitly make this connection, it is implied in comments mentioned above by Fidel, Eliza (for example, she and not her artwork, was performing for the audience) and Kitty Plum. It was also evident in the vignettes where study-participants struggled to understand relationships between themselves, notions of artist-selves, and the purpose of their research projects and their artworks.

Alternatively, there were experiences that seem to contradict these associations. For example, several study-participants commented, as did Mary Smith, on the requirement to post images and text online, and "the hours that were spent trying to upload things", and how "time-consuming" this "whole process of documenting, Photoshopping, uploading, labelling" was. One person felt that "it was never really appreciated how much work that was". While these activities are, to an extent, necessary for professional practice as an artist, in the academic situation they were seemingly enacted as a further set of compliances. This in turn produced a struggle, a sense of passive resistance to the process and to the presentation of artworks and art processes by these means. Maybe this resistance evidences not only a divergence from Mary Smith's idea about a relationship between the self and the artwork, but also an implicit agreement with Foucault's ideas on the relationship between the author and the text discussed earlier. As O'Farrell (2005) suggested, 'the confusion between the order of the text and the order of the author's psychological persona has yet to be resolved in the critical or popular consciousnesses' (p. 23).

Equally, perhaps this resistance to the time-consuming processes of remediation was enabled because it was perceived as, for example, inappropriate labour for an artist or alternatively, it interfered with artistic pursuits? (e.g., Maycroft, 2005). While Hocking (2013) proposed that there had been a 'discursive reconstitution of creative activity as

work' (p. 245) in visual arts education in general, did these practices in the online environment further contribute to Hocking's proposal by demanding and perpetuating different and particular creative behaviours that in turn enabled them to be resisted? Alter (2014) similarly commented on the time required to reproduce and digitise artworks, but she also highlighted the 'slight aesthetic shift' required as a result of the process (p. 53). Perhaps it was the enactment of this requirement to accommodate an aesthetic shift (Alter, 2014) that was being resisted, because this implied a loss of authenticity, individuality, and autonomy (all associated with notions of artist), when compared to traditional modes of presenting artworks and processes.

However, this implicit resistance could have been enabled by the idea that the technology in the online environment acts, during the study-participants' enrolment, perhaps like a museum where time is collected and held in one place (Johnson, 2006; see also Hetherington, 1999). In this sense, technology resists the passing of time whereby the accumulated time is manifest in the archive of, for example, weekly online forums where text discussions, feedback, images of artworks, processes, experiments, and drafts of work are retained. In addition, the nature of the technology not only orders time by presenting it as a narrative (Nazzari et al., 2014) but it also implies that actions, progress, and behaviours throughout the engagement with a self-directed project are linear and orderly (which they are most often not). This in turn suggests an imperative that previous discussions and work are worth being reminded of, and need to be re-visited.

While Eliza did not frame her experience of the remediation process in this way, she talked of a need to feel "comfortable in that [online] space" (also mentioned by George), and of questioning whether she was "doing what I'm supposed to be doing in this environment?" The performative relationality of this situation had short-term implications for Eliza's ongoing practice. She noted, "I think it got to the point where I was not confident in my judgments", and she was unhappy with the exhibition she presented for assessment at the end of the first year. In the conversation, she supposed "it wasn't ... until the end of the [first] year that I realised it was the online, it was the on-site, off-site, the whole package" that was also implicated in her "issue". Would understanding this complexity at the time of her lived experience have eased Eliza's situation? Perhaps not, as the ongoing effect of actions at-a-distance on her experiences is reflected in her earlier suggestion that she was still grappling to understand these experiences during the data-gathering conversation. Moreover, she later commented,

And it wasn't probably until you brought all this up with this project and I thought, 'It is a different – [way]'. I always was aware that it was very different, but [not] to the point where it is a different learning experience.

Eliza's experience and eventual understanding is supported by Nazzari et al. (2014) when they suggested there is a delay in 'acknowledging that digital technologies help

generate learning experiences that are different to traditional art education' (p. 95). However, Eliza's and others' experiences of their art practices in the online environment seemed to be defined by more than just a "different learning experience". While the intention of an online learning and teaching environment is to delegate and 'order practices at a distance' (Fenwick, 2010, p. 119), the study-participants' experiences also revealed that distance has the potential to perform materiality and art practices differently. Actions are delegated by distance, which in turn make other networks of relations visible along with their specific material, temporal, spatial, and conceptual nature. This also exposed how the network of distance in this project along with the enacted technology, can sometimes engender, as Bartlett (2013) argued, 'what it does not want' (p. 14), or in ANT terms, a surprise.

However, consistent with Foucault and ANT, this is also productive. This is evidenced when Eliza, upon reviewing her transcript, added immediately after the above comment about a different learning experience, the words "And also how I see myself as an artist now!" On the one hand, this seems to imply that the differences that are distance in terms of this research did not matter, at least unless they were performed through an ordering of proximity. In other words, the idea that distance delivery was such a different learning experience to the studio-based model on-campus was not evident to study-participants until this was revealed through this research project. On the other hand, Eliza's added comment also implies that further and different notions of artist-selves were performed at the time of realising, and then experiencing, an understanding of these differences. This affirms the previous suggestion that there are many more things than the differences that are distance, that matter in the performances of notions of artist-selves in this environment. As Law and Hetherington (2000) put it in terms of ANT practices, 'materials of all kinds are being disciplined, constituted, organised, and/or organising themselves to produce knowledges, subjects, objects, distances and locations' (p. 40). Consequently, the following chapter reflects on some other practices involved in the intervention that might also act at-a-distance, and therefore be implicated in rendering the differences that are often associated with distance to the margins in the study-participants' conversations, or not instantly visible in the relations that perform notions of artist-selves.

Chapter 7 Performing subjectivities

7.1 Subjectivity practices

As can be seen from the stories or modes of ordering presented so far, the entities and practices that perform and are performed in the networks that create distance in terms of this research paint pictures of multiple and simultaneous performances of subjectivities, both human and non-human. In addition, these stories suggest that there is more than the differences that are distance that matter in the enactments of these subjectivities. While outside the parameters of this research, it is acknowledged that different subjectivities are continuously enacted and altered (Edwards, 2002) through the different practices involved in the online learning and teaching environment explored in this research. These practices include, for example, those associated with education (e.g., Bartlett, 2013) and consequently art education (e.g., Elsdon-Clifton, 2010), as well as distance or online education (e.g., Gale, Wheeler, & Kelly, 2007), and online practices (e.g., Ross, 2011).

However, the stories told also make it evident that there are other practices performed in the processes of this research project that have had implications for subjectivity enactments, and specifically for performances of notions of artist-selves and for notions of distance. As discussed earlier, enactments of phenomena will simultaneously be produced through the practices of the research itself or as Fenwick and Edwards (2010) put it, through the 'multiple ontologies of research practices' (p. 158). Therefore, it is important to address how these actually happen. They contribute to the paradoxes of this quest, to the continual uncertainty and puzzlement (e.g., Latour, 2005) inherent in attempting to order performances of subjectivities, and in employing an intervention, Mol's metaphor to describe the processes of coping with the performativity of these multiple realities in research (e.g. Mol, 1999; 2002). Also in ANT terms, what needs to be acknowledged is that the practices enacted through this research project have been acted upon from a distance so that the actions of other networks have been 'transported to bear on local interactions' (Latour, 1994, p. 50). These practices are explored in this chapter.

By engaging with notions of subjectivity that embrace its dynamic and fluid nature, namely, those aligned with Foucault and ANT, subjectivities themselves are simultaneously enacted as actor-networks as well as entities within the research process. Sørensen (2007) warned that when dealing with 'notions like agency and identity', or in this case subjectivity, there is a risk that the network created by the relationality be thought of only as an entity or in terms of 'some kind of external context in relation to which the agency or identity is defined' (p. 4). With subjectivities being performed in and

as networks, they have the capability to create actions and practices, and therefore to delegate and order other practices at-a-distance. This reinforces, as already discussed, the idea that 'subjectivity could be never understood for itself' (Blackman, Cromby, Hook, Papadopoulos, & Walkerdine, 2008, p. 15). This was evident in the conversations when, for example, study-participants seemed reticent to engage in direct questions about perceived subject positions and any understandings of themselves as subjects. Often questions were rephrased, ignored or other matters were discussed. Equally, this could be viewed in the light of refusing and resisting practices, or perhaps study-participants implicitly concurred with Foucault and his suggestion that he did not feel 'it is necessary to know exactly what I am' (R. Martin, 1988, p. 9). However, other matters that arose in the conversations revealed the ongoing practices of action at-a-distance between subjectivities and the diverse, entangled networks enacted by this project such as (but not limited to) those associated with education, art, distance education, and technology.

However, performances of subjectivities themselves also encompass certain practices. The processual nature of any enactment means that any performance will not be synchronous with the subject that is being performed (Zembylas, 2003; see also Mayo, 2000). These will not align. There will always be, as already discussed, dislocations in 'spatio-temporal co-ordinates' (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 385), and between the practices that enact, the enactment itself, and what is enacted. This accounts for the multiple temporal dislocations and temporal lags (Hetherington, 2011) of these performances and also highlights, in line with Foucault and ANT's understanding of subjectivity, the fluidity of the subject, as one that is 'never fully constituted, but is subjected and produced time and again' (J. Butler, 1992, p. 13).

