

**Pasting Tides Pedagogy: Learning from Creative Non-Formal Art Education in Nassau,
Bahamas**

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Abstract

This dissertation examines how non-formal art education environments in Nassau, Bahamas, function as sites of cultural preservation, creative resistance, and pedagogical innovation.

Responding to the continued influence of Eurocentric models within many formal art education structures, the study investigates how Global South epistemologies can inform more inclusive and community-responsive approaches to creative pedagogy. In this sense, examining art education histories becomes not only a descriptive exercise but also a form of cultural criticism that interrogates whose knowledge systems and artistic traditions have historically been recognized or marginalized within the field (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019).

Using a qualitative multiple-case study design, the research explores two community-rooted learning environments: the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre, led by Arlene Nash Ferguson, and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.), founded by Antonius Roberts. Drawing on Participatory Action Research (PAR) principles alongside specific arts-based inquiry practices, the study engaged collaborators, learners, and community members over a two-year period through interviews, participant observation, artefact analysis, and collaborative artmaking. The research process emphasized relational learning, participant reflection, and the co-construction of knowledge within community contexts. Through thematic analysis the study arrives at a unique framework Pasting Tides Pedagogy, that synthesizes pedagogical principles observed across the two case studies. The framework identifies five key considerations for educators: experiential learning that connects student interests with local contexts; valuing local

knowledge and cultural practice; integrating nature and sustainability into creative processes; fostering collaboration across social and disciplinary boundaries; and adopting a holistic approach that weaves these elements into everyday life. Together, these principles position creativity as a relational and place-based process embedded within cultural traditions and community practices.

Rather than proposing a universal pedagogical model, the framework highlights how creative learning systems rooted in specific cultural contexts can offer insights for broader conversations in art education. By foregrounding Global South epistemologies and non-formal learning environments, the study contributes to emerging scholarship that seeks to expand the epistemological foundations of art education and recognize diverse sites of pedagogical knowledge production.

Keywords: art education, non-formal learning, Bahamas, creative pedagogy, decolonising education, Global South epistemologies

Dedication

For Antonius, Arlene, and Bernie

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This dissertation was shaped by many tides: of people, of place, of learning. It grew through community, conversation, and the generosity of those who shared their knowledge and care.

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This dissertation is, in many ways, a collective act, a pasting together of guidance, trust, and shared curiosity. It continues to grow and evolve through the communities, friendships, and shared creativity that flow through it.

Prologue: Locating Myself in the Research

Early Formation and Professional Trajectory

I have undertaken both undergraduate and master's degrees in Canada in the field of visual arts, within institutions structured around the predominant Western model of post-secondary art education, characterized by discipline-specific course tracks, studio instruction focused on individual artistic development, hierarchical teacher–student relationships, and Eurocentric canon-based curricula. As a student, I struggled with its embedded limitations such as programme guides, media specificity, and dictated techniques; however, I interpreted the situation as my own failure. Upon becoming a professor and eventually an administrator, I found myself faced with these same hurdles, though with a deepening understanding of how the imposed educational structures were not adequately supporting all students and, even worse, had shaped the way I thought I should be teaching. I began to see that I could play a role in advocating pedagogical approaches that would be more dynamic in response to diverse student needs, recognising changing and individual contexts. My motivation intensified as I began to collaborate with art educators around the world, learning from them the ways they have worked to relieve the tension created by standardised educational approaches formal institutions have been required to impose, and building support for more local and individualised learning.

This evolution from student to educator to researcher laid the groundwork for my commitment to exploring creative pedagogies that affirm plural, place-based, and community-responsive ways of knowing.

Professional Scope and Global Encounters

Through my professional roles, including my role as Director, International Programs & Collaboration at OCAD University, I have visited and assessed the curricula of over one hundred post-secondary institutions around the world that implement art education. Across many institutions, programme structures and content remain strongly shaped by similar models, based around the student's ability to meet prescribed guidelines that are the result of a 400-year-long history originating in Europe (Sawyer, 2017). As Western-colonial models have set international standards, schools and the educators operating within them throughout the world emulate these approaches in order to be recognised as valid and rigorous. The result of this system has been that context-specific, community-rooted educational models and creative traditions have often been neglected or undervalued, particularly in the Global South (Hatton, 2019; Salazar, 2013). Instead, many locally grounded artistic methods have continued within non-formal educational forums outside academia. The resulting Eurocentric standards of programme structures, curricula, and degree programs frequently do not align with the varied lived experiences, learning styles, and cultural contexts of many of today's students (Addison, 2010; Hatton, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

It was through witnessing this repetition across continents that I became convinced of the urgent need to foreground locally grounded, community-engaged models of learning as valid forms of creative pedagogy. My professional encounters thus became not only administrative observations but also catalysts for a deeper inquiry into the power relations shaping global art education.

Becoming a Researcher

As a researcher educated within Western institutions, I sought to recognize, reclaim, and transform the privileges and perspectives I had inherited—leveraging that awareness to challenge Eurocentric frameworks and open space for more plural approaches to knowledge. This critical self-positioning became the foundation for methodological choices that privilege relational, culturally grounded ways of knowing over purely institutional or text-based forms of knowledge production. The methodology engaged with Bahamian oral traditions and embodied knowledge as expressed through participant practices and site-based learning, incorporating artistic and visual responses as forms of reflection and dialogue, and cultural expression within the research process. These practices aligned with arts-based inquiry, while remaining situated within a broader PAR-informed case study design rather than a single arts-based methodological model. This dual role, as both participant and observer, required that I unlearn certain academic habits and cultivate an openness to knowledge shared through storytelling, gesture, and collective experience.

Building on this orientation toward embodied and arts-based ways of knowing, Dr. Bernie Andrews' emphasis on teaching not only *about* the arts, but *in, with, and through* them, also shapes this study's understanding of artistic practice as a mode of inquiry, communication, and knowledge production (Andrews, 2022). This perspective provides a pedagogical link between arts engagement and meaning-making, reinforcing the role of creative practice as both method and outcome within the research. This orientation helped frame the dissertation's attention to pedagogies grounded in lived experience, exchange, and creative practice, and aligns with the study's broader commitment to relational and culturally situated forms of learning (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019).

Locating My Positionality as a Doctoral Candidate in the Bahamas

Through Professor Ilene Sova, who was coordinating a potential Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiative between OCAD University and the University of The Bahamas, I was introduced to artist and educator Antonius Roberts. Roberts is an independent artist and environmental practitioner whose site, the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.), serves as a significant creative and community-based learning environment in Nassau. During an initial visit to I.C.E. in February 2021, I observed the mentorship of resident artists and the ways in which creative practice, environmental stewardship, and community engagement were integrated into the learning environment. These early observations suggested that the site functioned as a non-formal learning environment where creative knowledge was shared through mentorship, collaborative practice, and participation in ongoing artistic activity.

Subsequent visits deepened these relationships and expanded my engagement with local arts educators. While attending the opening of Antonius Roberts: Art, Ecology and Sacred Space at the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas, I also visited the nearby Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre. There I met Arlene Nash Ferguson, founder of the museum, and learned about her work in teaching Junkanoo traditions through community-rooted educational practices. Conversations with both Antonius and Arlene revealed strong parallels between their approaches to cultural continuity and broader scholarship on living heritage, intangible cultural heritage, and culturally embedded pedagogies. These relationships ultimately shaped both the direction of the research and the methodological approach of the study. The relationships did not remain static once the research began, but continued to evolve through repeated visits, ongoing communication, and participation in workshops, site activities, and informal exchanges. Rather than relying on a single moment of access, engagement was sustained through returning to the

sites, following up on conversations, and remaining in dialogue with participants as ideas developed. This meant that trust was not assumed, but continually negotiated, influencing what was shared, when it was shared, and how participants chose to represent their own practices. As a result, the research process was shaped not only by planned methods, but by the rhythms of relationship-building, including moments of hesitation, clarification, and mutual adjustment that informed both data collection and interpretation. For example, certain conversations or observations were only possible after multiple visits, once participants became more comfortable sharing the reasoning behind their practices or reflecting on them in dialogue.

In considering my fieldwork in the Bahamas, I was keenly conscious of my identity as a white-presenting female born, educated, and residing in Canada, a Commonwealth country in the Global North. My status as a member of the middle class has meant that I had pathways to financial resources and the ability to apply for funding, as well as continued access to education and related resources. I was therefore sensitive to the fact that I was conducting research informed by the institutional framework of a Northern university that is historically and culturally a repository of hierarchy and power. Acknowledging this context was not simply a matter of transparency but an ethical starting point, recognising how privilege, institutional affiliation, and geography could shape every aspect of the research relationship. In conducting this research, I was aware that my positionality as a Northern doctoral candidate working in a Caribbean context not only underlined my privilege but also introduced possible bias in how I perceived the needs of educational spaces or even how I defined research itself. These perceptions could easily vary from the experiences and perspectives of the participants. All these factors could influence the research process and the ability to address the needs and concerns of the community; therefore, they were appropriately revisited, reflected on, and dismantled

throughout the process, drawing on broader principles of reflexive fieldwork practice (Davis & Michelitch, 2022). For example, I noticed early in my fieldwork that I tended to focus on what was visible and measurable: the costumes being made, the techniques being taught, the sequence of tasks. It took repeated visits and deeper conversation to recognize that the most significant learning was happening in the spaces between. In the quiet accumulation of trust, in what participants chose not to explain yet, in the relational rhythms I had not been trained to see as data. Recognising this shifted how I took field notes, moving from recording what happened toward also asking myself what I might be overlooking, and why.

This process of reflexivity was therefore approached not as a one-time acknowledgement of positionality but as an ongoing practice of critically examining how my presence, assumptions, and institutional affiliations shaped interactions with participants and the interpretation of their experiences (Ibrahim et al., 2023; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). The goal was to maintain an evolving awareness of decolonial and anti-extractive research practices. In so doing, I consciously decentered formal Eurocentric methods that had historically diminished community knowledge and experience (Ibrahim et al., 2023; Igwe et al., 2022). Reflexivity also extended to the terminology used in the study, recognising that concepts such as Global South epistemologies and decolonial practice are fluid and context-dependent, shaped through ongoing dialogue with participants and collaborators. This reflexive process aligned with the dissertation's broader aim: to demonstrate how Global South and pluriversal epistemologies can inform more equitable, relational, and ecologically connected models of art education.

Shared and Divergent Contexts

Participants may not have immediately known some aspects of my positionality, and furthermore, I was aware that self-assigned identities might differ from identities assigned by others — a dynamic that has been documented across diverse fieldwork contexts (Davis & Michelitch, 2022). This includes my citizenship of a different island nation, Malta, which received independence from Britain within nine years of the Bahamas and has since engaged in its own, though distinct, process of dismantling colonial legacies. As an artist, educator, and community organizer, I also shared some commonalities with the participants. Regardless, I lacked the lived experiences, local knowledge, and profound understandings that insiders possess, and I was still an outsider to the community with which I became engaged during the research process (Ibrahim et al., 2023).

These layered intersections—being both insider through shared island geographies and creative practice, and outsider through Northern academic affiliation—highlighted the importance of humility and reciprocity in the research encounter. It is from this in-between position that my inquiry took shape, seeking not to speak for but to learn alongside the communities whose practices ground this work.

Positioning the Research

Ultimately, this prologue situates the research as both professional and personal: an effort to reconcile my institutional experiences with a broader commitment to creative pedagogy as a site of transformation. The study that follows responds to the contradictions I have lived within and between formal education and lived creative practice, between Northern privilege and Caribbean collaboration, and between academic inquiry and community care.

Chapter 1 - Introduction: Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal Environments in Nassau, Bahamas

Across the globe, formal art education has long been shaped by Eurocentric frameworks that prioritize individualism, standardized curricula, and hierarchical pedagogical models (Hatton, 2019; Sawyer, 2017). While these structures have defined institutional norms for centuries, they frequently marginalize diverse epistemologies and undervalue community-based, experiential, and culturally embedded ways of learning. As scholars have increasingly argued, however, art and art education can play an important role in the decolonization of knowledge by challenging assumptions about the universality of European artistic traditions and pedagogical frameworks (Garnet & Sinner, 2022, p. 35) — a principle this study extends into the Bahamian context. As educators confront increasingly complex global challenges and shifting student needs, there is a growing imperative to reimagine art education in ways that are inclusive, locally responsive, and decolonial in nature (Addison, 2010; Banks, 2022). This dissertation takes up this imperative through a case study that examines how non-formal, community-rooted educational practices might offer insights into more pluralistic, creative, and culturally sustaining approaches to teaching and learning in art education. In art education scholarship, these kinds of community-rooted learning environments are closely aligned with community-based art education (CBAE), which is commonly understood as part of broader non-formal and informal cultural learning systems rather than as a separate or formalized educational category (Lawton et al., 2019; Zimmerman, 2009). This study therefore approaches the two Bahamian sites as

examples of community-rooted, non-formal art education that also contribute to CBAE scholarship.

Situated in the Bahamas, a nation shaped by its African diasporic heritage and postcolonial identity, this study examines how non-formal art education environments serve as sites of cultural preservation and creative resistance. Through collaboration with Bahamian artists and educators, this research contributes to global conversations on decolonising education by documenting practises that prioritise community-based, experiential learning and challenge dominant Eurocentric paradigms (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Nash Ferguson, 2022).

Nassau, the capital city of the Bahamas, is a UNESCO Creative City with a rich tradition of inter-arts practice shaped through a complex postcolonial history. Although the Bahamas gained independence in 1973, colonial legacies continue to shape formal art education, albeit limited in scope. In contrast, non-formal environments have long served as key sites for sustaining cultural knowledge and creative practice (Jean-Pierre, 2021; Turner, 2015; UNESCO, 2021). While this dissertation is framed through visual art education, the inter-arts nature of these practices reveals integrated connections across dance, music, and theatre as well. Although I entered this work from a post-secondary and adult education perspective, the findings extend across levels, from youth learning to community and lifelong learning contexts (Andrews, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

My engagement with the Bahamian creative community emerged through professional collaborations developed in my role as Director of International Programs and Collaboration at OCAD University. Through these collaborations, I was introduced to Bahamian artists and educators, including Antonius Roberts and Arlene Nash Ferguson, whose work in community-based creative learning environments became central to this study. Initial visits to Nassau were

connected to collaborative educational programming and partnership development, during which I observed the mentorship practices and community engagement that shaped spaces such as the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.) and the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre. These early encounters revealed how non-formal creative learning was being sustained through mentorship, cultural practice, and community participation, ultimately shaping the direction of this research. These relationships later developed into the research partnerships that made this study possible. While these connections facilitated access to the field site, I approached the research as a scholar working largely external to the Bahamian cultural context, requiring ongoing reflection on how my institutional position, disciplinary training, and outsider status shaped both access to participants and interpretation of the findings. Observing the pedagogical practices at I.C.E. and the Educulture Junkanoo Museum prompted questions about how such community-rooted artistic traditions function as learning environments and how these practices might challenge dominant assumptions in formal art education.

Background and Significance of the Study

The decolonisation of education has been widely discussed in contemporary educational scholarship as a call to reconsider dominant frameworks of knowledge production and pedagogy. In art education, this does not suggest that all formal education systems function uniformly or that educators are not already working toward more inclusive approaches. Rather, many formal curricula, institutional histories, assessment structures, and government-approved educational frameworks continue to reflect Eurocentric assumptions about what counts as legitimate artistic knowledge and creative success (Battiste, 2013; Cote-Meek, 2014; Hatton, 2019). These assumptions often privilege individual artistic achievement, discipline-specific specialization,

and Western art historical canons over community-based, relational, and culturally embedded forms of learning (Freedman, 2007; Hatton, 2019; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Langfeld, 2018).

In Canadian contexts, for example, important curricular reforms have begun to create space for Indigenous knowledge, place-based learning, and more flexible approaches to arts education. British Columbia's redesigned curriculum offers one example of this shift, emphasizing personal and cultural identity, community connection, and multiple ways of knowing (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2019). However, such reforms remain uneven across provinces and institutions, and many formal educational structures continue to be shaped by inherited colonial and Eurocentric models (Battiste, 2013; Donald, 2012). This dissertation contributes to these broader conversations by examining how non-formal art education environments in the Bahamas offer community-rooted pedagogical models that operate beyond the constraints of formal institutional systems.

Yet, to support today's students, educators need to consider a variety of knowledge sources, connecting ideas from both the Global North and South to better support students and cultivate individuals who are aware of their surroundings and the planet, and who can understand the complex relationships between people and nature (Damus, 2023).

Building on this point, many art educators actively incorporate community-engaged learning, socially engaged practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, and culturally responsive teaching within formal settings, reflecting broader shifts in the field toward relational, participatory, and socially embedded models of art education (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008). Contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes art education as extending beyond traditional studio instruction to include museum education, public pedagogy, community engagement, and collaborative cultural practice (Hatton,

2019; UNESCO, 2021). However, these approaches are often implemented within broader institutional structures that remain influenced by Western artistic canons, discipline-specific specialization, and assessment models that have historically prioritized individual achievement over relational and community-based forms of learning. While significant work across K–12, post-secondary, and community-based art education has meaningfully shifted these conversations and expanded more inclusive pedagogical possibilities, these changes remain uneven across institutions and curricular systems, and there is still considerable work to be done in fully recognizing diverse cultural knowledge systems within formal art education (Freedman, 2007; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Haywood Rolling, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Shaped by a complex legacy of colonial subjugation yet sustained by vibrant African-derived traditions, the Bahamas offers a uniquely rich context in which emerging non-formal art education initiatives provide insight into how creative practices can function as decolonial responses that challenge dominant educational systems- sustaining cultural identity and fostering more inclusive, community-based learning environments (McGregory, 2021; Nash Ferguson, 2022; Saunders, 2004; Turner, 2015). These community-based spaces, which often operate outside the constraints of formal institutions, embrace oral traditions, intergenerational mentorship, as demonstrated through the Bahamian practices examined in this study and supported by scholarship on Junkanoo, Caribbean cultural education, and Bahamian creative practice (McGregory, 2021; Nash Ferguson, 2022; Saunders, 2004; Turner, 2015). These principles also resonate with broader theories of creativity that emphasize relational, cultural, and ecological dimensions of learning (Glăveanu et al., 2019). Scholarship on Caribbean art education similarly emphasizes the role of creative practice in processes of cultural self-definition and postcolonial identity formation. Creative arts education enables Caribbean

societies to “speak of ourselves, to ourselves in our own terms,” highlighting the importance of culturally grounded artistic learning within the region (Pearce, 2022, p. 297).

Statement of Research Objectives

In this dissertation, pedagogy refers not only to teaching methods, but to broader learning systems, including relationships, environments, and values. This study operates in three ways: first, descriptively, by examining how two Bahamian non-formal art education environments function as creative learning systems and what structures and sustains them; second, comparatively, by considering how these practices differ from dominant Eurocentric frameworks of creativity, which often prioritize individualism, universalization, and decontextualized knowledge; and third, generatively, by drawing on Global South epistemologies—understood here, following Santos, as plural, relational, and place-based ways of knowing shaped through histories of coloniality—and specifically on Glăveanu and Sierra to show how creativity can be understood as collective, ecological, and culturally embedded (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Santos, 2014). This suggests that these principles are not abstract ideals but are already enacted within non-formal contexts as lived, sustained pedagogical practices shaped through cultural continuity, survival, and community life (Glăveanu et al., 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Creative pedagogy is often used to describe educational approaches that prioritize imagination, experimentation, relational learning, and the development of creative thinking through practice (Andrews, 2019; Freedman, 2007; UNESCO, 2021). In this dissertation, the term refers specifically to pedagogical processes in which artistic practice functions as the primary medium through which learning, knowledge sharing, and relational engagement occur. The term does not refer broadly to innovative or imaginative teaching in general. Rather, it describes learning environments in which creative practice structures how mentorship, cultural

knowledge, collaboration, and reflection are enacted. Within the contexts examined in this study, these pedagogical processes are expressed through forms of experiential and community-based learning, mentorship between artists and emerging practitioners, the continuity of cultural traditions through creative practice, collaborative making, and engagement with local environments.

The term *experiential learning* is used here in dialogue with established educational scholarship, particularly work by Dewey (1934) and Kolb (1984), where it broadly refers to learning through direct engagement, reflection, and practice. In this study, however, the term functions primarily as a point of connection to educational discourse rather than a comprehensive descriptor of the Bahamian practices examined. The learning environments explored in this research are rooted in culturally specific traditions of mentorship, participation, and community knowledge-sharing that extend beyond conventional experiential learning models. Creative pedagogy is therefore understood as a relational learning system in which artistic activity supports the sharing of cultural knowledge, the development of creative practice, and ongoing engagement with community and environment.

The Research Sites

This research focuses on two key sites of non-formal art education in Nassau that exemplify these community-engaged pedagogies: the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.). Both serve as living examples of how non-formal education can operate outside of institutional frameworks while cultivating rich, intentional learning environments.

Founded by Arlene Nash Ferguson in 2000, the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre formalizes aspects of Junkanoo into structured cultural education programs that

center oral history, embodied learning, and mentorship. It provides specialized knowledge often missing from formal curricula and promotes cultural identity and creative expression, addressing significant gaps in formal education (Bahamas.com, n.d.; Nash Ferguson, 2022). Similarly, I.C.E., established by artist Antonius Roberts, supports emerging artists through place-based creative practices, intergenerational mentorship, and ecological engagement (House Gallery, n.d.). It offers studio space and collaborative opportunities that bridge individual artistic development with community empowerment. I.C.E. responds directly to the practical challenges faced by Bahamian creatives while contributing to broader sustainability goals (Incubator for Collaborative Expression, n.d.).



Figure 1 *Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre (left) and Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.)(right)*

Together, Nash Ferguson's and Roberts' work illustrate how non-formal education rooted in community, culture, and collaboration can foster creativity, preserve heritage, and offer

alternative pedagogical models outside traditional education systems. By emphasizing experiential learning, cultural relevance, and local knowledge, their initiatives offer compelling case studies for how Global South epistemologies (to be elaborated in the next chapter) can inform creative and decolonial art education.

Accordingly, this study examines their pedagogical approaches to understand how art education can become more culturally responsive and inclusive through grounded place-based and relational concepts of creativity and enriched by community-based practice. These findings aim to inform broader discussions around reimagining context-sensitive models of art education across diverse settings.

Methodology and Research Design

This dissertation adopts a qualitative multiple-case study design to examine how creative pedagogy emerges within non-formal art education environments. A multiple-case design enables in-depth exploration of each learning environment while also allowing comparison across contexts in order to identify recurring pedagogical patterns and differences in practice (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). The research is informed by Participatory Action Research (PAR) principles and incorporates artistic and visual inquiry practices as part of the data generation and reflective process that enable participants to engage collaboratively in interpreting their own creative and pedagogical practices. Rather than isolating variables or seeking universal explanations, this design allows for close attention to lived experience, relational learning, and the cultural and environmental conditions through which creative knowledge is sustained. The comparative structure of the study supports both site-specific understanding and cross-case analysis, allowing recurring pedagogical dimensions to emerge through dialogue, observation, and collaborative reflection across both research sites.

The research ultimately developed the Pasting Tides Pedagogical Framework, a conceptual synthesis emerging from the iterative analysis of both case study sites and used throughout the dissertation to articulate the recurring pedagogical dimensions of non-formal creative learning. The framework brings together material and ecological metaphors, describing pasting as a practice of adaptive, hands-on making and tides as a rhythm of movement, renewal, and relational exchange to show how creative learning is sustained within community contexts.

Before arriving at this framework, however, the study is grounded in a broader conceptual structure that traces how the research moves from global theoretical foundations toward localized pedagogical practice. As illustrated in Figure 3, the research structure maps this progression from Global South epistemologies—particularly as articulated by Glăveanu and Sierra (2015)—through broader discussions of creativity, creative pedagogy, and visual art education, narrowing toward non-formal learning environments and ultimately the two case study sites in Nassau, Bahamas. This cone-shaped structure reflects the methodological logic of the dissertation: beginning with broad epistemological and theoretical foundations, moving through increasingly specific educational and pedagogical contexts, and culminating in the lived practices of creative learning within the selected sites. The two case study sites—the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.)—serve as the localized environments through which these broader theoretical questions are examined in practice. This visualized pathway provides the foundation from which the Pasting Tides Pedagogical Framework later emerges as a localized articulation of creative learning within these Bahamian contexts.

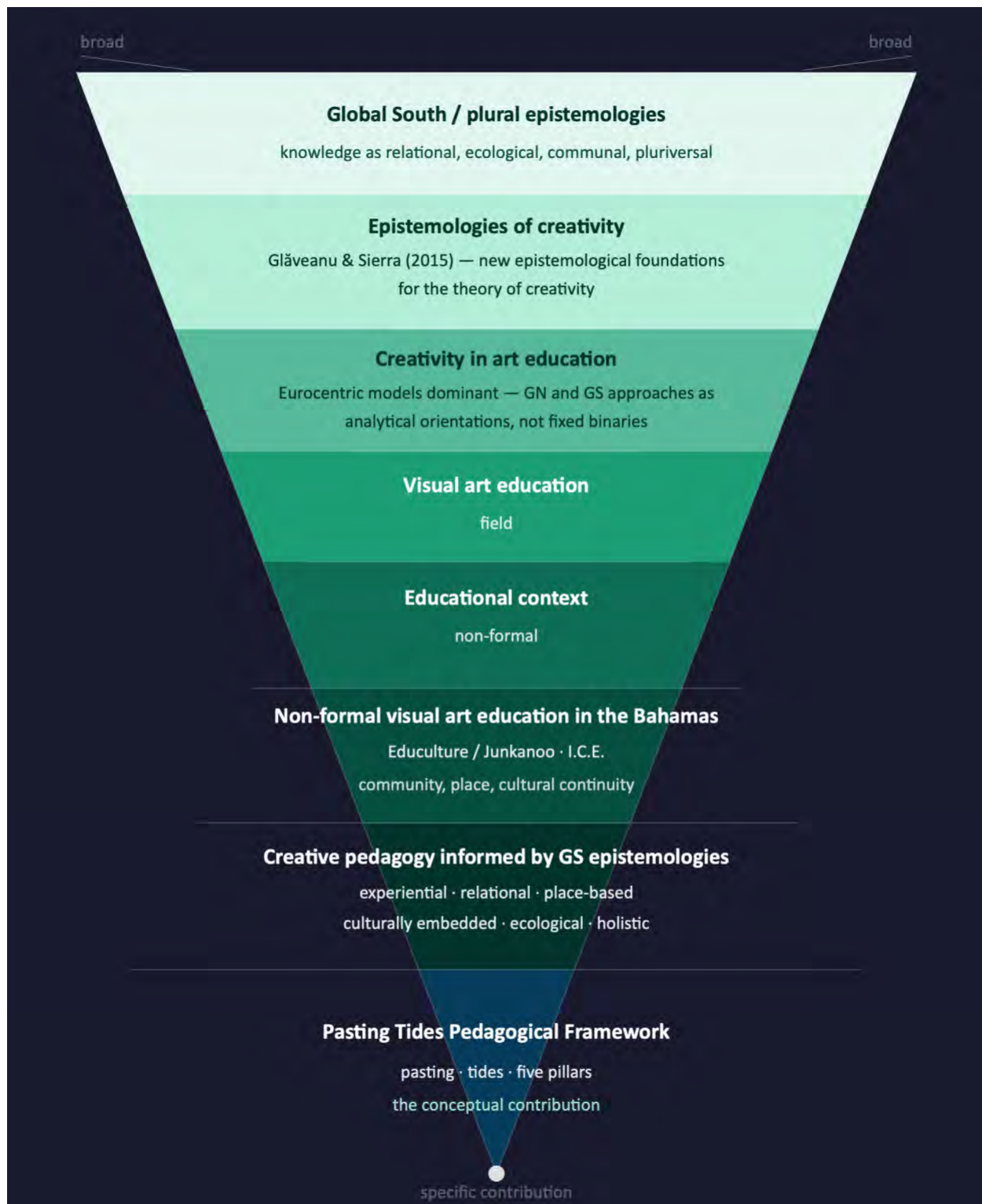


Figure 2 *Research Structure*

The study adopts a participatory action research (PAR) design using two iterative research cycles that combine observation, collaborative reflection with participants, and subsequent co-design of inquiry activities. PAR forms the primary methodological framework, while arts-based inquiry practices were incorporated as reflective tools within the research process. These creative responses—developed through collaborative artmaking, visual reflection, and discussion—helped surface dimensions of experience and identity, including cultural meanings articulated by participants that were not always easily articulated through interview dialogue alone. During coding, I remained attentive to how my interpretive lens could shape the identification of themes, returning to participant language to ensure categories reflected their meanings rather than externally imposed frameworks. I also returned to participants to discuss emerging interpretations, inviting them to clarify, refine, or challenge how their practices were being represented. In practice, this involved sharing preliminary themes and asking open-ended questions such as: “Does this reflect how you understand your practice?”, “Is there anything here that feels incomplete or misrepresented?”, and “How would you describe this in your own words?” These conversations supported the expansion and, in some cases, revision of interpretations, ensuring that analysis remained grounded in participant perspectives rather than finalized independently.

Rather than mobilizing PAR toward intervention, this study adapts its cyclical principles for co-interpretive knowledge generation, centering documentation, reflection, and the articulation of practices already sustained within community contexts (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Participants were engaged as co-researchers through iterative cycles of dialogue and reflection, not because the study sought to redesign these community practices, but because it

aimed to collaboratively interpret, name, and clarify the pedagogical logics already being enacted within them (Irwin, 2017; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019).

This methodological flexibility was further deepened by acknowledging embodiment and ecology as integral to inquiry. The research was guided by an attentiveness to rhythm, spatial interaction, and material engagement in each setting—what Lloyd (2014) describes as the “flows” of learning through movement and relation. These embodied dimensions paralleled the participatory and iterative nature of PAR, situating knowledge not only in discourse but also in bodily and environmental awareness.

It is important to emphasize that the resulting pedagogical framework *Pasting Tides* is not a pre-existing Bahamian model, but rather a synthesis emerging from observation, dialogue, and co-analysis. In this sense, the framework does not claim to codify local practice into a universal theory; rather, it offers a conceptual language for recognizing and articulating pedagogical principles already being enacted within Bahamian non-formal creative contexts (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Santos, 2014).

As will be elaborated in the following chapters, this framework is an integral facet of Global South epistemologies of creativity toward a localized, ecological understanding of art education. The framework not only serves as an analytic tool but also as a pedagogical proposition that contributes to the evolution of Global South epistemologies. It provides a vocabulary for describing adaptive, cyclical, and community-embedded creative learning, extending Glăveanu and Sierra’s foundations for creativity into a localized Bahamian expression.

Overview of the Dissertation Chapters

Across eight chapters, the dissertation traces the development of this framework and its grounding in Bahamian creative traditions. Chapter 2 critiques Eurocentric creativity theories,

contrasting Western individualism with Global South and community-based perspectives on creativity (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Hatton, 2019). Chapter 3 provides historical context on Bahamian art and education, tracing colonial influences from slavery-era Junkanoo prohibitions to post-independence curricular reforms (Saunders, 2004; Turner, 2015). Chapter 4 details the PAR methodology, emphasising relationship-building and ethical engagement (MacDonald, 2012; McGregory, 2021). Chapters 5 and 6 present case studies of the pedagogical approaches found through Junkanoo and I.C.E., analysing their pedagogical approaches through Global South epistemologies (Nash Ferguson, 2022; Roberts, n.d.). Chapter 7 supports these findings regarding their impact on learners, and finally, chapter 8 synthesises findings into recommendations that contribute to broader decolonial conversations in art education across diverse contexts (Damus, 2023; UNESCO, 2021).

Chapter Conclusion

By examining Bahamian non-formal art education through the lens of Global South epistemologies, this research challenges the universalisation of Western pedagogical models. This dissertation argues that creativity, when rooted in cultural traditions and collective well-being, can contribute to broader decolonial conversations in art education that should be more intentionally integrated into art education today (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; McGregory, 2021). As the study will demonstrate, educational approaches that respect different ways of knowing and learning from experience can encourage care for the environment and enable communities to create their own artistic paths—an important goal for creating fair and diverse educational pathways (Damus, 2023; UNESCO, 2021).

Chapter 2: Creativity in Art Education and the Significance of Global South

Epistemologies

The education systems of the future should be based on an ecology of knowledge, in the sense that they are called upon to link the knowledge of the global South and the knowledge of the global North with a view to producing allocentric, place-centric and planet-centric humans capable of grasping dialectical units in the kaleidoscopic flow of human and natural facts (Damus, 2023).

Epistemological Diversity in Art Education: The Advent of Global South Epistemologies

Decolonizing education and knowledge systems is an urgent and ongoing effort in today's interconnected world. As education systems move toward more inclusive and equitable ways of teaching and learning, it becomes increasingly important to question the dominance of Western-centric models—especially in disciplines like art education. Much of what has been inherited in formal art education reflects hierarchical, Eurocentric traditions that emphasize individualism, formal technique, and narrowly defined standards of excellence (Brzyski, 2007; Hatton, 2019). These values stem from European academy and atelier models that privileged mastery, imitation of classical forms, and the authority of the instructor, shaping enduring hierarchies of taste and authorship (Buckley & Conomos, 2009; Kempers & Jackson, 1994; Petricone, 2019). These legacies continue to shape many classrooms today, even as educators and researchers call for more socially rooted, collaborative, and culturally responsive approaches (Freedman, 2007; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008).

As we strive for more inclusive and equitable learning environments, it becomes imperative to challenge dominant Western-centric paradigms and embrace a more diverse set of

epistemologies. This approach not only enriches our understanding of the world but also addresses the systemic inequalities deeply rooted in our educational structures. Damus (2023) proposes an epistemological alliance between Global North and South knowledge systems, emphasizing the importance of valuing diverse ontologies, worldviews, and ways of thinking. This alliance aims to produce a more holistic, planet-centric education that links knowledge from various global perspectives to be culturally responsive and globally relevant. As Damus (2023) writes, the education systems of the future should be based on an ecology of knowledge, linking the knowledge of the Global South and the knowledge of the Global North with a view to producing allocentric, place-centric, and planet-centric humans capable of grasping dialectical units in the kaleidoscopic flow of human and natural facts.

Central to this epistemological reorientation is an understanding of Global South epistemologies—understood here as plural, relational, and place-based ways of knowing shaped through histories of colonialism, ecological precarity, and collective resilience. Rather than fixed geographic designations, the terms Global North and Global South are used as analytical orientations drawn from critical scholarship (Chasi & Heleta, 2025; Connell, 2007; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Santos, 2014). They refer to broad historical patterns of economic, political, and epistemological power shaping global knowledge production, but they do not describe homogeneous regions or singular cultural traditions. Educational practices within both regions remain diverse and internally contested.

This framing draws particularly on Glăveanu and Sierra (2015), whose work on Global South epistemologies in relation to creativity provides a key conceptual grounding for this study. Their framework highlights creativity as socially embedded, relational, and ecologically situated—standing in contrast to dominant Western conceptions that centre the individual as the

locus of creative achievement. Building on Santos' (2014) advocacy for pluriversal perspectives—which recognize multiple coexisting epistemologies rather than a single dominant model—epistemological diversity is understood here not as a supplement to established frameworks but as a necessary condition for a more just and inclusive art education. Following Chasi and Heleta (2025), it is important to acknowledge that strict South–North or Western–non-Western dichotomies risk oversimplifying complex realities of cultural and epistemological exchange. Such binaries can help name historical asymmetries of power and access, but they can also obscure the plurality of perspectives that exist within and across both contexts. Alternative terms such as the Majority World (Dados & Connell, 2012) are used in critical and decolonial scholarship to challenge hierarchical assumptions embedded in Global North/Global South language. While this framing is valuable, this study retains the Global North/Global South terminology for consistency with the grounding literature used in the conceptual framework. The Bahamas is often categorized within the Global South in the literature; here, however, the context is approached as a complex cultural and educational landscape shaped by multiple historical, regional, and diasporic influences rather than as a singular or representative case.

A brief clarification of key epistemological terms is warranted before proceeding. Terms such as Eurocentric, Western, and Global North knowledge systems, alongside Global South, Southern, decolonial, and Indigenous epistemologies, are used here not as fixed categories but as relational orientations that help illuminate diverse ways of knowing and teaching. The term decolonization is used with careful attention to its meaning. Scholars such as Tuck and Yang (2012) caution against the casual or metaphorical use of the term, emphasizing that decolonization carries specific political meanings connected to Indigenous sovereignty, land, and historical processes of colonization. In this study, this perspective informed a deliberate

methodological approach that prioritized participant interpretation, limited abstraction beyond context, and required returning to participants to clarify and confirm emerging interpretations. In practice, this meant resisting the impulse to translate participants' ways of describing their work into existing scholarly definitions. When Arlene spoke about creativity in Junkanoo as "dismantling the box," or when Antonius described I.C.E. as a space where residents "come with water and become crystallized," these framings were treated as conceptually generative in their own right, rather than as illustrations that simply confirmed existing scholarly definitions. The analysis returned to this language throughout, allowing participant-generated terms and metaphors to shape the findings rather than simply confirm them.

The discussion here engages broader scholarly conversations about how educational institutions examine dominant epistemological frameworks and create space for diverse knowledge traditions, contributing to conversations about epistemological plurality and the recognition of culturally grounded pedagogical practices—rather than claiming the decolonization of art education in the strict political sense. These discussions are particularly significant within the Canadian context in which this research is situated (Battiste, 2013), where ongoing dialogue regarding Indigenous knowledge, unceded lands, and the responsibilities of educational institutions continues to shape debates about decolonization in education.

Formal art education has been historically shaped by institutional models rooted in European academy traditions, including discipline-specific specialization, hierarchical teacher–student relationships, and curricular structures that privilege Western artistic canons (Daichendt, 2014; Hatton, 2019; Kempers & Jackson, 1994; Langfeld, 2018; Petricone, 2019). These influences remain visible across many K–12 and post-secondary contexts, particularly through curriculum standards, assessment models, discipline-based program structures, and institutional

definitions of artistic legitimacy (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008).

At the same time, formal education is neither uniform nor static. Many educators, teacher education programs, and arts institutions actively work against these inherited structures by incorporating community-engaged learning, Indigenous pedagogies, socially engaged art practices, and culturally responsive teaching (Freedman, 2007; Hatton, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008; UNESCO, 2021). Provincial curriculum reforms, such as British Columbia's redesigned arts curriculum, reflect broader efforts to move beyond narrow Eurocentric frameworks by emphasizing place-based learning, multiple perspectives, and cultural relationships (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2019). Nevertheless, these shifts remain uneven, and many institutional structures remain influenced by Western conceptions of creativity, originality, and disciplinary specialization, even as educators continue to advance more collective, relational, and place-based forms of artistic learning (Battiste, 2013; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Haywood Rolling, 2019).

Art educators in formal institutions globally have inherited pedagogical methods and frameworks resulting from classical European art schools (Belluigi, 2014; Boucharenc, 2006). These include hierarchical master-apprentice teaching models focused on technical mastery (Kempers & Jackson, 1994), discipline-specific specialization that separates art forms such as painting and sculpture (Langfeld, 2018), and rigid curricular structures that prioritize formalism, individual achievement, and product-based assessment over collaborative or process-based learning (Hatton, 2019; Haywood Rolling, 2019). Such frameworks often neglect Global South and Indigenous knowledge systems, reinforcing Eurocentric values and limiting the integration of diverse cultural practices into contemporary art education (Brzyski, 2007; Langfeld, 2018).

Examples of these excluded traditions may include localized and communal creative practices that are grounded in storytelling, ritual, and environmental relationships—such as those found in Indigenous, African, and Asian contexts—many of which have historically been excluded from formal Western curricula (Andrews, 2019; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015).

The practice of creativity varies across space and time, and we cannot operate with any single, reductionist definition of this phenomenon—such as the traditional Western view that defines creativity primarily as the ability of an individual to produce something novel and valuable in isolation (Glăveanu, 2010a; Glăveanu et al., 2019). Creativity is indeed universally valued, but varying cultures do appear to selectively nurture specific domains of creativity (Misra et al., 2006). As Glăveanu (2010b) notes, the most recent development in creativity studies involves the recognition that no account of creativity can be satisfactory unless it is culture inclusive (p. 151). Future studies must expand the scope of culturally specific as well as multicultural collaborations (Misra et al., 2006). Culture cannot be reduced to its material expression, nor can it be viewed exclusively as a set of values; consequently, creativity should also be viewed as dynamic and changing (Glăveanu et al., 2019; Zimmerman, 2009).

We are at the forefront of a complete reconceptualization of art education for a 21st-century context (Freedman, 2007). There is a need to critically examine school structures, curriculum content, and pedagogical approaches to ensure they are inclusive and representative of diverse perspectives. The distinction between visual arts and other creative forms such as dance, drama, and music holds less significance when approached through Global South epistemologies, which emphasize interconnected and holistic understandings of creativity. By embracing these concepts and working towards an epistemological alliance, more inclusive, equitable, and effective education systems that value and preserve diverse knowledge systems

can be created, with the intent to better serve diverse student populations and prepare them for participation in interconnected, multicultural communities.

Historical Foundations of Studio Art Education

Understanding contemporary debates within art education requires attention to the historical development of studio-based artistic training and the institutional structures through which artistic knowledge has been organized and transmitted. Many pedagogical traditions that continue to shape art education today can be traced to the European art academies established during the Renaissance (Buckley & Conomos, 2009; Kempers & Jackson, 1994; Petricone, 2019). These institutions formalized artistic training through hierarchical apprenticeship systems in which knowledge was transmitted from master to apprentice through structured stages of instruction. Training emphasized drawing as the foundation of visual arts practice alongside related disciplines such as perspective, anatomy, and iconography, establishing pedagogical frameworks that privileged technical mastery and the study of classical models.

As these academies gained prestige, their pedagogical models spread across Europe and eventually to North America, shaping the development of many early art institutions. By the nineteenth century, art academies had become key sites for the professionalization of artists and the codification of artistic training (Daichendt, 2014; Hatton, 2019; Robb, 2019). These institutional structures reinforced hierarchical teacher–student relationships and discipline-specific training models that privileged particular aesthetic traditions and methods. At the same time, they reflected broader social and cultural values of their historical context, reinforcing European artistic canons while marginalizing other creative traditions and knowledge systems (Buckley & Conomos, 2009; Petricone, 2019).

Significant transformations in art education began to emerge during the early twentieth century as artists and educators increasingly challenged the authority of academic traditions and questioned established definitions of artistic practice and value (Daichendt, 2014; Hatton, 2019; Petricone, 2019). Of these transformations, the founding of the Bauhaus in 1919 is particularly significant here because it represents the earliest sustained institutional challenge to the hierarchical academy model described above — introducing collaborative, interdisciplinary, and process-oriented principles that would reshape art education well beyond Europe (Hatton, 2019). The Bauhaus proposed an alternative pedagogical model that sought to dissolve boundaries between art, craft, and design while encouraging interdisciplinary experimentation and collaboration (Blaikie, 2019). Students began their studies with foundational courses focused on visual principles and material exploration before moving toward specialized areas of inquiry. This model emphasized experimentation, process-based learning, and the integration of artistic practice with contemporary social and technological conditions (Blaikie, 2019; Daichendt, 2014).

Following the closure of the Bauhaus during the rise of the Nazi regime, many of its faculty members emigrated to North America, where their pedagogical ideas significantly influenced the development of university-based art programs (Daichendt, 2014). By the mid-twentieth century, studio art education had become widely integrated into university systems, contributing to pedagogical orientations that balanced individual creative expression with structured disciplinary training (Haywood Rolling, 2019). During the latter half of the twentieth century, postmodern perspectives further reshaped art education by emphasizing cultural plurality, interdisciplinary experimentation, and critical engagement with social contexts (Esche, 2009). Artists increasingly worked across media and conceptual frameworks, while educators

began to question inherited hierarchies of artistic value and expand the range of practices considered legitimate within art education (Esche, 2009; Haywood Rolling, 2019). These shifts were accompanied by growing critiques of the colonial legacies embedded in dominant art education structures — critiques that called for greater cultural plurality, the inclusion of non-Western artistic traditions, and pedagogical approaches responsive to diverse communities and knowledge systems (Brzyski, 2007; Hatton, 2019). Contemporary art education therefore reflects an ongoing negotiation between historically embedded institutional traditions and emerging pedagogical models that prioritize collaboration, cultural responsiveness, and socially engaged practice (Freedman, 2007; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008).

Art Education as a Field of Inquiry: Contrasting Perspectives of Creativity

These shifts — from hierarchical academy models to experimental and community-engaged practices, and from a singular Western canon to more plural and contested understandings of artistic value — also contributed to the emergence of art education as a scholarly field concerned not only with the production of art but with understanding how artistic knowledge is taught, how creative learning occurs, and how pedagogical and curricular frameworks shape engagement with visual culture and artistic practice (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008). Within this literature, art education is often understood through multiple modes of engagement with the arts, including learning about the arts (historical and cultural knowledge), learning in the arts (developing artistic practice), learning with the arts (using artistic processes to explore ideas), and learning through the arts, where creative practice becomes a mode of inquiry and meaning-making (Andrews, 2022). In this sense, artistic practice functions not only as a form of expression but

also as a way of knowing through which learners explore ideas, relationships, and cultural meaning.

Scholarship in art education has increasingly moved beyond traditional studio-centred pedagogies toward models that emphasize collaboration, cultural context, and community engagement (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008). Recent scholarship has also emphasized the importance of recognizing multiple histories of art education rather than a singular, universal narrative, encouraging scholars to attend to diverse cultural perspectives and overlooked pedagogical traditions, particularly in relation to Indigenous and decolonial contexts in Canada (Garnet & Sinner, 2022). This shift reflects a broader movement away from frameworks centred primarily on individual artistic development and technical mastery within institutional settings toward understandings of creativity as a socially and culturally situated process that emerges through relationships, dialogue, and shared practice (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008).

Scholars have also examined forms of artistic learning that occur through community participation, collaborative practice, and socially engaged artistic processes. Research in areas such as community-based art education, museum education, and participatory art practice has explored how creative learning emerges within lived cultural environments and collective artistic activity (Goldblatt, 2006; Lawton et al., 2019; Mara & Thomson, 2021; Zimmerman, 2009). Similarly, scholars examining socially engaged and participatory art have identified a growing shift toward dialogical and relational forms of artistic production in which meaning emerges through collective participation rather than the creation of discrete art objects (Helguera, 2011; Kester, 2004; Lawton et al., 2019). While critics have raised important questions about the complexities and contradictions of participatory art practices (Bishop, 2012), there is broad

recognition that contemporary artistic production increasingly unfolds through collaborative and socially embedded processes.

Existing teacher preparation programs and graduate programs in art education already demonstrate how community-engaged and socially embedded pedagogies can function within formal educational structures. For example, Concordia University's undergraduate Art Education program includes courses such as *Introduction to Community Art Education* and *Community Art Education: Theory and Practice*, alongside practicum-based field placements that integrate observation, teaching, and community engagement as part of teacher preparation (Concordia University, 2024). Similarly, NSCAD University's Master of Arts in Art Education includes a Community-Based Practice stream, with courses such as *Community and Art Education: History, Theory, and Practice* that emphasize socially engaged practice, public pedagogy, and collaborative cultural work beyond the classroom (NSCAD University, 2024).

These models show that formal and community-based art education are not mutually exclusive categories. Rather, they reveal an ongoing disciplinary shift toward recognizing art education as relational, participatory, and culturally situated (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008). The present study builds on these conversations by examining non-formal Bahamian sites that function not as institutionally appended community engagement models, but as autonomous cultural learning systems rooted in local practice and intergenerational knowledge sharing.

Scholars argue that contemporary art education must expand beyond rigid disciplinary boundaries and recognize creativity as a relational phenomenon that emerges through interactions among people, materials, environments, and cultural traditions (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Haywood Rolling, 2019). As a result, many art educators have begun integrating

pedagogical approaches that emphasize experiential learning, collaboration, and engagement with broader social and ecological contexts (Freedman, 2007; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; UNESCO, 2021).

It is important to recognize that the categories used here to distinguish historically dominant and historically marginalized perspectives on creativity are necessarily broad and do not capture the full diversity of thought within either tradition. Within each framework exists a wide spectrum of practices and beliefs, and the growing influence of globalization continues to foster hybridity and cultural cross-pollination in how creativity is understood and expressed. While these categorizations can serve as useful entry points for comparative analysis, they should not be seen as fixed binaries. The following sections build on this complexity by examining contrasting views of creativity, organized around four key dimensions: who is emphasized in creative practice (individualistic versus collaborative focus); what is prioritized (originality versus local knowledge and practice); the intended outcomes (commercialization and privileged access versus community-based engagement); and the settings in which learning occurs (institutionalized education versus informal, non-formal, and experiential environments).

Individualistic vs. Collaborative Art

Scholarship discussing creativity in Global North and Global South contexts often highlights differing emphases on individual versus collaborative approaches. These distinctions are not absolute categories but analytical tendencies that reflect broader cultural, historical, and institutional influences on how creativity is understood and practiced. These differing emphases have significant implications for how creativity is conceptualized and taught within art education.

