



Through the Google Lens: Development of lecturing practice in Photography

This work is submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Technology in Photography at the Durban University of Technology

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August 2015

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Date: 25 August 2015

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Date: 25 August 2015

Abstract



Figure 1: A self portrait - made with my Blackberry. Image retrieved from osmosisLIZA weblog page (du Plessis 2011)

This dissertation is a self-study that involves inquiring into my mentoring practice to change and improve my situation and find a sense of belonging. The centre of the inquiry into 'self' lies in the search and claiming of an identity that consolidates the development of my artistic, mentoring and research practices during my 'first time' employment

experience, as a junior lecturer in a Photography program, 2009-2011.

I reflect on three years of lecturing experience in a tertiary education setting at the Durban University of Technology, in which doing a Masters was obligatory. I entered this position, with little experience in research and lecturing or photographic expertise. During this study, I made myself known as osmosisliza, the name of the 'cyborg' who journeys in cyberspace. I claim to be a 'photographer horticulturalist', a mentor concerned with cultivating collective online spaces, to create movement to connect in cyberspace for social learning purposes. I ask "Who is osmosisliza?"

My class motto is "**what you think, know and believe helps us all to be more**", a personal belief for building knowledge through exchange and collaboration with others. I employed a variety of free Web 2.0 applications, like Gmail, Blogger, Buzz, Picasa Web Albums, Google Bookmarks and YouTube to create online spaces in which I could position my living educational theory. I called this place the Google Lens (GL).

The Google Lens formed the mechanism to cultivate communities of practice for social learning, to develop confidence, motivation and engagement. The Google Lens was also the repository for qualitative and quantitative data. Mostly I analyse verbal and visual text, writings, photographs and video exchanges between learners and myself archived in the Google Lens to address my research question and sub-question. Through the lens of Google I did action research to improve my practice, and analyse my development as a newcomer to academia. I investigate how successful I was in using the Google Lens to achieve my mentoring goals.

I also made photographs during the process of this inquiry to visually address abstract identity dilemmas, concerns and thoughts in my place of work, to engage my 'I' in my 'eye' as photographer. I exhibit these in cyberspace. I call these electronic postcards. Electronic postcards are blog posts in a weblog called osmosisLIZA. I made 98 blog posts and sent 98 electronic postcards in this dissertation. An electronic postcard consists of a photograph, an illustration, labels and a text heading. In this document the electronic postcards run alongside the writings for this self-study, functioning as text and message of the experiences of a developing academic as well as evidence of the developmental questions I was continuously asking to improve my practice.

Keywords: Visual Literacy, Photographies, Digital Photography, Photography Theory, Communities of Practice, E-Learning, Google, self-study, action research, living theory, Art education, Photography education, Web 2.0.



Declaration by student

1. I know and understand that plagiarism is using another person's work and pretending that it is one's own, which is wrong.
2. This report is my own work.
3. I have appropriately referenced other people's work to my best ability.
4. I have not and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his/her own work.
5. All participants in the Google Lens are aware of their involvement in the making of this dissertation.
6. I have with the greatest respect and intention tried to portray their activities and engagement in my studies in a positive light.
7. Participants have given me permission to publicize them in an online forum for the purpose of aiding my studies.

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Dedication

I am moved by the art spirit of those that I mentor and the spirit that makes art what she is.

I have come to acknowledge that the spirit of art lies in the movement of the person. Like clay shaped by the hand, she is formed by what she touches and what she is touched by. The sounds she feels and the sounds she generates.

If photography is about sensory “competencies” of the eyes, heart and head then self-study is about the ears... it is about listening... be it to external sound waves or internal noise (the grainy kind). This self-study has been transformational for my self-image: as artist, mentor and researcher of photographs and has created a valuable soundboard to make movement from a ‘place’, a ‘place’ where I can connect my personal values, my compassion for learners and their creative spirit with a scholarly intent - to make a space for myself as an mentor in visual literacy and artist with photographs.

I believe every human being can create sound to make movement even when the human movement doesn’t make noise. When one is listened to one wants to create motion. What is said and the levels of what will be heard or what can move are inconsequent to the opportunity to make sound. One only needs permission from ones self. To move one requires a space and a place, and for a visual artist ones needs a medium(s). These are inanimate necessities, and cannot become alive if they do not have the human meddle. Human influences both challenge and support, inspire and motivate, and revive the spirit that nags to say something. Sometimes I was surprised that I actually could.

This dissertation is **dedicated to my son Sebastian**, the most beautiful sound I needed to make movement.

Acknowledgements

“To take a photograph means to recognize – simultaneously and within a fraction of a second – both the fact itself and the rigorous organisation of visually perceived forms that give it meaning. It is putting one’s head, one’s eye, and one’s heart on the same axis.”

(Cartier-Bresson in Hill and Cooper 2005:66)

I recognize in a “fraction of a second” (ibid) I say thank-you to:

Sebastian, for your enduring patience, your unconditional love that gave me hope and stamina because you never stopped believing in me. Once you said to me *sometimes I block my ears with my brain*. Your beautiful wisdom showed me that you understood and that gave some guilt-free moments.

Lorraine and Hennie, my critics, my parents, for supporting and challenging me, but always being close at hand when fear and dread consumed me.

Liz, my other critic, my first supervisor. Your ‘hurricane’ influence and ‘breezy’ guidance has made this possible. Your endless support and care in cyberspace, always being available via sms, email or sitting around the CELT boardroom table, despite your challenges, gave me the ongoing strength and motivation to work *together* through the many complexities of producing this document. I am lucky to have known you, Liz. You have moved my head.

Peter, my photography mentor, for your guidance and insight in mentoring photography. You have showed me that there is a space for me to express myself creatively in what I love to do, mentor and make photographs. You have moved my eyes.

Joan, my other mentor, my beginnings, for your ideas about teaching and learning. Your methods of engaging and empowering educators especially those that are still learning has transformed my practice. Your passion for what you do, and the love you invest in how you do it has fuelled me timeously, over and over again. You have moved my heart.

Delysia, my second supervisor, for taking over with supervision, for being understanding and supportive in helping me to close off this document.

Piers, for co-supervising.

My Colleagues: *Moses, Bwalya, Gee, Mark, Odwa, Mari, Andrea, Shubnam, Sibongile, Preggi, Tony, Akona and Gita* who always asked how I was going, who listened over a cup of tea (or water) and were considerate when I needed it most.

Thank-you to TES (Transformative Educational Studies), MPR (Mentoring Practitioner Research group) and DUT (Durban University of Technology) for support.

Lastly a big thank-you, goes to the learners (the mp4's, the digital sound). There are so many of you. Thank you to those who restored my journey before this document was printed but especially those who were part of the years of this study.

Paul, Gareth, Chillies, Fabian, Tazz, Varusha, Tae, Nicola, Chris, Siya M, Nabeel, Yolisa, Dena, Lungi, Thandeka, Sjah, Nompilo, Sphe, Sabelo, LaVerne, Josh, Kristyn, Nicole, Werner, Mandulo, Sane, Mbuyi, Sakhile, Veshlin, Lindeka, Kelly, Fiona, Page, Davis, Leeresh, Andile, Jerome, Celeste, Lelo, Nozipho, Yolanda, Nikki, Emily, Kate, Nhlanthla, Lindy, Lisa, Siya, Netty, Shan, Phakamani, Nduduzo, Trizelle, Yamkile, Q, Ryan, Adam, Erin, Monde, Shirin, Phoebe, Wanda, Nonto, Senzo, Nomkhosi, Nthabs, Ntombi, Sphe, Josh, Kelina, Oyena, Sifiso, Slindile, Sam, Mbuso, Shene, Innocentia, Nondumiso, Siboniso, Duncan, Zizi, James, Tyla-Skye, Paulo, Ndumiso, Sindi, Francesca, Massimo, Zweli.

You have all shaped me in valuable ways, guiding me, firing me up with your energetic, inquiring and wholesome digital sound. I choose to name you because, I recognise in each of you that you have individually made valuable and long-lasting contributions to me, facilitating me on how to mentor, even with your silences.

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Introduction

Preamble

I think only if we attempt this pouring out of personal feeling and thinking into the public domain, will a new public become possible. We cannot tell what kind of public it will be, but we do need to release more and more personal data into our public home to bring about a more real human environment: more real because it is more honest, more trusting, and more expressive.
(Professor Njabulo Ndebele 2012)⁵⁵

In this dissertation which critically reflects upon my study, I believe I am contributing to new knowledge and educational methodologies by making my personal lived experience and practice as an artist, mentor and researcher public. In order to do this I use a self-study (Pithouse, Mitchell and Moletsane 2009, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009) action research (McNiff 2002 and 2010, Wood 2010), informed by critical reflection (Schon 1983), as my principle research approaches. In so doing I reveal my living educational theory (Whitehead 1989 and 2008b). This document is about my choices, the selections and actions I made, to better define my role as an artist, mentor and researcher in my practice. I use an epistemological voice, a voice for knowing (artist), a practical voice, a voice for doing (mentoring) and an ontological voice, a voice for being and becoming (action research) to find out who I can be as an artist mentor and researcher in my practice (Bachelor 2006).

What are the research questions, methodologies and methods I have used in this study?

My main research question is: **How do I use online technologies to improve my practice as a mentor in visual literacy?**

⁵⁵ Durban University of Graduation Programme 2012 on the occasion of the award of an Honorary Doctorate to Professor Njabulo Ndebele.

My sub questions are:

1.1. How can I use online spaces to produce a learner of photographs who is confident, motivated and engaged with the field of visual communication?

1.2. Which online spaces serve to empower learners as practitioners of photographs?

I answer my research questions in the ongoing process of self-study (Pithouse, Mitchell and Moletsane 2009, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009) action research (McNiff 2002 and 2010, Wood 2010). As part of initiating my interrogation of my practice, I ask many critical reflective questions (Schon 1983, Luehman 2008) which helped me to access my understanding of my roles and voices as artist, mentor and researcher. I used self-study action research (McNiff 2002, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009, Pithouse, Mitchell and Moletsane 2009, McNiff 2010, Wood 2010) to approach my study and frame my dissertation. However it is in the nature of self-study action research (ibid) that the process of critical reflection generates ongoing questions related to the intention of raising awareness and improving practice (Whitehead 1989 and 2008b, McNiff 2002, 2008a, 2008b and 2010, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009, Pithouse, Mitchell and Moletsane 2009). I found in the process of this self-study action research (McNiff 2002, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009, Pithouse, Mitchell and Moletsane 2009, McNiff 2010, Wood 2010) project that numerous other questions presented themselves, over 200 in all. With these questions I could identify the problems and the reasons that led me into action (McNiff 2010), the action itself, and the influence from this action. My research questions reflect and examine what I did with online spaces I developed for mentoring learners in *photography*. How I addressed my artistic and mentoring concerns, the gaps I recognised in learners' attitudes towards learning.

Like Brandenburg (2009:196), my “choosing to conduct a self-study was a deliberate attempt to understand more about (my) practice (...) and to better understand outcomes of (my) practice in the context of a changing a complex world”. According to Laboskey self-study methodology consists of five elements:

It is self-initiated and focused; it is improvement aimed; it is interactive; it includes multiple mainly qualitative methods; and it defines values validity as a process based on trustworthiness. (Hamilton, Smith and Worthington 2008:21)

In my study I have focused on my practice as an artist, as an educational mentor and researcher. I have reflected on my action in relation to others to reveal my artistic and educational and research identities and knowledge (Hamilton et al 2008:21). I have collected data from multiple sources using multiple methods to establish trustworthiness (Hamilton et al 2008). In my self-study I interact with my learners in private and public online spaces to generate the understandings that I have explored in this study.

At a significant point in my study, my first supervisor Elizabeth Harrison made a comment on my draft asking the following question.

Is the purpose of self-study really to authenticate the self, or is it research about a question that only this self can answer because only this self has lived the experience?
(Harrison², PHD 2013)

I found this question most thought provoking and useful to me as a researcher. I was actually a watershed moment in my research. After reflection, I decided that my self-study was actually doing both. I was finding that the process of self-study was revealing myself to me in ways which would otherwise not have been possible. I realised that the process of self-discovery was made possible because I was critically reflecting on lived experience of my practice as artist, mentor and researcher unique to me. I had to journey into *self* to explore how I could claim an artistic identity in my *lecturing* practice (Gee 2000, Hughes 2007, McNiff 2008a and 2008b, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009). I do this by likening my self-study action research dissertation to a viewfinder in a camera.

² Harrison, E. 2013.. A comment made on my draft dissertation on 14 January 2013. Harrison my first supervisor passed away after a long and brave battle with cancer in August 2013.

I regard a viewfinder as a personalised looking instrument that offers a place and space to curate “self-selecting” (Strong-Wilson 2009:159) concepts “from an infinity of possible sights” (Berger 1972:02), placed in a rectangular frame. For this self-study, I chose to write up a narrative of my “storied” life (Connelly & Clandinin 2000:02) as an artist who was developing into a mentor, during my first time employment experience, as a junior *lecturer* in a Photography Program at a tertiary institution in Durban, South Africa. Being an artist and mentor is central to why I do things the way I do, and shapes my viewfinder for looking, regarding and seeing my practice.

The choices for the body of my story came about because of my “embodied knowledge” (Whitehead 2008b) connected to my values, beliefs, curiosities and concerns as artist, mentor and researcher: “What (I) chose to notice and ignore (is) shaped by (my) ever changing conception of what matter(s)” (Ochberg 2003:131). In my story, I identify signposts, namely evidence of how I was motivated and evidence of my influence, to account for my actions so that I can make improvements in my *lecturing* practice in *photography* as an art form (Whitehead 1989 and 2008ab, McNiff 2010). In this dissertation I introduce an explanation for my “educational influence” in my learning, “in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formation” in which I “live and work” (Whitehead 2008b:104). In doing so I reveal my living artistic and educational theory (Whitehead 1989, 2008b). So I approached this study using self-study (Pithouse, Mitchell and Moletsane 2009, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009) action research (McNiff 2002, 2008a, 2008b and 2010) to reveal my living educational theory (Whitehead 1989 and 2008b).

In my dissertation I generate my living theories from action research as an explanation for my educational influences in learning (Whitehead 2009a). I explore these explanations with my artistic and educational values, which respond to my desire to improve my practice as artist, mentor and researcher.

I used action research to observe, describe and explain (McNiff 2010) the details of my “influences”, and how I was shaped by other “influences” that motivated, inspired and informed my practice (Bullough and Pinnegar 2001:13), because of the implementation of the GL. I use structures, people and objects from my personal life, my lived experience (Whitehead 2008b) to look through and identify my values, concerns and actions, so that they can be examined and written about in this document, much like the photographic compositional concept known as a “frame within a frame” (Galer 2006). I found the action research questions listed below (Whitehead 1989, McNiff 2010a) a useful rationale and framework for reflecting upon my practice. These are:

1. What really matters to me? What do I care passionately about? What kind of difference do I want to make in the world?
2. What are my values and why?
3. What is my concern? Why am I concerned?
4. What kind of experiences can I describe to show the reasons for my concerns?
5. What can I do about it?
6. What will I do about it?
7. How do I evaluate the educational influences of my actions?
8. How do I demonstrate the validity of the account of my educational influence in learning?
9. How do I modify my concerns, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluation?

Following Timm (2013:35/36) I adapted these questions to facilitate and direct my self-study aimed at improving my practice as artist and mentor in *photography*. I discovered that the interrogation of my practice, using these exploratory questions generated numerous action research cycles (McNiff 2010). I discovered however that the action research cycles that emerged were not simply sequential but intersected, interfaced and interwoven (Timm and Conolly 2015) with each other because of the inherent complexity of my study.

This has resulted in a kaleidoscope of concerns, actions and responses which reflected the impossibility of “putting performance on the page” in a way in which it reflects its reality (Chamberlan 1998:05).

In order to address the difficulties presented by the complexity of my study I was encouraged by Whitehead (2009b:108) to use multi-media: “the communications of the meanings of embodied knowledge needs visual narrative in addition to words on pages of printed text”. I used multi-media to express “empathetic resonance to describe my experience of my strongest emotional response to hearing, seeing and feeling (my) communication” with myself as artist and mentor of my learners (2011b:05).

In my dissertation I establish that I use three media platforms. These are written text, electronic text and visual text. These three media platforms simultaneously and mutually inform each other, and create other spaces for interfacing, intersecting and interweaving (Timm and Conolly 2015) movements between artist, mentor and researcher selves.

In my written text I put certain words in italics to highlight the ambivalence of these words. Words like *self*, *photography* and *lecturer*. The words *photography* and *lecturer* are in the title of this dissertation, but are not in italics because when I started my Master’s and handed in my proposal, I assumed these titles, without questioning them. In my contract I was employed as a junior *lecturer* in the Photography Program. However, when I began to do research, and I started structuring and building an argument for claiming a living theory (Whitehead 2009a) in my practice, these words became problematic for me. I began to interrogate and ask “Why?”. I recognized that in my place of work these words defined me incorrectly, and gave me an institutional identity rather than one that was based on my values as an artist. I discuss this in Chapter 2. As such, I experienced cognitive dissonance and dislocation. I felt displaced because my ideals, beliefs and values as an artist were compromised and disputed mostly by the way these words defined how I should act as an educator.

I was motivated to do something about my cognitive dissonance and dislocation. Towards the end of the document as I develop and my influences grow (Bullough and Pinnegar 2001) I remove these words from italics and replace them with other words. Words like *osmosisliza*, *photographies* and *mentor* (respectively). These replaced words, are closer to how I see I can claim an artistic and mentoring identity in my practice, a space where I connect and engage my sense of self-worth and personal philosophy on learning.

To provide the space for finding the *self* as artist in *photography*, I name myself “osmosisliza”. I deliberately use lowercase to show my lack of authority, of knowing who I was when I started claiming this name. “osmosisliza” is my “cyborg” persona (Morse 1994 cited in Lander 2005:160) who mostly lives in cyberspace. *osmosisliza* is the artist who values the humanness of the photographer (Clarke 1997), the digitization of the image, and New Technologies over the mechanics of the camera. *osmosisliza* is the significant “I” of this self-study (McNiff 2008a and 2008b). The centre of the inquiry into *self* lies in the search and claiming of an identity for *osmosisliza* that consolidates the development of my mentoring and research practice in *photographies* (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008) as an artist. Gee’s views are that identity refers to “a certain kind of person” whose makeup is built by natural forces and (re)formed by people in charge (like institutions, like a dissertation) and recognised in the individual traits of dialogue and practice (2000:100). I like the way Wanda Mchunu, a first year student in 2011³, wrote (Guillem and Gillam 2004) about how cyberspace “allows one to change personas, allows one to be anyone they want to be... (and how)... its also an escape for people to explore and experiment, to learn and entertain” (sic)⁴. Mchunu’s use of the words “explore”, “escape”, “experiment” and “learn”, resonate strongly with *osmosisliza*’s artist body, and explains my outlook and position during this enquiry.

³ *Personal notes from a class discussion in March 2011.*

⁴ *Unedited. I do not edit student text. See annexure (1): Copy and Paste (sic) ethical stance for Google Lens (GL) spaces and Ethical Consent form signed by learners.*

I give reasons for this outlook and describe my shift in awareness in Chapter 1 when I ask “Who is the body of I?”.

The word *photography* is placed in italics to show that it’s meaning for me, at the beginning of my employment and self-study, was not comfortable. *Photography* was foreign to me. I had not studied this field, nor had I used it before as an artistic medium in my previous art endeavours. Mostly I was uncertain as to how I could find artistic value, significance and purpose with the medium of *photography* in my practice. In order for the word to have resonance, I needed to develop my artistic intent first with the medium and then I could develop my professionalism as an educator for the medium. I talk about this in Chapter 1 and 2. I replace *photography* with the word “photographies” because the learners and I live in a digital age where the nature of how a photograph is produced and consumed has a distinctive set of social and personal implications that are different to its historical impetus (Tagg cited in Wells 2004, Company 2003 and 2004). “Photographies” (Tagg in Wells 2004) describes the way in which *photography* is reshaped by digitization and the Internet. When I replace the word *photography* with “photographies” (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008), I begin to claim an identity for osmosisLiza’s artist body, and this claim importantly signposted ways to become an educator (Pithouse, Mitchell and Moletsane 2009). In Chapter 1, I will account for why I claim this when I ask “What is the body of my eye?”.

In the chapters to follow (1-4), the reader will find words in bold italics in brackets, next to certain statements (except for the introduction and conclusion). These words are the same words that link electronic postcards (refer to pages 29, 33 and 34 for further explanation) in a series on osmosisLIZA weblog, assigned through labels, figure 4, on page 33 and 34. My electronic postcards are supposed to be read alongside this document to highlight the connections I made between my written text and my visual voice to study the *self*.

The labels in osmosisLIZA weblog (refer to page 34 for further explanation) and the mirrored bold italic words in this document importantly talk about the movements I made, between my artist, mentor and online body, between my private and public life, and between my intuition and intellect, as I wrote about my lived experience. I encourage the reader to read this document with my osmosisLIZA weblog page open, to explore connections and movements “between”. However I am mindful the reader may not have access to the Internet, so I have provided a CD with screenshots from my weblog, to mimic the experience one would have online⁵.

I replace the word *lecturer* with mentor because I do not like how it positions me as an educator. I will explain my concerns and the reasons for my concerns associated with this word in Chapter 2 when I examine osmosisliza’s mentoring body. To position myself as a mentor rather than *lecturer*, I created an online learning environment, made up of numerous Google applications linked and grouped together, which I collectively termed the ‘Google Lens’ (referred to as GL from here on). In Chapter 3, I account for why I developed the GL as a place to mentor in and I explain how this identified osmosisliza’s online body.

I use electronic text in the GL. I use Google applications collectively as a lens to zoom into my practice, to analyse and develop my mentoring self, so that I could improve what I had set out to do (Whitehead 2008a, 2008b) and check that it is as I would like it to be (McNiff 2010). Langford (2007) writes that photographic lenses are designed to bring in detail and image brightness and avoid optical defects known as aberrations. The subject is brought into focus and it is “pried from its original location” (Campany 2004:20). I use GL as a lens to focus on three things.

First, the activation of my artistic and mentoring values, a way to put my beliefs and curiosities into action in my practice, as an educator.

⁵ See annexure (2): A description of the contents of the accompanying CD.

Second, I used the GL as a lens for self-reflection to express my artist self with photographs, prying with visual text into my identity dilemma and asking: “Who is osmosisliza?”. In the GL I publicise these artistic investigations by holding an exhibition in cyberspace. In the GL I found a place where I could remove my ambivalence and uncertainty about *photography* and experiment with photographs, the digitisation and distribution of images and image data.

Third I used the GL as the repository for qualitative data for action research (McNiff 2002 and 2010). The data in the GL is formulated from the lesson plans, assignments and formative class actives I initiated with learners.

The applications, which act as the lens of Google were (in order of my discovery of them):

1. Gmail – for connecting with learners via email, text and video chat.
A link to get to Google Docs, to the ‘cloud’ for storage, collaborative documents, notes and an assignment bank.
2. Buzz – for sharing, announcing, and discussion (discontinued by Google in December 2011 and replaced by Google +)
3. Google Bookmarks – for access to shared websites and online resources.
4. YouTube – as a video bank for tutorial and entertainment resources on photographs.
5. Blogger– for personal reflection and visual journaling:
osmosisBLOG⁶, osmosisLIZA⁷ and osmosisPROJECTS⁸.
6. Picasa Web Albums – for online critiques, personal web albums, sharing class visual assignments across class years.

From the beginning of 2010, my use of the GL was exploratory, and only in 2011 did I start to use the GL as a mentoring tool.

⁶ osmosisBLOG (online). Available: <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/>

⁷ osmosisLIZA (online). Available: <http://lizarduplessis.blogspot.com/>

⁸ osmosisPROJECTS (online). Available: <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/>

The GL formation was gradual, and it grew out of my interaction with the learners and/or their interaction with the technology.

As learners and I found the need to exchange conversations on photographs (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008) via Google applications and Web 2.0 features, so we discovered online spaces and we learned the dynamics of these online spaces together, in a centrifugal manner, moving from inbox to inbox. The centre of the Google Lens is Gmail, an emailing platform that initially connected the learners and me via the Internet, and provided the link to sign into other Google spaces. We selected the applications that form the GL, because of their Web 2.0 characteristics, with the intent to form a Community of Practice (CoP) (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder 2002). Promoting CoP in a learning environment is important to me, for endorsing social learning (Zimring 1999, Wenger 2000), to change and challenge learner's outlook on personal and professional development, and as a way to negotiate the self because of the other (Hughes 2007).

I use visual text in the form of photographs and illustrations in a private space in Blogger (a weblog that is part of GL) called osmosisLIZA, for self-reflection. I call these 'electronic postcards'. My visual text runs alongside the written text in this document (de Lange, Mitchell and Stuart 2007). Electronic postcards are the visual voice (ibid) of how my "actions embodied my learning" and how my "learning was informed by reflections on my actions" (McNiff 2002:06). Electronic postcards show how I used my "eye" to explore my "I" (Clarke 1997). When I blogged 'electronic postcards', my voice felt more meaningful, because the visual offered me a place and space for unfiltered exploration. I could be poetic, and experimental, and embrace my sense of confusion and scatteredness, an escape from writing, where I had to order, structure and argue my points within an academic paradigm. I was able to see things differently with a comfortable text for self-examination and promote the "idea of (re) positioning the self" (Pithouse, Mitchell, Moletsane 2009:05) as artist in photographs.

The electronic postcards reveal my artistic intent and spirit as I look at my world through a metaphoric lens, expressing my imagination and my heart in a public forum, to resolve my sense of cognitive dissonance and dislocation. The electronic postcards in osmosisLIZA weblog form the practical component of this dissertation⁹. I have also supplied a CD at the back of this document that includes screenshots of my electronic postcards from osmosisLIZA weblog.

This study generated a vast amount of data. Data is the “initial information which shows the situation as it is (...) It is possible by identifying particular pieces of data which match the proposed criteria to show evidence of improvement “ (McNiff and Whitehead 2002:208). I collected my data from the following GL applications: Gmail, Buzz, Google Bookmarks, YouTube, Blogger and Picasa Web Albums, from between 30-75 participating learners (depending on specific context) over a period of 2 years. I clearly could not use all this data so therefore I had to extricate relevant evidence from the data which was pertinent to my research questions. The evidence can be used to support claims to knowledge (McNiff and Whitehead 2002:208). The detailed account of how I extricated the evidence from my data is provided in the beginning of Chapter 4.

How have I focused and delimited my dissertation?

In this study I have used self-study action research (McNiff 2002, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009, Pithouse, Mitchell and Moletsane 2009, McNiff 2010, Wood 2010) to explain my ways of knowing, being and valuing my identity and practice as an artist, educator and researcher. I have limited my dissertation by focusing on myself as artist, mentor and researcher between 2010 and 2011, in reference to my interactions with the learners I was mentoring, in Applied Digital Photography (year 1,2,3) and Visual Communication (year 1) in the Photography Program at the Durban University of Technology (DUT).

⁹ See annexure (2): A description of the contents of the accompanying CD.

How do I use literature in my dissertation?

The literature I have chosen to use can be likened to a tripod, a sturdy structure for establishing arguments for my thinking (the camera body) and supporting my point-of-view (viewfinder). In this document I show how the exposing of, and being exposed to, discourses on mentoring “photographies” for contemporary digital photographers (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008), helped to direct and explain “my living educational influences” (Whitehead 2008b:104). I choose resources and selected texts, both visual and written, to shape this self-study, for my own learning and development and to facilitate becoming a better mentor to others. I have read widely in photography and photographs, visual methodologies, educational studies, community of practice, and online learning environments. I integrate reference to my readings within the text where relevant and explanatory (Bruce 1994).

In *photography*, I value the dialogues and learning discoveries about the act of photography which were instrumental in questioning the word *photography*, and prepared my mentoring approach for photographs, in the writings of Berger 1972, Clarke 1997, Company 2004, Wells 2004, Traub, Heller and Bell 2006, Szarkowski 2007, Rubinstein and Sluis 2008, Marian 2010 and Shore 2010. In photographs, I value examining the nature of photographs in a social context with an emphasis on visual literacy, in the writings of Fransecky and Debes 1972, Rosenblum 1997, Rakes 1999, Sims, O’Leary, Cook and Butland, 2002, Bamford 2003, Wells 2004, Company 2004b, Galer 2006 and Langford 2007. In visual methodologies, I value discourses on encoding and decoding photographs and building visual literacy competency, in the writings of Fransecky and Debes 1972, Berger 1972, Sontag 1977, Bamford 2003, Barthes 1980, Rosenblum 1997, Clarke 1997, Berger 1998, Company 2004, Lester 2000, La Grange 2005, Rubinstein and Sluis 2008 and Faris Belt 2008.

In educational studies, I value what I have learned about research methodologies for transforming *teacher* education using visual methodology, self-study, action research and living theories for professional development as novice educator, in the writings of Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000, Connolly and Clandinin 2000, Gee 2000, Bullough and Pinnegar 2001, Bochner and Ellis 2003, de Lange, Mitchell and Stuart 2007, Afonso and Taylor 2009, Batchelor 2009, Whitehead 1989, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, hooks 2010 and McNiff 2002, 2008a, 2008b, 2010. In Communities of Practice (CoP), I value discourses for online learning in Higher Education, in the writings of Wenger 2000, Seely Brown 2000, Seely Brown & Adler 2008, Tapscott 2009 and Aguilar & Krasny 2011. In online learning environments, I value learning more about the effects of Web 2.0 for social learning, in the writings of Carmean & Haefner 2002, Downes 2005, Laurillard 2006, Goddard 2007, Berk 2008 & 2010, Greenhow, Robelia and Hughes 2009, Tapscott 2009, hooks 2010 and Jones, Ramanau, Cross and Healing 2010.