These various performances were complicated further by other practices in the research process, for example, the requirement that study-participants draw on their experiences of past events to discuss in the conversations. While a Foucauldian and ANT-ish approach necessitates an intervention in the interplay of what Foucault called the 'field of experience' (Foucault, 2003b, p. 387), as already discussed, this practice would have enacted a number of different spatial and temporal zones, contributing further to the continuities and discontinuities in performances of subjectivities mentioned above. As Foucault (1968/2003) observed, the past or history consisted of dispersed events, ideas, and practices rather than being a 'chain of uninterrupted continuities' (p. 395). In the case of this research, the range of dispersed experiences would have included, for example, the study-participants' lived experiences while engaged in the circumstances of distance delivery, their experiences as reflections on this when they prepared to engage in the research, their experiences that were the interview conversations itself, and the experiences when re-reading and approving the transcripts. While Thiele (2003) described the narrative as 'mediated experience' (p. 214), in terms of this research, the different stories unfolded in the conversations, transcribed and then told in different

modes of ordering are viewed as discreet experiences rather than an experience that is mediated. Though, as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggested, 'in the construction of narratives of experience, there is a reflexive relationship between living a life story, telling a life story, retelling a life story, and reliving a life story' (p. 6, see also Mishler, 2004).

However, also present in these performances are the potential for conceptual dislocations, particularly if these practices are viewed in the light of Foucault's notion of experience. As mentioned earlier, O'Leary (2008) argued that Foucault's experience should be understood as both experiential and experimental. This, O'Leary suggested, meant that experience is both 'something that we can call "everyday" or "background" experience' as well as something that is "'transformative" experience' (2008, p. 20). If experiences are transformative, this then means that forms of subjectivity emerge 'in response to the occurrence of a whole range of experiences' (O'Leary, 2010, p. 180) rather than through a singular or specific experience (see also Hallward, 2000). In addition, with experience being transformative, this links with Foucault's practices of techniques of the self. As discussed earlier, this reinforces the idea that these practices are 'in no sense a recovery of authentic experience ... rather it is a liminal process which seeks to explore ways of being beyond the already known' (McNay, 2009, p. 67). Thus, there are uncertainties and difficulties in untangling the material, spatial, temporal, and conceptual practices of experiencing that contribute to the performances of subjectivities. These entanglements were evident in all of the conversations, and are revealed, as examples, in the following discussion.

During the conversation, Kitty-Plum stated that at the beginning of the programme "I felt like I was a student". However, she added, after a noticeable pause, the question "I think?" While this was also mentioned in her vignette, it reflects the difference between the experience of the conversation itself and the experience of remembering her lived experiences. The participant-observer responded, "even to friends when you were talking?" The reply was, "Well, I was an artist because I was able to do the course and I was [creating] my own work". However, this was followed immediately by the reiteration of her original stance. This could be described as an act of resistance, or equally as an example of the temporality of a 'knowing location' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 37). In the original experience, a notion of an artist-self was momentarily enacted when the study-participant enrolled in the MA&D programme but was refused during the conversation once she reflected on the later relationships enacted as she experienced the delivery of the programme.

This is also an example of the work or the bypassing strategies evident in the heterogeneous elements of an ANT network (Latour, 1999). The initial enactment would have been re-activated variously throughout enrolment practices, for example, the process of applying for a degree involving creative art practice, proposing a visual arts

topic to study, and providing a portfolio of artworks evidencing an ongoing art practice. George also associated going to “art school” with an enactment of a notion of artist-self, as the students would have had to publically and privately label and present themselves as artists. The academic institution, in turn, affirmed this perception by selecting, interviewing, and accepting them onto the programme, thereby also sanctioning their artworks and ideas as appropriate for artistic endeavour. The students would likely have told others of their success. As Bain (2005) suggested, the status of the artist ‘is derived largely from the construction and maintenance of an artistic identity and its effective communication to others’ (p. 25). However, as this example reflects, notions of artist-self were not stable as the tensions of partial connections and discontinuities enacted its temporal nature. A further example of this was when Kitty Plum commented, as mentioned in her vignette, “You’ve made me think about myself as an artist whereas I’d forgotten about it since completing the Masters - well not forgotten about it, it just - hasn’t been a priority”.

The research process also required the study-participants to engage in practices of self-description during conversations and the unfolding of their stories, or as J. Butler (2001) put it, the practices of ‘giving an account of oneself’. While earlier acknowledging that this process ‘encourages social entities to proliferate’ (Strathern, 1999, p. 172), there are complexities in self-describing brought about by the possibility of recognising and engaging with interferences from partial and multiple roles and selves (e.g., Michael A. Peters, 2005). Equally, these practices could be associated with acts of confessing which Foucault identified as a practice of the self, outlined earlier (e.g., Foucault, 1993). However, J. Butler (2001) highlighted the performative nature of this practice of giving an account of oneself, which, as with performances of subjectivities discussed above, is complicated by its own temporal dislocation through its discontinuous unfolding.

The “I” cannot tell the story of its own emergence, and the conditions of its own possibility, without in some sense bearing witness to a state of affairs to which one could not have been present, prior to one’s own becoming, and so narrating that which one cannot know. (p. 26)

Again, the act of describing oneself is not synchronous with either the performance of oneself or the recognition of oneself, or in ANT terms, with identifying a ‘knowing location’ (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 37). Consequently, Butler spoke of living in a ‘vector of temporalities’ (2004, p. 26).

As the example on the previous page shows, many participants seemed to experience this temporal dislocation during the conversations, this experience of ‘always being slightly “out of synch”’ (Brady & Schirato, 2011, p. 28). In addition, Everton commented towards the end of his story, “Ironically, everything I’ve said [until now], this will kind of negate it. I actually felt like that [perceived myself as an artist] the entire way through”. This is also an example of participating in and ‘bearing witness’ to the processes of becoming, and what J. Butler (2001) called a ‘resignifying process’ in that becoming

remains a 'permanent possibility' for the subject (p. 13). In addition, there is the complexity of accounting for the multiple selves in this temporality. It is not possible to account for oneself definitively. Therefore, many study-participants accounted for themselves in relative and comparative terms, for example, of "being an artist over being a student", of feeling "less of an artist", and of thinking of oneself "more as an art educator than an artist". Alternatively, this may have been brought about by the practices of what Law and Hetherington (2000) referred to as 'knowing at a distance' (p. 42). While knowing at-a-distance is bound up with actions at-a-distance, Law and Hetherington (2000) suggested that this practice 'necessarily implies ... simplifications and reductions' (p. 42), perhaps due to the temporary and impermanent nature of these positions. Therefore, even the point at which one might know oneself, one might not be able to recognise or give an account of the complex entanglements involved in any description of the performances or enactments of the self.

7.2 Practices that distance

Practising resistance

While the practices described above highlight spatial and temporal complexities, and interferences that are inherent in attempting to unravel subjectivities performances, further practices materialised through the conversations in the empirical component of this research. Despite the participant-observer bringing some of the differences that perform distance into proximity during the conversations, these were, as mentioned already, seemingly rendered to the margins in relation to performing notions of artist-selves in the environment under investigation. The practices that materialised are manifest in all the stories told thus far, and these can be described as further practices of distancing. While the differences that are distance are themselves performed through actions of distancing, it was particularly the practices of resisting and refusing that came to the fore in the conversations.

The materialisation of these practices should not, in a sense, be a 'surprise' (Latour, 2005, p. 45) as resistance is embedded in performances of subjectivities as well as in an ANT-ish approach to research. As discussed earlier, practices of resistance and refusal inform both Foucault and ANT's ideas about the constitution and performances of subjectivities. For Foucault, resistance is the productive aspect of power whereby resistance enables actions and practices of freedom and practices of the self. Similarly, for ANT, resistance is an action that enables entities and actor-networks to be performed and revealed. Therefore, as Berglund (2008) affirmed, the presence and action of resistance and any subsequent 'subject positions of resistance' need not be viewed as

'undesirable' (p. 147). In addition, as also discussed, an ANT-ish approach manifests in practices of tracing and describing, and in multiple stories or modes of ordering which then reveal the complexity and multiplicity of phenomena. The character of this ordering of networks is, as Law (1992) argued, 'better seen as a verb – a somewhat uncertain process of overcoming resistance' (p. 380). The resistances that need to be overcome are, as he explained, the possibility of the heterogeneous materials that create the network, making 'off on their own' (Law, 1992, p. 381), namely their resistance to ordering. Therefore, this overcoming of resistance can also be viewed as productive.

To borrow from Strathern's discussion of the Melanesian metaphor of cutting, where she described how 'an act of severance connects what is separated' (1991/2004, p. 113), likewise, an act of resistance can be seen to reveal relationships between what is resisting and what is resisted (see also Latimer, 2001). Strathern (1991/2004) discussed Melanesian examples where 'cutting is done ... with the intent of making relationships appear', and referred to this as 'a creative act' (p. 114). Acts of resistance and refusal can be seen in a similar light, as actions that can make relationships evident and therefore in the case of this research, the practices, relations, and entities that perform subjectivities. In other words, to resist on the one hand means to allow on the other, or as already mentioned albeit in relation to an ANT account, processes of including and excluding imply and perform each other in the performances of themselves. Alternatively, if resistance is understood as a creative act, it is analogous with Foucault's notions of resistance and techniques of the self, where, as discussed, entities effect their own means, in response to actions of other entities, in order to negotiate performances of subjectivities.

As an example, the story of Eliza's ongoing "issue" with the material nature of her project when encountered in relation to the networks of distance and therefore technology could equally have been ordered in terms of stories of resistance, particularly in the sense that acts of resistance were often materialised by and as actions at-a-distance. For instance, resistances to craft practices in her past revealed interactions between her understanding of materials in relation to artistic practices, research processes, and photographic practices as well as having implications for her confidence levels about her capability to create artworks that performed as she wanted. Similarly, earning a living through making was resisted, which actioned an embracing of practices of creative freedom.