In Western perspectives, creativity is often conceptualized with a strong emphasis on the individual. Teresa Amabile's well-known componential model of creativity places the individual at the center of the creative process, emphasizing internal factors such as domain expertise, creative thinking skills, and intrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1983). Within this framework, social and cultural influences are typically treated as contextual factors that may support or inhibit individual creativity rather than as integral components of the creative process (Glăveanu, 2010b; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015). The individualistic approach aligns with the prevailing notion of creativity as self-expression, often disconnected from varied cultural contexts or communities where art is produced (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Zimmerman, 2009). The concept of the 'genius' solitary artist is further reinforced in Western or Global North cultures, where knowledge archiving and documentation create issues of access, limiting participation to those who can understand or gain permission to engage with the information (Andrews, 2019).

Western art education approaches typically focus on the ability to produce something new, often a product that 'breaks from tradition' (Lubart & Sternberg, 1998; Starko, 2010). This approach has created a formal 'ivory tower' where only a specific elite can engage in knowledge sharing. The educational structures in these settings often have considerable constraints, such as fixed time blocks for lessons and rigid evaluation frameworks (Belluigi, 2014; UNESCO, 2021) which can reproduce colonial logic of universality (Shahjahan et al., 2021).

In contrast, Global South and decolonial perspectives on creativity highlight the importance of collaboration and social interaction in the creative process. Sobe (2022) suggests that art education should move beyond models that prioritize individual success and instead focus on the development of shared knowledge through teamwork and the inclusion of diverse voices and perspectives. This perspective aligns with UNESCO's (2021) call for educational

models that foster cooperation, cultural engagement, and creative participation across communities and disciplines. In this framing, creativity is understood not only as an individual cognitive ability but as a socially embedded process connected to cultural heritage, collective meaning-making, and civic engagement.

Critical and socially engaged perspectives in art education, often aligned with broader decolonial critiques of traditional educational hierarchies, similarly advocate reconsidering the European master–apprentice model toward more collaborative and dialogic forms of learning that emphasize discourse, experimentation, and shared discovery rather than solely the production of finished art objects (Buckley & Conomos, 2009; Goldstein, 1998). Within this approach, the role of the art educator shifts from transmitting canonical knowledge to facilitating processes through which students develop skills that allow them to articulate and continually reassess their practice through experimentation (Belluigi, 2014; Buckley & Conomos, 2009; Hall, 2010; Sweeny, 2013). Art education in this context is therefore understood as a socially engaged, experiential, and embodied activity capable of expanding understandings of human practices and opening new cultural possibilities (Parker, 2002). Such approaches also recognize the importance of incorporating diverse social systems, epistemologies, and cultural traditions into teaching (Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008), reflecting increasingly plural visual cultures and learning communities (Freedman, 2007).

By emphasizing collaboration, cultural engagement, and collective meaning-making, these perspectives position creativity as a foundation for building more inclusive, tolerant, and sustainable societies (Glăveanu et al., 2019). The shift from an individualistic to a more relational understanding of creativity therefore challenges dominant Western models while opening new possibilities for art education and creative practice in global contexts.

Originality vs. Local Knowledge and Practice

Individual-centred and community-centred perspectives on creativity differ significantly in their emphasis on originality versus the highlighting of shared local practices (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Zimmerman, 2009). While Western/Global North approaches have traditionally focused on individual originality and the production of unique art objects, Global South approaches prioritize collective knowledge and cultural continuity (Baldacchino & Hickman, 2019; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Langfeld, 2018). These distinctions highlight the importance of more inclusive and diverse approaches to art education in an increasingly interconnected world (Freedman, 2007; UNESCO, 2021).

As Baldacchino and Hickman (2019) note, Western approaches to art education have emphasized both the act of making and the final product. This perspective aligns with the Western emphasis on originality and individual expression (Glăveanu, 2010b; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015). Formal technical training is often provided to selected individuals to foster the creation of impressive and prestigious art objects, further reinforcing the value placed on originality and individual achievement (Kempers & Jackson, 1994; Langfeld, 2018; Petricone, 2019). Institutions have played a significant role in shaping what is considered valuable in art, often prioritizing certain forms—such as painting and sculpture—over others (Langfeld, 2018). This hierarchical classification of art forms, enforced by the emphasis on individual success, has become a defining feature of Western education systems.

Many Global South perspectives on creativity place greater emphasis on local customs and cultural traditions (Andrews, 2019; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Misra et al., 2006). This way of thinking fits better with decolonial ideas in art education. Lauterbach (2009) suggests that schools should encourage fresh conversations that cross different boundaries, instead of

restricting student success to the current cultural industry. This view supports a more inclusive and varied approach to art education, appreciating both shared cultural practices and personal expression.

Global South-informed perspectives in art education often stress the importance of culture, ethics, and diverse cultural contexts (Hall, 2010; Schönau, 2017). Eisner (2002) points out that the arts play a key role in celebrating diversity, uniqueness, and unexpectedness. This view also urges art institutions, especially those that still adhere to traditional methods, to broaden their content and include ideas and styles influenced by Global South and Indigenous cultures (Hatton, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

The shift towards valuing shared local practices and diverse cultural perspectives in art education aligns with changing economic needs (Baker, 2009; Coogan, 2009). As Baker (2009) notes, we need to consider these changing needs when designing and operating art school environments. In a world transitioning from an economy based on physical labour to one emphasizing mental labour, art education that embraces diverse perspectives and shared cultural practices becomes increasingly fundamental (Coogan, 2009).

Commercialization and Privileged Access vs. Community-based Engagement

In the Western tradition, the artist's primary role was to showcase expert craftsmanship to please clients and patrons, who often dictated the core details of the work produced (Kempers & Jackson, 1994). This approach was further solidified through the establishment of prestigious academies in the mid-1500s, which spread across Europe for two centuries (Buckley & Conomos, 2009). These institutions perpetuated art's relationships with dominant political structures and even religious propaganda (Petricone, 2019).

As the Industrial Revolution took hold, Western art institutions in the Global North began to shift towards a more commercial orientation (Baker, 2009; Petricone, 2019). New, practical skills were integrated into curricula, focusing on techniques that could be applied in industrial environments and reproduced for larger markets (Haywood Rolling, 2019). This utilitarian approach was particularly embraced in Northern European academies (Petricone, 2019). By contrast, many Global South and culturally grounded perspectives on creativity and artistic education emphasize a more holistic integration into daily life (Andrews, 2019; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Hatton, 2019). This approach aligns with the uncertainty and open-ended nature of creative production (Shreeve et al., 2010, p. 125). Contemporary art education in this vein emphasizes interpersonal and interdisciplinary connections, highlighting the importance of interactions among individuals, cultural groups, and various forms of representation (Hatton, 2019).

Place-based and relational approaches acknowledge the transformative influence of globalization on cultural landscapes, referring to the ways in which cultures interact, merge, and adapt through increased global connectivity and exchange (Andrews, 2019; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015). This dynamic process has resulted in a shift toward multi-dimensional, multicultural, and community-based knowledge exchange, contrasting with the linear, sequential, specialized, and individualistic tendencies often associated with Western/Global North traditions (Andrews, 2019). Art courses that encourage teachers and students to develop theory related to their personal knowledge and incorporate examples from diverse and Indigenous art traditions more frequently help to provide a more inclusive creative dialogue (Hatton, 2019).

In recent years, there has been a trend towards multi, cross, and interdisciplinarity in art education globally (Freedman, 2007; Hatton, 2019; UNESCO, 2021). This shift has led to a

reconsideration of what constitutes studio practice or arts research, with multiple ways of looking and learning leading to breakthrough discoveries (Pujol, 2009). Some argue that contemporary art may no longer be a discipline within itself, but rather a place where disciplines intersect and interact (Ewing, 2009). This slow shift towards a more holistic and integrated approach to creativity and artistic education represents a convergence of Global North and Global South perspectives, potentially leading to more inclusive and diverse artistic practices (Damus, 2023; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; UNESCO, 2021).

Institutionalized Art Education vs. Nonformal and Experiential Art Learning

As discussed in the previous section on the historical foundations of studio art education, many contemporary approaches to art education continue to be shaped by institutional structures that emerged through European academies and later became embedded within universities and formal educational systems. These models emphasized structured curricula, discipline-specific training, and hierarchical teacher–student relationships, contributing to enduring assumptions about how artistic knowledge should be produced and transmitted within formal learning environments.

The Western canon's formation reflects systemic exclusionary practices rooted in colonial power dynamics. Langfeld (2018) emphasizes that the prioritization of Eurocentric art education perpetuated hierarchies by framing Western artistic norms as universal rather than socially constructed (Brzyski, 2007; Savoy, 2020). For example, the 1980s Getty Centre for Education in the Arts entrenched medium-specific specialization through discipline-based models, prioritizing technical mastery over interdisciplinary exploration (Haywood Rolling, 2019). Later critiques of postmodernism questioned these systems by promoting diverse methods, but mixed models still prevail due to the continued influence of Bauhaus ideas and traditional teacher–student power

relationships. Crucially, canonical narratives excluded entire categories of creative expression, including feminist art histories (Chicago, 2014; Jaffee, 2005), Global South and Indigenous artistic traditions (Çelik, 1996), and postcolonial and Indigenous epistemologies (Bowles, 2001).

It is also important to distinguish between formal education that incorporates community-engaged practice and non-formal learning environments that exist independently of institutional systems. Many universities, museums, and schools have developed meaningful forms of service learning, public pedagogy, and community partnership work through community-based art education, museum education, and socially engaged pedagogical models (Freedman, 2007; Helguera, 2011; Kester, 2004; Lawton et al., 2019; Mara & Thomson, 2021). However, these models often remain connected to formal curricular structures, institutional timelines, and assessment frameworks that shape participation and outcomes (Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008; Scott, 2015). In contrast, the learning environments examined in this study operate as autonomous cultural ecosystems in which artistic learning is embedded within everyday life, mentorship, community participation, and living heritage practices rather than institutional assessment structures (Andrews, 2019; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; UNESCO, 2021).

Many Global South and culturally grounded perspectives view creativity as closely tied to non-formal and experiential learning contexts (Andrews, 2019; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Mara & Thomson, 2021). In many oral cultures, commonly found in the Global South, creative practice is understood as a communal activity in which knowledge keepers work for the collective benefit of the community (Andrews, 2019). This approach emphasizes shared creative development and places greater importance on internalized growth and cultural continuity rather than formal institutional learning (Starko, 2010). Artistic disciplines are often integrated rather

than separated, functioning together within storytelling traditions that act as collective inquiry and living cultural record (Andrews, 2019). For instance, in many African sociocultural contexts, creativity manifests as communal storytelling that interweaves music, dance, and visual symbolism to preserve collective memory (Andrews, 2019). Mpofu et al. (2006) characterize this as 'everyday creativity,' where iterative processes strengthen community bonds rather than emphasizing individual artistic products.

Non-formal education is widely recognized within educational scholarship as a distinct pedagogical framework describing organized learning that occurs outside formal educational institutions while remaining intentional, structured, and socially embedded within community contexts (Mara & Thomson, 2021; Scott, 2015). Gaining prominence since the 1970s, non-formal education emphasizes the development of attitudes, behaviours, communication skills, and socialization rather than the cognitive outcomes typically prioritized in formal education—such as memorization, standardized knowledge acquisition, test performance, and mastery of predefined academic content (Mara, E. L., 2021; Mara & Thomson, 2021). Closely aligned with Global South and relational perspectives, non-formal education builds learning around students' interests, lived experiences, and local contexts (Mara, E. L., 2021; Mara, D., 2021; Muntean, 2022; Scott, 2015), while promoting flexibility, creativity, and collaboration (Mara & Thomson, 2021; Muntean, 2022; Scarlet-Ritter, 2021; Scott, 2015). It is grounded in the principle of equitable access to education, recognizing that formal systems often fail to meet the diverse needs of all learners (Mara, D., 2021; Mara & Thomson, 2021).

Although the term non-formal was initially framed in contrast to formal education, it has since evolved to describe a distinct pedagogical approach grounded in flexibility, participation, and context-specific learning rather than functioning simply as a negation of formal systems

(Mara & Thomson, 2021; Muntean, 2022). The term non-formal is therefore used not as a comparative or deficit label but to reference the specific conditions, methodologies, and educational philosophies that characterize this field—particularly its emphasis on lived experience, collaboration, and community-embedded learning (Ibrahim et al., 2023; Scott, 2015). Because this study examines learning environments that emerge through cultural practice, mentorship, and community participation rather than institutional curricula, non-formal education provides a particularly relevant conceptual framework and serves as the primary analytical lens for interpreting the pedagogical dynamics observed in the Bahamian contexts examined in this research.

Non-formal education typically takes place outside formal educational structures, providing learners with expanded opportunities for personal, social, and professional development (Fantozzi, 2021; Mara, D., 2021; Scott, 2015). These learning environments often encourage learners to define their own learning objectives, engaging in independent and self-directed exploration within their communities while creating connections across artistic and cultural practices (Hunyadi, 2021). Non-formal learning environments also emphasize collaborative relationships between educators and learners, with both participants working together as a community to experiment with tools, methods, and creative processes that support participation, personalization, and collective knowledge production (Scott, 2015).

Closely related to non-formal education is the field of community-based art education, which situates artistic learning within lived cultural environments and emphasizes collaborative creative processes, intergenerational knowledge exchange, and locally grounded artistic practice (Goldblatt, 2006; Lawton et al., 2019; Mara & Thomson, 2021). Within such contexts, artistic learning frequently occurs through participation in community activities and shared cultural

practices rather than through predetermined institutional curricula, with educators acting as facilitators who support the collective construction of meaning through creative activity (Zimmerman, 2009). Scholars examining socially engaged and participatory art have similarly identified a growing shift toward dialogical and relational forms of artistic production in which meaning emerges through collective participation rather than the creation of discrete art objects (Helguera, 2011; Kester, 2004; Lawton et al., 2019). While community-based art education and non-formal education share an emphasis on collaboration and cultural context, they differ in orientation: non-formal education describes learning systems that emerge outside institutional structures, often developed and sustained by communities themselves, while community-based art education is an approach within the field of art education that engages communities as collaborators and sites of learning (Goldblatt, 2006; Mara & Thomson, 2021; Zimmerman, 2009).

Contemporary educational reforms increasingly call for multicultural integration and pedagogical approaches that recognize Indigenous and community-based knowledge systems within creative education (R'boul, 2022; UNESCO, 2021). Recognizing these differences highlights the importance of examining alternative educational models that accommodate a wider range of cultural perspectives on learning and creative development.

The Significance of Global South Epistemologies for Art Education

Comparing theories of creativity and examining how they manifest in art education highlights the diverse understandings of creativity, as well as the cultural and contextual influences that lead to varied pedagogical approaches. To complement these contrasting perspectives, the new epistemological foundations for the theory of creativity elaborated by Glăveanu and Sierra (2015) offer a broader societal framing for understanding creativity.

Glăveanu and Sierra (2015) emphasize the importance of considering creativity through a Global South perspective, advocating for models that prioritize social, collaborative, intercultural, and environmentally rooted understandings. Their framework is particularly resonant in Caribbean contexts such as the Bahamas, where communities shaped by colonial histories, ecological precarity, and collective resilience have developed creative knowledge systems that resist dominant Western conceptions of creativity — conceptions that tend to emphasize linear, individual achievement and universal standards of innovation (Dados & Connell, 2012). Instead, Glăveanu and Sierra draw on culturally situated, relational, and embodied practices that reflect the lived realities of communities historically marginalized within global knowledge production. This orientation aligns with constructivist traditions in education, which view knowledge as co-constructed through social interaction and context, and with pragmatist perspectives that value lived experience, experimentation, and reflection as central to learning and creativity.

Glăveanu and Sierra's framework points toward a more expansive understanding of creativity, one that moves beyond singular, Western-centred conceptions toward plural, culturally situated alternatives. This resonates with Santos' broader project of pluriversal knowledge — where diverse epistemologies coexist rather than one dominating (Santos, 2014) — and his concept of the ecology of knowledges, which proposes that different knowledge systems, including those historically excluded or marginalized by colonial structures, can enter into productive dialogue without hierarchy (Santos, 2014). Both frameworks resonate deeply with the Bahamian context explored in this study, where non-formal art education practices have developed as both a response to the exclusions of formal colonial education and as an affirmation of locally grounded creative and cultural knowledge.

Since their 2015 publication, Glăveanu has continued to advance this line of inquiry through new collaborations, particularly with Luciana Dantas de Paula and Angela Uchoa Branco. Their 2024 article expands on the epistemological foundation laid by Glăveanu and Sierra, applying it to educational psychology and highlighting how dominant Western frameworks have often limited the recognition of diverse creative expressions. This newer work emphasizes trans-epistemological approaches and advocates for a pluralist, contextualized understanding of creativity that is deeply embedded in social, cultural, and ecological realities (Dantas de Paula et al., 2024). Other scholars have also built on this foundation—Mollema (2024) and Birhane and Guest (2021) have extended Global South epistemologies into the realm of artificial intelligence and computational sciences, drawing attention to how colonial patterns of knowledge exclusion persist in technological design and data ethics. These interdisciplinary extensions reinforce Glăveanu and Sierra's argument that creativity is not neutral or universal but shaped by socio-political and historical contexts.

Glăveanu and Sierra (2015) originally identified several key principles within Global South approaches to creativity: the recognition of creative expression in everyday community practices; the participatory and collaborative nature of knowledge production; the embeddedness of mind, body, and environment; and the imperative to balance innovation with ecological and social sustainability. These principles have since been expanded upon in transdisciplinary contexts and continue to inform a growing body of work that reimagines creativity as a socially and ecologically situated process (Dantas de Paula et al., 2024; Mollema, 2024; Birhane & Guest, 2021). Collectively, this evolving scholarship offers a robust epistemological foundation for reimagining art education beyond dominant formal structures—prioritizing pluralism, intercultural dialogue, and community-based pedagogical models (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015;

Santos, 2014; UNESCO, 2021). These theoretical perspectives are not treated as fixed categories against which the fieldwork is measured; rather, they provide conceptual lenses that help interpret how educators and cultural practitioners describe and enact creative learning within the contexts studied.

The following summary outlines the key principles drawn from Glăveanu and Sierra's (2015) framework, highlighting their relevance to creative and educational practices in the Bahamian context:

In contrast to linear views of creative achievement, creativity is understood as embodied in everyday practices that contribute to and sustain the livelihood of communities.

1. Rather than viewing creativity as an individual trait arising solely from a single mind, it is better understood as a process that connects mind, body, society, and the natural environment.
2. Creativity theory should focus on diversity and local knowledge, not on assuming a universal way of being creative.
3. Multiple perspectives should be embraced, challenging elitist models that privilege expert knowledge and uphold hierarchical validation systems.
4. Collaboration, solidarity, and mutual support are central to creativity—contrasting with dominant views that emphasize competition. Creative learning depends on dialogue and cooperation among teachers and peers.
5. Creativity is participatory and communal—every creative act is a relational process involving people, ideas, and culture.
6. Creative work involves imagining new possibilities and transforming reality.

Experiencing other worlds enables us to envision and build better futures.

7. Instead of linking creativity to consumption and control, we must align it with living well and building just, sustainable societies. Creativity should nurture fairness, environmental care, and interconnection.
8. Participatory approaches such as Participatory Action Research reconnect theory with practice, recognizing creativity's deep impact on education, economics, and society.

This philosophy centres creativity within local, relational, and culturally grounded knowledge systems, offering a lens for rethinking art education. Grounded in Global South epistemologies (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015), it promotes inclusive, collaborative, and context-responsive pedagogies that challenge dominant Western paradigms and align more closely with the complexities of our interconnected world. These values—relationality, community participation, intercultural dialogue, and sustainability—intersect to challenge dominant Western paradigms and offer a more inclusive, pluralistic, and locally grounded foundation for rethinking creative pedagogy in art education.

This philosophy is particularly relevant to the Bahamian context explored in this study, where non-formal art education practices and community-based learning challenge colonial legacies and foster creative agency rooted in local values. Building on Glăveanu and Sierra's (2015) call to recognize the relational, embodied, and ecological dimensions of creativity, this study attends to how such dimensions are expressed within Bahamian art and design education. The research traces how creativity emerges through material practices, collaborative processes, and ongoing cycles of making and exchange within community contexts. In doing so, it highlights how creative work is sustained through responsiveness to place, interdependence, and continuity across generations, reflecting a broader Global South orientation to knowledge and practice.

The Educator as Bridge: Reframing Art Education through Nonformal and Decolonial Approaches

The Western tradition of art education historically followed a structured, hierarchical model. As discussed, the first academies emphasized a master-apprentice relationship, focusing on technical training in specialized techniques in specific mediums (Kempers & Jackson, 1994; Shahjahan et al., 2021). This approach produced a perception of art as a valuable societal endeavour, often romanticized today (McCormick, 2009). However, it also led to a sanitized portrayal of reality shaped by the directives of teachers and patrons, omitting representations of the general population's struggles (Kempers & Jackson, 1994).

By the late 20th century, Western art education began to evolve. Teachers started encouraging students to unlearn preconceptions and seek personal, innovative approaches (Esche, 2009). The narrative era (1980s–present) emerged, with art practices operating as social responses (Haywood Rolling, 2019). Art instruction now fosters students to embrace their choices through assessing and identifying their own best ideas (Haywood Rolling, 2019). Modern Western art education aims to provide students with challenges and opportunities to build skills in self-expression, imagination, and collaborative problem-solving (Hall, 2010). Material and technical explorations are used as means for problem-solving, preparing students for diverse contemporary professional practices (Goldstein, 1998; Langfeld, 2018). Art educators strive to foster critical consciousness and curiosity, developing tailored survival skills for an evolving art ecosystem (Buckley & Conomos, 2009).

Decolonial approaches in art education seek to eliminate hierarchies in studio education between master and apprentice, student and teacher (Hatton, 2019). This perspective challenges the professionalization process that followed colonizing logics, including forced hierarchies and

exclusive access to education (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010; Viruru & Cannella, 2006). Art educators are encouraged to respond to varied and evolving notions of how and why we make art. The focus is on foregrounding hybridized cultural and creative experiences, embracing Global South and intercultural art forms, and rethinking collective, visual, and material cultures as everyday art theory and practice (Hatton, 2019). Decolonial perspectives advocate for moving the arts curriculum away from restrictive structures rooted in Western traditions. This approach encourages the active imagining of possible futures and modeling of reciprocal social relations (Ewing, 2009). In this approach, some art educators frame themselves as co-learners with their students, working together to find new ways to define their field, providing opportunities for students to take risks, fail, revisit, and take ownership of their creative decisions (Adams et al., 2016).

Contemporary art education increasingly draws on multiple pedagogical traditions, including historically dominant Western frameworks alongside decolonial and Global South perspectives that foreground relational, culturally grounded approaches to learning (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Hatton, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008). Engaging these diverse perspectives expands the role of art educators in cultivating learning environments that embrace cultural plurality, encourage experimentation and critical reflection, and prepare students to navigate the complex and evolving landscape of contemporary art (Freedman, 2007; Hatton, 2019; UNESCO, 2021). Such integration supports more inclusive and dynamic art education experiences that foster personal and visual expression, sensory awareness, and the capacity to think and act creatively (Thomas, 2019).

While there are promising examples in which art education institutions have begun incorporating decolonial and Global South perspectives, these efforts are often additive rather

than transformative, rarely involving a deeper reconsideration of the epistemological and institutional foundations that have historically shaped dominant models of art education (Hatton, 2019; Shahjahan et al., 2021). At the same time, these efforts signal a slow but significant shift. Educators and institutions are increasingly recognizing the limitations of a singular, Western-dominant framework and are beginning to make space for multiple knowledge systems, including those rooted in the Global South (Damus, 2023; Santos, 2014; UNESCO, 2021). This gradual integration is cause for cautious optimism. While the changes are not yet widespread or deeply structural, they mark an important step toward a more pluralistic, inclusive vision for education. Much more work remains, but the movement toward epistemological pluralism is underway. Through everyday pedagogical choices, educators can act as catalysts for deeper change. By centering epistemological plurality, collaborative learning, and culturally situated knowledge, teachers can begin to shift classroom culture, unsettle dominant narratives, and lay the groundwork for more equitable and decolonial educational practices from within (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010; Hatton, 2019).

Some formal learning programs have already begun to integrate approaches from non-formal educational environments. Current examples of hybrid educational models illustrate how non-formal and decolonial pedagogies are beginning to reshape art education. At Bowling Green State University, for instance, the hybrid M.A. program blends coursework with community-partnered studio projects, requiring educators to adapt Western assessment rubrics to honour integrative oral feedback—reflecting traditions prevalent in African diasporic cultures (Bowling Green State University, 2025). Similarly, Tufts University's MAT program partners with Boston-area schools to create mural projects co-designed by students, local elders, and immigrant artists, operationalizing Sobe's (2022) concept of shared knowledge resources through intercommunity

dialogue (Tufts University, 2004). Programs such as the School of the Damned, a nomadic UK-based initiative that operates through skill-sharing networks, collectively develop curricula informed by Global South epistemologies, dissolving the teacher–student power dynamic and resisting institutional hierarchies (ArtWeb Blog, 2020). At Converse University, art teachers develop lesson plans that integrate Cherokee basket-weaving techniques with digital media tools (Converse University, 2024), fostering what Glăveanu et al. (2019) term transcultural creativity—the ability to synthesize disparate cultural codes into innovative artistic solutions. Likewise, Columbia University's hybrid M.A. in Studio Practice for Art Educators combines Western technical training with decolonial teaching strategies, requiring candidates to design community-engaged art projects that center Indigenous storytelling traditions (Teachers College & Columbia University, 2024).

Together, these models reflect a shift toward multi-dimensional knowledge exchange, countering what Damus (2023) critiques as the cognitive losses produced by monocultural education systems. They centre collaborative knowledge production, environmental interconnectedness, and culturally situated learning. Yet, as UNESCO (2021) notes, significant challenges remain in scaling these approaches within the constraints of formal institutions—particularly the tension between standardized competencies and the flexibility required for culturally responsive pedagogies.

Chapter Conclusion

Looking at art education from the viewpoint of Global South knowledge systems allows us to see ideas that question traditional Western ways of thinking. While the terms Global North and Global South are not fixed or oppositional, they serve as useful lenses for examining how different histories and contexts shape creative practice and pedagogy. This chapter has

highlighted the contrasts across these perspectives, emphasizing the need for a more inclusive and diverse understanding of artistic expression in art education.

Key differences emerged across several dimensions. While Western/Global North perspectives often focus on individual creativity and originality, Global South approaches tend to emphasize collaborative efforts and the highlighting of local knowledge and practices. The forum for dissemination also differs, with Global North models leaning towards commercialization and privileged access, while Global South perspectives embrace more holistic and interdisciplinary perspectives rooted in community engagement. The learning environment itself varies, with Western traditions favouring institutionalized education, whereas Global South approaches often prioritize informal, non-formal, and experiential learning contexts.

The role of the educator has also diverged, shifting from the traditional master–apprentice model in Western art education to a more collaborative, co-learning approach advocated by decolonial and community-based perspectives. This shift reflects a broader movement to embrace diverse epistemologies and challenge hierarchical structures in education. Glăveanu and Sierra's (2015) framework for understanding creativity offers a helpful way to evaluate and rethink art education—questioning straightforward ideas about creative success, seeing creativity in daily activities, and highlighting how mind, body, and surroundings are linked. It encourages attention to diversity, different viewpoints, and teamwork, while recognizing that creative actions involve participation and community.

By examining the unique cultural landscape and historical context of the Bahamas and how it has resulted in distinctive ways to teach art, this research highlights the challenges and opportunities in reimagining art education to serve diverse student populations and preserve local knowledge and practices. Having outlined the theoretical and scholarly perspectives shaping

contemporary debates on creativity and art education, the following chapter turns to the historical and cultural context of the Bahamas in order to situate the learning environments examined in this research.

Chapter 3: Art and Art Education in the Bahamas

The Bahamas: A brief history

As an African-diasporic Caribbean country, the Bahamas is steeped in cultural adversity (Dunn, 2018). Described as a 'boundless space' encompassing a cauldron of cultures, the Caribbean is a crossroads of ethnicities, religions, nationalities characterized as a flow of 'bodies, identities, and people' historically engaged in trade and commerce (Benetton, 2014, p.11). The first inhabitants of the island, the Lucayans, were decimated by European expeditions to the region in the 1400s via (Glinton-Meicholas, 1992). In October 1492 Christopher Columbus made landfall on one of the Bahamian islands, setting off a trajectory of religious and cultural relations in the region that continues to this day (Turner, 2015). It was not until 1648, however, that the first permanent European settlement was established in the Bahamas (Jean-Pierre, 2021; Minnis & Wright, 2017). Following the American Revolution of 1776, the exodus of British loyalists brought an economic boom based on the production of sugar, tobacco, and cotton to the nearby Bahamian that inevitably led to the transatlantic African slave trade for the supply of labour (Jean-Pierre, 2021; Turner, 2015). Although formally abolished in 1807, the actual ownership of human being 'purchased' before 1807 remained permissible until 1834, resulting in most enslaved individuals not being believed to be freed until 1846 (Minnis & Wright, 2017). Following the official emancipation of enslaved peoples, a three-tier social system shaped by class and race emerged, the vestiges of which continued up to 1973 when the Bahamas formally gained independence from Britain in 1973, and continue to be reflected in the country's mixed ancestry, with much of the population descended from enslaved African forebears (Brissett, 2021; Strachan, 2007).

In view of its history of slavery and class divisions the legacy of slavery has persisted. Despite the majority of Bahama's populace being of African descent, a pervasive sense of cultural inferiority has continued to be associated with the legacy and artifacts of African heritage (Saunders, 2004). Nevertheless, as Turner (2015) has argued, for Bahamians, the colonial past, both cultural and religious, as well as the neo-colonial present, shaped almost all aspects of Bahamian life. A force that has asserted this continuity neo-colonialism and self-negation has been the system of national education that has long had a strong influence on generations of Bahamians. As Turner (2015) has observed, formal education in the Bahamas has long imbued a popular sense of self-negation – 'the tendency for the African Caribbean people to belittle their African heritage and valorise their European one, while being a product of both' (p.22). This sense of national self-identity has contributed to Bahama's integration in the global economy, as an exporter of raw materials and dependency on foreign-controlled tourism and offshore financial services—industries that are structured in ways that reproduce unequal global relationships and limit local autonomy.

Despite its British past and its proximity to the United States, Bahamians have maintained their own historically grounded pluralistic identity. The High Commission of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas has described this identity as "a distinct culture which has evolved over generations, from a mixture of mostly African, combined with some British and American influences, which developed into a unique and colourful style of Bahamian self-expression" (Jean-Pierre, 2021).

Colonial and Post-Colonial Schooling in the Bahamas

Education in the Bahamas has been an example of postcolonial, cross-national transfers of cultural influences (Urwick, 2002). Although no comprehensive text on the history of

education in the Bahamas exists (Urwick, 2002), the earliest educational work in the Bahamas seems to have been undertaken in the 1720s by laymen associated with the two sectarian societies – one for the *Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* and the other, for the *Propagation of Christian Knowledge*. A major aim of these church groups appears to have been the conversion of slaves, while also providing education for fee paying whites and free blacks throughout the late 1700s (Trainor, 2008). These led ultimately to the establishment of the main Bahamian educational system led by the Church of England (Trainor, 2008). As Craton and Saunders (2000) asserted, the church schools fostered a perspective that children of African-descendant parents were ‘growing up in ignorance’, and that therefore they were first and foremost ‘dedicated to the notion, congenial to the ruling regime, that an education system should be firmly based on sound Christian principles’ (p. 264). For practical purposes, Christian instruction focused from an early age at teaching English and reading skills to young students (Craton & Saunders, 2000). Although British funding did not lead to the establishment of an effective indigenous education system, its withdrawal in 1846 shifted responsibility for future education policy decisions into local hands (Craton & Saunders, 2000). This marked a pivotal moment: for the first time, responsibility for education policy decisions rested in local hands (Craton & Saunders, 2000).

Rather than catalyzing structural reform and enabling the development of educational approaches rooted in local cultural knowledge and needs, authority for education shifted mainly into the hands of churches, effectively continuing colonial priorities under the guise of local governance. Although the first *bona fide* government secondary school was founded in 1925, and a public Board of Education was established in 1947, public schooling remained chronically underfunded, and church-run schools continued to dominate the landscape of Bahamian

education (Craton & Saunders, 2000; Turner, 2015). Long-standing colonial narratives were maintained in curricular content which effectively hindered opportunities for systemic transformation (Nash Ferguson, 2022). A letter published in the August 30th, 1966, issue of the Nassau Guardian newspaper summarized growing frustration with local secular and local education: "... Our children are compelled to study about the European *brightmen* (the conquerors so to speak) and nothing about themselves. After 300 years our schools do not have a proper history of the Bahamas" (Saunders, 2011). Schools attended by Black students in particular were underfunded, lacking supplies and trained teachers. Reflecting the general attitude of colonial rulers, the establishment of a widespread, democratic, and free system of education and the enrolment of non-whites in secondary schools was resisted as a way to ensure the perpetuation of the racially skewed socio-economic status quo still mitigated against the secondary education of non-whites (Nash Ferguson, 2022; Saunders, 2004).

In addition to the legacy of British colonial influence on the norms and content of public education, over the past half-century education in the Bahamas has also been increasingly influenced by educational systems in the US and Canada (Urwick, 2002). While much of this has been due to the effects of development aid, it has also served the cultural and economic interests of these donor countries. The general effect has been to perpetuate dependency and hinder the development of locally grounded education and a strong sense of national identity. This has been evident in the continued use of American textbooks and resources in Bahamian public schools despite ongoing concerns expressed by teachers and curriculum specialists about their dubious relevance for the Bahamian context.

Methods of student assessment, notably through standardized examinations that have a significant impact on possibilities for Bahamian students to advance from secondary school to

higher education are essentially replicas of British colonial practices (Urwick, 2002). Parallel to the GCE and the CSE¹ in the United Kingdom, The BJC and BGCSE examinations² introduced in the Bahamas in 1993 have a significant influence on the syllabi of junior high and high school curricula (Bethel, 2004; Urwick, 2002). Along with this examination structure, which acts as a criterion for entry into post-secondary education, Bahamian institutions have also adopted North American terminology of grade points, grade levels, and associated degrees (Urwick, 2002).

Unfortunately, however, the privileging of the models of North American and British schooling has been detrimental to indigenous and local culture (Turner, 2015). African-based beliefs and customs are now often regarded as outlandish or superstitious in contrast to the materialist norms and global influences of the modern world (Saunders, 2011). These in turn perpetuate norms of racial stratification and societal stratification that are rooted in the norms of imperialism and erstwhile class structures. (Urwick, 2002). Invariably such normative influences have contributed to the perpetuation of embedded inequalities that that are associated with skewed rates of underperformance, absenteeism, and lack of proper preparation for the local labour force (Brissett, 2021). As Jules (2008) has observed, local education requires a fundamental rethinking of educational provisions, allowing for the development of a unique form of academic excellence. This includes efforts to counter the self-negation that has been commonplace among many African Caribbeans (Turner, 2015). This underscores the need for genuine Bahamian content in school curricula (Glinton-Meicholas, 1992). As McGregory (2021) has observed, a repertoire of cultural knowledge becomes a practical as well as symbolic survival mechanism that is especially important to consider in a landscape of transnational cultural flows.

¹ General Certificate of Education (GCE) and the Certificate of Secondary Education(CSE) in the UK.

² The BJC (Bahamas Junior Certificate) and BGCSE (Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education) are the main school leaving examinations are administered by the Bahamian Ministry of Education.

As questions about the relevance of Eurocentric education in the Bahamas and other countries of the South continue, growing attention has focused on the broader issue of youth development as being central to community wellbeing and cultural continuity. For this to occur requires educational programs designed not just *for* young people, but equally important *with* them in order to cultivate a strong sense of their attachment to their own communities. From this perspective education should aim to equip young people with the skills needed to contribute meaningfully to their local environments as well as to the larger national context. As Rahming (2004) argues, education should foster both personal development and collective well-being in ways that reflect and reinforce local cultural values.

Colonial influences are still evident in 21st-century education in the islands (Brissett, 2021; Strachan, 2007). Across the English-speaking Caribbean, British academic traditions replaced the indigenous social systems, failing to consider local circumstances and ways of transferring knowledge (Brissett, 2021; Coates, 2012).

Post-Secondary Education in The Bahamas

The availability of post-secondary education in the Bahamas is a relatively recent development (Thompson & Thompson, 2008). Prior to the late 1960s, teaching, nursing, and technical skills training were the main degree offerings in higher education (Jean-Pierre, 2021; Thompson & Thompson, 2008). In 1974, however, the College of the Bahamas (CoB) – later to become the University of The Bahamas (UB) – was established and has become the main institution of higher learning in the country (Jean-Pierre, 2021). It was initially designed to support a broad range of areas of study, starting with hotel training, technical education, business, and education studies, and in its first two decades it offered associate degrees, diplomas and certificates (Thompson & Thompson, 2008). During that time Bahamians seeking higher

degrees had to study in foreign institutions (Urwick, 2002). Today, however, with its main campus located in Nassau, New Providence, UB serves as a hub for academic and cultural development throughout the West Indies. As of 2025, UB has an enrollment of approximately 8,722 students and employs 294 academic staff members, making it one of the largest employers in the country (University of The Bahamas, 2025). The institution offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs across eight academic units, of which the Faculty of Liberal and Fine Arts houses the visual arts program (University of The Bahamas, 2025).

As with many institutions of higher education elsewhere in the world, the University of the Bahamas has adopted program structures and areas of study established by U.S. institutions, along with a North American style credit system (Brissett, 2018; Jules, 2008). Although this was meant to adhere to international equivalence that would enable students to transition to and from systems of higher education in different countries, a subsequent effect has been that because of the bureaucracy and systems of academic credentialling, some students ‘lose their way in the academic supermarket’ (Denny, 2022; Urwick, 2002, p. 167)

Art and Art Education in The Bahamas

The first peoples of the Bahamas did not survive long enough to be influenced by or respond to European artistic styles. It is recorded that a significant feature of the visual aesthetic of the Lucayan people was a knowledge of, and reverence for, nature which led to a distinction between the creation of art and the crafts used in daily life (Turner, 2015). The African populations that arrived as slaves would have had only limited, if any, access to creative materials or the ability to learn new skills in artmaking (Turner, 2015). Consequently, their African wood carving techniques learned in their lands of origin were passed on intergenerationally in the Bahamas (Glinton-Meicholas, 1992). Yet despite these early wood

carving practices, very few artefacts created by Africans before the late 19th century have been preserved (Glinton-Meicholas, 1992), limiting their potential to serve as learning tools today.

From the declaration of Bahamas independence in 1973, visual arts experienced a renaissance in the country, in large part due to the emergence of a spirit of national pride and identity (Glinton-Meicholas, 1992; Saunders, 2011). Gradually in this period the arts in general began to gain legitimacy as a professional pursuit, and artists increasingly engaged with themes that reflected the country's evolving cultural and political identity. Bahamian artists undertook a blending of techniques rooted in Lucayan and African traditions with those acquired through academic training or exposure to European art historical models (Benetton, 2014; Minnis & Wright, 2017). Increasingly artists began to explore the movement of people, objects, images, and ideas, thus leading to a gradual fusion of regional and international influences. In both style and subject matter, artists have depicted identities, environments, and social structures that emerged from the complex histories of the Bahamas and other regions of the West Indies (Archer-Straw, 1997; Benetton, 2014). Their work has reflected the legacy of slavery, national independence, and the contradictions embedded in postcolonial freedom and creativity. Their work frequently addresses the ongoing effects of colonialism. As curator Amanda Coulson observed, since the country's independence, numerous Bahamian artists have produced work that confronts “an insidious violence and the legacy of slavery, the birth of a nation, freedom, and the conditions of creation”, all of which underscores their engagement with the sociohistorical realities of the Bahamian experience (cited by (Minnis & Wright, 2017). As a result of these critical reflections and insights, appreciation of art education has expanded (Glinton-Meicholas, 1992). In 1970, the Ministry of Education and Culture was established, marking an important shift in national educational policy during the years surrounding independence. Through

increased attention to cultural identity and national heritage, visual arts curricula began to incorporate previously neglected aspects of Bahamian history and cultural expression (Glinton-Meicholas, 1992; Ministry of Education, Technical and Vocational Training, n.d.).

The University of the Bahamas offers the only post-secondary art program on the island of New Providence, making it the sole institution for formal professional education and accreditation in the visual arts. Since 1985, the university has provided an associate degree in art; however, no higher-level degree in visual art is currently available within the country (University of the Bahamas, 2021–2022; Saunders, 2011). This lack of advanced training opportunities presents a significant barrier to the development of the local creative sector and highlights the ongoing need for expanded educational infrastructure in the arts.

The dominance of a singular, formalized education system can continue to marginalize local ways of knowing and limits the development of pedagogies grounded in culturally relevant or decolonial approaches (Adjei, 2007; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015). Artist educators who are disenfranchised have worked to create new forums of art education, operating outside of formal institutions. Strachan (2007), when reflecting on his involvement within the local creative scene, highlights the persistent structural barriers faced by artists—including censorship, class dynamics, systematic neglect, and public indifference. Yet rather than being defeated by these challenges, he describes the experience as “a lesson in pragmatism,” noting that “we have persisted and adapted in interesting ways” (p. 81), emphasizing the community’s ongoing efforts to transform and resist these conditions through creative resilience.

While formal art education has been integrated into primary and secondary curricula, challenges persist in aligning teaching methods and content with local cultural values. Non-

formal education initiatives and community-based programs, play a vital role in preserving Bahamian identity and fostering creativity.

Non-formal education in the Bahamas functions as a vital complement to traditional schooling, particularly in preserving cultural heritage and fostering creative capacity. Unlike formal education, which is institutionally structured and assessed, non-formal education is community-based, often informal in delivery, and deeply embedded in local cultural practices. Junkanoo—a centuries-old Bahamian festival rooted in West African traditions—illustrates this pedagogical model in practice (McGregory, 2021). The festival’s preparation process, centred around community “shacks,” provides rich, experiential learning environments where skills such as costume design, drumming, choreography, and project management are passed down through intergenerational mentorship and hands-on participation (Nash Ferguson, 2022). These creative hubs function as dynamic, collaborative spaces that foster problem-solving and self-expression, offering an alternative yet equally powerful educational model outside formal institutional frameworks.

Together, the discussed historical, educational, and creative developments illustrate the tension between imposed colonial educational legacies and the emergence of context-responsive, culturally grounded alternatives. While formal art education in the Bahamas has made strides—particularly at the primary and secondary levels—its reach remains limited, and its frameworks are often misaligned with local epistemologies and needs. Historical accounts from elsewhere in the Caribbean suggest that this misalignment is part of a broader regional pattern in which artistic practice was often undervalued within formal education and public life, frequently regarded as peripheral rather than central to intellectual and social development (Pearce, 2022). In contrast, non-formal and community-originated practices such as Junkanoo demonstrate how

deeply rooted, experiential learning continues to thrive outside institutional boundaries. Artists and educators operating in these spaces are not only preserving cultural heritage, but also actively reimagining what education can look like in a postcolonial Caribbean context. Their efforts challenge dominant models, assert the value of local knowledge, and affirm the power of creativity as a tool for resistance, identity formation, and pedagogical transformation.

As in many postcolonial cultural contexts, Bahamian creative traditions also exist within ongoing negotiations related to tourism economies, cultural visibility, institutional recognition, and shifting community expectations. These dynamics remain important for understanding how cultural practices evolve and how artistic work circulates socially and economically. However, a full examination of these debates would extend beyond the scope of the present study, which focuses specifically on the pedagogical processes through which creative learning unfolds within non-formal educational environments. Rather than undertaking a sustained analysis of these broader tensions, the research acknowledges them as part of the wider cultural landscape in which the learning environments examined in this dissertation operate.

Research Objectives

This research aims to examine the unique landscape of art education in the Bahamas as a pathway to understanding approaches to art education that can support diverse learners. The research objectives are threefold.

First, it seeks to examine the characteristics of experiential non-formal art education, as exemplified by two community-based art education centers, and their role in fostering creativity and cultural valorization within the context of post-colonial Bahamian society. This study explores these dynamics through an in-depth case-study of two community-based initiatives—Educulture and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.)—which exemplify how

experiential non-formal art education can preserve cultural heritage, foster creativity, and support alternative learning frameworks outside traditional institutions. Neither of these environments developed as a supplement to institutional education. Rather, they emerged outside it, in response to cultural and educational exclusions, and became sustained sites of creative learning, mentorship, and collective knowledge-making (Mara & Thomson, 2021; Scott, 2015; UNESCO, 2021).

Second, drawing upon the analysis of these two centres, the study aims to highlight the differences between non-formal art education in these unique cultural contexts and the pedagogical models employed by westernized centers of formal art education. By contrasting these models, the research examines how non-formal education emphasizes relationality, community-based knowledge circulation, and cultural continuity—elements often absent or undervalued in standardized, outcome-driven Western frameworks. This comparison not only surfaces structural and philosophical differences but also raises critical questions about what kinds of knowledge are legitimized, how creativity is nurtured, and whose values underpin educational design.

Third, this research endeavours to reveal the efficacy of Global South epistemologies as conceptual foundations for qualitative research in Global South contexts, with the potential to be applied as conceptual foundations for developing pedagogical approaches that can be embraced in art education globally.

By focusing on these objectives, this study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on decolonizing education and developing more inclusive pedagogical approaches, potentially uncovering insights applicable to diverse cultural contexts worldwide.

Conceptual Framework

This research is grounded in the conceptual framework of Global South epistemologies which emphasize the importance of decolonizing knowledge systems and valuing diverse cultural perspectives. It situates these ideas within broader contemporary global conditions shaped by globalization and explores how such dynamics influence practices in art education. Specifically, the study investigates the intersection between dominant systems of art education and local knowledge systems, using the Bahamas as a case study to examine how colonial legacies have shaped educational paradigms.

Through a qualitative case study of art education in the Bahamas, this research centers the role of creative pedagogies in expressing and advancing the broader goals of decolonization. It looks at how art education practices—especially those rooted in non-formal and community-based settings—can highlight teaching approaches that are more relational, responsive, and reflective of local lived experience. Ultimately, this framework contributes to understanding how art education can serve as a transformative tool for cultural celebration and global inclusivity, while also fostering pedagogical practices that honor informal learning and pluralistic ways of knowing.

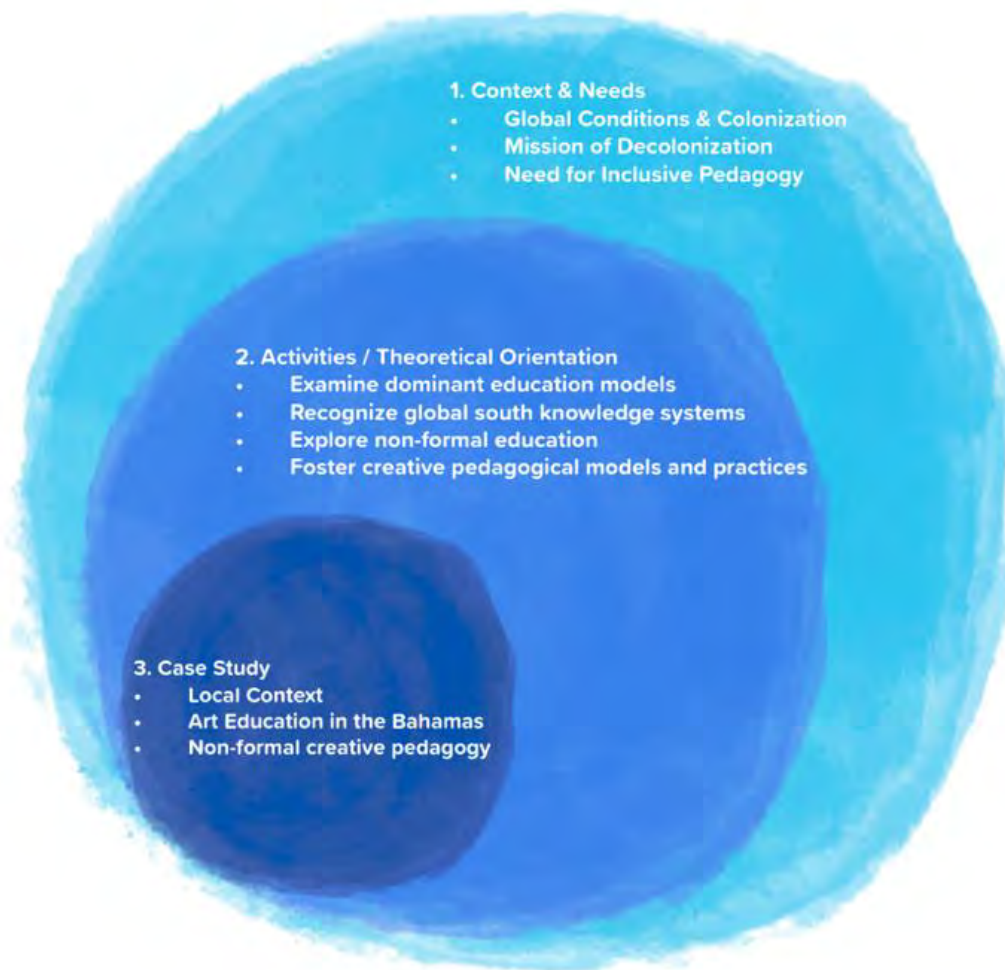
Building on this foundation, the research design was guided by a conceptual framework that offered both a lens for analysis and a structure for implementation. This framework weaves together the historical context of colonization, the pedagogical needs of diverse learners, and the promise of Global South epistemologies to imagine more inclusive and community-rooted models of art education. It identifies not only the global and local pressures shaping education in the Bahamas but also points to key theoretical orientations—such as non-formal learning, creativity as resistance, and the critique of dominant systems—that ground this inquiry. These

concepts ultimately informed the selection of activities, case studies, and interpretive approaches used in this research.