The literature is considered as relevant throughout each chapter in this document, and is not discussed in a stand-alone chapter.

How did I structure my dissertation?

In Chapter 1, I make my artist's statement (Bochner and Ellis 2003, Alexenberg 2008). I describe my cyborg persona, osmosisliza (Hughes 2007) through two bodies, my "I" and my "eye". I articulate who osmosisliza's artist body is at the time of writing up this document: my personal artist values, beliefs, aspirations and concerns, in the body of "I". I look inwards as an artist to find out how I can perform outwards (Pithouse et al 2009) as mentor and researcher. In the body of my "eye", I attempt to show how the electronic postcards in the GL helped me to self-reflect (self-respect). I describe and explain the osmosisLIZA weblog and the electronic postcards. I make connections between my "I" in osmosisliza and my "eye" in my weblog osmosisLIZA.

I use screenshots from Adobe Photoshop, to guide the reader into understanding the relevance of my method for making electronic postcards. I describe why I had to exhibit my electronic postcards and the concerns I had with an online exhibition.

In Chapter 2, I make my mentoring statement (Whitehead 2008b, Pithouse et al 2009b, hooks 2010). I begin to articulate who I can be, with who I am. I start by deconstructing what the words *lecturer* and *photography* mean to me as an artist, in order to claim a position as mentor, and then I reconstruct spaces, the Google Lens, to position myself, to test that position. As I “mature” and “grow” (Bullough and Pinnegar 2001:13) I feel more confident and show evidence as to why I replace the word *lecturer* with mentor and *photography* with ‘photographies’, and the social implications they have in a contemporary educational context, because of online technologies. For evaluation purposes, I use more photographic terminologies as methodologies for inquiring into the self. I adopt specific photographic vantage points (Szarkowski 2007): worm’s eye view, eye level, bird’s-eye view and back view to look, see and regard my practice from different perspectives. For a photographer, standing in a different position with a camera gives the photographer a different sense of the world and the subject in view. As Galer writes: “A carefully chosen viewpoint or vantage point can often reveal the subject as familiar and yet strange... a fresh angle” (2006:73). When I adopt different vantage points, I find myself looking more closely at my practice, seeing for longer, and regarding my subject matter from multiple angles to find something new in the familiar.

I start with the worm’s eye view, looking up at myself and my practice from below. From this vantage point I see and regard myself as a new educator, a learner of photographs and an underexposed artist. I feel small (anxious, vulnerable and excluded) and dominated by current educational paradigms. I understand that my “private trial”, lack of artist self, is also the “private trial” of learners (Mills cited in Bullough and Pinnegar 2001:15). I then shift my vantage point and look across, to be at eye level with the learners.

At eye level, I look straight ahead and make contact with the learners, to get closer to their online worlds and to observe their learning and social environment. I raise concerns about the conduciveness of current learning environments that are not in keeping with what I observed as learners' current digital practices. I define "osmosis" to put my living theory (Whitehead 2009) into action to address my dissatisfaction with current educational practices in the Photography Program. I begin to search for a specific kind of online space and place to develop the "I" in the "eye" of learners (Clarke 1997).

I show and provide evidence of the ways in which I set out to observe and listen to the learners, so that I could identify reasons as to why I think learners appear to suffer from a lack of confidence, motivation and engagement in their *photography* practice. I describe what I wanted to do about changing the learning environment. I show evidence of how I addressed the social and educational needs of learners to nurture self-assurance and competence, attributes I felt contributed to creating creative and thinking photographers. I introduce the GL to learners, to introduce the "osmosis" living educational theory, and to connect us in cyberspace. I claim mentorship, and as mentor I send out five messages to the learners.

In Chapter 3, I put my "osmosis" educational theory into action in more than one online environment. I then examine it to improve my practice (Whitehead 2008b, McNiff 2010), to make a research statement and to address my research questions. I continue from eye level to explain how I wanted to develop learners' online bodies for improving their visual literacy skills in photographs (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008). Through the GL, I action the words mentor and photographs in my practice. I then experimented with the GL and other online places and spaces using my lived experience as a learner in e-learning, and my living theory values (Whitehead 1989) of "Authority, Authenticity and Authorship". I write about how I search for a specific type of online environment, which would promote and improve visual literacy skills, using Laurillard's word *fecund* as a type of search engine (Fransecky and Debes 1972, Laurillard 2006, Jones, Ramanau, Cross and Healing 2010).

I use the GL to zoom into what *fecund* implies for learners with a predominant visual disposition who are socially connected via New Technologies and the Internet. I allocate ticks (✓) to define what the word *fecund* would encompass to promote deeper learning for learners with a predominantly photographs disposition.

In chapter 4, I present a summary of my findings as researcher. I act as a “tourist” (Sontag 1977) in my practice. From a bird’s-eye view, with great difficulty, I remove myself subjectively from my practice to look down objectively on my practice. I gather and collate data from the GL to evaluate my practice against my research questions. I use the photographic principle of f-stops, to show the movement of looking widely at my data then narrowing it down, to focus on osmosisiza.

In my final chapter, I provide evidence of my educational influence which (in)forms my living educational theory (Whitehead 1989). For my conclusion, to make my closing statements and answer my research questions I use the photographic vantage point of *back view*. I look backwards over my practice to show my learners’ developments and mine. I observe learners practice in the GL. I describe what I have done and what I can improve on, and state the way forward for “osmosisiza” to move ideas on mentoring photographs with confidence and purpose (McNiff 2010).

Chapter 1: osmosisliza artist body

In this chapter I make my artist statement by discussing the artist body of osmosisliza through two bodies, the body of my “I” (person) and the body of my “eye” (electronic postcards) (McNiff 2008a). In the body of my “I”, I describe my sense of cognitive dissonance and dislocation in the Photography Program and give reasons as to why I felt this way. I talk about how I used my feelings of cognitive dissonance and dislocation, my lack of confidence, embarrassment and fear to prompt action (Schon 1983, Ochberg 2003, Wood 2008, Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009) because I wanted to transform my sense of worth and purpose as an artist. In the body of my “eye” (electronic postcards), I discuss how and why it was necessary that I actioned osmosisliza’s artist body in my electronic postcards.

Who is the body of “I”?

I have a Fine Art B-Tech degree specializing in Sculpture and a Diploma in Fashion Design from the same institution at which I mentored during the period of study. I started my junior lecturer contract with very little experience in *lecturing* and limited *photography* background and found myself drawing from my artistic background, my center (*intuition*). I felt guided mostly by my artist spirit (*tattooed*), but this complicated matters, exacerbating my concerns about not belonging. I was an artist trying to put more value on visual literacy in a technically orientated photographic environment. *Photography* was a new medium for me and the mostly technical and commercial emphasis in the department marginalised my artistic outlook and values (*g(r)asp, underexposed, separating lines, muted*) .

When I had my job interview sometime in 2008, I remember being asked what a fine artist would do in the Photography Program. Afterwards that question cycled in my mind continuously.

At the interview, I replied to the question with an analogy, saying that I always looked at artists as octopi, “because octopi have large heads and many arms”. The big head to me refers to thinkers. The eight arms signify reaching in many directions, resourcefulness and inventiveness. I use this analogy to describe how I used a centrifugal action, from the artist self, my centre, to find purpose in my first time employment. In this statement perhaps it seems that the question of artist in a Photography Program was then easily resolved. That was hardly the case. I still had to claim a place and space, a presence and an artist voice, *a body with photography* in an adverse environment; with an unfamiliar medium (***the big bad wolf***).

I live in Umhlanga Rocks, which is about 15 minutes outside Durban along the North Coast and is close to the sea. I spend a lot of time on the beach. Many times I have witnessed people catching octopi in the rocks near the lighthouse. Part of the capturing process, part of immobilizing an octopus, is to turn it inside out. In the Photography Program, I felt inside-out (***insides out***) like an octopus cornered, restrained and displaced from my place of comfort, my artistic body. I had arms reaching in many directions, looking to touch something familiar to form a balance between two worlds - the one inside me and the one outside me (Antone and Hill 1992). Inside me the artist felt neglected but strong (***under-exposed***). *Photography* as an art form (let alone a teaching form) was mysterious but exciting, offering me a new way of seeing and expressing myself. Not knowing much about *photography* made me feel more like a learner than a *lecturer* (***over-exposed***).

Outside me, doing a Master’s in *Photography* was challenging and pressurized, stressful, especially under a contract, because I had to complete my Master’s to keep my job and prove my worth (***cornered, noose***). This meant finishing it in a given time limit, in a demanding position, as I coped with new responsibilities, new ways of thinking and being. As such, I often spoke about constantly feeling like I had a noose around my neck. I battled with feelings of uncertainty, distress and fear, longing to find a *secure* place to be (***salty liquid***).

I felt mostly fearful (and embarrassed) of being in a novice position having to *lecture*, with no formal roots in *photography*. In an excerpt from my personal Reflective Journals (RJ), I voiced these concerns on the responsibility of *teaching* in the Photography Program with my current inside out disposition. I wrote (sic):

I started my lecturing experience with a noose around my neck. My contract stated that I was to achieve a Masters within the three-year contract I was given. I was so ecstatic to get the position and promised I would do all I can to make sure that my contract was fulfilled. I am a fine artist with experience in Digital enhancement and manipulation but not a photographer. Did I bite off more than I could chew (with sincere and good intentions)? In my first year I am given an extra subject, of which I know very little about, over and above what I had done with part-time. I am going to have to learn Photography, learn to apply my existing art concepts into a new discipline as well as learn to teach. To teach learners one has to teach oneself. Learn to teach? How does one learn to teach? For learners to be taught, one has the responsibility to make them teachable? Alone? Together? To gain confidence and I need to know more. What would I call myself? Photography Horticulturalist? (2009)

Being in a Photography Program whose focus is on the technical (the way a camera functions) with a commercial outlook, was foreign territory for me. I did not know enough about the discourses on the medium of *photography (g(r)asp)*, nor the technical side of the camera, so there was a “mysteriousness underlying the very act of photography” (Clarke 1997:12). This made me feel insecure and vulnerable. Making images for commercial reasons and profit to idealize consumerist ideals conflicted with my artistic outlook of using any medium to express imagination and send messages about personal and social issues for creating awareness, ways for claiming creative authenticity and making social action (Clarke 1997:30) **(dis(infect), (mis)place, (dis)located)**.

In my working environment my way of thinking and being as an artist was often alienated and my sense of purpose and belonging constantly challenged **(muted, sightless)**. So, in the beginning I saw the artist *self* as separate from the novice educator. This had a crippling effect on me as my sense of being was undermined. I felt that I had to compromise my values as an artist, my centre, to fit in. My self-esteem was greatly affected **(peril, (b)locked)**. I found myself lacking confidence, motivation and engagement **(frame of mind)**. These were my feelings of dissonance and dislocation (du Plessis 2009).

I needed to do something about the displacement I was experiencing (**because of**) (Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber 2009, McNiff 2010). I came to recognise that I had to modify my dislocated artist self by “self-evaluating” - taking action and reflecting on “Why I am the way that I am?” and “Why I do the things that I do?” (McNiff 2010:06). To begin to position my artist body more, I started by articulating my artist passions, values, standards of judgement, aspirations and beliefs (McNiff 2010). Feeling and being an artist were synonymous bodies that could not be separated (**take form, layers**). Being an artist was my personal viewfinder for me being and feeling human (**looking glass**). I used reflexive questions (Whitehead 1989, McNiff 2010) enquiring into what makes me an artist. I critically reflected and asked:

1. What do I care passionately about as an artist?
2. How did I modify my dislocated artist self in *photography*

What do I care passionately about as artist?

My definition of what I think constitutes the spirit of being an artist (**echo**) is drawn from Henri's quote below:

Art is understood in the province of every human being. It is simply a question of doing things, anything, well. It is not an outside extra thing. When the artist is alive in any person, what ever the kind of work may be, (she) becomes inventive, searching, daring, self-expressing creature. (She) becomes interesting to the people. (She) disturbs, upsets, enlightens, and (she) opens ways for a better understanding. Where those that are not artists are trying to close the book, (she) opens it, shows that there are more pages possible. The world will stagnate without (her) and the world will be beautiful with (her), for (she) is interesting to (herself) as (she) is interesting to others. (She) does not have to be a painter or sculptor to be an artist. (She) can work in any medium. (She) simply has to find the gain in the work itself, not outside it. (1923:11)

The spirit for myself as an artist, feels “alive” when it nags to say something (**insides out**). I believe every human being should have a space and place to express their personal voice, to create the sound of their internal movement, even if it doesn't make noise. By internal movement I mean personal growth and awareness of the self as a living and contributing element in the world.

I share lived experiences in order to open up “more pages” and a “better understanding” of self and other (***because of, me you, unseeing***) (Henri 1923:11). What is important for me, as an artist, is that an individual is given an opportunity, a space, to “open up” and reflect on their ways (***relevant fingers***) (ibid); then, that there is a place to share these ways with others, so that connections may be made between self and others (Pithouse 2009a). In a certain kind of place and space, lie possibilities for personal and social transformation and reinvention (McNiff 2002). To express (articulate), an artist needs a medium (***shadow of me***). A space, a place and a medium feed movement, allowing me to be a “self-expressing creature” that can become “inventive, searching, (and) daring” (Henri 1923:11), to be interesting to myself so that I can also be interesting to others. Space, place and medium are inanimate necessities, but cannot become “alive” if they do not have the human touch (***taking form, because of, frame in a frame***) (ibid). I value human influences that both test and support, inspire and motivate, that revive and challenge my heart, eye, and mind (***hollow muscular organ, gaze, frame of mind***).

How did I modify my dislocated artist self in *photography*?

To modify my dislocated artist self in *photography* (***cornered, tears, (dis)infect***) I undertook to build on my knowledge of visual theory, as explained by Huxley’s “circle dance” (cited in Lester 2000:07). I added my thoughts in brackets on what this implied for photographers:

The more you know, the more you sense (the more I regard). ***The more you sense, the more you select*** (the more I look the more I see). ***The more you select the more you perceive*** (the more I understand). ***The more you perceive, the more you remember*** (memories and lived experiences). ***The more you remember, the more you learn*** (the more I critically think). ***The more you learn the more you know***” (the more I build on knowledge).

My state of feeling excluded in the predominantly technical and commercial ethos held by the department provided necessary signposts to do research (***separating lines***). I needed to develop my body of knowledge about a form of *photography* that supported my artistic curiosity and values, so that I could build my *photography body*.

I drew from writings that focused on the “power” of photography as messenger and communicator, as well as “constructor” of the world around us (Clarke 1997:11). I read extensively¹⁰ into the nature of the photograph as an act (McKenzie 2011). I was inspired by Peter McKenzie’s mentoring approach and had many conversations with McKenzie in 2011, about the subjective and conceptual authority of the person behind the camera **(because of, looking glass)**. Conversations involved topics that addressed the processes involved in the notion of ‘making’ photographs, the subjective and creative involvement of the person, as opposed to ‘taking’ photographs, the removal of the person, a technical bias and objective stance. I focused on the person behind the camera. I began to “view” the processes involved in how the photographer “make(s) sense of an ambivalent and ever-changing condition” (Clarke 1997:121), by deciding and choosing what and which elements to include and exclude in the frame (Berger 1998) from “an infinity of other possible sights” (Berger 1972:02) **(outside in, insides out)**.

The photograph is the “artefact” (Way 2006:02), the product of the act of photography making. Adams writes that “you don’t take a photograph, you make it” (2011) because of the processes and “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” of thought, feeling and idea. I put value on how creativity and agency was articulated in the selective and subjective control of including and excluding elements in the frame, the way a photographer decoded (Rakes 1999) elements from the world, and encoded them in the viewfinder.

I regard these aspects of the act of making photographs as interpretative frameworks for individual voices, formed by inner potential, lived experiences and life skills (in conversation with McKenzie 2011) **(crossroad, taking form, relevant fingers)**.

¹⁰ Fransecky and Debes 1972, Berger 1972, Sontag 1977, Berger 1972, Bamford 2003, Barthes 1980, Rosenblum 1997, Clarke 1997, Berger 1998, Campamy 2004, Lester 2000, La Grange 2005, Rubinstein and Sluis 2008, Faris Belt 2008.

I saw the necessity of building self-awareness discourses and activities with learners in order to build “vision-competencies” (Pettersen 1998:06) in the learners in my visual literacy and visual communication subjects. I also saw the necessity to build relationships outside of the timetabled subjects, between self and other (learners, creatives), ways to “discriminate and (re)interpret the visible actions, objects, symbols, natural or man-made, that (s)he encounters in her (his) environment” (ibid).

My personal interrogation of the role of person behind the camera, rather than the camera itself was an important signpost (**relevant finger, indication mark, responsibility**) that I should and could change my *lecturing* actions. I pulled the question Szarkowski (2007) posed into my own artistic dilemma and *lecturing* dilemmas (**viewpoint, becoming**). Szarkowski asked:

“How could this mechanical and mindless process be made to produce pictures meaningful in human terms... pictures with clarity and coherence and a point of view? (2007:06)

I critically reflected and posed two questions that I needed to answer, to examine how I could position my artist body in photographs:

- How could my humanness in my artistic body be involved in the act of making and thinking photographs?
- How could the mechanical body of my camera become involved in the act of making and thinking, in this self study?

At the point of writing these questions I had not yet considered how I would make photographs to induce some kind of social action (**pangs of conscience**) in my personal identity dilemma. I had not yet articulated how photographs could be meaningful to developing my artistic body, whilst doing this self-study (**crossroad, echo, tag**). I modified my dislocated artist self in *photography* in two ways: first by claiming a position on making photographs, putting focus on humanness and visual literacy, and articulating this in writing; and second by making my electronic postcards, using the medium of photographs.

Then was I able to extend these articulations and discourses into the learners' learning environment, to claim a mentoring body (discussed in Chapter 3).

As a Fashion Design student I learned to construct 3-dimensional shapes from 2-dimensional drawings, through making patterns and sewing pieces together to create volume and shape. When I sculpted in my Fine Art days, I expressed ideas by removing layers from an existing form or building layers to construct a form, mostly using wood, metal or clay. My creative making was very much process based, which gave me personal satisfaction. I value construction, a comfort I felt with the way of my *hands*, as I negotiated thinking, feeling and doing with practical constructive methods (***frame of mind, a hollow muscular organ, shadow of me tag, under-exposed***). I liked to build shape and form from pieces through selective processes, piecing together a vision from idea to final product. White explained that construction existed in photography (2006:25). I could begin with a whole and then I could remove layers and build shape according to what I believe and feel, like I would carve wood or build with clay. I learnt to look beyond the photograph's "surface appearance" and "promise of the actual" (Clarke 1997:23), and identified that imagination and discovery are "intrinsic" to making photographs (Way 2006:02) through how I respond to the world, how I am touched and what I touch. Unlike the defining parameters assumed by the frame of a photograph, a world does not have edges (Shore 2010:54). I make creative choices.

I liked that photographs offered multiple existences in "a sealed world in which (I could) bring (multiple) meaning(s)" (Clarke 1997:30). I enjoyed how photographs alluded less to the real (what was present), and more to the abstract, inviting both "denotative (literal)" and "connotative (symbolic)" readings (Clarke 1997:25).

This thinking was meaningful for me, as it resonated with my artistic intent of "opening up ways for a better understanding" (Henri 1923:11) through human involvement (***viewpoint, frame of mind***).

I appreciated that the flat photograph provided a critical three-dimensional conceptual framework for social, cultural and artistic debate that could challenge its technical representation (Clarke 1997, Company 2004, Szarkowski 2007). Socially and culturally, other people's photographs showed me the relationships between the photographer and their world, pointing out a world I would otherwise not see (Sontag 1977, Clarke 1997, Szarkowski 2007). I appreciated that I could do the same for others.

Artistically the photograph could speak about the way I interpreted and experienced the world through my eye, "I" in my "eye" (Clarke 1997:30) (**crossroad**). I could think with my eye (Kaplan 2006) and sculpt and fashion (the human element) the "raw materials" of the world (White 2006:23) according to the way I looked and saw them (**eyeball, looking glass, viewpoint**). These discourses gave me confidence and the enthusiasm to build up my body of my eye, making photographs that spoke about the story I was writing about in this self-study, and led me to create my electronic postcards in osmosisLIZA weblog in the GL.

What is "the body of my eye"?

"The body of my eye" is the methodology of thinking with my eye, with my electronic postcards and exhibiting them in osmosisLIZA weblog. My electronic postcards show a personalised methodology and aesthetic that is evidence of my experimentation with photographies. I used a photograph's digital component, a pixel, as a conceptual sculpting material to describe my self-study journey (**relevant fingers, antennas, crossroad**). My electronic postcards are notably "traces" or "stencils" (Sontag 1977:154) of the outside world, but they spoke about my inside world (de Lange et al 2007), my "memento mori", revealing how I participated in my "mortality, vulnerability and mutability" (Sontag 1977:15). My electronic postcards disclose what I fear and what I love, who I am, who I might have been, what I know and what I imagine.

What is important in the osmosisLIZA weblog?

In the title of weblog osmosisLIZA, there is an important accent shift of my first name with capital letters, figure 2. This is a conscious attempt to give emphasis and importance to my perspective, the person who is the artist, in a subjective way (Bochner & Ellis 2003). I found myself always asking: “Who is this weblog for?”



Figure 2: A screenshot of weblog osmosisLIZA's title with a subtitle that reads: "making sense of the movement between".

In this GL space I attempt to authorize the artist-self, that which comforts me, paradoxically with *photography* as medium, that which confronts and provokes me (Henri 1923), to make “sense of the movement between” (du Plessis 2011a) being artist, mentor and researcher in photographs.

I write the following at the bottom of osmosisLIZA weblog page (sic):

This blog is about 'me' and 'photographies' and the fluctuating movement between. I send you electronic postcards from cyberspace about my self-study journey, poetic spaces where I find myself pausing, feeling and thinking, as I search to articulate an identity as an artist, mentor and researcher of photographs. (du Plessis 2011a)

In the osmosisLIZA weblog each weblog post is an electronic postcard. I made 98 blog posts, spaces_1-98, and used 98 photographs¹¹ as “souvenirs” (Sontag 1977:09) of the places and spaces I was enquiring into my I, osmosisliza, for this self-study. I blogged and wrote simultaneously¹², paralleling two disjunctured worlds, to provide a ‘close up’ of the way “eye” saw my dislocated artist self, my “I”, in my place of work, thus addressing my osmosisliza identity dilemma. When you open weblog osmosisLIZA you will start at the end; space_98, and have to go backwards to find the beginning; space_1, as the chronological system for ordering the posts is from a present date to the past. This movement is pertinent, because it personifies the reflective action that describes my position of using action research to improve my practice. In this document I select examples of electronic postcards from weblog osmosisLIZA, as evidence of myself as research practioner in action (McNiff 2010) using visual text to make “sense of the movement between” (du Plessis 2011a).

I like the way the Google Blogger weblog template can be personalized for user aesthetic and functionality. Through the GL using Blogger, I could personalise the viewing space for looking at osmosisliza. In Google Blogger’s templates, I could choose how I wanted my electronic postcards to be viewed, singularly or in a series, much like the considerations I would make in a physical gallery space. I could also choose a particular colour palette or typefaces, post layouts, include add-ons (like facebook, Google +, Gmail and Twitter push buttons) for sharing purposes. I like how I could add gadgets¹³ for interest and information: number of followers, number of hits). I like how I could create hyperlinks through the way I assigned labels to take the viewer to other virtual ‘gallery’ spaces.

¹¹ These photographs were made between 2009 and 2011, 98 photographs were chosen from 15500 (over 12345558480bytes of data).

¹² I started the osmosisLIZA weblog in 2012, when I started structuring my Masters dissertation more, and began to hone my thinking.

¹³ Blogger. 2008. *Spice Up Your Blog with Google Gadgets. Blogger Buzz: The Official Buzz from Blogger at Google* (online). Available: <http://buzz.blogger.com/2008/07/spice-up-your-blog-with-google-gadgets.html> (Accessed 14 June 2013).

I could show different collections of electronic postcards, which accentuated the notion of disseminated movement and non-confinement, strong conceptual elements that speak about my state of being (***looking glass, frame in a frame, frame of mind, becoming***). Labels offer multiple experiences that can be linked and importantly shared. They make the viewing experience discoverable by the way the viewer clicks, how much the viewer decides to interact and engage with them. Labels and hyperlinks make the electronic postcards transportable, when the viewer tags or shares them (via add-ons), to another public space and to another audience. I like how the electronic postcards float in space and ask that the viewer moves between my experiences, thoughts and feeling, guided by the their own thoughts and feelings (***ebb and flow***). This assimilates the kind of movement I was undergoing (***becoming***) and how I was searching for ways to connect myself with others. What I like about exhibiting my electronic postcards in a virtual space is that they give a feeling of being suspended and are transient in nature. One electronic postcard can move between spaces, and be re-contextualized by that space, offering multiple meanings, rather than being locked in a singular defined space. This sense of vacillation is an echo of how I as an artist was moving into my research, into my mentoring practice, moving between my “mortality, vulnerability and mutability” (Sontag 1977:11).

What is an electronic postcard?

Every electronic postcard is a story from my “lived experience” (Whitehead 1989) with characteristic elements. I use a particular layout to define the content and context of an electronic postcard: a numerical space, a title, a photograph, an illustration and labels. The photograph is a snapshot from my everyday life (it is dated), possibly banal for others but very particular to me. Snapshot is a relevant term used to describe quick readymade photographs, classified as “vernacular” (Wells 2000) in Photography genres. The snapshot or vernacular photograph is normally regarded as outside of the professional photographic canon (Clarke 1997:225), and associated with the amateur.

Commonly a photographer uses a “point and shoot” camera (like a cell phone), what most photographers in South Africa call a “muk and druk”¹⁴. Its impact is socially and culturally defined (Clarke 1997:225). New users with inexpensive cameras, sloganised by Kodak as “you push the button, we will do the rest” (Clarke 1997:18), from the 19th Century onwards were making huge amounts of photographs. This signified a turning point for the reproduceability of photographs (Marian 2010:168) as they flooded the mass market (Grundberg in La Grange 2005:153) and produced an “image-choked world” (Sontag 1977:15). Other characteristics that I like about snapshots are notions of spontaneity, casual and unexpected accounts of the everyday life, one’s personal insights, private moments that are made public, and memory making. Postcards, according to Marian (2010:201), grew out of this shift towards looking into one’s private moments to send visual messages and memories.

Each electronic postcard has visual metaphors. Symbols stencilled from discoveries in my research are juxtaposed with moments lived in my everyday life. I regard my electronic postcards as signposts that compelled me to look at myself differently and to make movement from a place of dis-ease and uncertainty to a place of action. Using my artist body, as a site for reflection and purpose gave me confidence in my practice as mentor and researcher (Pithouse, Mitchell, Moletsane 2009).

I use the electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog, figure 3, space_1, entitled “crossroad or suicide?” as the example to show the elements that form the characteristic layout for their structure. Significantly, this is the first electronic postcard that symbolises the start of my journey as tourist in my practice.

¹⁴ *Afrikaans colloquialism to describe a rudimentary camera*



Figure 3: space_1 – “crossroad or suicide?” (Labels: antennas, becoming, crossroad, frame of mind, insides out, layers, looking glass, noose, over-exposed, responsibility, separating lines, solo, tag)

du Plessis, LK. 2011. space_1 (image). Available
<http://lizarduplessis.blogspot.com/2011/08/space1.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

First, I number the space, I then provide a title in red, then I insert a photograph. This is followed by an illustrative rendition traced from the photograph. Lastly I assign labels, figure 4.

The post-production and image manipulation symbolize how I examined and processed (Bochner & Ellis 2003) thoughts, actions and *photography*, which set the rigor for this self-study and which I will discuss in more depth in the writing that follows. The red title of the electronic postcard is the subject matter of the blog post, the reason that gave rise to the space of contemplation. This gives the viewer an entry point to interpret my frame of mind. I used a point and shoot camera, the Panasonic DMC-TZ3 Lumix¹⁵, with a 10x Leica zoom lens to make the photograph. In using this type of device I purposely discounted technical details and photographed with the symbols on the camera, on “program mode”: the method used by amateurs, because self-consciously I started as one. The photographs are documentary in style, randomly covering events and happenings from a *home* environment, the familiar. I juxtapose this photograph with another image which sits below. This is a pink and white illustration that is stenciled from the photograph. I use a tool in Adobe Photoshop called the pen tool (described on page 38, figure 6) to separate shapes, forms and negative spaces in the photograph and paste them on a new document and fill this with pink. Pink denotes my intuition (explained further on page 40, figure 7). The illustration talks about the unfamiliar, my place of work and the dilemmas and discoveries I made whilst writing and researching my practice. For every electronic postcard I assign labels. The labels, figure 4, are words to describe my relevant thinking and feelings at the time of looking inward. I like to play with the structure of the words, to highlight opposites and show my ambivalent sense of being. For instance when letters are separated and reshuffled they can mean polar opposites, like g(r)asp, (b)lock, (mis)place, (dis)infect and (dis)location.

¹⁵ *Panasonic Lumix Manual. 2007. (online) Available:*
<http://service.us.panasonic.com/OPERMANPDF/DMCTZ2.pdf> (Accessed on 10 January 2013).