Equally, Eliza's description of being positioned by the online environment as "the audience", and subsequently viewing her artworks "differently" once they were associated with distance and technology, could be seen in the light of acts of resistance by not only Eliza but also by the artwork and by the technology. As Eisenhauer (2006) proposed, the 'construction of the relationship between a viewer and the viewed also impact understandings of viewer's options for critical engagement and resistance' (p. 158). This

implies that Eliza and her fellow study-participants engaged in acts of resistance to the artwork's capability to communicate through such means as its own materiality or content *until* there was a relationship with distance and technology. Equally, this situation could be described in terms of the artwork and technology resisting the material specificity of each other in order to privilege their own materiality.

Similarly, Eliza's "issue" could be described in terms of creating strategies of resistance in order to unravel and understand the interactions between bodily engagement, her artworks, and technology and as a consequence, notions of her own subjectivity (Garolian & Gaudelius, 2001). As Garolian and Gaudelius (2001) argued, technology becomes 'one more contested ground upon which we can resist' (p. 346). Therefore, in this case, the various acts of resistance encountered in the interactions with technology as well as distance, revealed notions of artist-self for Eliza that could also include a bodily engagement with materials, and an investigation of the material properties of things. In addition, the practices of resistance here could be seen as strategies in terms of Foucault's techniques and practices of the self. As Foucault (1982/2003a) wondered, 'maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are' (p. 134). Therefore, while the actions of resistance arising in all the empirical conversations should not be unexpected, the nature of the resisting and what materialised through these actions can reveal material specificities and practices at play in the dynamics between distance and the enactments of notions of artist-selves. Consequently, this can then reveal how it was that the differences that were distance, were not the only things that mattered in performances of notions of artist-selves in this environment.

Gaining access to our selves

Star (1991/2007) proposed that practices of resistance are also involved in another aspect of the performances of subjectivities, namely in the ways that 'we gain access to ... [our various] selves' (p. 82). This project's research question, by referring to notions of artist-self, implies a need for the study-participants to engage in this process. The practice of gaining access to our selves can be differentiated from the practices of giving an account of oneself in that the former would have to take place before the latter. As Star noted, this implies 'listening, rather than talking on behalf of' (1991/2007, p. 82), which in turn allows for the possibility of refusing or resisting. Star also affirmed Foucault and ANT's frames of reference on the fluidity of the subject when she described selves as 'split' and 'impure' (1991/2007, p. 82). Therefore, she argued 'we have experience of a self unified only through action, work and the patchwork of collective biography' (Star, 1991/2007, p. 82). The complexity of this process and its temporal nature can be appreciated when viewing 'experience' in the light of Foucault, and 'work' and 'action' in terms of ANT.

Star (1991/2007) suggested there were three ways of gaining access to these multiple and fluid selves. The first involved 'refusing those images of the executive in the network which screen out the work that is delegated' (1991/2007, p. 82). Similar to ANT, by not attributing all the action of the network to a central figure, the work of associates or other entities is rendered visible, and a 'different network is discovered' (Star, 1991/2007, p. 82). The second way of gaining access involved 'refusing to discard any of our selves in an ontological sense – refusing to ... become pure' (Star, 1991/2007, p. 82). However, complicating this is the understanding that the self in 'an ontological sense' is also not stable, but is fluid, multiple, and relationally performed. The third way arises from the other two, which, by acknowledging the possibility of simultaneous multiple subjectivities arising in simultaneously multiple networks, recognises the power of 'multiple marginality' as a foundation of the fluidity of subjectivity in that it encompasses 'heterogeneity' (Star, 1991/2007, p. 82). In addition, Star suggested 'this is at its most powerful is a collective resistance' (1991/2007, p. 82). This affirms that not only are practices of resistance a means of revealing relationships in the performances of subjectivities but they are a means of one gaining access to notions of a self. These ideas also have an affinity with Foucault's notions discussed earlier about the relationships between practices of resistance, of freedom and performances of subjectivities, and attempting to understand the ways 'humans develop knowledge about themselves' (Foucault, 1982/2003b, p. 146), namely as a knowing self.

To explore and highlight the materiality of some of the actions, relations, and practices of resistance in the empirical conversations, Star's (1999/2007) suggested subjectivity practices of ways of gaining access to our partial and multiple selves will be included in further modes of ordering. As this is an attempt to draw out performances of notions of artist-selves, the central figure in terms of this research is cast as artist, or in another sense, it is intermittently brought into proximity through the ordering. While temporarily privileging artist at times here, it is understood, from the theoretical perspectives laid out for this research, that artist is enacted as an entity in terms of a position of subjectivity, albeit as a temporary point of attachment. In addition, artist is performed, as both Foucault and ANT would have it, as an actor-network or a means of acting or being acted upon at-a-distance by other networks. The discussion that follows includes only a few examples of the multiple acts of refusing and resisting as attempts to gain access to them selves, which arose in the conversations with study-participants. This is to highlight 'what else is found there' (A. N. Whitehead, 1920, p. 41), to overcome sets of resistances (Law, 1992), and to ponder the work of other entities and networks that might be interwoven in dynamics of distance and performances of notions of the artist-self.

Stories of gaining access to notions of artist-selves

As discussed, distance performed the spaces where the study-participants carried out their art practices in different ways, as material and immaterial, as absent and present, and as a combination of these, for example, the possibility of being materially immaterial. However, the artist's workplace or studio is associated with an image of artist, or as Bain (2004a) maintained, it is frequently associated with defining an artist. She outlined 'how artists often identify the studio as the primary place that defines and structures their daily lives and substantially contributes to their self-conceptions as artists' (Bain, 2004a, p. 174). A possible relationship between the studio and notions of artist-self was affirmed by some study-participants however, not by all. Although the participant-observer mentioned the idea of their studios in conversations, three study-participants chose not to discuss this notion as a specific place. In other words, the spaces where they carried out their art practices and created artwork were rendered absent and immaterial in the conversations. Moser and Law (2003) discussed several forms of resistance, one of which was 'resistance by absencing oneself' (p. 16). In a sense, this is what these study-participants did. Their lack of engagement and silence on the matter manifests as acts of resistance. By refusing to engage explicitly with an image of the studio as a place of work, perhaps they were also refusing the significance of their studios in relation to their notions of artist-self. While distance enacted these non-institutional spaces of labour and creativity on the one hand, distance also rendered the possibility for these spaces to be invisible and therefore, for the study-participants to refuse on the other.

However, in resisting discussing these spaces, other entities were revealed. In one case, a space of learning became important ("learning, just learning, learning about me, learning about how I worked"), the actions of which were subsequently associated with notions of an artist-self. This was framed in terms of the processual nature of performances of a particular subjectivity, namely "learning to be an artist, learning to think like an artist". This notion of learning could have been enacted by the educational environment, and an acknowledgement of performances of a pedagogised self (Atkinson, 2002). However, it could also have been enacted, albeit at-a-distance, by the notion of the studio-based model of pedagogy which references and potentially reinforces historic notions of 'mentoring and apprenticeship' (Alter, 2014, p. 50; see also Bain, 2005; Thornton, 2005) that were historically associated with artists' guilds and artists' studios. As Mary Smith wondered, "maybe being an art student feels like a stepping stone or one of the 'paying one's dues' aspects of slowly working towards assuming the identity as an artist". Everton noted at one point how the University provided him with an "opportunity to kind of be mentored". However, at another point in the conversation, when the participant-observer was trying to elucidate if there were any relationships between notions of the studio and artist-self, he resisted discussing this, instead revealing a refusal to discard what could have been the performance of an ontological understanding

of his self. He commented, "At that point in time I didn't have any reason not to [make] any art. I'd backed myself to do it all those years earlier My family had backed me to do it". Although the idea of having a place to make his artwork is implicit in this response, having the capability for the sustained creation of artworks and the acknowledgement of this by others, particularly family, seemed more important for him in a performance of a notion of artist-self. However, the certainty of this was resisted a few sentences later when he explained how there was also a need to embark on further study to "challenge ... my thinking".

Kitty Plum, however, acknowledged Bain's (2004a) proposed relationship between the studio and a notion of artist when she commented, as already mentioned in her vignette, "Having a studio seems like a very 'artist' thing to do". Nevertheless, she refused this image of artist for herself, stating, "I never had a studio". Instead of consciously setting aside a particular space to work in, she preferred to "move about", to "have some spaces in a couple of different places". This rejection of the concept of a studio as a specific place, and the subsequent enabling of a flexibility to have various workspaces, was made possible by the network of distance. The need to provide and define her own workspace due to the lack of shared institutional studio spaces meant Kitty Plum could please herself in when, where, and how she engaged in her art practice. As Edwards (2002) noted, distance education re-ordered 'space-time arrangements for learning' (p. 354). On the one hand, this resistance to having a specific studio might have been because of its association with a notion of artist, namely it was an "'artist' thing to do". However, on the other, it also suggests Kitty Plum accepted the idea of work autonomy, which is also often associated with an understanding of artist. As Bain (2005) suggested 'work autonomy is a fundamental component of artistic practice' whereby artists have 'freedom and flexibility' in terms of work hours as well as management of output (p. 39). So did Kitty Plum's resistance of one notion of artist allow her to associate and embrace another for herself? By resisting the duality of artist/ studio was she also engaging in the bypassing strategies of ANT (Latour, 1999) and inherently accommodating the heterogeneous nature of network elements to enact and gain access to a notion of herself as artist?

However, Kitty Plum went on to ponder the materiality of her image of the studio that she had refused, saying, "I don't know if a space would have suffocated me or made me work harder". She deliberated further.

If I [said] 'right I'm going into my studio now' and it's in a room down a [hallway] – wherever, or I might have felt 'Oh god, I don't want to go to the studio'. Whereas if I'm at home, say at the kitchen table doing something, there's not as much pressure on you maybe?