The conceptual framework for this study is organized around three interconnected areas: context and needs, activities and theoretical orientation, and the specific case study focus. Together, these elements illustrate how the research moves from broader global conditions toward the localized pedagogical practices examined in Nassau, Bahamas.

The first area, context and needs, situates the research within the broader conditions of globalization and the enduring legacies of colonialism that continue to shape education systems worldwide. Many formal educational structures, particularly in art education, remain rooted in Western norms that privilege Eurocentric knowledge systems and marginalize local, Indigenous, and community-based ways of knowing (Battiste, 2013; Donald, 2012). This creates an urgent need for more inclusive pedagogical approaches that better support diverse learners, particularly those whose cultural values, lived experiences, and creative practices exist outside dominant institutional frameworks. Decolonization in this context involves not only critiquing inherited systems, but also reimagining educational models that are more relational, plural, and culturally responsive.

The second area focuses on activities and theoretical orientation. This research begins by critically examining dominant formal education models and the colonial assumptions embedded within them, particularly those that prioritize individualism, standardization, and hierarchical teaching structures. In response, the study draws on Global South epistemologies, which emphasize epistemological plurality, relational knowledge, and creativity as socially and culturally embedded. Non-formal education becomes a particularly important lens within this framework, as it offers examples of learning rooted in community participation, lived



Key Outcomes – Pedagogical values that view creativity from a Global South perspective

Figure 3- Conceptual Framework

experience, and creative practice. Through this perspective, the study explores how alternative pedagogical models can foster more holistic and responsive forms of art education.

The third area narrows to the case study itself: the Bahamas, and specifically Nassau as a site of non-formal creative pedagogy. The Bahamian context provides a rich example of how colonial histories continue to shape formal education while community-based creative practices sustain cultural knowledge and resistance. Particular attention is given to art education in the

Bahamas and to non-formal environments such as Junkanoo traditions, mentorship structures, and creative spaces like the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.). These sites demonstrate how creativity functions as a form of cultural preservation, collective learning, and pedagogical innovation outside formal institutional systems. By first focusing on the unique landscape of art education in the Bahamas, the study aims to reveal insights applicable to diverse cultural contexts worldwide, potentially informing more inclusive and culturally responsive art education practices globally. At the heart of these findings are key pedagogical values grounded in Global South epistemologies—values that emphasize relationality, community engagement, oral knowledge practices, and the transformative potential of creativity rooted in lived experience. These outcomes challenge conventional hierarchies in art education and instead promote learning environments where collaboration, experimentation, and cultural affirmation are central. As such, this research aims to contribute not only to local educational dialogue but also to the broader reimagining of how art education can be structured to support the flourishing of diverse creative identities in a rapidly changing world.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has laid the groundwork for understanding the historical, cultural, and theoretical forces that inform the direction and purpose of this study. It has argued for the urgent need to rethink art education considering both colonial legacies and the creative, community-rooted knowledge systems that persist in the Global South. Through the Bahamian context—particularly the traditions of Junkanoo and the pedagogical work of non-formal educational centres—this chapter has illustrated how alternative epistemologies challenge dominant models and open space for more grounded, relational, and culturally sustaining forms of creative

learning. Having explored the philosophical underpinnings and educational values that guide this inquiry, the next chapter turns to the methodological strategies used to explore these ideas in action. It will outline the research design, data collection methods, and analytical approaches that operationalize the conceptual framework introduced here, demonstrating how these choices are aligned with decolonial, participatory, and arts-based inquiry practices. This methodological discussion will also address the ethical considerations and positionality of the researcher, ensuring that the inquiry remains consistent with the values and commitments articulated in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

Epistemological Foundations

Jumping off from the current dominant history of art education, this dissertation draws upon the intersections of pragmatism and constructivism. Pragmatism has had significant influence on art education (Goldblatt, 2006; Van Moer et al., 2008) and constructivism has shaped both non-formal learning environments (Mara, E. L., 2021). These epistemologies have provided the comprehensive lens to analyse the dynamic process of creative pedagogy and its practical implications in art education. Additionally, these two ways of understanding underscore how knowledge is personal and shaped by our experiences, how we interpret things, and how we interact with the world, while also stressing the importance of context, experience, and the ability to change and improve our knowledge (Dewey & Hickman, 1998; Piaget, 1968). The philosophical traditions of pragmatism and constructivism support the study's emphasis on context, relational learning, and lived experience.

Building on these traditions, this study also integrates insights from embodied and ecological scholarship, which expand Dewey's legacy beyond Western pragmatism toward more relational, sensory, and environmental understandings of learning. These approaches recognize that meaning is made not only through reflection and dialogue but also through the body, movement, and interactions with the surrounding environment (Capra & Luisi, 2014; Ingold, 2023; Lloyd, 2014).

Pragmatism, particularly as developed by John Dewey, centers on the idea that knowledge emerges through active engagement with the world and must be judged by its usefulness in addressing real-world challenges (Dewey, 1934; Dewey & Hickman, 1998). Dewey's work on aesthetics and education directly connects creative practice with experiential

learning, making it especially relevant in art education contexts where knowing is enacted through making. In the Bahamian non-formal spaces studied—Junkanoo and I.C.E.—learning is not an abstracted or linear process but one that evolves through cultural expression, experimentation, and community collaboration. This aligns closely with Dewey’s assertion that meaningful education arises through experience, inquiry, and reflection (Goldblatt, 2006; Van Moer et al., 2008).

From a methodological standpoint, pragmatism supports the blending of diverse qualitative methods—such as interviews, artefact analysis, creative documentation, and participant observation. Rather than privileging a single methodological technique, pragmatism allows the research design to evolve in response to the realities of the field site and the forms of knowledge that emerge through engagement with participants.

Constructivism, similarly, foregrounds the active, social construction of knowledge. According to theorists such as Piaget (1968), learning occurs through interaction with one’s environment, shaped by prior knowledge, culture, and social relationships. These pedagogies challenge hierarchical models of instruction, instead emphasizing co-construction of meaning between teachers, learners, and the broader community (Addison, 2010; Blaikie, 2019). The role of the educator in these contexts mirror what Addison (2010) calls the facilitation of *embodied practices*, where knowledge becomes tangible through movement making and participation. Constructivism also supports this study’s ethical and epistemological principles. The use of conversational interviews, collaborative reflection, and arts-based creative responses follows from the belief that research participants are not subjects from whom data is extracted, but co-creators of knowledge. The emphasis on positionality, reflexivity, and context aligns with

constructivist ethics as well as with current scholarship advocating for more relational and culturally sensitive research in formerly colonized contexts (Banks, 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2023).

Together, pragmatism and constructivism provide a coherent foundation for a study that is grounded in situated knowledge, co-creation, and real-world relevance. They affirm that knowledge is neither fixed nor universal, but always evolving through dialogue, practice, and the meanings people make together. Both paradigms shape how knowledge, learning, and research are approached within this inquiry into non-formal, community-based art education in the Bahamas. In applying pragmatism and constructivism, this dissertation does not seek to extract static truths about creativity or education but instead explores how creative learning emerges within social, cultural, and ecological contexts—and how such learning can be understood, valued, and potentially embraced in broader educational discourses.

Case Study Approach

Consistent with the pragmatic and constructivist orientation outlined above, this research adopts a qualitative case study approach to examine how creative learning unfolds within specific community-rooted contexts. Case study methodology is particularly appropriate when the aim is to explore complex social and educational processes within real-life settings, where the boundaries between the phenomenon under investigation and its context are closely intertwined (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). Rather than isolating variables or seeking universal explanations, a case study allows for close attention to lived experience, relationships, and local conditions—an approach that aligns with the study's emphasis on situated knowledge and community-based learning. Case studies are especially well suited to research that seeks to understand how meaning is constructed within particular environments and social practices (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Santos, 2014; Stake, 1995)

Within this dissertation, a case is understood as a bounded learning environment in which artistic practice, mentorship, and cultural knowledge are transmitted through ongoing participation and collaboration (Creswell & Poth, 2018, Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). The study therefore focuses on two sites in Nassau, Bahamas: Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre, founded by Arlene Nash Ferguson, and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.), led by artist Antonius Roberts. Each site functions as a sustained environment for creative learning rooted in Bahamian cultural practice, where participants engage with artistic traditions, materials, and ideas through mentorship, shared making, and collective reflection. These sites were selected because they represent distinct yet complementary contexts through which non-formal art education is enacted in the Bahamas.

Importantly, these cases are not intended to represent all forms of art education in the Bahamas, nor to generalize across Caribbean contexts. Rather, they serve as analytically rich examples that illuminate how creative learning emerges within particular social, cultural, and ecological environments (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Examining both cases allows the study to explore similarities and differences in pedagogical practice across two distinct learning spaces—one centered on the sustaining of Junkanoo cultural traditions and the other grounded in contemporary artistic experimentation and environmental engagement. Through this comparative perspective, the study is able to identify recurring pedagogical patterns that inform the development of the *Pasting Tides* framework while remaining attentive to the specificity of each context.



Figure 4 Antonius Roberts and Arlene Nash Ferguson at FUZE Caribbean Art Fair (October 2025)

Research Fieldwork: A Participatory Action Research (PAR) Approach

As the aims of my dissertation were to learn from the communities engaged with non-formal art education in the Bahamas, research fieldwork for this study was conducted largely as a form of open-ended inquiry combined with participatory action research (PAR). PAR was particularly appropriate as a methodological approach in part because of its alignment with the objectives of decolonial practices and community empowerment. PAR has fundamentally reshaped traditional research paradigms by recognising participants as co-researchers rather than subjects, thereby transforming the power dynamics inherent in conventional academic inquiry (MacDonald, 2012). Because it prioritises local knowledge and community voices in the research process, this methodology helps to address the complex cultural and historical realities of the Bahamas. For purposes of my dissertation, the democratic and equitable nature of PAR created spaces for authentic engagement with participants, allowing their expertise and lived experiences to guide the research rather than imposing an external research design on them (Boodram, 2021). In the Bahamian context, the adoption of PAR carries particular significance given the nation's complex post-colonial reality and ongoing efforts to reclaim cultural identity. By focusing on involving local people as genuine research participants and working together to create knowledge, PAR helps challenge colonial influences by recognizing and supporting local and indigenous Bahamian knowledge and teaching methods.

The participatory dimension was located in key moments where participants refined themes, challenged interpretations, and contributed directly to the development of the Pasting Tides framework. This included both collaboratively generated material and observational data and field notes produced by the researcher, which were returned to participants for clarification and member verification (Davis & Michelitch, 2022; Irwin, 2017; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019).

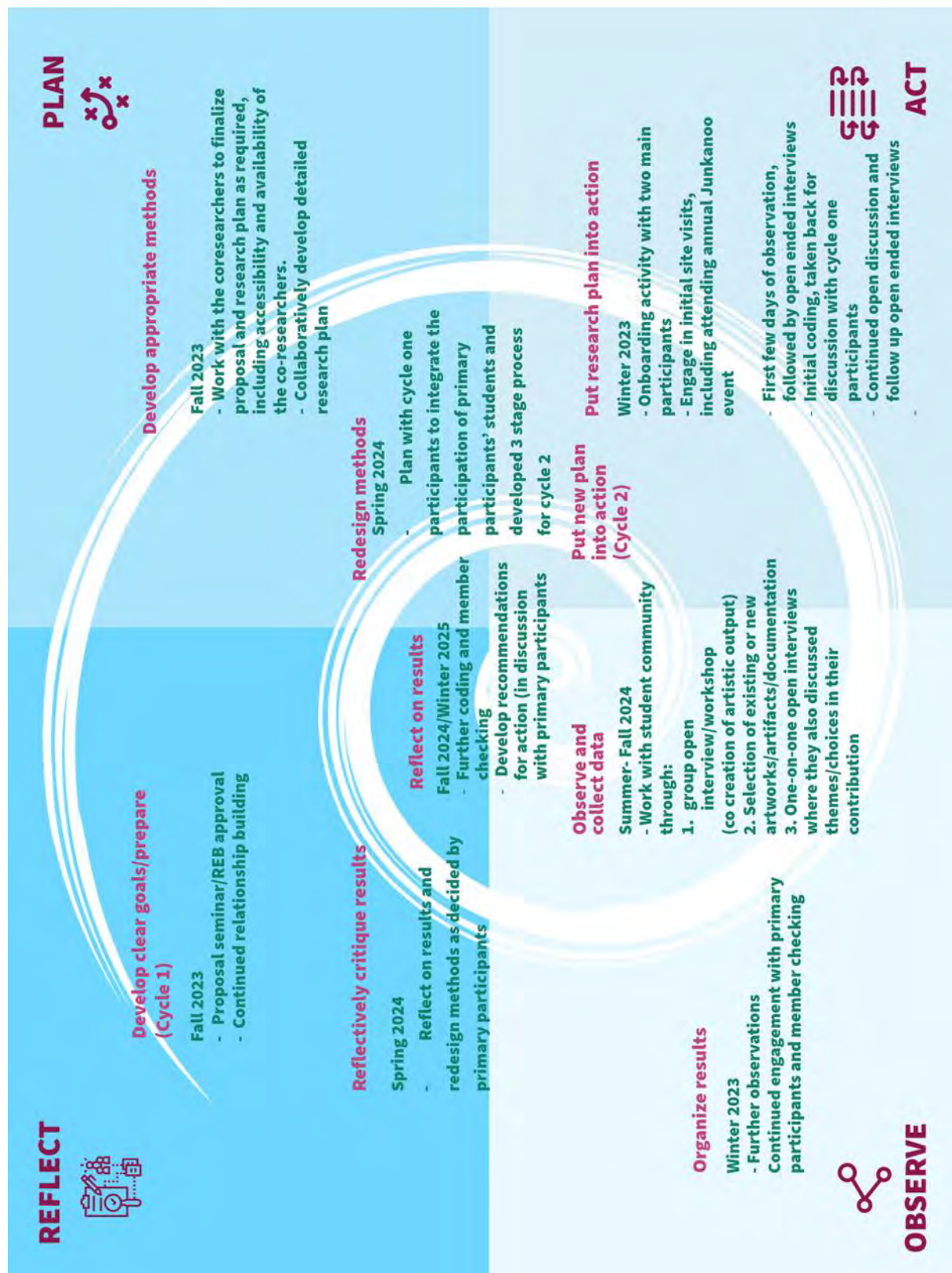


Figure 5 PAR Cycles/Research Design

This study followed two iterative PAR cycles. In Cycle 1, exploratory interviews, and observations were conducted with the primary participants to identify key pedagogical themes. Preliminary interpretations were then discussed with these collaborators, who contributed their reflections and helped shape the direction of the study. Based on this collective analysis, the second research cycle was co-designed to examine how these pedagogical approaches were experienced by mentees within the learning environments. Within this design, the case study approach provided the structural framework for examining each site as a bounded system, while Participatory Action Research (PAR) informed how knowledge was generated within and across these cases. Rather than treating the cases as static units of analysis, the PAR orientation shaped the study as an iterative and relational process in which observations, conversations, and collaborative activities informed one another over time. In practice, this meant that observations from workshops and discussions were revisited with participants in later interactions, where they were clarified, expanded, or challenged. Emerging themes were also shared in follow-up conversations, allowing participants to refine how their practices were being interpreted. As a result, each case was not only documented, but continually interpreted in dialogue with participants, allowing insights to emerge through cycles of engagement rather than through a single phase of data collection and analysis.

Participatory Research Cycles

Participatory Action Research is structured around iterative cycles of action, reflection, and adaptation (MacDonald, 2012). In this study, two interconnected cycles were undertaken over the course of the fieldwork. These cycles allowed participants not only to contribute data but also to influence the direction of the research as interpretations emerged. Within this

participatory framework, the study also incorporated arts-based inquiry practices that recognize creative processes as forms of reflective and experiential knowledge production.

The first research cycle focused on working collaboratively with the two primary participants, Bahamian educators Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts, whose non-formal educational initiatives formed the central cases of this study. During this phase, exploratory informal interviews and participant observation were conducted within their respective learning environments. These activities allowed for the documentation of pedagogical practices, mentorship structures, and community-based creative processes.

Cycle 1 incorporated multiple qualitative research methods. Open-ended discussions provided opportunities for the educators to reflect on their pedagogical philosophies and experiences. Participant observation, including site visits and engagement with cultural events such as Junkanoo, allowed the researcher to observe how creative learning unfolded in practice.

Following this initial stage of data collection, preliminary themes were identified through thematic analysis of interviews, observations, field notes, and artistic and visual responses. These preliminary interpretations were then discussed with the primary participants, who provided feedback, clarification, and additional contextual insights. This stage of collaborative reflection was essential in ensuring that emerging interpretations accurately reflected the lived realities of the learning environments. During these discussions, we also collectively examined how the emerging themes related to broader theoretical concepts explored in the study, particularly Global South epistemologies of creativity (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015) and the pedagogical characteristics commonly associated with non-formal learning environments.

Through this process, several recurring dimensions of creative learning were identified and refined across both case study sites, including experiential learning, local knowledge and

practice, nature and sustainability, collaboration, and holistic learning. These dimensions later became the five pedagogical pillars articulated within the *Pasting Tides Pedagogical Framework*, developed through this research as a conceptual lens for understanding creative learning in non-formal Bahamian contexts. During Cycle 1, these emerging themes also informed the core thematic structure used to guide the second research cycle with learner participants. This collaborative interpretive stage therefore functioned as the analytical bridge between the exploratory data gathered in Cycle 1 and the refined thematic framework that structured the subsequent investigation in Cycle 2.

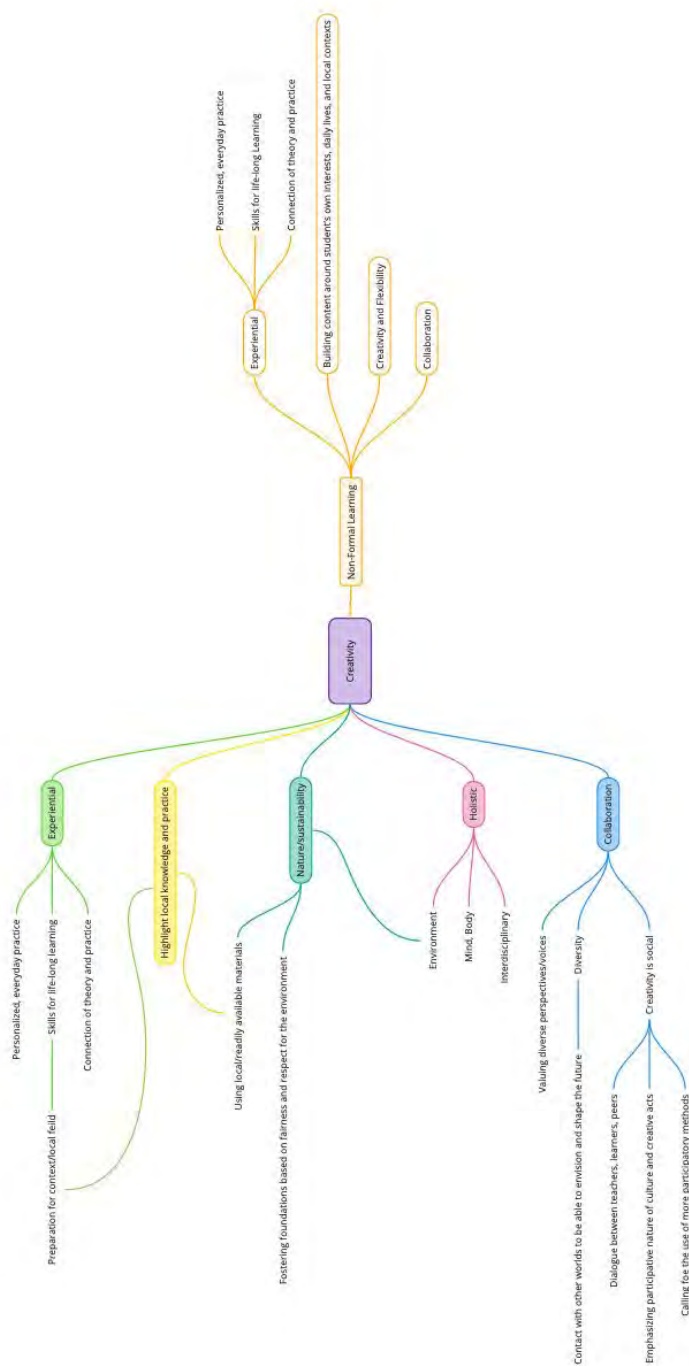


Figure 6 Mapping Global South Epistemologies onto Core Principles of Non-Formal Education done in discussion with Primary Participants at the end of Cycle One

Transition between cycles: collaborative interpretation and redesign

Consistent with Participatory Action Research principles, the findings emerging from Cycle 1 were not treated as final conclusions but as a basis for reflection and further inquiry. Through ongoing dialogue with the primary participants, the preliminary themes were examined in relation to their pedagogical practices and community contexts. These conversations revealed the importance of extending the investigation to include the experiences of learners within these environments.

As a result of this collaborative reflection, the second research cycle was developed jointly with Arlene and Antonius, the primary participants. Together, we designed a series of activities that would allow their students and mentees to contribute their own perspectives on the creative learning processes occurring within these non-formal educational spaces.

Cycle 2: investigation with learners and community participants

The second cycle expanded the research to include learners participating in the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.). In this phase, the primary participants transitioned from research participants to collaborators who helped facilitate engagement with their mentees.

Cycle 2 included collaborative artistic workshops, participant interviews, and the creation of, or the contribution of existing artistic and visual responses reflecting participants' experiences within these learning environments. The workshops provided spaces for participants to collaboratively create participant-generated artistic and visual responses while engaging in dialogue about their learning experiences, motivations, and creative development. These activities generated both visual and verbal data, allowing the research to capture dimensions of learning that might not emerge through interviews alone.

Through this second cycle, the research moved from documenting pedagogical approaches to examining how those approaches were experienced and interpreted by learners themselves. The insights generated through this stage contributed significantly to the refinement and further development of the pedagogical themes that later informed the Pasting Tides pedagogical framework.

Alongside PAR, Cycle 2 incorporated specific arts-based inquiry practices through collaborative artmaking, visual reflection, and participant-generated or participant-contributed artistic and visual responses. These responses were not treated as a standalone arts-based methodology, nor as arts-informed representations of findings. Instead, they functioned as reflective and dialogic tools within the broader PAR-informed case study design. They allowed participants to communicate experiences, values, and pedagogical ideas through creative practice, helping to bring forward meanings that were not always easily expressed through interview dialogue alone.

Artistic and visual responses generated during Cycle 2 were incorporated as qualitative data within the broader participatory research process. These responses emerged through two stages of engagement. First, participants collaborated in small groups during workshop sessions to create collective participant-generated or participant-contributed artistic and visual responses while discussing their experiences within the learning environments. These collaborative participant-generated visual responses functioned as visual reflections of shared experiences and prompted dialogue among participants about the pedagogical and cultural dimensions of their learning.

Following the workshops, participants were invited to participate in individual interviews and to bring additional artistic or visual materials that represented their experiences of learning

within these environments. These contributions included original artworks, photographs, and documentation of creative practice that participants felt reflected how their involvement in Junkanoo or the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.) had shaped their artistic development, cultural understanding, or sense of community. During these interviews, the visual materials were used as prompts to support open-ended discussion, allowing participants to explain the significance of their contributions and reflect on the learning processes they represented.

The interpretation of these artistic responses was conducted through thematic analysis in dialogue with participants. Visual elements, subject matter, materials, and narratives discussed by participants were examined alongside interview transcripts, field notes, and observational data. Rather than evaluating the participant-generated or participant-contributed artistic and visual responses as aesthetic objects, the analysis focused on how participants used visual expression to communicate experiences of learning, collaboration, cultural identity, and environmental engagement. This interpretive process allowed recurring themes across the artistic responses to be identified and compared with the themes emerging from verbal data.

Consistent with the participatory principles guiding the study, participants played an active role in interpreting their own contributions. During the individual interviews, participants discussed the meanings, contexts, and intentions behind the visual responses they shared, helping to identify relevant themes and clarify their relationship to the pedagogical practices under examination. These discussions ensured that interpretations of the visual material remained grounded in participants' perspectives and experiences within the learning environments. Together, the artistic responses and interview reflections provided complementary forms of insight into how creative learning was experienced by participants, allowing the research to

capture dimensions of pedagogical practice that might not emerge through verbal interviews alone. These recurring themes were later integrated with findings from interviews and observations to inform the development of the five pedagogical pillars articulated within the Pasting Tides pedagogical framework.

The research process was also informed by embodied and ecological perspectives that foregrounded sensory experience and environmental reciprocity as integral to creative inquiry. This dimension of the methodology recognizes that learning and meaning making are enacted through the body's engagement with materials, spaces, and others. In practical terms, this meant attending to the gestures, rhythms, and spatial interactions observed, and reflecting on how these embodied practices generated insight. Fieldnotes and reflections captured not only what participants said, but also how they interacted, collaborated, and responded to their environments.

This approach resonates with ecological methodologies that view research as an interconnected system of relationships between researcher, participants, materials, and environments, drawing on systems-thinking perspectives from the life sciences (Capra & Luisi, 2014) and anthropological attention to relational, material inquiry (Ingold, 2023). The Bahamian field sites, alive with sound, colour, and motion, naturally invited such an ecological stance. Here, creativity was observed as a relational flow between people and place, echoing Lloyd's (2014) notion of "function, form, feeling, and flow" in pedagogical experience. Incorporating these embodied and ecological perspectives extended the principles of PAR by emphasizing responsiveness, reciprocity, and sensory awareness as essential to ethical, situated research.

Positionality and Power Dynamics

This research was made possible through relationships developed with Bahamian educators and artists over several years. While these relationships enabled meaningful engagement with the learning environments examined in this study, I remained aware that I approached this work as a researcher from outside the Bahamian cultural context. Throughout the research process, I therefore sought to centre the perspectives of the educators and participants involved, recognizing that my role was to document and interpret their pedagogical practices rather than to speak on behalf of the communities in which they are embedded. This relational orientation reflects the study's broader methodological commitment to participatory and collaborative research practices. Recognizing that reflexive awareness in cross-cultural research remains ongoing and incomplete, the interpretations presented here represent one situated understanding shaped through relationships developed during the research process. This approach reflects broader methodological discussions of reflexive and relational inquiry (Davis & Michelitch, 2022; Irwin, 2017).

Considerations of identity, positionality, and power dynamics are significant issues in conducting qualitative research, especially for studies conducted in non-formal sectors of the Global South (Herman et al., 2022). In adopting PAR as a field-based approach, researchers must repeatedly examine how their beliefs, judgements, and practices, which rooted in different identities, influence research (Davis & Michelitch, 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2023). Keikelame and Swartz (2019) have highlighted five key issues important to consider in decolonising research methods: (i) power sharing; (ii) trust; (iii) culture and cultural competence; (iv) respectful and legitimate research practice; and (v) acknowledging the strengths of individuals and communities (p. 3). I was aware of these factors while deciding on fieldwork and

data gathering methods. These included engaging in ongoing reflection and self-awareness throughout (Ibrahim et al., 2023), assuring a collaborative research process (Herman et al., 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2023; Igwe et al., 2022; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019), and learning from and respecting local knowledge and identifying outcomes that contribute to self-determination and empowerment of the community rather than solely the researchers (Herman et al., 2022; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). As Herman et al. (2022) emphasise, rather than solely advancing academic interests, decolonial researchers must learn from and respect local knowledge while identifying outcomes that contribute to community self-determination.

This dissertation has been grounded in relationships developed over the past five years through professional partnerships with the primary participants in both Canada and the Bahamas, who welcomed me to conduct research within their communities. I prioritized the ongoing development of trust through sustained engagement, including returning to sites, maintaining dialogue, and taking time to understand participants' perspectives, goals, and expertise. This also required ongoing attention to my own positionality as a white, settler, Canadian researcher, including developing cultural awareness and reflecting on how my presence, institutional affiliation, and assumptions could shape the research process. Efforts to redistribute power within the research relationship included prioritizing participant voice, remaining responsive to their input, and approaching the research as a collaborative process rather than a fixed design. In practice, this meant allowing participants to guide the direction of conversations during interviews and workshops, incorporating their interpretations when discussing artistic works, and remaining open to shifting the focus of inquiry based on what participants identified as meaningful. It also involved returning to participants with emerging ideas and interpretations for clarification and refinement, rather than treating initial observations or interviews as complete

representations of their practices. At times, this meant pausing or reframing lines of questioning when they did not align with participants' ways of explaining their work or experiences.

Because participatory action research is grounded in relational trust, this approach required ongoing reflexive self-awareness to remain open, transparent, and responsive in interactions with participants, supporting mutual understanding and the co-construction of knowledge (Igwe et al., 2022).

Reflexivity in cross-cultural research is not a fixed or completed step but an ongoing process that unfolds throughout the research lifecycle. In practical terms, this shaped my field notes by requiring me to distinguish between description, participant explanation, and my own interpretation. When observing workshops, studio activity, Junkanoo preparation, or informal exchanges, I recorded not only what occurred, but also whose explanation framed the event, what contextual information participants provided, and where my own outsider assumptions required clarification. This helped prevent field notes from becoming neutralized observations detached from the cultural and relational conditions through which meaning was being made.

This approach also shaped how interviews were conducted. Rather than following a strictly structured format, interviews and workshop discussions were guided by participants' own priorities, allowing them to define what aspects of their practice were most significant. When unfamiliar concepts or practices emerged, I asked participants to elaborate using their own language and examples, rather than translating these immediately into external academic terms. This ensured that meaning remained grounded in participant understanding rather than being prematurely interpreted through my own framework.

Similarly, in the interpretation of artistic works, I avoided treating visual materials as objects for independent analysis or critique. Instead, interpretation was developed through

dialogue with participants, drawing on their explanations of materials, symbolism, process, and intention. Interpretation was based on these explanations, which determined how the works were understood within the study. Their perspectives shaped the analysis from the outset, guiding how meaning was identified, described, and contextualized. As a result, artistic works were approached as expressions situated within lived practice, rather than as representations to be decoded through external theoretical lenses.

While identifying positionality and power dynamics provides an important starting point, ethical engagement requires continual reflection on how the researcher's presence, interpretations, and institutional affiliations shape the research process (Davis & Michelitch, 2022; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). Throughout this study, reflexivity was therefore revisited at multiple stages—including during fieldwork interactions, the interpretation of participants' narratives, and the framing of analytical conclusions. Recognizing that reflexive awareness is always partial and evolving, this dissertation approaches reflexivity not as a final resolution of positionality but as an ongoing practice of questioning how knowledge is produced within the research encounter (Ibrahim et al., 2023; MacDonald, 2012).

Access to the research environments examined in this study developed through relationships established prior to the formal research process. My professional role within international arts education created opportunities for dialogue and collaboration with artists and educators in Nassau, including Antonius Roberts and Arlene Nash Ferguson. These relationships facilitated invitations to visit their learning environments and observe aspects of their pedagogical practices. While this relational entry point made it possible to engage meaningfully with the research setting, it also required careful attention to issues of trust, representation, and interpretation. For example, I needed to ensure that participants felt comfortable sharing their

perspectives, that their experiences were represented accurately, and that my interpretations remained grounded in their words and practices rather than my own assumptions.

Research Participants

The primary participants/collaborators were two teachers/mentors from Nassau, Bahamas: Antonius Roberts and Arlene Nash Ferguson. Antonius and Arlene are both active community leaders who engage in non-formal art education models using Global South creativity concepts. The first cycle of research focuses only on their activities as artists and art educators. This was followed by the second cycle of research which was extended to several of their students or former students/mentees (eight altogether), identified by Arlene and Antonius, who were able share in the research process by demonstrating and speaking about their own unique creative approaches to learning.

Arlene's selected participants were all women who have become advocates for Arlene's integration of Junkanoo methods into her education program. All of them were currently working as educators, in local elementary schools and with Arlene at the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre. They consented to participating under their full names: Deena Godet-Moxey, Carlene Farrington, Cheryl Ford and Ariadne (Quinn) Munnings. Antonius' suggested participants were current 'residents' of I.C.E., emerging artists in their 20s who are working in studio spaces on site under Robert's guidance: Chappell Whyms Jr, Justin Moultrie, Reagan Kemp and Alia Knowles (also practicing under the name Sapita). They also consented to sharing documentation of new and existing artworks/creative endeavours.

Throughout research fieldwork, I placed importance on the participants being actively engaged in the research process—sharing their perspectives as cultural practitioners and educators embedded in their own communities, rather than being positioned as subjects observed

by an external researcher reporting through their own personal lens or bias. I also involved the participants in ensuring the data accurately reflected their context by enabling them to review and approve the final content of my narrative at various points in the research cycle.

Arts-Based Inquiry Practices within the Study

In addition to interviews and observational fieldwork, this study incorporates arts-based inquiry practices as a way of engaging forms of knowledge that emerge through creative practice. Arts-based inquiry practices recognize artistic processes and visual expression as valuable modes of inquiry capable of revealing insights that may not be fully accessible through verbal or textual analysis alone (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2018). In this study, collaborative artmaking, visual responses, and creative reflection were used as complementary methods within a broader participatory action research framework rather than as a standalone methodological approach. Within art education research in particular, artistic production can function as both a process of reflection and a form of data, enabling participants to communicate ideas, experiences, and relationships that may be difficult to articulate through conventional research methods. In this study, artistic responses are therefore approached not as illustrations of findings but as meaningful contributions to the interpretive process.

Arts-based approaches were especially appropriate given the nature of the learning environments examined. Both the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.) operate through creative practice, mentorship, and shared making. As a result, collaborative artmaking, participant-generated visual material, and the examination of artistic artefacts formed part of the broader research process. These materials were considered alongside interviews, field observations, and participant reflections in order to better understand how creative learning unfolds within these community-rooted

environments. Rather than positioning artmaking as separate from research, the study treats artistic processes as intertwined with the generation and interpretation of knowledge, aligning with arts-based inquiry practices that emphasize experiential, embodied, and relational forms of inquiry (Knowles & Cole, 2008; Leavy, 2018).

Framing the research in this way also allows the study to draw on artistic and visual inquiry practices without relying exclusively on any single methodological model. These practices are understood here as approaches in which artistic processes, visual materials, embodied practices, and creative forms of expression contribute to inquiry, interpretation, and knowledge generation (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2020; McNiff, 2008). In this study, such scholarship is used to support the methodological framing of how artistic and embodied processes function within the research, while interpretations of cultural practices remain grounded in participant contributions, site-based observations, and context-specific scholarship. While arts-based approaches have developed through a range of methodological traditions within educational research, this study adopts a broader understanding of arts-based inquiry in which artistic practice functions as one component of a multi-method qualitative design rather than as a standalone methodological framework.

In this context, collaborative artmaking, participant-generated visual responses, and creative reflection supported participant dialogue, documentation, and co-analysis of pedagogical practice across the two case sites. These practices align most closely with arts-based inquiry rather than arts-informed inquiry, which is typically concerned with using artistic forms to represent or communicate research findings (Cole & Knowles, 2008). Specific arts-based inquiry practices were therefore integrated into the broader PAR-informed case study design to support reflection, dialogue, and culturally situated knowledge generation.

Data Collection

Data for this study were generated through four fieldwork trips to Nassau between late 2023 and mid-2025, complemented by ongoing virtual engagement that allowed for sustained dialogue and collaboration between visits. These in-person and online exchanges ensured that communication remained relational and continuous across the research period while allowing the research process to remain responsive to participants' availability and community rhythms (Davis & Michelitch, 2022).

Using a participatory and qualitative approach, data were collected through informal and semi-structured interviews, participant observation during workshops and learning activities, field notes recorded during site visits, and participant-generated creative materials. Additional sources included archival documents, teaching tools, photographs, videos, audio recordings, and oral histories shared by participants to provide historical and contextual insight into creative and educational practice. These materials supported a broader understanding of how pedagogy was experienced, sustained, and transmitted within the two non-formal educational environments: the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.).

Data collection was conducted collaboratively with participants, who were involved in identifying which materials, experiences, and histories were most relevant to the study. These ranged from newly created artworks and teaching tools to personal archives, local documents, videos, and community histories. This process reflected the study's PAR-informed approach, prioritizing co-interpretation rather than extraction and ensuring that participants remained central to how their pedagogical practices were documented and understood.

I also loosely adopted the approach of kin study, a decolonial alternative to conventional case study methods, drawing from ecological scholarship (Kanngieser & Todd, 2020). Kin study emphasizes relational accountability by foregrounding connections between people, place, and knowledge, while resisting the extractive tendencies and universalizing assumptions often embedded in outsider-led research. This framework helped shape the ethical orientation of the project by encouraging attentiveness to local contexts, cultural protocols, and the lived realities of participants. As Igwe et al. (2022) argue, designing research collaboratively with participants creates pathways for more equitable knowledge production and stronger inclusion of community voices in the research process.

In practice, this meant centering the knowledge systems and assets of participants and their communities (Keikelame & Swartz, 2019), rather than imposing external academic framings. During the relationship-building phase, guiding questions were co-developed in dialogue with participants to ensure they reflected participant priorities, language, and lived pedagogical practices. Participants also had ongoing opportunities to review the materials being collected, provide clarification, and contribute additional insights in formats most relevant to them, whether through conversation, reflection, archival sharing, or creative output.

The first research cycle focused on building trust and establishing the collaborative foundation for the study with the two primary educator-participants, Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts. During this phase, extended site visits were supported by participant observation of daily activities, mentorship practices, and community interactions. Informal interviews, open conversations, and semi-structured interviews provided space for both educators to reflect on their pedagogical philosophies, creative practices, and the historical and cultural contexts shaping their work. Visual documentation of the sites, including photographs of

learning environments, artistic processes, and material practices, was supplemented by field notes documenting observations, spatial dynamics, and reflections on how learning unfolded within each setting.

Following preliminary coding of Cycle 1 interviews and observations, emerging themes were returned to participants through collaborative discussion and member-checking processes. Participants were given opportunities to review transcripts, clarify or expand on earlier contributions, and provide feedback on how their voices and perspectives were being represented. In some cases, sections of the developing writing were also shared with peers and collaborators within their communities to support cultural accuracy, contextual nuance, and collective reflection. This transition phase supported collaborative interpretation and refinement of emerging themes before the second research cycle began.

Building on the groundwork established in Cycle 1, Cycle 2 expanded the study to include learners, mentees, and community participants connected to both sites. This phase involved a structured three-stage creative inquiry process. First, group workshops were held at each site in July 2024, during which participants engaged in collaborative artmaking and recorded group conversations. Second, participants completed self-directed follow-up artistic contributions for an artist book, submitted between October 2024 and February 2025. Finally, one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted to reflect on the meaning of their creative work and their broader learning experiences within these learning environments.

Participant observation continued throughout Cycle 2, particularly during shared studio activities, workshops, and informal interactions within both sites. This allowed attention to be given not only to what participants said about learning, but also to how knowledge was exchanged through embodied practice, routine interaction, and collaborative making. Across

both cycles, transcripts, field notes, workshop documentation, photographs, participant-generated artistic responses, and shared archival materials were organized and incorporated into the broader thematic analysis process.

To support the trustworthiness of the research, data collection remained iterative and relational rather than fixed or extractive. Ongoing follow-up conversations, flexible communication, participant review, and collaborative reflection were embedded throughout the research process. This approach prioritized participant agency, mutual respect, and shared inquiry, ensuring that the study remained grounded in the values and epistemologies of the communities involved. This approach reflects a commitment to non-extractive research practices, in which care is taken to avoid removing knowledge from its cultural context or reinterpreting it independently of those who hold it, including returning to participants to clarify and refine emerging interpretations.

I maintained thorough record-keeping and followed clearly defined consent and data management procedures throughout the research process. Interview recordings, field notes, photographs, and archival materials were securely stored using password-protected institutional OneDrive storage in accordance with University of Ottawa ethics protocols. All research data will be retained for a period of five years following the completion of the study, after which digital files and associated materials will be securely destroyed in accordance with institutional ethics requirements.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process was guided by reflexive thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach. This method was selected because it supports flexible yet rigorous interpretation of qualitative data while allowing themes to emerge through iterative

engagement with participant experiences, site observations, and collaborative reflection.

Reflexive thematic analysis aligned well with the study's qualitative multiple-case study design and Participatory Action Research (PAR) orientation because it allowed analysis to remain responsive to context, participant dialogue, and the evolving interpretation of creative pedagogical practices. Analysis unfolded across both research cycles and the transition between them, allowing insights from Cycle 1 with the primary educators to inform the design of Cycle 2 with learners and community participants. This cyclical movement between observation, reflection, collaborative interpretation, and refinement strengthened the relationship between data collection and analysis throughout the study.

Phase one involved familiarization with the data through repeated reading of interview transcripts, field notes, observation notes, workshop documentation, participant-generated or participant-contributed artistic and visual responses, and relevant archival materials collected across both research sites. This included data generated in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, as well as reflections produced during the transition between cycles when preliminary findings were discussed with participants and used to refine subsequent inquiry. This stage required close engagement with the data to identify recurring patterns, tensions, and pedagogical relationships. Reflective memos were written throughout this process to document early observations, emerging questions, and connections between participant narratives and the broader conceptual framework of Global South epistemologies and non-formal learning.

Phase two focused on generating initial codes. Coding was both inductive and deductive. Some codes emerged directly from participant language, observed practices, and site-specific experiences, while others were informed by the study's conceptual grounding in Global South epistemologies, non-formal education, and relational creativity (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Glăveanu

& Sierra, 2015). Attention was given to recurring pedagogical structures such as mentorship, cultural continuity, collaboration, environmental engagement, experiential learning, and the relationship between artistic practice and community life. Participant-generated or participant-contributed artistic and visual responses were interpreted alongside interview and observational data, not as finished artworks for aesthetic evaluation, but as reflective and dialogic materials that helped surface meanings not always easily articulated through verbal interviews alone.

Phase three involved searching for themes by grouping related codes into broader thematic patterns across both case study sites. This stage required comparing the pedagogical practices observed within the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.) to identify both site-specific distinctions and recurring shared structures. Cross-case comparison allowed the analysis to move beyond individual experiences toward broader pedagogical dimensions that shaped creative learning across both environments.

Phase four involved reviewing and refining candidate themes by returning to the full dataset and testing whether the developing themes accurately reflected participant experiences and the observed learning environments. This process also included collaborative interpretation and participant dialogue, particularly during the transition between research cycles, where preliminary patterns and conceptual relationships were discussed with participants as part of the PAR-informed co-interpretive process. The transition between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 was important here, as early interpretations developed through work with Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts were revisited and expanded through engagement with learners and mentees. This allowed the study to test whether pedagogical patterns identified by the primary educators were also reflected in participant experiences. This functioned as a form of member checking

and strengthened the trustworthiness of the analysis by ensuring that interpretations remained grounded in participant experience rather than solely researcher interpretation.

Phase five focused on defining and naming themes. Through iterative refinement, broader pedagogical dimensions were clarified and articulated as the five recurring pillars of the *Pasting Tides Pedagogical Framework*: experiential learning, local knowledge and practice, nature and sustainability, collaboration, and holistic practice. These themes were not imposed as predetermined categories, but emerged through the analytic relationship between participant experience, cross-case comparison, and theoretical interpretation. The framework was developed as a conceptual synthesis of pedagogical practices already being enacted within the two sites rather than as a universal model to be transferred unchanged into other contexts.

Phase six involved producing the final analysis presented in Chapters 5 through 8, where the themes were connected to broader scholarship in art education, creativity studies, community-based learning, and Global South epistemologies. The final articulation of *Pasting Tides Pedagogy* therefore emerged not as a pre-existing Bahamian model, but as a localized conceptual framework grounded in the lived pedagogical practices of the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression. This process allowed the study to move from site-specific observations toward a broader contribution to conversations about non-formal art education, decolonial pedagogy, and culturally situated creative learning.

Trustworthiness and Reflexivity

Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research requires careful attention to transparency, reflexivity, and the use of multiple sources of evidence (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, trustworthiness was supported through several complementary

strategies. First, triangulation across multiple forms of data strengthened the interpretive process. Interview transcripts, participant observation notes, archival materials, and participant-generated artistic works were considered together, allowing patterns to be examined from different perspectives and within different forms of expression. This combination of verbal, observational, and visual materials helped ensure that interpretations did not rely on a single type of evidence but instead reflected the broader dynamics of the learning environments studied.

Second, participant verification and collaborative interpretation played a central role in refining the analysis. Throughout the PAR cycles, participants were invited to review and discuss emerging interpretations, including the themes and pedagogical patterns that later informed the Pasting Tides framework.

These opportunities for dialogue enabled participants to clarify meanings, challenge interpretations, and ensure that the research narrative accurately reflected their experiences and contexts. This process of ongoing feedback functioned as a form of member checking, helping maintain alignment between the researcher's interpretations and participant perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Reflexivity was also central to the research process. As a researcher working within communities that were not my own, I remained attentive to how my positionality—as an outsider to the Bahamian cultural context while also participating in collaborative creative processes—shaped both the research relationships and the interpretations developed. Maintaining reflexive awareness throughout fieldwork helped ensure that participant perspectives remained central to the analysis and that the study did not seek to impose external interpretations onto local practices. Instead, the research aimed to document and interpret pedagogical approaches already

present within these communities while acknowledging the relational dynamics through which such knowledge became visible within the research process.

Together, these practices supported ethical and interpretive transparency throughout the study. By combining triangulated data sources, collaborative interpretation, and reflexive attention to positionality, the research sought to remain accountable to the participants whose knowledge and experiences shaped the findings presented in this dissertation.

Chapter Conclusion

The methodological stages outlined in this chapter were carefully selected to reflect and uphold the philosophical and ethical commitments of the study, particularly its emphasis on relationality, co-construction of knowledge, and community-based creativity. Drawing on participatory, constructivist, and arts-based reflective approaches, the methods were designed to remain responsive to local contexts while enabling deep engagement with participants' lived experiences.

This approach was directly aligned with the overarching objectives of the research, as identified at the end of Chapter 2. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) explore how non-formal art education supports diverse learners; (2) examine how creative pedagogical practices foster cultural identity, community engagement, and personal development; and (3) consider the potential of Global South epistemologies in reshaping dominant understandings of art education. The methods outlined here not only supported the collection of rich and culturally grounded data, but also ensured that participants' voices, experiences, and contributions remained central throughout the research process.

In the following two chapters I will present the findings of cycle one of the PAR research which focuses on the works of the primary participants – Arlene Nash Ferguson who heads the

Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre, and Antonius Roberts who is the founder and director of I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression). Through a mix of interview excerpts, descriptive accounts of each of their educational approaches, and analysis of creative responses generated through the research process, the chapters will reveal how their pedagogies embody key principles of non-formal education and epistemologies of the Global South.

Chapter 5: The Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre: The Educator's Perspective

Introduction

This chapter begins with a historical overview of Junkanoo, a significant and longstanding artistic and cultural event in the Bahamas. I will then present a brief description of the current creativity and learning associated with Junkanoo, which will then lead to a detailed analysis of the key features of the Educulture Centre itself. This includes a short biography of the first primary participant, Arlene Nash Ferguson, who is the founder and current director of the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre (henceforth referred as the Educulture Centre).

The practices explored in this chapter (and the following chapter) represent localized expressions of plural epistemologies that challenge dominant Western frameworks, rather than fixed or uniform models of “Global South” education. Following this foundational overview, the chapter then presents qualitative data collected through observations, interviews, and site visits at the Educulture Centre. This data offers detailed insight into Arlene Nash Ferguson’s pedagogical approach, revealing how her educational philosophy is enacted through both the museum’s programming and her active role within Junkanoo communities. By documenting her methods of mentorship, experiential teaching, and community engagement, the chapter illustrates how Arlene’s work challenges traditional educational hierarchies and exemplifies a distinctly Bahamian model of non-formal cultural pedagogy. These findings provide a nuanced understanding of how Junkanoo serves not only as a cultural tradition but also as a dynamic vehicle for holistic, intergenerational learning.