Labels

- (b)lock (14)
- (dis)location (19)
- (mis)place (20)
- a hollow muscular organ (23)
- antennas (11)
- because of (45)
- becoming (30)
- big bad wolf (13)
- bucket (14)
- cornered (6)
- covering (7)
- crossroad (25)
- dis(infect) (18)
- ebb and flow (29)
- echo (30)
- eyeball (7)
- frame in a frame (4)
- frame of mind (41)
- g(r)asp (29)
- gaze (10)
- hang(ing) (10)
- indication mark (32)
- insides out (34)
- intuition (11)
- layers (11)
- looking glass (22)
- me you (22)
- muted (11)
- noose (19)
- outside in (15)
- over-exposed (17)
- pangs of conscience (16)
- peril (21)
- relevant fingers (16)
- responsibility (25)
- salty liquid (16)
- separating lines (34)
- shadow of me (33)
- sightless (14)
- solo (28)
- tag (30)
- taking form (27)
- tattooed (11)
- tear(s) (16)
- under-exposed (13)
- unseeing (22)
- viewpoint (33)
- walls (16)

These labels offer entry points for reading the electronic postcard, but also show my ambiguous state, how I grapple with the notion of multiple possible identities (Gee 2000) and scattered thoughts. Assigning labels also bundles a series of electronic postcards from different weblog spaces.

When the viewer clicks on a label in a post, they are led to another linked weblog page, to a series of images pertaining to that specific thematic word. One will find that a single electronic postcard fits into more than one label, and thus a singular electronic postcard is disseminated and has multiple contexts.

This multiplicity is intended to show how I was feeling many things at once, moving between mixed thoughts and conflicting emotions, moving between being artist, mentor and researcher. For the purpose of this written document, which will be bound and printed and can not access hyperlinks, I have provided a CD with folders that are named as per these labels. In these folders are the series of electronic postcards that apply to the labels that would be seen as the listed series in my weblog osmosisLIZA.

Figure 4: A screenshot from osmosisLIZA weblog showing the list of labels attached to the posts and the number of images that are associated with that label (du Plessis 2011a)

Why do I make my electronic postcards the way that I do?

In this section I discuss how I made my electronic postcards so that the process (a methodology) aligns itself to the inquiry of self for this self-study. When I started to publish, I wanted to use an aesthetic that spoke about the kind of movements I was making in my artist-body whilst interrogating my practice in writing. Whilst preparing this document I chose photographs for my electronic postcards, that “pricked” me, but “also bruise(d) me, (was) poignant to me” (Barthes 1980:27). The choice was informed by my writing and thinking (**ebb and flow**) at the time of structuring this document. The photographs that I chose were deeply personal, relating to an “entire set of relationships and meanings” (Clarke 1997:30), defined by the intent of this self-study, to resolve my identity dilemma in my practice. The post-production and image manipulation symbolizes, the movements I made whilst doing action research: how I examined, selected and processed thoughts and actions, which set the rigor for this self-study (Bochner & Ellis 2003).

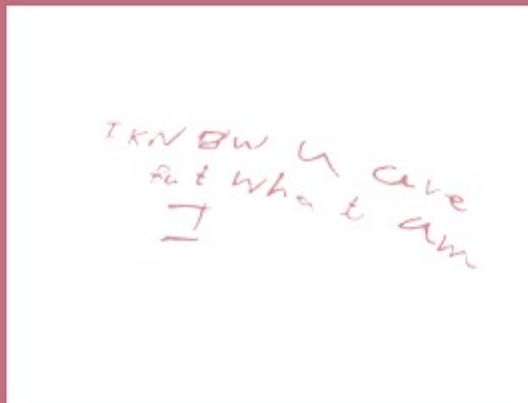
I use the electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog, figure 5, space_28, entitled “written under the skin” as an example to explain the fusion of inquiry and art. In this example I explain how the process for creating my aesthetic has conceptual meanings for reading the electronic postcards. The personal story behind space_28, goes like this. One lazy Saturday afternoon, my son Sebastian asked if he could give me a tattoo on my back (his words).

space_28

written under the skin



december 2009



Posted by osmosis liza at 9:44 AM



Recommend this on Google

Labels: because of, frame of mind, looking glass, muted, outside in, over-exposed, peril, salty liquid, taking form, tattooed

Figure 5: space_28 – “written under the skin” (Labels: because of, frame of mind, looking glass, outside in, overexposed, peril, salty liquid, taking form)
du Plessis, LK. 2012. space_28 (image). Available
<http://lizarduplessis.blogspot.com/2012/02/space-28.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

He drew a 'monster-face' on my shoulder blade and then continued to write with a blue ball point pen in abbreviated written text asking: "I know u are but what am I? I understood this as meaning "I know who you are but what am I?". I was unable to view it, so I asked him to take a photograph of it with my BlackBerry. When I looked at the photograph, I noticed that ballpoint pen writing had also made my skin go red in patches making it look raw and freshly tattooed. I saw the question asked by my son in writing, and the notion of permanence of this question "stencilled"¹⁶ (Sontag1977:154) on my skin as a relevant way to describe my ambivalent positions – feeling located as an artist but dislocated as a photographer, educator and researcher; feeling locked and blocked in a tertiary education system I knew little about.

I was excited and ambitious with my new employment in the Photography Program, accepting my obligations to do research under my contract. However I felt alone, finding it difficult to grasp how I should fit in, and this made me feel fearful and vulnerable. I found myself constantly asking: "What am I?". A question that felt like a tattoo, weighing on my shoulders, inked for all to see, except me. These inked words spoke a lot about the private inner turmoil that lay beneath, invisible, as I was trying to make sense of who osmosislike could be.

The transient and organic nature of reading messages and meanings in a photograph is both a strength and threat (Bester 2011:127) for me. Photographs are interpretative (Berger 1972, Clarke 1997, Wells 2004, Company 2004, La Grange 2005, Traub et al 2006, Szarkowski 2007, Marian 2010, Shore 2010), and a viewer could make 'multiple' readings. Clarke importantly writes that "any photograph, by implication, involves a set of questions and ambiguities endemic to its nature as an act of representation" (1997:07).

¹⁶I chose this word to make reference to Sontag who says that: "a photograph is not only an image (as a painting is an image), an interpretation of the real, it is also a trace, something directly stenciled off the real, like a footprint or a death mask" (1977:154).

Thus I had to establish an entry point, a conceptual point of reference and set a context for the viewer to get a better sense of my perspective and intended meaning. To safeguard the co-dependence of meaning (ibid) and context I provided a title and labels (captions). The title is “written under the skin”, alluding to what the viewer sees on the outside being in fact what I see on the inside. The labels: **because of, frame of mind, looking glass, muted, outside in, over-exposed, peril, salty liquid, taking form, tattooed**, are thematic words that talk about what I was thinking, feeling and reflecting on at the time of looking inward. I re-wrote the Sebastian’s words “ I know u are but what am I?” in pink and placed them in a new ‘blank’ document, under this photograph. The method, explained below, for how I did this describes why I had to do it.

In Adobe Photoshop I duplicated the photograph by copying and pasting it into a new document, which is usually white and blank. Photographer and educator Stephen Shore describes how “a painter starts with a blank canvas and builds a picture” whereas a photographer “starts with the messiness of the world and selects a picture” (2007:37), “solves” rather than “composes” (2007:53).

White states that a photographer’s way of creating is “blank”, “sensitized”, waiting, organizing and preparing for anything to happen (2006:24) contrary to a painter who conjures up an image on a blank canvas. Blank for me means a fresh start, something unmarked and empty. The action of pasting the original photograph into a blank document signifies a site for reinventing. Is it a symbolic movement? A site to move from? A place to transform? A space for the expansion of self? (Bachelor 2006). It is from here that I begin to trace the shape, object or negative space, a reflective and contemplative action. I use the pen tool in Adobe Photoshop to outline a space in the photograph where I found myself pausing, feeling and thinking, contemplating. Figure 6 is a screenshot from my Adobe Photoshop working environment showing this method.

Normally the gap that I am contemplating and reflecting on is a *negative space*. The use of the words *negative space* here has two connotations.

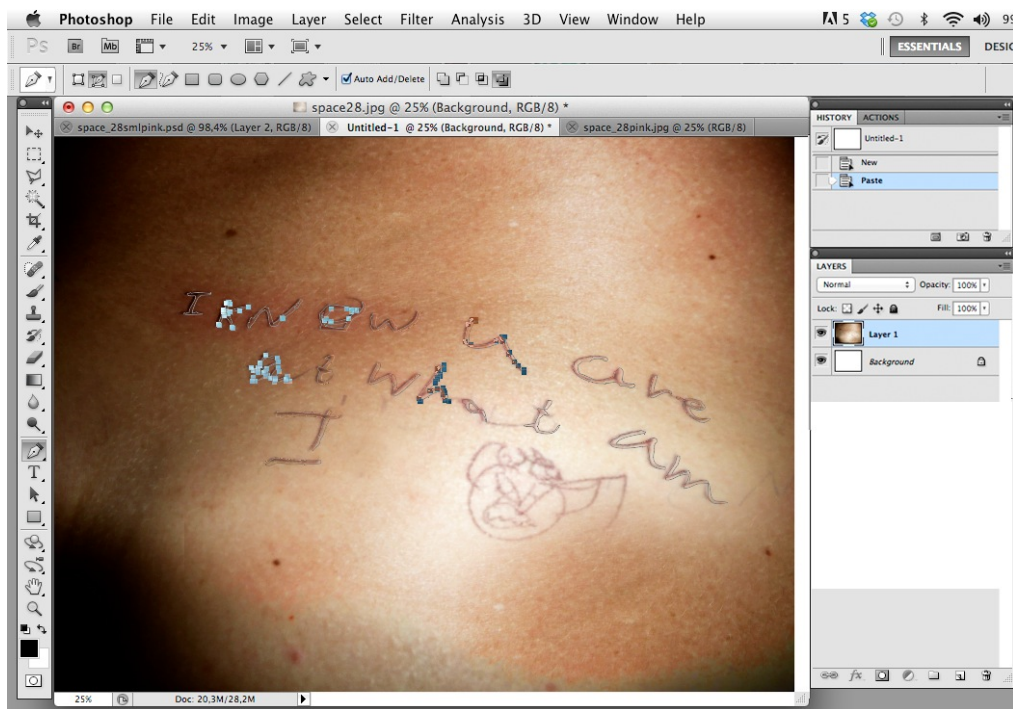


Figure 6: A screenshot from Adobe Photoshop workspace showing the demarcating of a 'contemplative' space using the pen tool.

First it refers to Design Elements, to the visual language of composing visual elements in a photograph, where there is an absence rather than presence of distinguishing features (Galer 2006). Second, it talks about my physical, emotional and intellectual space in my self that needs to be clarified. Often this is what I fear or feel alienated from. At times it is a gap, a space I feel secure with, a place in which I can belong. I saw this part in the image as a site of curiosity to talk about my identity dilemma, from which I can make movement.

Once the *negative space* was outlined, I converted it into a selection from the menu in Adobe Photoshop. I then cut everything other than what was selected. This leaves only the section that was outlined, everything else deleted or erased, presenting new singled out forms, sculptural forms that are two-dimensional stand-alone shapes.

This stand-alone space is symbolically a result of being traced from the spaces in the photograph, a public reality turned private.

I then fill these selected areas with a particular colour of pink, R196 G122 B139, from the colour picker in Adobe Photoshop, figure 7. The pink I have chosen represents my intuitiveness.

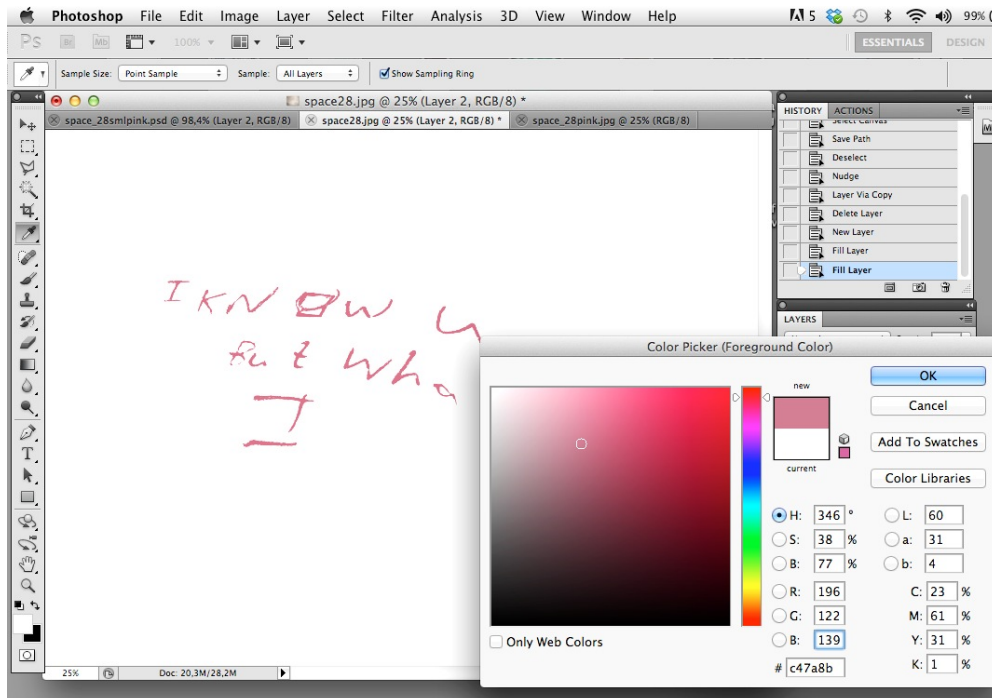


Figure 7: A screenshot from Adobe Photoshop workspace showing how the demarcated space looks once it is isolated from its original content, placed in a new blank document and filled with pink values of R196 G122 B139.

It symbolically states those spaces, gaps and places I have recognised as *negative spaces* that have come from my gut brain (Timm 2013), from a sense of being locked or blocked from my artistic self, and wanting to do something about it. The word intuition referring to the operation of my gut brain (Timm 2013) crops up regularly when I describe how and why I do the things the way that I do, explaining acts of spontaneity from a deep-seated feeling, a behaviour that defines many of osmosisLIZA's actions (or reactions).

In every weblog post in osmosisLIZA, the new interpreted document sits below the original. A diptych, it must be read alongside the original.

The way in which the pink shape is articulated is important, as it speaks further about my current disposition. The pink parts are entry points that offer a way to read and re-contextualize the snapshot photograph into my current self-study inquiry. The pink parts act as a lens, whereby the snapshot and its meaning are “pried from its original location” (Campany 2004:20), and re-contextualized by the written arguments and developments that have come about because of this self-study. The pink shapes, forms and lines are sometimes blurred and other times sharp, often fragmented. Some are recognizable, but most are abstract. They are conceptual indicators of how I look, regard and see osmosisliza’s identity at the time of doing action research, looking for a place and space to be artist using the medium of photographs.

Where is my *place* and *space* for artist body for making photographs?

In the writing below I articulate how I modified my view on *photography* to connect with developing my artist body, which lead to replacing this word with photographs (***big bad wolf, (dis)infect, insides out, hang(ing), noose, responsibility, peril***). The general use of the word body applies to the idea of referring to the main or central part of something, like a camera body. Likewise the artist body is the site that houses the mechanics and the structure for making a photograph (***frame in a frame, grasp, shadow of me***). I identified that in my artist body there were three components I would use to make a photograph (***tag***). My first component was my physical body, which I linked to the word look (***gaze***). My second component was my intellectual and emotional body, which I linked to the word, regard (***intuition***). My third component was my extended body, me as a photographer and the photograph itself, which I link to the word see (***echo***).

I identified the words *look, regard* and *see* as relevant and answerable creative acts for encoding and decoding a photograph (Rakes 1999). These acts constituted ways to develop “vision competencies” and show different “sensory experiences” (Debes 1969 cited in Fransecky and Debes 1972: 27) (***eyeball***).

The mechanics of the camera and the viewfinder could be used as carving tools to show my aesthetic, and curate what I was thinking with my eyes (Kaplan 2006). My eye was different, not just a “physiological organ” (Lange cited in Gordon 2010:xxii) but an “ontological” one (Wells 2004:18) closely connected to who I am, and how I approach or interpret experience, strong indicators of personalized thought, observation and expression (Berger 1972 & 1980, Sontag 1977, Berger 1988, Clarke 1997, Lester 2000, Kaplan 2006, Way 2006), and strong tools for claiming a voice as artist.

With better comprehension of the words *look*, *regard* and *see* (Berger 1972 & 1980, Berger 1998, Lester 2000, Simboa 2009), I found a space, through my eye to my (head) brain to my heart (brain)¹⁷, where I could place my artistic thought and sensibility (Henri 1923, Bochner and Ellis 2003) to make photographs **(*looking glass, frame of mind, a hollow muscular organ*)**. I “look” when I direct my eye toward someone or something in a specified direction (***gaze***). When I hold a camera at different angles and physically position myself in a place and space, visibility of the subject (***viewpoint***) is determined. The visibility of a subject is determined by light. Light is affected by the time of day, the season and shadow. Camera equipment, like lenses and tripods also dictate where I would position myself to look at a subject, to gauge angle and distance. My looking and the subject’s visibility are altered when I move my physical body closer or further from the subject. The shape of the viewfinder (Galer 2006, Langford 2007, Waller 2000), like the shape of a computer screen or a paper size, would delimit my looking, dictating what is included and excluded within a rectangular shape. The resolution of the image (pixels per inch), would determine its size and clarity on the screen, and where I would direct my eyes (***frame in a frame***).

I “regard” when I think carefully about something. By definition regard can also be linked to notions of seeing (Berger 1980, Clarke 1997, Szarkowski 2007).

¹⁷ I refer to head brain and heart brain in Timm 2013.

Regarding for me is about sensing and selecting (**intuition**). Sensing and selecting are crucial creative tools that offer authorship in a photograph, because they authorise individuality (Berger 1989) when the photographer makes decisions and choices for shaping the visual message in the frame (**tag, solo**). My intellectual and emotional body discloses my internal and private inside world that tries to make sense of the outside world (Antone & Hill 1992). What I would frame and visually interpret is affected by how and why I am drawn to a subject, my emotional and intellectual connection with the experiences I have with the message I receive from the subject (**insides out, outside in**), a psychological nearness or farness.

Cartier-Bresson writes that in order for the photographer to “give a meaning” to the world, one has to “feel involved in what one frames through the viewfinder” and that “this attitude requires concentration, discipline of mind, sensitivity, and a sense of geometry” (Hill and Cooper 2005:66).

This statement for me talks about using my intellectual and emotional body, my “grammar” and “ethics of seeing” (Sontag 1977:11) to voice my personal perspective and insight, my “I” in the “eye” (**echo, because of**). Robert Capa’s famous quotation “If your pictures aren’t good enough, you’re not close enough” (Stephan 1999:69) alludes to notions of psychological closeness and nearness, getting familiar with oneself, one’s environment and the subject in order to make a meaningful photography (**me you**). Peter McKenzie calls this “the distance between the subject and lens” (in conversation 2011) - a metaphor for the relationship or synergy of the way a photographer views the subject and hence of how these interactions affect the selections in the frame and the specific choices for moments and times to push the shutter button. Being *closer* to the subject, states McKenzie, aids visual dialogue as it involves a better way of understanding and engaging the subject because of careful consideration and mindfulness from knowing more about the subject. I “see” means to perceive with the eyes: to discern, emphasize or deduce mentally after reflection (**echo**).

Seeing also ascertains or expresses comprehension and agreement with the photographer's choices and decisions about composition in the frame, as Cartier-Bresson states:

To (m)ake a photograph means to recognize – simultaneously and within a fraction of a second – both the fact itself and the rigorous organisation of visually perceived forms that give it meaning. It is putting one's head, one's eye, and one's heart on the same axis.
(Hill and Cooper 2005:66)

The word "see" referred to the expanse, the mass, the space where I as photographer place myself, emotionally, physically and conceptually because of the interactions that came from that place (**indication mark**). My make-up as photographer (Berger 1998, Berger 1972, Lester 2000) and my skills in visual literacy (Bamford 2003, Simboa 2009) determine how I can translate what I see.

What I see is based on what I decide to see, determined by what I know and believe, what I feel and think (Berger 1972) (**looking glass, relevant fingers**). Berger writes that the relationship between self and seeing is closely connected to who we are "as we are" (1972:01) and it is constantly moving as our relationships between things and ourselves shift. In my *extended* body, I take into account the duality or rather plurality of sending and receiving messages and how it can be further complicated by the way the viewer imbues his/her sense of the photograph. When Barthes writes that a photograph "acts as a transparent envelope" (cited in Clarke 1997:19), I read that this statement applies to the context of the way the viewer and the photographer see and the place in which it (the photograph?) is received (**shadow of me**).

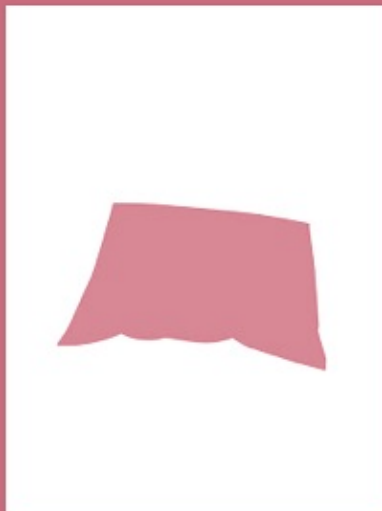
I explore these ideas visually in the electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog, figure 8, space_14, entitled "seeing to believe". The snapshot shows my son looking at a goldfish through a transparent plastic packet, his eyes directed to the bottom corner where the goldfish seems to be hiding. The water that shapes the packet acts like a zoom lens enlarging my son's head (head brain¹⁸) and his eyes, making them seem out of proportion.

¹⁸ Timm 2013

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2011

space_14

seeing to believe



Posted by osmosis liza at 7:02 AM No comments:



 Recommend this on Google

Labels: because of, becoming, crossroad, eyeball, frame of mind, Photography, viewpoint

Figure 8: space_14 - "seeing to believe" (labels: because of, becoming, crossroad, eyeball, frame of mind, viewpoint, responsibility, looking glass, gaze, indication mark, me you, pangs of conscience)

du Plessis, LK. 2011. space_14 (image). Available:

<http://lizarduplessis.blogspot.com/2011/11/space14.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

I am using this distortion to talk about the connection between the eye and the brain, emphasizing their prominence and connection – the “seeing to think, thinking to see” analogy. In the second image, the pink parts are a vaguely rectangular shape, much like the viewfinder of a camera or the screen of a computer. The shape is formed by the outline of the packet and by the level of the water. These are the elements that are causing the distortion and enlargement of the brain and eyes. This is the contemplative gap for me as it talks about that space that gives prominence to creative thought and imagination.

In establishing what *body* meant to me as an artist, and in locating how the person, the personal and the interpersonal could converge when the shutter is pressed, I critically reflected and asked: How do I establish agency of self to make meaningful photographs?

What are my primary artist values?

I located my primary artist values for making meaningful photographs in three words: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship and valued them as fundamental conceptual elements for making and reading photographs. I chose to write them with a capital letter to announce them loudly and place importance on them. These are personal frames that I envisage locate the creative spirit (Henri 1923) in any human being and bring out individualistic attributes for self-awareness and self-discovery, especially if shared with others (***relevant fingers, me you***). Authority, Authenticity and Authorship are my living theory values (Whitehead 1989).

I define my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship, according to how I understand them from my personal art-making background and beliefs.

By Authorship, I refer to the revealing and telling of my personal stories in a visual, written or spoken form, from my immediate surroundings, whether from the outside (geographical, historical, cultural and social) or from the inside (thoughts, opinions, feelings, beliefs, aesthetics, style). I also include an account; an expression, which also resides in my thought processes; experiences and the artifact produced from these (***because of***). Authenticity means validity in the way in which my story is told, stories that talk (visual, written or spoken manner) about my social, cultural and political orientation (***indication mark***). What artifacts (devices, medium, tone, behavior) or mode of expression (aesthetic, style, sensibility) display authenticity? I also associate words like skill, competency, imagination, aspiration and desire with how the story is formed or exchanged, its articulation (***relevant fingers***). Authority talks about integrity, ownership, accountability or agency of my story and artifact. It describes the way in which I would express my voice, in a strong and confident manner, showing that it belongs to me and I am answerable for it (***responsibility, pangs of conscience***). It means telling my story with a *truthful* intention, integrity and agency.

In osmosisLIZA weblog, through my electronic postcards I found it necessary to position my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship, so that I could claim a more perceptible and tangible relationship with the medium (Campany 2003) of photographs.

What is my place and space for artist body with photographs?

In osmosisLIZA, I sculpt experience and use my artist body, mind and eye to unwrap my lived experience (Whitehead 2008b) and select what I frame for this self-study with “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship”. I regard my ‘being and seeing’ as the “raw material(s) for creative activity” (White 2006:23). Living in a digital age is an important element of my artist *body*, and affects how I look, regard and see the *place* and *space* for being both artist and mentor of photographs.

In today's age the photograph is constructed from digitized information, pixels not chemicals; it is processed by the computer, and offers multiple ways to distribute, explore and reshape images (Campany 2004) (*indication mark, relevant fingers, crossroad*). Nowadays photographs are more abundantly accessed and socially saturated in contemporary culture as ways for communication and expression (Sims, O'Leary, Cook & Butland 2002, Rakes 1999, Campany 2004, Rubinstein & Sluis 2008). Pixels and new technologies make photography more shape-able and have widened access to images and people. Through it being "malleable" and reworkable, in its multiplicity of forms, photography becomes "more ubiquitous" in everyday life (*ebb and flow*) (Campany 2004:02). Campany claims that:

a photograph may be a fixed image but socially speaking, photography does not keep still... a photograph might be sharp but the totality of all that is photographic, can't be held in focus... it is too big and too diffuse to be a unified field (2004:02).

As such photography can be put on a "dissecting table to which different forms of the photographic are brought for creative reflection" (Campany 2004:02). According to Tagg, photography should no longer be regarded as singular hence it is more appropriate to talk about "photographies" (cited in Wells 2004:302).

Image retouching and processing programs like Adobe Photoshop, Lightroom, or Picasa, when supported (and determined) by new technologies and cyberspace, offer mutable modelling tools and "dissecting tables" (Campany 2004:02). With this computer software I experienced how a photograph could be further altered, providing endless possibilities for manipulation and distribution (Wells 2004) as far as the artistic imagination, skill and equipment will allow. I made a conscious replacement of the word *photography* with "photographies" (*becoming, layers, taking form, viewpoint*). I valued how in its digitised form it challenged the way in which photography had been framed and consumed (Rubinstein & Sluis 2008). This had personal implications for me as an artist, especially in my place of work in the department, because it offered and gave me more artistic leverage because of its impressionable state and represented a new way of understanding.

I valued that photographs could be found in numerous places at once (Campany 2004), as the connections between self and other could be explored more. This outlook was described in my RJ entry (du Plessis) in 2009 when I wrote:

the ability to turn data into pixels/binary codes opens up doors for many transactions. The question is not only in “Where can this data go?” but “Where and Who can it reach?”(sic)

From photography having been small in my being and thinking, mostly prescribed by technical considerations, it became ubiquitous (Campany 2004:05) and large with numerous artistic possibilities with the word photographs (**shadow of me**). Clarke writes that “every aspect of photographic space has potential meaning beyond its literal presence” (1997:32). In photographs I saw a *place* to develop my artistic body with a malleable medium, and through the act of photographs a ‘space’ to express my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship. My artist self felt “inventive” and became “alive” (Henri 1923:11). I am a visual person, and I like to think with visual metaphors. I began to *look, regard* and see how “socially speaking” (Campany 2004:02) photographs could metaphorically speak about my internal world (**inside out**) and my external world, (**outside in**) (Clarke 1997, Way 2006, Shore 2010) (**becoming, frame of mind, relevant fingers**). My internal world housed my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship, and my opinions, feelings, beliefs, emotions, intellect and values. My external world – my place of work, learners, cyberspace, new technologies and the writing up of this self-study document, which involved research – affected my internal world.

McKenzie (2011) often spoke about a photograph as a “mirror and a window”. In an email dated 15 November 2012, McKenzie describes the “mirror” analogy through the way in which meaning is inferred. This entails how the viewer, “the receiver of the photographer’s intent”, sees themselves in the photograph. The “window” analogy allows one to see through the contents, bound and selected by the frame, releasing imagination and thus inviting a “place to be touched”.

Szarkowski, like McKenzie, metaphorically distinguished the way in which the *personal* (the viewer and the photographer) is “touched” by the subject and the experience. Szarkowski states that when a photograph acts as a “mirror”, it reveals a “romantic expression of the photographer's sensibility as it projects itself on the things and sights of this world... (thus) reflecting a portrait of the artist who made it”(1978:03). As a “window”, the photograph explores “the exterior world... in all its presence and reality...through which one might better know the world” (1978:03). Clarke describes *photography* as not so much a “mirror of the world but our way with that world” (Clarke 1997:29). Using the mirror and window analogies, I value how photographs then “certify” and “convert” experience into a “souvenir” (Sontag 1977:09), expressing a way of looking, regarding and seeing (Sontag 1977:10) a world from a particular point of view. I value how photographs communicate a state of self that is simultaneously impressionable and could make an impression, where my sense of being could be subverted and subvert others. For me this boundless condition provides an artistic standpoint and a learning curve, as it not only raises critical issues around visual representation and personal aesthetics, but challenges the way in which personal, social and political values and practices are expressed in contemporary culture, bringing to fore discourses of the self and other (Wells 2004). Sontag aptly writes that “photographs cannot create a moral position, but they can reinforce one and can help build a nascent one” (1977:17) (**tag, outside in, looking glass, layers, taking form, becoming**).