In this discussion, her idea of a studio has been delegated the capability to exert "pressure" on her, which in turn seemed to produce resistance. How has this pressure been enacted? Was it produced by the studio's relationship with the power inherent in an academic environment, albeit actioned at-a-distance? Kitty Plum referred to, as was

mentioned in her vignette, the power of the institution as an “umbrella” “over” her. Did this perhaps limit her notions of artistic freedom? This seemed significant to her, as she mentioned how, following her study she now had “more freedom and no-one to answer to”.

Other study-participants spoke of institutional pressures in terms of the academic requirements for compliance, which did not necessarily relate to a student’s “reality”. Others spoke of “pressure” from lecturers and supervisors, as being challenged, questioned, and receiving feedback that made them feel “anxious” about their artworks and processes. Others spoke of the “work pressures” in the academic environment perhaps referring to assessment deadlines or “the pressure of having to produce” artworks. In a sense, this affirms Hocking’s notion discussed earlier, of the ‘reconstitution of creative activity as work’ (2013, p. 245). For example, Everton described how at one stage “I just kept producing stuff ... I must admit ... I got really tired of doing that”. This was because, on the one hand, he was required to regularly produce and photograph new or more resolved artworks to put online to discuss with supervisors. On the other hand, the artworks he was seemingly forced to produce ended up frustrating him as he was not “really that one hundred percent engaged” with them. However, for George, this “pressure of having to produce and that emphasis on studio practice” provided him with “experiences as an artist” and therefore helped him get “into a state of being that is an artistic state of being”. Thus, as Kitty Plum implied in her comment above, the “pressure” of the academic environment could be productive, which in her case had the potential to make her “work harder”.

Perhaps this “pressure” that Kitty Plum experienced was delegated by her understanding of being isolated, hence her preference to work at the kitchen table, which is the centre of household routines. As Alpers (1998/2014) discussed, the studio presents problems in that it ‘leaves outside so much of the world and that its condition is that of isolation’ (p. 411). In addition, as already discussed, artistic labour is understood as frequently solitary for extended periods where not only the ‘work’ remains invisible, but as Bain (2003) noted, ‘many artists experience isolation’ (p. 314). This ‘notion of separateness’ (Bain, 2007, p. 251), and the ideas of working in isolation and independently are often understood to underpin an artist’s creative engagement (e.g., Elsbach, 2009). However, Kitty Plum had experienced a shared academic studio space during her undergraduate study. Consequently, she described how “you could feed off your shared studio” because you were “immersed in it [the environment and artmaking]”. Not only could she “talk to somebody” but also she could “really see something [artworks, their processes and materiality]”. Was it this experience as well as the lack of a similar environment and the sense of isolation enacted by distance that provided further “pressure” and produced resistance? Did she then inherently resist these stereotypes of defining the ways artists

work and thereby refuse to discard part of her self, a part that desired a greater level of sociability?

Perhaps Kitty Plum's perceived "pressure" was delegated by a societal perception of that relationship between the studio and an identity as artist mentioned by Bain (2004a). Did this then raise questions about Kitty Plum's expectations, and her confidence about what and how she had to create or produce in such a space? While this idea could be inferred from her previous comments, it arose again in the enactment of temporal dislocations, perhaps also due to the above relationships. Kitty Plum commented, "Half the time you could forget about it [the work] and push it [away] - 'Oh, I'll do some of that tomorrow'". What the enactment of this practice prompted was a temporal, spatial, and conceptual resistance to engaging in what artists do in their studios, namely creating and producing artworks.

However, were there other 'images' associated with artist that were involved in the delegation of this action? The studio is not only associated with a definition of artist, it is also perceived by society as the appropriate place of occupation for an artist, which in turn potentially re-affirms 'occupational identity construction' (Bain, 2004a, p. 171). Consequently, what occupies the artist in this place is often referred to as studio practice, which in turn is associated with creative acts, creative expression, and creative freedom as mentioned earlier (e.g., Bain, 2005; Clarke, Harrison, Reeve, & Edwards, 2002). While Bain (2004a) noted how the artist has been variously interpreted over time as, for instance, 'conformist, labourer, intellectual, genius, individualist, Bohemian and entrepreneur' (p. 172), a contemporary notion is of one as a creative individual (Bain, 2005, 2007; Danaher et al., 2000a). This is often associated with romantic notions such as the 'individual creative genius', a notion that still persists in society today despite, as Hocking (2013) argued, visual arts education relinquishing these ideas (p. 243). This individual is able to represent personal opinions and views of the world rather than to perpetuate established norms of society, which was the case historically. This creative ability is again thought to be mysteriously bestowed, and is considered a 'gift', with the individual perceived as privileged and separate from the rest of society (e.g., Bain, 2005). Consequently, there is a perception that creative and imaginative production comes easily for the creative individual, taking less effort both physically and mentally than other types of 'work'. Therefore, it is understood that the creative worker need only be remunerated by the individual's sense of 'intrinsic satisfaction' (D. Bennett et al., 2009, p. 11) and achievement as they 'create only for themselves' (Elsbach, 2009, p. 1067). In addition, partaking in this creative work is thought to 'affirm one's identity as artist' (D. Bennett et al., 2009, p. 11; see also Elsbach, 2009). Did these societal perceptions about notions of an artist add "pressure", and act momentarily, at-a-distance upon Kitty Plum's capability and willingness to engage in creative activities, and subsequently enact a refusal of these notions of artist for herself?

As with all the stories told in this document, this discussion risks the 'simplifications and reductions' of 'knowing at a distance' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 42) that is performed in the ordering of any story. However, a complexity remains evident because manifest in these stories is the way Star's means of gaining access to the various selves are interrelated, that is, they do not operate separately or in isolation. Their entanglement happens because actions at-a-distance amongst other networks are also implicit in the actions of resistance. Therefore, as this story suggests, not only was Kitty Plum refusing images or notions of an artist in terms of, for example, the artist's studio or creative practice, but in doing so this seemed to also activate and interrelate a refusal to discard part of herself or more to the point, to 'become pure' (Star, 1991/2007, p. 82). Perhaps the "pressure" also enabled her to retain aspects of her self, which then became incorporated in her notions of artist-self, which in her case included notions of "fun" and "freedom". Several times Kitty Plum referred to her art practice somewhere in the space of art and craft. She described aspects of her practice prior to completing the MA&D as "kind of crafty fun ... which ... wasn't enough" in terms of being a "serious" artist. She then described her recent practice where she had "freedom", and "I'm just doing what I enjoy, and I think it has fallen back [to being] a bit - crafty ... just sort of a bit of fun". Does this then mean that Kitty Plum resisted some images of artist because they were, in her words, too "serious" or was it that she resisted being a "serious" artist?

This story has been ordered to explore relationships between some of Star's ways of gaining access to our selves, and acts of resistance to highlight different networks, and actions that might be interwoven in the performances of notions of an artist-self. However, it is also reflective of Foucault's modes of action, which, as discussed earlier, he viewed as a relational practice whereby actions act 'upon their [other entities] actions: an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions' (Foucault, 1982/2003a, p. 137). In addition, it points to ANT's modes of action whereby actions overwhelm and mobilise entities thereby making 'others proceed to action' (Latour, 1996a, p. 237). Nevertheless, this ordering could obfuscate what is now an important understanding for this research. While this ordering made visible some ways that study-participants may have resisted images or notions of artist, it was this very practice of resisting that was made visible in every conversation, that is, all study-participants engaged in continual acts of resisting and refusing images or perceived notions of artist. It was these practices in the conversations with study-participants that, as noted earlier, rendered the differences that are distance to the margins or not always visible in performances of notions of artist-self. What follows is a discussion of how this might be the case.

Resisting stereotypes of notions of artist

The idea of resisting notions of a perceived or stereotypical artistic identity was discussed by Bain. While referring to identity rather than subjectivity, Bain (2005), like many others mentioned earlier, discussed artist in a collective sense, and in terms of an occupation or profession. She argued 'professional status comes largely from drawing on a repertoire of shared myths and stereotypes to help create an artistic identity and project it to others' (Bain, 2005, p. 25). However, she suggested individuals continually engaged in strategies of 'resisting and internalising tailored versions' (Bain, 2005, p. 42) of these to establish their, albeit temporary, positions of attachment. Some of these societal stereotypes and myths about who and what an artist might be, as well as understandings of notions of art and aesthetics, have already been mentioned in the stories above, for example, notions of artistic and creative labour, creative freedom and artistic autonomy, working in isolation, creativity as a gift, and the individual as creative genius. While many contemporary academic and art institutions challenge these stereotypes, they continue to be perpetuated and circulated by various means including the institutions that resist them, for example, through a reliance on the studio-model of pedagogy in art and design education.

In his study of artists who work on community-based art projects in south-eastern Australia, Selkrig (2011) confirmed that stereotypical myths of the artist still abound in society. While the artists he interviewed chose to practise art in a less solitary way, their mode of engagement was generally considered unconventional in the eyes of the community because it did not match preconceptions of how an artist operates. So not only were these artists resisting the stereotypical models of practice, but Selkrig (2011) found that 'they were confronted with, and were forced to challenge their own perspectives about, what being a "real" artist' entailed (p. 582). Experiences and negotiations of these perceptions often become sites of resistance, providing situations where artists engage in practices that explicitly resist, subvert, or embrace these stereotypes (e.g., Barkun, 2012).

While Bain (2005) identified the fluidity of identity, and how the practices of resisting and internalising stereotypes of artist were involved in this, her research did not specifically extend to the relationality of networks that might have acted at-a-distance on enactments of identity, and nor to performances of subjectivities. However, Kosmala (2007) explored the potential relationality involved in identity construction and found, for example, she was unable to separately 'interpret the political, private and artistic threads' of a particular artist's identity construction in relation to her art practice, thereby revealing the 'temporal discontinuity' of identity formation (p. 51).