Junkanoo: The Quintessential Bahamian Artistic Tapestry

Historical Overview

Junkanoo was born out of the period of the slave trade when, under Britain's 1797 Consolidated Slave Act, enslaved peoples were given three days off at Christmas (McGregory, 2021). An annual inter-arts (visual arts, music, dance, and drama) street festival, Junkanoo is referred to as the 'heartbeat of the nation' (Minnis & Wright, 2017, p. vi). The specifics of its name and origins have been the subject of debate. The most predominant idea is that the name is based on the cultural tradition originally referred to as 'John Canoe', named after an African slave trader from the West African Coast (Nash Ferguson, 2022). Another belief is that it is derived from the words 'junk' and 'a new' which allude to the ability of local people's ability to use discarded materials to create instruments, costumes and sculptures (McGregory, 2021). Historically, the few days off devoted to Junkanoo were used by the enslaved population to 'reclaim their humanity and heritage, celebrating the ceremonies and rituals from their former life' (Saunders, 2004). It was not only a time of revelry to 'let off steam' but also used as an 'agent for social change (and protest)' (Saunders, 2004). Celebrated each year in the early hours of Boxing Day and New Year's Day in downtown Nassau, Junkanoo includes a boisterous, colourful parade, with groups of a thousand or more participants in elaborate costumes energetically dancing, displaying sculptures crafted from cardboard and paper, and playing live music with resourcefully created instruments, and (Tancons & Thompson, 2015). The drums are fashioned from empty pork barrels, round cheese containers, or old rum kegs, stretched with goat or sheepskin adorned with radiant pieces of glass, bottle caps, and other shiny objects, all of which are complemented with the sounds of whistles, cowbells, and conch-shell horns. According to McGregor (2021), in the earliest form of Junkanoo 'no instruments spoke so



Figure 7 *Junkanoo costumes made of found and natural materials (displayed at Educulture Junkanoo and Resource Centre)*

eloquently of the new age than the ‘scrapers’ that were made from anything which would make a satisfactory sound when scraped —washboards and spoons, the jawbones of animals and sticks — when accompanied by the rhythmic beat of the drums (p. 61). The costumes and 3-dimensional sculptural floats also speak to the creativity and resourcefulness of the Africans in the Bahamas—in the early days they used indigenous materials and scraps of plantation life such as leaves, straw, feathers, rags, sacks, and even sponges, and today include newspaper, crepe paper, cardboard, and foam (McGregory, 2021; Nash Ferguson, 2022; Saunders, 2004). The style and subject matter speak to local culture, including various animals, birds, flowers, as well maritime and local/African history motifs.

As McGregor (2021) observes, Junkanoo is an example of many Caribbean carnivals that are “without doubt African ... developed without significant interference from European

influence” (p. 6). McGregor (2021) conceptualizes the term ‘The Endarkened’ as a play on ‘The Enlightenment: ‘I use the term “endarkened” to convey the collective joy of revellers who engage in traditions enjoyed by their ancestors as a way of memorializing them and their bold insistence on upholding free subjectivities despite the imperialistic master plan to deny them humanity’ (p. 15). Other scholars have observed that Junkanoo unequivocally came out of slavery and African (specifically West African) traditions (Minnis and Wright (2017), Nash Ferguson (2022), Saunders (2011), Tancons and Thompson (2015) and Turner (2015).

Although carnivals stem from European event calendars, they draw on a distinctly Africanized spirit of ritualistic play as public communication, distinct from European forms of performativity (McGregory, 2021). The enslaved individuals celebrated their three-days ‘in their own way’, which integrated aspects of African traditions (Saunders, 2004). This includes the element of dance (like the Ring Dance or Fire Dance), the use of goatskin instruments and some kind of bell, decorations and costuming including elements such as tall headdresses, masks, and face paint (Jean-Pierre, (2021); McGregor, 2021; Nash Ferguson, 2022; Saunders, 2004. In addition to these practical elements, it also enacts the strong African legacy of honouring the dead (Turner, 2015), as well as providing an outlet for connection with ancestry, history, and identity (Francis, 2013). Through this, they symbolically take possession of a space where they were physically, economically, and politically denied entrance to in the past (Tancons, 2015). Here, they perform, larger-than-life, the ritual, drumming, songs, dances. etc. that Europeans not only discouraged, but worked to eradicate (Minnis & Wright, 2017; Turner, 2015). Unlike Western traditions that often compartmentalize artistic disciplines, Caribbean carnivals seamlessly weave together costume/float design, choreography, musical composition, and dramatic performance into a single, cohesive cultural expression (Roberts, n.d.).

Despite both the Church and Junkanoo being an integral part of the history of the Bahamas, the relationship between the two has been fraught, with some members of the former regarding the latter as ‘irreligious’, ‘secular’, or even ‘demonic’ (Turner, 2015). Class tensions are also intertwined in negative perceptions. While the originators of the Junkanoo festival were underprivileged black people in the early 18th century, other ethnic groups became engaged in the parade spontaneously. Later, in the 1930s, when the festival began to attract tourists, and more Junkanoo participants hailed from middle class and elite sectors of Bahamian society, it took on the hue of respectability and began to attract more participants from a burgeoning middle class and a still-small elite strata.

As McGregory (2021) stated

...being called a Junkanoo... was not a complimentary term. In fact, if you were called a Junkanoo you were relegated to the ranks of the uncouth, uneducated, undisciplined, and wild, lacking strong social and moral fibre and were considered among the ‘dreg’ of society who sat (not even stood) at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder (p.59).

Regardless of class, women were generally judged negatively for participating, and historically, even acting as spectators (Saunders, 2004). The religious, gender, and class conflicts emphasise that African culture and religio-cultural identity are also sometimes othered by the African Caribbean people themselves, as the colonial mind-set has been entrenched (Turner, 2015). In recent years, public perceptions of Junkanoo have improved, and in 1973 it was officially designated as a ‘national artistic treasure’ that encapsulated the nation’s premier cultural identity (McGregory, 2021; Nash-Ferguson, 2004).

Like many living cultural traditions, Junkanoo continues to evolve within changing social, economic, and cultural conditions in the Bahamas, including the growing visibility of the

festival through tourism, shifting forms of participation, and ongoing conversations about cultural representation and community identity. These dynamics shape how the tradition is practiced and understood across generations. At the same time, Junkanoo remains a powerful site of creative learning, where artistic knowledge, collaborative practices, and cultural values are transmitted through making, mentorship, and participation. This kind of integrated creative learning resonates with wider Caribbean understandings of the arts as interconnected rather than separate domains; writing about the University of the West Indies Department of Creative and Festival Arts, Pearce (2022) notes that poetry, theatre, painting, and other forms have often been understood regionally as part of an ‘interdimensional whole.’

Creativity and Learning in Junkanoo

The annual preparation for Junkanoo is a community-wide event, starting months in advance in Junkanoo *shacks*. True to the resourceful ethos of Junkanoo, a staple shack rule is ‘do not waste anything’. Shacks are collaborative spaces, and the value of that factor is understood by all Junkanooers, as this group effort is viewed as required to execute any aspect of Junkanoo



Figure 8 *Junkanoo Shack*

(Minnis & Wright, 2017). Participating in Junkanoo is called ‘rushin’, which separates Junkanooers from the revelling spectators who are also considered as participants (McGregory, 2021; Saunders, 2004).

Tancons (2015) affirms that carnival, with its integration of visual arts with music, drama, and dance, “provides a critical anchor for the rearticulation of contemporary discourses and practices around performance art and exhibition making” (p. 15) and is placed “within the realm of art but in a way that is not derivative of metropolitan definitions” (p.17). In effect, Junkanoo represents decades of creative innovation. Like other African diasporic street masquerading practices that value the sense of community it affirms, Junkanoo makes room for collective creativity (Tancons, 2015). Junkanoo shacks constitute a non-judgemental, community environment enabling individuals to evolve, including through each group’s ‘design think tank’ processes that provide a generative process to develop new ideas and designs (McGregory, 2021; Turner, 2015). From this communal environment, individual growth is also championed and supported. As Francis (2013) observes, “through Junkanoo we can discover and release the best in all of us”, stating that many Junkanooers attest to this, believing “they probably would have never discovered their talent had the opportunity to experience these practical lessons had been denied” (p. 252).

Junkanoo functions as a powerful educational tool by engaging students across multiple disciplines while fostering cultural pride and creativity. Turner (2015) notes that Bahamian children become notably more engaged when Junkanoo is used as a medium for/in education. This observation aligns with the principle of "taking the children from where they are," a fundamental concept in teacher education (Nash Ferguson, 2022, p. 1). Nash Ferguson (2022)

further posits that Junkanoo could serve as a gateway to inspire a love of learning and potentially develop a uniquely Bahamian unit of inquiry encompassing various curriculum disciplines.

The educational benefits of Junkanoo extend beyond academic skills. Francis (2013) argues that Junkanoo plays a pivotal role in character development, providing a fraternity saturated with experienced life skills teachers. Nash Ferguson (2022) illustrates this point with the motivational phrase that titles her book "Let's go to B.A.Y. (Beyond and Above Yesterday)", encouraging continuous self-improvement inspired by the annual progression of Junkanoo. Moreover, the hands-on nature of Junkanoo activities is believed to stimulate the mind and release latent creative potential, with the level of creative release potentially correlating with the degree of participation (Francis, 2013). This aligns with the concept of using the Junkanoo shack model to foster small formational community groups, as suggested by Turner (2015).

In 1982 the Ministry of Education and Culture introduced and delivered the special educational module *Junior Junkanoo* in schools, marking a significant step in integrating Junkanoo into local education (Nash Ferguson, 2022). This program, which became national in 1988, was designed to promote interest in the craft at an early age and secure the future of this significant Bahamian cultural entity (Francis, 2013). McGregory (2021) highlights that Junior Junkanoo events serve as both educational tools and apprenticeships, assisting students in research, planning, organizing, critical thinking, problem-solving, and role-playing activities while stimulating creativity development. Yet, to fully harness Junkanoo's educational potential, Francis (2013) emphasizes the need for a corresponding Junkanoo curriculum. This would provide a framework for integrating Junkanoo into various aspects of education, maximizing its benefits as a pedagogical tool. By incorporating elements of visual art, music, history, and social

studies, it can provide a holistic learning experience that not only enhances academic skills but also fosters cultural pride and personal development.

One of the leading figures in continuing the educational and cultural significance of Junkanoo in the Bahamas is Arlene Nash Ferguson, a well-known Bahamian educator and founder of the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre which has become a vibrant hub dedicated to preserving and celebrating Bahamian heritage.

Arlene Nash Ferguson and the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre

Born and raised in Nassau, Arlene is a natural-born storyteller who has forged a unique approach to education that intertwines her diverse passions and experiences of pedagogy and cultural advocacy. Her academic journey took her to McMaster University in Canada for her first degree, followed by a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, and a Master's Degree in Education with the University of Miami Nassau Program. My engagement with Arlene's work developed through earlier professional encounters within the Bahamian arts community, which provided an opportunity to observe and discuss her pedagogical approach over multiple visits.

When I am asked to provide a bio as an introduction, if I am speaking, I always say I am a Bahamian by birth, I am a teacher by profession, I am a Junkanoo by passion, and I am a child of God by inheritance, and that's it.

Professionally, Arlene began her career as a high school history teacher in Nassau, later transitioning to lecturer at the College of the Bahamas (now University of the Bahamas) in History and Civics. Her path then led her to the Anglican Central Education Authority, where she served as vice-principal of the primary department before eventually becoming the principal

of St. John's College. However, a pivotal moment occurred when Arlene was invited by her friend Jackson Burnside to work with him at *Doongalik Studios Art Gallery*, which aims to showcase the Bahamas as an international center of creativity. Under Jackson's mentorship, Arlene was inspired to delve deeper into the possibilities of cultural education. After three transformative years at Doongalik, in the year 2000 Arlene embarked on her own creative journey, founding the *Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre*:

It was so new when we did it. And, you know, I just decided to follow my heart.

And I know a lot of people thought I was crazy. I mean, in this environment, you just don't go from being the principal of one of the major schools to this.

In effect, Arlene's aim was to revitalize art education by centering Bahamian culture, particularly Junkanoo, at the heart of the learning experience in the Educulture Centre. This dedication to preserving and sharing Bahamian culture led her to non-formal education approaches exemplified by Junkanoo workshops for schools and *ride and learn* tours focusing on social studies through a site-specific approach that brought students to historic locations for lessons. Since that time, Arlene's overall educational endeavours have extended to include diverse groups such as tourists, local youth, and community members of all ages. She lectures regularly for various organizations, emphasizing the importance of cultural orientation and creativity in education. Her philosophy, rooted in Junkanoo's ethos of unconventional thinking and creativity, advocates for dismantling boundaries and embracing cultural expression. To her, Junkanoo has clearly been a gateway to a love for learning: "not just for learning, a *love* for learning. And that was in a nutshell why I started Educulture". Local concepts of creativity drive Arlene's devotion to Junkanoo:

In Junkanoo, we say you cannot think normal. You have to think stupid if you want to win. So, creativity, and I hate the expression, ‘out of the box’... Junkanoos don't think out of the box -they dismantle the box and create a work of art... So, creativity is just... in Bahamian English we would say: it's just going crazy. It's just giving vent to all your ideas and your thoughts, no matter how crazy they are. You translate them into cultural reality. And that's what creativity is. You don't stay in your lane, as the young people say. You just let it all line up.

This reflection offers a culturally grounded articulation of creativity that differs from familiar Western framings such as “thinking outside the box.” In the Junkanoo context, creativity is understood as an expansive and improvisational process in which conventional limits are not simply exceeded but actively dismantled. Ideas are encouraged to unfold freely and are ultimately translated into collective cultural expression through performance, costume design, and artistic making. In this sense, creativity is not about extending inherited structures, but transforming them through collective, material, and culturally grounded practice (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Nash Ferguson, 2022).

Arlene is a pivotal figure in Bahamian cultural education due to her multifaceted work preserving and sharing Junkanoo traditions. Her pedagogical delivery is two-pronged: first through her establishment and operation of the Educulture Centre, and second through her active community membership and mentorship within the Junkanoo tradition itself. The latter has notably included mentoring other female educators to advocate for and advance developing a pedagogical ethos around the values of Junkanoo that they can employ inside and outside of formal learning environments and subsequently translate Junkanoo approaches into their own teaching methods. This mentorship occurs within a community of practice where skills

development intertwines with identity formation and social belonging. This approach contrasts with the more individualistic, credential-focused orientation of formal education, instead emphasizing learning as a process of becoming a full participant in a cultural community. Arlene's mentorship thus addresses not only arts skill acquisition but also the sharing of values, ethics, and community responsibilities associated with Junkanoo participation, encompassing the full range of knowledge necessary to sustain cultural and artistic traditions. As these women have furthered this practice by integrating into their own teaching (commonly with children through Junior Junkanoo or in elementary classrooms), the multiplication effect demonstrates how non-formal education can influence broader educational systems through knowledge transfer and methodological adaptation. The experiential, community-based approaches of Junkanoo, when applied to other educational contexts, introduce alternative pedagogies that can enrich teaching across various domains and settings.



Figure 9 *Junkanoo Shack as workshop space at Junkanoo Educulture and Resource Centre*

In effect, Arlene's dual positioning allows her to understand Junkanoo both from within as a participant learner, and from an external or objective perspective as an educator, which together inform her approach to cultural continuity and renewal. This interconnectedness facilitates intergenerational knowledge sharing that maintains Junkanoo as a living tradition rather than as historical artefact. The shacks where Junkanoo groups prepare represent crucial collaborative learning spaces where participants of different ages and experience levels work together toward common goals, creating rich opportunities for informal mentorship and knowledge exchange.

The Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre can be understood as an intergenerational, community-rooted arts-based classroom. Within this environment, learning is not separated from cultural practice, but embedded within it through storytelling, demonstration, making, and participation. This framing helps clarify why Educulture functions not simply as a museum or cultural site, but as a pedagogical environment in which creative knowledge is collectively transmitted and renewed through community practice (Nash Ferguson, 2022; UNESCO, 2021).

Mapping the Creative Foundations of the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre

The Educulture Centre is situated in downtown Nassau and offers an immersive experience that delves into the history, artistry, and spirit of Junkanoo—the Bahamas' iconic cultural festival. Through this unique space, the Centre has enhanced deep understanding of Junkanoo's significance as a symbol of resilience, creativity, and community. In the following sections I will expand on how Arlene's creative pedagogical approach embraces the key components of creativity from the perspective of the Global South.

Experiential Learning

Arlene implements an interactive approach that mirrors the hands-on, experiential learning traditionally occurring through Junkanoo and its communities. The museum facilitates direct participation rather than theoretical instruction, a hallmark of effective non-formal education that engages multiple senses and learning modalities. This experiential dimension fosters more profound and lasting learning outcomes compared to passive information consumption, particularly for cultural practices that involve performance, craft, and embodied knowledge. By providing specialized cultural knowledge that may not be comprehensively covered in school curricula, Arlene's work exemplifies how non-formal education institutions can address gaps in formal educational offerings.

Welcoming others into various points of the annual Junkanoo programming cycle is a key feature of Arlene's teaching. This includes adapting engagement and mentorship to individuals'

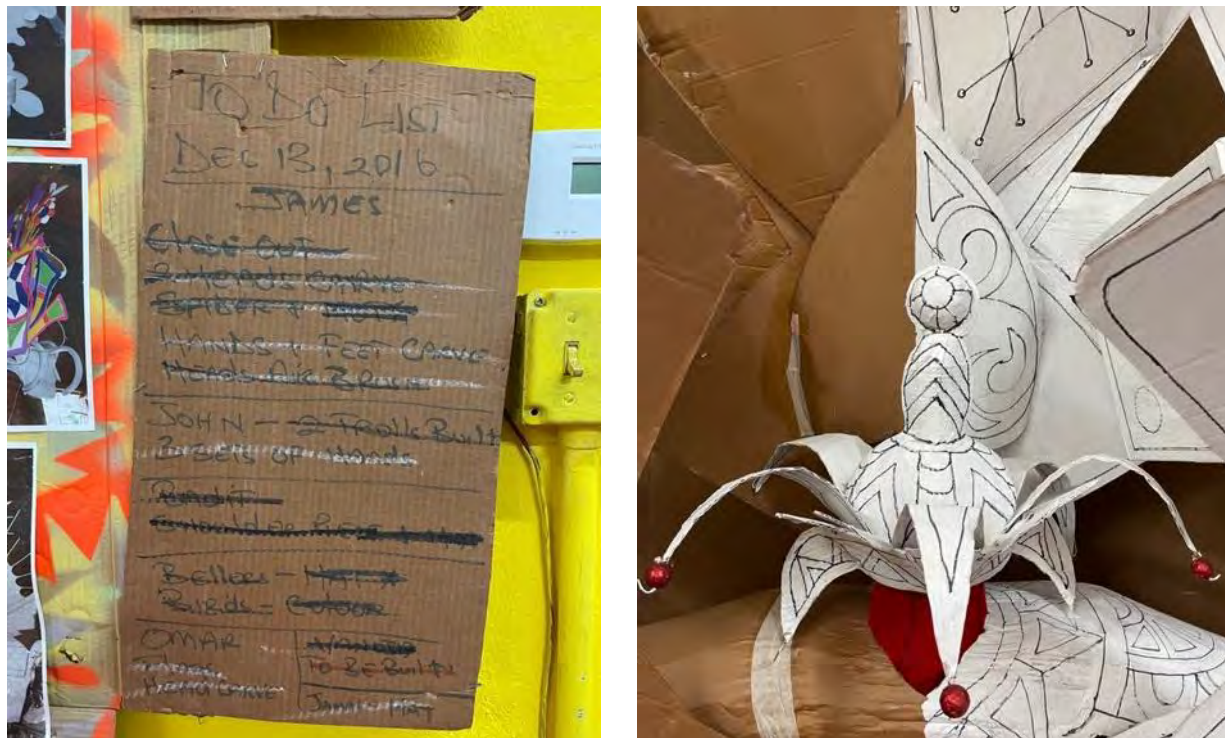


Figure 10 *Junkanoo process illustrated at Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre*

specific learning level, context, and needs. It likewise revolves around personal and collective reflection, active engagement with real-world scenarios, hands-on participation and problem-solving, allowing individuals to develop both practical and conceptual skills and knowledge. This approach is based on her own experiences and observations, with Junkanoo shacks functioning as dynamic learning environments where individuals of all ages come together to discover, create, and collaborate. Participants likewise hone their skills through hands-on experience and active participation by engaging in various activities such as costume design, music composition, and choreography. Arlene has not invented this non-formal learning approach; rather she celebrates and shares it as a symbol and model for learning in the community.

Her mentorship occurs within the traditions of Junkanoo communities, particularly the multigenerational collaboration and guidance evident in the shacks where Junkanoo groups gather to prepare for festivals. In so doing, she propagates the conditions of the shacks as organic learning environments where knowledge transfers through apprenticeship, observation, and guided participation rather than formal instruction. This exemplifies non-formal education's emphasis on situated learning, where skills and knowledge develop through participation in authentic cultural practices under the guidance of experienced practitioners. The learning experiences at both Educulture Centre and within the community demonstrate the vital connection between theory and practice, where cultural knowledge is not merely studied abstractly but embodied through direct engagement. As Arlene says, “the shack as a classroom, a learning space. Many people don't see it like that, but that's what it is because the skills are homegrown, and they are learned in the shack”. It is a space where one can develop differently

than are expected to in a formal classroom, each individual learning-by-doing, playing a specific role that has been identified as the best fit for them.

In *Let's go to B.A.Y! This is Junkanoo* (2022), Arlene explains that Junkanoo comprises a learning environment, “teaching the children and not the subject”, with all participants entering on their own terms, learning and growing together:

My teacher-trained eyes have seen children transformed in Junkanoo shacks.

Whereas they may have been lukewarm regarding learning in a formal school setting, in the shack they were suddenly different. They became excited children who took pride in work well done. They held themselves to the highest standards demonstrating that they understood character-building concepts such as teamwork and excellence (p.1)

In the shack, there is no difference between time learning and other aspects of one's life and responsibilities. As she recalls asking one community members:

What is Junkanoo to you? And he said, Junkanoo is my life. He said, it's all I have. Can you believe that? Just a perfect example of how we are... Junkanoo culture extends beyond the confines of the Shack, permeating everyday life in Bahamian communities.

Participants often find themselves applying the skills and lessons learnt in Junkanoo to various aspects of their lives, demonstrating the real-world applicability of experiential learning. Whether in project management, skill development and research, and collaboration, participants draw upon their Junkanoo experiences to navigate challenges and pursue their life goals. Although shacks are bustling with artistic materials and impressive creative achievements, most participants inside have not received formal art education. Their approaches and the resulting work build on themselves through collective action:



Figure 11 *Arlene (with her husband Silbert) participating in Junkanoo*

Once you get drawn into this, then you start to see things, and how do I take that, and I move on and so on and so on. So, every year, they've all got to get better. You see too much. You start to come up with some more creative ideas and go for it. And that's basically how it's a lot of stuff you've all done, a lot of stuff happening. And you just pick your spot. Yeah, you're the way you're most comfortable.

Everyone present is required to participate—if you're in the shack, your part of the production. Each person's strengths are recognized to determine how they can best contribute to advancing the group. Roles are coordinated to ensure they complement one another and support the group's shared goals. The benefit of this approach is that the shack experience involves intergenerational learning. Experienced members of the community serve as mentors to newcomers, passing down knowledge, skills, and traditions from one generation to the next. This mentorship dynamic fosters a sense of community and facilitates the transfer of both skills and

stories, ensuring the continuity and preservation of Junkanoo culture true to its oral cultural roots.

Arlene's dual position as both participant and educator establishes a continuous cycle of experiential learning that connects historical knowledge with contemporary practice. By actively participating in Junkanoo while simultaneously documenting and interpreting it, she bridges the gap between practitioner and educator roles, embodying the non-formal educational principle that learning occurs most effectively through direct engagement with authentic cultural practices. This approach creates opportunities for lifelong learning that extend beyond formal educational timelines, allowing participants to develop skills that remain relevant throughout their lives. Arlene's approach demonstrates remarkable flexibility in program design and implementation, exemplifying non-formal education's adaptability to learner circumstances. Her space serves diverse educational needs for various audiences, including school groups and tourists attending workshops ranging from one hour to one day. Despite these varying engagement lengths, she has designed curriculum and experiences that effectively transmit core cultural knowledge while accommodating different scheduling needs and learning objectives. This customization reflects non-formal education's commitment to meeting learners where they are and tailoring educational content to different audience requirements.

Her mentorship notably focuses on female participants, addressing potential gender disparities within traditional cultural practices. This targeted approach exemplifies non-formal education's capacity to address social equity issues through educational interventions, creating pathways for underrepresented groups to gain mastery and leadership within cultural traditions. By specifically mentoring women, Arlene contributes to the evolution of Junkanoo's gender dynamics while preserving its core cultural elements. This flexibility allows traditional practices

to remain relevant and inclusive while maintaining their cultural integrity, thus demonstrating how non-formal education can facilitate cultural evolution through creative adaptations of traditional knowledge systems.

Building Connections: Student Interests and Local Contexts

The Educulture Centre operates as a deliberate educational institution outside the formal school system. Its explicit mission, to "explore, discover and celebrate the spirit of Junkanoo in The Bahamas through an exciting variety of educational and cultural experiences for students and adults," positions it squarely within the non-formal education sector (Bahamas.com, n.d.). This space provides structured learning opportunities with specific educational objectives without being part of conventional schooling, thereby fulfilling a critical gap in cultural education that connects directly to students' local heritage and cultural identity.

The physical space itself plays a crucial role in Arlene's pedagogical approach. Resourcefully located in her childhood home, with the addition of a Junkanoo shack on the back, the space has



Figure 12 Arlene sharing personal and community contributions to the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre

been "repurposed to showcase the rich history and culture of Junkanoo and The Bahamas," creating an environment specifically designed to foster creativity and learning (Nassau Paradise Island, n.d.) The setting provides an authentic context for learning that commercial or institutional spaces might not achieve, allowing visitors to connect with Bahamian culture in an authentic, intimate setting. This repurposing of personal space reflects a common approach in non-formal education, where learning environments emerge organically from community contexts rather than being purpose-built institutional structures. The space also demonstrates resourcefulness in creating authentic learning environments without requiring conventional institutional structures. This creative approach to space allows for a more intimate connection with cultural materials than might be possible in purpose-built educational facilities. The Educulture Centre documents a cultural practice with over 200 years of history, dating back to the era of slavery while simultaneously positioning it as a vital institution for preserving intangible cultural heritage (Bahamas.com, n.d.). This preservation function aligns with non-formal education's role in safeguarding cultural practices that may receive insufficient attention in formal educational curricula. By creating comprehensive documentation and providing accessible use of Junkanoo traditions, the Educulture Centre ensures that these practices remain viable for future generations while connecting contemporary students to their historical and cultural roots.

Highlighting Local Knowledge/Practice

Arlene's dedication to preserving and fostering the tradition of Junkanoo reflects a deep commitment to community engagement, cultural preservation, and educational innovation. Arlene's multifaceted approach to education in the community, her role in both preserving and perpetuating Junkanoo customs and practice, demonstrates the evolving nature of preserving and

advocating for Bahamian cultural traditions. Junkanoo was born out of the tension and continued navigation of colonial legacies, embracing and resisting imposed structures at different points in history. When summarizing the culture of Junkanoo that was created under very specific conditions, Arlene declares, “It’s a completely homegrown festival.”

Arlene’s understanding of the importance in education through Junkanoo is grounded in a deep appreciation for its resilience in the face of societal and cultural changes. She acknowledges the tensions and challenges inherent in preserving tradition while embracing innovation, advocating for a balance that honours the spirit of Junkanoo. By advocating for this local knowledge to continue to be passed on, she is offering insights into history and traditions that are not always accessible through formal education, which still operates under the British model. As she says:

It's really community outreach at its best... So that they understand the big picture... Traditionally, in the African tradition of regaling yourself for your ceremony or your festival, the Africans in the Bahamas used what they had, indigenous materials, sponge, straw, whatever. Somewhere along the line, newspaper came in, which for me is very significant because by law, they were not permitted to learn to read and write. So, it was a further mark of defiance.

The tensions she speaks of continue today, which she also discussed head-on, with debates existing on whether the festival is ‘un-Christian’, highlighting that colonial attitudes towards anything viewed as ‘African’ persist. “Those lingering vestiges of a colonial mentality are still here in some pockets”.

Her approach to ensuring that Junkanoo remains a vibrant and evolving tradition revolves around hands-on education and participation. “We make our own costumes... It's almost like

cultural memory". The significance of the ongoing production process includes the fact that even though these deeply personal costumes are meticulously produced each year in the months leading up to the festival, they are not considered precious art objects. As she elaborates on the purpose of costumes and floats:

[Their] life needs to be at the event. And then it's not precious after. . . In most African traditions, the spirit inhabits your regalia. And once you take it off, that's it. We don't put our costumes on again. Even if we did, they would never feel the same. And so, the spirit is in the costume. . . It's almost like cultural memory. They are discarded after the parade, not because we don't value them, but because that is an inherent ritual that somewhere along the line we remembered, we learned.

Arlene's commitment has grown out of her desire to highlight Junkanoo as a symbol of resistance:

This is such a powerful story of survival and resistance. We are depriving our children of their heritage and the knowledge of who they is. And so that is what motivated me to start Educulture... Our culture in its entirety that is under attack, it is being challenged and so we need to make sure our children understand first and foremost that we have a culture and secondly what that culture is.

Arlene is uniquely positioned to do this work, as her own narrative is deeply intertwined with the history and tradition of Junkanoo. Though her role as an educator, mentor, and advocate is enacted in all aspects of her life and work in the community, the Educulture Centre acts as a unique homebase- as it is within the home she grew up in. "The only way I could tell the story of Junkanoo in this house... This is where you have come to have your off the beaten track behind the scenes true, true Bahamian experience". She explains that she and her husband felt that the

repurposing of her homestead was a natural location for her to bring to life “a combination of my twin passions of education and culture”.

As part of the research process, I observed and recorded Arlene’s work with a group of American tourists who visited the space as part of an afternoon tour of Nassau. She later informed me that she uses this welcome speech for guests from all backgrounds, including locals (with slight variation). Guests who enter the space are first greeted with Arlene’s warm and passionate welcome, asking them to participate through call and response:

It's an absolute pleasure to welcome you here, first of all, to the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. You know that my country is an archipelago we have 700 islands in our chain and this island is actually the eleventh largest but we became the top dog because we have the best harbour over the centuries all the traffic was by water and Paradise Island frames us beautifully and so for the next few minutes my pleasure to introduce you to the National Cultural Festival of the Bahamas it is a strange festival with a strange name everybody say: Junkanoo!

As the excitement builds within the group, she explains the significance of the location to bring to life the experience of Junkanoo:

I'm a little girl upstairs in my bed it's Christmas night after Santa Claus brought all those toys the big Christmas dinner just when I thought life couldn't get any better, suddenly in the middle of the night, out here in the middle of the street people are dancing! I said to Mommy, I want to go with them. She put me in a costume, and I was four years old. I've been in one virtually every Christmas ever since, so this was normal for me. Imagine my shock. Off to university I go. The first new thing I learned, the rest of

the world don't waste, I mean don't spend, the middle of the night dancing in the middle of the street and I had to find out why we crazy Bahamians do it!

From this, she says that right up to 50 years ago the Bahamas was a British colony and that in the British tradition, there was no separation between church and state:

And so, as today, 200 years ago, Christmas was to be observed with three days of holiday by everybody in the Bahamas, including those Bahamians who are enslaved. They say let's use our precious three days to recreate our festivals from home. It's time to renew the spirit and just in case anybody tries to stop us, we'll wait until the night. And off we go and discover that most of our West African festivals share four things in common. We all use a goatskin drum, some kind of bell or rattle. You always decorate yourself fully, and when you cover your face, it symbolises the presence of the ancestors. And so, in these isolated islands, leaves, feathers, and sponges become your decoration. Poignantly, she highlights the significance of acquiring paper to build your costume, just one example of how defiance and resilience are exemplified in these approaches:

And I tell the children, we'll never know for sure, something may have floated out of the window. You are not supposed to have it in your possession by law. So, we make it a part of our decoration as a mark of defiance. It was simply paper because by law you're not permitted to learn to read and write. So, you stick the paper on, and for our music, we know how to make a drum. We need a bell. We're on a farm. There goes that cow. Grab that bell from around his neck and be good to go. And 200 years ago, in the dark of the night, at Christmas time, the Bahamians said, Man, we survive.

She proceeds to share a collection of her personal items connected to the history and contemporary practice of Junkanoo, inviting everyone else to join in, making objects and playing

music together. Through her collection and space, she turns her homestead into a hub to illustrate the vibrancy and roots of the festival, even for those who do not get to personally attend it. She describes all these elements, the materials, the hands-on engagement, and even the location itself as key in the “sharing of our history and culture, using Junkanoo as the tool, the vehicle that does that”.

Arlene also reflects on an awareness of the changes and evolution within the Junkanoo, emphasizing the importance of preserving its original essence and significance. She expresses concern about the introduction of new materials and the shift towards competition, which she believes detracts from the soulful expression inherent in the tradition. By stating the importance to always questioning progress and evolution, rather than just accepting it blindly, she highlights the need to balance innovation with the preservation of cultural authenticity. This underscores her commitment to teaching the significance and history of the culture, urging others to critically examine the impact of change, or lack of knowledge preservation, on tradition.



Figure 13 Documentation of both traditional (left, center) and contemporary (right) costume styles/materials

Nature and Sustainability

Arlene's approach shows how Junkanoo serves as a poignant reminder of the intricate relationship between culture, nature, and sustainability. A throughline in the history of Junkanoo is a profound connection to the local landscape, including origins that embrace local materials. As Arlene identified, this is also part of the importance of furthering the roots of the culture, "recognizing the land and the history and the ancestors- it is so connected to the landscape." Through a celebration of the local environment, a dedication to utilising local and found materials, and a commitment to preserving cultural heritage, nature remains a relevant element as Junkanoo continues to evolve. Even at first glance, the imagery and theme of Junkanoo celebrate the unique local landscape and natural environment. Beyond the iconography of local flora, fauna, or underwater scenes, the bright colours mirror the blue waters and tropical greenery; the materials themselves also connect directly to this theme.

The craftsmanship of Junkanoo also embodies a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation through resourceful and symbolic materials. From the meticulous construction of wire frames to the intricate detailing with paper, cardboard, and natural embellishments, each piece tells a story of ingenuity and artistry. Participants reuse materials from local establishments and repurpose everyday items, underscoring a commitment to sustainability and access. Arlene remarked, "almost any object can be the subject of your creativity". She expands this point by referring to the approach of seeing 'with your Junkanoo eyes':

We would go to the food store and see a feather duster. And we won't see duster.

We'll see feathers that we can use on our costume. So, it's all creativity is the eyes that you use to see. And if you are seeing with your Junkanoo eyes, you are not seeing the normal. So almost any object can be the subject of your creativity.

Local and found materials are used in all instruments, costumes, and float construction. Historically, this included sponge, paper, goat hide, conch shells, cowbells, and tools such as saws. The dedication to using these resources persists, with the addition of locally acquired wire and cardboard and brown paper bags, sourced from partnering breweries or stores. However, other materials such as crepe paper, foam, and glitter are now being sourced from abroad to meet the demands of styles that have come as an influence from other islands and their carnivals. The inclusion of these materials is debated within Junkanoo communities, stating that not only breaks from the traditional ethos, but also creates issues around environmental sustainability. As Arlene says, "Environmental issues and sustainability have to be really considered here because there's only so much space."

Collaboration

According to Arlene, at the heart of Junkanoo lies collaboration. From the initial conception of themes to getting the group "down to Bay Street" on the night of Junkanoo performances, collaboration is integral to its success. This sentiment underscores not only the collective nature of Junkanoo encompassed in Arlene's own pedagogical approach, where individuals work together toward a shared goal. Within the Junkanoo Shacks, collaboration takes on an organized form, with each member contributing their specific roles and skills. Participants recognize the importance of working toward their strengths, ensuring that the team remains strong and cohesive. This emphasis on leveraging individual strengths contributes to the overall success of the group. Every contribution is valued and respected, fostering a sense of inclusivity and mutual respect within the group. As Arlene explained, "Once you figure out what your strength is, you stick to that, but you're still in a diverse pot. We learn that everybody has value."

Open dialogue and input from all members are also maintained throughout the process. Whether discussing theme selection or costume design, every member has the opportunity to contribute their ideas and opinions. This ensures that everyone feels heard and valued, allowing them to remain engaged in the creative process. Participants come together with a clear mission: to create memorable and impactful performances. This shared sense of purpose drives their collaborative efforts, uniting members toward a common objective. As Arlene emphasized, “Even if you are not on the design team, you have the option of telling them what your idea is. A clear goal that every man and his dog understand what our goal is.”

Beyond the shack, collaboration extends to the wider community. Local businesses, neighbors, and other supporters all play a role in the success of Junkanoo. This is also a result of each shack representing a neighbourhood who has continued to work with and support one another. “We are a neighborhood community. We're all born in the same neighborhood. Born and raised”. This community spirit strengthens social bonds and reinforces a local sense of belonging. Even further, though each shack or group is formally in competition with each other to score the most points by the judges the night of the festival, the groups, or *families* will often help each other out, sharing materials, transportation resources, etc. As Arlene pointed out:

This is all collaboration. It just never ends, it doesn't, it has no beginning and no end. It's all total collaboration. Now, the other thing is, the collaboration extends to the neighborhood. Some Bahama mama is going to cook a meal for those boys when they are in there all day, all night.

The wider networks that support Junkanoo participants also demonstrates the cultural acceptance of the arts and creativity in the Bahamas, which influences how art education can flourish in this context. In terms of local appreciation and openness for the arts, Arlene said ‘I

think it's almost second nature. We don't even think about it. You know what I mean? I think because it is, perhaps it is inherent". Arlene also tirelessly works to keep an engaged network of educators, artists, and community leaders to preserve and promote Bahamian culture through Junkanoo. This collective effort ensures that the tradition of Junkanoo continues to thrive and motivate the community for generations to come.

Holistic Approach

We have discussed the multifaceted nature of Junkanoo and its profound impact on personal, professional, and educational development. From interdisciplinary collaboration to the cultivation of essential life skills, Junkanoo exemplifies a holistic paradigm of learning that can be embraced to extend far beyond the confines of the classroom. Arlene has been dedicated to portraying how Junkanoo serves as a microcosm of comprehensive education, encompassing a



Figure 14 Members of a Junkanoo Family transporting costumes and floats from the shack to Bay Street the night of Junkanoo

wide array of subjects and disciplines. Participants engage in activities that integrate mathematics, history, language arts, and social studies, among others, seamlessly woven into the fabric of Junkanoo culture, executed through the arts. Whether designing costumes, composing music, or choreographing performances, individuals acquire knowledge and skills that transcend traditional academic boundaries. She has literally illustrated this (and actively shares it both with learners and those she is advocating to for its integration in formal education. “I took all of the steps that we followed to go through the parade, to go to the parade, and linked them to the disciplines in the school curriculum”

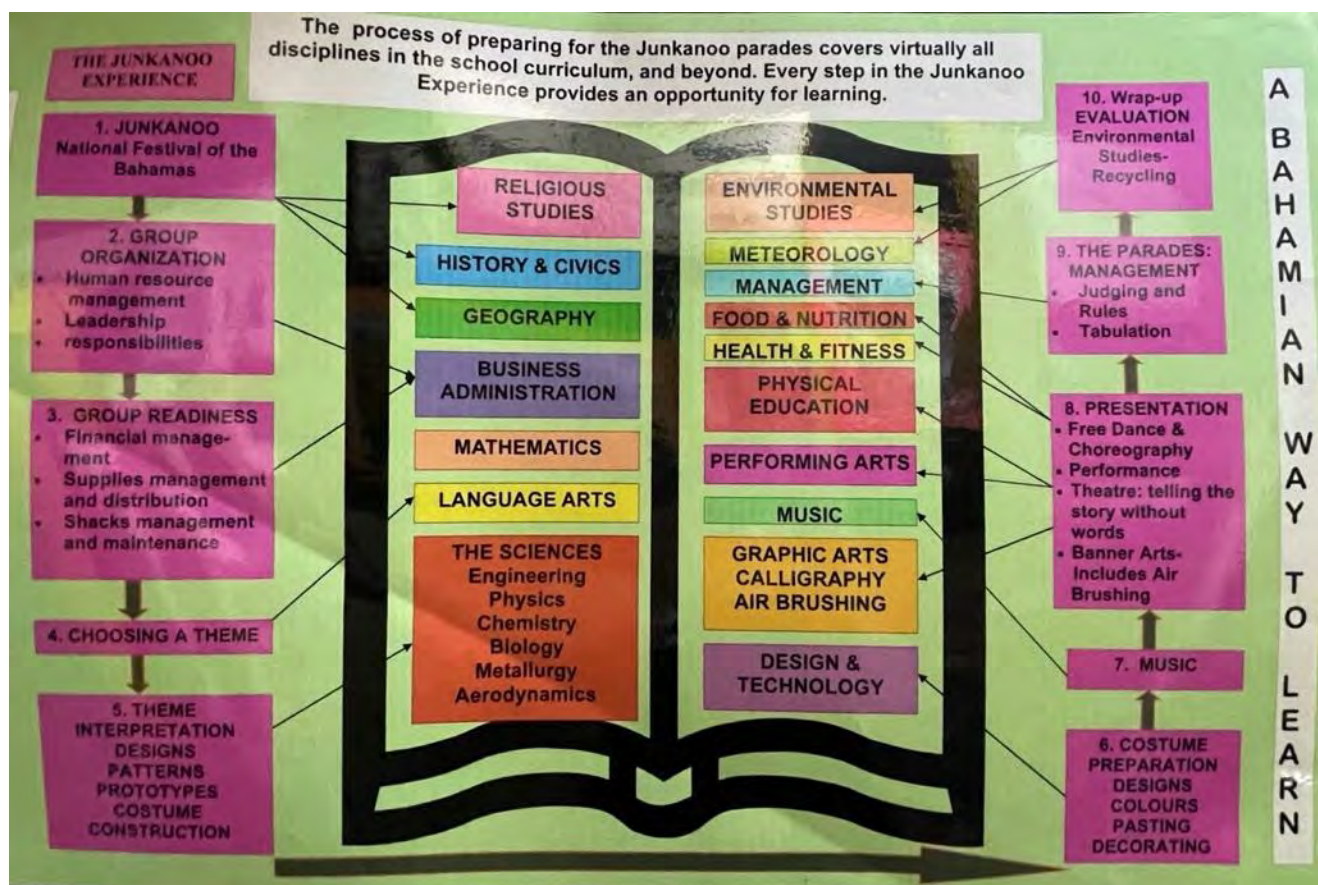


Figure 15 Arlene's visual representation of Junkanoo as 'a Bahamian Way to Learn'

The annual cycle of Junkanoo programming provides participants with ongoing opportunities for personal and professional growth. From the initial planning stages to the culminating parade, individuals are immersed in a dynamic process of learning, creation, and collaboration. Each year presents new challenges and opportunities for growth, fostering resilience, adaptability, and a lifelong commitment to quality:

We know exactly how to... how to complete a project, we can get there, come hell or high water. That's only one lesson. Other lessons like teamwork and patience and all of these Shack lessons for life, I call them, I tell the children.

These ongoing lessons in teamwork build both individual and collective problem-solving skills. "How do you overcome this challenge? And we have learnt to do that. We have seen shack walls come down, then the costume couldn't fit through the door. We will go to any lengths to achieve our goal".

"Discipline, patience, time management—these are all fundamental lessons gleaned from Junkanoo." As Arlene explains, participation in Junkanoo cultivates essential life skills and character traits that extend beyond the realm of artistic expression. These skills, along with teamwork, are instilled through the rigorous demands of Junkanoo preparation. Participants learn to navigate challenges, overcome obstacles, and strive for excellence in all endeavors. These foundational lessons serve as guiding principles both within the context of Junkanoo and throughout all aspects of life.

Junkanoo is inherently interdisciplinary. "Collaboration between music, dance, performance, and visual arts is integral to the overall performance". This interdisciplinary approach fosters creativity, innovation, and a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of artistic expression. It exemplifies a holistic approach to education that integrates creative output,

interdisciplinary collaboration, and character development. Through participation in Junkanoo, individuals acquire a comprehensive skill set, foster a deep appreciation for cultural heritage, and forge lifelong connections within their communities. Arlene's work uplifts Junkanoo as a beacon of creativity, resilience, and cultural pride, with the potential to continue to inspire generations of Bahamians to feel empowered in their own learning and development.

Chapter Conclusion

Arlene's dual contributions - through the Educulture Centre and through community mentorship - represent complementary yet distinct approaches to non-formal education and the epistemologies of the Global South. The museum provides a structured, accessible entry point to Junkanoo culture for diverse audiences, including those without prior exposure to Bahamian traditions. It creates a deliberate learning environment with curated experiences and explanatory frameworks that make cultural knowledge accessible. This approach aligns with more organized modes of non-formal education that maintain some structural elements of formal learning while operating outside institutional constraints.

Her community mentorship represents a more embedded, practice-based educational approach where learning occurs through progressive participation in authentic cultural activities. This mode of non-formal education more closely resembles apprenticeship models where knowledge transfers through demonstration, guided practice, and gradual assumption of responsibility within a community of practitioners. Her dual approach offers valuable insights for non-formal education theory and practice, particularly regarding cultural heritage preservation in relation to the arts. It suggests that comprehensive cultural education requires both institutional spaces for organized learning and community-based opportunities for practice and mentorship.

The combination addresses different learning needs and contexts while ensuring both the documentation and living continuity of cultural artistic traditions. Arlene's integrated yet distinct educational contributions thus represent a model for holistic approaches to education that balance cultural preservation with evolution, accessibility with authenticity, and structure with community embeddedness.

The practices observed at Educulture exemplify the *pasting* dimension of *Pasting Tides Pedagogy*—an ethos of layering, adaptation, and intergenerational continuity that sustains creative learning through material and communal connection. Together, these dynamics position Educulture, and Junkanoo itself, as a pedagogical system that is collective, culturally grounded, and sustained through community practice (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Nash Ferguson, 2022; UNESCO, 2021). Arlene Nash Ferguson's approach demonstrates how cultural knowledge is made durable through acts of reassembly, care, and participation. Within this context, *pasting* becomes both a creative method and a pedagogical stance that values collaboration, history, and the making-do spirit characteristic of Bahamian cultural life.

Chapter 6: The Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.): The Educator's Perspective

Introduction

This chapter highlights Antonius Roberts' work and ideas as another case study in non-formal art education, complementing those of Arlene Nash Ferguson in the previous chapter. It examines Antonius' contributions through his establishment of I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression) and other community spaces. By exploring Antonius' integrated approach to experiential learning, sustainability, and mentorship, the chapter provides a thematic analysis of his efforts to foster artistic growth and cultural preservation within the Bahamian context. Like the previous chapter examining the Educulture Centre, this analysis of I.C.E. illustrates diverse yet interconnected approaches to non-formal education that prioritize local knowledge, collaboration, and creative expression. My relationship with Antonius developed through professional collaboration and repeated visits to I.C.E., which allowed for extended observation of the mentorship practices described in this chapter.

Antonius Roberts and the I.C.E.

Arts and culture in the Bahamas are deeply integrated into society. Over recent years, in the wake of growing recognition and acceptance, there has been a noticeable development of an ecosystem that supports and celebrates visual art. This is evidenced by number of Bahamian artists now being part of the international art market, which has been met with enthusiastic interest. The proximity to the United States, with its strong economy and vibrant art marketplace has contributed to this advancement. The emergence of new galleries in the Bahamas further signifies the growth of the art scene, providing platforms for visual artists to showcase their work and connect with broader audiences. Additionally, the presence of curators with discerning eyes

has helped expose young talent to wider markets, nurturing a solid ecosystem for artistic development. These conditions have propelled the local art market to new heights, surpassing neighboring Caribbean nations.

One of the most widely recognized Bahamian artists is Antonius Roberts. Motivated by his own memory of returning home in 1981 after studying at Philadelphia College of Art (now the University of the Arts) as the only Bahamian with a professional art degree that year, Antonius was struck by the lack of a contemporary visual arts ecosystem in his own country. He soon evolved not only as an artist, but as an educator and community organizer, whose name became synonymous with the notion of *Sacred Spaces*. This phrase was first born out of his site-specific installation/intervention at the Clifton Heritage National Park, a historically significant site on the western coast of New Providence Island that includes ruins of a former Loyalist plantation, enslaved African quarters, and Lucayan archaeological remains. There, Roberts sculpted dead but rooted trees into towering female figures, honouring the memory and spiritual presence of African ancestors. The installation marked the beginning of a practice of creating reflective environments grounded in history, ecology, and cultural remembrance. Since then, this body of work has expanded to several additional artworks activating historically and symbolic sites across the Bahamas. Additionally, the concept of *Sacred Spaces* has also expanded to refer to the multiple arts and culture spaces on the island he has established. Reflecting on this, Antonius says, “I don't think I create sacred spaces. Sacred spaces exist. But I recognize the sacredness within the spaces for the objects that I have access to”.