With this insight I look to the medium of photographs as a powerful visual communicator providing an “extensive”¹⁹ site for visual evidence (Campbell 2004: 03) of self and other, a mirror and a window into both worlds (**ebb and flow, (dis)infect, frame in a frame**) that can be shared easily and abundantly over the Internet. Bamford writes that “images can be very powerful in our national and individual consciousness” (2003:04).

¹⁹ Campbell says *photographic terrain is as varied and inconsistent as it is extensive* (2004:01)

These new insights gave me the compulsion to use photographs to publicise my personal lived experience in weblog osmosisLIZA and hold an exhibition. My electronic postcards are a lens into the self as artist and an artist statement. I wanted to discover: What kind of artist I could be using the medium of photographs as my visual voice for expressing my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship? What conversations could happen when I pressed the shutter? What message could I send about my lived experience, my story as junior lecturer? Most importantly: What would I find out when I got closer to the artist of the subject, osmosisliza? What kind of difference could I make in my world? (*responsibility, becoming*).

I no longer felt as vulnerable. I no longer perceived *photography* as foreign, when I could speak about photographs. It did not feel set, constricted or explicit (through the technical bias) but shapeable and compliant. I experienced a feeling of 'lightness'. I show this shift in thinking and being in the electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA, weblog, figure 9, space_15, entitled "feelings of lightness". The snapshot shows an unusual heart-shaped grass seed-head, backlit by the setting sun, which I noticed whilst on a game reserve drive. The pink parts illustrate a heart that speaks of me loving my "feelings of lightness", as opposed to loathing the choking feeling I had of the "noose around my neck" (du Plessis 2009). In the second image, the pink parts obliterate the dense, cluttered, dark background, thus placing emphasis on the scribbled heart symbol formed by the grass. The heart is white (blank), and its shape is loosely formed as though drawn – suggesting spontaneity and impulsiveness. The heart is centrally placed in the frame, giving it balance, an indication of being poised and self-assured. For me this image shows that I was aware of osmosisliza's heart charging up. I was tickled pink as I started to creatively claim " Authority, Authenticity and Authorship" in my photographs practice, as I found ways to validate the movement from my eye to my head brain because of my heart brain and my gut brain (Timm 2013).

Tuesday, November 8, 2011

space_15

feelings of lightness



Posted by osmosis liza at 9:14 AM



Recommend this on Google

Labels: a hollow muscular organ, because of, crossroad, ebb and flow, echo, frame of mind, insides out, looking glass, tag, tattooed

Figure 9: space_15: “feelings of lightness” (Labels: a hollow muscular organ, because of, crossroad, ebb and flow, echo, frame of mind, insides out, looking glass, tag, tattooed)

du Plessis, LK. 2011. space_15 (image). Available:

<http://lizarduplessis.blogspot.com/2011/11/space15.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

I valued:

- the context where the photographer looks, sees and regards experience, and how the photographer draws from personal frameworks of reference;
- the social, political and cultural reasons for its conceptualisation and reasons for creating awareness;
- the act of photography, the person behind the camera, the conceptual reasons why a photograph is made (McKenzie 2011);
- the processes involved in the making of a photograph (how and why one gets to the artefact), the relationship between the subject and the lens (Clarke 1977);
- that photographs make messages and create awareness about the maker and their relationship to the world, acting as a mirror and window (McKenzie 2011);
- the digital nature of photographs, encouraged by the Internet and software programs, which promoted a culture of sharing and free form creative expression.

I wrote in my 2010 Reflective Journal that a pixel, like the viewfinder with its rectangular frame, offered great scope for manifesting and redefining vision and expanding imagination, communicating and changing the way I record, store, show, share, think and express photographs. I critically reflected and asked: “Where can this data go?”, “Where and Who will it reach?” and “What would the far reaching effect be when this data reaches a destination?”

Why do I publicise my electronic postcards?

I publicised my electronic postcards to share my journey of self discovery. In the making and constructive process of each electronic postcard lies evidence of a growing artist and mentor of photographs, “embodied inquiries” about osmosis (Bochner & Ellis 2003:506).

I try to show artistic assertiveness, by using the medium for shaping, rewriting and scrutinising my world (Henri 1926), to make sense of my “vision”, “disposition” and “understanding” of being and becoming a mentor in photographs (Luehmann 2008:294). When these are blogged, they probe “levels of agency, central participation, accountability” as they provide “opportunities for feedback and meaningful recognition” (Luehmann 2008:293) from others for developmental and conversational purposes. I made electronic postcards to reflect on the critical questions I kept asking myself: Who do I think I am? and Who do I want to be? (Luehmann 2008).

Bester writes that a photograph “forces one to think. In this lies their threat. And in this lies their strength” (2011:127). This is an important statement, for me, because I felt both threatened and empowered when I displayed photographs as personal and personalized text in osmosisLIZA, for viewing by the public. As I exposed myself, I felt vulnerable in another way. I also found consolation and strength in using a visual medium, like photographs, to inquire into osmosisliza, which came from my artist body. I could be experiential and even playful and did not have to stick to the rigid criteria a Masters document requires. I recognised other threats with publishing my electronic postcards as an exhibition in cyberspace, threats that questioned the integrity of my artistic standing and artistic merit. (**bucket, covering, looking glass, viewpoint, responsibility, tag**).

Questions arose, like:

- Do they show the clarity or meaningfulness of what I was trying to put across?
- Does the osmosisLIZA weblog articulate the purpose of this self-study with “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship”?
- Does the aesthetic and content reveal my intent and purpose with clarity?
- Can the viewer make sense of my perspective for making these images?
- Are these electronic postcards good or bad photographs? Why should this matter?

- Why should the viewer care?
- Are these electronic postcards meaningful (enough)?
- Can a virtual weblog be regarded as an exhibition space?
- Does the concept of a cyberspace exhibition bring in enough audiences to critically view the work?
- How do I grab the viewer's attention to follow my posts?
- How do I get feedback from audiences?

I was challenged by way the electronic postcards would be examined and scrutinized as artistic artefacts. I was concerned about the involvement or non-involvement of audience, their engagement and responses. I was concerned by how messages should and could be received, how meaning is decoded because my electronic postcards are so deeply personal. I was concerned whether others could find value in this publicised story. I recognised that these concerns would in actual fact test my voice as an artist, its authority and authenticity. Likewise these concerns would test the use of a particular space, cyberspace, to exhibit my artworks and publicize my self-interrogation.

I publicised my electronic postcards with the intent to influence.

What kind of difference do I want to make?

The snapshot for osmosisLIZA, weblog, figure 9, space_15, on page 51, was made in July 2009, one year into in my working contract as junior lecturer. This was a significant time, when I felt competent in the start of establishing my photographies body and when I was to embark on an e-learning course to cultivate my e-learning body and then conceive the Google Lens to meet the needs of my online body. This course was essential in marrying my photographies body with my *educator's* values through the use of online places and spaces: the Google Lens. I was attempting to integrate my educational, artistic and social values and influences, in order to find a place for osmosisliza to belong.

I critically reflected and asked: What kind of difference did I as artist with photographs want to make in my world?

I wanted to put my discoveries and reflections made in this chapter, my developments and new knowledge, back into my educating practices. I believe in the educational influences of my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship, as strong frameworks for developing confidence, motivation and engagement for professional photographers in multicultural environments, because they:

- encourage photographers to be makers not takers of photographic images (Adams 2011);
- become agents for holding one's own sensibility and personalized aesthetic and thus account for artistic sensibilities and creativity (La Grange 2005, Kaplan 2006);
- form the praxis from which embedded knowledge develops, a place where critical thinking can start and grow (La Grange 2005, Kaplan 2006, Traub et al 2006, Paul & Elder 2006a and b, hooks 2010);
- provide the necessary starting blocks for self-assessment in developing Visual Literacy (Fransecky & Debes 1972, Bamford 2003);
- challenge norms, stereotypes and social structures which are inherent in learning paradigms and knowledge structures (Alexenberg 2008, Alfonso and Taylor 2009, hooks 2010);
- nurture self development and self actualisation (hooks 2010, Rodgers cited in Zimring 1999);
- contribute to classroom authenticity by showing diversity (Hughes 2007, Parker 2007, hooks 2010);

When I modified my concerns, ideas and actions for mentoring photographs in the light of my evaluations above I started to deconstruct the word *lecturer*. In the next chapter I make my mentoring statement.

Chapter 2: osmosisliza mentor body

The camera is a tool for learning how to see without a camera. The visual life is an enormous undertaking, practically unattainable. I have touched it with this wonderful democratic instrument, the camera.

(Lange cited in Gordon 2010:xiii)

In the previous chapter, I asked “Who was I?” to find out “Who am I?” who mentors now. In this chapter I look at my practice (2009–2011) as mentor of photographs and account for my living theory (Whitehead 2008b and 2009a). I focus on what osmosisliza means for learners. I define my learning values and beliefs, to show “Why I teach the way that I do?” (McNiff 2008a:351) and “Why do I teach what I teach?” (Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000, McNiff 2002, 2008a, 2008b, Whitehead 2008a, 2008b). I define my mentor values, and explain why I contest the word *lecturer* and put it in italics. I then describe what matters and concerns me in a learning environment. I critically reflect on my practice and ask myself questions, which act as a lens into my own practice. These reflexive questions are signposts for how and why I need to make improvements and are used as interrogatory frameworks to make my conclusion. I ask these questions to align my mentor values and beliefs to my artistic values and beliefs. When they do not align, I describe how and why this raised concerns about the learners’ wellbeing and their learning environment, and in my conclusion I present ways to align them to improve my practice. In this chapter, I provide evidence from five observations and experiences I identified in my mentoring practice (McNiff 2010). I then ask “What can I do?” and “What will I do?” (ibid). These questions account for action, a space to give an account of what intuition guided me to do. I send out four messages to the learners. I define osmosis, an action for my living theory (Whitehead 1989, Wood 2008, Whitehead 2009a). At the end of this chapter, I ask an overall reflective question, which led me to construct and implement the GL, to promote osmosis.

What are my learning values and beliefs?

I believe that learning is life-long (Zimring 1999). What I find out about myself, my immediate surroundings, the personal, the known and the unknown (**unseeing, outside in, looking glass**). I believe that learning is about how I develop as a person and artist, because of experience and knowledge gained by interacting with others, that which is not self, wider communities, and the world (**me you, crossroad**). I believe that education should be a “help to life” and is a “virtue of experience” in which the learner “acts on his or her environment” (Montessori 1988:07). This action is guided by an “inward teacher” (Montessori 1988:08) and “inborn attractions” (**intuition**) which cause me to “grow and to develop, in accordance with that nature which is (mine) alone” (Montessori 1988:166). I believe that learning happens when I find pleasure and joy in what I do.

I link the word ‘curiosity’ to “inborn attraction” and “inward teacher” (Montessori 1988:08). I believe that it is the “creative spirit” that wants to know more, to understand more, to be an involved person (Henri 1923:11) (**tattooed, insides out**), to be “interesting to oneself” so that the “world will not stagnate” (ibid). I believe that learning is an active rather than passive act (Carmean & Haefer 2003). To be active refers to self-initiated learning which involves the “whole person of the learner feeling as well as intellect” (Rodgers 1969 cited in Zimring 2006:114). Other research suggests that when educators emphasize ‘active’ rather than ‘passive’ involvement of learners with their learning, the negotiation processes involved empowers an individual to hold authority over how they learn and their desire to learn, a life-long learning attitude (Montessori 1988, Rogers in Zimring 1999, Carmean & Haefer 2003, O’Niell & McMahon 2005). Learner-centred approaches help the learner “see (him/herself) differently as a result of the learning experience” (O’Niell & McMahon 2005:29). Another link for me between creativity, learner and learning is in the way an environment nurtures the self.

As embodied in Bourdieu and Passeron (1979):

... a student's creativity can only ever be a self-creation ... to study is not to create something but to create oneself. (cited in Batchelor 2006:225)

For learners in photographs, I believe that self-creation is an embodiment of the “I” for the “eye” (Clarke 1997:29) **(frame of mind, looking glass, eyeball)**. I encourage learners to use personal knowledge, social and cultural make-up as not only channels for agency but also channels for ways to connect creatively and intellectually with the environment: people and place **(layers, becoming)** – with “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship”.

I believe that seeing oneself differently through “collective awareness” (O’Niell & McMahon 2005:29) in a learner-centred environment is a constituent for promoting self-creation **(indication mark, because of)**. I value “mutable partnerships” (hooks 2010:19) that move and expand ideas for learning and self-creation. I value interactive exchanges, for better understanding of others and one’s practice. I value a caring and nurturing environment (Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000) for creating meaningful relationships. I believe we learn because of each other. When the learning environment becomes collectively ours **(crossroads)**, the interactions and relationships formed enhance our sense of self **(me you, because of)**.

As a South African this makes more sense to me, through the saying “umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu”. This sentence is a philosophy and way of life and literally translated means: “a person is a person through other persons” (Nabudere 2005:03). It says to me that I can live more profoundly when I live through others. The word “Umuntu” means person, who is seen as a “creative being” and the creative “maker of his/her existence, (which is) constantly changing and evolving because of others” (Nabudere 2005:03) **(frame within a frame, because of becoming)**. I developed my class motto from this: “what you think, know and believe helps us all to be more” (du Plessis 2011b)²⁰.

²⁰ see annexure (3): ADP3: Study Guide 2011

Taking a postmodernist licence and paraphrasing, I further claim that a person can only be a photographer through other persons (**viewpoint**).

The electronic postcard from osmosisLIZA's weblog, figure 10, space_8 entitled "a person is a person", visually talks about this African philosophy. This post shows my adopted outlook for "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" (Nabudere 2005:03). This electronic postcard describes how I placed importance on trying to get to know the learners' ways, in order to develop my mentor practices and set the tone for the types of places and spaces I wanted learners to engage in/with. Gee reminds me that in building an identity I must be recognized by others (2000:103). The snapshot was made at the Durban beachfront, and shows an environmental portrait of a young mime artist. A boy with a black body white face and hands passed by me, making direct eye contact with my camera and me. His eyes are engaging and communicate. The tiny pink parts in the second image are defined through his eyes and are almost lost in the whiteness of the rest of the frame. The emptiness as personified by "white" is symbolic for how I was not noticing and not engaging my artist self and learners in my practice. This encounter made me think about how I often look at something or somebody only at surface level, and do not regard or see enough because I do not engage. This electronic postcard alerted me, as mentor that I needed to be more involved with learners and their environment. In South Africa this electronic postcard resonates with the Zulu culture, which greets with the word "Sawubona" - "I see you".



Figure 10: space_8: “a person is a person”(Labels: crossroad, indication mark, insides out, me you, outside in, pangs of conscience, responsibility, solo)

du Plessis, LK. 2011. space_8 (image). Available:

<http://lizaduplessis.blogspot.com/2011/10/space8.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

What do the words lecturer and mentor mean to me?

Berger notably writes “to touch something is to situate oneself in relation to it” (1972:02). I believe that my responsibility to engage and facilitate learners, as creative and critical thinkers and makers, to “touch” (Berger 1972:02), is in nurturing their sense of self worth (**indication mark, (mis)place**). My own vulnerability compelled me to create a ‘climate’ to understand the emotional awareness and emotional intelligence (**because of**) of learners (hooks 2010). I needed to get close to learners, with empathetic understanding for effective learning and to build relationships (hooks 2010). I thought it equally necessary that learners find out more about me.

I had no experience in being an educator in a tertiary setting. I also grappled with what it meant for me as an artist to be a *lecturer* (**peril**). I found it very difficult to position myself authentically, to locate the right kind of place and space that would see me as a creative being and maintain a creative existence (**muted**).

I was always uncomfortable with the way the institution used words like *teacher*, *lecturer* and *instructor*, which for me defined a specific type of role and implicated a ready-made hierarchical position (**big bad wolf**). For me, this dictated a dominance and a prescription of knowledge and person, issuing a certain type of reaction/relationship between learner and the person that implied to me (because of my own learning experiences in school and tertiary) that a *lecturer* knows more and a learner must sit and listen (**separating lines**). These words spoke to me about command and passive learning (**walls**). It concerned me how these words were seen as traditional, and thus accepted as the norm. I critically reflected and asked myself: What should I call myself? How could I replace set ideas and convince otherwise?

As an alumnus of the same institution, now in a mentoring role, I often found myself remembering and comparing the relationships I had as a learner with people who influenced my learning.

I recalled and noted that the greatest developments in my learning happened when I felt mentored by a personalized one-on-one approach; when I felt safe because I was seen, heard, accepted and believed, nurtured to trust that I was a developing individual (Antone and Hill 1992:04). I remember feeling great joy of seeing mentors working on their artworks in the same studio (**echo**). I was mostly moved and touched when mentors shared their artistic thoughts, practices and personal art making ways with me (**relevant fingers**).

In the first year of my employment as a junior *lecturer*, I was under the impression that I had to separate from the learners and would need to distance myself. This concerned me (**tear(s) pangs of consciousness**). I found myself getting too involved with the learners. I couldn't detach. It just seemed unnatural and wrong for me because it undermined integrity. I was too exposed as a learner myself (**overexposed**). I questioned my authenticity (hooks 2010) as passionate artist, my authority with *photography* and my authorship in *lecturing*. I was still learning and needed to be visible as such (**underexposed**). I valued that the learners' perspectives informed my own emergence in photography (**relevant fingers, me you**). I found their insights to be exciting, refreshing and motivating in my own self-creation. I acknowledged this to learners. I often told them that I valued growing and learning together, and that they importantly shaped my *lecturing* practices (Whitehead 1989 and 2008b, Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000, hooks 2010).

For me the word *lecturer* is associated with a single instructor and trainer who stands in front of a group of learners and gives lectures, in a controlled environment and manner, where presence is controlled by time and timetables (**separating lines, (dis)infect**). My association with the word 'mentor' is closer to the notion of a guide, influencer and advisor, someone who interacts with learners (**antennas, echo**), from their perspective (viewpoint), and tries to have a personalized relationship with the learners (hooks 2010). 'Mentor' is closer to the word peer. I felt more comfortable with disclosing that I was 'becoming a mentor' rather than 'assuming a *lecturer's* position' (Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000, Bachelor). As such, I replaced it with mentor (**tag, (dis)location**).

The replacement symbolically represents my shifting of position and consciousness from a traditional notion of a instructing knowledge, distancing, to activating the role of mentor and co-constructing knowledge, by getting closer to learners (**responsibility**) (Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000, O'Neil and McMahon 2005, Greenhow, Robelia and Hughes 2009, hooks 2010). Henri's quotation below was indicative of my pledge to learners, as I assumed and claimed a mentoring role (**cross-road, (mis)place**):

I have little interest in teaching you what you I know. I wish to stimulate you to tell me what you know. In my office towards you I am trying to improve my own environment. (1923:12)

What matters to me as I activate the role of mentor of photographs?

When I activated the role of mentor, I used hooks's term "engaged pedagogy" (2010:19) as a framework for mentoring (**taking form**). This framework focuses on getting closer to learners, to better "understand the emotional awareness and emotional intelligence" of our learning environment, as a collective. I wanted to engage students beyond surface level (**responsibility**). I instilled the importance of integrity, openness and honesty, because I believed that each learner had the power to influence (hooks 2010). To influence their own peers and my learning (**frame of mind, pangs of conscience**) – "who we are and what we might learn together" (hooks 2010:20).

In the bullets (on page 52) I list how I see the relevance of my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship as strong frameworks for developing photographers. I appreciate that a point and shoot camera, new technologies and the Internet are empowering tools for me (**echo**) to put across my personal living theory values, my makeup, my "I in my eye" (Clarke 1997:29) (**looking glass, eyeball, shadow of me**). Through the GL, in my weblog, osmosisLIZA, I had found a way to express my body of photographs and my artistic standing with my electronic postcards.

As mentor I critically reflected and asked myself: What can a photograph tell about the person who made it? How can a photographic image contribute to learning about oneself? I took this as a cue (**tag**) to where I could touch (Berger 1972, Lange 2010).

I was concerned because I noticed that learners, in trying to explore and experiment with their own photography practices, experienced a “confusion and disruption from inside their worlds” (Antone and Hill 1992) (**tag, (b)lock**). Batchelor questions the ‘integrity’ of the learner voice in contemporary higher education (2006:225) by explaining that when the voice for “being and becoming (the ontological voice)” is less valued and supported than the “voice for knowing (epistemological voice)” and the “voice for doing (practical voice)” becomes “vulnerable” as learners suffer from a “weakened sense of being” (2006:226). Many learners spoke to me of feeling frustrated, alienated and demotivated by the expectations defined by the technical aspects of photography in the course content. When learners communicated with me about their photographic making and their personal wellbeing, I pinpointed that the learner’s “weakened sense of being” was due to artistic limitations, lack of communicative arenas and poor self-awareness (Batchelor 2006:226). It matters to me that I facilitate learners to make their own enquiries (Bochner and Ellis 2003) into the medium of photographs, and develop their own voices and aesthetics to put across their messages (**intuition**). I want learners to communicate and make messages from centres that draw strongly and confidently from their personalised languages of looking, regarding and seeing the world (Clarke 1997) in a South African context – owning their lived experiences (Whitehead 2008b) to show their individualistic environment (**because of**). It matters to me that learners show evidence of the self, with “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” in all learning cycles or processes that are involved in the act of photography: in conceptualization, discussion, capturing, processing and production of images. As mentor I critically reflected and asked myself: What might I do to enable learners to reveal their own experience with “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship”?

In my RJ in 2009 (July) I wrote:

LEARNERS matter to me: It matters to me that learners are engaged and active in their own learning environments, where they remain positive and motivated about learning and become accountable and responsible for progress and developments in their own practices whilst also influenced by other practices. Learning must feel achievable at his or her own pace, despite ones cultural or historical background. Learning must provide choices, so that learners take control of their learning. Learners must feel independent and guided by purposeful discoveries and meaningful interactions with others. (sic) (du Plessis)

The journal entry above shows me that my mentoring approach aspires towards learner-centredness (O’Neil and McMahon 2005, hooks 2010), right from the start of my employment. It matters to me that learners are engaged and active in their own environments for learning, for self-actualization and self-development (***pangs of consciousness***). As an artist it is important that I promote discovery, choice and freedom of expression as relevant practices for self-creation. It matters to me that learners find joy in what they are doing (Zimring 1999, hooks 2010) and that the environment sparks ideas for creative expression - “putting (their) head, (their) eye, and (their) heart on the same axis” (Hill and Cooper 2005:66) (***relevant fingers***). If creatively stimulated, I believe, this encourages learners to be continual producers of photographs, because of joy and self-fulfillment, and not just driven by assignments or assessments (***frame of mind, (dis)infect***). As mentor I critically reflected and asked myself: Where in my learning environment (lecturing, assignments, classroom activities) can I encourage a learner to draw freely from? How do I make my learning environment “joyful”?

It matters to me that learners engage with others and see this as significant for their own self-creation (***relevant fingers, me you, because of***). As mentor I encourage learners to have open minds (hooks 2010) and embrace influences from others, because in “learning and talking together, we break the notion that our experience of gaining knowledge is private, individualistic and competitive” (hooks 2010:43). Interacting with others provided the mirror and window (in conversation with McKenzie 2011, Szarkowski 1978) into self.

Conolly's (2009)²¹ quote below has strong resonance for me in my mentoring values:

We work on the assumption that people already know much of what they need to know, but they often are unaware that they know what they know, and that they become aware of what they know, and how to use what they know, by reflecting critically on their practice and from interacting with others.

I value the potential in every type of learner and their learning style to creatively and intellectually shape and develop the learning process and progress of other learners (hooks 2010) (**looking glass, outside in, tag, because of, becoming**). It matters to me that I give learners the confidence to recognize the power of their own influence to “open up ways for a better understanding” (Henri 1923:11). As mentor I critically reflected and asked myself: Where could I locate other kinds of learning environments and influences? How do I motivate learners to be confident to engage and exchange ideas with peers? I was concerned that learners were not ‘seeing’ each other. I was sensitive to the multiple tongues of learners in the classroom, which represented multiple layers in knowledge and creativity. Our learning environment consisted of groups of individuals from different races and cultures, with varied sexual orientations, religious and political beliefs that affected outlooks, opinions, thoughts and expression – it was colourful. The word ‘colourful’ alludes to notions of diversity, choice and variety. I was concerned that in our learning environment there was disambiguation. The word ‘disambiguation’, means to remove uncertainty from the implications of the word ‘colourful’, thus embracing notions of difference, multiplicity, dissimilarity and variance in a medium, people and environment (**walls, separating lines, antennas**).

It matters to me that learners to tell their stories, drawing from an immediate or local environment, their lived experience (Whitehead 2008b). I encourage learners to believe that their story is part of a collection of South African stories that place value on diversity (**layers**).

²¹ Unpublished document from self study group - Mentoring Practitioner Research (MPR) at Durban University of Technology (MPR)

I see the potential of personalized stories as new valid texts (**under-exposed**), that promote and challenge perceptions and aesthetics of being a South African living in Africa (de Lange, Mitchell and Stuart 2007). hooks says:

Stories help us to connect to a world beyond the self. In telling our stories we make connections with other stories... A powerful way we connect with a diverse world is by listening to different stories we are told. These stories are a way of knowing. Therefore, they contain both power and the art of possibility. We need more stories. (2010:53)

We needed more stories.

With photographs and distribution platforms like Web 2.0, the Internet and other new technologies I am cognizant that learners can tell and listen to multiple stories that can shape, challenge and create cultural and social discourses in the 21st Century from a cell phone. In an email to colleague Andrea Alcock (13 May) 2010, I wrote:

The more I examine the nature of Photography, the more I discover learning potentials in Photography, not only as an artistic medium for expression or a powerful tool for communication, but also as a teaching tool whereby forces of individuality and creativeness, influenced by ones values, beliefs, history, culture and geography converge when the shutter button is pressed. What really matters to me is that learners utilize Photography as a medium to unlock their own potentials and express their experiences as active participants in a local and or global context.

It matters to me that I develop visual competencies in learners (Fransecky and Debes 1972). Photographs “educate and entertain” (Lester 2000:225) and are mostly read based on the premise that a camera does not lie, which tends to focus on that which is visible (**sightless**). Bester establishes that photography “is a form of witnessing that overcomes invisibility through images that are intentionally acts of visibility” (cited in Nunn 2012:126). I wanted learners to be able to encode and decode visual stories that locate a psycho-social-cultural voice (Berger 1989, as “part of a self-conscious and determining act of reference to give (more human) meaning to things” (Clarke 1997:30) (**covering, separating lines**). It matters to me that learners improve visual literacy skills so that their messages and meaning are sincere and intentional, clearer and stronger (**outside in, insides out**). Improving this, I believe, improves life skills (Fransecky and Debes 1972, Petterson 1998, Bamford 2003) (**pangs of consciousness**).

Debes writes:

Visual Literacy refers to a group of vision-competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences. The development of these competencies is fundamental to normal human learning. When developed, they enable a visually literate person to discriminate and interpret the visible actions, objects, symbols, natural or man-made, that (s)he encounters in (her)his environment. Through the creative use of these competencies, (s)he is able to communicate with others. Through the appreciative use of these competencies, (s)he is able to comprehend and enjoy the masterworks of visual communication.

(cited in Fransecky and Debes 1972)

I have highlighted the words that jumped out at me because these are the words that were relevant in developing my artist body with photographs. I recognize them as an important aspects for my mentoring body.

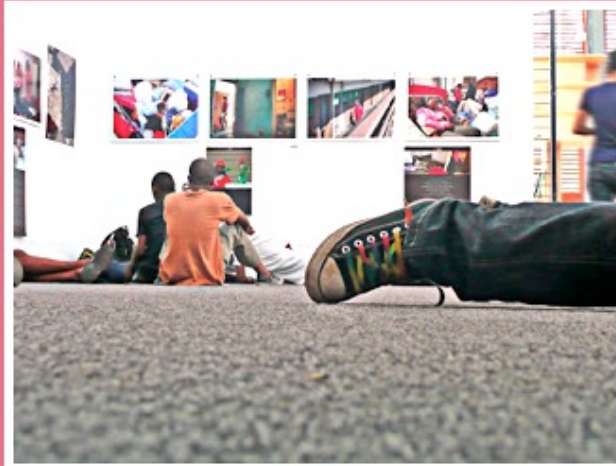
I critically reflect and ask: What might I do to influence learners to be more aware of the persuasive and discursive aspects in a photograph, that are beyond the surface level of the actual or beyond being defined by the technical? What type of environment could I create and make more suitable for a learner with a predominantly visual preoccupation? How do I get learners to critically analyse what and why they see the way that they do?

The electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog, figure 11, space_75 entitled “colourful disambiguation”, is a term that describes the concerns that I had about learners and photographs. It describes how I recognised that the learners were not seen and heard by others and they made photographs that were not freely situated or referenced from personal perspectives. The snapshot shows a worm’s eye view of learners engaging with a photographic exhibition in a Gallery space. I took a group of learners to see a photographic exhibition at the Kwazulu Natal Society of Arts Gallery (KZNSA). A worm’s eye view suggests a submissive stance.