Stories exploring practices of resisting

The most overt instances of resistance to the myths and stereotypes of artists, and Bain's ideas on the performativity of an artistic identity were in Mary Smith's vignette, although this practice was implicit in all other stories. This refusing and resisting seemed to, as implied above, reveal more than relationships with stereotypical notions of artist. For Mary Smith, the "mythical associations" of the "label itself" which she described as a "kind of mythical thing" enacted this resistance. At the same time, she resisted the complexity of notions of artist by identifying herself as a "drawer", because it is "easy to be successful at because all you have to do is draw pictures". This implies that an artist is defined by more than an accomplishment of a skill or task completion. However, she later associated the capability of being able to draw with a societal perception of artist. Does this suggest that, as a drawer, she also momentarily perceived herself as artist? Mary Smith also referred to "all these clichés about an artist and what their lifestyle is supposed to be like". She resisted the romantic, most often male, 'stereotypical image of the starving artist living in a garret' (Bain, 2005, p. 29), preferring instead to refer to herself as "a middle-class woman", and noting her family was not "starving". She resisted the "myths around artists being intense and slightly deranged," adding "I suppose I don't really put myself in that eccentric, out of control, umbrella. I'm a relatively organised and disciplined person". Here, in resisting these stereotypes, she has revealed a notion of artist-self as female, organised, and disciplined or perhaps this enacted the possibility of refusing to discard part of herself.

Mary-Smith also identified the notion of the studio as "definitely part of the myth" although clarified that having one was not a necessity, for example, "if you're a performance artist you don't need a studio". However, she also internalised part of the myth of the studio "to some extent", describing how she utilised her own purpose-built space to exhibit her artworks for others who would not have been part of the academic environment she was engaged with. In this sense, she resisted giving up the romanticism of this particular stereotypical image (e.g., Freer & Bennett, 2012) of the relationship between the studio and artistic life. She described this as follows:

I do know that if I know ... [there're] people coming round then I would usually tidy my studio. Or put up things that I wanted people to see. Almost like decorating the lounge.... [I think] they'll probably want to look at what I'm doing and so I would arrange things in order for people to see what I wanted them to see.

The possibility of these actions were, on the one hand enabled by distance because the studio she worked in for her MA&D study was physically and temporally distant from the academic institution. On the other, Mary Smith was perhaps again, as she had done previously when she talked of representing herself in her artwork, resisting the idea discussed earlier about how the artist and their artwork are more often than not separated

(Bain, 2004b), by being able to control an exhibiting situation and be present with her artworks. In addition, as discussed in her vignette, she resisted the label artist instead feeling it, in part, should be bestowed by “outside sources”. Therefore, while she resisted assuming the label for herself, she set up a situation where she could potentially receive that “recognition” and “acknowledgement” from others. In addition, she “tidied up” the studio, which resisted the idea of the space as a place of occupation, and rendered some of her creative ‘work’ invisible to others, perhaps in turn reinforcing her notion of herself as an “organised and disciplined” artist. However, Mary Smith also linked her feeling of discomfort and actions of resistance to the label of artist with New Zealand culture saying, “we [New Zealanders] are not that good at blowing our own trumpets. Sometimes people ask me what I do and I might say, “I’m a housewife”. However, perhaps this also enacted a refusal to discard an aspect of her ontological self, to remain impure and ontologically multiple.

Examples of implicit resistances to notions of artist were evident in Everton’s conversation and his vignette. He referred to himself as artist in terms of making a living, engaging in creative practices, producing artworks, and having “some genuine interests” in art. However, he also noted how he “was struggling as to who I was as an artist at the time”. This struggle seemed to remain throughout his postgraduate experience via distance as he commented, “and then, by the end of it, I think I was really confused as to who I was as an artist”. This struggle and confusion could also be couched in terms of Foucault’s notion of resistance. While seeming to embrace some occupational notions of artist for himself, there was some resistance to who he might be in relation to artist as a name. Alternatively, in terms of Star’s (1991/2007) discussion, perhaps he was struggling to understand the parts of his ontological self that could be retained in relation to his performances of notions of artist-self, or perhaps there was a dislocation between these processes and a knowing location.

Everton discussed his resistance to this naming noting how “I was always uncomfortable ... when people labelled me as an artist”. This was the reason he “clung to that title painter”. However, he described the societal “confusion” this produced in terms of an occupation, that is, “everyone thought you were going to put up wallpaper and decorate their house”. This forced him to refuse his preferred label, instead finding it “easier” to say, “Well actually I’m an artist who paints”. Everton’s repeated attempts to refuse the label were also a resistance to societal understandings of the term. Despite accepting some of the occupational definitions, he noted how he was “always vague” about what artist meant. “It’s very, very vague and it’s a term that’s come through the centuries and sort of been attached to somebody. It’s attached to a vague person that no-one actually knows what they actually do”. He also related this again to himself saying, “No. I mean I seriously cannot tell you what I think an artist is, any longer”. He implied that his postgraduate experiences produced a more complex understanding of this notion, noting

that beforehand “I think I had a simplified version of it”. He went on to wonder, “I’m not even sure I’ve met any artists yet”. During this part of the conversation, he also resisted creativity in relation to notions of an artist adding “But again, it comes back to that really vague thing, what is creativity?” As well, he pondered creativity’s relationship to the production of artworks. He mentioned people who “kind of could be” artists, and how when he looked at their artworks now, he questioned this, commenting, “Maybe they weren’t”. Or perhaps in this instance, Everton was resisting for himself the idea Bain (2005) proposed that ‘the qualifying term “professional”, in the arts, is, for all intents and purposes, an empty signifier that does not guarantee quality or excellence nor signify a degree of economic and social status’ (p. 34).

This story is an example of the continual action and the resulting fluidity that happens in the performativity of refusing images and stereotypes of, in this case, artist. However, this also highlights that Everton’s resistances to giving up parts of himself were perhaps more important in his performances of a particular subjectivity than resisting stereotypical notions of artist, or as suggested for Kitty Plum, they were performed simultaneously. His artmaking and creative engagement now had to have purpose and meaning for him, and without that understanding, he questioned his notions of artist-self. As a further example of this, he commented, “I didn’t really actually know why I was doing it any longer” and consequently, as mentioned in his vignette, “I just couldn’t narrow it down as to what I wanted to be or who I wanted to be in that process”.

This question of understanding ‘why’ in relation to their artistic practices was enacted in different ways in most of the conversations, not only in Everton’s. This could have been activated by the postgraduate research environment where as George commented, “we did make that distinction between producing art for the Masters’ course as research into something and making art for exhibition of some sort”. Equally, it could have been actioned by the network of art and artistic practices themselves, whereby as Steyerl (2013) proffered, ‘Does art possess you in the form of endless self-performance?’ (p. 228). However, it seemed for Everton, and perhaps all of them, that purposefulness and meaningfulness in their engagement in art practices became associated with notions of artist-self. This could nevertheless, be seen as perhaps a refusal of societal perceptions associated with artist such as notions of creativity, freedom of expression, and art as self-expression, or equally in the terms of associations with an aspect of their ontological self.

These examples highlight how continual acts of resistance enact the relationality involved in the performances of simultaneous multiple subjectivities. However, they can also be seen in the light of Foucault’s ideas on the author-function, discussed earlier. Evident is the interplay between the discourses that endow and support notions of artist, and how notions of artist, defined in terms of being a performance, identify and authorise these discourses to circulate in society. Evident is how each different performance of

subjectivity gives rise to different sets of ideas, and to different understandings of a subject. Evident are the struggles of naming whereby, as discussed, names can only 'gesture at someone' (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 380), because there are other functions or actions involved, and they are 'situated between the two poles of description and designation' (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 381) each being neither entirely in one mode nor the other. Evident is the interconnectedness between, for example, an individual, an individual engaging in creative activity, an individual as the creator of an artwork, and an individual involved in the discourse surrounding an artwork. Evident is the idea that it is within the 'scission', in the 'division', and the 'distance' between these, and other networks, that notions of artist-selves are performed and operate (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 385).

In addition, these stories support Bain's (2005) argument that individuals continually engage in strategies of 'resisting and internalising tailored versions' (Bain, 2005, p. 42). Moreover, they also demonstrate how practices of gaining access to one's self, as Star (1991/2007) argued, are required to make notions of artist-self visible. Acts of tracing and describing revealed the relationality of the heterogeneous elements of networks, which in turn gesture at how a knowing location is performed. What became evident was that the study-participants continually resisted images and notions of artist for their various selves, which simultaneously performed refusals to discard parts of their ontological self. This meant they inherently gained access to notions of themselves as artist as these two aspects became entangled with the performances of notions of their artist-selves. Therefore, it now seems that these practices, as well as those implicit in the research process itself discussed earlier, are what rendered distance, in terms of this research, to the margins but, at the same time, they were also means of gaining access to notions of artist-selves.