His decades as a community leader in both formal and non-formal education have enabled him to leverage his skills and experience to foster environments that have resulted in a holistic approach that interweaves creative pedagogy into all his endeavours, including the



Figure 16 *Hillside House (left) and The Gallery & Wine Bar (right)*

establishment of three arts and culture spaces– Hillside House, The Gallery & Wine Bar, and I.C.E.

Hillside House is a historic building situated overlooking Nassau's harbour. It was first established as Antonius' personal art studio, where he mentored many local emerging artists. Today, Hillside House is a cultural centre and art gallery, showcasing diverse range of Bahamian artwork, providing a platform for local artists to showcase their work and engage with the community through exhibitions, artist talks, and cultural events. The Gallery & Wine Bar, which is the most recent art space Antonius has created, is situated in the heart of the Nassau Cruise Terminal. It features a rotating schedule of large exhibitions. It is also a vibrant social space, combining an art gallery with a wine bar, thereby creating a relaxed atmosphere for locals and visitors alike. In addition, it serves as a space for emerging artists whom Antonius appoints as an artist-in-residence on a yearly basis.

The third centre established by Antonius, I.C.E., at a key moment in 2019 when art and culture in the Bahamas were attaining increased recognition as significant ecosystems of Bahamian society. As an innovative space, I.C.E. represents the culmination of Antonius' lifelong commitment to conservation, creativity, and community building through non-formal educational approaches. It embodies his vision of fostering sustainable creative environments that nurture emerging artists while addressing broader societal and environmental interests. As he says, “I think predominantly I.C.E. is the most significant . . . not only of my work but of my life”. By focusing simultaneously on environmental sustainability, cultural heritage, and professional opportunity, I.C.E. exemplifies a holistic approach to non-formal education that addresses interconnected domains of human development and community well-being.

I.C.E. is not a school, but a creative space where learning occurs through proximity, observation, and participation. Roberts positions himself as facilitator and mentor rather than teacher, and the environment itself plays a formative pedagogical role. The site, a transformed industrial space associated with the history of ice production and enterprise in Nassau, shapes how learning takes place by reinforcing themes of renewal, adaptation, and possibility (Incubator for Collaborative Expression, n.d.; Roberts, n.d.; UNESCO, 2021).

Mapping The Creative Foundations of I.C.E.

The I.C.E. consists of studio spaces, workshops, and exhibition areas in the government industrial park of Nassau. It serves as a collaborative space for emerging and creative artists to work, collaborate, and grow together within the context of a local arts community. Each year, Antonius selects local emerging artists to come and work as ‘residents’ within the I.C.E. space, developing and defining their creative practices under his mentorship. Through this platform, he works to support these young artists to individually define how they can contribute to the cultural

landscape of the Bahamas. As in the previous chapter, the main topics that I will examine are experiential learning, collaboration, local knowledge/practice, nature and sustainability, and holistic approaches exemplified by I.C.E.



Figure 17 *Communal studio spaces in I.C.E.*

Experiential Learning

Antonius' approach at I.C.E. embodies the principles of experiential learning, focusing on lifelong skills, experimentation, and inclusive mentorship rather than prescribed goals, techniques, or structures. He cultivates a dynamic learning environment, real-world professional opportunities, and encouragement for others to embrace collaboration, reflection, and individualized learning. At the core of Antonius' philosophy is the belief in providing a nurturing environment where emerging artists can thrive through hands-on experience and mentorship. Rejecting the traditional teacher-student dynamic, Antonius views his role as that of a facilitator, guiding residents as they explore their creative potential.

Antonius believes "that people best learn through action by doing things" and can benefit from being provided a forum for them to learn hands-on at their own individual paces. He refers to I.C.E. as "a flexible sanctuary for creativity". This flexibility is required:

Because particularly in life or in creativity, there's really no right or wrong. It's no good or bad. It's all relative. I really think that you nurture creativity through doing. I think the more you understand the materials or your experiences, this whole creative process should become second nature.

Despite his extensive background in formal education, Antonius rejects formal roles such as teacher/pupil at I.C.E.:

I don't see them as my students... they're here because they want to be here . . . The first thing that is important to me is recognition. And understanding who they are, where they came from, and the level of their own life. And then the language that they speak to. And so that process is very important to me before I can begin to think about sharing what I know in a manner at which I feel that I can do it.

Drawing from his own experience under the mentorship of Brent Malone, a Bahamian photorealist painter and gallery owner, Antonius seeks to offer residents a comprehensive understanding of the artistic process through lived experience:

I've taught for 20 years, and I understand the importance of mentorship. I thought because I had this amazing space- just allow emerging artists or people who have this desire to be creative to just come within this space to learn to see what I do, and see what others do, and try to figure this whole thing out... Because there's no separation for me when I was growing up, I had Brent Malone as a mentor, so I was able to see the whole

structure of art from the creative aspect to the museum the gallery aspect to the whole business of art it, the promotion and so forth.

Antonius ' own studio is also part of I.C.E., so residents have access to him as a living example. He reflects on how he seeks to propagate this approach:

The most impactful and effective teachers that I've had, taught and led by example. And so therefore I try to live that. I'm not going to tell you how to do something... I can show you how I do it. I can have a conversation and try to encourage you or force you to just think a little differently, or try to point you in a direction, and then I would use myself as an example to you.

Antonius has always seen the value of mentorship in the local art community, as he has seen many local students also greatly benefiting from apprenticeships in professional studios separate from their class time, where they learn what it means to develop one's own practice away from planned structures or required outcomes:

Is there a structure? No, there cannot be a structure because often times I think it's important to meet people where they are and try to find a language that they understand and so you can take them to where they feel they want to be or need to be.

He is motivated by a desire to provide emerging artists with more personalized education than they may be receiving within school: "there's less relating to each individual student there, or understanding that different students may learn differently, or, you know, someone in their life might be at a certain point". He notes that the set structures of art school aren't always in line with the ways of learning or development of the students he works with:

Because they feel, oh my goodness, this is too confining. These deadlines and these expectations confine to you, which is totally against this whole concept or process of creativity.

Antonius shares a poignant personal realization around the value and application of creativity in everyday life:

Creativity to me is life and living... When I was a student, I used to say, creativity is the- no art - is the end product of a creative experience. That was my definition of art. Art, the end product of a creative experience. But I find the older I get, living and life requires, requires trying to find the most simple solutions to big problems, just so you can, you can exist in this world.

At I.C.E., experimentation is encouraged, with Antonius saying:

Creativity is about living, problem-solving and finding new, exciting ways to experience things rather than focusing just on art products. It develops through action and doing rather than strict structures.

He believes that fostering creativity requires an openness to experimentation and discovery rather than judging outcomes. When critiques, studio visits, and exhibitions (all borrowed from more formal or traditional models) are held at I.C.E., they are aimed towards building skills not products. I.C.E. residents set their own goals and timelines, with Antonius only insisting that they each take full responsibility for their own work and development. "And so... I don't have any expectations... I try to gently encourage them to think, just think realistically about life and living". Therefore, structures that have formed have been introduced by the residents themselves, such as skill sharing and other collective workshops.

Central to this experiential learning is the practice of personal reflection at all stages. Antonius encourages residents to critically reflect on their artistic practice, identifying areas for growth and setting personal goals for future exploration. Reflective practice, Antonius believes, is key to honing one's craft and developing a deeper understanding of the creative process. "It's not about getting it right the first time," Antonius affirms, "It's about learning from the process." By embracing failure as an opportunity for growth, residents cultivate resilience and adaptability, essential qualities for navigating the challenges of the art world. Just as the resident artists are each engaging in an ongoing process of personal evolution, so is the space itself. As the interests and needs of the residents and the broader community change, so does the programming of the space:

I just wanted to be accessible. Alright, for those who are interested in learning from me in this space. And so, but not only learning from me, learning from one another.

Antonius' pedagogical methodology centers on artistic practice and interdisciplinary collaboration, providing direct engagement rather than theoretical instruction alone. This approach began early in his career, as he developed teaching methods that included working with students in his own studio as apprentices, which would later inform his mentorship programs (D'Aguilar Art Foundation, n.d.). Unlike formal educational institutions with standardized curricula and credentialing systems, I.C.E. offers flexible learning pathways guided by mentorship and project-based experiences, aligning with defining characteristics of non-formal education.

The physical transformation of the I.C.E. facility itself became a powerful experiential learning opportunity. Antonius secured a ten-year lease on a 36,000 square foot site with a dilapidated warehouse in 2019 and immediately began, with the help of the community, a

process of conservation, preservation, and restoration—transforming the neglected structure into a vibrant creative hub (Incubator for Collaborative Expression, n.d.). This act of rehabilitation serves as both practical facility development and powerful pedagogical metaphor. The warehouse's transformation from "once-derelict structure hidden by overgrown foliage" to thriving creative center demonstrates Antonius' belief in the possibility of renewal and repurposing—themes that echo throughout his artistic work and educational approach (Hillside House Gallery, n.d.). The facility is now "fully self-sustaining with its use of solar power and well water," incorporating "state-of-the-art solar power energy and water systems" alongside a "thriving garden" (Hillside House Gallery, n.d.; Incubator for Collaborative Expression, n.d.).



Figure 18 *Renovation documentation at I.C.E.*

The integration of these environmental systems transforms the facility from mere classroom into living laboratory for sustainability education. This approach creates a continuous cycle of experiential learning that connects theoretical knowledge with practical application, embodying the non-formal educational principle that learning occurs most effectively through direct engagement with authentic practices in real-world contexts.

I.C.E. offers its residents comprehensive experiential learning opportunities through active involvement in exhibition planning and professional development activities. Antonius empowers emerging artists by inviting them to participate hands-on in all aspects of exhibition creation – from conceptualisation and curation to installation and promotion. These practical learning experiences extend beyond I.C.E.'s physical space into the broader Bahamian community through collaborative projects with local businesses, schools, and cultural institutions, creating meaningful connections between artists and diverse audiences.

The mentorship model established by Antonius ensures that these experiences occur within a supportive framework where established artists guide emerging talents through real-world challenges while encouraging creative risk-taking. This approach exemplifies experiential learning at its most effective—combining authentic professional challenges with reflective practice and community engagement to develop well-rounded creative practitioners equipped for sustainable careers in the arts.

Antonius' approach demonstrates adaptability to learner circumstances. I.C.E.'s primary educational approach involves creating opportunities "for young and emerging artists to explore their potential in a sustainable environment" as 'residents' in the space (Incubator for Collaborative Expression, n.d.). Residents are granted a studio space in the facility, where they can work individually as well as with their peers through both structured professional

opportunities and informal interactions. Antonius and other established local artists provide guidance while encouraging self-directed discovery. The emphasis on "expanding horizons into potentially sustaining themselves through their work" reveals I.C.E.'s concern with both artistic development and economic empowerment—addressing practical challenges facing creative practitioners in The Bahamas.

This is an approach Antonius has fine-tuned over the years, publicly beginning with his coordination of the FINCO Summer Art Workshops. This experience provided him valuable experience in designing and implementing non-formal arts education programming for young Bahamians (The Current: Baha Mar Gallery, n.d.). These workshops represented an early iteration of Antonius' commitment to nurturing creative talent outside traditional educational frameworks. His ability to design educational experiences that adapt to diverse participant needs while maintaining core learning objectives exemplifies the flexibility that characterizes effective non-formal education. This adaptability creates pathways for learners who might not thrive in more rigid educational structures, demonstrating how non-formal approaches can expand educational access while fostering innovation.

Building Connections: Student Interests and Local Contexts

Antonius conceived I.C.E. as "a shared space that would allow scientists, educators, researchers, artists, mathematicians and engineers to experience and benefit from interdisciplinary collaboration" (Hillside House Gallery, n.d.). This vision positions I.C.E. as what might be termed a "boundary-spanning" educational initiative that bridges traditionally separated fields of knowledge and practice, creating meaningful connections to participants' diverse interests and professional aspirations.

Learning within the community of I.C.E. extends beyond the confines of the studio walls, with residents actively engaging with the broader community through exhibitions, events, and open studios. Through these real-world opportunities, residents gain practical experience, build professional networks, and contribute to the cultural fabric of their community. Antonius also emphasizes the importance of providing residents with access to professional opportunities, stating, "They need to be able to do so almost every day... We need to nurture young curators, young arts leaders, and provide them with the skills and knowledge to succeed in the art world." The relationship between I.C.E. and Antonius' earlier Hillside House Studio & Gallery (established in 2012) creates an extended educational ecosystem. Described as "sister sites," these spaces offer complementary environments for artistic development and exhibition (Hillside House Gallery, n.d.). This network approach enhances the educational capacity of both facilities, providing participants with access to different contexts and resources depending on their developmental needs and project requirements. By creating these overlapping spaces for engagement with local artistic traditions and contemporary creative practices, Antonius builds connections that are deeply rooted in Bahamian cultural contexts while remaining open to global influences and innovative approaches.

Highlighting Local Knowledge/Practice

Embracing local knowledge and heritage is important to Antonius in fostering a sense of identity, belonging, and empowerment among residents. Growing up immersed in a matriarchal culture, Antonius acknowledges the pivotal role of community and family in shaping his worldview. Raised by nurturing female figures within his family circle, he developed a keen understanding of the Bahamian matriarchal culture, which emphasizes communal support, care, and interconnectedness. Drawing from these formative experiences, Antonius carries forward the

values instilled in him, finding inspiration in the collective wisdom passed down through generations: "I always like to honour history...I'm not trying to make up anything or reinvent anything". For Antonius, honouring ancestors and paying homage to the knowledge of previous generations is significant, providing learners with a sense of continuity and rootedness in their cultural identity.

Central to Antonius' own artistic practice is the celebration of indigenous/local materials and practices, which he says are often stigmatized within broader societal contexts. As an artist, Antonius challenges prevailing biases and misconceptions surrounding local craftsmanship and artistic expression. His sculptures, crafted from native materials, serve as powerful symbols of cultural resilience and creativity, challenging conventional notions of beauty and merit: "Even my sculptures...people...thought I was working voodoo". Navigating cultural biases and stereotypes, Antonius champions the intrinsic value of local materials, challenging colonial narratives and promoting cultural pride.

Building on the keystone elements of his artmaking, Antonius approaches educational initiatives in ways aimed at reframing perceptions of indigenous knowledge, highlighting its relevance and significance in contemporary contexts. One way he does so is through emphasis on revisiting and experimenting with traditional techniques and practices. By encouraging his residents to explore ancient methods of craftsmanship, such as ceramic pottery making without modern tools, Antonius sparks curiosity and innovation. To facilitate experimentation and discovery, he provides resources within the studio, including supporting the residents in the building of a makeshift furnaces/kiln out of remnants of the site's former factory. As part of this dialogue, he also brought in ceramic objects from his own personal collection for the group to

engage with directly, including Greek Columbian pottery and masks that had been made by another local artist.

The site's previous role as the island's ice factory also greatly contributes to its recognition of local histories. The name itself, I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression), playfully nods at this history:

We bring youngsters in and then they become ice you know- they come here with water, but then they should be solidified as they go through this whole process, and they can they become crystallized.

This metaphor is pedagogically significant because it frames learning not as external instruction imposed upon the learner, but as an unfolding process of emergence shaped by environment, mentorship, and sustained practice (Incubator for Collaborative Expression, n.d.; Glăveanu et al., 2019).

Much like he did with Hillside House before this, through repurposing historical buildings, Antonius creates immersive environments that serve as living testaments to the past. The ice factory, which he proudly points out was the first bohemian owned company in the government industrial park, serves as a tangible link to the island's industrial heritage, inviting visitors to explore a broad tapestry of Bahamian history. He also speaks about the circumstances that brought him to rent this property when he was looking for a site large enough that he could sculpt a monumental local Tamarind Tree for a commission. The required scale for this, as well as the funds received for the commission, allowed him to also transformation the space into one where he could run programming with local youth/emerging artists.

It's almost like that project is recycling itself into this community. Well, and you have now made the connection. I mean, to honour my ancestors, all right, and to honour

the history, particularly the tamarin tree that was removed, all right, I felt it would be so significant... If the stories and the whole spirit of my ancestors could be manifested into a space that will continue to educate and continue to grow and to expand. And so that was the whole vision.

Contemporary local engagement also receives the same reverence as cultural past.

Through community participation onsite, across the island, and even internationally, Antonius reinforces to the residents that they are part of a larger ecosystem that is shaped by its participants and varied contexts. This often includes bringing in local professionals, elders, and other stakeholders to share knowledge and reinforce the valuing of natural, historical, and cultural materials. This empowers learners to forge deeper connections with their identity and surroundings, also sharing with the residents the importance of celebrating and preserving collective heritage.

Nature and Sustainability

Perhaps Antonius' dedication to stewardship is most evident in his appreciation of the land- including the I.C.E. property itself. When embarking on a tour of the sprawling art space, one is immersed in a vibrant ecosystem teeming with life. Amidst the lush foliage of fruit trees, flourishing vegetable gardens, and captivating sculptures crafted from reclaimed woods, Antonius reflects on his deep admiration for the natural world and its profound influence on his artistic endeavours:

I walk in this space, and I just feel so at home. So inspired. And there's no disconnect. It's just a natural progression as to why I'm as an artist... I kind of step into this role of almost like being a steward of our environment. Collecting wood that came from trees that were cut down. An environment being violated.



Figure 19 *Garden and greenhouse space at I.C.E.*

Antonius advocates for a creative approach that draws inspiration from nature—a philosophy he embodies through his art and teaching. For Antonius, nature serves not only as a muse but as a guiding force. He champions a nature-inspired approach to education, leveraging art as a catalyst for environmental awareness and agricultural literacy: "Our forefathers always said that- plant something- that is more valuable to you. Something that will give something back to you, like where you can feed yourself." I.C.E.'s property is home to countless edible species, which Antonius cultivates in the greenhouse, planters, or some, as Antonius says, 'he met there'. The property is meticulously cared for to create an inviting community space for individual and collective reflection. Antonius notes that there is value in a resident simply deciding to come out and spend time surrounded by the natural resources for their creative contemplation:

If we start thinking about the whole process of what is involved in growing.

Alright, and so therefore there's a little bit of agriculture, there's a little bit of science.

And so, we're looking at creativity and we're looking at science.

His nature-inspired approach revolves around educating individuals on agriculture, ecology, and environmental stewardship through artistic expression. By intertwining art with lessons on sustainable practices and local culture, Antonius fosters a deeper understanding of our interconnectedness with the natural world.

In a world grappling with environmental challenges, Antonius emphasizes the urgent need for sustainable practices and ecological consciousness:

And if we don't understand this ecosystem, and we don't figure out how to harness nature and figure out how to utilize all of this so that we can learn about nature...how to sustain ourselves...how do we have these major conversations about self-resolution?

His approach to sustainability transcends mere resource management, encompassing a profound understanding of the interconnectedness of all living beings:

I have an opportunity for this place to become a reservoir...a learning space where people could understand our past so we can understand our future.

Drawing inspiration from nature and cultural traditions, he encourages learners to perceive beyond the surface, recognising the inherent narratives woven into their surroundings:

A tree is a symbol. It starts to grow, and then it starts to shoot, and I think of that entire process. I see it as a dream as that's come true. And it continues to grow, and it has happened to me. It evolved and it's perceived differently by individuals. That was driven home to me when I visited Africa. Just to see this expansive, these expansive trees... And how it is respected by their family, their friends. And it symbolizes, family. It symbolizes

a strong connection to their history, to their ancestors as well. It's not an object, it's a form, it's a community. It is a space. It is a place where people gather... And so, we're under this tree, and then, first of all, we get to know one another.

Collaboration

Collaboration is integral to the experiential learning journey at I.C.E.. Residents engage in collaborative projects, dialogue, and co-hosted events, developing community and shared exploration. Through collaboration, residents gain exposure to diverse perspectives and learn essential teamwork skills vital for their future careers as artists. When speaking of the role collaboration plays at I.C.E., Antonius boasts:

It's everything. I don't know if you're aware, but if you look at a lot of successful artists, art problems, whether it's on Broadway, whether it's a band, dancers, musicians, actors, everything becomes larger and more impactful because many hands touch it.

As residents work in various arts disciplines, the studio serves as a multifunctional space where artists come together to exchange ideas and skills, learning from one another's interests and mediums. For instance, painters may venture into new territories, such as learning to play musical instruments like the piano, through exploration facilitated by the open environment of the space and its resources. This interdisciplinary approach not only broadens artistic horizons but also promotes mutual learning and inspiration among peers.

I.C.E. is a social space. Antonius also emphasizes the importance of having communal spaces where individuals can gather and converse. Whether it's a designated meeting area or informal hangout spots, Antonius recognizes the significance of these places onsite in nurturing a sense of belonging and fostering connections among residents. This creates a supportive community where ideas flourish and friendships thrive.

Through informal gatherings as well as planned group activities, students engage in meaningful dialogue, exchange feedback, and work together on projects, enriching their artistic journey. Skill-sharing and peer knowledge exchange usually happens casually but also becomes more organized as residents often facilitate workshops to share their approaches with each other. By creating an open studio layout and fostering a spirit of collaboration and peer learning, Antonius provides opportunities for students to interact and support one another's artistic growth. Furthermore, Antonius also brings members of the broader community in, inviting local and international artists for studio visits and informal gatherings. This includes artists and curators who are thus real-life connections that will actively shape the resident's professional networks. Additionally, when holding events at I.C.E., there is a standing open invitation extended to all who want to take part. In addition to working on the site nearby, Antonius also makes himself available through *Weekly Coffee Chats* gathering where residents and guests can come together to informally share what they are working on and ask each other for advice.

Community engagement represents a crucial dimension of I.C.E.'s educational framework. The facility functions as "a hub that symbolizes the perfect melting pot of local artistry, industry, ecology and community outreach" (Hillside House Gallery, n.d.). By facilitating interactions between creative practitioners and broader community networks within the space and beyond, I.C.E. creates informal learning opportunities that strengthen social capital while generating practical applications for creative work. This approach embodies the situated learning principle that professional development occurs most effectively through legitimate participation in communities of practice.

Antonius' extensive international connections, developed throughout his artistic career, enhance I.C.E.'s capacity for productive collaborations. His own experiences working

internationally—from Italy to China to Germany—inform the design and implementation of I.C.E.'s exchange programs (D'Aguilar Art Foundation, n.d.). This global perspective ensures that I.C.E.'s educational offerings maintain relevant connections to international developments while remaining grounded in Bahamian cultural contexts. The international collaborations create opportunities for cross-cultural learning that enrich participants' perspectives while expanding their professional networks, demonstrating how non-formal education can transcend geographic boundaries while strengthening local communities.

Peer mentorship forms the core of I.C.E.'s educational methodology, with Antonius leading by example to model a structured yet flexible environment where creatives can develop their skills and professional identities under experienced guidance and a support system of peers (The Current: Baha Mar Gallery, n.d.). This holistic support recognizes that sustainable artistic practice requires not only creative skills but also professional acumen, networks, and resilience—areas often neglected in formal arts education. The mentorship approach creates opportunities for knowledge transfer that extends beyond technical skills to encompass professional values, ethical considerations, and cultural contexts.

Holistic Approach

Antonius' promotes a multifaceted view of learning that extends beyond the confines of conventional pedagogy, placing local perspectives of creativity at the centre. Through a synthesis of local wisdom, individual creative expression, and community participation, Antonius fosters environments where learners are encouraged to explore, create, and connect on a level that permeates multiple aspects of their lives. Thus, he is fostering a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between art, culture, and lived experiences. At all stages of the development

process, Antonius empowers emerging practitioners to become active participants in their own learning journeys.

Residents play expanding roles in all aspects of the daily work and special projects that happen at I.C.E.. As their dynamics will shift based on expanding individual and collective goals, residents often become more resourceful, embracing new approaches and tasks. For instance, if they are organizing an exhibition, they work together or delegate based on interest/enthusiasm to select work, create promotional material, participate in outreach, etc.. This is an example of community-engaged learning, where learners are invited to actively participate in collaborative endeavours that extend beyond artistic pursuits. They are also building an understanding of their place within the broader community. Through these professional experiences and hands-on projects, learners organically bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and lived realities: "It's more of a life experience than just an art experience", declares Antonius. They become capable to not only adapt to changing needs of their practice/lives, but also self-reliant and flexible. Resourcefulness, consistency, and discipline are also identified by Antonius as lifelong skills he aims to instil in the residents.

Interdisciplinary collaboration serves as a cornerstone for broad innovation and growth. By bringing together artists from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, learners are afforded the opportunity to exchange ideas, perspectives, and techniques, enriching their creative journeys: "Residents work across disciplines, learning by doing and participating in all aspects". Furthermore, the process cultivates a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of different artistic forms and practices.

In addition to understanding how all the various elements of his approach build to create his creative pedagogy, he also understands the importance of its ongoing nature:

For me is longevity is important. There are a lot of spaces, places that come and go. But for me, sustainability and longevity are so important. Because I think the longer you work at something and allow that thing with patients to build out, then there is a kind of seriousness that is attached to it.

Just like the approach to creative practice he fosters, he intends I.C.E. to evolve, potentially expanding to include spaces for local and international artists to also live on-site while they work together. He acts as a living example of the values of dedication and growth that he instills in residents.

Chapter Conclusion

Antonius' creation of I.C.E. represents a sophisticated integration of multiple non-formal educational approaches. Through thoughtful integration of physical space, mentorship practices, sustainability principles, and collaborative networks, I.C.E. addresses multiple dimensions of learning while remaining responsive to community needs and cultural contexts. The initiative demonstrates how non-formal education can bridge traditional divides between individual



Figure 20 Collaborative work and exhibition space at I.C.E.

development and community engagement, creating educational experiences that simultaneously benefit participants and strengthen their social contexts.

Antonius' emphasis on sustainability further extends the educational impact of I.C.E. beyond immediate participants. Environmental sustainability is reflected in self-sufficient systems and ecological stewardship, economic sustainability in the cultivation of professional opportunities for artists, and cultural sustainability in the preservation and continuation of creative practices. Through this integration, I.C.E. demonstrates how non-formal education can respond to complex social and environmental challenges by connecting individual creative development with broader community resilience.

From this case, key pedagogical insights emerge: learning is structured through environment rather than curriculum, mentorship operates through presence rather than instruction, and professional development is embedded within community. Creativity is inseparable from ecological awareness, and learning unfolds as self-directed and relational. These dynamics show how the pedagogy operates through openness, transformation, and sustained community engagement (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Incubator for Collaborative Expression, n.d.; UNESCO, 2021).

Antonius Roberts' practice at I.C.E. reflects the tides dimension of *Pasting Tides Pedagogy*. His ecological and community-oriented approach embodies a rhythmic creativity that renews itself through exchange, collaboration, and responsiveness to environment. The tides metaphor captures the flow of knowledge and relationships that move between people, materials, and natural systems, illustrating how creative practice can both sustain and be sustained by its ecological and social contexts.

The next chapter validates and extends the findings presented here—and in the previous chapter—by examining the reflections and insights of students who have participated in Arlene’s and Antonius’ programs and mentorship. By exploring learners' perspectives, the study develops a fuller understanding of how these educational approaches translate into meaningful learning experiences and outcomes.

Chapter 7: Non-formal Art Education: Junkanoo and I.C.E.: Learners' Perspectives

Introduction

This chapter presents the perspectives of a cohort of learners who will be referred to either as participants who have been engaged as either mentees connected to Arlene Nash Ferguson's Educulture Centre education initiatives or as artist 'residents' in Antonius Roberts' I.C.E.. This compilation complements and extends the analysis of interviews conducted with the educators themselves presented in Chapters 5 and 6, thereby offering a comprehensive picture of how educational philosophies translate into lived experiences.

This section draws from two sources: (1) collaborative creative workshops in which participants engaged in a group interview while co-creating a collective artwork, and (2) a follow-up phase where participants had time to reflect individually and contribute further through new or existing artworks, as well as documentation and artifacts representing their participation in these learning environments. They were then invited to optionally participate in one-on-one interviews, providing a deeper opportunity to explain their artistic contributions and expand on any personal reflections that emerged during the process.

While the previous chapters examined the educators' pedagogical approaches, theoretical frameworks, and cultural foundations, this review of participant perspectives provides nuanced understanding of how these educational visions are manifested in practice. The chapter is organised following the themes as used with the educators (primary participants in cycle one), allowing direct comparison between participant experiences across both educational contexts. By looking at how the same concepts are applied or manifested in these different learning settings—evolving traditional cultural practices and contemporary visual arts—we can understand how flexible and effective non-formal educational methods can be. The participants' reflections on

their creative processes, collaborative experiences, and personal growth provide compelling evidence of how these educational models foster not only skills development but also deeper connections to cultural heritage, community, and sustainable practises.

Across both sites, learning was experiential, collaborative, and culturally embedded, supporting both creative development and personal transformation. Here, personal transformation refers to shifts in confidence, creative agency, and cultural identity articulated by participants, reinforced through their artistic contributions, and confirmed through participant validation during the collaborative analysis process (Davis & Michelitch, 2022; Glăveanu et al., 2019; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019).



Figure 21 *Artwork created in collaborative workshop/interview with Arlene's mentees (local educators)*



Figure 22 Documentation of collaborative workshop/interview

Insights from Arlene Nash Ferguson's mentees

The following summaries of group interviews integrate the findings from both group and individual interviews with participants involved in Junkanoo education under the mentorship of Arlene Nash Ferguson. These findings reveal how Junkanoo as an educational methodology embodies principles of non-formal education while fostering cultural preservation and creative development aligned with non-formal, culturally responsive approaches. Each thematic section synthesizes perspectives from participants, highlighting their individual learning and teaching approaches, all of which exemplify epistemologies of the Global South.

The Participants**Deena RC Godet-Moxey**

Deena RC Godet-Moxey is an accomplished educator at The Anglican Central Education Authority (ACEA) in The Bahamas, holding a Master of Science in Organizational Learning and Leadership from Barry University.

Carlene Farrington

Carlene Farrington has been serving as a teacher for the Ministry of Education in The Bahamas since 2006, holding a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Teaching from the College of The Bahamas.

Cheryl Ford

Cheryl Ford serves as a teacher at St. Anne's School in Nassau, The Bahamas, bringing her passion for education and child development to the classroom.

Ariadne Quinn Munnings

Ariadne Quinn Munnings graduated from the College of the Bahamas in 2007 and has taught at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School (2007- 2013), Mangrove Cay High School (2013-2016), and C.C. Sweeting Senior High School (2016-present).

Mapping The Creative Foundations of Junkanoo: Participants' Perspectives

The creative foundations of Junkanoo are not only rooted in its vibrant cultural traditions but also in the personal journeys of those who have learned from it, and now in turn advocate for its integration into education. This section delves into the testimonials of individuals who, mentored by Arlene Nash Ferguson, have transitioned from learners to educators, using their experiences to inspire others. Through their stories, we uncover how Junkanoo serves as a powerful tool for experiential learning, cultural preservation, and personal growth. These educators now champion Junkanoo's methodologies in their own teaching, bridging generations and fostering a deeper connection to Bahamian heritage within their communities and classrooms. The following subsections will highlight Junkanoo's ability to foster experiential, local, nature-based, collaborative, and holistic learning.

Experiential Learning. Junkanoo education thrives outside conventional classroom boundaries. Participants in the group interview emphasized how Junkanoo activities are deeply rooted in community settings where students often participate in Junkanoo preparations within their neighbourhoods, involving local artists and community members. Quinn explained how costumes are created in shacks, describing them as "little houses, little structures that would be built either onto a person's home," highlighting Junkanoo's integration into everyday life. Carlene's experience also demonstrates this community-based approach, particularly through her

work at Woodcock Primary School. In her one-on-one interview, she describes an immersive learning environment extending far beyond school walls:

The community would shut down the street so we could practice... no cars were allowed in... we would rush from the school gate, go up, come back around, and no one had an issue with it.

The family island (smaller islands in the Bahamas) context intensifies this community involvement, as Quinn explained regarding her experience in Mangrove Cay: "On the family island I was on, the community is small. At the time, there were only 700 persons on the official voters registry." Yet even with such limited resources, the entire community mobilized. Quinn expanded: "It became a community affair with Junkanoo in terms of assisting in preparation and whatever it took to get to Nassau to compete." She additionally noted that "there were three Junkanoo groups at the time, and each one of those Junkanoo groups made themselves responsible for building" space for the school program, demonstrating extraordinary community commitment.



Figure 23 *Quinn's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations in progress*

The participants discussed how individuals learn about the cultural significance of Junkanoo through direct participation in its activities, such as costume making and parades. This immersion in cultural practices has enhanced their understanding and appreciation of their heritage. By participating in Junkanoo activities, students engage in experiential learning where they apply knowledge in practical, real-world contexts. During the discussion, Quinn explained how they teach each other specific techniques like fringing in a communal process through which individuals learn tasks that they are most adept at and thereby finding a role to help the collective of creators. She also states that when experimenting with tactile techniques, "You can use all your creativity. There are no mistakes."

Deena went into detail discussing problem-solving and observations that can be made when working with Junkanoo techniques, explaining common approaches and opportunities to try new things. Participants also acknowledged historical barriers that prevented full participation, especially for many women. During the group discussion, Carlene highlighted their determination to overcome this limitation and the benefits derived from opportunities for intergenerational knowledge transfer: "I grew up in the shop, watching everything [at a time] when you just couldn't go... it was hard" and "as soon as I was able to, I had never missed a parade. I had season tickets Monday before until I could be there'.



Figure 24 Carlene's documentation of multiple generation's supporting Junior Junkanoo preparations

Junkanoo involves multiple generations, with grandparents, parents, and children participating together. This intergenerational involvement ensures that cultural knowledge and practices are passed down through families, fostering a sense of continuity and community. Participants also described how new families are forged in the shacks, where members view each other as ‘brothers, fathers, sisters, and mothers’. This creates a continuous chain of knowledge passing from one generation to the next. Carlene offered concrete examples of this multi-generational participation:

One of our parents who is assisting us with the brass section, he also builds, his dad builds. So, his son is in Junkanoo. He is in Junkanoo. His dad is in Junkanoo. So, they're all in it. That's how it is, it's passed down.

The stories of the participants illustrated that Junkanoo involves multiple generations participating together, ensuring that cultural knowledge and practices are passed down through families (and chosen families), fostering a sense of continuity and community. The involvement of local families, artists, and community members in the preparation and celebration of Junkanoo highlights its communal nature and strengthens social bonds. Experienced practitioners mentor younger participants, teaching them the skills and traditions associated with Junkanoo. This mentorship is crucial for maintaining the authenticity and richness of the cultural practice. They spoke about grandparents bringing their grandchildren and their students rushing alongside them.

Creativity and Flexibility. The group spoke about how they have learned through personal experience that Junkanoo activities can be adapted to suit different skill levels and abilities, such as one person being good at pasting, while another is able to master 3D construction, allowing everyone to contribute meaningfully. The participants asserted that Junkanoo allows for personal expression and creativity, catering to individual interests and ideas.

Cheryl mentioned how there is not one 'right way' participants can learn or do: "so we can use basically any shape that you want. It's according to whatever subject you're dealing with, you have to pick something, so it can be any shape." This flexibility allows individuals to tailor their approach to their own or their students' individual needs and interests, encouraging learners to develop their own style and ideas within the Junkanoo tradition.

Building Connections: Student Interests and Local Contexts. The participants emphasized how Junkanoo reveals and develops students' unique strengths, thereby creating meaningful learning opportunities for students who might not excel in traditional academics. Carlene observed: "You begin to see who your leaders are, who can take instructions well, who have to learn how to take instructions, who have to learn how to work with others to make it work." Quinn added "this is their honour roll moment, because they're doing something that nobody else can." Carlene summarised the impact: "Our job as teachers is not to see how smart children are but to see how children are smart. Because they're all smart in different ways." Following on how both Carlene and Quinn addressed how Junkanoo provides alternative paths to success, the group discussed how Junkanoo provides a pathway for students to discover and develop their unique intelligences. Carlene offered a powerful example of using Junkanoo to teach mathematics, allowing for creative expression while reinforcing academic concepts:

The child who can beat a rhythm drum, there's so much music and math in that because nobody can just pick that up and beat that rhythm. That's a skill. The kids had to fill out this form and do this costume. It had to be math. You pick a math word, and you needed to depict it on the costume... Like a student said, it took them out of the textbook into life like it's oh, I didn't even think you could do "xyz".

Quinn observed similar benefits with her students, particularly those struggling academically, noting the creation of pathways to continued growth:

For those kids full of academic challenges, that's something that they can excel in. They can excel because it involves [hands-on, practical engagement], and you can be great at that... There's even in the Junkanoo group a system that they can move up... You don't always have to be a drummer. You can start out just holding your drum, even if that begins with a thumb top. And then as you get older and you get better, you could be a lead [drummer].

Highlighting Local Knowledge/Practice. The participants repeatedly emphasized how deeply ingrained Junkanoo is in Bahamian history and culture. The discussion emphasized Junkanoo's profound historical and cultural significance. Carlene described it as "the revolution for the Bahamas," underscoring its historical importance as a form of cultural expression and resistance. She also compared it to other forms of cultural resistance and symbol of freedom, such as one from her native Haiti: "You know how we make soup? Pumpkin soup? As a form of resistance. So that's what Junkanoo was". Quinn explained how integrating Junkanoo into education helps immigrant students connect with Bahamian culture:

In our school populations, we do have the non-Haitians. We [also] have a lot of Haitian immigrants. We have other nationalities as well... A number of my students, my Haitian students specifically, have never been to Junkanoo. They've heard about it... they have an idea of what it is, but they've never been... it makes them feel more Bahamian, more welcome [i.e., participating helps them feel a stronger sense of belonging and national identity]. They don't feel Bahamian if they don't feel a part of what's happening.

Because of Arlene's tutelage, however, these educators are actively working to preserve and advance Junkanoo traditions through formal integration into education. Quinn shared exciting developments: "Junkanoo now must be integrated in every subject area. This just happened in January (2025). Before that, there were snippets of Junkanoo integration in the curriculum'. Carlene likewise expressed optimism about this curriculum integration:

I have a good feeling we're going to get Junkanoo in the curriculum... and not just put a couple of sentences about it on one page. We're going to develop it where we're doing math problems based on Junkanoo. We're going to be putting junkanoo in our grammar and our vocabulary, so we're learning those terms.

The group discussion highlighted that Junkanoo serves to preserve and pass down Bahamian traditions and cultural knowledge. This idea is evident in the way Junkanoo activities involve traditional practices such as costume making, music, and dance, which are integral to Bahamian heritage.

The participants continue to draw on their personal journeys to connect with students and inspire participation. In the group discussion, they shared their long-standing commitment to Junkanoo, using their personal anecdotes to illustrate the dedication and passion involved in Junkanoo participation and how this can inspire their own students. Carlene described how sharing her own Junkanoo experience builds rapport with students:

I show them pictures of me in Junior Junkanoo participating [and] spearheading. When I show them the one or two pictures of me in my costume when I did participate in Junkanoo, they look at me differently. I can relate to them because I know about shack life... I'm not just someone lording over them. I'm one of them, and it makes a big difference.

Quinn similarly reflected on how her Junkanoo involvement transformed her teaching:

For my children who do Junkanoo, the music starts, and they start dancing; I can dance with them, too... If anything, it connects us all, because then we have that shared history... The respect is there because they can connect to [me].

She also affirmed how students relate to her through Junkanoo influences: "Respect. I'm not just someone who lives in the 'burbs' [who] doesn't have an idea what's happening with them. I can relate to them."

While the participants spoke passionately about the benefits of integrating Junkanoo into educational contexts, they also acknowledged that this work is not without resistance.

The process of legitimizing Junkanoo as a valuable educational practice has revealed systemic and attitudinal challenges within formal school settings. As Carlene explained: "At academia Junkanoo was not looked at as being academic. When one like me who comes here. . . it's like I have to sell it to them". Deena added:

My principal told me straight up, I don't do Junkanoo, I don't like Junkanoo. . .

They don't see the educational value, they still see Junkanoo only as a street party for vulgar girls.

The participants all spoke about their resilience in the face of continued societal misconceptions, and their continuing efforts to change these perceptions and to integrate Junkanoo into education through both Junior Junkanoo and as an integral component of the core curriculum. Carlene explained the challenges faced by educators in integrating Junkanoo into formal education as well as their persistence in overcoming these obstacles. This has been part of their overall efforts within the Ministry of Education and to create a curriculum that includes institutionalising cultural education. Through this advocacy, the participants also explained how

Junkanoo has evolved over time, adapting to changing circumstances while maintaining its core traditions.

Throughout the histories the participants shared, it is evident how Junkanoo has evolved, adapting to changing circumstances while maintaining its core traditions. This is also discussed through Junkanoo's perseverance over years of being relocated or cancelled. Carlene explained how Junkanoo participation teaches resilience through setbacks: “You don't learn anything from winning, you learn when you lose. You get so creative and those students they were, they were so high”. She shared her own experience of persistence after disappointment: “We lost. It was like because it was lackluster. But I said this year I had to; you have to educate so that they can understand.”

Quinn described how Junior Junkanoo instills discipline and persistence in students, demonstrating how the desire to participate motivated behavioral change and resilience:

I remember I told [a] child... he couldn't participate. He was just spiraling out of control. And I said, listen, I can't risk your behavior... He shakes himself... [like he suddenly realized he needed to change]. Wow. Shakes himself up.

Nature and Sustainability. Junkanoo costumes and performances often incorporate elements of the Bahamian natural environment. The group interview noted that the imagery used in Junkanoo costumes often reflects Bahamian culture, landscape and history. Carlene provided specific examples of environmentally themed performances:

The theme was Andros. So, we were able to share some of the things that people knew about Andros, as well as some things that people didn't know about Andros [such as the presence] of flamingos in Andros.



Figure 25 *Quinn's documentation of 'Splendors of Andros' and ocean motifs in Junkanoo costumes and floats*

More recently, her school adopted the theme “Adventures Under the Sea,” connecting to the unique Bahamian landscape and complementing topics in the science curriculum.

Throughout the histories shared by the participants traced how Junkanoo maintained its core traditions as it has evolved and adapts to changing circumstances. The artwork includes traditional symbols and motifs that are significant to the community. Their significance was evident in the materials the participants brought to the interview, as well as the collaborative work they made together that day. The design and decoration of Junkanoo costumes also allow for collaborative and personal artistic expression, where participants can incorporate imagery that tells stories or represents cultural themes.

The group emphasised how Junkanoo uses sustainable practises through resourcefulness. Carlene highlighted this:

One of the things I really like about Junkanoo is that you don't waste things. So, we get things that are normally discarded...This is the backdrop for our banner last year,



Figure 26 *Quinn's documentation of found/collected cardboard being used as an integral base material for Junkanoo*

four pieces of cardboard. And the wood are all pieces of junk wood that have been discarded.

The participants each reinforced that Junkanoo costumes, sculptures, and instruments have been historically made using locally available materials. This practice emphasizes the resourcefulness of the Bahamian people and ties the festival to local traditions. Cheryl mentioned, "It's what you have... whatever you have, you're going to [find a way to use to] inspire." when discussing the use of materials like newspaper and cardboard. The use of recycled materials is common in Junkanoo, encouraging sustainability. Participants often repurpose items creatively. When asked where they source their materials, Carlene explained that they collect items from virtually anywhere. She noted that members of the committee often point out useful materials they've spotted, including leftover supplies from school repair projects, which are regularly repurposed for Junkanoo.

There is an acknowledgement that many materials more recently integrated into Junkanoo, such as glitter and sequins, are not sustainable. However, many individuals, including those interviewed, advocate for avoiding non-biodegradable materials. They spoke of a conscious effort to move away from using environmentally harmful materials, with Cheryl mentioning, "Glitter drops off... that will be forever." The continued encouragement to use sustainable materials, which are also seen as more historically accurate in Junkanoo, supports broader environmental sustainability efforts in the region and aligns with the community's values of resourcefulness and conservation.

The participants shared that through the process of creating Junkanoo costumes, emerging practitioners learn about the importance of sustainability and the impact of their choices on the environment. They discussed how they use this opportunity to teach about recycling and the benefits of using natural and sustainable materials.

Collaboration. They all enthusiastically discussed how the Junkanoo shack serves as the physical embodiment of collaborative learning, using a systematic approach that teaches students structured collaboration. The group described these spaces as "community hubs where participants gather to work on costumes and practice routines," fostering "a sense of community and teamwork as everyone contributes to the collective effort." Carlene detailed how this collaborative environment functions with a division of labour:

It's like an assembly line. So, what he's doing is like how it's like security officer inspecting the work... After everybody's put in the colours, so what he's doing is he's drawing in the line... When they draw it in, they write what colour goes in deep spot.

Quinn spoke to the extraordinary community support required for Junior Junkanoo on family islands, as planning and execution requires extensive coordination and support from the entire community, demonstrating the power of collaborative networks:

How many people would go to Nassau from the island. So, in total, I put about 200 persons. Things in total about that. We had about 200 classes we didn't need check roles.

The exercise required extensive coordination and support from the entire community, demonstrating the power of collaborative networks. Junkanoo shacks are central to the preparation for the festival, serving as community hubs where participants gather to work on costumes and practice routines. The participants discussed how Junkanoo participants work toward a common goal, such as winning a parade or creating the best costume. This focus on shared objectives fosters a sense of unity and purpose.

Junkanoo participants develop specialized skills by finding their niche within the broader collaborative process. The group discussion highlighted how participants naturally take on specific roles based on their individual skills and interests—such as designing, crafting, or organizing—which supports the development of both collaborative and personal abilities through shared tasks.

Different techniques require different skills, allowing students to find their strengths, specialized roles develop over time. Carlene mentioned: "That's the thing... it's inclusive of all students. We have students from our special ed unit that are going to be performing as well." Quinn explained:

You don't always have to be a drummer... start out holding your drum, even if that starts off with a thumb top [small drum piece]. And then as you get older and you get better, you could be a lead.

This progression allows participants to develop and refine their skills over time. Cheryl noted that participants "kind of finds their strength. [They] get strength in that group. [They're] interested".

This practical approach helps participants develop both collaborative and personal skills through shared tasks. This division of labour also teaches participants to appreciate each other's contributions and work together effectively. Through collaboration, participants develop various skills, such as teamwork, creativity, time management, and leadership, which are valuable in various areas of their lives. The group discusses how this is true in various aspects of Junkanoo, such as costume and float development, music, dance, etc..

Junkanoo also encourages open dialogue and input from all participants. The group discussed how this happens both formally (i.e., meetings to discuss themes) and informally (daily discussions in shacks) throughout the annual cycle of Junkanoo planning. This inclusive approach ensures that everyone's ideas are considered, fostering a collaborative environment. Furthermore, participants regularly give and receive feedback to improve their work, with the group discussing how participants actively engage in giving and receiving feedback throughout. They highlight an openness to experimentation, allowing participants to refine their designs based on peer feedback and personal reflection. This iterative process helps refine skills and enhances the overall quality of the Junkanoo experience. Quinn notes "It's always worth it," highlighting that the time spent refining their work leads to a more fulfilling and vibrant representation of Junkanoo.



Figure 27 *Carlene's documentation of communities gathering for Junior Junkanoo rehearsals*

As discussed, the collaborative nature of Junkanoo creates robust support systems that extend beyond the immediate participants. The group interview highlighted how Junkanoo involves multiple generations working together, "which strengthens community bonds" and relies on "the support of the entire community." Carlene described how even non-participating community members contribute meaningfully: "After school, if there's not somebody who's on staff that can do it, the community would actually come in. Persons will come in after school." She emphasized the all-hands-on-deck approach: "She's helping with the choreography. It's everybody."

Carlene shared how their mother played a crucial role by ensuring that after the parade, breakfast was ready, and the participants had everything they needed. This underscores the behind-the-scenes support that is essential for the success of Junkanoo:

My mom...made sure when we came off that parade, she made sure breakfast was ready because you know we're coming over. We're gonna bathe, we're gonna eat, and we have to sleep.

This communal effort underscores the importance of working together to achieve shared goals.

Holistic Approach. Participants discussed how Junkanoo involves collaboration among artists, musicians, and dancers across arts fields. The participants noted that even though some people may not see themselves as artists or musicians, they can still contribute to Junkanoo in various ways, such as assembling costumes or participating in the parade. The group declared that Junkanoo encompasses multiple forms of artistic expression. They were passionate that Junkanoo allows participants to engage with their heritage in a multifaceted and immersive manner, combining various art forms to create a rich cultural experience.

The participants spoke about how, through practice, Junkanoo also provides growth in a variety of subjects, including math, history, and art. They articulate that, through their roles as educators, they work diligently to integrate Junkanoo into the school curriculum, emphasizing its educational value- which they deduced through their own participation in Junkanoo planning and



Figure 28 *Carlene's Math Junkanoo parade costume*

communities outside of school. The group also discussed converting their classrooms into workshop where students could work on costumes together, fostering teamwork and creativity. Carlene organized a Math Junkanoo Parade where students created costumes based on math concepts, blending academic learning with cultural expression. She noted how the activity clearly demonstrated Junkanoo's potential as an interdisciplinary teaching tool that was a straightforward and engaging way to teach through culture.