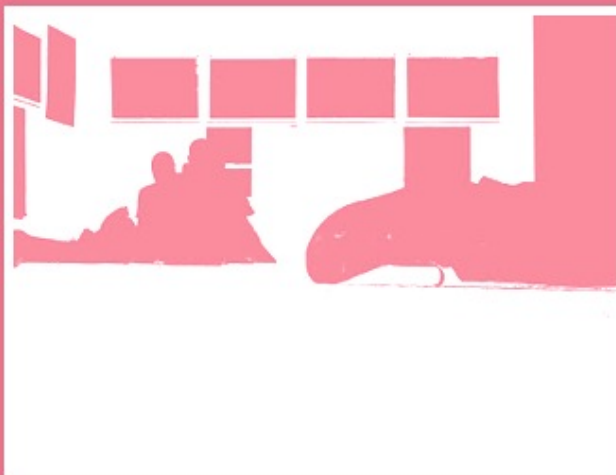
Friday, February 1, 2013

space_75

colourful disambiguation



may 2010



Posted by osmosis liza at 2:17 AM No comments:



Recommend this on Google

Labels: antennas, becoming, crossroad, dis(infect), indication mark, looking glass, me you, relevant fingers, responsibility, taking form

Figure 11: space_75 – “colourful disambiguation (Labels: antennas, becoming, crossroad, dis(infect), indication mark, looking glass, me you, relevant fingers, responsibility, taking form)

du Plessis, LK. 2012. space_75 (image). Available:

<http://lizarduplessis.blogspot.com/2013/02/space75.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

In Adobe Photoshop I intentionally made the image over-saturated with strong contrast, to over-emphasise the colourful parts in the snapshot, symbols for diversity in the classroom (Hughes 2007, Parker 2007, hooks 2010). The pink parts outline the colourful parts, namely the photographic prints and the learners' bodies. The rectangular structures of the photographic prints symbolise the department's rigidity. Other shapes amalgamate into wavy, freeform shapes, defined by the outline of the learners' bodies.

What are my concerns?

I describe my concerns by identifying the situation as it was (McNiff 2010) through five major observations about the learners and their learning environment that highlighted a lack of 'colourful disambiguation' (***frame in a frame***) Through these observations I critically reflected and asked myself "What can I do?" and "What will I do?" (McNiff 2010:87). I took action to improve my practice by improving the learning experience for learners that was highlighted in these observations.

What are my five major observations that show lack of colourful disambiguation?

My first observation was located in the learners' articulation for the making photographs. Learners showed a lack of confidence in claiming "*Authority, Authenticity and Authorship*" of a position and reason (indication mark) for making a photograph. Second, I observed that learners' lacked motivation to experiment and express because their photographs were always critiqued and assessed from a technical standpoint (big bad wolf, overexposed) rather than a creative and critical thinking act of their "I" in their "eye" (shadow of me, underexposed) (Clarke 1997:29). Third, the effects and impact of new technologies on the learners' social and personal lives was not part of their educational life (separating lines).

Fourth, I was concerned about learners' lack of engagement with others (me you): with peers, other artistic practices, other creative spaces and other contemporary photographers, which existed outside of the department. Fifth, I was deeply worried about the social and developmental implications of the effects that the first four concerns (lack of confidence, motivation and engagement) would have on the learners' developments as contemporary South African visual communicators in a post-Apartheid South Africa (relevant fingers, responsibility). I believe that it is imperative that young South Africans, especially those whose preoccupation is in photography, use photographs as a medium to "define a post-apartheid" identity (Gevisser 2011:10), a past fraught with oppression, dominance and injustice (Newbury 2009) (big bad wolf).

In my first observation I identified that learners were reluctant to claim what they know, feel and believe when it came to speaking about and looking at their own images. I became concerned. In the face-to-face critiques²² I noted that when learners were invited to substantiate their reasons for thinking about, making and commenting on their own or others' images, they were reserved and shallow, speaking with vagueness that I recognized as not unknowing but rather a lack of confidence (**muted**). Learners did not show written or verbal accounts of problem solving, comprehension and reflection to support and develop their visual communication skills (**pangs of conscience, responsibility**). The reason for their judgment was missing. I critically reflected and asked myself: Why did this happen? Was it because of the place - a tiered lecture hall where the learner sat in rows with the lecturers in the front, and the learner was distanced from their work? Was it the method? Were subjects asking for too many photographs to be critiqued in one timeslot? Did the obvious face-to-face public arena create a lack of confidence? I was concerned that learners did not articulate or support their own photographs from conceptual personal standpoints (**sightless, g(r)asp**). This is incongruous to the nature of a photograph (La Grange 2005).

²² When learners put up printed works on display boards and lecturers stand in the front and comment and assess their works.

A photograph provides a “map of seeing” as there are “clues” (Way 2006:02) to what, why and how a photographer looks, regards and sees (**viewpoint, tag**). A photographer must be able to articulate what she or he thinks, feels, knows and wonders during the act of photography (**bucket**). A photographer should be able to give personal reasons as to why certain decisions were made to exclude and include elements in the frame. A photographer should be able to account for pressing the shutter to signify that that was a moment worth capturing (Galer 2006). I observed that learners undermined their cultural selves for their educational selves, thus living in two different worlds (**separating lines**). I critically reflected and asked myself: What kind of place and space could further promote the creative, personalized and visual conversations inherent in the act of photography?

Secondly, I was concerned when I observed by how learners see and measure *photography*. At times learners handed in anything, just to fill the hand in criteria. For me, this act showed that learners valued assessment over creative authorship and authority. I observed that learners separated *photography* and the course requirements from themselves and from their immediate and personal environments (**cornered**). I was concerned that learners did not artistically or conceptually dissect photography (**tear(s), (b)lock**) because the department’s syllabus did not offer or support different types of educational and aesthetic inquiry beyond the technical and commercial. By inquiry I refer to the critical investigation and articulation of debates and matters that learners draw from as they decode the outside world to encode their inside world (Bamford 2003, Kaplan 2006, Rakes 1999) and the photograph. It concerned me that the learners’ way with *photography* was prescribed through the mechanics of the camera’s body (Barthes 1980, Szarkowski 2007), the “utensil” (Barthes 1980:55), rather than through their own *bodies* (**antennas, (mis)place**). To illustrate how learners separated *photography* from their immediate and personal environments, I juxtapose two portraits of learner Phakamani Londo (2011, then in second year), figures 12 and 13 (Guillem and Gillam 2004).

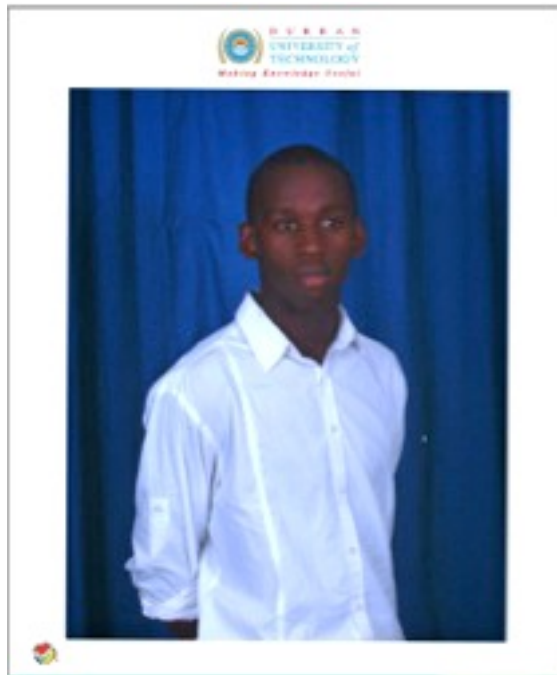


Figure 12: Phakamani Londo's portrait made by a fellow student Nhlanthla Shezi for an assignment orchestrated around the technical aspects of studio portraits for the forthcoming DUT Graduation Ceremony.



Figure 13: Phakamani's image that reveals a personal account of himself demonstrating “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” using Adobe Photoshop to build up a visual collage of his identity.

Londo, P. 2011. Double Exposure (image). Available:
<https://picasaweb.google.com/10919114891167212448/DoubleExposure>
 (Accessed 13 June 2013)

In figure 12, Londo is photographed as graduate from DUT, by his friend Nhlanthla Shezi for another assignment, in a prescribed manner²³. It is a formal portrait with an emphasis on the technical aspects of *photography*: correct lighting, pose and exposure. In contrast, in figure 13, Londo expresses himself in a self portrait assignment set by me, which I posted in a Picasa Web Album (PWA), titled “Double Exposure: Me and the other me”²⁴ (du Plessis 02 May 2011). In this portrait Londo used Adobe Photoshop to create a more meaningful and colourful photomontage that explored personal and cultural aspects of his life.

Londo writes (2011) (sic)²⁵:

“In this assignment I chose to reveal the real me which is based on a lot of different things which people do not know or see in me as am interpreted as being just a normal township guy who is similar to all the township people yet this portrait shows a different side which tells two different stories. Most people know me as a humble, funny guy who is open to all which is true well in this self portrait have shown people exactly who I am. I am not only a township boy yet a educated person and who is informed not only about educational stuff yet social stuff like ART, MUSIC, FASHION, ORIGINALITY. What inspired me in this assignment is my originality as a African this has created a brickwall in my basic understandin of who I really am. I am a zulu speaking person from kwazulu natal , I respect my tradition, culture and mostly who I am. I am inspired by Africa as a whole. The map of africa shows how much it means to me....In my image I have light coming in the top right hand corner which shows hope,faith in the people of africa and the world as a whole .The stars I used them to show that in every person there is a pure shiny side to him or her and that person is a shinning star no matter what. Mostly what inspired me is that I am a very confident person who believes even when it seems hard yet with hope everything works out so that inspired me in doing this image which everything was shot by me”.

Londo’s writing (du Plessis 02 May 2011) on the image demonstrates a private story that draws from self. This was published online for all learners to see. Another student, Wanda Mchunu (then a first year), commented on Londo’s photograph, recognizing that this image “talks of the traditional boy vs urban life”. This alerted me about the duality of rural and urban life amongst many learners, a common dichotomy for them.

²³ This assignment was set to mimic the graduation settings that learners would need to work with when they participated in the photographing of the DUT’s graduation ceremony.

²⁴ see annexure (4): ADP2 - Assignment 2011: Double Exposure: Me and the other me

²⁵ unedited text – see annexure (1) Copy and Paste (sic) ethical stance for Google Lens (GL) space and Ethical Consent Form signed by learners. I want the readers to see the authentic responses, please without judgment.

I have often been concerned, and noticed in the conceptualization of their ideas for photography subject matter, that some learners undermine their cultural selves for their educational selves, living in two different worlds. I was concerned that learners were reluctant to experiment and tinker with photographs ideas and aesthetic. I observed that this reluctance was the result of the rigors and the assessment criteria set by the department (**big bad wolf, cornered**) with a technical and commercial emphasis, the central ethos of the department (**solo, (b)lock**). I critically reflected and asked myself: Was this because photographs was given little weight in the department? It concerned me that learners played very little with photographs' "ubiquitous" nature, made more "malleable" with digitization (Sims et al 2002, Wells 2004:13, Campany 2004, Rubinstein and Sluis 2008) and the soft and hardware that formed it. In 2011 I developed assignments with criteria for experimentation and online critique to induce conversation between peers, using Picassa Web Albums (PWA) ²⁶.

Educator Angela Faris Belt writes that when emphasis is placed on the technical and mechanical side of photography, much time is spent practising these at the risk of creating miscommunicated images that "lack substantive meaning" when photographers "are undereducated in the areas of photography and art history, visual literacy, critical theory, and aesthetics" (2008:x). Faris Belt quotes conceptual artist Misha Gordin: "the poor concept, perfectly executed, still makes a poor photograph" (2008:x). Faris Belt does however state that in order to "produce images filled with intelligence, insight, passion, and depth" the photographer needs a good blend of technical know-how (camera and digital technology), so that these perspectives and perceptions communicate to the viewer (2008:x). To intensify the conceptual element, the technical and aesthetic must be "interconnected" to develop a more "holistic" approach to learning *photography* and to produce a "well-rounded" learner of photography (Faris Belt 2008:x-xi).

²⁶ see annexure (4): ADP2 - Assignment 2011: Double Exposure: Me and the other me

I critically reflected and asked myself: How could I align, yet improve existing *educational* practices for visual literacy and visual communication in the department?

Third, I noticed that whilst learners worked they were also social networking (*antennas, tag*). Figure 14 shows a photograph taken with my Blackberry of the first year learners in 2011 who were asked on their first day lecture with me: “Who was on Facebook?”. I recognized and valued that in the Digital Lab²⁷, there was always a hubbub of activity and lots of laughter and engagement around YouTube videos and Facebook posts.



Figure 14: A photograph made on 01/02/2011 of the ADP1 first years' show of hands to indicate that the majority of the class were on Facebook.

These dialogue windows were always open and active as learners chatted or posted comments in between working and whilst lectures took place. Learners gathered around computers during their breaks and after lectures, often sitting around one computer, engaged and enjoying what they were doing.

²⁷ In the shared computer room, where I spend most of my mentoring time, learners have access to the Internet. If there are no lectures, learners have free access to be on the computers.

Learners were sharing their findings and explorations, but it concerned me because it felt separate from their learning environment (**relevant fingers**). I critically reflected and asked: How could learners study and play?

Digitization and the computers were very much part of learners' social lives but not their classroom lives. According to Tapscott (2009) and Sims (2008) the potential of the Internet has changed the pedagogical frameworks of learning and extended the range of locations where and how learning takes place. Sims puts focus on the "interpersonal communications and interactions, social constructivism, and the empowerment of the learner" (2008:157) in an online environment. Whilst Tapscott writes about the Internet as "a self-organisation tool" (Tapscott 2009:18) that presents "new paradigms in communication" and democratises content (Tapscott 2009: 40). I critically reflected and asked: How can I promote learners as active content builders of knowledge through their photographs? How do I create a learning environment that supports multiple perspectives? How do I encourage learners to express and reveal themselves more as South African?

Taking cognisance of learner behaviour, I became concerned that learners were easily dislocated by the rigors and structures that define learning and the places where learning occurs (from schooling to tertiary settings). I understood why learners could easily be de-motivated by current learning experiences because their learning experiences were not keeping up with these ways of working (Savin-Baden, McFarland and Savin-Baden 2008) (**sightless, indication mark**). I critically reflected and asked myself: What culture of learners exists? What culture for learning exists? What culture(s) could be created to bind the two?

I agreed with Tapscott's 21st-century perspective on learner and mentor collaboration, where he writes that young people of today "are the new teachers" as they are transforming society from politics to education by "replacing a culture of control with a culture of enablement" (2009:11). These were indications to me that learners were turning to the net to "do many things" like communicate, comprehend, explore and learn (Tapscott 2009:09).

Learners were also finding relief and joy, putting happiness and humour alongside their educational needs in the same *place* and *space* on the computer screen (**frame of mind**). I critically reflected and asked myself: What boundaries did I need to loosen for social attitudes/needs to mix with educational attitudes/needs? How does a learner act in their e-learning environment? As opposed to: How should a learner act in an e-learning environment?

My fourth observation relates to the third.

There were other ways of working with *photography* and I observed that learners were disengaged from other artists (Campany 2004) and professional communities (Waller 2000, Galer 2006) that endorsed creative expression and critical conversation with photographs. The absence of other art forms, art practices and dialogue saddened me (**tear(s), salty liquid**). Traub encourages photography learners to engage and articulate ideas in a community or forum that not only stimulates creativity but also contributes to thinking critically about photography (Traub et al 2006: xvii). I was equally troubled that learners' photographs practices and endeavours were not *seen* or *heard* (Antone and Hill 1992) by their families, their friends and other artistic communities but especially by their peers (**outside in, me you**). In the department there was no contact between the learners of different levels (**walls**).

Szarkowski (2007:07) affirms how photographers learnt photography from others in the following:

The photographers learnt in two ways: first from a worker's intimate understandings of (her)his tools ... and second (s)he learned from other photographs, which presented themselves in an unending stream. Whether (her)his concern was commercial or artistic, (her)his tradition was formed by all the photographs that had impressed themselves upon (her)his consciousness.

The lack of sharing and exchanging of thoughts, experiences and conversations amongst learners also perturbed me, because in order to decolonise knowledge structures (***separating lines, walls, (b)lock***) and to change perspectives, learners need to be able to be critical thinkers together in an “open learning community” (hooks 2010:27). Telling stories that are fictional or true is a way to help to understand each other and a way to “begin the process of building a community” (hooks 2010:49). Opportunities to hear each person’s voice are the “sparks that ignite a deeper passion” for learning and creative expression (hooks 2010:53).

I was concerned because in the department I noticed that learners tried to tell stories or make photographs that they thought the lecturer wanted to hear or see (to get better marks) displacing what the learners themselves wanted (***dis(infect), muted***). Often this includes gendered, cultural and artistic biases (hooks 2010) where opinions and benchmarks are sought or aspired in Western male concepts, and in spheres other than African. I critically reflected and asked myself: How does a learner look, regard and see their own authority in *photography* or *photographies*, framed through their own life and culture?

I observed that in the Photography Program black females made up the majority of learners per class. I also noted that the top learners from each year are mostly women. This led me to think. How does a black female learner studying the influence of photography, historically (Heilbrun 2009) dominated by Western male Master photographers (who are usually dead and made photographs in a different era for different reasons) set her own benchmarks for success as a developing photographer against the incongruences of another culture, gender and preference? I critically reflected and asked myself: How can she claim “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” of her time and place when her examples are from another?

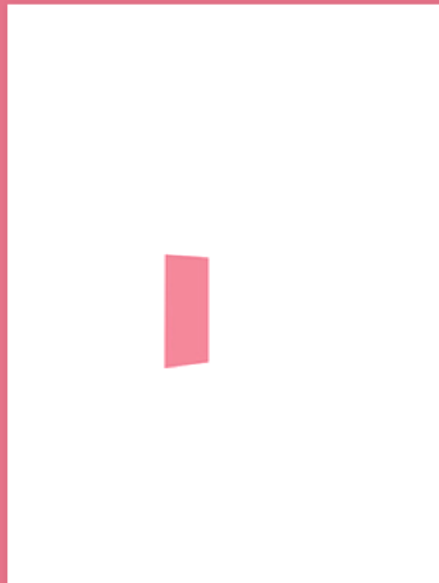
The electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog, figure 15, space_ 17 entitled “herstory” visually questions my own sense of what it means to have a female South African viewpoint that is challenged by a historical male-dominated past.







space_17

herstory



december 2009



Posted by osmosis liza at 7:46 PM No comments:      

Labels: becoming, crossroad, echo, frame of mind, over-exposed, viewpoint, walls

Figure 15: space_17 – “herstory” (Labels: becoming, crossroad, echo, frame of mind, over-exposed, viewpoint, walls)
du Plessis, LK. 2011. space_8 (image). Available:
<http://lizaduplessis.blogspot.com/2011/11/space18.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

In this post I purposely allude to the lack of my story (her/story) in a patriarchal his/story. The snapshot shows a tongue-in-cheeky portrayal of fragments of a stereotypical history associated with the colonization of Africa, using motifs from an empty gaming room decorated with decapitated and preserved trophies from hunting. However the pink parts outline a door that symbolically leads away from or into this game environment. With this ambivalence, the viewer is asked to decide. For me, the door offers an escape from a patriarchal history. In a Postmodern climate, the pursuit of authenticity and identity formation lies in the suspicion of the meta-narrative (Wells 1997, La Grange 2005). This is especially relevant in the history of South Africa and the history of how apartheid shaped photography practice (Newbury 2009:03) and the role of photographers (Weinberg 2007) (**tag, frame in a frame**). Much of contemporary South African photography deals with identity, memory and representation issues in relation to apartheid (Golby cited in Weinberg 2007:109) (**antennas, covering, taking form**). South African Art/Documentary photographer Cedric Nunn writes with authority that: "In photography I saw a new medium that would allow me to express myself in relation to various issues that I was becoming aware of" (2012:06). Nunn claims that the photographs in his exhibition "Call and Response" were "testimony" to his "own awakening and rising consciousness" (2012:06). Enwezor comments in the written interview with Nunn that it was relevant to hear about how Nunn reflected on the conditions and historical circumstances in which his images were made because they "brought him to where he is today" (2011:25).

For intellectuals (especially learners), I think it is essential to promote the investigation of *truth*, *fact*, and *knowledge* with numerous perspectives, (**ebb and flow**), so that learners can negotiate their positions accordingly (Gumede and Dikeni 2009) (**peril**). Similarly hooks points out that one of the major challenges for *educators* in democratising learning is in "sharing knowledge from an unbiased and/or decolonized standpoint with learners who are so deeply mired in dominator culture that they are not open to learning new ways of thinking and knowing" (2010:27).

My fifth observation was that learners, although growing up in a post apartheid time, were still not grappling with identity issues of what it means to be South African. Learners did not test or negotiate knowledge structures or photographic representation (**sightless**). Learners did not embody democracy and freedom of speech by taking ownership of their personal perspectives and stories, to build diverse resources and show colourful ways for expression (**tattooed, (dis)infect**). I was deeply worried about the social and developmental implications (O’Niell & McMahon 2005, Rogers in Zimring 1999, hooks 2010) this would have on their sense of identity in a learning environment.

I believe that South Africa’s history of apartheid and Post-Apartheid *democracy* are critical frameworks through which one can inspect and dissect definitions, current representations and views on the identity of what it means to be South African today (Newbury 2009, Gumede and Dikeni 2010, Gevisser 2011) (**frame of mind, frame in a frame, looking glass**). More importantly, it concerned me that there were “socialized” blind spots (**big bad wolf**) in the thinking of the learners in my classroom: set biases and issues of race, gender and class, that caused separations between learners and that kept them away from each others’ worlds (hooks 2010:100). hooks advises educators to demonstrate to learners that there are numerous perspectives and points of view about race, gender and class despite cultural, social and religious make-up. Perspectives should be questioned “not from a “place of anger” but rather from a “place of awareness” (2010:101). Thus as I assumed a mentor’s role (white, female and middleclass) I believed that I needed to promote discernment (about race, gender and class) (**separating lines, relevant fingers**) and offer multiple explorations, via online communication, with visual and verbal text on these identity-related dilemmas and social matters (**pangs of conscience, responsibility**). I critically reflected and asked myself: How could I implement an online space (open, expressive, individualistic) as opposed to a *classroom* (traditional, confined, structured)?

What are the four messages I sent out?

In 2010 I sent out four personal messages to the learners to action my living theory (Whitehead 2009a) and set the tone for a space and place to resolve evidence of 'colourful disambiguation' in our learning environment. These messages put my artistic and mentoring values and beliefs into action (Whitehead 1989), and arose from the concerns and evidence of the five observations I raised earlier, and the reflective questions I asked myself whilst observing when I experienced problems where my educational and artistic values were negated in my learning environment (ibid).

I sent these four messages in changing the method I used to communicate with learners, by formalizing GL activities in assignment briefs²⁸, in peer assessment and in the content of the study guide²⁹. I wanted to engage at "surface level" (hooks 2010:19) (**covering**) and break down the measures of who is more "intelligent" (hooks 2010:22) (**shadow of me, (mis)place**). I made it known to learners, that I am a learner of digital photographs too and asked learners to share with me what they know (**overexposed**). I did this to encourage learners to make exchanges, to share experiences and opinions on photographs as a collective in cyberspace (**ebb and flow**). I watched and observed learners' online activity, looking for places and spaces outside of traditional learning environments to make my educational inquiry. I started looking for ways to be automated into the learner's inbox, their online body, to stay connected inside and outside the traditional *classroom*, with online platforms that instantly notify their users of correspondence, that use real time chat and offer the inclusion of visual text. For me the key to "knowing together" (hooks 2010) lies in reciprocity, a "two way push and pull" (Seely Brown 2000:12).

²⁸ See annexure (4): ADP2 - Assignment 2011: *Double exposure: Me and the other me* and annexure (8): ADP3 Assignment Brief: *Fashion Illustration with Adobe Photoshop 2011*

²⁹ See annexure (3): ADP3: *Study guide 2011*

The first message I sent was as a concerned artist. My first message addresses my first, fourth and fifth concern, a lack of claiming “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” of being South African. I made it known that my internal mentoring, being an artist, ran parallel with my external mentoring (**echo**). I valued “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” as artistic tools to cross boundaries and make changes in the way knowledge and information is formed, distributed and shared. I placed an emphasis on the words “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” in assignments, in classroom discussions and in study guides to encourage learners’ to use their personal lived experiences in their practice, to claim and voice their “I” in their “eye”. Motivated by McKenzie (2011), I asked learners to articulate subjectivity through personal expressions of their cultural, social and political identities and constantly reference these in the creative process. I insisted on multiple stories, to show the *colourful disambiguation* in the meaning of the words “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship”.

The emphasis on the self in relation to others provides an important text and voice for seeing Africa through the lens of living in Africa and being African, an approach that promotes the formation of an African aesthetic (as discussed with mentor Peter McKenzie 2011). It is important to me, that learners (re)define what it means to be a photographer in South Africa and move away from Western paradigms and constructs of representation. I encourage this outlook to build a ‘revolutionary spirit’ in upcoming photographers so that visual representation and misrepresentation of Africa, which traditionally has been developed by the ‘outsider’, can be challenged and questioned (**antenna, relevant fingers, responsibility**) (ibid). Africans needed to tell African stories and make African photographs by African photographers (Larsen nd).

My second message addresses my second and third concerns, the lack of creative experimentation with photographs. In my learning environment I endorsed the word photographs (Tagg cited in Wells 2004). I focused on showing learners how to distribute and share photographs online.

I pushed my opinion that a place and space can (re)define how a visual message is received and what happens to it afterwards (**because of**), thus placing responsibility with its maker, the “I” in the “eye”, and developing visual literacy competencies. I demonstrated how photographs could be duplicated and re-sent in multiple forms: different sizes, file formats, and outputs, to and from multiple spaces, and encouraged learners to generate conversation on each other’s photographs. I promoted “unstructured spaces” where a learner is not told how to be (**sightless, muted, bucket**) in a learning environment but rather that a learner can “become what they want to be” (Batchelor 2008:237) (**eyeball, echo, indication mark**).

My third message addressed my second and fifth concerns. I encouraged learners to see themselves as knowledge builders, content creators, aesthetic makers and critical thinkers (**frame in a frame, taking form**) (Seely Brown and Alder 2008, Paul and Elder 2006a/b). In South Africa it is particularly important for photographers (Newbury 2009), to be shown that they can be message makers of a new “socio-political topography” and commentators of visual culture in a “life under democracy” (Tredoux in Yudelman 2012:30). Being visual knowledge builders, content creators and critical thinkers brings forth fresh ideas and fresh perspectives for navigating between truth, truths and untruth (Gumede and Dikeni 2009).

My fourth message was the substitution of the word *classroom* with the word *space* and gave my other messages a platform for representation. A *classroom* is associated with a singular, confined, and traditional sense of a learning environment defined by a timetable (**walls, separating lines**). The word *space*, for me, is more of an empty word that signifies an open, re-definable gap, a vastness (**frame of mind, intuition, gaze**). The word *cyberspace* supports my notion of infinite space that for me feels endless; its size is imaginable, as extensive as my curiosity, governed by my Internet speed and platforms for connectivity via new technologies (**antennas**).

I began looking for online social networking platforms that provided diverse possibilities for mentoring, connecting, exploring, sharing, expressing and experiencing ones creative thoughts and actions, where I the learner and other learners could converge and speak to each other (**crossroad**). I wanted to offer spaces and places that respect the “shortcomings and strengths” of a “variety of views and opinions” (Gumede and Dikeni 2010:01) (**antennas, because of, relevant fingers**). I implemented GL activities as part of assignment and assessment criteria.

What is osmosis?

To demonstrate the validity of the account of an educational influence in my own and learners’ learning, I name my philosophy on learning: osmosis (**becoming**). According to the Mac OSX Dictionary 2009, scientifically osmosis is defined as:

The movement of water-molecules through a semi-permeable membrane from a less concentrated solution into a more concentrated one, thus equalizing the concentrations on each side of the membrane.

I saw ‘osmosis’ as a personal metaphor for how I think and imagine that learning happens from movement and connections made via cyberspace guided by an “inward teacher” (Montessori 1988:08). osmosis (lower case deliberate) ³⁰ represents my living educational theory that speaks about crossing boundaries and inducing change through movement by interacting with others. It is educational, social and spiritual. I believe and value that in order for an individual to powerfully cross boundaries and make movement they must embody “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” of the self and their context of living. For me osmosis is further embodied in the word “heuristic”, which refers to methods that are loose and fluid, that happen because of ‘trial and error’, ‘action and reaction’, experimentation and play (Aguilar and Krasny 2011:119).

³⁰ Inspired by the stylization used by bell hooks, a way to remove authorship and put value on substance rather than person.

My 'osmosis' philosophy promotes learning that takes place because of self-initiative, encouraged by the environment, the sharing of concentrations of knowledge (**layers**). Knowledge moves from any individual to other individuals who did not know or have access to this knowledge; from mentor to learner, learner to mentor and learner to learner. This is a two-way relationship (**ebb and flow, frame of mind**). Open dialogue is encouraged to challenge entrenched knowledge-based structures (Montessori 1988, Zimring 1999, hooks 2010) that propose that the *teacher, lecturer or instructor* has the knowledge and the learner (**separating lines**) is a passive listener.