Distance and performances of subjectivities

The question that remains is to understand how it was that distance mattered in these performances of notions of artist-selves, even though it was seemingly rendered to the margins in the study-participants' conversations. Although the paradoxes and problems of naming, labelling and categorising in terms of Foucault and ANT have been discussed already in a number of ways, Star (1991/2007) also talked of a position where 'the self ... is as yet unlabelled' (p. 90). In terms of the discussion so far, this could happen as part of the performative practices of gaining access to oneself and of giving an account of oneself, as the former practice is interwoven in the latter. The unlabelled self, as a subject position, will also be precariously fluid and multiple. However, the performance of this 'as yet unlabelled self' seemed to be evident both implicitly and explicitly as a positioning strategy for all study-participants during the conversations, although it manifests itself, as

discussions here have shown, through actions of resistance. This is because the 'as yet unlabelled self' must occur in the very act of resistance, or more precisely at the point where the resistance is about to take place, namely the point just prior to the recognition of what is resisting, and what is being resisted. This as yet unlabelled self could perhaps be associated with Butler's ideas discussed earlier. She argued that the temporality and processes of recognition inherently decentre the individual, meaning that self-identity cannot be achieved, that is, 'one can only give and take recognition on the condition that one becomes disorientated from oneself by something which is not oneself' (J. Butler, 2001, p. 28).

It seems from the stories that while study-participants engaged in the practices of gaining access to their various selves, they did so at the point where they remained at yet unlabelled. In other words, practices of resistance were apparent in relation the study-participants frequently preferring to remain 'as yet unlabelled' in terms of artist, and consequently, to use Star's words again, to remain as 'split' and 'impure' (1991/2007, p. 82). This repeated refusal in the form of actions of resistance reinforces the tension enacted by simultaneous partial connections with multiple networks. However, it also means that we are only ever allowed, as Hetherington (1998) put it, a 'small glimpse rather than a full view' of any position of subjectivity (p. 23), or in the case of this research, a fleeting glimpse of any performance of notions of an artist-self.

The manifestation of these strategies of remaining 'as yet unlabelled' in terms of artist in every study-participant's conversation suggests that these implicit actions could be framed in terms of a 'collective resistance' (Star, 1991/2007, p. 82), and this therefore becomes another one of Star's (1991/2007) ways of gaining access to their various selves. On the one hand, the collective acts of resistance could have been enabled by the entry point into the research and the privileging of the term artist in the opening question posed to study-participants, which, as already discussed, was to act as a 'catalytic prompt' (A. Douglas, personal communication, 1 April 2015). On the other hand, however, these collective actions could also be seen as further resistance to particular images or notions of artist.

As already discussed, artists are often perceived to exist in the margins of society (V. D. Alexander & Bowler, 2014; Bain, 2007). Bain (2004b) suggested there is a 'complex interplay of absence and presence, invisibility and visibility' (p. 424) for an artist, and therefore many ways, some of which have been mentioned, in which artists can be marginalised and rendered invisible. Perhaps the study-participants' collective action was to resist this perception of an artist as insignificant and by doing so, they implicitly embraced or brought to the fore, the importance of artist in society, albeit in this case as artist as yet unlabelled. Alternatively, perhaps they accepted this notion of artist as marginalised and invisible for themselves, and utilised this location in the margins as a

place that in turn enabled them to resist. As Hetherington (1998) proposed, positions in the margins could challenge, 'through practices of resistance and transgression' (p. 126). In doing this, the study-participants would have simultaneously refused to discard a part of themselves, which was in this instance, this particular notion of artist.

However, these acts of collective resistance could have arisen in other ways. The presence of these actions in the relations that worked to associate all study-participants, namely the network that is distance, implies that distance in some way enabled or performed the possibility of these collective actions. How might this be the case? The presence of these actions implies, in the light of Star's (1991/2007) discussion earlier, that on the one hand distance as an entity and a network, performed a space enabling the creation of, as Star called it, a 'patchwork of collective biography' (p. 82). In addition, as Grabner and Wood (2010) suggested, 'any act of resistance has to entail a relationship between a subjectivity and a community' (p. 11). On the other hand, their presence implies that distance simultaneously performed a network enabling the creation of 'multiple marginality' (Star, 1991/2007, p. 82).

Stories discussed here evidence how students shared some common circumstances by being part of the 'Off-campus Strand' or distance thereby providing the opportunity to create that 'patchwork' of a 'collective biography'. The stories also revealed performances of marginality by actions of the network, and by actions at-a-distance from other networks. It is important to reiterate here, in line with Foucault and ANT's understandings of social phenomena, that, as Hetherington (1998) put it, 'marginality too is plural rather than singular' (p. 23). In addition, as discussed earlier, margins are seen as complex spaces that are 'sites of deferral as well as difference' that are not 'visible to all. They are, rather, often constituted in practice and in the representations of that practice rather than in the ontology of things' (Hetherington, 1998, p. 126). Distance as a pedagogical mode of delivery was performed into the margins in terms of the 'normal' delivery of AUT University's postgraduate art and design programmes.

Conversely, distance was enabled to retain an aspect of its ontological self by the performance of its very nature. This meant that practices of distance performed actions of resistance to what was 'normal' by, for example, enabling students to study from home, by not providing an institutional studio, by distancing the tactility of artworks and practices, and by resisting the segregation of students by art and design disciplines, which were the usual practices for delivering the MA&D programme. This would have collectively positioned these students in what was considered the margins, particularly in relation to the majority of art and design postgraduate students. However, distance also positioned the institution as peripheral to the individual students physically, temporally and conceptually. This rendered their relationships with the academic institution differently, thereby performing and delegating other networks to participate and perform

in their learning, and their engagement with their art practices. Furthermore, although these circumstances of being distant, and the technological and pedagogical delivery were similar for all participants, as the stories have revealed, distance simultaneously enacted diverse and multiple participant experiences in relation to these. These actions then also collectively positioned each study-participant differently to each other, as peripheral to each other, in the margins, which also performed the possibility for them to retain and reveal aspects of their ontological selves.

Equally distance, by enabling the performances of these multiple and simultaneous positions of marginality, and by delegating action to other networks to perform similarly, for example, the study-participants' homes, in turn enacted the possibility for these collective resistances. As Star (1991/2007) implied, collective resistance is only possible from the margins. Therefore, distance, in terms of how it is enacted in this research, was enabled to perform collective resistances to a homogeny of notions of artist-selves. This enabled study-participants to engage in further collective as well as individual practices of distancing, of resisting and refusing. As Foucault argued, it is these acts of resistance that not only help locate relations that perform subjectivities, but also they help locate subjectivities themselves.

While other practices were also revealed in the performing and locating of subjectivities, be they 'as yet unlabelled' and simultaneously caught in the process of gaining access to themselves, so too were fleeting glimpses of different, heterogeneous, diverse, and multiple notions of artist-self. What this highlights, is how it is not the differences of distance that mattered in the performances of notions of artist-selves, but rather it is the relational performativity that *is* distance that matters. It is this that enables notions of artist-selves to be not only performed in different ways and through different means but also to be performed simultaneously different and multiple. In other words, it is not the lack of proximity, the lack of the collective institutional studio thought to be fundamental to the pedagogical studio-model, or the lack of the possibility for material and tactile engagement with artefacts, that matters in the performances of notions of artist-selves, as distance performs all relations differently to enable further diverse notions of artist-selves. Instead, there are different gatherings of actions and practices that sustain the performances of simultaneously multiple subjectivities, and therefore performances of distance in relation to performances of notions of artist-selves do, as Law and Mol (2008) would have it, make 'a difference to the end result' (p. 67).

Chapter 8 Conclusion

This study explores how notions of artist-selves are performed in the distance delivery of a postgraduate visual arts education. It is important to understand what happens for participants when aspects of a visual art, studio-based pedagogical approach are called into question by distance delivery. Since this ontological model of learning and teaching inherently privileges such notions as proximity and presence, it cannot be translated directly into an online environment. While it was not the intention of this research to compare a studio-based mode of delivery with an online version or distance delivery, many have already addressed associated matters as mentioned in Chapter 1. This includes the merits of online education, notions of presence in an online environment, and implications of attempting to transfer the studio tutorial or critique into an online environment. However, in my experience, many lecturers of both visual art and design disciplines appear reticent to embrace online and distance delivery as a prevailing mode of engagement for postgraduate research education, despite witnessing the success of this mode of delivery in AUT University's MA&D programme over the last 12 years. Anecdotally, this resistance is related to concerns about students, their practices, and their artefacts being remote and not part of a shared and institutionally provided studio. There is apprehension about the lack of physical presence and physical engagement with artworks and their materiality, as well as the processes involved in their creation, which are important for understanding artistic research in a postgraduate visual arts degree.

This is also supported in some literature where, for example, Nazzari et al. (2014) confirmed my experiences, and discussed the 'uncertainty' lecturers exhibited about providing an 'adequate' appraisal of artworks encountered in an online learning and teaching network where there is not 'a direct encounter' with the artwork itself (p. 95). While it was also not the intention of this research to discuss how artworks can be effectively engaged with and appraised in an online environment, these uncertainties and reservations indicate that there are difficulties and 'matters of concern' (Latour, 2004, 2005) in this situation. Nevertheless, my experience also suggests that students who were considered off-campus and undertook their engagement with AUT University's MA&D programme via distance delivery, did not seem to be troubled in the same way by the differences some art educators pointed to as reasons for eschewing distance delivery.

The studio-model is still the preferred pedagogical approach for visual arts education in New Zealand, although this is changing in Europe in response to the implementation of a new framework for higher education (e.g., Slager, 2013). As an ontological pedagogical approach, the studio-model is a means of enabling and perpetuating practices and behaviours in participants in relation to a specific discipline. In addition, the studio is the

place most often associated with notions of artist. Therefore, the studio-model will give rise to particular subjectivities, which are likely to be associated with notions of what it might be to be an artist. On one hand, we know from literature, as outlined in Chapter 1 and anecdotally, that artist is a fraught occupational and professional label, with few universally agreed, definable parameters. Yet, on the other hand, academic institutions increasingly offer creative tertiary degrees and visual arts programmes that implicitly rely on the existence of notions of artist as an entity, and yet seem to take-for-granted what this might entail. Therefore, rather than comparing and contrasting the studio-based model with its translation into distance delivery, it proved useful in this study to explore how student's notions of artist-self might be enabled and performed in the practices of this supposedly different learning and teaching environment that is so entangled with notions of distance. In this way, it was possible to understand distance delivery differently.