The participants highlighted that in their role as educators, they use Junkanoo as a project-based learning tool, where students must research, design, and execute their projects. This approach encourages creative problem-solving and the application of academic knowledge in practical, artistic ways.

The group individually and collectively stated that through Junkanoo, participants develop a range of skills, including teamwork, creativity, and leadership. They talked about how students learn to work together, take on leadership roles, and express their creativity through costume design and performance. For example, the creation of Junkanoo costumes involves innovative techniques and creative problem-solving. The groups discussed various methods of pasting and decorating costumes, which require a high level of skill and creativity. This hands-on approach allows students to engage directly with their cultural heritage through practical activities.

The participants spoke on end about the educational benefits of integrating Junkanoo into the school curriculum to make learning experiences more engaging and relevant to their cultural context and varied students. They all agreed that participating in Junkanoo fosters a sense of cultural pride and identity for those who participate and experience it, as personally felt and witnessed by the participants.

The participants also shared their stories of Junkanoo helping students build confidence and self-esteem, as well as seeing the pride participation brought to their students and the passion they each have for Junkanoo that they seek to pass on. They proudly discussed how studies have shown that integrating Junkanoo into formal educational environments improves student attendance and punctuality. Carlene shared, "We were able to show, at least by principle, they were able to see that attendance and especially punctuality, for the first time... we peaked at 96%".



Figure 29 *Archival images of Junior Junkanoo preparations shared by Carlene*

Summary

As these experiences and reflections of Arlene's former mentees (now educators themselves) reveal, the key aspects of Arlene's educational philosophy are corroborated through their own lived experiences and teaching practices.

The mentees' accounts demonstrate how Arlene's flexible approach to creativity has influenced their teaching. Cheryl's statement that "there is not one 'right way'" in Junkanoo echoes Arlene's philosophy that "Junkanoos don't think out of the box -they dismantle the box and create a work of art".

Arlene's dedication to preserving and promoting Bahamian culture through Junkanoo is also strongly reflected in her mentees' work. Their efforts to integrate Junkanoo into formal education curricula and their emphasis on its historical and cultural significance align with Arlene's mission to make "Bahamian culture, particularly Junkanoo, the heart of the learning experience".

Arlene's vision of Junkanoo as a comprehensive educational tool is endorsed by her mentees' successful integration of Junkanoo into various subjects. Carlene's Math Junkanoo Parade and the mentees' efforts to use Junkanoo as a project-based learning tool across disciplines directly support the value of Arlene's holistic educational philosophy.

The mentees' continued focus on using sustainable and locally sourced materials in Junkanoo directly supports the core values which Arlene identified. Carlene's emphasis on not wasting materials and repurposing discarded items reflects Arlene's teachings on resourcefulness and environmental consciousness in Junkanoo practices.

The collaborative nature of Junkanoo is once again evident in the mentees' descriptions of the shack as a hub of teamwork and skill-sharing. This aligns with Arlene's view of Junkanoo as "community outreach at its best", fostering intergenerational learning and community bonds. In summary, the experiences, practices, and teaching methods of Arlene's mentees provide strong confirmation for her non-formal art education approach through Junkanoo. Their work in preserving, promoting, and integrating Junkanoo into formal education settings demonstrates the lasting impact and effectiveness of Arlene's educational philosophy.



Figure 30 Artwork created in collaborative workshop/interview with I.C.E. Residents (piece 1 of 2)



Figure 31 Artwork created in collaborative workshop/interview with I.C.E. Residents (piece 2 of

2)



Figure 32 *Documentation of collaborative workshop/interview*

Insights from Antonius Roberts' I.C.E. Program Participants

The following integrates findings from both group and individual interviews with residents (hereby referred to as participants) of I.C.E. program under the mentorship of Antonius Roberts. These findings reveal how the program embodies principles of non-formal education while fostering creative development aligned with culturally responsive approaches. Each thematic section synthesizes perspectives from four participants, highlighting both their individual growth and shared experiences within this unique creative environment. Their reflections on specific artworks and creative processes—whether pieces they had previously made or ones they developed in response to this research—offer valuable insights into how the educational model translates into meaningful artistic practice.

The Participants**Chappell Whyms Jr.**

Chappell Whyms Jr. is an analog and digital photographer living and working in Nassau, Bahamas. His journey in photography began in 2018 during what he describes as his “mid-college crisis,” seeking something to be passionate about, and he later ventured into analog photography during the pandemic in 2019. As of January 2024, Whyms became a participant at Project I.C.E., where he established developing and darkroom enlarging studios at both I.C.E. and Poinciana Paper Press, perfecting his process for both black and white and colour film.

Justin Moultrie

Justin Moultrie (b. 1996, Nassau, Bahamas) is a visual artist working primarily with acrylic paint and oil pastels who pursued an Associate of Arts in Fine Arts at the University of the Bahamas (not completed). His artistic focus centers on depicting vibrant Bahamian life and landscapes, spiritualism, and the relationship between humans and nature.

Reagan Kemp

Reagan Kemp is a multi-disciplinary visual artist with a diverse portfolio spanning photography, videography, painting, sculpture, and more. She has also demonstrated her commitment to fostering artistic expression and collaboration for the broader the local artist community through her work as a curator and creative director.

Alia Knowles

Alia Knowles (who also goes by the artist-name Sapita), is a multi-disciplinary artist with a background in graphic design and illustration. She still engages in strategic design and illustration work, while expanding her own creative practice based on ceramics. This includes building a small business to educate other local individuals on both traditional and contemporary ceramic techniques.

Mapping The Creative Foundations of I.C.E.: Participants' Perspectives

The participants outline how I.C.E. combines mentorship, hands-on learning, and sustainability to empower them to explore their creative potential while connecting with local cultural and environmental contexts. Through exhibitions, workshops, and community engagement, participants gain practical skills and professional experience, often collaborating across disciplines like visual arts, design, and ecology. It emphasizes resourcefulness, using natural and recycled materials, and encourages artists to integrate traditional practices with innovative techniques. By blending creativity with conservation, I.C.E. serves as a hub for artistic growth, cultural preservation, and sustainable development in The Bahamas.

Experiential Learning. I.C.E. provides artists with hands-on experiences through exhibitions, events, open studios, and workshops. Participants enthusiastically described how

these platforms allow emerging talent to gain practical experience in organizing and running events, preparing them for real-world professional scenarios. The tangible nature of these opportunities was evident during the group interview, which took place inside an exhibition Reagan had curated, next to a new ceramic studio Alia had recently established, while Justin had just opened a two-person exhibition at another local gallery the night before. Reagan emphasised the freedom this environment provides:

I never wanted to curate shows that have happened before, so I think for me, this space is a little less regulated than others, so we're able to kind of make more honest work, if that makes sense.

This sentiment reflects the program's emphasis on authentic creative expression over commercial considerations Justin highlighted the extensive exhibition experience he's gained: "I think by the end of the year I've [participated in] nine shows."

These numerous opportunities have provided valuable practical learning experiences that help the participants understand professional aspects of their craft beyond just creation. The group spoke about how Antonius encourages artists to develop crucial skills by running their own events, setting personal goals, and timelines. The participants specified they have learned from Antonius' example about the importance of continuous learning and discovery, which promotes self-directed learning and adaptability.



Figure 33 *Documentation of I.C.E. Residents at their public exhibitions- contributed by Justin and Reagan*

Mentorship emerged as a key aspect of I.C.E.'s learning environment, with more experienced artists and educators working alongside emerging artists. This creates an atmosphere conducive to exchanging ideas and practices. All participants identified that Antonius works closely with each of them, facilitating an atmosphere of mutual learning and growth.

The programme brings together artists of different ages and experience levels, facilitating knowledge transfer across generations. Chappell mentioned: "It's been extremely helpful, at least in my practice, because of I.C.E., we now have the Nassau Photography Association". He highlighted that this was also made possible due to I.C.E. acting as a community hub for other professionals to engage with the participants through events like *Weekly Coffee Chats*.

I.C.E. was consistently described as a comfortable and relaxed environment compared to formal institutions. Alia stated, "It's also very comfortable as well, because there's something about institutions... obviously they give off a much more serious, nonsense cycle vibe".

This atmosphere allows for experimentation and process-focused work, encouraging artists to take risks without the pressure of producing finished products. Chappell noted:



Figure 34 Alia's documentation of group and one-on-one feedback and critique sessions with Antonius' and external guests

Being able to be here for six months and have the space and time and come here to sit and shoot for myself and create Images that I just want to create it helped immensely especially with my storytelling for my work.

Creativity and Flexibility. Several participants noted barriers they faced in formal education. Alia discussed struggling with math and being placed in a lower 'stream' where her maximum grade was capped: "The maximum grade I can get is a C". Justin mentioned having difficulty with formal art education: "I failed the drawing test". Chappell talked about his "mid-college crisis" while studying accounting: "I was studying accounting, and halfway through the first semester I realized that I don't want to do this for the rest of my life."

Participants expressed a strong preference for hands-on, experiential learning over formal education. Reagan articulated her learning style: "I prefer to handle learning... I'll just start doing a thing and then work through it halfway". Chappell similarly valued room for questioning: "Being able to ask questions about different processes and different things that I might not be familiar with has been extremely helpful." Alia highlighted that she appreciates the freedom and flexibility that allows for experimentation and risk-taking at I.C.E. compared to formal education structures. Chappell's individual interview revealed intense periods of experimentation:

Within the past 48 hours, I have done the most experimenting that I have ever tried in my life... it's been a crazy three days, because I've been learning so much about the chemicals, I've been learning so much about the process, the fabric I use, the way I heat and dry it, the way I expose it, all of these different things, like resulting in different results.



Figure 35 *Artworks contributed by Justin*



Figure 36 *Artworks contributed by Alia*

Alia described her experimental approach to researching pre-Columbian ceramic traditions:

I wanted to essentially pretend like I was back-in-the-day, and I don't have any modern-day resources to accomplish these things because I just wanted to see because I also just wanted to test.

Reagan spoke about her impressive output in this enabling environment, having painted 52 paintings in the previous year. She mentioned that the "raw, humble space" of I.C.E. keeps her focused and grounded, reminding her of her childhood home.

Building Connections: Student Interests and Local Contexts. I.C.E. provides artists with opportunities to engage with the local art community and collectors. Reagan, who also curates the gallery space, states:

I'm using it as an opportunity to... give the platform to not just emerging visual artists, but artists from different mediums, so we've set up the fusion...

Which is kind of trying to build a culture around up-and-coming artists and celebrate them in a cool way.

By being connected with the larger community, artists build relationships and networks within the local art scene while developing an understanding of the legacy and roles senior members have played in developing the creative ecosystem. Reagan plans to connect I.C.E. with educational institutions like ICAN (Incubator for Creative Arts Nassau) and UB:

I'm hoping to find some way to funnel in or connect I.C.E. and the University of the Bahamas. These kids are actually doing a thing and they're not that much younger than me. This is amazing. We've got to get them. We've got to support them.

Highlighting Local Knowledge and Practices. The participants discussed how the I.C.E. space encourages artists to explore and appreciate local materials and agricultural practices. They have witnessed the significance of natural materials through Antonius' work, which is also housed and created onsite.

In the group interview, discussion of local materials emerged organically, including conversations about Silver Top (a native palm used by local straw makers in weaving) and Junkanoo traditions. Chappell mentioned the challenges in sourcing traditional materials:

Similarly with straw, there are very few people that still put together straw, and then you have the demand for it so high that makes it even harder to get.

Alia's research into pre-Columbian ceramic history during her time at I.C.E. led to a significant personal discovery: "I learned that we did in the Bahamas we did have a ceramic history, which is something that I never even knew about." She expanded, stating her research demonstrates a commitment to valuing local materials:

As for my personal practice, I hope mostly on pre-Columbian ceramic traditions and studies, and then the rediscovering of our ceramic history in the Bahamas and why there's no documentation, or like not easily accessible documentation of it, and not a lot of people really know what it is... I was able to make a clay body, cool stuff that I dug up from the ground here in Nassau.



Figure 37 Alia's documentation of her local clay and firing technique explorations

I.C.E. fosters appreciation for local history and ancestral knowledge. Participants noted the need for this, as they have witnessed challenges in preserving local knowledge and practises in the region. Chappell reflected:

I think that's one thing that the Bahamas over time has not done well is documenting history. I don't think we have a really great historical documentation over the past years to say we could go back and look at stuff and I think that's something that needs to change and get better at.

Participants specifically emphasised the importance of oral traditions in preserving cultural identity. Chappell mentioned:

I think oftentimes because our history has always been grandparents sitting around talking to grandchildren because I remember my grandmother used to sit under her macadamia nut tree and I used to sit with her, and she used to tell me about her childhood that storytelling was how we passed the history on.

The group expressed concern about the lack of historical documentation of the region. Chappell's photographic work aims to address this gap:

I want them to take away the aspect of the country that isn't inherently put out there commercially under the capitalistic scope of like tourism. We are a country with people of many different cultures, many different ideas, many different emotions, many different expressive ways and like there's more to experience than just the hotel and the beaches.

Participants felt encouraged to explore their cultural roots through incorporating traditional practises into their work. Alia mentions her developing interest in ceramic traditions, while Reagan's current practice involves exploring colonialism and its effects:



Figure 38 *Artwork contributed by Reagan*

Some of the traditions that we lost and things that were stripped from us, my own personal heritage and the way those cultures have such a respect for community and nature and just things that get lost and like colonized societies and capitalism and these sorts of structures that were kind of like placed on to us.

In Reagan's painting featuring a machete, she explained the personal significance behind it. When others viewed the work, they saw violence in it, which surprised her. For Reagan, the machete represents a connection to her childhood and her grandfather who raised her and taught her about yard work, which involved using a machete to care for trees and plants. She described being a seven-year-old with a small machete, learning to tend to vegetation—an important part of her upbringing and local culture given the abundance of flora in the Bahamas. Reagan now views the machete with a sense of duality, acknowledging its potential perception as a violent

object while emphasizing that for her, it represents nurturing and care from a unique local perspective. She sees a softness in the image that contrasts with violent interpretations others might have. Reagan explained how her current work explored her family's history and cultural heritage:

So, the work I'm making now... started with my relationship with my grandfather and kind of went back into a larger picture of how the two cultures, my, I guess, gene from the story, have this huge history about sets of generation and kind of preserving traditions.



Figure 39 *Artworks contributed by Reagan*



Figure 40 *Residents spending time in garden at I.C.E. (documentation contributed by Justin)*



Figure 41 *Artworks contributed by Justin*

Nature and Sustainability. Antonius encourages participants to spend time observing and sketching nature. Justin emphasized the importance of natural surroundings: "Being surrounded by nature is always a good thing that's going on in our communities". He further expressed a personal need for natural elements: "I like quiet, I like fresh air, and I find, I feel sick when I don't have sun. Like, if the day is raining and it's cloudy outside."

Participants discussed broader environmental concerns faced both locally and globally, such as challenges in sourcing traditional materials sustainably. During their collaborative art activity during the group interview, they walked into I.C.E.'s agricultural garden space to gather materials to incorporate into their work.

Discussions around incorporating natural elements into artworks repeatedly emerged. For instance, Reagan mentioned using soil from the I.C.E. property/garden in an installation. Her painting practice was influenced by her pandemic gardening experience: "I began to explore gardening, which influenced my artistic practice. I painted my first papaya that I grew." She shared an anecdote about mangos that highlights the abundance of local fruit and its impact on her work: "There was a huge mango tree in my yard growing up, and it feels very nostalgic." Chappell's photography expresses appreciation for nature and elevates everyday scenes:

Even now when I take a day off and I just drive around, and I just stop and take pictures it's like there's so much that we pass by- so [many] things that might have history from people history... even dilapidated buildings have their histories.

In discussing his photography of Eleuthera, Chappell emphasised the importance of appreciating the natural beauty that locals often take for granted: "Over time... you keep on the rose-coloured glasses for a long time everything just stays red, and you have to take them off to see life in a different perspective."

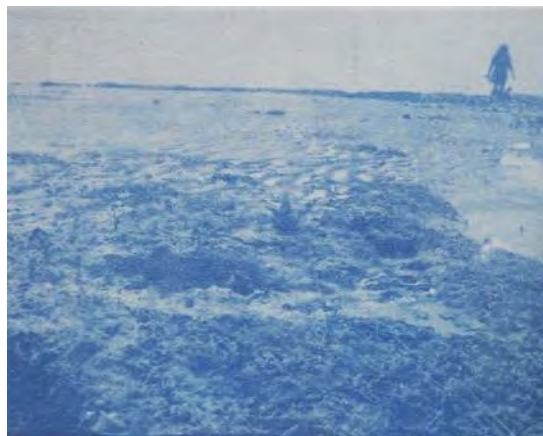


Figure 42 *Artworks contributed by Chappell*

Collaboration. I.C.E. provides a collaborative environment where artists work in proximity to one another. Reagan described it as "no different than a large family dynamic." This setup allows artists to interact and learn from each other regularly.

Justin articulated the value of this environment compared to working in isolation:

Plenty of other artists came to me just to tell me 'you don't know how good it is to be able to be around people when you're doing this', because a lot of them said they didn't have no one.

He further explained how peer feedback enhances his practice:

They can even give feedback, or they can even have a difference of how they develop versus doing it by themselves, noting this prevents working 'in a vacuum'.

The participants discussed how talking through ideas often leads to 'light bulb moments' in the creative process. Chappell emphasized: "Community is important. Having people around you that know you and understand you is very important. That will push you." He playfully provided specific examples of peer support:

Reagan is constantly threatening to fight me because at first... I always felt like my work wasn't good. She's like 'no, no, no, no, it is good- I'm telling you it is good. Do not make me have to beat you about it'.

Participants at I.C.E. also frequently exchange technical knowledge and techniques. Reagan, who started as a photographer, has expanded into painting and curating: "I'm using it as an opportunity to... give the platform to not just emerging visual artists, but artists from different mediums." Alia's establishment of a ceramic studio space allows for teaching and sharing this medium with others. The artists often organise informal outings together that inspire their work. Chappell recounted, "Me, Justin, and [another resident] just hopped in my car and drove around

the island for like the whole day." These trips build camaraderie and provide opportunities for shared experiences and inspiration. Reagan emphasised the importance of critique and feedback within their community:

I think that's the quickest way to either evolve or stay very still as an artist. It's like not being able to receive critique or being able to take it in.

This feedback loop helps artists refine their work and develop their skills. Reagan described a collaborative photographic process: "I couldn't have shot it without Chappell, obviously... he helped me set everything up... to take the photo of him." This demonstrates how their varied skills complement each other's artistic processes.



Figure 43 Documentation of peers working together in the studios (Contributed by Alia, Justin, and Reagan)



Figure 44 *Justin's documentation of him and his peers going around the island to gather documentation for their artworks*

Holistic Approach. Participants recounted how artists at I.C.E. engage in various aspects of the art world beyond just creating art. Reagan curates exhibitions at I.C.E. and other arts centers on the island, while Alia has developed a small ceramics studio on the property to teach the medium to others. Participants are involved in curation, management, and other professional aspects of the art world, all having exhibited professionally through I.C.E. They declared that they have all gained hands-on experience in organizing events, managing budgets, and developing professional networks.

The participants spoke about time spent at I.C.E. beyond art production, including time for reflection. Justin noted the importance of these moments for his creative practice, as inspiration can occur during mundane tasks. The boundaries between ‘art-time’ and ‘life-time’ are blurred, allowing for a more integrated and flexible approach.

Chappell reflected on how I.C.E. allowed him to separate his artistic practice from commercial photography:

Being at I.C.E. has granted me the space and mentally... the time... for doing this. Because, honestly, the amount of equipment and stuff I had would not have fit in my house.

Reagan discussed how having a dedicated space has improved her practice:

Having a space like this to kind of spread a work out, look at it, talk, prepare a conversation and just kind of critique, it's like, that really expanded my practice in a very pivotal, important way.

Artists from various disciplines work together at I.C.E., including painters, ceramicists, and multidisciplinary artists in close proximity. They demonstrate willingness to explore various media and learn from each other's practices. Reagan described herself as a multidisciplinary artist who started with writing, moved to photography, and then began painting during the pandemic. Alia mentioned her background in graphic design and current focus on ceramics, showing a diverse range of skills and approaches. Chappell, a photographer, mentions collaborating with painters: "And then one day me, Reagan, and Justin just went downtown with cameras and took pictures". This interdisciplinary environment allows for cross-pollination of ideas and techniques, fostering a dynamic approach to artmaking.

It was also noted that involvement in I.C.E. has improved the artists' confidence. Justin reflected:

I think from then on, I could feel like my process starting to get more focused and more confident... I'm very thankful for Mr. Roberts. I'm very thankful for the space because I can feel like when I look at my work, I can like see that I enjoy it, but I also feel confident... I feel like now I have much more confidence in things than I'm saying in my work.

Chappell mentioned how being at I.C.E. has helped him develop not only his photography skills but also his confidence. Previously feeling isolated, he now values:

Having somebody to go to and ask, and who has experience with it makes it a lot better and makes me feel a little bit more comfortable in the mistakes I make.

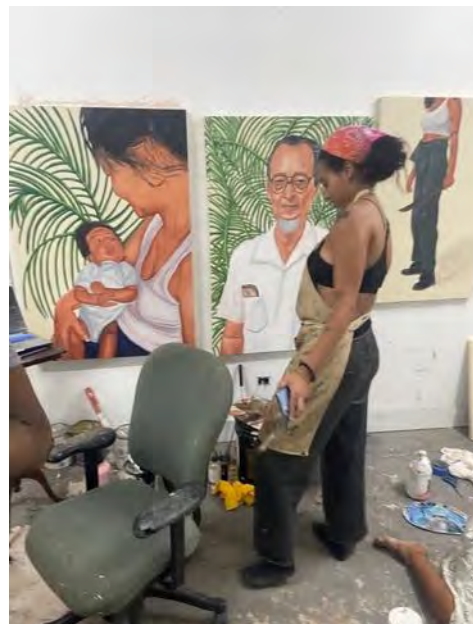


Figure 45 Images of participating residents working at I.C.E. (Contributed by Alia, Justin, and Reagan)

Summary

Through the interviews with participants, the research reveals how I.C.E. fosters creative development and cultural responsiveness and aligns with epistemologies of the Global South. I.C.E. provides artists with hands-on opportunities through professional experiences, allowing emerging talent to gain practical experience in organizing and running events, preparing them for real-world professional scenarios. Antonius encourages artists to develop crucial skills by running their own events and setting personal goals and timelines, fostering a comfortable and relaxed environment compared to formal institutions.

This atmosphere allows for experimentation and process-focused work, encouraging artists to take risks without the pressure of producing finished products. Participants expressed a strong preference for hands-on, experiential learning over formal education. The approach emphasizes connecting with local contexts and highlighting local knowledge, helping artists explore their cultural roots and incorporate traditional practices into their work. Antonius encourages participants to spend time observing and sketching nature, and artists often incorporate natural elements into their artwork, aligning with broader environmental concerns faced both locally and globally.

I.C.E. provides a collaborative environment where artists work in proximity to one another, allowing them to interact and learn from each other regularly. This setup fosters peer feedback, technical knowledge exchange, and interdisciplinary approaches to artmaking. Participants engage in various aspects of the art world beyond just creating art, including curation, management, and other professional aspects. This comprehensive approach has improved artists' confidence and expands their professional opportunities. In conclusion, Antonius Roberts' I.C.E. initiative demonstrates how non-formal art education can effectively

nurture emerging artists while maintaining strong connections to cultural heritage and community.

Artistic and Visual Responses: Interpreting Creative Themes

The artistic and visual responses discussed in this section are interpreted as reflective and dialogic materials generated within the research process. They are not presented as arts-informed representations of the study's findings, but as participant-generated or participant-contributed responses that helped make visible experiences, values, and pedagogical meanings that were discussed alongside interview and observational data.

This section examines the artistic and visual responses contributed by secondary participants as an additional source of qualitative insight into how creative learning was experienced within the studied environments. These visual materials were interpreted alongside interview dialogue and observational data in order to identify recurring themes that illuminate the pedagogical values embedded within these non-formal learning contexts.

Participants brought both existing and new works, which were discussed in one-on-one and group settings, with interpretation developed through their articulation of materials, processes, and meanings. These participant-generated or participant-contributed artistic and visual responses provided access to embodied and non-verbal knowledge, surfacing insights not available through interviews alone and emerging through making, material engagement, and collaborative dialogue. They were central to refining the thematic analysis, helping identify patterns and connect lived experience with creative practice. In this way, visual and verbal data were collaboratively interpreted, with themes developed iteratively through coding and participant dialogue. The use of artistic and textual material as part of inquiry is informed by methodological literature on living inquiry through art and text, while the cultural meanings of

the materials themselves are grounded in participants' own explanations and in the Bahamian contexts described throughout this chapter (Irwin, 2017; Springgay et al., 2005).

First, the two groups of secondary participants worked collaboratively to create artwork that captured the subject matter of a group discussion, which was the first time the group came together to discuss their non-formal educational experience. Then, before one-one-interviews, each were given the option to individually contribute existing or new artworks, and photo documentation that responded to the prompt: visually represent personal responses to the question 'how have you (or others around you) been impacted/learned through being involved with Junkanoo/I.C.E.?'. Their reflection on what they chose to contribute and why was integrated into the previous sections, as it was articulated in their one-on-one interviews.

The artistic responses created during collaborative workshops and their subsequent individual contributions involved several recurring themes that echoed the interview data and observational findings. These themes reflect a complex manifestation of the research values, emphasizing community-driven, culturally responsive, and sustainable approaches to both art making and art education. These interpretations are situated within a framework of epistemic plurality that acknowledges the coexistence of multiple ways of knowing, each shaped by local histories, creative practices, and relational learning environments. These themes were identified through thematic interpretation of visual imagery in dialogue with participants' interview reflections.

Identity and Self-Expression

The images capture how the contributors, especially the participants from I.C.E., often use artistic expressions to explore identity and self-expression, reflecting a deep connection to cultural and personal narratives. This theme highlights the role of art in fostering individual

growth and cultural pride, emphasizing the importance of preserving cultural identity and honouring ancestral traditions, sites, and histories.

Collaboration and Community Engagement

Collaboration is a dominant theme, reflecting the importance of collective creativity and community involvement. The narratives here highlight the value of communal effort in creative processes, reflecting a broader cultural emphasis on shared responsibility and mutual support.

In the context of Junkanoo, participants work together in shacks to prepare for the festival, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility. This collaborative environment is not only essential for the festival's success but also serves as a model for community-driven learning, where individuals develop specialized skills while contributing to a common goal.

Almost all the participants from I.C.E. chose to share images of them and their peers in the studio, both working together as well as spending downtime/time for reflection. Participants also contributed visual evidence of working with other local practitioners, highlighting the importance of cultural exchange, expanding communities, and diversity in enriching their creative processes. This theme underscores the value of integrating diverse perspectives and traditions into artistic practices, reflecting a broader appreciation for community-driven and culturally responsive approaches to art education.

Cultural Preservation and Identity

The use of traditional materials and techniques, along with cultural references, highlights participants' appreciation for preserving cultural heritage. This theme underscores the importance of honoring ancestral traditions and maintaining cultural identity.

Cultural preservation is another significant theme, with visual contributions often incorporating traditional motifs and historical symbols. Junkanoo costumes, for example, feature

elements like cardboard, paper, leaves, straw, feathers, rags, sacks, and even sponges, symbolizing the resourcefulness and creativity of African diasporic traditions. This theme underscores the importance of preserving cultural identity and honouring ancestral traditions, reflecting a narrative of resilience and resistance.

Artistic and visual responses contributed from the participants at I.C.E. frequently incorporated traditional motifs, historical symbols, and indigenous materials. The visual representation of these themes underscores the significance of preserving cultural identity and honoring ancestral traditions, reflecting a narrative of resilience and resistance.

Environmental Awareness and Sustainability

Environmental awareness is a related recurring theme, with images highlighting the use of recycled materials and eco-friendly practices. Junkanoo's emphasis on repurposing discarded materials into instruments and costumes exemplifies this theme, reflecting a broader value on living in harmony with nature.

Participants in both Junkanoo and I.C.E. programs emphasize considerations of sustainability in their creative processes. Participants often incorporate natural materials and repurposed materials into their artworks, reflecting a strong emphasis on environmental awareness and sustainability. This is particularly evident in Junkanoo images, where costumes and sculptures are crafted from found, local materials. By valuing local ecosystems and incorporating natural elements into their creative processes, participants demonstrate an appreciation for the role of art in promoting environmental consciousness. Themes related to the local environment, such as gardens, plants, and spending time outside, highlight the importance of connecting with nature. Participants often depict local flora and fauna in their work, emphasizing the significance of preserving natural resources and respecting local ecosystems.

This connection to nature is not only aesthetically significant but also serves as a reminder of the importance of sustainable practices and environmental stewardship. Colour schemes are also often in line with local environments as well as traditional palettes.

Additional Reoccurring Themes

Additional recurring themes included experimentation and process focus, trying new media and techniques, the role of family, and the documentation of professional showcases. Together, these themes further demonstrate that learning in these environments extended beyond technical development to include identity formation, public presence, and evolving relationships to community and practice (Glăveanu et al., 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Narratives and imagery also include the role of family in supporting artistic practices and cultural preservation, the significance of local sites, the integration of everyday activities into creative processes, and the documentation of professional opportunities and showcases, which highlight how participants reflect on and document their artistic achievements.

Overall, the themes identified through the interpretation of these images, paired with their reflection on their contributions in one-on-one interviews, reveal an appreciation for collaboration, cultural preservation, environmental awareness, and innovation through experimentation. These themes reflect a deep understanding of the research values, emphasizing community-driven, culturally responsive, and sustainable approaches to art education. The integration of natural materials, repurposed materials, and local environmental themes further enriches our understanding of how personal and local artistic narratives can inform and transform educational practices.

Chapter Conclusion

Through the two distinct yet complementary non-formal learning approaches of Arlene and Antonius, we witness a noteworthy alignment between educational philosophy and lived experience. The testimonies of both Junkanoo educators and I.C.E. residents support and extend the proposed frameworks established in previous chapters, demonstrating how epistemologies of the Global South manifest in authentic learning contexts that prioritise cultural heritage, collaborative creation, and holistic development.

Several critical patterns emerge across both educational environments. First, participants consistently emphasised the value of experiential learning—whether through costume and float making in Junkanoo shacks or exhibition organisation at I.C.E.- over traditional classroom instruction. This practical approach creates meaningful connections between abstract concepts and tangible skills, fostering deeper understanding and retention. As Carlene articulated regarding Junkanoo mathematics integration, it “took them out of the textbook into life,” while Chappell’s description of his intense 48-hour experimentation with cyanotypes exemplifies I.C.E.’s commitment to learning through doing.

Second, both contexts reveal the profound importance of collaborative learning communities. Reagan’s description of I.C.E. as “no different than a large family dynamic” parallels the shack culture described by the Junkanoo educators, where intergenerational knowledge transfer occurs naturally through shared practice. In both environments, participants develop specialised roles based on their strengths while maintaining mutual support systems that enhance collective outcomes. This collaborative approach directly challenges Western individualistic models of creativity by embracing the communal creative processes emphasised by Glăveanu and Sierra.

The deep connection to cultural heritage and local knowledge represents another significant commonality. Alia's research into pre-Columbian ceramic traditions through I.C.E. mirrors the Junkanoo educators' efforts to preserve and advance traditional practices through integration into formal education. Both groups expressed concern about historical documentation in the Bahamas, with participants actively working to address these gaps through their creative and educational practices, a sentiment echoed across both learning environments.

Environmental awareness and sustainability emerged as consistent themes across both contexts. The use of recycled materials in Junkanoo costume-making reflects a similar resourcefulness to I.C.E. residents' incorporation of natural elements from the garden into their artistic practice. This reverence for the natural environment connects contemporary creative practices with traditional values, demonstrating how local knowledge systems inherently address global environmental concerns.

Perhaps most significantly, both educational environments foster holistic development that extends beyond technical skills. Participants consistently reported increased confidence, expanded professional opportunities, and deeper connections to their cultural identity. For instance, the transformation of Reagan from photographer to curator, Alia from graphic designer to ceramicist exploring indigenous traditions, and Quinn from classroom teacher to cultural advocate demonstrates how these non-formal learning environments nurture multidimensional growth beyond disciplinary boundaries.

These similar results in different areas—contemporary visual arts and traditional cultural practices—show how adaptable and successful educational methods based on the knowledge systems and approaches of the Global South can be. Despite operating in distinct domains, both I.C.E. and Junkanoo education initiatives embody similar principles of experiential learning,

collaboration, nature/cultural preservation, and holistic development. Their success in fostering artistic growth and cultural continuity suggests that these approaches might offer valuable models for addressing educational challenges throughout the Caribbean region and beyond. By centring local knowledge systems while remaining open to innovation, both Arlene and Antonius have created educational environments that resist colonial epistemologies while preparing participants for contemporary challenges. The lived experiences of their participants suggest that educational approaches grounded in Global South epistemologies can foster culturally relevant, engaging, and meaningful opportunities for growth. As educators navigate increasingly complex global challenges, the Bahamian non-formal learning environments examined in this study offer insights into how learning environments may honour heritage while fostering innovation, nurture community while developing individual strengths, and preserve tradition while embracing change.

Chapter 8: Reimagining Art Education Through Global South Epistemologies: Pathways Forward for International Practice

This research on art education and creativity in the Bahamas reveals that effective art education cannot be separated from its cultural context—not only because culture provides content for artistic exploration, but because culture fundamentally shapes how creativity itself is understood and practiced. Engaging with Global South epistemologies invites educators and researchers to reconsider pedagogical approaches that move beyond individualistic and product-oriented frameworks toward more collaborative, process-focused, and culturally responsive models of creative learning. While the practices examined in this study emerge from the specific cultural context of the Bahamas, many regions of the world sustain similar community-rooted learning environments. The insights developed here may therefore be of interest to art educators, community arts practitioners, museum educators, and scholars exploring relational and context-sensitive approaches to creative pedagogy. The phrase Global South epistemologies is used throughout this chapter in its plural and evolving sense. It signifies a set of knowledge orientations that foreground relational, ecological, and community-based creativity. As Chasi and Heleta (2025) note, these frameworks are not meant to necessarily supersede Western perspectives, but to broaden and pluralize the notion of creativity through ongoing dialogue across global education systems. In this spirit, the ideas explored here do not position the Bahamian context as representative of a single epistemic model, but as a living example of how creative pedagogies can generate new understandings through cross-cultural exchange, reflexivity, and situated practice.

The pedagogical approaches of Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts offer insights that can inform broader conversations in art education. Their practices, rooted in

Bahamian cultural traditions and community-based learning environments, contribute to broader conversations in art education by foregrounding collaborative, culturally responsive, and experiential approaches to creative learning. Their work likewise exemplifies how creativity flourishes when approached through collaborative, culturally responsive, and experiential frameworks that prioritize community knowledge and holistic development. At the same time, the findings presented in this dissertation do not stand apart from the broader field of art education. Rather, they enhance conversations with contemporary scholarship that increasingly emphasizes experiential learning, cultural responsiveness, socially engaged practice, ecological awareness, and community-rooted pedagogies (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008; UNESCO, 2021). This chapter therefore not only synthesizes the findings of the study but also situates them in relation to existing literature in art education, in education more generally, and in community-based practices, and thereby clarifying how the Bahamian cases examined in this dissertation both resonate with and extend current debates in the field.

Scholarship in art education has increasingly recognized that meaningful creative learning often occurs through living pedagogies embedded in community relationships, cultural participation, and everyday practice rather than exclusively within formal institutional settings. Community-based art education, museum education, socially engaged practice, and public pedagogy have all demonstrated how artistic learning can emerge through relational, place-based, and culturally situated forms of engagement (Freedman, 2007; Helguera, 2011; Kester, 2004; Lawton et al., 2019; Mara & Thomson, 2021). These approaches show that art education is not limited to questions of inclusion within formal institutions but can also be understood

through broader cultural ecosystems in which learning is sustained through participation, mentorship, and shared social practice.

The contribution of this study is therefore not to suggest that such pedagogies are absent from existing scholarship, but to examine how two Bahamian non-formal learning environments operate as community-rooted cultural systems in which creative practice, cultural continuity, and ecological awareness are inseparable from everyday life. In this context, living pedagogy is not an institutional strategy added to formal education, but the primary structure through which learning itself is sustained through participation, mentorship, and shared cultural practice.

The creativity framework proposed by Glăveanu and Sierra (2015) provides a foundational lens for understanding creativity from the perspective of the Global South. Their considerations challenge historically dominant narratives of innovation often associated with Western creativity discourse and align closely with the patterns identified in this study. The following table summarizes how the findings from Bahamian educational and community contexts extend and localize their work.

Table 1 *Extending Glăveanu and Sierra (2015): From Global South Epistemologies to Bahamian Contexts of Creative Learning.*

Glăveanu and Sierra (2015): Core Considerations	Localized Extension within This Study (Bahamian Context)
1. A linear view of creative achievements in history versus the recognition of creativity in everyday practice and the history of diverse groups.	Creativity is recognized as an ongoing communal process that emerges through everyday acts of making, repairing, celebration, and collaboration within Bahamian cultural life, particularly through practices such as Junkanoo, community workshops, and informal art education.
2. The absence of nature, materiality, and the body versus a theory of	Creativity is embodied and ecological. Learning takes place through touch, rhythm, and material

Glăveanu and Sierra (2015): Core Considerations	Localized Extension within This Study (Bahamian Context)
creativity that connects mind and body, person and environment.	engagement, linking human and environmental processes within art-making, performance, and sustainability-focused pedagogy.
3. Universalism versus diversity in the theory of creativity.	The study affirms creativity as pluriversal and context-specific, emerging from Bahamian ecological, cultural, and diasporic relations rather than universal definitions of artistic genius or innovation.
4. Expert validation versus multiple perspectives on creativity.	Authority is decentralized. Teachers, students, and community members contribute equally to the interpretation and validation of creative processes through dialogue, collaboration, and shared authorship.
5. Androcentric perspectives and a focus on competition versus acknowledging the role of collaboration, solidarity, and complementarity.	Creativity is relational and collective, emphasizing mentorship, care, and solidarity across generations, with shared success valued over individual recognition.
6. Solitary creators versus participative creativity and communitarian efforts.	Learning and artistic production occur through interdependence. Community workshops and collaborative festivals demonstrate creativity as a networked, participatory process rather than a solitary pursuit.
7. Monocultivation of the mind versus the creation of possible worlds.	Education and art-making cultivate imagination as a social practice that envisions alternative futures through relational, ecological, and intercultural modes of creativity.
8. Creativity and consumption versus creativity and Living Well.	Creative practice is aligned with well-being, sustainability, and cultural continuity rather than economic or commercial outcomes, connecting directly to local values of balance and collective flourishing.
9. An ethics-free science of creativity versus active involvement in societal debates.	Creativity is positioned as an ethical and civic practice that engages with social, environmental, and educational transformation, framing art education as a site of dialogue and community empowerment.
Overall Contribution	The research extends Glăveanu and Sierra's Global South framework by articulating a Bahamian

Glăveanu and Sierra (2015): Core Considerations	Localized Extension within This Study (Bahamian Context)
	ecological and community-based model of creative pedagogy, culminating in the <i>Pasting Tides Pedagogy</i> framework.

Pasting Tides Pedagogy

Building on these insights, the analysis culminated in the development of the *Pasting Tides Pedagogical Framework*, the central conceptual contribution of this dissertation. Rather than a pre-existing Bahamian model, *Pasting Tides* is a conceptual synthesis that emerged through observation, dialogue, and collaborative interpretation across the two case study sites. It offers a way of articulating how creative learning is sustained within non-formal Bahamian learning environments through both material practice and relational exchange. While its articulation reflects my interpretation as a researcher, it is grounded in the pedagogical practices, values, and perspectives shared by educators and learners throughout the research process.

The framework draws on two complementary metaphors—pasting and tides—to describe how creative knowledge is produced, circulated, and renewed within community-rooted learning environments. The first metaphor, pasting, is drawn from the Junkanoo tradition of gluing and layering materials to create elaborate costumes. Within this framework, pasting represents the adaptive, hands-on process of constructing knowledge through layering, experimentation, collaboration, and repetition. It reflects Bahamian traditions of resourcefulness and collective making, where knowledge is built from available materials, shared practice, and accumulated experience. The second metaphor, tides, evokes the ecological and social rhythms that shape island life. Tides describe the cyclical movement of knowledge and relationships as they flow

between people, materials, environments, and generations. Together, these metaphors illustrate how learning unfolds through processes of layering, exchange, and renewal.

From this synthesis emerge five interconnected pedagogical principles: experiential learning, local knowledge and practice, nature and sustainability, collaboration, and holistic learning. These dimensions appeared consistently across both research sites and form the foundation of the Pasting Tides framework. In this sense, the framework extends Glăveanu and Sierra's (2015) understanding of creativity as socially embedded, relational, and culturally situated, while also aligning with Santos' (2014) argument for pluriversal epistemologies that recognize multiple coexisting ways of knowing rather than a single universal model. Pasting Tides therefore offers a localized articulation of Global South epistemologies within Bahamian art education, demonstrating how creative pedagogy can function as a form of cultural continuity, community resilience, and educational transformation.

Pasting provides the cohesion and material continuity that hold these pedagogical pillars together, while *tides* introduce movement, renewal, and exchange. Together, they form a pedagogy of creative continuity: grounded yet fluid, collective yet evolving. This model illustrates how structure and flow coexist within Bahamian creative pedagogy and offers a lens for understanding how creative learning is sustained across time, material, and community.

The Pasting Tides Pedagogical Framework emerged through the iterative analysis conducted across the two participatory research cycles described in Chapter 4. Preliminary themes identified through collaborative reflection with the primary participants in Cycle 1 were refined through the learner perspectives gathered in Cycle 2 and interpreted in relation to Global South epistemologies of creativity and the characteristics of non-formal learning environments. Together, these analyses informed the five pedagogical pillars illustrated below.

Table 2 *The Five Pillars within the Pasting Tides Pedagogy.*

Pillar	How It Functions within the Pasting Tides Pedagogy
Experiential Learning	Learning occurs through embodied, hands-on making that mirrors the act of pasting in Junkanoo. Knowledge develops through cycles of practice, reflection, and return, like the movement of the tides. Experience is understood as iterative and process-based, allowing meaning to deepen through doing.
Local Knowledge	Cultural memory and everyday expertise form the material of learning. Through pasting, fragments of local knowledge are layered and preserved, while the tides carry these insights into wider dialogues, keeping them both rooted in place and open to exchange.
Nature and Sustainability	The natural environment provides both resources and guiding metaphors. Pasting reflects sustainable making practices that reuse and transform available materials, and the tides embody ecological balance and renewal. Creativity becomes a practice of environmental care and continuity.
Holistic Practice	Learning engages mind, body, emotion, and spirit together. Pasting gathers these dimensions through tactile and sensory processes, and the tides maintain rhythm and harmony among them. The result is a balanced approach that values well-being alongside skill development.
Collaboration	Collective making is essential. Pasting makes visible the shared labour of creative work, while the tides describe the ongoing movement of ideas and efforts within a group. Collaboration becomes a living rhythm of reciprocity, trust, and shared purpose.

While the *Pasting Tides* framework emerged from observations within non-formal learning environments in The Bahamas, its most direct relevance is to formal art education settings that are already seeking to move beyond studio-centred, product-driven, and Eurocentric models of creative learning. In particular, the framework may be useful for post-secondary studio art, interdisciplinary creative practice, teacher education, and senior secondary visual arts contexts where educators have enough curricular flexibility to engage students in extended making, place-based inquiry, collaborative processes, and culturally grounded reflection. The

framework is not intended to address all areas of art education equally, nor to replace existing community-based art education scholarship. Rather, it offers a conceptual lens for educators working within formal institutions who are asking how local knowledge, relational practice, ecological awareness, and collective making might be taken seriously as pedagogical foundations rather than treated as supplemental content. Potential users of the framework include higher education instructors working in studio art and interdisciplinary creative programs, community-based artists and cultural practitioners facilitating collaborative learning environments, and educators seeking to integrate culturally grounded and experiential approaches within both formal and non-formal educational contexts. In addition, aspects of the framework may be valuable to K–12 educators interested in incorporating local cultural traditions, collaborative learning structures, and place-based creative inquiry into classroom practice. Rather than functioning as a prescriptive teaching model, *Pasting Tides* is intended as a conceptual framework that supports educators in reflecting on how relational, culturally grounded, and experiential forms of creative learning may be cultivated within diverse settings.

The framework also responds to broader shifts already underway in art education scholarship. Within formal studio, teacher education, and community-based art education scholarship, researchers have increasingly challenged narrow studio-centred, Eurocentric, and product-driven models of teaching by emphasizing art education as relational, socially situated, and culturally mediated (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008). In this sense, *Pasting Tides* should not be understood as rejecting the field of art education, but rather as contributing a localized and conceptually integrated articulation of principles that are increasingly visible across the field, particularly in community-based, interdisciplinary, and socially engaged contexts. What distinguishes this study is that these

pedagogical values were not introduced as external strategies or institutional innovations; rather, they were observed as lived, ongoing practices within Bahamian non-formal creative environments. The contribution of Pasting Tides is therefore not the claim that community-based or relational approaches are new to art education, but that Bahamian non-formal creative environments offer a culturally specific articulation of how these approaches operate as integrated learning systems.

The *Pasting Tides Pedagogical Framework* articulates five recurring pedagogical dimensions through which creative pedagogy becomes visible in practice: experiential learning, local knowledge and practice, nature and sustainability, collaboration, and holistic learning. These five pillars function as interpretive bridges between the empirical findings of this study and broader conversations in art education, community-based learning, and Global South epistemologies. The following sections examine each pillar in relation to existing scholarship while clarifying the distinct contribution of this study and considering how these approaches may be meaningfully adapted by educators working in diverse contexts.

Developing Experiential Learning Approaches

Art education should emphasize extended engagement with creative processes rather than focusing primarily on finished products. This case study demonstrates how experiential, practice-based learning creates deeper engagement and more meaningful outcomes than theoretical instruction alone. While the term experiential learning is used here to connect the findings to established education scholarship, the practices observed in these Bahamian non-formal learning environments also include cultural participation, intergenerational knowledge exchange, and community creative activity that shape how learning unfolds in these contexts. Drawing from the sustained, cyclical nature of Junkanoo preparation, educators can design projects that unfold over

longer time frames, allowing students to deeply explore materials, techniques, and concepts through multiple iterations. This approach values learning through experimentation and reflection, countering the product-driven orientation common in Western educational contexts.

This finding strongly resonates with long-standing scholarship in education and art education that positions experience as central to meaningful learning. Dewey's (1934) account of art as experience remains foundational here, particularly in its insistence that knowledge develops through active engagement, reflection, and continuity across experience. More recent art education scholarship likewise emphasizes process, inquiry, and embodied making over purely product-driven models (Freedman, 2007; Goldblatt, 2006; Van Moer et al., 2008). The Bahamian cases examined in this dissertation reinforce these perspectives, but they do so within non-formal contexts in which experiential learning is not simply a pedagogical technique. Rather, it forms part of the cultural logic of the learning environment itself.

Likewise, as demonstrated in I.C.E., whenever possible learning should take place in real-world settings rather than being confined solely to traditional classrooms. By establishing partnerships with community organizations, local businesses, and cultural institutions, educators can create opportunities for students to apply their creative skills in authentic environments. Such experiences provide valuable insights into how creative work operates within broader social and economic systems. Additionally, art educators can design projects that address real community needs or challenges, positioning creativity as a tool for social engagement rather than solely for self-expression. Inspired by the community-oriented ethos of Junkanoo—where artistic expression serves collective cultural purposes—educators can collaborate with community partners to identify meaningful ways for students to use their artistic talents to make a local

impact. This approach not only highlights the social value of creativity but also demonstrates its practical applications of their creative abilities.

In this respect, the findings of this study also intersect with contemporary art education scholarship that has increasingly called for teaching to move beyond the isolated studio classroom and toward more socially situated and community-responsive forms of practice (Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008; UNESCO, 2021). Within these discussions, experiential learning often appears as a means of increasing relevance, engagement, and critical awareness. The Bahamian examples contribute to this conversation by showing how creative learning can be structured through long-term participation in community rhythms, collective responsibilities, and cultural events, rather than through discrete classroom exercises alone. This suggests that experiential learning in art education may be strengthened when it is tied not only to active making, but also to social purpose, cultural continuity, and sustained participation in shared creative life.

Art education should also support students' growth as cultural beings, community members, and potential professionals simultaneously. Arlene Nash Ferguson's use of Junkanoo to teach both cultural heritage and life skills for example demonstrates how educators can design learning experiences that integrate technical abilities, cultural understanding, and professional development. This holistic approach acknowledges that artistic growth is inherently tied to broader aspects of human development.