'osmosis' grew from the need to promote the practice of photographs and to improve visual literacy skills for self-awareness and self-creation, through claiming "Authority, Authenticity and Authorship" in an online environment, by interacting with others. The spirit or flow of 'osmosis' is rooted in establishing good relationships (hooks 2010) with gestures of reciprocity: exchange and sharing using new technologies, the Internet, hardware (cell phones, DSLR cameras and computers) and software programs (Google, Firefox, Adobe Photoshop, Picasa) (**relevant fingers**). I use Web 2.0 technologies to encourage confidence, engagement and motivation, social learning, through exchange and conversation in a heuristic framework (Wenger 2002, Sims 2008). Symbolically, a single computer structured by the mentor represents the single water molecule, a low concentration, where communicative information is sent. Cyberspace functions as the porous membrane. The high concentration refers to those computers (or other new technology devices) used by the learner where the communicative information is received. Conversely one person (present or past learner) can send communicative information to me, to move and pass this to other learners³¹. I use the word communicative adjacent to information to indicate my beliefs that when information is exchanged, imparted or relayed, it has the ability to be more powerful, and more revealing as it can be added to, scrutinized and re-informed (**taking form (dis)infect**).

³¹ Personal notes from Webinar presentation (du Plessis 2010)

'osmosis' occurs when there is movement of the communicative information (text, gesture, sound, visuals) lodged in the domain of any singular computer, which travels through cyberspace to other computers and other devices used by other users. It also refers to building content and building on knowledge. Information is low concentrated, when it comes from a single source. Information is more concentrated when it is enriched by other sources or contributions made by other people (*me you, dis(infect), layers*).

The electronic postcard from osmosisLIZA's weblog, figure 16, space_29, entitled "reverse osmosis", talks about how I wanted to challenge the formation of knowledge structure in my learning environment by deconstructing the way it was formed. The snapshot is a close up of a freshwater snail's egg-cluster. For me the snail's egg-cluster portrays how I see that knowledge can be clumped up in one environment or in one person, glued and shaped together, with little breathing room. At the time of posting this electronic postcard I wanted to unclump and break up the shape of how knowledge was formed and perceived. I wanted learners to be empowered by sharing and contributing to the formation of knowledge. I searched for platforms for movement that were organic in delivering, receiving and sending communicative information. I wanted to create semi permeable membranes, a "living web" in cyberspace (Tapscott 2009:53), its shape unpredictable.

In the second image the pink parts are formed from those areas that bind and touch one another, the shared spaces. I imagined knowledge loosening and spreading out from one centre (me) to numerous centres (learners) when shared and exchanged. As this communicative information dispersed, it expanded, changing and reshaping as others interacted and moved it. This I believed is when, where and why learning happens (Wenger 2000, Seely Brown & Alder 2008, hooks 2010). This electronic postcard signalled me to put my 'osmosis' philosophy into action to promote my educational living theory (Whitehead 2009a and 2009b).

Tuesday, February 21, 2012

space_29

reverse osmosis



may 2009



Posted by **osmosis fax** at 8:57 AM No comments:



Recommend this on Google

Labels: (b)lock, covering, ebb and flow, frame of mind, indication mark, insides out, me you, separating lines, sightless, taking form

Figure 16: space_29 – “reverse osmosis” (Labels: (b)lock, covering, ebb and flow, frame of mind, indication mark, insides out, me you, separating lines, sightless, taking form)

du Plessis, LK. 2012. space_29 (image). Available:

<http://lizaduplessis.blogspot.com/2012/02/space29.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

What difference do I want to make?

When I summed up the frameworks (my concerns, aspirations and passions) for developing 'osmosis', I also accounted for "Why I have to teach the way that I do" (McNiff 2008a, Whitehead 2008b) and what kind of difference I could make in the learner's world (**solo, eyeball**). I had pinpointed how I needed to develop learner's photographic body through improving their visual literacy skills, but not a place to activate it (**taking form, shadow of me**). I recognized that visual literacy is strongly "a social practice" (Bamford 2003:04) and needed a public environment that endorsed social practices like exchanges and interaction in communities, creating forums for conversation and story telling. I started to think about how these social terms could define creative authorship in an online digital environment for learners of photographs, and what that environment should look like.

I felt a responsibility for first defining, then finding, a "fecund" (Laurillard 2006) environment for photographic learners with a strong digital orientation, where they could "develop vision competences" and "integrate other sensory experiences" (Debes 1969 cited in Fransecky and Debes 1972:27) with new technologies. Realising that I did want to make a difference in our world (mine and learners'), I became passionate about addressing gaps, those pink parts, in the osmosisLIZA weblog, and about addressing both those concerns raised in my mentoring practice and those observations that showed a lack of colourful disambiguation in the learners' bodies (**pangs of conscience, responsibility**). I critically reflected and asked myself: What is my online body?

At the end of this chapter 1, after considering all reflexive questions, I asked:

What contemporary medium can I use in mentoring and learning that fascinates, feeds and connects photographic learners through their preoccupations with visual literacy?

This question led up to the formation of the Google Lens.

Chapter 3: osmosisliza's online body

Asking questions and collecting evidence to consider and examine the many and varied tensions of professional practice can help teachers face and develop understandings of the messiness and complexities of teaching.

(Luehmann 2008:295)

By online body I refer to Lander's research, where Lander says that the feeling and sensory body of the learner and mentor is a "site for knowledge" and it needs to be re-configured in online learning practices (2005:156). Lander "calls for a re-embodiment of electronic communities of practice that redefines ritual practices, hospitality, and learning in relationship" (2005:155).

Developing an online body (Lander 2005) was **a** pertinent movement in my practice to action the artist self with the mentor self in osmosisliza's current identity dilemma (***peril, (dis)location, sightless***). It was an action that provided the data into how I influenced and how I was being influenced, so that I could articulate ways to improve my practice (Whitehead 2008b). I was looking for a certain kind (Gee 2000) of space to act on my feelings of cognitive dissonance and dislocation³² (du Plessis 2009), of not belonging in my place of work (***tear(s), (mis)place, frame of mind***).

In the previous chapter, I wrote about my mentoring observations and concerns, and the learners' lack of artistic confidence, motivation and engagement in claiming "Authority, Authenticity and Authorship" in their photographs-making. I frequently asked reflexive questions, posted electronic postcards in the osmosisLIZA weblog, and collected evidence (Luehman 2008) to comprehend the "messiness and complexities" of my practice (ibid:295), to better perform as mentor of photographs (***responsibility, pangs of consciousness***). I embraced 'osmosis', an action, as a way to claim my living theory (see definition on page 86 and 87, in Chapter 2), and chose cyberspace, as my preferred meeting point (***frame in a frame***).

³² a term introduced to me in 2009, in Professor Jack Whitehead's keynote seminar

In this chapter I discuss how I came to find the online ‘place’ I called the “Google Lens”. I show how I searched for a specific type of “contemporary medium” that “fascinates, feeds and connects photographs learners through their preoccupations with visual literacy” (du Plessis, page 91). I discuss how I could only evaluate what mattered to me for my online body when I got closer to the learners and when I used online applications, like Blackboard (Bb CE8)³³ and Gmail. I write about the steps I took to first understand the digital sound of the learners (**antennas, covering, because of**), whom I affectionately labeled, “mp4’s” (a file format that measures digital sound). The learners’ digital sound provided the phenomenon that decided the characteristics of my online body (Gee 2000, Clandinin and Connelly’s 2000, Suter 2012). ‘Phenomenon’ here refers to all “the processes, emotions, complexities, nuances, values, cultural templates, embodiment, and the political and social contexts” for developing my online body mixed with the “emotions, beliefs, self-concepts, intentions, interpretations, identities, contradictions (and) actions” (Pithouse Morgan et al 2009b:44). I write about searching and then finding a “fecund” (Laurillard 2006) environment for photographs learners with a digital orientation in a South African context (**responsibility, ebb and flow**). In the writing to follow, I describe some of the properties of GL applications and the experiences learners and I had in them. I placed check (✓) marks next to words to highlight that I approve or recognise the value of certain characteristics in words that can be aligned with my osmosis philosophy (**indication mark, (dis)infect**) and promote “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” of self and practice in an online environment, like the GL.

I also consider how these checked words (✓’s) can “develop vision competences” from personal contexts and “integrat(e) other sensory experiences” (Debes 1969 cited in Fransecky and Debes 1972:27) from lived experiences (Whitehead 1989) (**eyeball, intuition**) and when shared, can shape others in their visual literacy learning developments.

³³ Bb Blackboard. 2013. (online) Available: <http://www.blackboard.com/Sites/International/EMEA/index.html> (Accessed on 13 August 2013).

In the GL learners are given an open, non-hierarchical platform to express, explain and exchange thoughts and ways, as they importantly interact with others. I then gather the checked words that denote fecund to me. I reconsider how and whether their 'behavior' shows confidence, engagement and motivation in the GL against a table I formulated³⁴, so that I can address my research sub-questions and main question in my conclusion. The √'s were important for defining osmosis too, as they helped me to know what I wanted for my online body, and signposted ways to improve my practice. In this chapter I also explain how I developed my online body through my dissatisfaction with Bb CE8. My learning experience in it led me to realise what I did not want for my online body. The concerns raised by Bb CE8 were critical signposts to move on, to find another kind of place for learning through movement, osmosis (*indication mark, crossroad*). This led me to Gmail, and Gmail lead me to the GL (*becoming*).

What matters to me about my online body?

"How to find the pearls in the shells of oysters" (Montessori 1988:ix)

From the "messiness and complexities" (Luehmann 2008:295) that concerned me in my mentoring practice, many questions surfaced (*bucket, a hollow muscular organ*). I identified gaps where I could build my online body, alongside the bodies of learners to make a collective body for learning with movement and connections made in cyberspace (*antennas, (dis)infect, becoming*). I believe strongly that when learners (oysters) revealed "Authority, Authenticity and Authorship" (the pearls) confidently, they would become more engaged and with their practice and motivated, awakening their creative spirit (Henri 1923). I believe that when practices are shared and photographs-making experiences are exchanged with others, 'osmosis'-style, this could improve confidence. Sharing prompts engagement and can influence how a learner could motivate others to feel motivated themselves (*indication mark*).

³⁴ see annexure (6): Words associated with fecund for confidence, motivation and engagement.

It matters to me that I define and find a fecund place, a “place of measurement” for learners as photographic practitioners (Josselson, Lieblich and McAdams 2003:03). It matters to me that I infiltrate rather than re-create learners’ current online behaviour for educational purposes (**indication mark**). It matters that I “read between the lines” to understand the “new languages and set of behaviours of textual communication”, coming from the learners, rather than dictate how learners should act and react in the GL (Hughes 2007:719).

I became passionate about being in the learners’ inboxes, to hear their digital sound so that I could make a difference for our inclusive online learning bodies (**responsibility, hollow muscular organ, because of**). Tapscott’s eight “Net Gen”³⁵ norms (2009:74) mattered to me: freedom, customization, scrutiny, integrity, collaboration, entertainment, speed and innovation. I used these norms as a further framework for defining what fecund (√) means to me for my online learning environment.

Taking the advice “of deeply listening to others” (Josselson et al 2003:03), it mattered to me that I researched more about learners’ practices, e-learning platforms and educational online learning discourses. First, I placed emphasis on what the learner was doing, rather than what I wanted to do (Laurillard 2006:02) (**relevant fingers**). Second, I became a learner in e-learning, and experienced being in a community of practice (looking glass). Third, I opened a Gmail account, which led me to other important Google-linked discoveries (frame in a frame).

³⁵ short for Net Generation

Who do I meet and greet online?

To explore the word fecund I needed to find out who the learners were whom I meet and greet everyday (Jones, Ramanau, Cross and Healing 2010). I had to personalize the learning experience, to place focus on learners' aspirations and needs, and to exchange and share skill and knowledge of photographs (Laurillard 2006:02) (**tag, layers**). I identified the necessity to understand what the learners were going through in their years of study, how their home and social environments affected the learning environment (**unseeing**) (Zimring 1999). I took notice of the way the learners expressed "spaces and silences" and "the complexities of realizing their ideals and ambitions in their own way and in their own voices" (Batchelor 2006:237) (**frame of mind, muted**). I had to build "empathetic understanding" (Rodgers 1983:111-12 cited in Zimring 1999:04), and trustworthiness and integrity (Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000). I had to focus on availability, accessibility and approachability (Berk 2010). I asked myself: Who are the mp4's in our learning environment?" What was their world, viewed from a computer screen? How could I get to know the digital sound of the learners? How do I connect with a range of learners with disparate backgrounds and means?

My thinking about this is visually explored in the electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog figure 17, space_34 entitled "ambient light". In photography ambient light refers to available or natural light, which is determined by the environment and the placement of the subject (Galer 2006). This electronic postcard makes reference to Montessori's preoccupation: "How to find the pearls in the shells of oysters" (1988: ix). I am referring here to my mentor- aspirations of getting to know the learners better, to see and regard them in 'natural light' so that I can better serve them as mentor. The snapshot shows a graffiti word 'diamonds', a plural, illicitly sprayed on a wall in a public place. This word does not stand alone in the image. It sits above a hole in the wall, which has been filled or blocked by other structures.

Tuesday, April 10, 2012

space_34

ambient light



august 2010



Posted by osmosis liza at 8:09 AM



+2 including You

Labels: a hollow muscular organ, antennas, because of, becoming, crossroad, ebb and flow, frame of mind, layers, responsibility, solo, tear(s), walls

Figure 17: space_34 – “ambient light” (Labels: a hollow muscular organ, antennas, because of, becoming, crossroad, ebb and flow, frame of mind, layers, responsibility, solo, tear(s), walls)
du Plessis, LK. 2012. space_34 (image). Available:
<http://lizaduplessis.blogspot.com/2012/04/space34.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

The word 'diamonds' forms the pink contemplative parts for the illustration that sits below the snapshot. Its plurality suggests a group. In the pink parts, I am referring to the learners as a collective. The pink parts are intentionally blurred and there is a distinct line across them, which separate its shapes. This is symbolic. It refers to how I recognised that I did not know whom I meet and greet, and that we were separate from each other and one another. The lettering is hard to make out, blurry and shaky, literally representing the way I had felt about the search I was on. I was undecided and unclear on how I could to define and construct a fecund learning environment for our collective development. Likewise it speaks about how I was nervous about how my mentoring methodology would be received or fit in the department. In this electronic postcard I examined feelings of displacement, being locked or blocked by structures where I cannot get closer to learners. This electronic postcard signals to me that I needed to find value in gaps that otherwise may be considered redundant and barricaded. I needed to remove those structures that obstructed my development. I needed to gain confidence as I drew from my intuition, my artistic self.

When I observed the learners' digital sound, I took into account that the learners in our learning environment were from Africa (√) not from America, Europe or Australia, from which all the academic literature I had read classified the younger generation as "Net-Geners" (Tapscott 2009, Berk 2008 and 2010, Jones, Ramanau, Cross and Healing 2010) (**eyeball**). To resolve issues of availability, accessibility and approachability (Greenhow et al 2009), I tested this label in my own environment, and devised a questionnaire called "Meet the Digital Natives" in 2010³⁶ (**(g(r)asp)**).

Its purpose was to get to know the digital environment (technologies and internet access) used by the learners in day-to-day living, from educating, playing, purchasing, accessing news or updating, to interacting with lecturers, peers and/or family members (**frame of mind, layers, relevant fingers, antennas**).

³⁶ See annexure (5): *Meet the Digital Natives Questionnaire*

The information filled in by learners showed me that existing learners already had the means, know-how and inclination to flourish in an e-learning environment and already lived in the connectivity of the Internet (Williams 2008, Seely Brown and Alder 2008, Tapscott 2009, Jones et al 2010) (**ebb and flow**). This questionnaire highlighted the fact that those learners who did not have Internet access or computers at home, benefitted from the online environment provided by the department. On a social level (Tapscott 2009: 09), these learners did still connect, play, share and learn with others on a weekday basis (**tag, me you**).

I saw connecting and exchanging socially networked online spaces and places as a way to change patterns and approaches to learning and mentoring (Williams 2008, Laurillard 2006) (**big bad wolf, separating lines**). I wanted to use new technologies to serve and support how learners learn, and examine how efficiently learners attain/retain a skill or knowledge with ease and enjoyment (Laurillard 2006) (**intuition, (mis)place**). I saw online learning as a way to keep up with learners' digital idiosyncrasies (**echo, ebb and flow**). I also saw it as a way to mix social needs with educational needs so that I may better know the learners' cultural references and their ability to engage with new technology from autonomous standpoints. I felt it important to make contributions towards a collective ethos, in learning with photographs to develop critical visual content builders (**becoming**).

What did BlackBoard CE8 show me?

In 2009, I attended a one-year e-learning course for academic staff at DUT Pioneers. I became a learner of a Learning Management System (LMS) called BlackBoard (Bb CE8).

In my application form³⁷, I stated my goals (note I was still using the word *lecture* here) as:

I would like to create an interesting and creative forum for learners to discover, navigate and explore whereby they acquire knowledge and skill not only in their chosen field, Photography, but also gain insight into other disciplines that are united through access to the World Wide Web. I would also like to create a platform whereby learners may present their photographs and generate conversation around their photographs with other classmates. I hope that the Pioneers course will facilitate my lecturing skills by providing a means to keep learners inspired and creative through new technology. (sic) (du Plessis 2009)

Bb CE8 was an important developer for my online body (**frame in a frame**). It provided the framework for me to engage in e-learning, and a template from which I was able to work, but it clearly was not the forum I wanted in order to create a fecund environment. I became frustrated by limitations I found in Bb CE8, when I identified how this LMS compromised my mentoring vision of presenting photographs and generating conversation around them (which I had articulated as personal criteria in my application form). My greatest educational development in attending this course was when I was in a learner's position (**shadow of me, under-exposed, (b)lock**). This shifted me and shaped my perceptions for what and how I wanted my learning forum to look, to function and behave (**echo, relevant fingers**). My learning took place not in, but with a group, a community that grew together (**me you, shadow of me**). Being together we learned together (**looking glass, frame in a frame**). This experience consolidated the questions I had written in my RJ in 2009 (see page 20) about my concerns as novice *lecturer*, when I asked "How do I to learn to teach?", "How do I make learners teachable?", "Do I have to do this alone or together?" (du Plessis 2009).

As a learner, I was cognizant of being on the other side of the lecture theatre, sitting down instead of standing up (**shadow of me**). I valued learning in two ways, learning to mentor and being stimulated to learn more about e-learning. As I was taking notes for the e-learning course, importantly I was taking notes on how the mode of instruction was taking place (**taking form, tattoo**).

³⁷ see annexure (7): *Pioneers application form 2009*

I immediately recognized that the learning environment I was in, was warm, engaging and collectively orientated (Hughes 2007). I found value in the dynamics of using my peers as building blocks for understanding, which I realised made my learning interactive, feeling easier and more fun. I appreciated that I felt guided and mentored by Mari Pete and Gita Mistri, rather than taught. My opinion and my way mattered **(g(r)asp)**. I felt comfortable to exchange stories and experiences, and ask questions. I appreciated that collaborative activities set by the facilitator could help to form and shape environments in which learners could take their own responsibility to nurture, extend and co-create knowledge and meaning (Palloff and Pratt 2005, hooks 2010). I recognized that the collective environment provided much of the nurturing, because I felt active as a member of a community **(crossroad, echo, looking glass)**. My sense of self felt important, because of back-and-forth movements between personal experiences, learning and belonging, as we shared practices, interacted regularly, and exchanged common concerns and passions for things we did (Wenger 2000) **(bucket, taking form)**. Learning happened because of the “interplay of competence and experience” where I could openly “negotiate competence” on what I know and do not know (Wenger 2000:226). The learning experience was engaging and meaningful in a community of practice. It was bound by individual contributions, acknowledgement of one another, common goals, joint resources, combined skills and freedom of imagination (Wenger 2000, Hughes 2007) **(because of)**. Learning was social, active, contextual and engaging, qualities that define a “deeper learning experience” (Carmean and Haefner 2002:29).

The electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog, figure 18, space_82 entitled “communities of practice” visually engages my shift in thinking about how learning happens from growing and being together. The snapshot shows feet submerged in seawater, standing in a small rock pool filled with mussels. The light cast on the feet makes them look energized by the sun, and they appear to sparkle. In the foreground, the growing mussels cluster together around a clearly demarcated empty patch. This is predominantly green and suggests fertile ground. Its shape is the rough profile of a heart symbol.

space_82

communities of practice



october 2011



Posted by **osmosis liza** at 6:43 AM



Recommend this on Google

Labels: because of, becoming, frame of mind, gaze, indication mark, looking glass, me you, outside in, relevant fingers, responsibility, tag, taking form

Figure 18: space_82 – “communities of practice” (Labels: a hollow muscular organ, because of, becoming, frame of mind, gaze, indication mark, looking glass, me you, outside in, relevant fingers, responsibility, tag, taking form)

du Plessis, LK. 2013. space_82 (image). Available:

<http://lizaduplessis.blogspot.com/2013/04/space82.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

This was formed by the way the mussels have grown closely together and alongside one another. In the second image the pink part illustrates this shape, that environment that is abundant and caring from growing and being together. This was a signpost for me to create a community of practice.

In the middle of 2009, as designer, I learnt to build an online classroom with Bb CE8. By the end of 2009, I had developed an online classroom called “osmosis” as part of my course requirements but did not then launch it to learners, figure 19.

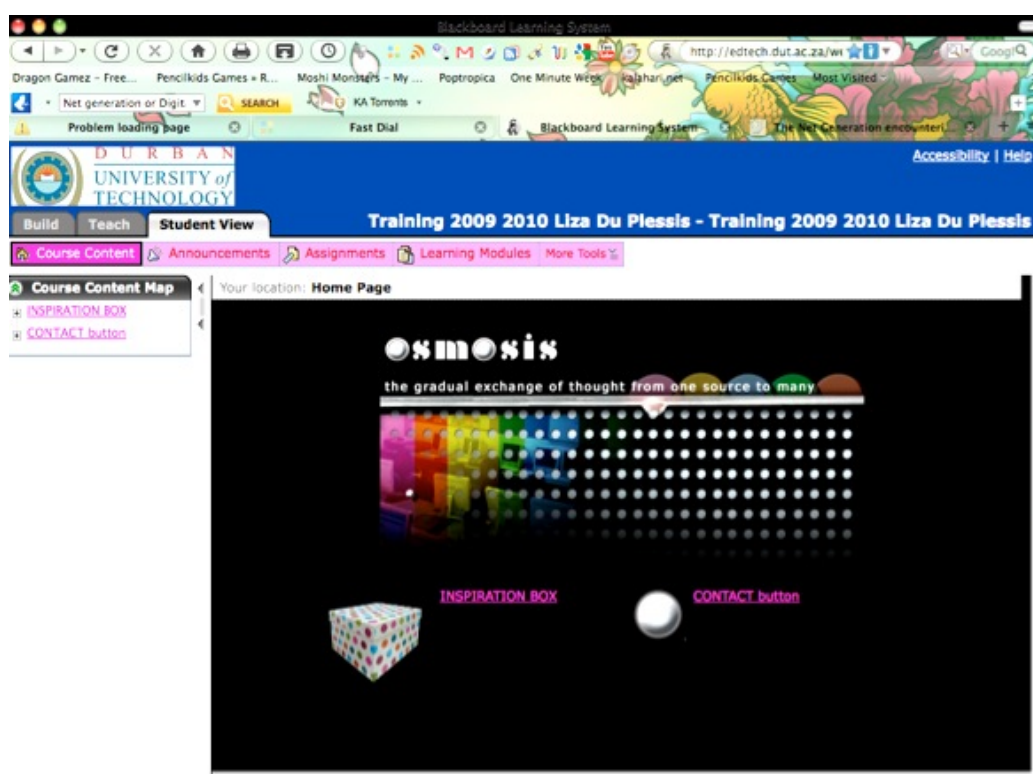


Figure 19: A screenshot of my Blackboard classroom’s design of a homepage and menu structure for the course content, designed in 2009.

Bb CE8 was significant in my development of new mentoring tools (*looking glass, frame in a frame*). It drew my attention to the types of processes, discourses, modules and operations that are synonymous with creating online classroom environments. Bb CE8 also presented other ways on how to be connected and to connect with learners in an educational context.

I learned about tools like real-time peer-discussions, asynchronous communication, sharing, grading, self-assessments, journal keeping, making glossaries and media libraries, displaying hyperlinks to video, blogs and wikis (***crossroad, taking form***). Laurillard (2006) notably writes that when there is a collaborative process, between learner, machine and environment, this promotes a deeper learning experience as users, learners and *educators* build new models for engagement of the world when they are able to customize and design, inspect and re-create individually with new technologies (***tag***).

What are my concerns with BlackBoard CE8?

I did not launch my Bb CE8 classroom, despite it being in cyberspace, my preferred meeting point, because I identified in it the constraints of a traditional brick and mortar classroom, namely its *teacher*-centeredness (***separating lines, (b)lock***). I was concerned that it did not support the photograph as a central object³⁸ for visual literacy, nor for conversations or image clarity. Bb CE8 did not promote my osmosis learning philosophy, primarily a learner-centred approach (***peril, cornered***).

I saw Bb CE8's page design elements as limited to a small range of visual representation, based more on a certain linear conception of *teaching* and learning that involved instruction via the written word rather than through images (***cornered, under-exposed***). It concerned me that the page design elements did not support good resolution photographic quality images, which hindered critical discussion around photographs (***separating lines, muted***).

Good resolution is important for reading detail of/in elements and feeling the mood created by photographic considerations like, lighting and depth of field. In Bb CE8 the image's file size and clarity were compromised by the restrictions and procedure for uploading them.

³⁸ see statement in application form in annexure (7) - *Pioneers application form 2009*

The menu structure forced me to view the images one by one rather than give me an option to see multiple images at one time. Viewing multiple images at one time was an important aspect for me for making comparisons between photographs submitted, to promote collective discussion.

I was concerned that BB CE8 did not support the uploading of images by the learners of their own accord.

In Bb CE8, I found the menu structure and layout governed by the template uninspiring and its interface cluttered (too many drop-down menus). I found this confusing, as it was difficult to navigate (*g(r)asp*). It concerned me that it was hard to find things and hard to remember where they had been deposited. I found this uncertainty hindered my workflow, diverging my thinking and my aim (*separating lines*). I was concerned that my creative authorship was restrained. In developing my BB CE8 online *classroom* I experienced many limitations with regards to layout, file format, and file size, where I felt I had to compromise my aesthetic and personal design sensibilities (*muted, noose*).

I noticed that in Bb CE8's virtual classrooms there are limited opportunities for learners to share their work, to show visuals, to express themselves or to initiate discussion independently (*separating lines, (dis)infect*). I was concerned about the restrictive and singular contained classroom structure and behavior that supported few of the Web2.0 features necessary for sharing or exchanging concentrations of knowledge (*sightless*). My concerns with the shortcomings of Bb CE8 were heightened when I became a learner in a Blackboard classroom, when I attended my Induction Course as a new junior lecturer. I discovered that my online body values and needs, which sought independence, customization, collaboration, visual entertainment, speed and innovation: Tapscott's eight "Net Gen" norms (2009:74) (on page 94) were not met and this demotivated me from making full use of the valuable educative course content in the online classroom (*relevant fingers, underexposed*).

The facilitator would have to send emails urging me and my group to go online, to log in and engage with her modules, and chat. I recognized immediately that to get the learners in my *classroom* to connect with this type of online environment was going to be challenging and tiresome. It concerned me that Bb CE8 felt too remote from my experience and felt separated from my everyday web activities (**sightless**). I realised that my online body would need to keep up with free form types of activities in order to develop learners' confidence, motivation and engagement with their private worlds (**responsibility**).

I had observed how the learners were predominantly using Web.2.0, YouTube and social networking platforms as part of their new Web activities. I became concerned that Bb CE8 would not motivate or engage learners enough to participate in a community of practice (**tag, relevant fingers, eyeball**). I was concerned because I wanted to create a community of practice for learners to express and encounter each other's ways of photographies. I wanted the computer screen to function as a mirror and window to individual and collective learners' voices and stories, which showcased diversity in the words "Authority, Authenticity and Authorship", offering multiple stories through multiple voices (**me you, outside in, relevant fingers, becoming**). I was looking for spaces and places that crossed visual, cultural and social borders to provide the educative framework for developing the "eye" (looking, regarding and seeing the raw materials of the world) with a critical "I" (**frame of mind**). The dynamics of the new Web, collaborating, sharing, exchanging and building content, using Web 2.0 and other new technologies, were what I valued in my online body. Bb CE8 did not facilitate this kind of practice. My dissatisfaction with Bb CE8's constraints, and my concerns with its *classroom* behaviour, led me to search for an alternative virtual place and space. I critically reflected and asked:

How can I create and structure a teaching environment using new technologies that is fun, interactive, communicative and engages a deeper learning principle?

What did I do about my concerns?

Find(ing) ways of coming together, on an equal footing, to contribute to the wellbeing of all.
(Chomsky 1996 cited in McNiff 2008:1140)

I opened a Gmail account to connect outside of my work account, as Gmail was noticeably the preferred email platform used by the learners. I did this so that I could have more access to the voice of learners in an online platform, which had greater social implications for me (**ebb and flow**). My work account limited my storage of data, and I felt it positioned me more as *lecturer* of an institution – lizadp (**big bad wolf, peril**). I wanted to make changes about my role and relationship with learners (**walls, (dis)locate**). Gmail was a space for knowing each other. In Gmail I was known as osmosisliza and I could designate a place solely to have interactions with learners, and I could position myself and my mentoring beliefs (**indication mark, shadow of me**).