Foucault and ANT were important for this study as they provided a relational approach to understand the social whereby social phenomena are not pre-existing but rather they are understood as enacted through the relationality and actions-upon-actions that in turn perform the social. Consequently entities, including subjectivities, and networks are not fixed or stable but rather are performed as complex and simultaneously multiple. Consequently, phenomena could now become the site of the investigation itself, which of necessity meant looking to experiences in concrete situations to explore what happens in those circumstances, and to see what material entities, subjectivities, relations, and practices are present. This meant posing 'how' questions to ask how phenomena are performed, enacted, and constituted, albeit momentarily, and to make visible the actions in interwoven, often taken-for-granted networks. This made it possible to explore the entities, relations, and practices involved in the performances of notions of artist-selves in a postgraduate visual arts programme delivered online, as well as in the performances of notions of distance.

The empirical intervention into students' experiences of the distance delivery of AUT University's MA&D programme was intended as a starting point. This, I anticipated, would enable a reflexive engagement, and provide an opportunity to think differently about the social phenomena concerned, namely, the enactments of both notions of artist-self and of the distance delivery of a postgraduate visual arts degree. In addition, the empirical engagement was used to raise questions, which were subsequently explored in keeping with an ANT-ish approach, through tracing and describing, the telling of stories, and different modes of ordering, as well as engaging with 'material minutiae' (Law, 2007, p. 9).

As a mode of ordering, the vignettes highlighted, on the one hand, a multitude of different materials, entities, and relations in the study-participants' experiences of the visual arts

distance learning and teaching environment. They simultaneously revealed different and multiple performances of subjectivities, which included implicit and explicit performances of notions of artist-selves. On the other hand, however, these vignettes also disappoint, as they are unable, through the singularity of their linear unfolding, to reveal the sheer 'bewildering array' (Latour, 2005, p. 47) of all the different entities and relations performed in every phrase in the interview conversations, or the complexity of subjectivities and their performances. In addition, the conversations with study-participants reflected how they talked of other things, and did not talk about their experiences of the environment in the same language, with the same understandings or same intention as each other or as I, the participant-observer, may have.

In an approach using Foucault and ANT, it is not appropriate to pre-suppose entities and relationships involved in a circumstance prior to an intervention. However, the conversations revealed that characteristics defining distance delivery of a visual arts postgraduate degree identified through other lecturers' and my experiences (which underpinned discussions in Chapter 1), did not seem to matter in the same way in the study-participants' experiences. These were relegated to the margins, or not made visible in the study-participants' consideration of their experiences and notions of themselves as artist in relation to the distance delivery of visual arts education. This initially enacted some uncertainty over the appropriateness of the conversations in the research design. However, it simultaneously enacted 'a point of passage' (Law & Hetherington, 2000, p. 41), highlighting the need to recognise and further examine the complex dance in the performances of subjectivities, and acknowledge that there were other practices involved which interacted in varied and 'unpredictable ways' (Law, 2004, p. 162).

Following the unfolding of the vignettes, it became necessary to reflect further on what distance might be as an entity and as a network, and how it was enacted in the material relationality of the environment, and in the light of study-participants' experiences. It also became necessary to reflect on practices in the research process and how these might be entangled in performances of subjectivities. Moreover, practices of resistance were manifest in the study-participants' stories and these needed to be explored to understand how they were interwoven in practices of understanding performances of notions of artist-selves. Only then was it possible to identify some ways distance enabled acts and practices of resistance, which meant that study-participants could gain access to notions of themselves as artist. This suggested that the relational performativity that *is* distance mattered more in performances of notions of artist-selves than, for example the lack of notions of presence and proximity, which, in my experience, lecturers had implied were fundamental to visual arts education. In other words, the differences that were brought into play to define distance delivery of visual arts education as different were not what mattered in enactments of notions of artist-self. It was not the entities themselves that mattered but rather how distance was performed as well as its performativity, and the

relations and actions involved that mattered in performances of simultaneously multiple notions of artist-selves.

As a reflexive investigation and engagement in a Foucauldian and ANT-ish manner, this study is necessarily limited in a number of ways, especially if viewed in the light of other methodological approaches. In a relational approach to understanding the social, many have suggested that boundaries of phenomena and research are 'vague' (e.g., P. M. Alexander & Silvis, 2014, p. 16). However, with definitions of entities understood to be contingent and performed, it is important that a relational approach is understood, as Barad (2003) suggested, as 'a doing – the enactment of boundaries' (p. 803). In this way, so long as the vagueness, the lack of simple definitions, and the lack of direct cause and effect relations, are not taken-for-granted but are examined, this can then be understood as a means of revealing the complexities of phenomena as well as the enactment of potential boundaries.

Another perceived limitation to the research is the embeddedness of me as the participant-observer in the situation and practices under investigation. This can be said to obfuscate the research and the implications of this have been discussed earlier. However, as Alasdair MacIntyre observed 'I can only answer the question "What am I to do?" if I can answer the prior question "Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?"' (as cited in Thiele, 2003, p. 214). Therefore, this investigation is also a means of understanding the stories and practices of a particular distance learning and teaching circumstance of which I was a part. These have subsequently been unfolded through ANT's multiple modes of ordering, through storytelling and the 'work' of talk, and through acts of tracing and acts of describing minutiae. Such an approach also reduces the risk of, as Baker (2014) suggested, using study-participant's private narratives purely in the pursuit of academic voyeurism and the basis for 'sheer theorising' (p. 100).

Accordingly, when employing Foucault and ANT, the question of what I am then to do necessarily becomes murky and messy (e.g., Law, 2004; Law, 2006). Both affirmed that the ultimate aim of their modes of intervention is not to generate knowledge of 'what is to be done' (Foucault, 1980/2003b, p. 256). Rather it is to open up different understandings and questions, and to be able to sense the richness and complexity of phenomena under investigation. In this case, this was the richness, vibrancy and productivity in the performances of notions of artist-selves and of notions of distance, and how they might be entangled, as well as identifying the presence of other relations and practices, such as resistance.

However, there are further implications arising from this investigation. Foucault and ANT's understandings that knowledge is not fixed, and that any entity or environment cannot be taken-for-granted in terms of already knowing how they may perform in

society, has also been affirmed. Earlier versions of ANT used a term black-boxing whereby a network is taken-for-granted and thought of as stable or 'that which no longer needs to be considered, those things whose contents have become a matter of indifference' (Latour & Callon, 1981, p. 285). Such networks are assumed to be entities, and remain unquestioned while they perform as predicted, and it is only when they break down that we take notice of them and look to understand their material relationality. This means that as educators, we should not black-box or take-for-granted our pedagogical practices such as distance or online delivery or the standard studio-based model of visual arts education. We need to question continually how they might be performed as relational networks. When aspects of the studio-model of visual arts education are translated into the online environment or distance delivery, for many educators pedagogical practices appear to break down, and this creates uncertainty and acts of resistance to engaging in the environment itself. However, this research found this is not the case for all participants, in particular not for the students, as notions of artist-selves were still performed in relation to a visual arts distance learning and teaching environment, albeit differently in terms of both means and outcome. Perhaps visual arts lecturers need to understand their acts of resistance to distance delivery in the light of this research, instead recognising them in relation to their own performances of a particular subjectivity and in relation to concerns about their own notions of artist-self, since many are practising artists. The uncertainty generated by the perceived lack of presence and proximity should not be seen solely in relation to the students, to artefacts, or the online environment but rather also in relation to the networks and practices that in turn perform the lecturers' notions of themselves as artist.

This also highlights that we should not black-box or take-for-granted the idea that it is the provision of a shared occupational environment for students that perpetuates particular practices, behaviours, and specific subjectivities that might be associated with artist. ANT's simultaneously multiple ontologies and Foucault's notion of author-function or notion of artist-self as performed means we should not conflate artist with other entities such as the artwork, intention, content, the pedagogical environment or surrounding discourse or vice versa. We must acknowledge that it is within the 'scission', in the 'division', and the 'distance' between all these entities and other networks that subjectivities such as notions of artist are performed and operate (Foucault, 1969/2003, p. 385).

In addition, Foucault's practices and techniques of the self help us understand how these are, as McNay (2009) argued, 'liminal' processes that seek 'to explore ways of being beyond the already known' (p. 67). This means that resistance, because it entails resisting what is already known, becomes necessary so that, as Star (1991/2007) would have it, the self can simultaneously remain 'as yet unlabelled' (p. 90). This idea of exploring ways and notions of artist-self 'beyond the already known' was evident in all the

study-participants' stories, and none more so than Everton's struggle to understand "who I was as an artist at the time". Consequently, to understand the potential of delivering visual arts education via distance and in an online situation, we should not compare with previous modes so that we make visible only what is already known, and therefore what might be lacking, such as proximity and presence. This does not mean we should not be aware of these differences but we need to examine how all entities and relations perform and are performed so we can understand them differently and as relationally performed, and so can comprehend their complexity and consequently, their potential in our pedagogical practices.

While this research has developed an understanding of performances of notions of distance, there have been, by implication, many gestures to different performances of notions of presence in this environment. The next stage of this project would be to make these, as well as the ideas discussed above, more evident to other visual arts educators to allay their fears of the unknown. Presence, however, is also both a relational and spatio-temporal activity. The phenomenon or event that is presence is only enacted in a relationship between entities and therefore, as Latour (1998/2014) noted, 'there is ... no *direct* way ... to put oneself in the presence of presence' (p. 434, emphasis in original). In addition, he noted how presence, 'by the very passage of time, is always lost' (Latour, 1998/2014, p. 434). Therefore, to exist, presence needs to be continually performed, and so it is possible that networks of different entities will also perform different notions of presence.