Learning from the ways in which both Arlene and Antonius facilitate intergenerational knowledge transfer, educational programs should intentionally connect different age groups to facilitate the exchange of wisdom and innovation. Drawing from the Junkanoo tradition where skills and cultural knowledge pass between generations, educators can design initiatives that

bring together youth, adults, and elders in collaborative creative practice. These connections help preserve traditional knowledge while allowing it to evolve through contact with contemporary perspectives.

To foster this kind of experiential learning environment, educators might create open studio spaces—like Junkanoo shacks or I.C.E. —where students can work collaboratively on ongoing projects over extended periods. Flexible attendance structures could allow students to drop in during open periods to continue their work, blurring the lines between designated ‘art time’ and other activities. As seen in Antonius’ pedagogical approach, embedding professional opportunities such as exhibitions into the curriculum would require students to manage all aspects of these events—from concept development to curation and promotion—providing real-world experience. Mentorship connections between students of varying ages or skill levels could replace rigid age-based groupings, encouraging peer-to-peer learning.

Rather than relying on step-by-step instruction, educators could use open-ended prompts that encourage multiple approaches and solutions, emphasizing discovery through process. Community field trips might offer students direct engagement with local craftspeople, artists, and cultural practitioners in their working environments. Allocating time for intensive experimentation with specific techniques or materials would deepen students’ understanding through focused inquiry. Finally, informal routines like I.C.E.’s *Weekly Coffee Chats*, where students share works-in-progress and receive peer feedback in a low-pressure settings, could further support experiential learning by fostering dialogue and collaboration.

Taken together, these findings confirm that experiential learning is not peripheral to art education but central to how creative practice becomes meaningful. They also extend current discussions by showing that experiential learning is closely intertwined with cultural

participation, intergenerational exchange, and community accountability. This contributes a more community-embedded and Global South-inflected account of experiential art education than is often foregrounded in the mainstream literature.

Integrating Cultural Context and Local Knowledge

The deep cultural rootedness of Bahamian art education offers important lessons about connecting creative practice to heritage and community wisdom. Art educators should research and incorporate local creative traditions into their teaching, moving beyond the Western canon. On an ongoing basis, educators should consider how art education practices can connect to goals of decolonization. This should involve community elders, local artists, and cultural institutions as valuable knowledge sources.

This emphasis on cultural context and local knowledge resonates strongly with contemporary scholarship in art education that argues for culturally responsive, sustaining, and place-conscious pedagogies (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008). It also aligns with wider calls to challenge the assumption that valid artistic knowledge is located primarily within Eurocentric canons or institutional archives. In this sense, the findings of this dissertation reinforce a growing movement within art education that values learners' lived experiences, cultural traditions, and community histories as legitimate foundations for creative work.

Establishing ongoing relationships with community artists, craftspeople, and cultural practitioners provides students access to knowledge systems often excluded from formal education. Following Antonius' approach of creating networks between emerging and established artists, educators can develop programs that connect students with local practitioners for sustained mentorship and cultural learning outside of the classroom. These relationships should

be reciprocal, with educational institutions offering resources and platforms to community knowledge keepers while students gain invaluable context-specific understanding.

The pedagogical approaches explored in this research offer unique advantages for supporting diverse and multicultural student populations by creating legitimate spaces for cultural heritage exploration and expression. These methods can help students from varied backgrounds feel valued and included in the educational process. Unlike standardized Western curricula that often privilege dominant cultural narratives, these approaches invite students to draw upon their own cultural knowledge, family histories, and traditions as valid sources for artistic inspiration and development. This validation can be particularly transformative for students who rarely see their cultural backgrounds reflected in educational contexts. By implementing flexible frameworks that encourage personal cultural investigation—whether through materials, techniques, subject matter, or collaborative processes—educators can create environments where students are able to strengthen their cultural identities while sharing diverse perspectives with peers. The result will not only be more meaningful engagement for students from varied backgrounds but also richer cross-cultural understanding for the entire learning community, preparing all students to navigate and contribute to an increasingly interconnected global society.

Building on the importance of integrating cultural context and local knowledge into art education, it is essential to actively engage with the rich traditions and practices of the surrounding community. By researching and immersing oneself in local cultural practices, educators can design projects that honour these traditions while allowing for contemporary interpretation. For instance, Antonius' work at I.C.E. demonstrates how artistic practices can be deeply rooted in Bahamian cultural identity, drawing from local materials, history, and customs

to create works that resonate with both tradition and innovation. Similarly, educators can create opportunities for students to explore their own diverse cultural heritages through creative assignments that connect to their lived experiences.

Inviting learners to engage directly with community practitioners, elders, and knowledge keepers is another powerful way to bridge the gap between formal education and cultural traditions. These individuals can bring invaluable perspectives and personal connections to traditional practices, enriching students' understanding of their cultural roots. For example, students might interview family members about crafts or customs from their childhoods, fostering intergenerational dialogue while uncovering stories that might otherwise be lost. These conversations can inspire projects that reflect the unique cultural identity of the region while encouraging students to see themselves as active participants in preserving and evolving their heritage.

Educators can also develop assignments that explicitly connect to the local landscape, history, and culture. This approach not only grounds learning in students' immediate surroundings but also helps them appreciate the interconnectedness between art, environment, and identity. Antonius Roberts' emphasis on sustainability and his use of natural materials in his art provide a compelling model for this kind of engagement. By encouraging students to draw inspiration from their local environment—whether through materials, themes, or subject matter—educators can foster a deeper connection to place and community.

Incorporating cultural protocols into classroom routines further reinforces respect for local traditions. Practices such as circle discussions or acknowledgment ceremonies can create a sense of shared purpose and honour the values embedded in indigenous ways of knowing. Similarly, integrating subject areas through cultural themes can make learning more holistic and

meaningful. For example, Carlene's "Math Junkanoo Parade" demonstrates how mathematical concepts can be explored through cultural forms, offering students a dynamic way to connect academic subjects with their heritage.

Documenting local arts practices through student-led research projects is another way to preserve and celebrate cultural knowledge. These projects can address gaps in formal historical records by capturing oral histories or exploring under-documented traditions. Alia's research on pre-Columbian ceramics for instance highlights how student inquiry can contribute to broader understandings of cultural history. By empowering students to become researchers and storytellers, educators can help them recognize their role in sustaining and sharing their community's legacy.

Educators sharing their own personal cultural connections with students also plays an important role in building authentic relationships within the classroom. When educators openly share their involvement with cultural activities—such as Arlene's, Quinn's and Carlene's participation in Junkanoo—they model how creativity can serve as a bridge between personal identity and collective heritage. This authenticity fosters trust and inspires students to explore their own connections to culture through art.

At the same time, the Bahamian cases demonstrate that local knowledge is not merely a resource that can be added to an existing curriculum. Rather, it functions as the very substance through which pedagogical relationships, artistic processes, and cultural responsibilities are organized. This is a significant distinction. Much contemporary art education literature advocates for inclusion and representation, but the environments documented in this study show how culturally rooted knowledge can structure the learning environment itself. In this sense, the contribution of the present study lies in showing how non-formal art education can operate as a

living pedagogical system grounded in heritage, everyday practice, and community accountability, rather than simply as a site where cultural content is included.

Connecting Creative Practice to Environmental Stewardship

Like the artistic endeavours of Junkanoo and I.C.E., environmental consciousness should be integrated throughout art education, not treated as a separate topic. As seen in Antonius' emphasis on sustainability at I.C.E., educators can incorporate ecological considerations into all aspects of art education—from materials selection and waste management to thematic explorations of environmental issues. This approach helps students understand creativity as inherently connected to and responsible toward the natural world, countering the anthropocentric focus of much Western art education.

This study has also highlighted a profound reconceptualization of the relationship between creative practice and the natural world that challenges dominant Western paradigms. Rather than viewing the environment merely as subject matter or a resource for artmaking, the Bahamian approaches demonstrate how environmental consciousness can be fundamental to artistic identity and process. This perspective invites educators working in diverse contexts to reconsider how artistic practice may be understood as embedded within ecological systems rather than separate from them. This has been exemplified by ecological and embodied scholarship that has challenged human-centred and extractive models of education and creativity, including Ingold's (2021a, 2021b, 2023) anthropological attention to material, environmental, and embodied dimensions of making, and broader systems-thinking perspectives from the life sciences (Capra & Luisi, 2014; Lloyd, 2014; Lloyd, 2016). It also aligns with emerging conversations in art education that call for stronger attention to sustainability, environmental ethics, and material responsibility (UNESCO, 2021). Within this literature, ecological awareness

is often framed as an important dimension of contemporary pedagogy. The Bahamian examples deepen this discussion by showing that environmental stewardship is not simply an added theme for creative projects, but a way of understanding artistic practice itself.

By positioning creative work within an inherent interconnectedness of all living systems, ecological perspectives can disrupt the traditional Western separation between nature and culture. When Antonius' residents incorporate garden soil into installations or when Junkanoo practitioners reimagine discarded materials, they exemplify a worldview where creativity exists within, rather than apart from, natural cycles. This conceptual framework challenges art educators to consider how creative practices might honour natural systems rather than exploit them.

The study has also demonstrated a fundamental shift from environmental art as *representation* toward environmental art as *participation*. Instead of simply depicting nature, artists in these contexts actively engage with ecological processes. This participatory approach recognizes what indigenous knowledge systems have long understood—that humans are not observers of nature but participants within it. For international educators, this offers a philosophical foundation for art education that positions creativity as a form of ecological citizenship rather than merely self-expression.

Perhaps most significantly, the study has revealed how sustainable art practices emerge organically from cultural contexts where resource consciousness has been necessary for survival. The Junkanoo tradition of repurposing materials reflects a cultural wisdom developed through centuries of limited resources and colonial extraction—a wisdom increasingly relevant in our era of environmental crisis. This suggests that environmental art education is not simply about

teaching 'green' techniques but about recovering and honoring traditional knowledge systems that have long understood the necessity of living within environmental limits.

Art education offers a unique opportunity to connect creative practice with environmental stewardship, fostering both artistic growth and ecological awareness. By integrating sustainability into their teaching, educators can inspire students to think critically about the materials they use, the impact of their choices, and their relationship with the natural world. Antonius' work at I.C.E., which emphasizes sustainability and the use of local materials, provides a powerful example of how creativity can align with environmental responsibility. One way to promote sustainability in art education is by establishing systems for repurposing discarded materials. Inspired by the Junkanoo ethos of "you don't waste things," educators can create classroom or institutional collection systems where students gather and reuse items that might otherwise be thrown away. This practice not only reduces waste but also encourages students to see potential in everyday objects, fostering resourcefulness and creativity.

Another approach involves creating a small garden space connected to the learning environment where students can grow plants for observation and use as art materials. This hands-on interaction with nature deepens students' understanding of ecological processes while providing them with sustainable resources for creative projects. Such initiatives can also serve as a springboard for discussions about the interconnectedness of art, nature, and community.

Projects that explore local environmental themes offer another avenue for connecting creativity to ecological awareness. For example, Carlene's "Adventures Under the Sea" Junkanoo theme highlights how art can reflect and celebrate the Bahamian landscape while encouraging students to engage with environmental issues specific to their region. By designing assignments

that focus on local ecosystems, educators can help students develop a sense of place and responsibility toward their surroundings.

Educators can also raise awareness about material sustainability by discussing the environmental impact of traditional art supplies and exploring alternatives. For instance, Junkanoo practitioners have expressed concerns about non-biodegradable materials used in costumes, prompting conversations about how creative practices can evolve to be more environmentally friendly. These discussions encourage students to think critically about their choices and seek innovative solutions that align with sustainable values.

Outdoor creation sessions provide an opportunity for students to directly observe and respond to the natural environment. At I.C.E., Antonius encourages young artists to work outdoors, drawing inspiration from their surroundings and engaging with nature in meaningful ways. Educators can adopt similar practices by organizing outdoor art-making activities that emphasize observation and connection with the natural world.

Incorporating found natural materials into art projects further reinforces the idea that creativity can emerge from sustainable sources. By teaching students to recognize potential uses in everyday objects—such as leaves, shells, or driftwood—educators can help them develop an appreciation for the beauty and utility of natural elements. This practice aligns with Antonius’ philosophy of using local materials to create works that reflect both cultural heritage and environmental mindfulness.

Documenting environmental change through visual works offers another way for students to engage with ecological issues relevant to their lives. Assignments might include creating artwork that records changes in local ecosystems or highlights pressing environmental

challenges. These projects not only raise awareness but also empower students to use their creative skills as tools for advocacy and education.

Finally, fostering observation skills through regular nature journaling or sketching exercises encourages students to see everyday objects as potential art subject matter and/or materials while cultivating mindfulness about their surroundings. These practices teach students to approach both art-making and environmental stewardship with curiosity and intentionality. By integrating these strategies into their curriculum, educators can create learning environments where creativity serves as a bridge between artistic expression and ecological responsibility.

What this study contributes to the field is an integrated account of ecological art education in which environmental stewardship is inseparable from cultural practice, material knowledge, and community life. Rather than presenting sustainability as a contemporary institutional priority alone, the Bahamian cases show how ecological awareness may already be embedded within longstanding creative traditions. This insight is valuable for art education, where environmental responsibility is sometimes framed as a new curricular addition rather than as a relational mode of practice and worldview.

Embracing Collaborative Models of Creativity

Western art education often emphasizes individual creativity and achievement, positioning the artist as a solitary genius. However, collaborative approaches observed in Bahamian contexts offer important insights for reconsidering how collaborative creativity can be cultivated within art education. Drawing inspiration from Antonius' work at I.C.E. and the Junkanoo shack model, educators can design learning environments where creativity thrives through collaboration rather than isolation. In these spaces, participants with diverse skills

contribute to shared creations, challenging the Western idea of the solitary artist while cultivating essential skills such as communication, compromise, and collective problem-solving.

This finding is perhaps one of the clearest points of connection between the present study and contemporary art education scholarship. Over the past two decades, scholars have increasingly emphasized that creativity is not simply individual but relational, dialogic, and socially produced (Freedman, 2007; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Glăveanu, 2010a; Glăveanu, 2010b). Parallel discussions in community-based and socially engaged art practices likewise understand artistic work as emerging through participation, dialogue, and collective process rather than through isolated authorship alone (Helguera, 2011; Kester, 2004). The pedagogical environments at Educulture and I.C.E. strongly resonate with these discussions, particularly in the ways they position mentorship, shared labour, and reciprocity as central to creative development.

Collaborative projects should be central to art education, with outcomes that depend on group participation rather than individual achievement. For example, Antonius' emphasis on mentorship and shared creative spaces exemplifies how collaboration can enrich artistic development. Educators can create assignments that require students to pool their unique talents—whether through group installations, community murals, or multimedia projects—helping them recognize the value of working together to achieve a common goal. This approach not only enhances students' technical skills but also fosters an understanding of how creativity can build relationships and strengthen communities.

Assessment frameworks should also evolve to recognize and value collective achievement alongside individual growth. Current metrics often focus solely on personal portfolios or technical proficiency; however, educators can redesign criteria to evaluate how

students contribute to group dynamics, support others' learning, and build upon shared ideas. These skills are highly valued in professional settings and community contexts but are often overlooked in traditional assessment models. By incorporating documentation of collaborative processes and reflections on group learning experiences into evaluations, educators can highlight the importance of teamwork and shared creativity.

Structured opportunities for peer-to-peer teaching and learning further disrupt traditional teacher-centered hierarchies and encourage reciprocal knowledge exchange. Inspired by I.C.E.'s ecosystem and the collaborative Junkanoo groups/families, where emerging artists learn alongside established practitioners, educators can create spaces where students regularly share their specialized skills and techniques with peers. This reciprocal learning fosters a sense of community and builds students' confidence in both acquiring and sharing expertise. For instance, students might lead workshops on techniques they have developed or collaborate on projects that require them to teach one another specific skills.

Creating intergenerational learning communities is another powerful way to embrace collaborative models of creativity. Inspired by Junkanoo's intergenerational participation and I.C.E.'s residency model, educators can design programs where beginners, intermediate learners, and advanced practitioners work alongside one another in the same environment. This approach allows natural mentorship to develop as more experienced participants model techniques, approaches, and professional practices for newer learners while benefiting from fresh perspectives brought by younger artists. Such environments foster mutual respect and create opportunities for knowledge transfer across generations.

Educators themselves should adopt flexible roles within these collaborative spaces—shifting between being a teacher, co-learner, mentor, or facilitator depending on the context.

Antonius' approach of working alongside emerging artists at I.C.E., where he simultaneously creates his own work while guiding others in theirs, serves as an inspiring example of this dynamic role-shifting. By engaging directly in creative practice alongside their students, educators demonstrate humility and openness while modeling professional habits.

Collaborative models also extend beyond the classroom into broader community engagement. Educators can establish partnerships with local organizations or cultural institutions to create projects that address community needs while fostering collective creativity. At the same time, this study extends these conversations by showing how collaboration functions not only as a method of artmaking, but also as a cultural ethic and pedagogical infrastructure. In the Bahamian contexts studied, collaboration is sustained through long-term social relationships, shared responsibility, intergenerational participation, and community recognition. This differs in emphasis from some institutional models of collaborative learning, where group work may be temporary or instrumental. The contribution of the present study is therefore to demonstrate how collaborative creativity can be understood as a durable pedagogical condition rather than simply an assignment structure or artistic strategy.

Fostering Holistic Approaches to Art Education

The Bahamian examples demonstrate the profound value of approaching art education through interconnected frameworks rather than compartmentalized disciplines. Art educators are encouraged to challenge boundaries between artistic mediums and subject areas, creating integrated learning experiences that reflect the seamless connections found in cultural practices like Junkanoo. Junkanoo exemplifies how visual art, music, performance, and craft can be woven together into a unified creative expression, offering a model for curriculum design that crosses traditional disciplinary divides. Educators can incorporate inter-arts initiatives into their teaching

by collaborating with music, dance, or theater instructors or introducing multimedia approaches that encourage students to explore how different creative modalities inform and enhance one another.

This holistic orientation also resonates with scholarship that critiques the fragmentation of learning into isolated disciplines, skills, and outcomes. Art education scholars have increasingly argued for interdisciplinary, relational, and socially grounded models of creativity that connect artistic practice to wider questions of identity, culture, environment, and lived experience (Andrews, 2019, 2022; Hatton, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008). In broader educational discourse, holistic and integrative approaches have likewise been associated with more meaningful and equitable learning, particularly where students are invited to connect emotional, cultural, embodied, and intellectual dimensions of knowledge (Gardner, 2011; UNESCO, 2021). The present study supports these arguments while showing how such integration is already enacted in Bahamian non-formal contexts.

As this study has also shown, pedagogical approaches can effectively connect artistic development with cultural identity, social relationships, and spiritual practices. Antonius' work at I.C.E., for example, embodies this holistic framework by fostering creativity as an interconnected capability tied to all dimensions of human development. Such approaches align with many Global South educational philosophies that view art not as an isolated skill but as a relational and integrative practice. By adopting this perspective, educators can help students see their creative growth as intrinsically connected to their personal identities, cultural heritage, and broader communities.

Central to this conceptual approach is the recognition that technical skill development cannot be meaningfully separated from cultural context. For instance, Alia's research with pre-

Columbian ceramic traditions or Junkanoo practitioners teaching specific paste-making techniques are simultaneously sharing cultural knowledge, historical understanding, and technical capabilities. This integrated approach invites art educators to question artificial boundaries between ‘technique’ on one side and ‘content’ or ‘history’ in art education on the other. Rather than treating technical skills as neutral or detached from meaning, educators can emphasize how cultural values and historical narratives are embedded within artistic methods themselves.

This study also challenges Western notions of creativity as an individual pursuit by reconceptualizing it as inherently relational. In both the I.C.E. and Junkanoo contexts, creative development occurs through webs of relationships—between peers, across generations, and with the broader community. This relational understanding of creativity disrupts the myth of the solitary genius by positioning artistic growth as something that happens between people rather than solely within individuals. For educators worldwide, this framework offers a powerful alternative that values connection, dialogue, and collective meaning-making as essential components of artistic development.

Another significant insight is the unity of cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and physical dimensions in artistic learning. Bahamian approaches resist Western tendencies to prioritize intellectual development over embodied knowledge or emotional intelligence. For example, Quinn’s use of Junkanoo to teach math demonstrates how academic learning can be seamlessly integrated with physical movement and creative expression. Similarly, Antonius’ focus on using natural materials connects students to both environmental awareness and spiritual reflection through their creative practice. Educators can foster holistic learning environments by designing projects that engage multiple facets of students’ development simultaneously. Assignments

might incorporate storytelling to connect emotional intelligence with artistic expression or include physical activities like dance or outdoor creation sessions to cultivate embodied knowledge alongside technical skills.

A key contribution of the present study lies in demonstrating that holistic art education is not only an aspirational pedagogical goal but a lived reality within certain non-formal, culturally grounded environments. In the Bahamian cases, holistic practice emerges through the inseparability of artistic work from community participation, environmental awareness, heritage continuity, and personal development. This expands current discussions in art education by showing how holistic learning can be sustained through community-based cultural forms rather than only through interdisciplinary curricular design within formal institutions.

Situating Pasting Tides within Art Education and Community-Based Practice

Taken together, the findings of this study both resonate with and extend current conversations in art education. On one hand, the pedagogical values identified here—experiential learning, cultural responsiveness, collaboration, ecological awareness, and holistic development—are not absent from contemporary theory and practice. Indeed, a growing body of scholarship already critiques Eurocentric and product-oriented models of art education in favour of more relational, participatory, and socially engaged approaches (Freedman, 2007; Haywood Rolling, 2019; Mason & Torres Pereira de Eça, 2008; UNESCO, 2021). In this sense, the Bahamian cases examined in this dissertation support and reinforce important directions already emerging in the field.

At the same time, the present study helps identify an important gap. A significant portion of the literature advocating collaborative, community-engaged, or culturally responsive art education has been developed within formal institutional contexts—particularly universities,

schools, museums, and community arts programs in the Global North (Ibrahim et al., 2023). Broader critiques of how Global North institutional knowledge production shapes research agendas and educational norms further reinforce this point (R'boul, 2022; Shahjahan et al., 2021). By contrast, this dissertation documents non-formal art education environments in Nassau, Bahamas, where these values are not supplementary strategies layered onto an institutional curriculum, but fundamental and organic features of how creative learning is lived, sustained, and transmitted. The cases examined in the Junkanoo and I.C.E. contexts therefore offer a valuable counterpoint to dominant educational models and reveal how artistic pedagogy can operate through everyday community practice, intergenerational exchange, and cultural continuity.

This is also where more sustained engagement with community-based art education becomes useful. The Bahamian contexts explored here share meaningful affinities with scholarship and practice that emphasize dialogic learning, socially situated artmaking, and the co-construction of meaning through community engagement. While resonating with these approaches, the present study complements them by highlighting how similar pedagogical dynamics emerge within Bahamian non-formal creative traditions. In doing so, it contributes a distinctly Caribbean and Global South articulation of community-rooted creative pedagogy, one in which ecological awareness, cultural heritage, and non-formal artistic education are deeply intertwined. In this regard, *Pasting Tides* offers a synthesized vocabulary for describing pedagogical conditions that may already be present in community arts practice but are rarely theorized through Global South epistemologies or Bahamian creative traditions.

The contribution of the *Pasting Tides* framework is therefore threefold. First, it provides a conceptual language for understanding how creative learning unfolds within Bahamian non-

formal art education environments, translating observed pedagogical practices into a framework that can support theoretical reflection within art education research. Second, it extends existing discussions in art education by foregrounding the role of Global South epistemologies in shaping collaborative, ecological, and culturally grounded pedagogies. Third, it offers educators and researchers a framework that can support comparative reflection across contexts without reducing local specificity to a universal model. In this sense, the framework is both locally grounded and open to broader dialogue: rooted in Bahamian creative practice while contributing to broader conversations about how art education might be reimagined internationally.

Pasting Tides extends Glăveanu and Sierra's creativity framework by grounding it in a specific Bahamian context. Rather than proposing a new theory in abstraction, it demonstrates how these principles are already enacted in lived, community-rooted practice. In this sense, these practices function not as supplemental approaches, but as the conditions through which learning, making, and cultural knowledge are inseparably sustained. In doing so, the study helps consolidate conversations across creativity studies, art education, and socially engaged practice by grounding Global South epistemologies of creativity in non-formal pedagogical systems and bringing them into dialogue with sociocultural creativity and relational art education frameworks. In this way, the *Pasting Tides* framework establishes a conceptual and translational bridge between Bahamian non-formal pedagogical practice and broader conversations in art education (Freedman, 2007; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Haywood Rolling, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

This dissertation therefore contributes to existing scholarship in community-based, socially engaged, and non-formal art education rather than positioning itself outside of it. What the Bahamian contexts examined in this study contribute is a model in which these relational and

community-based approaches are not positioned alongside institutional structures but operate as fully integrated systems of learning in which cultural knowledge, creative practice, and pedagogy are inseparable. Its significance lies in bringing Bahamian creative learning environments into these broader disciplinary conversations and demonstrating how Global South epistemologies can further expand understandings of art education, creativity, and pedagogical practice.

Contextual Adaptation and the Limits of Transferability

While the findings of this study offer insights into creative learning within non-formal art education environments, it is important to recognize that the pedagogical practices observed in this research are deeply rooted in the specific cultural, historical, and social context of the Bahamas. The learning environments at the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.) emerged through local artistic traditions, community relationships, and cultural practices that cannot be separated from their broader social and historical conditions. For this reason, the pedagogical approaches described in this dissertation should not be interpreted as universally transferable models for art education. Their most meaningful application is therefore in formal learning environments where educators are already working to loosen rigid curricular structures and are seeking ways to embed community-rooted, relational, and place-based approaches more fully within core pedagogical design.

Instead, the *Pasting Tides* framework is best understood as a conceptual lens through which educators and researchers may reflect on how creative learning emerges within particular cultural environments. Many of the pedagogical elements identified in this study—such as experiential learning, collaboration, the valuing of local knowledge, and culturally grounded creative practice—may already be present in other educational contexts. What this framework offers is a way of recognizing and articulating how these practices function together within

community-rooted learning environments, particularly those shaped by histories of cultural continuity, exclusion, or resistance. In this sense, the framework does not propose a fixed model to be transplanted elsewhere but rather invites educators to reflect on how similar principles may already exist within their own contexts and how they might be interpreted through local cultural knowledge and educational practices.

Recognizing these limits is especially important in discussions of Global South epistemologies. As scholars have noted, educational practices that emerge within specific cultural contexts should not be abstracted into universal models without careful attention to the conditions that gave rise to them (Chasi & Heleta, 2025; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015). Rather than promoting direct transfer, the insights developed in this study invite educators to consider how similar principles might be interpreted and adapted within their own local contexts, in dialogue with the cultural knowledge, artistic traditions, and social realities present in those settings. This includes attending to differences in institutional structures, community priorities, access to resources, and historical relationships between cultural practice and formal education systems.

In this sense, the contribution of this research lies not in prescribing a fixed pedagogical model, but in offering a framework for recognizing and valuing creative learning practices that may already exist within communities. By foregrounding local knowledge, relational learning, and cultural context, the study encourages educators to approach pedagogical innovation through processes of listening, collaboration, and contextual adaptation rather than replication.

Final Recommendations

Building on the pathways outlined in this chapter, this study offers the following recommendations for educators, institutions, and policymakers seeking to integrate Global South epistemologies into art education practice. These recommendations synthesize the five key

pedagogical areas identified across the case studies and emphasize the importance of embedding learning within the rhythms of daily life and community contexts.

The *Pasting Tides* framework highlights several interconnected conditions that support creative learning. Central to this approach is experiential learning, where knowledge emerges through making, observation, and iterative practice grounded in community histories and everyday expertise. While experiential learning is often associated with Global North educational theory, the practices observed in this study are rooted in local knowledge systems and community-based forms of cultural continuity (Dewey, 1934; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015; Kolb, 1984). Creative practice is also closely connected to the natural environment, situating artistic work within ecological systems and embedding sustainability within the process of making. Collaboration emerges as another defining feature, supported through collective practice, shared authorship, and reciprocal learning relationships. Finally, learning unfolds holistically, integrating emotional, social, embodied, and intellectual dimensions over time (Ingold, 2023; Lloyd, 2014; UNESCO, 2021).

Taken together, these insights suggest several practical directions for educators seeking to cultivate more relational, community-responsive forms of art education. The following recommendations translate the conceptual insights of the *Pasting Tides* framework into pedagogical principles that may guide curriculum design and educational practice.

1. Embed experiential learning as a core pedagogical mode. Learning experiences should actively engage students in making, doing, and reflecting, grounding creative practice in real-world contexts. Opportunities to participate in community-led arts, cultural events, and place-based projects can strengthen the connection between creative skills and lived experience.

2. Design curriculum that is responsive to local context and student interests. Curriculum development should draw on local cultural, historical, and environmental narratives while remaining responsive to students' evolving interests. This responsiveness fosters relevance, engagement, and a sense of belonging in the learning process.
3. Recognize and elevate local knowledge and practices. Education systems should treat community knowledge holders as co-educators, incorporating their expertise into teaching and learning. This approach affirms the value of cultural heritage while offering students diverse models of creative problem-solving.
4. Integrate nature and sustainability into creative practice. Environmental awareness should be embedded in material selection, project design, and critical reflection. Connecting creative practice to sustainability strengthens ecological consciousness and reinforces the interdependence of cultural and environmental stewardship.
5. Foster collaborative practice. Collaboration between students, educators, communities, and disciplines enriches creativity and strengthens social cohesion. Projects should encourage shared ownership, dialogue, and collective authorship.
6. Adopt a holistic approach that connects learning to daily life. A truly holistic pedagogy integrates emotional, cultural, and ecological dimensions of learning into everyday experiences. By weaving together these elements, education can extend beyond the classroom and become an ongoing process that supports both personal growth and community vitality.

These recommendations underscore the need for educational models that are contextually grounded, culturally relevant, and ecologically responsible. By adopting these approaches, educators and institutions can foster creativity that not only reflects but also strengthens the

communities in which it is practiced. Importantly, these recommendations should not be understood as prescriptive steps derived from a single cultural context. Rather, they function as guiding principles that educators may adapt to their own environments while remaining attentive to local histories, knowledge systems, and creative traditions.

Chapter Conclusion

Implementing these recommendations requires art educators to engage in ongoing critical reflection about their own cultural positioning and pedagogical assumptions. The goal is not to appropriate specific cultural practices like Junkanoo, but rather to recognize and adapt the underlying educational principles these practices embody. By embracing collaborative creativity, integrating cultural context, developing experiential approaches, fostering holistic education, and implementing alternative mentorship models, art educators can create learning environments that honour diverse epistemologies while preparing students for meaningful participation in an increasingly interconnected world.

As discussed, art education stands at a critical juncture in which engagement with Global South epistemologies can support the ongoing reconsideration of traditional pedagogical frameworks. This approach challenges the dominance of Western-centric paradigms, which often prioritize individual creativity, originality, and institutionalized learning environments, while neglecting collaborative, community-driven, and experiential models deeply rooted in Global South traditions. By embracing diverse ways of knowing and teaching, art education can evolve into a more inclusive, culturally responsive, and globally relevant practice.

The exploration of Arlene and Antonius' practices exemplifies how creativity can be understood as relational, participatory, and deeply connected to local knowledge and environmental stewardship. These practices align with Glăveanu and Sierra's framework for new

epistemological foundations of creativity, which emphasizes collaboration, solidarity, and the integration of mind, body, and environment. This perspective invites educators to move beyond linear views of creative achievement and toward fostering creativity as a communal act that sustains livelihoods and enriches cultural heritage.

In contrast to more hierarchical and rigid curricular traditions often associated with Western art education, the Global South perspectives engaged in this dissertation foreground informal and experiential learning contexts that center local knowledge and practices. These approaches encourage students to see themselves as active participants in shaping their communities through art while fostering critical awareness of their connections to culture, history, and the environment. Such models challenge the elitist notions of creativity as mastery over nature or competition for validation, instead promoting fairness, sustainability, and mutual respect.

The role of the educator must also shift from being a master or authority figure to a co-learner who facilitates dialogue, experimentation, and collaboration. This decolonial perspective reimagines art education as a space for reciprocal learning where students are empowered to articulate their creative processes through shared discovery rather than adhering to rigid standards or hierarchies.

By incorporating Global South epistemologies into art education educators can create programs that are more equitable, sustainable, and culturally adequate. These approaches not only preserve local knowledge but also prepare students to navigate interconnected multicultural communities where creativity serves as a tool for advocacy, social change, and environmental stewardship.

The *Pasting Tides Pedagogy* serves as a synthesis of the study's findings and a contribution to emerging Global South frameworks for creative education. By grounding the act of learning in the dual dynamics of *pasting* and *tides*, this model highlights how creativity can be understood as both a practice of assembly and a rhythm of renewal. Although rooted in Bahamian contexts, the framework offers a conceptual lens through which educators may reflect on ecological, cultural, and relational dimensions of creative learning within their own contexts. It invites art educators to consider creativity not as a fixed outcome but as an ongoing process of connection, adaptation, and flow.

Importantly, this study demonstrates that many of the pedagogical values articulated through the *Pasting Tides* framework are already visible within contemporary art education and community-based creative practice. The contribution of this dissertation is therefore not to claim the discovery of entirely new pedagogical principles, but to show how these principles are coherently enacted within Bahamian non-formal art education and to theorize them through the *Pasting Tides* framework. Grounded in Global South epistemologies of creativity and shaped through ecological awareness, cultural knowledge, and everyday creative practice, this framework situates the documented pedagogical approaches within broader conversations in art education scholarship, demonstrating how practices observed in Bahamian non-formal learning environments resonate with and extend existing discussions on collaborative creativity, community-engaged art education, and socially situated learning.

Ultimately, this reconceptualization of art education highlights how diverse perspectives on creativity can enrich our understanding of artistic expression while addressing systemic inequalities in educational structures. By fostering holistic approaches that integrate cultural context, environmental awareness, collaboration, and interdisciplinary learning, educators can

cultivate inclusive spaces where creativity flourishes as both an individual pursuit and a collective act that shapes our shared future.

Chapter 9: Conclusion – Reimagining Art Education Through Non-Formal Practice and Global South Epistemologies

This study set out to investigate how non-formal, experiential art education initiatives in postcolonial Bahamian contexts foster creativity and cultural identity, how they differ from and respond to dominant Western art education models, and how Global South epistemologies might offer powerful conceptual foundations for reshaping creative pedagogy globally. These interlinked questions have guided the research from its inception through to this final chapter. In alignment with these aims, this research first examined the defining characteristics of non-formal, experiential art education as exemplified by two community-based initiatives in The Bahamas, and how they nurture creativity and cultural celebration within a postcolonial society. Second, it contrasted these findings with dominant Western models of art education to highlight both their pedagogical and epistemological differences. Third, it investigated how Global South frameworks, particularly those grounded in relational, collective, and place-based epistemologies, can act as conceptual foundations for building globally relevant and ethically engaged creative education models. While existing studies have acknowledged the value of non-formal education, few have examined how these models, grounded in Global South contexts, can actively inform and reshape formal art education on a structural level.

This research also modeled a participatory, arts-based approach to inquiry. The use of participatory action research (PAR), creative making, and collaborative reflection not only shaped data collection but reflected the relational ethos central to the pedagogical environments studied. This methodological choice underscores the potential for research to align with the very values it investigates.

Throughout this dissertation, creative pedagogy has been used to describe relational learning environments in which artistic practice structures how mentorship, cultural continuity, collaboration, and ecological awareness unfold within community-rooted artistic traditions. In the contexts examined here, creative pedagogy refers specifically to learning systems in which artistic practice functions as the primary medium through which knowledge is transmitted, relationships are cultivated, and cultural knowledge is sustained.

Through the lens of the community-based initiatives led by Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts, the study has illuminated how art education outside institutional structures can nurture creativity that is collaborative, culturally rooted, and socially transformative. These learning environments—Junkanoo shacks and the I.C.E. studio—embody an ethic of mentorship, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and place-based practice. Here, creativity emerges not as a solitary act, but as a communal process grounded in everyday experience.

While this research examines community-rooted artistic practices primarily among young adult and adult participants, the pedagogical insights generated through this study may also inform educational approaches across a range of contexts, including higher education studios, community arts programs, and K–12 art classrooms seeking to incorporate culturally grounded and collaborative learning practices. These audiences reflect the broad range of contexts in which contemporary art education scholarship is now situated, spanning formal education, community arts practice, and interdisciplinary creative learning environments. The framework's most immediate application lies within formal studio-based and interdisciplinary post-secondary contexts, as well as senior secondary visual arts programs where educators have greater curricular flexibility to move beyond product-driven assessment models that privilege individual outcomes over relational and process-based learning. These contexts are particularly significant

because relational, place-based, and community-engaged approaches are often present as supplementary or project-based components rather than as structuring principles. Although the framework may resonate across multiple areas of art education, it is in these settings that it can most effectively support the integration of relational, place-based, and community-rooted approaches as core pedagogical structures rather than remaining at the level of enrichment or adjunct activity.

While the pedagogical values observed in this study resonate with scholarship on community-based art education and socially engaged art practice, the environments examined in this research are more accurately understood as non-formal learning contexts. Programs such as Educulture, the Junkanoo shacks, and the I.C.E. residency operate outside formal educational institutions and function as spaces where creative knowledge is transmitted through participation, mentorship, and cultural practice. Non-formal learning is generally understood as organized educational activity occurring outside formal schooling structures and embedded within everyday social and cultural contexts (UNESCO, 2021).

For this reason, non-formal learning provides the primary analytical lens for this dissertation. Community-based art education literature remains relevant for understanding the collaborative and socially situated dimensions of these practices; however, the present research focuses specifically on how creative pedagogy emerges within non-formal cultural learning environments. The Bahamian contexts examined here therefore contribute to broader conversations in art education by illustrating how creative knowledge can be sustained and transmitted through community-embedded practices that operate beyond formal educational systems.

By engaging Glăveanu and Sierra's (2015) Global South framework, this research challenges dominant, Western assumptions about creativity as linear, individualistic, or commodified. Instead, it foregrounds creativity as an act of relationality—tied to land, memory, heritage, and the collective well-being of a community. These practices, while rich in pedagogical value, often lack institutional recognition within formal education systems due to their divergence from standardized curricular frameworks.

Glăveanu and Sierra's framework has provided a theoretical lens to name and validate what these Bahamian practices already embody: creativity that is collective, embedded in community rituals, attuned to the environment, and inseparable from cultural memory. Their work calls attention to the need for creativity education to expand beyond linear models of innovation and recognize diverse epistemologies that flourish outside formal institutions. By aligning with this framework, this dissertation positions Bahamian non-formal art education not as peripheral but as central to rethinking global creative pedagogies. It likewise contributes new insight into the specific pedagogical values and creative practices that shape non-formal art education in Nassau, Bahamas, particularly those grounded in relationality, ecological responsiveness, cultural continuity, and collaborative making. By articulating these locally rooted approaches, the study demonstrates how community-based creative pedagogy can inform more inclusive, context-responsive models of art education in diverse cultural settings.

These findings offer practical and theoretical guidance for educators seeking to integrate Global South-informed pedagogies within formal and hybrid learning environments, particularly through the relational, place-based, and experiential principles articulated in the *Pasting Tides* pedagogical framework, highlighting the potential for culturally situated creative practices to reshape art education more broadly. In so doing, it adds to a growing body of scholarship that

repositions Global South epistemologies as central to contemporary creative pedagogy and reinforces discourse on the recognition of non-formal education in global contexts.

This work not only maps theoretical frameworks onto lived practice but actively repositions the Bahamian case studies as valuable sites of pedagogical knowledge production. They offer compelling alternatives to formalized schooling, inviting us to rethink how and where art education occurs, and what values underpin it. Significantly, students in these programs reported feeling empowered, seen, and connected—outcomes rarely captured by standardized assessments, yet essential for meaningful learning.

Like all studies, this research has its limitations. Its scope was limited to a small number of participants and case studies within the Bahamian context. While offering valuable insights, its findings should not be seen as generalizable to all non-formal educational contexts. Building on the contributions and limitations of this study, future research should continue to examine the evolving conditions shaping these practices, including questions of cultural sustainability, tourism, and the broader social, cultural, and educational forces that affect how such pedagogies are recognized, sustained, and transformed (Nash Ferguson, 2022; UNESCO, 2021). This includes attention to how non-formal creative learning environments interact with structures of power such as cultural policy, institutional gatekeeping and credentialism, market recognition, gendered forms of labour, religious and social stigma, and evolving forms of participation within cultural traditions. Future work may also explore how the *Pasting Tides* framework might inform practice in other regions through careful, context-specific adaptation rather than direct transfer (Chasi & Heleta, 2025; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015).

These limitations shape how the findings should be interpreted: the themes and recommendations are deeply embedded in the cultural, social, and geographic specificity of the

Bahamian context, and thus may manifest differently in other settings. My positionality—as a Maltese-Canadian artist and researcher trained in Western institutions—also influenced the research process, from the questions I asked to the ways I interpreted participant narratives. While I actively sought to center local voices and co-construct knowledge, my outsider perspective may have introduced biases in framing and emphasis. Future studies could address these limitations by expanding participant pools to include a broader range of voices, engaging multiple non-formal contexts across diverse regions, and incorporating longitudinal approaches to track the lasting impact of these pedagogies over time. Comparative research across varied Global South contexts would further illuminate shared strategies and unique practices, refining a more globally informed understanding of non-formal art education. By acknowledging these parameters and possibilities, the findings of this study can be more effectively understood not as universal prescriptions, but as deeply situated insights that invite dialogue, adaptation, and continued exploration in other educational and cultural landscapes.

The study's engagement with terms such as Global South, decolonial, Eurocentric, and Western reflects an effort to approach knowledge as plural and evolving rather than oppositional. These frameworks are not offered as fixed definitions but as invitations to consider how multiple ways of knowing can coexist, intersect, and inform one another. Readers are invited to consider this plurality—to see how creative learning, in all its local and global forms, continues to be shaped through dialogue, reciprocity, and place-based understanding.

As global educational institutions navigate the demands of diversity, internationalization, and sustainability, these findings affirm the urgent need to broaden the epistemological foundations of art education. For too long, Global South knowledge systems have been sidelined within academic discourse. Yet, as the world becomes increasingly interconnected—and as our

classrooms become more culturally and linguistically diverse—there is both a moral and pedagogical imperative to engage with these frameworks more seriously. In an age marked by climate crises, global migration, and deepening inequities, it is more critical than ever to draw upon educational models that prioritize relationality, resilience, and local knowledge. The conditions of today's world, and the identities of the students we now serve, demand that we move beyond outdated hierarchies and toward a plurality of learning traditions that support equity and sustainability. These findings offer insights for ongoing scholarly conversations around epistemic justice and the incorporation of Global South pedagogies into art education. Future publication of this work could deepen the theoretical discourse surrounding creativity, recognition, and pedagogical transformation, particularly in venues focused on arts education, decolonial studies, or curriculum reform. Beyond academic dissemination, this research also points to practical pathways forward.

In addition to contributing to scholarly discussions, this research is intended to circulate across multiple educational and cultural contexts. Future dissemination will therefore include scholarly publications that engage conversations in art education, creativity studies, and research exploring Global South and decolonial perspectives in education. Such work will further articulate the pedagogical insights emerging from the *Pasting Tides* framework and situate the Bahamian case studies within broader discussions of non-formal learning, community-rooted art education, and culturally grounded creative practice. Academic conferences and professional gatherings also provide important opportunities to share and refine these insights in dialogue with educators and researchers working in related fields.

Beyond academic publication, the findings of this study may also inform practice-facing conversations within art education and cultural sectors. Workshops, presentations, and

collaborative discussions with educators and cultural practitioners may provide opportunities to explore how principles such as mentorship, collaborative learning, and culturally grounded creative practice can inform pedagogical reflection in diverse learning environments. Accessible summaries of the *Pasting Tides* framework may also support reflection among educators working in museum education, community arts initiatives, and artist-led learning spaces.

Equally important is ensuring that the knowledge generated through this research circulates within the communities whose practices shaped the study. Sharing findings with collaborators and participants in the Bahamas, as well as with cultural and educational networks in the region, forms an essential part of the ethical commitments of this project. Returning insights to these communities supports continued dialogue about creative learning, cultural practice, and community-rooted pedagogy, while helping ensure that the research remains accountable to the contexts from which it emerged.

While systemic decolonization of education is an ambitious and ongoing project, this research demonstrates that educators can begin this work through their everyday practices. By incorporating mentorship, collaborative learning, and culturally grounded content, teachers can begin to reshape the classroom as a space of reciprocity, plurality, and social imagination.

To move this work forward, future research must explore how institutional structures—such as accreditation systems, curriculum governance, and funding models—can be redesigned to support the kinds of pedagogical innovation exemplified in non-formal educational spaces. This includes examining how formal institutions might adopt more participatory and community-engaged approaches, informed by the Global South epistemologies discussed in this study. At the same time, comparative work across varied Global South contexts is needed to deepen our understanding of how creativity is cultivated in different cultural and geographic settings, and

how these insights can inform practice globally. Perhaps most critically, students' voices should play a vital role in these continued explorations, especially those from communities historically marginalized in mainstream education. Their insights are essential to shaping educational models that not only acknowledge diversity but meaningfully embrace it.

In the end, this research affirms that creativity—when rooted in community, culture, and care—can be a powerful act of resistance and renewal. Supporting creative learners in today's diverse, interconnected world means fostering pedagogical models that reflect complexity, embrace plurality, and prepare students to co-create more just and imaginative futures.

This research will be further disseminated through multiple, complementary pathways. A book manuscript is being developed with the intention of remaining accessible to and in dialogue with the community in the Bahamas from which this work emerged, extending its relational and practice-based foundations. This includes sharing findings directly with collaborators at the Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre and the Incubator for Collaborative Expression (I.C.E.), as well as exploring community-facing workshops and educator resource materials that support local reflection and continued dialogue around non-formal creative pedagogy.

In parallel, peer-reviewed journal articles and conference presentations will situate these findings within the fields of art education and community-based education, contributing to ongoing discussions of decolonial and relational pedagogies, arts-based and participatory methodologies, and international approaches to teaching and learning. Potential venues include journals such as the *International Journal of Education through Art* and the *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, as well as conferences focused on art education, creative pedagogy, and community-engaged research. Potential conference venues include the Canadian

Society for Education through Art conference, InSEA World Congress, and the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, where discussions of art education, community-based learning, decolonial pedagogy, and participatory research are central. The findings may also inform faculty development workshops and international teaching initiatives, particularly in relation to community-based learning, COIL, and Global South approaches to creativity and pedagogy.

This work advances pluriversal understandings of creativity and challenges dominant, singular definitions by foregrounding contextually grounded, culturally situated, and collectively generated creative practices.

Epilogue: Continuing Currents of Creative Pedagogy

This research began as a response to the tension I experienced between the formal educational systems that shaped me and the dynamic, community-rooted ways of learning I encountered through my professional and artistic practice. What first appeared as a contradiction became a catalyst for transformation. As an artist and researcher working within and alongside the Bahamian context, I came to understand my position as both an outsider and a long-term collaborator. This reflexive awareness shaped the way the research unfolded, guiding me to centre local voices, shared authorship, and respectful engagement at every stage. These directions are not simply academic concerns but necessary steps toward building educational systems that respond to the realities and possibilities of the present moment.

When I began this project, I sought to understand how learning might occur outside institutional structures. What I came to realize was that learning, in its most vital form, always exceeds structure. The conversations, workshops, and collaborative acts that unfolded through this research taught me that education is not merely the transmission of knowledge but the co-creation of meaning within context. Creativity revealed itself as a rhythm of reciprocity, a continual exchange between people, materials, and environments.

Through this process, my own understanding of art education evolved. I no longer see the classroom or studio as a bounded space but as a permeable site of encounter that extends into communities, ecosystems, and cultural memory. The methodologies that once served as tools for investigation became modes of relation, ways of being present, listening, and responding. Participatory Action Research and artistic and visual responses offered not only frameworks for study but living practices that continue to guide how I teach, make, and collaborate.

Engaging with Bahamian cultural practices, particularly through the work of Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts, revealed how creativity functions as both inheritance and innovation. Their practices embody a pedagogy of continuity in which knowledge circulates through story, performance, and making. This has reshaped how I understand the purpose of art education: not as mastery or production, but as stewardship of cultural and ecological connection.

These insights have also reframed my work within institutional contexts. I continue to explore how universities might enhance their roles as centres of exchange and dissemination of knowledge as well as the producers of new knowledge. The principles that emerged from this dissertation—context, collaboration, and care—now inform how I design partnerships, support residencies, and advocate for policies that bridge academic and community learning. The research lives on not only in text but through the relationships and initiatives that grow from it.

