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**Statement on Current Research and Creative Practice**  
**2023**

This statement is a summary of three compelling major projects and research endeavors I am currently working on and expect to continue through the coming academic year.

Research: *Exit/us: Reversing the exodus of art educators*

Writing: *Picture This! The How and Why of Creativity*

Creative Practice: *Walking A/r/tography and the Movimento Project*

**Exit/us: Reversing the Exodus of Art Educators**

This research was conducted in response to a deficit of data related specifically to the field of K-12 Art Education in the United States under the conditions of a nationwide teacher shortage. The study generated compelling statistics on the root causes of the current exodus, including significant aspects of pandemic teaching in 2020 and 2021. My article highlighting and analyzing findings from the study is under peer review with the journal *Studies in Art Education*.

The study was conducted through a national online [survey](#) from January to July, 2022. Responses were solicited from K-12 visual art educators across the United States. Participants responded voluntarily with full privacy and anonymity to questions regarding their experiences in teaching visual arts, perceived support from school and district leadership, support networks, and experiences teaching during the pandemic. Responses were solicited from art educators leaving the field and those who are staying, as this research also seeks key factors that lead to a long, fulfilling career.

The research application was approved by the IRB Board for the University of Texas at Arlington in November of 2021. The study successfully generated nearly four hundred pages of relevant and vital data for the field. The article presents and analyzes key data and discusses issues that will inform pre-service education preparation programs and school systems seeking to retain qualified and talented arts educators.

## **Walking A/r/tography and the Movimento Project**

This project combines research, writing, walking, photography, and visualization through a creative endeavor with fellow artists and writers across the globe. At the InSEA conference in Vancouver (2019) I discovered a group of artists and art educators practicing Walking A/r/tography on every continent coming together to share their experiences and exhibit the visual products of their walks through a wide range of media. While researching for my dissertation in 2017, I experienced walking and being present, including lostness and wandering, as a profound methodology for data collection. I was thrilled to connect with this community through a shared creative philosophy.

Since the conference, I have engaged with Walking A/r/tography through a new creative practice called the [Movimento Project](#). We also have a book that has been accepted for publication with Springer's SABER series (2023) with the working title *Walking as Critical Inquiry*. My chapter, "Discovering Lostness: Wandering and Getting Lost as Research Methodology," investigates the role of lostness to enhance observation and awareness through research and creative expression as illustrated and experienced with my Movimento Project. Here is an excerpt from "Discovering Lostness:"

Walking, moving forward through unfamiliar landscapes, is for me a powerful research tool for investigation, observation, writing and reflecting. My slow kinetic encounters reveal ideas and insights about lived creative experiences unavailable elsewhere. Further, a methodology of lostness and wandering as a research practice has proved to be profoundly enlightening. More than simply walking, wandering can be hesitant and uncertain, shuffling and distracted. Wandering is kinesis with the freedom to pause, suspending movement to linger, savor, and be immersed in a moment. Wandering has built-in space for wonder, for surprise, for discovery; it allows time for detailed observation and the contemplation of meaning. Thus phenomenological walks that allow for wandering and lostness can empower the researcher, the artist, the writer, and the seeker with unique opportunities for discovery rich with meaning.

The Movimento Project is a visual expression of this philosophy, my creative practice that involves moving into and through primarily natural spaces to make and capture a visual expression of movement. This involves exploring new places, drawing in sand or earth, or assembling local debris, then photographing the results. The gallery section of my website presents the current results of this ever-evolving endeavor with an artist's statement, photographs and videos.

## **A Pedagogy of Creativity**

Currently, I am writing a unique book about creativity called *Picture This! The how and why of creativity*. The primary objective for this book is to present and discuss a targeted range of philosophies and perspectives on creativity integrated with the practice of *being* creative.

In the first unit, *Understanding Creativity* we examine definitions of creativity from global sources featuring a diverse range of perspectives. The stages of creativity are presented and defined through a vibrant Creativity Wheel diagram emphasizing the role of evaluation and high-level thinking that occurs continuously throughout the creative process.

The second unit, *How Creativity Happens*, features lessons and activities that will enhance understanding of how creative processes function and can be amplified to greater breadth and depth. Chapter four, Teaching Creativity, is organized around the stages of creativity with several activities, games, and prompts to enhance student abilities in each area.

The third unit, *Why Artists Create*, features a diverse range of artists and their creative processes in practice. Each highlighted artist shares their views about creativity, their own experiences and procedures. Additional chapters discuss significant features of Creative Places and Museums as sites that spark the imagination.

Each unit closes with prompts for reflection for the artist educators reading and using this book with their students. The prompts encourage close observation of the outcomes of the activities, thinking about the successes or struggles their students experienced, and what that means for their pedagogy of creativity with their specific students, classroom, or school.