An example of this was mentioned earlier when a study-participant whispered an experience of seeing an image of her artwork online: "Oh god, did I put that up? Oh!" On the one hand, absences or distances were created between the creator and the artefact when it was photographed and uploaded for viewing online, but on the other, different material relations enacted a different notion of presence and consequently immediacy, visibility, and perception as well as an implicit performance of a notion of artist-self. Is it perhaps that distance, when examined, offers the opportunity to highlight the temporal, spatial, and conceptual discontinuities of proximity and presence that were taken-for-granted and not previously visible to visual arts educators whilst engaging in studio-based pedagogies? These discontinuities, in turn, seem to be what have enabled an increased diversity of experiences and outcomes in the distance learning and teaching environment, which is a necessary achievement in postgraduate research in visual arts education.

When describing 'sets of relations' by which 'a particular emplacement might be defined', Foucault (1984/1998) referred to the bundle of relations that is a train (p. 178). He suggested a train was 'something through which one passes; it is also something by which one can pass from one point to another; and then it is something that passes by' (Foucault, 1984/1998, p. 178). This is the complexity through which distance delivery of

visual arts education needs to be considered as many only consider it as 'something that passes by'. This is because distance, even with the enactment of technology and of, for example, individual and separated studios, tends to be understood as an entity, rather than more appropriately as a gathering of actions, practices and relations as and between entangled networks. It needs to be understood in terms of an earlier analogy from Latour, namely that 'Boeing-747s do not fly, airlines fly' (1994, p. 46). As visual arts educators, we need to acknowledge the relationalities performed through the studio-based model of pedagogy, and translate the capabilities and potential of these relations into an online environment and not the entities alone. We also need to develop, model, and sustain practices of relationality through and beyond the taken-for-granted and any perceived limitations, and trust the power of these relations to be productive even when acts of resistance are involved. This is because the interwoven relationality of practices is what performs and sustains the multiple performances of subjectivities, be they artworks, notions of artist, notions of artist-selves or distance delivery of a postgraduate visual arts degree.

In conclusion, the quest to understand how notions of artist-self are enacted in a postgraduate visual arts learning and teaching environment that is delivered substantially online or by distance delivery has been conducted in a wayfaring manner (Ingold, 2011) to explore and consider the distance learning model differently. Consequently, what is evident from the research journey's unfolding here is that the relationality implicit in the question and the approach necessitated ongoing mediations as different entities and relations arose, and re-orderings of the research question from different perspectives as understandings of both the question and phenomena and their relations deepened. The research revealed that simultaneously multiple notions of artist-self were enacted in the visual arts distance learning and teaching environment despite some fundamental characteristics of the studio-based pedagogical model such as presence and proximity, being called into question. Notions of artist-selves and the enactment of other subjectivities including those mentioned above such as artworks, notions of artist, and a postgraduate visual arts degree, were not contingent on the studio-based model alone. These were shown to be performed relationally through the interaction of other diverse networks as well as with distance delivery itself. Furthermore, comprehending both human and non-human subjectivities in this way allows visual arts educators to acknowledge the power of relational networks as a means of questioning and consequently understanding how our pedagogical practices, such as studio-based and distance delivery models, are enacted and perform. By embracing a relational understanding, we can better comprehend, realise and expand the potential of our learning and teaching practices, in particular the distance delivery of postgraduate visual arts education.

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Appendix A: Ethical approval



A U T E C
S E C R E T A R I A T

23 April 2013

Nesta Devine
Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Nesta

Re Ethics Application: **13/16 Artists enacted: The constitution of the artist-self in a contemporary postgraduate learning network (working title).**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the AUT University Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 23 April 2016.

As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 23 April 2016;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 23 April 2016 or on completion of the project.

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this. If your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply there.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, please use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at ethics@aut.ac.nz.

All the very best with your research,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Madeline Banda'.

Madeline Banda
Acting Executive Secretary
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Dale Fitchett dale.fitchett@aut.ac.nz

Appendix B: Participant information sheet

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

6 April 2013

Project Title

Artists enacted: The constitution of the artist-self in a contemporary postgraduate learning network

An Invitation

As a Doctoral student at AUT, I, Dale Fitchett, would like to invite you to participate in my research, which includes gathering stories about an artist's identity construction while engaged in a postgraduate research degree that is taught substantially online. The study focuses on how your identity as an artist was affected (positively and negatively) in this environment. I am interested in gathering details of the occasions and things that might have influenced your perception of yourself as an artist and how this perception may have changed during the postgraduate experience. 'Artist' is a fraught label to begin with. Therefore, this particular environment is worth investigating, as it is substantially different to traditional studio based models of teaching. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of data collection, which takes the form of interviews.

What is the purpose of this research?

The aim of this research is to investigate and document the question:

How does the artist constitute themselves in a contemporary academic situation that is:

- a postgraduate research environment
- delivered substantially online

Underpinning this research is the idea that identities are unstable, multifaceted and that they shift over time and in response to different circumstances. The purpose of the research is to map the stories of how the identity of the artist unfolds, is maintained or even falls apart in this environment. It will map the interactions involved in this situation (between humans and non-humans) and how these relationships affect the identity of the artist. The emergent patterns will be used to support and critique the theoretical study. The research will contribute to a gap in the understanding of the needs of artists as students in this environment. This is not a review of the programme or mode of delivery but rather is to gather stories of your experiences and identity as an artist in this situation. This study forms part of my PhD thesis and research findings and data extracts, as part of the descriptive findings of the study, may also be used for conference and journal papers.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been invited to participate in this research because you have completed your Master of Art & Design delivered via the off-campus strand and you engage in an art practice. You will have responded to an invitation to participate, which was initially circulated via personal networks to MA&D graduates. I require 8 – 12 participants. Applicants will be selected on a 'first come, first served' basis until numbers are met. Initially those graduating between 2008 and now will be included. Some may be excluded if we find it is not possible to conduct the interviews either face-to-face or via Skype.

What will happen in this research?

Participation in this research will involve you completing:

1. **Consent form** - to be signed and returned.
2. **Participant Details Information** - a 30 minute phone or Skype call with me to complete this. At this time you will identify a pseudonym so that your identity will remain confidential for all data collected, the analysis and publication of findings.
3. **Interview** – maximum of 1.5 hours either face-to-face (in a location mutually agreed by you and I) or via Skype. These will be conducted by me and will take the form of a semi-structured and open-ended conversation. It will be audiotaped and I will also take notes. If you want me to provide any material to prompt our conversation, this can be discussed.
4. **Interview transcript verification** – you will receive a typed copy of the verbatim interview which you can edit for accuracy and add any further information. Return of this is required within two weeks and I will then assume your acceptance of this as an accurate account of our conversation. Analysis of interviews will not take place until this has been received.
5. **Second interview** – this may be necessary for clarification only. These will be by phone or Skype. Maximum 45 minutes. The transcript will be handled the same as the previous interview.

What are the discomforts and risks?

You may feel some anxiety being interviewed and having your thoughts recorded. Talking about your experiences may also be unsettling. However, our conversations will be conducted in a friendly manner and I respect and value your contribution. All information you provide will be treated confidentially and your identity will be protected at all times.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

You can choose whether you answer particular questions during interviews, you can stop an interview and you can withdraw from the data collection at any time.

What are the benefits?

As a participant in this study, you may benefit from reflecting on your identity as an artist and your art practice and the circumstances that influence their sustainability. As a researcher, I may benefit through gaining a PhD and contributing knowledge to the area of interest.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your privacy will be protected through the use of a pseudonym. Your identity, the pseudonym and contact details will remain confidential at all times during and following the research. All information, communications and data collected from you during this research will be transferred to a personal (not AUT) secure external hard drive that only I have access to. Any data extracts used in journals and conference papers will maintain confidentiality with the use of pseudonyms.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

In terms of total time, I would need a maximum of four hours of your time for activities outlined above. Interviews will be scheduled at times that suit you so this will not interfere with any work commitments.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

If you would like further information regarding this study, please email or call me (details provided below). You have two weeks to consider this and ask any questions. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time prior to completion of data collection. Written withdrawal is required and all data from you would be destroyed with no adverse consequences to you.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you wish to participate, please return the completed and signed consent form (included in the email with this Participation Information Sheet) within two weeks of receiving it. This can be sent as a scanned copy of the form with your actual signature, a copy of the form with your digital signature, or by including the following statement in the email: 'This email is in lieu of a signature on the attached Consent form'. Once consent has been clearly established by one of the above means, you will receive an email confirming receipt and your involvement in the project. Further details will then be arranged. I will also ask you to physically sign the form at interview.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you would like feedback on the results of this research, you can indicate this on the consent form. You may also indicate this at any time during the study. I will forward this to you once the research is completed.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr NESTA Devine, Faculty of Culture and Society, School of Education, nesta.devine@aut.ac.nz, phone (0064) (09) 921-9999 Ext 7361

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTECH, Dr Rosemary Godbold, rosemary.godbold@aut.ac.nz, (0064) (09) 921 9999 ext 6902.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**Researcher's Contact Details.**

Dale Fitchett, Office WM208a, Faculty of Design & Creative Technology, School of Art & Design, AUT University. Email: dale.fitchett@aut.ac.nz, phone (0064) (09) 921-9999 Ext 8229

Project Supervisor's Contact Details.

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Nesta Devine, Faculty of Culture and Society, School of Education, nesta.devine@aut.ac.nz, phone (0064) (09) 921-9999 Ext 7361

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 23 April 2013, AUTEK Reference number 13/16.