While this dissertation highlights the pedagogical insights that emerge from Bahamian non-formal art education environments, it does not attempt to provide a comprehensive analysis of the broader social tensions that also shape these cultural contexts. Practices such as Junkanoo exist within complex and evolving dynamics, including negotiations around tourism economies, cultural commodification, institutional recognition, religious and class perceptions, and questions of participation and access. These dynamics appear at moments throughout the narrative but were not developed as central analytical problems, as the primary focus of this study was on pedagogical processes and creative learning environments. A sustained examination of these sociocultural negotiations would require a different methodological scope and remains an important direction for future research.

The collaborative relationships established through this research continue to evolve and provide opportunities to further explore these questions. For example, forthcoming international residency initiatives I am co-developing will invite emerging artists to work with reclaimed and waste materials sourced from large resort infrastructures in Nassau, connecting local making traditions—including practices associated with Junkanoo—with broader contemporary art practices. Designed as professional development opportunities that support artists transitioning from post-secondary study into professional practice, these initiatives will also allow me to continue learning from Bahamian artists and communities about the social, economic, and cultural dynamics that shape creative practice in the region, including the areas of tension identified above.

Looking ahead, I am drawn to the possibilities of expanding the research into broader international networks of creative pedagogy and cultural collaboration. This research demonstrated that resilience and creativity often flourish at the intersections of disciplines, practices, and communities. These spaces invite artists and educators to think relationally and to build knowledge that is adaptive, responsive, and collective. Future projects will continue to explore these intersections, tracing how creative learning circulates through transnational and intercultural systems.

This study's framework, *Pasting Tides Pedagogy*, remains a guiding metaphor for me. It reminds me that knowledge is not fixed but layered, and that learning moves with the currents of collaboration and care. To paste is to connect fragments into a whole; to move with the tides is to accept motion, return, and renewal. Both gestures resist permanence and invite change. Just as these collaborations have continued to evolve beyond the research, so too has my own creative practice. The experiences and relationships that shaped this study have become deeply

entwined with how I make and think through art. The tides that inspired this model remind me that learning, like water, is cyclical and transformative.

During one of my extended fieldwork periods in The Bahamas, I created projection-based works that traced light, tide, and time—temporary gestures shaped by the shifting conditions of water, weather, and place. Through these light-based site-responsive experiments, I began exploring how tides, light, and impermanence could inform creative processes that echo the pedagogical insights developed in this study. The works became a form of dialogue with the environments and relationships that shaped the research—expressions of learning that move, unfold, and renew like water itself. This body of work, as an extension of the research I have compiled here, continues to be guided by what Arlene and Antonius taught me: that creativity is most powerful when it is shared, situated, and in rhythm with the communities and ecologies that hold it.

As I reflect on the journey that brought me here, from the structured studios of my early education to the community spaces of Nassau, I recognize that this research is not an ending but a confluence. Each collaboration, conversation, and classroom encounter has contributed to a growing understanding of creativity as a shared responsibility. The work continues through the communities that shaped it and through my ongoing commitment to bridging institutional practice with lived, local knowledge.

As this work moves beyond the dissertation, it continues through creative and relational forms of dissemination, including the development of an artist book, collaborative workshops, and community-engaged programming that return knowledge to the spaces and participants from which it emerged. These approaches honour the co-creative foundations of the research, ensuring

that its insights remain accessible, dialogic, and grounded in practice. In this way, dissemination is not an endpoint but an ongoing process of exchange, reflection, and renewal.

Like tides, these ideas will keep returning and reshaping themselves with each new context. They carry forward the traces of every hand, voice, and place that formed them. In this ongoing motion lies the true measure of creative pedagogy: not as doctrine but as relationship, an ever-changing field of learning, making, and imagining together.



Jennie Suddick learning to fringe and paste in a Junkanoo shack

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Appendix A

Cycle 1 — Ethics File S-10-23-9437

A.1 Certificate of Ethics Approval — Cycle 1 Approved: November 3, 2023

University of Ottawa REB | File S-10-23-9437 | Doctoral thesis

A.2 Invitation Letter — Arlene Nash Ferguson December 1, 2023

A.3 Invitation Letter — Antonius Roberts December 1, 2023

A.4 Consent Form — Cycle 1 Primary Participants Version: October 29, 2023

Used for educators Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts

A.5 Photo Consent & Release Form — Cycle 1 Version: October 29, 2023

A.6 Interview Guide — Cycle 1 Educators 13 open-ended questions

A.7 Onboarding Activity Outline — Cycle 1 Version: November 19, 2023

Cycle 2 — Ethics File S-05-24-10298

B.1 Certificate of Ethics Approval — Cycle 2 Approved: May 27, 2024

University of Ottawa REB | File S-05-24-10298 | Doctoral thesis

B.2 Invitation Letter — Cycle 2 Participants April 2024

B.3 Consent Form — Cycle 2 Participants Version: April 2024

Used for students/mentees of Nash Ferguson and Roberts

B.4 Artwork Documentation & Release Form — Cycle 2 Supervisor: Dr. Richard Maclure

B.5 Activity/Workshop Outline — Cycle 2 July 2024

B.6 Interview Guide — Cycle 2 Participants 15 questions in 2 sections

Cycle 2 — Visual and Artistic Responses

C.1 I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression) Bahamas

C.1.1 Reagan — Visual and Artistic Responses 3 pages, 11 images

Themes: Identity and Self-Expression; Collaboration and Community Engagement; Cultural Preservation and Identity; Environmental Awareness and Sustainability; Trying New Media and Techniques; The Role of Family; Documentation of Professional Showcases

C.1.2 Justin — Visual and Artistic Responses 6 pages, 28 images

Themes: Identity and Self-Expression; Collaboration and Community Engagement; Cultural Preservation and Identity; Environmental Awareness and Sustainability; Trying New Media and Techniques; The Role of Family; Documentation of Professional Showcases

C.1.3 Alia — Visual and Artistic Responses 5 pages, 24 images

Themes: Identity and Self-Expression; Collaboration and Community Engagement; Cultural Preservation and Identity; Environmental Awareness and Sustainability; Trying New Media and Techniques; Documentation of Professional Showcases

C.2 Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre

C.2.1 Carlene — Visual and Artistic Responses 7 pages, 41 images

Themes: Identity and Self-Expression; Collaboration and Community Engagement; Cultural Preservation and Identity; Environmental Awareness and Sustainability; Trying New Media and Techniques; The Role of Family; Documentation of Professional Showcases

C.2.2 Quinn — Visual and Artistic Responses

5 pages, 25 images

Themes: Identity and Self-Expression; Collaboration and Community Engagement; Cultural Preservation and Identity; Environmental Awareness and Sustainability; Trying New Media and Techniques; Documentation of Professional Showcases

CYCLE 1

Ethics File Number: S-10-23-9437

Supervisor: Dr. Bernard Andrews// Dr. Richard Maclure

Approved: November 3, 2023 | Expiry: November 2, 2024

A.1 Certificate of Ethics Approval — Cycle 1

University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board. Ethics File S-10-23-9437. Approved November 3, 2023. Expiry November 2, 2024.

Université d'Ottawa
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa
Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

03/11/2023

CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE | CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

Numéro du dossier / Ethics File Number
Titre du projet / Project Title

S-10-23-9437
Advancing creative pedagogy in
art education: Learning from
non-formal environments in
Nassau, Bahamas (Cycle 1)

Type de projet / Project Type

Thèse de doctorat / Doctoral
thesis

Statut du projet / Project Status

Approuvé / Approved

Date d'approbation (jj/mm/aaaa) / Approval Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

03/11/2023

Date d'expiration (jj/mm/aaaa) / Expiry Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

02/11/2024

Équipe de recherche / Research Team

Chercheur / Researcher

Jennie SUDDICK
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Affiliation

Faculté d'éducation / Faculty of Education
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Role

Chercheur Principal / Principal Investigator
Superviseur / Supervisor

Conditions spéciales ou commentaires / Special conditions or comments

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03/11/2023

Université d'Ottawa

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa

Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche (CÉR) de l'Université d'Ottawa, opérant conformément à l'*Énoncé de politique des Trois conseils* (2014) et toutes autres lois et tous règlements applicables, a examiné et approuvé la demande d'éthique du projet de recherche ci-nommé.

L'approbation est valide pour la durée indiquée plus haut et est sujette aux conditions énumérées dans la section intitulée "Conditions Spéciales ou Commentaires". Le formulaire « Renouvellement ou Fermeture de Projet » doit être complété quatre semaines avant la date d'échéance indiquée ci-haut afin de demander un renouvellement de cette approbation éthique ou afin de fermer le dossier.

Toutes modifications apportées au projet doivent être approuvées par le CÉR avant leur mise en place, sauf si le participant doit être retiré en raison d'un danger immédiat ou s'il s'agit d'un changement ayant trait à des éléments administratifs ou logistiques du projet. Les chercheurs doivent aviser le CÉR dans les plus brefs délais de tout changement pouvant augmenter le niveau de risque aux participants ou pouvant affecter considérablement le déroulement du projet, rapporter tout événement imprévu ou indésirable et soumettre toute nouvelle information pouvant nuire à la conduite du projet ou à la sécurité des participants.

The University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board, which operates in accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (2014) and other applicable laws and regulations, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above-named research project.

Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and is subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions or Comments". The "Renewal/Project Closure" form must be completed four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval or closure of the file.

Any changes made to the project must be approved by the REB before being implemented, except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) only pertain to administrative or logistical components of the project. Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes that increase the risk to participant(s), any changes that considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project or the safety of the participant(s).

Kim THOMPSON

Responsable d'éthique en recherche / Protocol Officer

Pour/For **Barbara GRAVES** Président(e) du/ Chair of the **Comité d'éthique de la recherche en sciences sociales et humanités / Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board**

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A.2 Invitation Letter — Arlene Nash Ferguson (Cycle 1)

Sent December 1, 2023 to Cycle 1 primary participant Arlene Ferguson.

Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal Environments in Nassau, Bahamas

December 1, 2023

Dear Arlene Nash Ferguson,

As you know, you are invited to participate in a research study entitled Advancing creative pedagogy in art education: Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas. This English-language research study is part of my PhD studies at University of Ottawa in the Faculty of Education. This research will ask: How does creative pedagogy enacted in non-formal education support diverse art students? How can creative pedagogical models employed in non-formal educational settings enrich the learning and lived-experiences of students whose culture and/or values are dissonant with colonial systems? This research will explore how formal contemporary art education can integrate non-formal learning systems, catalysing personalized, collaborative, and experiential learning toward increased conditions of access, cultural inclusion, and belonging.

As discussed, this research will follow a collaborative format, following the approaches of Participatory Action Research (PAR). As such, yourself and other participants will play an active role in the study design, including assessment of and potential re-design of methods if appropriate. All aspects of this study are designed to be convenient and flexible to accommodate your schedule.

In addition to the confirmed onboarding activity (workshop) and interviews, I will also be observing you in public events and spaces in your community including the Junkanoo Festival and exhibition openings.

Please review the attached consent form. Should you be willing to participate in the study, please sign the form and then return it to me via e-mail.

Thank you for reviewing the materials and agreeing to be part of this research project,

Sincerely,

Jennie Suddick

PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

[Principal investigator contact information redacted per uO Research privacy requirements]

You may also contact Jennie Suddick at the above address with any questions, or her primary supervisor.

A.3 Invitation Letter — Antonius Roberts (Cycle 1)

Sent December 1, 2023 to Cycle 1 primary participant Antonius Roberts.

**Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal
Environments in Nassau, Bahamas**

December 1, 2023

Dear Antonius Roberts,

As you know, you are invited to participate in a research study entitled Advancing creative pedagogy in art education: Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas. This English-language research study is part of my PhD studies at University of Ottawa in the Faculty of Education. This research will ask: How does creative pedagogy enacted in non-formal education support diverse art students? How can creative pedagogical models employed in non-formal educational settings enrich the learning and lived-experiences of students whose culture and/or values are dissonant with colonial systems? This research will explore how formal contemporary art education can integrate non-formal learning systems, catalysing personalized, collaborative, and experiential learning toward increased conditions of access, cultural inclusion, and belonging.

As discussed, this research will follow a collaborative format, following the approaches of Participatory Action Research (PAR). As such, yourself and other participants will play an active role in the study design, including assessment of and potential re-design of methods if appropriate. All aspects of this study are designed to be convenient and flexible to accommodate your schedule.

In addition to the confirmed onboarding activity (workshop) and interviews, I will also be observing you in public events and spaces in your community including the Junkanoo Festival and exhibition openings.

Please review the attached consent form. Should you be willing to participate in the study, please sign the form and then return it to me via e-mail.

Thank you for reviewing the materials and agreeing to be part of this research project,

Sincerely,

Jennie Suddick

PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

[Principal investigator contact information redacted per uO Research privacy requirements]

You may also contact Jennie Suddick at the above address with any questions, or her primary supervisor.

A.4 Consent Form — Cycle 1 Primary Participants

Version: October 29, 2023. Used for primary participants (educators) Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts.

**Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal
Environments in Nassau, Bahamas (Cycle One)**

Principal Investigator: Jennie Suddick

PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

[Principal investigator contact information redacted per uO Research privacy requirements]

Supervisor: Dr. Bernard Andrews/ Dr. Richard Maclure

Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

The purpose of this English-language study is to ask: How does creative pedagogy enacted in non-formal education support diverse art students? How can creative pedagogical models employed in non-formal educational settings enrich the learning and lived-experiences of students whose culture and/or values are dissonant with colonial systems?

This will be done through examining pedagogical models employed by the educational leaders of I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression) Bahamas and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre, through data collection with educators (primary participants).

This study will present insights into the approaches and values employed in creative pedagogy in non-formal art education in Nassau, Bahamas, while also illustrating how these approaches to creative pedagogy may be enacted by educators. It will identify opportunities for integration of culturally valuable learning into formal educational structures. Such research will contribute to emergent infrastructures useful to art educators furthering the efforts to decolonize educational systems. Furthermore, this research will make visible local and educational knowledges within and beyond their community.

I am invited to participate in the abovementioned research study conducted by Jennie Suddick, PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa, supervised by Dr. Bernard Andrews/ Dr. Richard Maclure.

My participation will consist of engaging with Jennie Suddick in a Participatory Action Research (PAR) cycle that may include using artistic mediums/processes, as well as participating in interviews and participatory workshops. Furthermore, Jennie Suddick will accompany me in my teaching environment to observe and engage in further dialogue. My contribution/participation in Cycle 1 is outlined below, will begin in December 2023, and be completed by or before May 2024:

Cycle One: Primary Participants as Source of Data

- Activity #1 — Onboarding Activity (workshop): estimated engagement length — one day (collaborative creative workshop, maximum 6 hours)
- Activity #2 — Group discussion with open-ended questions — half day, 3 hours

- Activity #3 — Observation: engage in initial site visits (December 24th and January 1st), estimated engagement length — two days (3–5 hours each) over 2 weeks; this will take place at public events and spaces in your community including the Junkanoo Festival and exhibition openings
- Winter 2024: Remote/online communication
- Analyzing data and collective reflection of early interpretation with primary investigator
- Reflect on results and redesign methods with primary investigator
- Activity #4 — Artistic contributions: the creation of new, original artworks (maximum 10-hour contribution)

Following Cycle 1, I will work with Jennie Suddick as a collaborator when she engages with secondary participants (our students/mentees) for Cycle 2. This work plan will be developed with Jennie Suddick no later than June 2024, and will be completed by February 2025.

I understand that along with materials collected and created and documentation of the process itself, these findings will be compiled in both a physical and open-access digital artist book (*in development*) to be disseminated to international readership.

Photographs of myself and potentially my original artworks will be collected during Activity #1 — Onboarding Activity, Activity #3 — Observation, and Activity #4 — Artistic contributions. Video recording may be collected during Activity #3 — Observation for transcription purposes.

Given the nature and scope of the project, my identity will be acknowledged/known. All participants will be credited in line with artistic practice standards. Participants will retain intellectual property of all existing and new artworks that are documented as data for this study.

I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, before or during the use of an instrument protocol, refuse to participate, and refuse to answer questions without penalty. Alternately, I may choose not to complete a particular aspect or point in the research for personal reasons without explanation but continue in the study. If I withdraw from the study, my data is to be destroyed and not used, unless otherwise requested by myself.

I understand that the data collected throughout the PAR cycle will be encrypted and retained in a secure manner on a password-protected computer for a period of five years. I understand that all interview recordings, notes, and other archive materials will be stored on OneDrive, and destroyed after the research is completed. If the arts-based materials are stored in digital formats (e.g., photographs, scanned drawings), the primary researcher will ensure that the data is encrypted to protect against unauthorized access. Any physical data will be stored in a secure physical storage space, and the primary researcher will maintain a log of all interactions with the arts-based materials.

My participation in this study will involve me volunteering personal information about my creative pedagogical process, and this may cause me to feel anxious. I have received assurance that every effort will be made to minimize this risk (e.g., option to refuse to answer, option to withdraw, identities will not be revealed).

If I have any questions, I may contact the principal investigator, Jennie Suddick (contact information redacted).

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research at the University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5. Tel: (613) 562-5387; E-mail: ethics@uottawa.ca.

I, (please print) _____, agree to participate in the research study, entitled Advancing creative pedagogy in art education: Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas, conducted by Jennie Suddick, PhD Candidate, University of Ottawa.

Participant's Signature _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date: _____

Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please retain a copy of this consent form for future reference. Thank you for agreeing to participate.

A.5 Photo Consent & Release Form — Cycle 1

Version: October 29, 2023. Used for primary participants (educators) in Cycle 1.

Photo Consent & Release

**Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal
Environments in Nassau, Bahamas**

Principal Investigator: Jennie Suddick

PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

[Principal investigator contact information redacted per uO Research privacy requirements]

Supervisor: Dr. Bernard Andrews/ Dr. Richard Maclure

Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

**Use of Documentation from Research: Advancing creative pedagogy in art education:
Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas**

The purpose of this English-language study is to ask: How does creative pedagogy enacted in non-formal education support diverse art students? How can creative pedagogical models employed in non-formal educational settings enrich the learning and lived-experiences of students whose culture and/or values are dissonant with colonial systems? This will be done

through examining pedagogical models employed by the educational leaders of I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression) Bahamas and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre, through data collection with educators (primary participants).

I acknowledge that Jennie Suddick will collect photographs and videos (collectively, the 'Materials') that document the process of her research of which I am engaging with as a participant and/or collaborator. The Materials can be used for the direct purpose of this research, including the culminating artist book (*in development*), as well as reproduced in any future papers, conference presentations, websites, etc. wherever directly associated with the research project. I consent to the use of photographs and video to be taken during these research activities.

Photographs of myself and potentially my original artworks will be collected during Cycle 1 of this research project as outlined: Activity #1 — Onboarding Activity, Activity #3 — Observation, and Activity #4 — Artistic contributions. Video recording may be collected during Activity #3 — Observation for transcription purposes. Further details of these activities are outlined at the end of this document.

I grant permission for the Materials to be shared, used, or distributed for the purposes of education and academic endeavours and the specified research project.

I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, before or during the use of an instrument protocol, refuse to participate, and refuse to answer questions without penalty. Alternately, I may choose not to complete a particular aspect or point in the research for personal reasons without explanation but continue in the study. If I withdraw from the project, all photo documentation of myself, my work, my educational environment, etc. will no longer be shared/retained as part of this research.

I hereby grant Jennie Suddick the right to reproduce and share the Materials. Jennie Suddick shall obtain my, or my authorized representative's, further written consent before modifying, altering, or changing any images that are captured or incorporated within the Materials, in any manner.

I understand that this consent is valid for the duration of the research project and any associated dissemination of findings. After the completion of the research project, my consent remains valid for any future use of the materials.

I have read and understood the contents of this release form, and I voluntarily consent to participate.

If I have any questions, I may contact the principal investigator, Jennie Suddick (contact information redacted) or her primary supervisor.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research at the University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5. Tel: (613) 562-5387; E-mail: ethics@uottawa.ca.

I, (please print) _____, agree to participate in the research study, entitled Advancing creative pedagogy in art education: Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas, conducted by Jennie Suddick, PhD Candidate, University of Ottawa.

Participant's Signature _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date: _____

Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please retain a copy of this form for future reference. Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Cycle 1 Activities Summary:

- Activity #1 — Onboarding Activity (workshop): maximum 6 hours
- Activity #2 — Group discussion with open-ended questions: 3 hours
- Activity #3 — Observation: site visits including Junkanoo Festival (December 24th and January 1st); 2 days, 3–5 hours each
- Winter 2024: Remote/online communication; data reflection and method redesign
- Activity #4 — Artistic contributions: creation of new, original artworks (maximum 10-hour contribution)

A.6 Interview Guide — Cycle 1 Educators

Open-ended questions proposed to the educators (primary participants) in group discussion format. Questions served as a framework; interviews were conducted in an open-ended manner to allow for flexibility and broader relevant discussion.

Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal Environments in Nassau, Bahamas

The following questions were proposed to the educators (primary participants) in interviews/open-ended group discussion:

1. How would you describe your overall philosophy of teaching art and fostering creativity?
2. What are your primary goals when teaching?
3. Can you describe how you structure your teaching?
4. How do you feel the cultural context you are based in influences your teaching?
5. How does your site/location where you deliver your programs influence your teaching?
6. How do the lived experiences of your students influence your teaching?
7. What role does collaboration and peer interaction play in your teaching?
8. How do you define creative pedagogy?
9. How do you incorporate elements of creative pedagogy into your approach?

10. What teaching methods or strategies do you find most effective in encouraging students' creativity?
11. How do you assess and/or provide feedback on students' creative work?
12. How do you select and use materials and resources to enhance the learning experiences of your students/mentees?
13. What challenges have you encountered in promoting creativity in art education, and how have you overcome them?

A.7 Onboarding Activity Outline — Cycle 1

Version: November 19, 2023. Collaborative workshop outline used to initiate data collection with primary participants in Cycle 1.

Location: To be confirmed at a site of the participants' choosing, with the ability to visit additional sites within the duration. This can take place over multiple meetings if required by the educators.

Estimated time: Approximately 4–5 hours maximum as needed (including travel), to be completed in one day.

Data Formats to be Collected During this Session:

- Field notes: narrative data, quotes, contextual information
- Audio recording for transcribing purposes
- Photos: documentation of existing artworks, sites, and artifacts

Participants: Primary researcher and primary participants (educators).

Note: 'Artifacts' are also encouraged to be existing or original artworks, as appropriate.

Objects/Documentation

Each participant will be asked to identify the following:

- One or more artifact(s) that speaks to creativity in your context for you.
- One or more artifact(s) that speaks to your approach as an educator.
- One or more objects that you would share with a new student.
- One or more materials that you would provide your students/motivate them to use.

Sites

- Identify and collectively visit one or more sites that the local participants identify as significant to creativity and/or creative pedagogy in their community. Sites can be visited by the group as part of this process.

People

- Identify a person (living or dead) that inspires your teaching.
- Identify the people in your community that support your teaching, including collaborators.
- Identify community members who you want to connect with your teaching.

Note: Individuals who are discussed who are not public figures will be anonymized.

We will share these with each other in person and have an open dialogue about why we made each choice and its significance.

Consider together: Is there a way we can activate or combine these to bring others into this research process? What could this achieve?

What should next steps in the research look like? — To be discussed collaboratively.

CYCLE 2

Ethics File Number: S-05-24-10298

Supervisor: Dr. Richard Maclure

Approved: May 27, 2024 | Expiry: May 26, 2025

B.1 Certificate of Ethics Approval — Cycle 2

University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board. Ethics File S-05-24-10298. Approved May 27, 2024. Expiry May 26, 2025.

Université d'Ottawa
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa
Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

27/05/2024

CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE | CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

Numéro du dossier / Ethics File Number
Titre du projet / Project Title

S-05-24-10298
Advancing creative pedagogy in
art education: Learning from
non-formal environments in
Nassau, Bahamas (Cycle 2)

Type de projet / Project Type

Thèse de doctorat / Doctoral
thesis

Statut du projet / Project Status

Approuvé / Approved

Date d'approbation (jj/mm/aaaa) / Approval Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

27/05/2024

Date d'expiration (jj/mm/aaaa) / Expiry Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

26/05/2025

Équipe de recherche / Research Team

Chercheur / Researcher

Jennie SUDDICK
Richard MACLURE

Affiliation

Faculté d'éducation / Faculty of Education
Faculté d'éducation / Faculty of Education

Role

Chercheur Principal / Principal Investigator
Superviseur / Supervisor

Conditions spéciales ou commentaires / Special conditions or comments

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

613-562-5387 • 613-562-5338 • ethique@uOttawa.ca / ethics@uOttawa.ca
www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie | www.recherche.uottawa.ca/ethics

27/05/2024

Université d'Ottawa

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa

Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche (CÉR) de l'Université d'Ottawa, opérant conformément à l'*Énoncé de politique des Trois conseils* (2014) et toutes autres lois et tous règlements applicables, a examiné et approuvé la demande d'éthique du projet de recherche ci-nommé.

L'approbation est valide pour la durée indiquée plus haut et est sujette aux conditions énumérées dans la section intitulée "Conditions Spéciales ou Commentaires". Le formulaire « Renouvellement ou Fermeture de Projet » doit être complété quatre semaines avant la date d'échéance indiquée ci-haut afin de demander un renouvellement de cette approbation éthique ou afin de fermer le dossier.

Toutes modifications apportées au projet doivent être approuvées par le CÉR avant leur mise en place, sauf si le participant doit être retiré en raison d'un danger immédiat ou s'il s'agit d'un changement ayant trait à des éléments administratifs ou logistiques du projet. Les chercheurs doivent aviser le CÉR dans les plus brefs délais de tout changement pouvant augmenter le niveau de risque aux participants ou pouvant affecter considérablement le déroulement du projet, rapporter tout événement imprévu ou indésirable et soumettre toute nouvelle information pouvant nuire à la conduite du projet ou à la sécurité des participants.

The University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board, which operates in accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (2014) and other applicable laws and regulations, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above-named research project.

Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and is subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions or Comments". The "Renewal/Project Closure" form must be completed four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval or closure of the file.

Any changes made to the project must be approved by the REB before being implemented, except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) only pertain to administrative or logistical components of the project. Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes that increase the risk to participant(s), any changes that considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project or the safety of the participant(s).

Kim THOMPSON (GESTIONNAIRE / MANAGER)

Directeur / Director

Pour/For **Barbara GRAVES** Président(e) du/ Chair of the **Comité d'éthique de la recherche en sciences sociales et humanités / Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board**

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

613-562-5387 • 613-562-5338 • ethique@uOttawa.ca / ethics@uOttawa.ca
www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie | www.recherche.uottawa.ca/ethics

B.2 Invitation Letter — Cycle 2 Participants

April 2024 version. Sent to secondary participants (students/mentees of Arlene Ferguson and Antonius Roberts) recruited for Cycle 2.

Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal Environments in Nassau, Bahamas

Date

Dear {name},

As you know, you are invited to participate in a research study entitled Advancing creative pedagogy in art education: Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas. This English-language research study is part of my PhD studies at University of Ottawa in the Faculty of Education. This research will ask: How does creative pedagogy enacted in non-formal education support diverse art students? How can creative pedagogical models employed in non-formal educational settings enrich the learning and lived-experiences of students whose culture and/or values are dissonant with colonial systems? This research will explore how formal contemporary art education can integrate non-formal learning systems, catalysing personalized, collaborative, and experiential learning toward increased conditions of access, cultural inclusion, and belonging.

This research will follow a collaborative format, following the approaches of Participatory Action Research (PAR). What happens within the workshops/sessions and ultimate outcomes will directly contribute to the outcome of the research. All aspects of this study are designed to be convenient and flexible to accommodate your schedule.

You will be participating in the confirmed artistic workshop, which may include follow-up production of original creative materials, and a one-on-one interview with the primary researcher. The materials collected through these activities will be compiled in an artist book (*in development*) that will document and summarize this project/research.

Please review the attached consent form. Should you be willing to participate in the study, please sign the form and then return it to me via e-mail.

Thank you for reviewing the materials and agreeing to be part of this research project,

Sincerely,

Jennie Suddick

PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

[Principal investigator contact information redacted per uO Research privacy requirements]

You may also contact the primary supervisor.

B.3 Consent Form — Cycle 2 Participants

April 2024 version. Used for secondary participants (students/mentees of Arlene Ferguson and Antonius Roberts) in Cycle 2.

**Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal
Environments in Nassau, Bahamas (Cycle Two)**

Principal Investigator: Jennie Suddick

PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

[Principal investigator contact information redacted per uO Research privacy requirements]

Supervisor: Dr. Richard Maclure

Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

The purpose of this English-language study is to ask: How does creative pedagogy enacted in non-formal education support diverse art students? How can creative pedagogical models employed in non-formal educational settings enrich the learning and lived-experiences of students whose culture and/or values are dissonant with colonial systems?

This will be done through examining pedagogical models employed by the educational leaders of I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression) Bahamas and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre, through data collection with educators (primary participants).

This study will present insights into the approaches and values employed in creative pedagogy in non-formal art education in Nassau, Bahamas, while also illustrating how these approaches to creative pedagogy may be enacted by educators. It will identify opportunities for integration of culturally valuable learning into formal educational structures. Such research will contribute to emergent infrastructures useful to art educators furthering the efforts to decolonize educational systems. Furthermore, this research will make visible local and educational knowledges within and beyond their community.

I am invited to participate in the abovementioned research study conducted by Jennie Suddick, PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa, supervised by Dr. Richard Maclure.

My participation will consist of engaging with Jennie Suddick in a Participatory Action Research (PAR) cycle that will include using artistic mediums/processes, as well as participating in interviews and a participatory workshop. My contribution/participation in Cycle 2 is outlined below, will begin in July 2024, and be completed by or before the end of October 2024:

Activity #1: Artistic Workshop (3–4 hours, onsite) — Collective

On-site between July 13th and 21st, 2024. A collective artist workshop will be held at each I.C.E. Bahamas and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre. The goal will be to

produce either collaborative or a series of individual artworks that reflect on your experiences as part of the respective non-formal education group. The 3–5 participants from each group will meet only with their group (therefore two separate workshops will be held). The structure will be open-ended, where participants will simultaneously create new original artworks and engage in open conversation (that will be recorded). Materials will be provided, but you can bring any materials that you want to contribute/work with.

Activity #2: Potential Follow-Up Artistic Activity — Individual

To be determined by the end of the artistic workshop. Estimated contribution by each participant: maximum 3 hours, in your own space/time. By the end of Activity #1, the group will decide how they would like to further contribute to the research and artist book (*in development*). A deadline for contribution will be decided by the group (approximately September 2024).

I understand that along with materials collected and created and documentation of the process itself, these findings will be compiled in both a physical and open-access digital artist book (*in development*) to be disseminated to international readership.

Photographs and video recording of myself and potentially my original artworks will be collected during Activity #1 and the content produced in Activity #2 will also be photographed for documentation. The recordings and photographs may be used for the direct purpose of this research, including the thesis, as well as reproduced in any future papers, conference presentations, websites, etc. wherever directly associated with the research project.

I understand that I can either select to be acknowledged through either my name or artistic moniker. I acknowledge that given the nature and scope of the project portraying specific artistic approaches/contexts, my identity could potentially be deduced.

All participants will be credited in line with artistic practice standards. Participants will retain intellectual property of all existing and new artworks that are documented as data for this study.

I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, before or during the use of an instrument protocol, refuse to participate, and refuse to answer questions without penalty. Alternately, I may choose not to complete a particular aspect or point in the research for personal reasons without explanation but continue in the study. If I withdraw from the study, my data is to be destroyed and not used, unless otherwise requested by myself.

I understand that the data collected throughout the PAR cycle will be encrypted and retained in a secure manner on a password-protected computer for a period of five years. I understand that all interview recordings, notes, and other archive materials will be stored on OneDrive, and destroyed after the research is completed. If the arts-based materials are stored in digital formats (e.g., photographs, scanned drawings/other artworks), the primary researcher will ensure that the data is encrypted to protect against unauthorized access. Any physical data will be stored in a secure, locked physical storage space at I.C.E. Bahamas, and the primary researcher will maintain a log of all interactions with the arts-based materials.

My participation in this study will involve me volunteering personal information about my creative process, and this may cause me to feel anxious. I have received assurance that every effort will be made to minimize this risk (e.g., option to refuse to answer, option to withdraw, identities will not be revealed).

If I have any questions, I may contact the principal investigator, Jennie Suddick (contact information redacted) or her supervisor.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research at the University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5. Tel: (613) 562-5387; E-mail: ethics@uottawa.ca.

I, (please print legal name) _____, agree to participate in the research study, entitled Advancing creative pedagogy in art education: Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas, conducted by Jennie Suddick, PhD Candidate, University of Ottawa.

I would like to be credited in any written research summaries and the resulting artist book as (please print professional name/moniker) _____

or

I would like to remain, to the best of the researcher's abilities, anonymous.

Participant's Signature _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date: _____

Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please retain a copy of this consent form for future reference. Thank you for agreeing to participate.

You may also contact the primary supervisor.

B.4 Artwork Documentation & Release Form — Cycle 2

Used for Cycle 2 participants. Covers use of original artworks contributed as data for thesis and the artist book. Supervisor: Dr. Richard Maclure.

Artwork Consent & Release Form**Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal
Environments in Nassau, Bahamas****Principal Investigator: Jennie Suddick**

PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

[Principal investigator contact information redacted per uO Research privacy requirements]

Supervisor: Dr. Richard Maclure

Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

**Use of Documentation from Research: Advancing creative pedagogy in art education:
Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas**

The purpose of this English-language study is to ask: How does creative pedagogy enacted in non-formal education support diverse art students? How can creative pedagogical models

employed in non-formal educational settings enrich the learning and lived-experiences of students whose culture and/or values are dissonant with colonial systems? This will be done through examining pedagogical models employed by the educational leaders of I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression) Bahamas and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre, through data collection with educators (primary participants).

I acknowledge that Jennie Suddick will compile original artworks and related materials/documentation (the Materials) for inclusion in an artist book that will be the culminating product of this research project. I consent that this documentation can also be reproduced in any future papers, conference presentations, websites, etc. wherever directly associated with the research project. I grant permission for the artworks and materials to be shared, used, or distributed for the purposes of education and academic endeavours and the specified research project.

Scans and photographs of my original artworks will be collected during this research project as outlined: during Activity #1 — Artistic Workshop and Activity #2 — Potential Follow-Up Artistic Activity. I will assure the artworks are completed for documentation by the end of September 2024 at the latest.

Following Canadian professional artistic standards (CARFAC), I will be compensated \$79 Canadian per full page of content that is produced through Activity #2, to be included in the final thesis and artist book. This will be up to a maximum of 8 pages per participant.

I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, refuse to participate, and refuse to answer questions without penalty. Alternately, I may choose not to complete a particular aspect or point in the research for personal reasons without explanation but continue in the study. If I withdraw

from the project, all photo documentation of myself, my work, my educational environment, etc. will no longer be shared/retained as part of this research.

I hereby grant Jennie Suddick the right to reproduce and share the Materials. Jennie Suddick shall obtain my, or my authorized representative's, further written consent before modifying, altering, or changing any images that are captured or incorporated within the Materials, in any manner.

I understand that this consent is valid for the duration of the research project and any associated dissemination of findings. After the completion of the research project, my consent remains valid for any future use of the materials. I will hold the copyright of all original artworks made through this process, and will also retain the original artwork once documented, as artwork will be returned to the artist/creator no later than December 2024.

If I have any questions, I may contact the principal investigator, Jennie Suddick (contact information redacted) or her primary supervisor.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research at the University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5. Tel: (613) 562-5387; E-mail: ethics@uottawa.ca.

I, (please print) _____, agree to the terms of this release for the research study, entitled Advancing creative pedagogy in art education: Learning from non-formal environments in Nassau, Bahamas, conducted by Jennie Suddick, PhD Candidate, University of Ottawa.

Participant's Signature _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date: _____

Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please retain a copy of this form for future reference. Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Further Details on Activities Referenced in This Document:

Activity #1: Artistic Workshop (3–4 hours, onsite)

An artist workshop will be held at each I.C.E. Bahamas and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre. The goal will be to produce either a collaborative or a series of individual artworks that reflect on participants' experiences as part of the respective non-formal education

group. The 3–5 participants from each group will meet only with their group (therefore two separate workshops will be held). The structure will be open-ended, where participants will simultaneously create new original artworks and engage in conversation (that will be recorded). Materials will be provided, but participants may also bring any materials they want to contribute.

Activity #2: Potential Follow-Up Artistic Activity

To be determined by the end of Activity #1 (estimated contribution by each participant: maximum 3 hours, in their own space/time). By the end of Activity #1, the group will decide how they would like to further contribute to the thesis and artist book. This may include the creation of additional artworks or the contribution of photo documentation to be collected individually by each participant. A deadline for contribution will be decided by the group.

B.5 Activity/Workshop Outline — Cycle 2

Working document used to guide the Cycle 2 artistic workshop and follow-up activities at I.C.E.

Bahamas and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre, July 2024.

Workshop Discussion Framework:

- Introductory conversation — what brought participants to I.C.E./Junkanoo
- How their lives have been impacted as a result of being in that space/community
- What is there to celebrate about this? — visually represent
- What gaps in education does this fill?
- How they see taking their experiences forward
- Group reflection

Participant Next Steps (Following Workshop):

- Contribute up to 7 pages to the thesis/artist book
- New material or archive/found material (artworks, photos, flyers, etc.)

Emerging Themes (from Workshop Discussions):

- Experiential (learning by doing/experimenting)
- Highlight local knowledge/practice/traditions
- Nature/Sustainability

- Holistic (development time not separated from daily life, hands-on, interdisciplinary)
- Collaboration

For Arlene Nash Ferguson and Antonius Roberts (Primary Participants, as Collaborators in Cycle 2):

- Elaborate on their own experiences as students and instructors in formal art education settings, which might highlight critical comparisons with their non-formal art education experiences.
- Refer to specific formal art education settings experienced as a student and instructor.

Follow-Up Communication — I.C.E. Bahamas Participants

Step 1: Contributing to the Thesis/Artist Book

Overall goal: To visually represent personal responses to the question — How have you (or others around you) been impacted/learned through being involved with I.C.E.?

Each participant is asked to contribute 5 (minimum) to 8 (maximum) pages of images to illustrate their personal reflections. Highlighted themes include: local knowledge/practice/traditions; Nature/Sustainability; Collaboration; Experiential learning; and Holistic learning. The pages can be documentation of existing artwork, photos, documentation of your space or the world around you, or any other images that personally relate to the main

question and/or the outlined themes. Participants will be compensated \$79 Canadian per page.

Deadline: approximately October 5th.

Step 2: One-on-One Call or In-Person Meeting

A one-hour maximum call or in-person meeting to casually speak about what was contributed in Step 1. Scheduled for when the primary researcher visits Nassau in mid-to-late October, or online around the same time.

Follow-Up Communication — Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre**Participants**

Same two-step structure as above, with the guiding question — How have you (or others around you, including students) been impacted/learned through being involved with Junkanoo/I.C.E.?

B.6 Interview Guide — Cycle 2 Participants

One-on-one interview questions used with secondary participants (students/mentees) in Cycle 2.

Questions served as a framework; interviews were open-ended to allow for flexibility and broader relevant discussion.

Advancing Creative Pedagogy in Art Education: Learning from Non-Formal Environments in Nassau, Bahamas

Section 1: About the Non-Formal Learning Environment/Community

14. How did you get involved with Arlene Nash Ferguson/Antonius Roberts and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre/I.C.E. Bahamas?
15. How would you describe your participation in this non-formal educational environment?
16. How has your participation in Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre/I.C.E. Bahamas influenced your personal and professional growth?
17. Can you describe any specific skills or knowledge you gained through your involvement in these learning environments?
18. Can you share any memorable experiences or projects from your time in these environments?
19. Have you had opportunities to apply the skills or knowledge you acquired in these programs to real-world situations or projects?

20. How do you predict you will use this experience moving forward in both your personal and professional life?
21. How would you define/describe 'creativity' in the context of working with Arlene Nash Ferguson/Antonius Roberts and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre/I.C.E. Bahamas?
22. How do you perceive the value of non-formal learning environments compared to traditional educational settings in the field of art and design?

Section 2: About the Artworks Contributed through Activity #1 and Activity #2

23. Tell me about the artworks you have contributed.
24. How has your participation with Arlene Nash Ferguson/Antonius Roberts and Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre/I.C.E. Bahamas influenced your making of these works or other works you make in your practice?
25. What have you chosen to represent in the artworks?
26. Do the materials you have used have any significance?
27. Does the subject matter you have depicted have any significance?
28. Are there any other choices you made in the artwork that hold any significance?

APPENDIX B**CYCLE 2: VISUAL AND ARTISTIC RESPONSES**

The following pages present the visual and artistic materials contributed by Cycle 2 participants as part of the Artistic contributions data collection process. Each image is accompanied by its descriptive caption and the thematic categories identified through analysis.

C.1 I.C.E. (Incubator for Collaborative Expression) Bahamas**C.1.1 Reagan — Visual and Artistic Responses**

Reagan is a resident artist at I.C.E. Bahamas. The following images were contributed by Reagan as part of the Cycle 2 Artistic contributions data collection, alongside participation in the collective artistic workshop (Activity #1) and individual follow-up (Activity #2). Images include Reagan's original artworks and photographic documentation of her practice and community engagement. Captions and thematic categories are reproduced as coded.



Reagan's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, trying new media and techniques



Reagan's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, trying new media and techniques, the role of family



Regan in her studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression



Regan with her peer (Justin) in studios at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Regan with her peers (including Justin) in studios at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Regan with her peer (Justin) in studios at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Regan with her peers (including Justin) in studios at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement, trying new media and techniques



Reagan's peers at a group exhibition in the community
Collaboration and Community Engagement, documentation of professional showcases



Reagan's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Reagan's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Reagan's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, the role of family



Reagan's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, the role of family



Reagan's artwork

Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques, the role of family

C.1.2 Justin — Visual and Artistic Responses

Justin is a resident artist at I.C.E. Bahamas. The following images were contributed by Justin as part of the Cycle Artistic contributions data collection, alongside participation in the collective artistic workshop (Activity #1) and individual follow-up (Activity #2). Images include Justin's original artworks and photographic documentation of his practice and community engagement. Captions and thematic categories are reproduced as coded.



Justin in the studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression, trying new media and techniques



Justin in the studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression, trying new media and techniques



Justin in the studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Justin and another resident sits at I.C.E.



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, the role of family



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Justin in his studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, the role of family



Justin in his studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression



Justin's peer at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Justin in his studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression



Justin working with his peer in the garden at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Justin in the garden at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Justin's peer at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Justin and his peers at I.C.E. coming together for a workshop
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Justin in his studio at I.C.E.
Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Justin at an art exhibition (offsite)
Identity and Self-Expression, documentation of professional showcases



Justin in the garden at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Justin and his peers doing a workshop at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Justin and his peers going around the island to gather documentation for their art works
Collaboration and Community Engagement



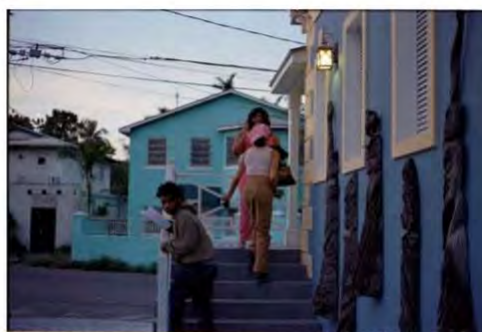
One of Justin's peers at a exhibition opening (off-site)
Collaboration and Community Engagement, documentation of professional showcases



Justin and his peers going around the island to gather documetation for their art works
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Justin in his studio at I.C.E.



Justin and his peers going around the island to gather documetation for their art works
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Justin in his studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression



Justin in his studio at I.C.E.
Identity and Self-Expression



Justin's peer having a studio visit with a local professional at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Justin's peer at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement, trying new media and techniques



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Justin's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques

C.1.3 Alia — Visual and Artistic Responses

Alia is a resident artist at I.C.E. Bahamas. The following images were contributed by Alia as part of the Cycle 2 Artistic contributions /data collection, alongside participation in the collective artistic workshop (Activity #1) and individual follow-up (Activity #2). Images include Alia's original artworks and photographic documentation of her practice and community engagement. Captions and thematic categories are reproduced as coded.



Alia and her peers setting up an exhibition at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Alia and her peers setting up her installation exhibition at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, documentation of professional showcases



Alia firing the clay pieces for her installation (exhibited at I.C.E.)
Cultural Preservation and Identity, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Alia preparing clay pieces for her installation (exhibited at I.C.E.)
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, documentation of professional showcases



Alia's installation exhibited at I.C.E.
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, documentation of professional showcases



Alia and her peer (Regan) working together at I.C.E.
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, documentation of professional showcases, collaboration and Community Engagement



Alia's artwork (sketchbook collage)
Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Alia's artwork
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Alia's wood burning kiln she developed/experimented with at I.C.E.
Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Alia in the studio at I.C.E.
trying new media and techniques



Alia experimenting with making clay from local materials
Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Alia's studio at I.C.E. which she has set up to hold classes for the local community
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Alia experimenting with traditional clay firing techniques
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Alia's artwork- produced with traditional techniques
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Alia's artwork- produced with traditional techniques (in process)
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Alia's installation exhibited at I.C.E.
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, documentation of professional showcases



A workshop with the local community that Alia organized at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Alia and her peers (including Justin) having a critique in their studio with Antonius
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Alia sharin her installtion exhibited at I.C.E. with local community members
Collaboration and Community Engagement, the documentation of professional showcases



Alia's installtion at I.C.E.
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques, documentation of professional showcases



Alia and her peers (including Justin) sharing ideas and works in progress with one another
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Alia's peer in their studio at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Alia working looking out to the garden at I.C.E.
Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Visiting local school group at I.C.E.
Collaboration and Community Engagement



Alia's documentation of the garden at I.C.E.
Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Alia's documentation of her peer in the garden at I.C.E.



Alia's artwork based on pre-Colombian ceramics
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Alia's artwork based on pre-Colombian ceramics
Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Alia's peers having a critique in their studio with a local arts professional
Collaboration and Community Engagement

C.2 Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre

C.2.1 Carlene — Visual and Artistic Responses

Carlene is a participant at Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre. The following images were contributed by Carlene as part of the Cycle 2 Artistic contributions data collection. Images consist of Carlene's photographic documentation of Junior Junkanoo — capturing costume creation, parade preparations, community support, and performance — reflecting her deep engagement with Junkanoo as a living educational and cultural practice. Captions and thematic categories are reproduced as coded.



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress (community member support)



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo practice
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations (community support)
Cultural Preservation and Identity



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression. Collaboration and Community Engagement. Cultural Preservation and Identity Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo practice
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



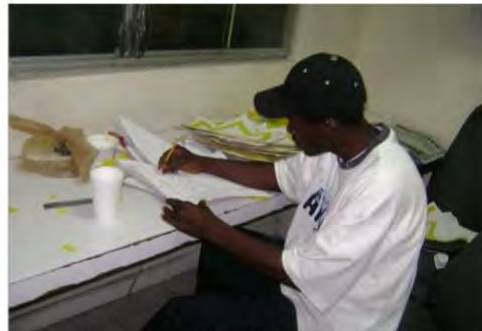
Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations (community support)
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the role of family, trying new media and techniques



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations (community support)
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the role of family, trying new media and techniques



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo preparations (community support)
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, the role of family, trying new media and techniques



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkanoo
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkano
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



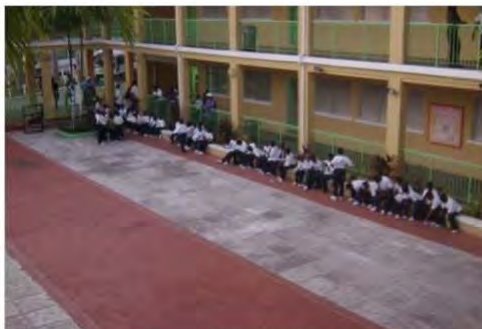
Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkano
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkano
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkano
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, trying new media and techniques



Carlene's documentation of Junior Junkano practice
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity

C.2.2 Quinn — Visual and Artistic Responses

Quinn is a participant at Educulture Junkanoo Museum and Resource Centre. The following images were contributed by Quinn as part of the Cycle 2 Artistic contributions data collection. Images consist of Quinn's photographic documentation of Junior Junkanoo and the Junkanoo parade — capturing costume creation, parade preparations, community support, and performance — reflecting her deep engagement with Junkanoo as a living educational and cultural practice. Captions and thematic categories are reproduced as coded.



Quinn's documentation of students planning for JuniorJunkanoo at school- *Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques*



Quinn's documentation of community members supporting students preparing for JuniorJunkanoo at school- *Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new*



Quinn's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Quinn's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Quinn's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Quinn's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, trying new media and techniques



Quinn's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Cultural Preservation and Identity



Quinn's documentation of Junior Junkanoo creations in progress
Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability trying new media and techniques



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation (herself)
Identity and Self-Expression, Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Collaboration and Community Engagement, Cultural Preservation and Identity, Environmental Awareness and Sustainability, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
Cultural Preservation and Identity, documentation of professional showcases



Quinn's Junkanoo documentation
*Identity and Self-Expression, Cultural Preservation
and Identity*