Why was Gmail important for developing my online body?

Tapscott says that “email is so yesterday” (2009:46), and likens it to writing a well mannered letter to someone’s parents. I agree. Gmail is so today, so much more than just about letter writing, because of its Web 2.0 integration and links to other Google spaces (**ebb and flow**). My opinion is that an application that just sends mail is far less likely to be used by a younger generation who are socially networked and use instant modes of real time chat communications (**separating lines**), figures 20 and 21. With Gmail, learners and I were contactable instantly via email and smartphones (√). With this type of free (√) access, I noticed how many doors opened up, for many types (√) of transactions: from personal, to social to professional (**dis(infect), layers**).

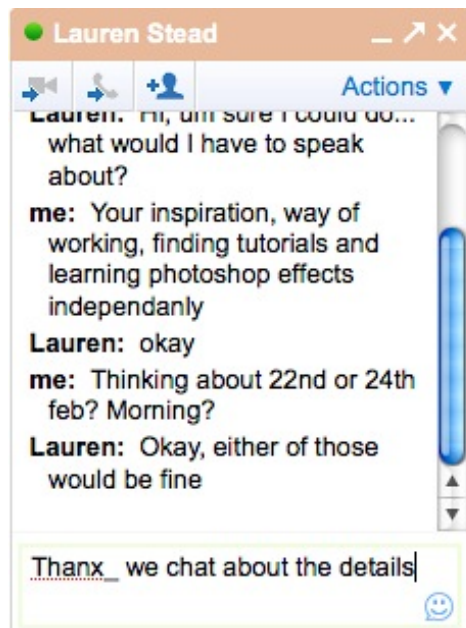


Figure 20: A screenshot of Gmail real time chat “text” facilities showing a real time chat with Lauren Stead, fourth year student (2011), talking about her making a presentation to the third years



Figure 21: A screenshot of Gmail “video” chat facilities from my computer showing colleague Bwalya Lungu and I “video” chatting about Masters when I was sick at home and she was in her office at DUT (2011).

Tapscott writes that the younger generation has grown up with choice, and this sense of freedom has effects on education because learning and communicating should “take place where and when they want it” (2009:53). I think it is more where and when learners need it, being flexible, and offering open access (***under-exposed***).

In Gmail I noted how for many learners the non-face-to-face method of Gmail offered more platforms for communication: there was choice (√) and freedom (√), as it was more word friendly (√); it was cheaper than sms'ing (√), allowed more characters, and emoticons (√). The other reasons I valued Gmail as an emailing platform was because it was interactive (√) and could be customized (√) to suit its user (***tag, me you, antennas***).

On a visual level, Gmail can be modified (√) with numerous ‘individualistic’ choices of how one would like the forum to behave. Individuals could choose the look of their Gmail dialogue window from a variety of backgrounds. Gmail invited instant responses(√) with its real-time chat facilities (√) that supported both video (√), image(√) and text (√). With these asynchronous properties learners and I all had access to each other “anytime any place” (√) (Google 2013) (***tag, me you, antennas***).

The learners Gmailed me and chatted to me about all kinds of things, from interesting and absurd links (e.g. chain mail) to numerous websites they felt I might find interesting (to pass on to others), to assignment hand-ins, apologies for those assignments that were late or overdue, to discuss tasks and assignment misunderstandings or to get advice and feedback on works in progress, figures 22 -27, (***looking glass, outside in, tear(s), insides out***). There were also highly personal emails, as learners attempted to explain the difficult situations they found themselves in – like shootings, deaths in the family, kidnaps, rapes, deaths of classmates, birth of babies, psychiatric hospitalization, depression, and financial burdens (***pangs of consciousness, outside in, insides out***).

I remember remarking to a colleague that I was surprised at how many problems and difficulties the learners were going through that year. I found myself stopping and feeling embarrassed that the only reason I knew of these was because the learners were communicating more with me. I became aware that I needed to explore more ways to understand what the learners are going through in their years of study. Gmail became the emotional link between learners and myself (**taking form, hollow muscular organ, bucket**). As I became more aware of how the home environment affected the learning environment, I became encouraged to sustain trustworthiness and integrity (hooks 2010). I recognised trust as a value that encouraged movement and connections for osmosis (**covering, responsibility**). With Gmail I observed the notion of “objectivity of a stranger”, where relations are formed because of “distance and nearness, indifference and involvement” (Simmel 1950 cited in Lander 2004:167). Conversing in Gmail seemed to be a more comfortable way (✓) for learners to write about and tell me of their challenges and accomplishments (**frame of mind**). Learners wrote as if they were speaking, communicating with personal (✓) colloquialisms, abbreviations, configuring sound-like gestures, ignoring grammar and using emoticons (✓). The tone of their emails seemed relaxed. Learners wrote spontaneously and fast, expressing themselves casually (**tag, antennas**). What Lander asks, I importantly asked myself: “How do (I) *hear* and *see* spelling and grammar mistakes in imagining the body of the online learner with whom (I am) interacting?” (2005:168).

I heard and saw these gestures as shows of friendliness (✓), openness (✓), and integrity (✓) that produce a sound, “a speaking mouth that merged the voice with the body”, and embodied “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” (Lander 2004:157) (**crossroad, looking glass**). These online gestures were indicators of “re-memembering the body” and the person, to show human experience (✓) (Lander 2005:156) (**tag**).

This is evident in figure 22, a screenshot of Lindy Mthembu's email to me, and is an example (Guillem and Gillam 2004) of how she presented herself to me as a kind-hearted, considerate and appreciative human.

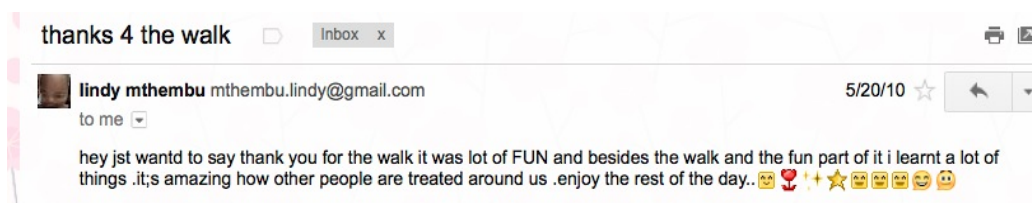


Figure 22: A screenshot of an email illustrating a tone that is overall easy going, casual and expressive in a free form manner, ending off with colourful emoticons.

Mthembu emailed to tell me (Guillem and Gillam 2004) about how she found her walking experience to visit a Gallery helped her to be perceptive about the environment she was in contact with. This type of exchange signified to me an online body presence, rather than absence of a body. Mthembu and the other examples below, (figures 23 to 27) used sound and creative language (✓) (like numerous exclamation marks, mixture of capital and small letters, words that were spelled as they sounded, abbreviations, visual images) to show other emotions (✓), like happiness, kindness, sadness and worry that were what I identified as poetically induced and could be visually interpreted. I liked the kind of free-form friendly tone (✓) used by the learners when communicating with me in Gmail (*tag, antennas*).

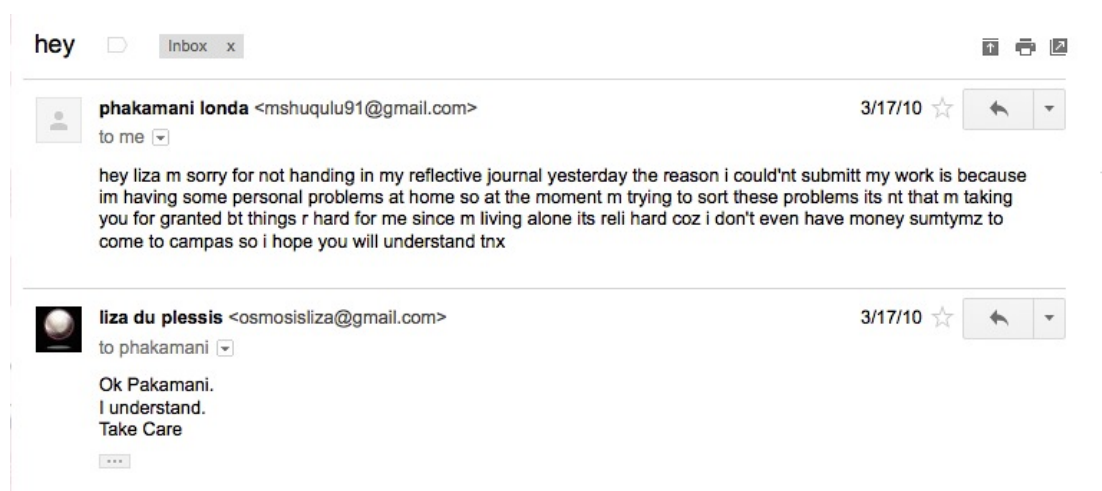


Figure 23: A screenshot of Phakamani Londa's email to me. Londo explains his personal dilemmas for not handing in an assignment. He communicates without sentences using abbreviations.

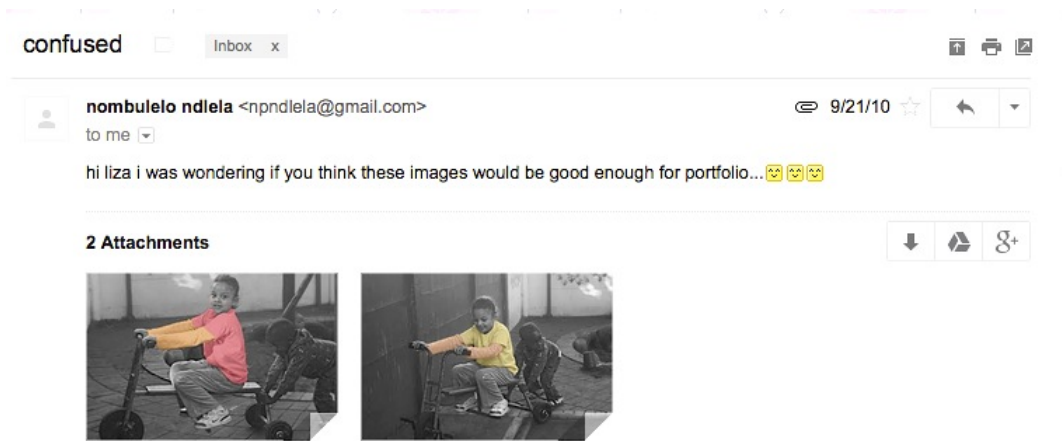


Figure 24: A screenshot of Nombulelo Ndlela’s email to me. Ndlela asks advice on her portfolio image submission. She does not use sentences or consider grammar and sends me attachments of her images. She ends with multiple emoticons.

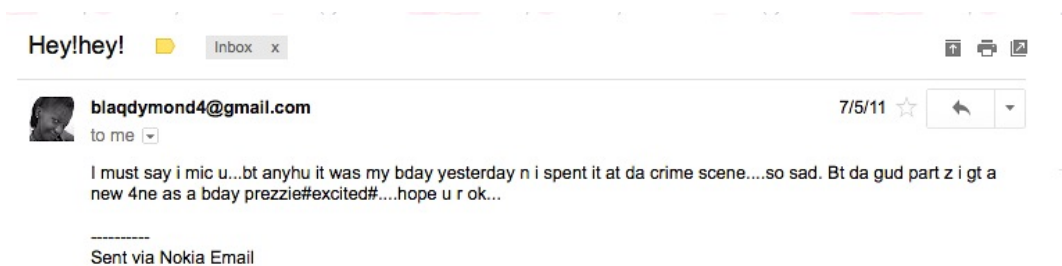


Figure 25: A screenshot of Ntombi Mbambo’s email to me. Mbambo explains her absence and her joy of receiving a cellphone for her birthday. Her expressive and innovative way of spelling words shows authority feeling comfortable to communicate with me in her own way, rather than in a formal, academically accepted manner.

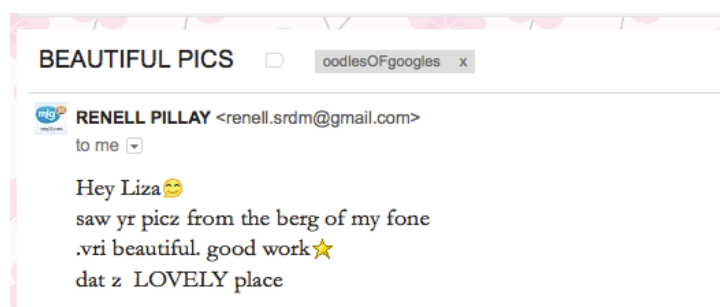


Figure 26: A screenshot of Renell Pillay’s email to me. Pillay sends an unexpected positive comment about my photography via her cell phone, using emoticons and abbreviations.

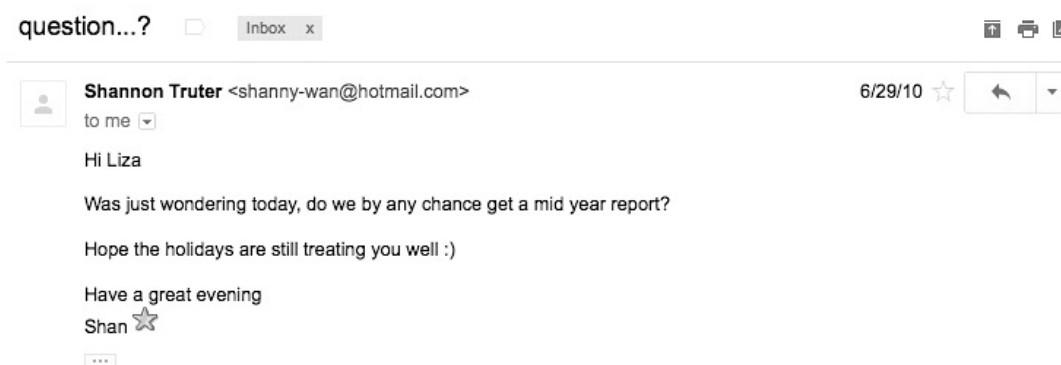


Figure 27: A screenshot of Shannon Truter’s email to me. Truter makes an enquiry during the holidays in the evening. She uses emoticons.

Emoticons brought about a casual tone (√), and were a way to invite communication (√) and interaction (√). I experienced that using these modes of expressing sound brought about a change in our relationship. It reduced the space between the learner and the mentor (√), the private and the public (√), the emotional wellbeing of the learner versus the scholarly wellbeing (√) (**tag**).

In Gmail learners would write in a humorous manner (√). Learners would refer to me in many ways, using nicknames and extensions to my name, that they made up. They spoke to me in high spirited, fun-loving and light-hearted ways (√). It showed me that they could adopt a relaxed and playful manner in my company, because they were comfortable in doing so, and I encouraged it. I refer to two examples, figures 28 and 29, where I asked learners to send me material to make blog posts on them in osmosisBLOG weblog. In figure 28, Sabelo Masuku’s³⁹ email (Guillem and Gillam 2004) responds to my persistence of asking him to send me images for a blog post in saying jokingly: “here are these images you have been crying about”. Sabelo also speaks in Zulu (as he knows I can understand some Zulu). He refers to me as “sisi liza” (sister liza) and “mam’ncane” (small mother).

³⁹ *Jaws_when my tooth wasn’t missing, published on July 30 2015. Available: <http://www.osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2010/07/jawswhen-my-tooth-wasnt-missing.html>*

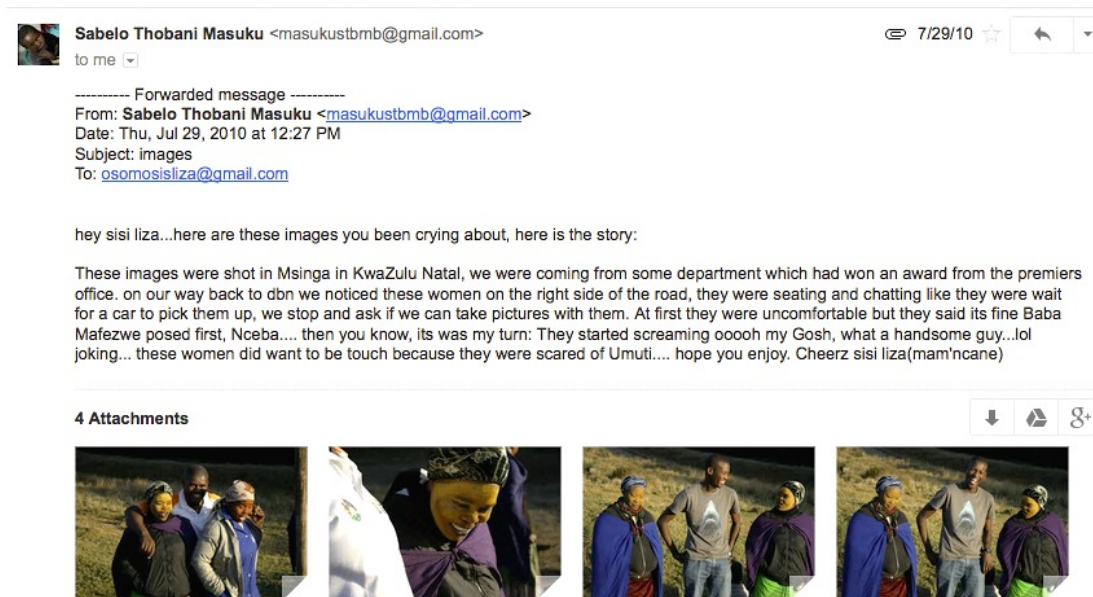


Figure 28: A screenshot from a Gmail response from Sabelo Masuku that shows humour and playfulness.

In figure 29, Jerome Kemraj⁴⁰, another learner writes my name in a lengthened manner, as if calling me. He also repeats his name in the subject as if, I am calling him.

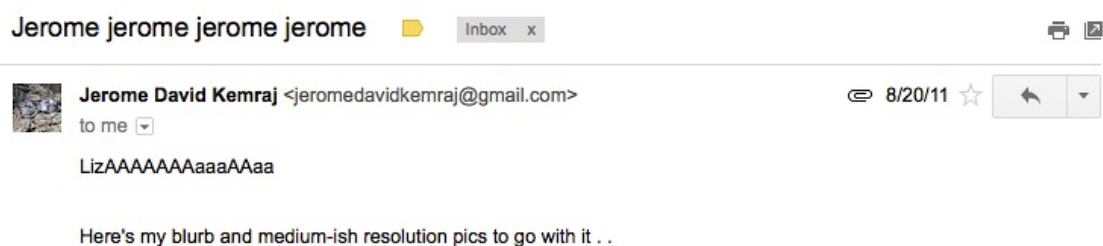


Figure 29: Screenshot of part of an email where learner Jerome Kemraj is playful in the way he writes my name.

⁴⁰ *The Power of Inspiration*, published on 21 August 2011. Available: <http://www.osomosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/08/power-of-inspiration.html>

In Gmail I got the opportunity to see learners in ‘ambient’ light (√) and listen more (√) to get to know learners better (hooks 2010), which set a casual tone for activating my role as mentor (*antennas, shadow of me*). From the tone and sound made by learners (“mp4’s”) I got direction for how I could collectively develop our online bodies (*indication mark*). From Gmail I found I could begin to load osmosisliza (*becoming*). I use the verb load because for me it speaks of charging up and fuelling up, when something becomes identifiable, figure 30.



Figure 30: A screenshot of a graphic loading symbol from my Gmail. Gmail was a significant router in my practice. Connecting to learners with Gmail shaped my mentoring practices.

How and why did Gmail lead me to the Google Lens?

I chose Google over Blackboard CE8. As the learners and I interacted more with photographs and Gmail, I discovered other Google spaces, by way of demonstration. I experimented with these linked Web 2.0 Google applications, not all together at one time, but in bits and pieces, moving from one to the other as the need arose, as they were made known to me mostly by the learners. As I learned what the Google applications did, I saw the potential of what the GL could offer for connecting learners and learning through these connections. From the casual conversations in Gmail, I began to consider how I could use other Google linked applications as exploratory spaces to close the gaps between learners’ social and educational needs. I wanted to change learners’ narrowed perception that learning only happens in structured *classrooms* through *lecturers*.

An announcement made by learner Renell Pillay in the GL application, Buzz⁴¹, on 04 April 2010, signalled to me about the necessity to cross boundaries between social and educational. Making a buzz, it seemed, was not as much about starting conversations but rather about announcing one's self. Pillay wrote:

Out of all of the places you could be today, and all of the things, you could be doing, fate led you here, to this moment, to this page. So heed these words wisely, for there's an important message here that you're supposed to take with you...(sic)

I wanted the learners to understand their learning environment as expressing a series of movements between:

- free-form expression or play, and technical expertise
- conceptual and practical applications of photographs for creative and commercial practice
- public and private domains of self
- cyberspace and the real world
- social and educational interactions with the world
- self and others
- self awareness and educative knowledge
- confidence, motivation and engagement

At the beginning of 2010, I was unaware of what Google could offer, and I did not even appreciate it as an educating tool until 2011. By 2011, I recognised possibilities in Google linked spaces, where Gmail was the valuable link that provided membership to these places (***looking glass, frame in a frame***).

I stretched Google to see how far I might expand its spaces and places to find and continue defining a fecund environment for the learners and myself, for photographs (***frame of mind, intuition, (dis)infect***). I chose six of these: Google Docs, Google Bookmarks, Buzz, YouTube, Blogger and Picasa Web Albums and collectively called them the Google Lens (GL).

⁴¹ Google. 2010. Google (online). Available: <http://www.google.com/buzz> (Accessed on 10 July 2010).

In the diagram below, figure 31, the elongation of the word “Goooooooooogle” symbolically represents how I had started with Gmail and discovered that it provided a valuable link to other free Google spaces.

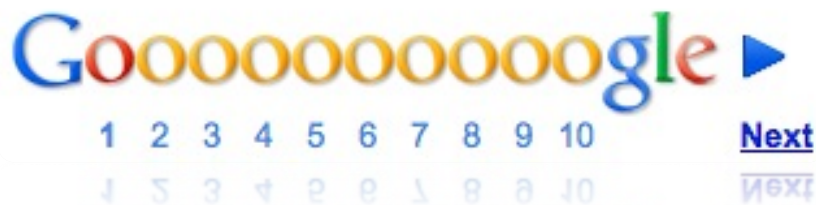


Figure 31: Screenshot from the bottom of the Google search homepage (image) Available: <https://www.google.co.za/search?q=google+icons&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-ZA:official&client=firefox-a> **(Accessed 12 June 2013)**

The Google Lens, supported by Web 2.0, offered “hybrid learning spaces” which “travel across physical and cyberspaces according to principles of collaboration and participation” (Greenhow et al 2009: 247), and which contained multiple platforms for engagement where a range of different forms of communicative information (image, text, video, hyperlinks, or add-ons to social networking sites) would be delivered, received and sent. The GL offered numerous possibilities to connect and be connected with, thus promoting ‘osmosis’ movements (***becoming, taking form, ebb and flow***). I began to consider that numerous separate but linked spaces might be more appropriate to provide the forum for a community of practice because they offered choice, a “living web”, flexible and varied (Tapscott 2009:53), where learners could choose their mode of engagement (***eyeball, intuition***). I was searching for organic spaces that were shaped by the way in which learners made individual contributions. I started to use the Google linked applications as mentoring tools and exploratory spaces to close the gap between the social and educational, the public and private, self and other, individual and collective; and between photography and art, and autonomy and diversity (***because of, (dis)locate, (mis)place, frame in a frame***).

In 2011 I started to have online critiques in Picasa Web Albums (PWA), (a way to address my concerns in Chapter 2, page 70-82). The Google Lens application known as a PWA was a good example of a multi-platform image bank (du Plessis 02 and 25 May 2011). In a PWA, learners could independently upload their photographs; learners could view and leave commentary on each others photographs. Learners showed enthusiasm and engagement in having this type of critique. After an online critique in a PWA, called "Fashion Illustration"⁴² (du Plessis 25 May 2011), I asked learners before they left⁴³ to Gmail me written feedback of their experience and thoughts on this type of online critique, as well as to make suggestions on how it may be improved.

These are the four responses I received⁴⁴ (Guillem and Gillam 2004).

Dena Churchman wrote (sic):

Todays crit went well, I enjoy critting in a group although sometimes it is hard to be completely honest. I think on the whole it went well, its a little confusing critting each other's comments. I think its a successful way of doing things, thank you Liza.

Sabelo Masuku who was part of Churchman's group wrote (sic):

I really enjoyed being in a group because it helps you be able to participate on other learners works and be able to learn other things you did not know! let try it again!!!! loved working with Lungi n Dena.

Fiona Wang wrote (sic):

No suggestions, Experience good, but nerve racking.

Thandeka Mseleku wrote (sic):

I like that we get to engage in each others work because we learn from each other but I also would have liked it more if you could hear what we say about each others work and also get your input thank you liza I had fun.

⁴²See annexure (8): ADP3 Assignment Brief: Fashion Illustration with Adobe Photoshop 2011

⁴³ This was a task asked to be done there and then, at the end of a day. As I did not monitor learners many 'slipped' out. Only 4 out of 11 that were present for the online critique responded. I have difficulty in getting learners to understand the value of feedback and the relevance this plays in trying to improve my practice.

⁴⁴ See annexure (9): Personal Notes: Summary from timeline diagrams for 2010 and 2011

It is Sanelisiwe Vilakazi's remark (Guillem and Gillam 2004) that stood out the most for me, because it echoed osmosis, my reasons for establishing the Google Lens. Saneliswe Vilakazi wrote (sic):

we did it as a class

In October 2011, I had a face-to-face conversation with the same class, about submitting their next assignment online. Learners chose to submit photographs online rather than have them printed. Class representative Young, speaks on behalf of the class and summarizes (Guillem and Gillam 2004) the positives and negatives of PWA in her email (October 2011), figure 32.

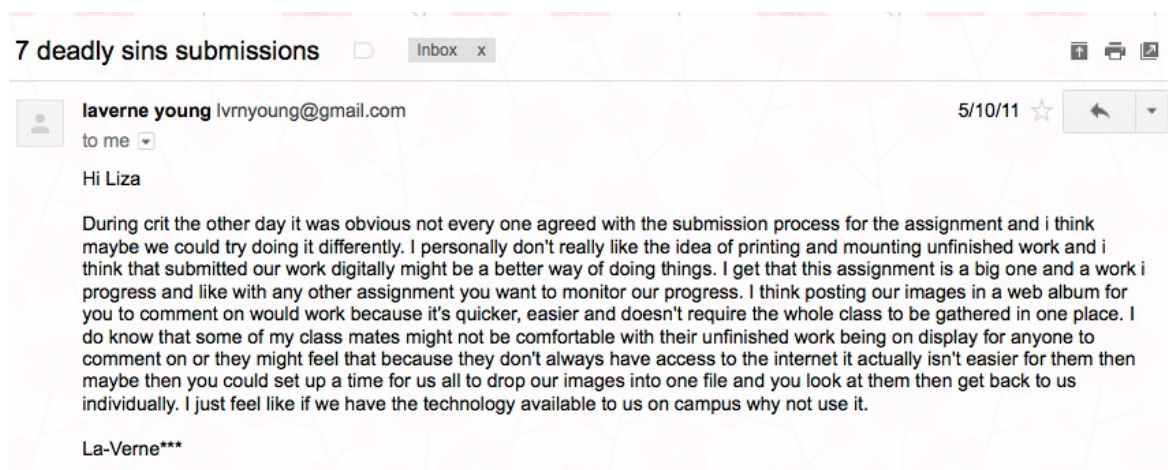


Figure 32: A screenshot of a Gmail sent from a student on behalf of the class stipulating that they favoured an online critique of their assignment “Fashion Illustration” over face-to-face method – dated 05 October 2011.

In another verbal conversation with the learners, the majority of the learners told me that they enjoyed browsing through the PWA independently for self-development (✓). Although I was aware that some learners were unhappy with showing unfinished work, I tried to encourage the view that these albums were about learning and development. Learners had free access to the PWA, they could upload multiple images or delete their image if they had a change of mind. Learners also indicated that they would look through the PWA's for inspiration (✓) to find reference points for conceptualization to facilitate thinking (✓).

Learners indicated that they enjoyed seeing other learners' creativity, so that they could make comparisons (✓) and get to know peers better (✓).

Through the Google Lens I could shift my online body by replacing the letter "e" in e-learning with a "c" to form c-learning. I embraced c-learning over e-learning (Sims 2008) (***frame in a frame, looking glass***). Sims defines c-learning as "technology-enhanced environments that enable collaboration, contextual and connected learning" (2008:154). The concept of C-learning (Sims 2008) spoke to me about the social (✓) and humanistic dynamics (✓) that accompanied learning experiences, and placed value on the whole learner (Zimring 1999, Allen 2005, Batchelor 2006, hooks 2010).

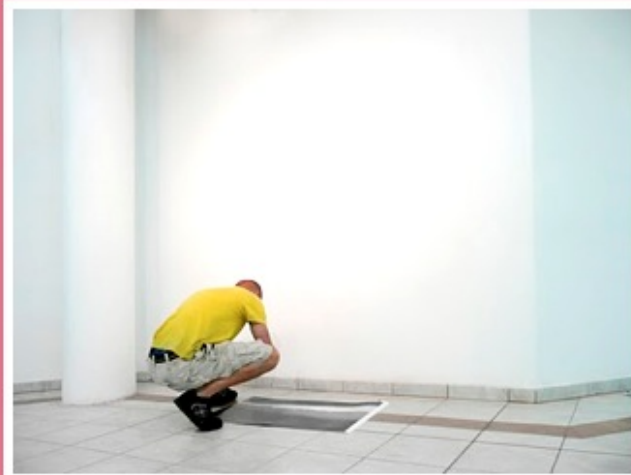
I recognised the c-learning concepts: communities (✓), critique (✓), connectivity (✓), construction (✓) and collaboration (✓) (Downes 2005, Goddard 2007, Sims 2008). They could strengthen visual literacies with photographs, because of human exchange and interaction, when the environment endorsed and allowed it (***antennas, tag***).

The electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA's weblog, figure 33, space_9 entitled "framework", visually addresses my challenge to build a safe space for personal expression. The snapshot shows a single learner looking down at his large printed photograph on the floor of a vacant gallery. Here I make reference to McKenzie's notion of the photograph functioning as both a mirror and window. The gallery space is vacant (exhibition still to go up) and the walls are "blank", "sensitized", waiting for something to happen (White 2006:24). A symbolic line on the floor of the gallery runs between the learner's body and the blank gallery wall, as if through the centre of the photograph.

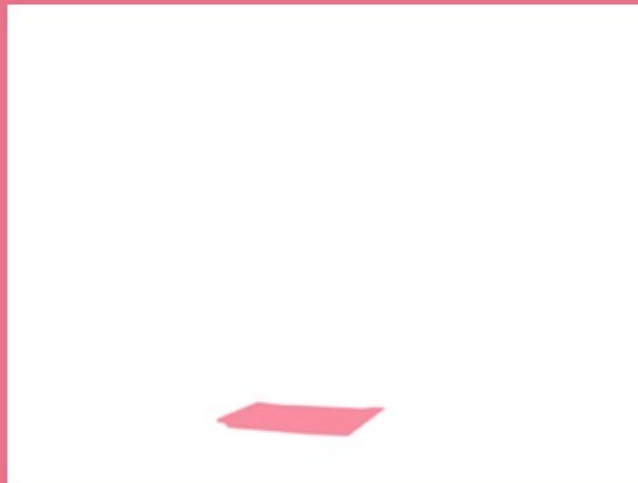
Sunday, October 2, 2011

space_9

framework



june 2010



Posted by **osmosis liza** at 11:08 AM



Recommend this on Google

Labels: **eyeball**, **frame of mind**, **g(r)asp**, **indication mark**, **insides out**, **me you**, **peril**, **responsibility**, **separating lines**, **sightless**, **solo**, **tag**, **under-exposed**

Figure 33: space_9 – “framework” (Labels: eyeball, frame of mind, g(r)asp, indication mark, insides out, me you, peril, responsibility, separating lines, sightless, solo, tag, under-exposed)

du Plessis, LK. 2011. space_9 (image). Available:

<http://lizaduplessis.blogspot.com/2011/10/space9.html> (Accessed 13 June 2013)

The shape of the photograph for the exhibition, a solid rectangular shape with suggestive weightiness, forms the pink part (reminiscent of a computer screen, or cell phone screen). I critically reflect and ask myself: What is needed to make a learner cross the line from a private to a public space? How can a learner look into the self? I believe that when self-awareness is under-developed or undermined, self-confidence is damaged, and this would affect how the photographer positions him or herself as a maker and commentator, and as critical citizen, in a local and global context (Durban University of Technology 2012). This electronic postcard signalled to me that I needed to find ways for learners to feel uncompromised and uncensored, in order to express themselves visually, orally and in a written form.

The Google Lens was formed out of my concerns (highlighted in my artist, mentor and online body chapters), and gave evidence for “Why I did what I did the way that I did” (McNiff 2008a, 2010). I created the Google Lens to embody learning communication strategies that promoted my osmosis living theory. The GL offered a relaxed communicative platform for visual and verbal exchange that helped me to bridge the gaps between the personal, educational and social, and between learners, their peers and myself (**because of, taking form, crossroad**). The GL positioned osmosis as a certain kind (Gee 2000) of mentor in photographs (**frame of mind, covering**).

The points below summarize my learning objectives for the GL. I used the GL as a mentoring tool to:

- connect learners through gestures of sharing and exchange, to promote collaboration. I wanted to establish links to peers, whom I regarded as other mentors. I wanted learners to send and receive communicative information via their own online bodies, using social networks like Gmail, Buzz, FaceBook, Twitter and others, as sites for knowing themselves and their practices through others (Allen K 2005, Lander 2005, Pallof and Pratt 2005, Laurillard 2006, Berk 2008 & 2010, Sims 2008, Tapscott 2009, Jones et al 2010).

- support and act on my living theory. I wanted to change how the learners saw me. I wanted to deconstruct existing learning and *teaching* paradigms I had and believed the learners had, about being a *lecturer* who *instructs* learners, in a traditional lecturing environment via a scheduled and fixed timetable. I wanted to offer a personal perspective of mentorship drawn from my artistic values and beliefs. I wanted to set in motion a learner-centred learning environment that existed flexibly, and individually customized in cyberspace, where learning is experiential and exploratory. I wanted learners and to learn alongside each other, by doing and finding out, through acts of discovery and communication. I wanted to share our learning experiences in order to gain confidence, motivation and engagement in our own learning developments (Montessori 1988, O’Niell and McMahon 2005, Goddard 2007, Greenhow et al 2009, hooks 2010).
- work outside of the confinements of a brick and mortar classroom or Learning Management System (LMS) bound spaces, and promote the notion of a living web using multiple interfaces and new technology media like video, Web 2.0, real time, or hyperlinks. I wanted to validate and encourage learning experiences outside of the timetable. I wanted us to meet and greet each other regularly in cyberspace, when we needed to and when we felt like it (Carmean and Haefner 2002, Goddard 2007, Tapscott 2009, Berk 2010, Jones et al 2010).
- place an emphasis on social learning and promote communication and dialogue, especially through the information obtained from photographs. I wanted learning to be a cognitive process where a learner acts and performs because of observing the stimuli from their own personal and collective social environments (Wenger 2000, Wenger et al 2002, Wenger 2006, Seely Brown and Alder, 2008, Wallace 2010, Anguilar and Krasny 2011).

- build a community of practice around photographs with a focus on the ubiquitous nature of digital photography. I wanted to start conversations from the visual messages sent and received over the Internet. I wanted learners to engage with peers, and other photographers, artists and critical thinkers, other disciplines and other contexts. I wanted to broaden the perception of how a learner may influence and be influenced.
- I wanted this experience to build confidence and motivate learners (Rakes 1999, Zimring 1999, Sims et al 2002, Allen 2005, Pallof and Pratt 2005, Kaplan 2006, Traub et al 2006, Hughes 2007, hooks 2010).
- generate a culture of critical thinking and discernment in photographic visual literacy. I wanted learners to publicise their stories, and their reasons for making and thinking photographs. I wanted to encourage ownership of expression and personal opinions, “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” of the “eye” because of the “I”. I wanted to offer both individual participation and membership of a group. I wanted to show multiple viewpoints and varied perspectives about thought and practice with photographs, to build on knowledge and challenge opinions in order to be engaged citizens of the world (Rakes 1999, Zimring 1999, Bamford 2003, Campany 2004, Traub et al 2006, Paul and Elder 2006a and 2006b, Hughes 2007, Afonso and Taylor 2009, hooks 2010).

At the end of this chapter, I reflected and asked:

How do I improve my practice in an online environment that keeps learners inspired and connected whilst engaged in shared learning experiences?

In the next chapter I evaluate the educational influences of my actions as I implemented the Google Lens in my practice, to improve my practice. I evaluate the action itself against the formation and intent of developing the GL (McNiff 2008 and 2010), set against the backdrop of my research questions. I also evaluate the influence from this action (ibid), by analysis of the qualitative data housed in the GL applications for action research (McNiff 2002), to make my conclusion. I zoom into my practice through the Google Lens, so that I can address my overall research questions: How do I use online technologies to improve my practice as a mentor in visual literacy? How can I use online environments to produce a learner of photographs who is confident, motivated and engaged with the field of visual communication? Which online spaces serve to empower learners as practitioners of photographs?

Chapter 4: Zooming in on data, looking for evidence of my educational influence.

To study a practice is simultaneously to study self: a study of self-in-relation to other.
(Bullough and Pinnegar 2001:14)

In this chapter I collect, collate and analyse data Google Lens and zoom in on the evidence from the Google Lens of my educational influence on my learners' learning (McNiff and Whitehead 2002) and identify the need to establish evidence out of the data I have collected. I collected my data from: Gmail (over 2000 emails), PWA (20 Web Albums), Buzz (30 posts), Google Docs documents (approximately 45 learner assignments), osmosisBLOG weblog (112 posts) and osmosisPROJECTS weblog (38 posts)⁴⁵. In this chapter I develop a method of finding the evidence of my influence through a number of processes (Timm 2013). I developed a series of tables and graphs, figure 35,36,38 so that I could demonstrate my educational influence on my learners. I explain in photographic terms what happened as I zoomed into my data, using the notion of an aperture to see, to observe, to probe the evidence in the data. I started at f22, looking widely, and then I moved through to, f16, f11, f5.6, and reached f1.4.

I believe that the multiple characteristics and capacities of my online learning body in the GL invite and allow interaction and application, and lead to a fecundity of online learning expression and communication. I believe that this fecundity simultaneously (in)forms my practice and provides a space for the demonstration of my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship. In the bullets below I list the specifics that make the GL fecund.

⁴⁵ see annexure (9): Personal notes: summary for timeline diagram

The GL applications collectively empower learners as photographic practitioners because they:

- are common (popular) and free – democratic but secure;
- provide synchronous (real time chat/collaboration) and asynchronous (converse and publish thoughts without help/independently) interactivity;
- are compliant with new technologies (like cell phones etc) and integrated with Web 2.0. Users are linked or can make links via numerous devices and domains (such as other social networking sites) from any place, at any time with speed and accuracy;
- offer a variety of ways (visual or verbal) to make announcements and/or publish thoughts opinions or exchange stories and experiences;
- allow autonomy but also allow collaborators to build and be able to do things together;
- are self-organisational: for images, hyperlinks, video and written text;
- are configured to support high resolution images with a variety of viewable options (previews) and playable video (directly in the interface);
- accommodate creative and expressive use of text: diverse and numerous types of characters and emoticons;
- allow flexible layout and customizable dialogue windows; providing short cuts (push buttons/cookies) and choices for learners to store and browse content;
- are user-friendly (WYSIWYG) and offer a fun approach to building content.
- extend into online “cloud” storage for: building personal libraries, image banks, storing organizing and sharing data (images and text);
- show *like* buttons and other symbols to stencil hospitality and signify casual and friendly gestures of acknowledgement;
- provide a platform to showcase creativity and professionalism;
- offer addons, and thus the information can be shared on other social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter;
- connect private to public world (discretion of user);

I make a retrospective analysis of the period 2010–2011. The GL acted like a memory card. During the process of collecting and collating evidence I was reminded of experiences I had forgotten about (**tear(s), a hollow muscular organ, covering, crossroad**). I found I started at the end to make sense of the beginning and looked from above to make sense of below, much like how the weblog osmosisLIZA is structured and formed.

For this chapter, unlike the others, I had to adopt an impassive and detached position in relation to the “I”. I used a surveying eye on the Google Lens memory card, to select and bring into focus with an analytic eye those experiences and moments that addressed my research questions, to move forwards. I had formulated the GL in an organic way. I approached my data analysis with the same gradual outlook (**intuition, antennas, eyeball**). I only made sense of my data during the process of accumulating, uncovering and sifting, thus revealing an “emergent” method (Suter 2012:363). The method for analyzing my evidence, the data in the GL, was not pre-determined. The first level data ‘freewheeled’ into second and third level. As it evolved, I resolved, through “themes, concepts, insights and understandings” (Patton 2002 cited in Suter 2012: 344) to make sense of it, in relation to my research questions. I noticed whilst establishing these levels, that I began thinking and behaving like a camera’s body, zooming in and out, controlling focus, controlling depth of field (DOF) (Ziniades 2006), using aperture priority (**taking form**).

In this Chapter I show how I used this analogy of prioritising aperture, and numerous f-stops (f/22, f16, f11, f5.6, f1.4), to move from a small opening, seeing everything in focus, to a wider one, so that I could confidently get to the self-study area of focus, osmosisliza.

When I evaluated the educational influences of my actions, I had to act like Susan Sontag’s camera that “makes everyone a tourist in other people’s reality” (1977: 57). I found it difficult to adopt a standpoint of an observer or tourist in my own life and find my analytical eye and objective I.

There was so much (too much) qualitative data that seemed undirected (**unseeing**). There was so much freewheeling with the GL (**intuition**). I felt stuck right in the middle, swamped, immobilized by the amount (**cornered, peril**). There was a lot of play and scattered actions in and with the GL. I did not know what or how I would find what it said about my practice (Mauthner and Parry 2004, Suter 2012) (**ebb and flow**). I also recognised that I was still connecting emotionally with experiences in my practice and learning aspirations (Lander 2005) (**a hollow muscular organ**). Awkwardly, I knew that I would need to distance myself much much more. I needed to step back from subjectivity to a critical and objective position for this self-study. I zoomed out to see the distance of how I can zoom back into my research.

I chose not to use Qualitative Data software to sort or collate my data, but rather to go painstakingly and physically through all my GL texts (visual and written) and other mentoring *spaces* and *places*⁴⁶ (**antennas, looking glass**). I was more comfortable working intuitively and finding my own way to process the information. I needed to touch the data and shape it by how it touched me. My sculptural sensibility to build up form came into play (**tattooed**).

I started by looking through Gmail correspondence (about 2000 emails), then online comments and posts from 150 weblog entries⁴⁷, 20 PWA's, and one year of Buzz announcements (**relevant fingers**). I went through class discussions, assignment briefs, lesson plans and study guides from three levels and four subjects over two years (**covering**). I collected correspondence from hard-drives, online clouds (Google Documents), desktop folders, worksheets and piles of assignment hand-ins to look for evidence of educational influence. It was time consuming (took four months) but provided the necessary shift and first step of seeing myself in the role of action researcher.

⁴⁶ See annexure (9): *Personal Notes: Summary for timeline diagrams 2010 and 2011*

⁴⁷ namely *osmosisBLOG* and *osmosisPROJECTS*

I needed to develop systems that would allow me to sort and decide, to compare and organize, to locate what my qualitative data in the GL might be saying (Suter 2012). I needed to choose evidence for my educational influences (McNiff 2010) **(because of, solo, echo, shadow of me)**. I critically reflected and asked: How do I understand my professionalism? Which is the more valuable evidence to back up my knowledge claim? What do I choose as critical feedback from learners to support my ideas? (ibid).

The electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog, figure 34, entitled space_85: “artist’s viewfinder” is about how I changed the paradigms of my thinking about finding my own creative (comfortable) way to do research and analyse my quantitative data. Becoming a tourist in my practice was a necessary “step towards decolonizing both (my) research and (my) professional practice”.

When I became objective, I was able to claim a position as “a producer (rather than reproducer) of cultural knowledge” (Mutau and Swadener 2004 cited in Taylor 2009:05). In the beginning I looked at my research analysis through the constraints of what I regard as a regulated viewfinder, the rigid shape defined through a rectangle. This regulated shape dictated to me a calculated and rigid boundary. Here I am referring to research paradigms and the viewfinder of a camera or computer screen.

I initially could not comprehend how and what my data was saying about my online body, because I had not given myself permission to be artist here either, I had not considered locating the space for creative interventions and direction by way of interpretation and re-contextualization (Josselson 2003, Bochner and Ellis 2003, Alexenberg 2008). I had to make my method for data analysis meaningful to myself first, for it to be meaningful in my research. The snapshot shows a circular mirror reflecting back on an intentionally slightly overexposed scene in a Gallery space (the space for artists). The circular frame fills the viewfinder frame dead centre. This circular shape challenges the parameters normally defined by the regular frame and the way a scene is photographed.

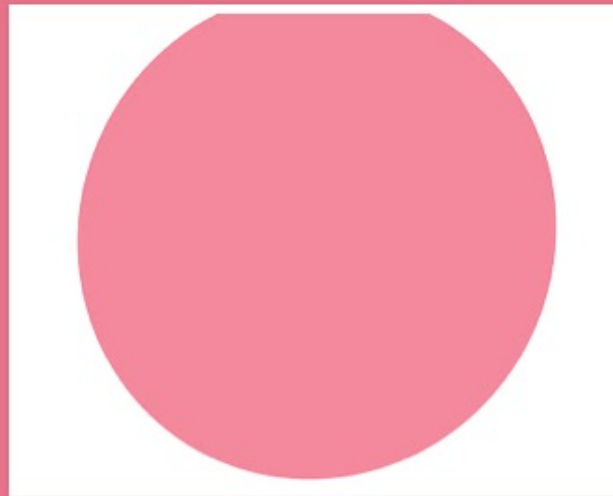
Friday, May 3, 2013

space_85

artist's viewfinder



may 2010



Posted by **osmosis liza** at 9:17 AM



Recommend this on Google

Labels: **eyeball**, **frame of mind**, **indication mark**, **insides out**, **looking glass**, **shadow of me**, **solo**, **tag**, **taking form**, **tattooed**, **viewpoint**

Figure 34: space_85 – “artist’s viewfinder” (Labels: eyeball, frame of mind, indication mark, insides out, looking glass, shadow of me, solo, tag, taking form, tattooed, viewpoint)

du Plessis, L. 2013. space_85. *osmosisLIZA* (image). Available: <http://lizaduplessis.blogspot.com/2013/05/space85.html> (Accessed 21 April 2013)

The pink part in the second image is traced from the circular shape of the reflective mirror. The pink part is large and solid, with a dominating and contesting presence. Its position and weightiness overrides the boundaries of the imposed rectangular traditional camera frame. This electronic postcard signalled to me that I needed to frame data as I look, regard and see fit from my comfort zone, my artist body.

I needed to put value in being an artist who was creating with the medium of photographs and reflect my values of “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” in my research. Suter writes (2012:345) that:

The qualitative researcher often is the instrument, relying on his or her skills to receive information in natural contexts and uncover its meaning by descriptive, exploratory, or explanatory procedures.

I noticed whilst establishing my three levels of data analysis, and whilst processing information and mechanically collating it, that I began thinking and behaving like a camera’s body to uncover meaning (Suter 2012) **(g(r)asp, crossroad)**. I was set on aperture priority, controlling exposure, depth of field (DOF), zooming in and out of the Google Lens to make sense of my data. I noticed that I was framing, making decisions about what to include and exclude, in order to curate and tell my story about my practice and bring osmosisliza into focus **(intuition, frame with a frame)**.

The aperture is an opening in the camera body that regulates light. Prioritizing aperture controls the amount of light entering the camera and affects the focus of the subject due to changing DOF (Langford 1997 and 2007, Waller 2000, Ziniades 2006). The f-stop (lens speed) changes the size of the aperture, and determines DOF. When the opening becomes smaller, a photographer stops down, and everything is in focus. To make the opening bigger, a photographer opens up and chooses which areas will be in focus and which will be blurry (ibid). Visually DOF regulates the clarity and detail from the foreground, through the midground to the background (ibid).

To position myself in this self-study and answer the research questions, I had to 'stop down' first to be able to 'open up' to where osmosisliza was, in her data **(solo, tag, indication mark)**. It was not surprising that the method for analysing data in this self-study would be moulded on photographic sensibilities, my newly acquired body of knowledge on photographs. This was my area of artistic focus, that which I was mostly trying to develop in osmosisliza **(because of, (dis)locate, gaze, eyeball)**.

What happened at f/22?

At f/22 I looked at the panoramic vista of my mentoring practices from 2010 to 2011⁴⁸ with everything about my osmosis living theory in focus **(because of, antennas, crossroad, separating lines)**. I collected and stitched parts together, for my first level of data analysis.

I did the following:

- I made a summary of the GL and analysed the properties and characteristics of each application, and set this against what I wanted the GL to do, its purpose (Chapter 3, from page 106).
- I enquired into how the GL functioned as a mechanism for COP.
- I looked at the ways learners interacted in the GL and aligned these observations to my artistic, mentor and online values of trying to cultivate a relevant online body for mentoring to improve visual literacy in photographs (Chapter 1/2/3).

⁴⁸ see annexure (9):*Personal Notes: Summary for timeline diagrams for 2010 and 2011*

- I collected the ticks (✓) to find words⁴⁹ that encompassed my definition of fecund, as I saw it necessary for a learning environment for professional photographers practitioners.

What happened at f/16?

At f/16 I extrapolated and pinpointed practices and projects only from the GL, for my second level of data analysis (***becoming, antennas, crossroad, separating lines***). I observed how visual and verbal text, the “shared repertoire” (Wenger 2000:229), including the artefacts, characteristics, symbols, words, styles, stories and sensibilities used to give meaning to a community, were expressed in comments, shared resources, tools, and ways of exchanging and problem solving for social learning to take place (ibid).

Seely Brown and Alder state that an important aspect of social learning is “not only ‘learning about’ the subject matter but ‘learning to be’ a full participant in the field” (2008:09). I focused on how these interactions showed “creative use(s) of competencies” (Debes 1969 cited in Fransecky and Debes 1972:27) for visual literacy and set a tone of engagement through how learners revealed and expressed engagement with my living theory values of Authority, Authenticity and Authorship.

I took the following action:

- I designed a table, figure 35, for qualitative data so that I could measure confidence, motivation and engagement from the way learners interacted and communicated in the GL – seeing these as my social learning concepts (Wenger 2000, Wenger et al 2002, Wenger 2006, Seely Brown & Alder 2008, Aguilar and Krasny 2011).

⁴⁹ see annexure (6): Words associated with fecund for confidence, motivation and engagement

- I looked for evidence (visual and written text) that showed self-assurance and an appreciation of one's own (learners and my own) and other's qualities and abilities, to measure confidence. To measure motivation, I looked for evidence (visual and written text) that showed interest, enthusiasm, stimulation to do something, or to encourage others. To measure engagement, I looked for evidence (visual and written text) that showed involvement and conversation.
- I looked for making meaningful contact and connections made between the GL spaces, peers and their practical work. I regarded the types of movements and connections (osmosis) that were made to bring about conversation, exchange, reciprocity between myself and the learners (visa versa) and how these were implied and articulated verbally or visually.
- I asked myself: What does learner voice and participation look like?
- I regarded what other sensory experiences were experienced in the GL. I examined how learners expressed joy and affection in their online bodies.
- I asked myself: What types of events and or conversations seem to motivate learners? How could I 'entice' learners to interact and engage more? What was the tone of the interactions and responses made? How did learners like to communicate?
- I observed from the shared repertoire, artefacts and tone, that I had established a certain kind of mentoring portfolio (Strong-Wilson 2009) and behaved as a certain kind of mentor (Gee 2000). I asked myself: What are the mentoring and learning experiences for the learners? What are the mentoring and learning experiences for me?

- I was able to monitor and gauge what the learners and I lived through. I could regard the kind of relationship I had with the learners through the GL activities and how we shaped and (in)formed each others' development.
- I evaluated my educational influence on others. I asked: Who were the regular chatterers? What should I be happy about? What should I be concerned about? What brings learners together? What devices were used/not used? How did learners respond? When, where and why was there a response or no response?
- From this table I was able to pinpoint shortfalls and strengths, which raised questions about my practice. I compared my 2010 mentoring practice and assignments with those in 2011. I tried to establish: What I did not do enough of? What I did. What can still be done?

INDEX:

- (1) *Subject: Identified the assignment, discussion, blog post header, project or email from all assignments (formative and summative) and interactions with learners.*
- (2) *Date: shows chronology*
- (3) *Level of study: which learners and which subjects were involved*
- (4) *Number of learners: An approximation. Who has it reached?*
- (5) *Online Google space: Name and identify*
- (6) *Other Linked space: Name and identify, Where can it go?*
- (7) *Conversations: visuals and text /shared repertoire: comments, resources and evidence from and between learners and myself. This is where I identified the artefacts, characteristics, symbols, words, styles and sensibilities used to give meaning to this community (Wenger 2000: 229). This constitutes the bulk of what Fransecky and Debes (1972) describe as 'creative use(s) of competencies' for visual literacy and "shared repertoire" (Wenger 2000, Aguilar and Krasny 2010).*
- (8) *3 A's: measure how the GL applications provided a platform for learners to show (i) Authenticity (true to self), (ii) Authorship (personal story), and (iii) Authority (strong voice).*
- (9) *CoP (from Wenger 2000): Builds relationships, shows committed members, shows signs of social learning and helping each other over time, sharing information.*
- *Confidence: Look for evidence (visual and written text) that shows self-assurance and an appreciation of one's own and others' qualities and abilities.*
- *Engagement: Look for evidence (visual and written text) that shows involvement, conversation, making meaningful contact and connection, moving position.*
- *Motivation: Look for evidence (visual and written text) that shows interest, enthusiasm, stimulation to do something, encourage.*

What happened at f/11?

At f/11 I wanted to get a better understanding of the story of the GL and the progression of developing the GL as a mentoring tool (***taking form, antennas, crossroad, separating lines***). This was a way to explore the question “Who am I?” who teaches now, by finding out “Who was I?” who taught then. I took the following action:

- I created two timelines of my GL practices from 2010 to 2011, figures 36 - 37, that showed the growth of the GL, the activities in each GL and how they were used together in a month.
- I asked the following questions: What Google Lens spaces are used most often? Why? What Google Lens spaces were used together? Why?
- I noted that in 2011 The Google Lens was consistently used and I noticed that the learners’ participation in the GL was more productive. I asked what made this shift? What did I do to make the GL more engaging?
- I searched for a case study to use that best encapsulates my educational influences.

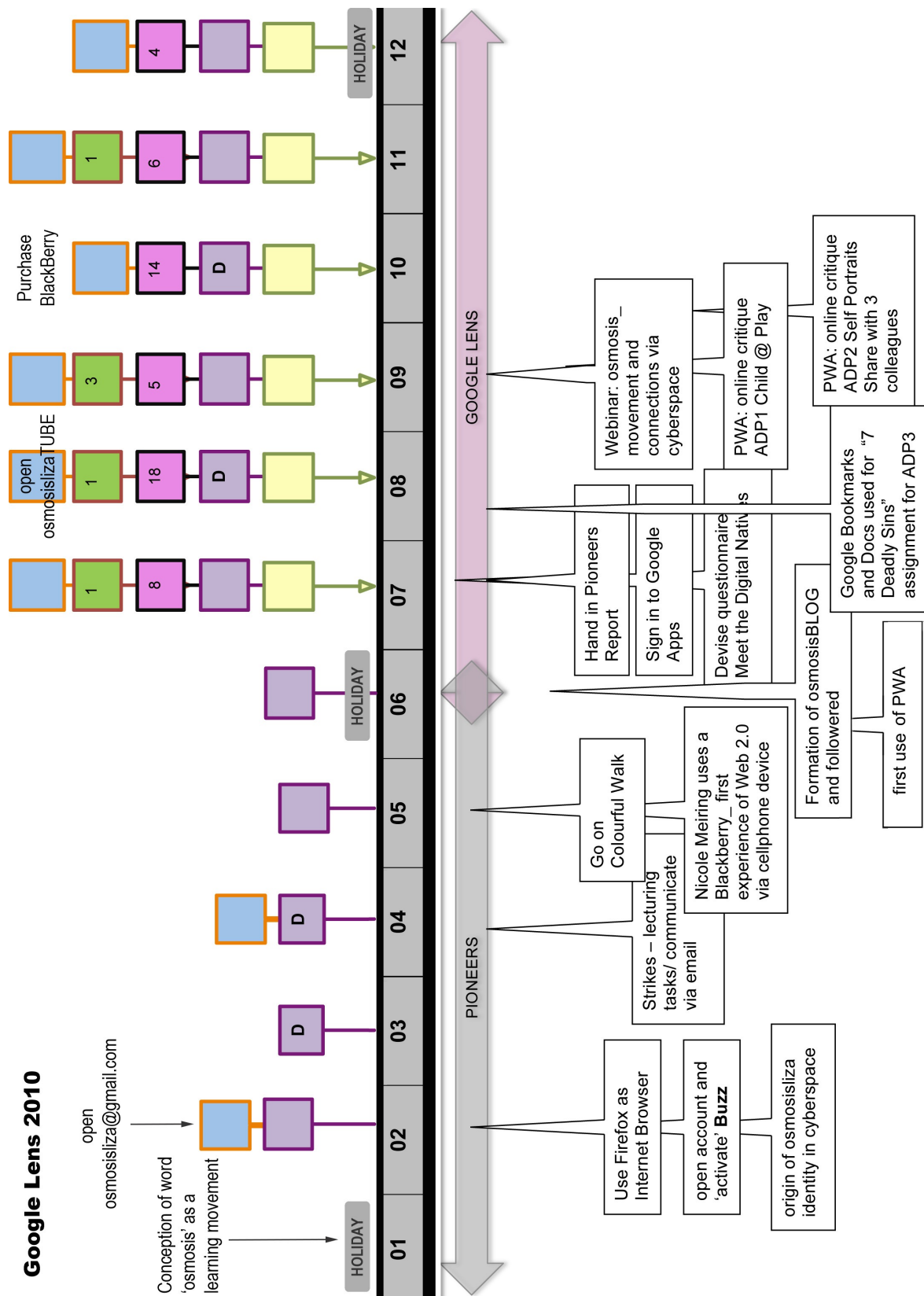


Figure 36: A timeline illustration of 2010 Google Lens activity – see index figure 38

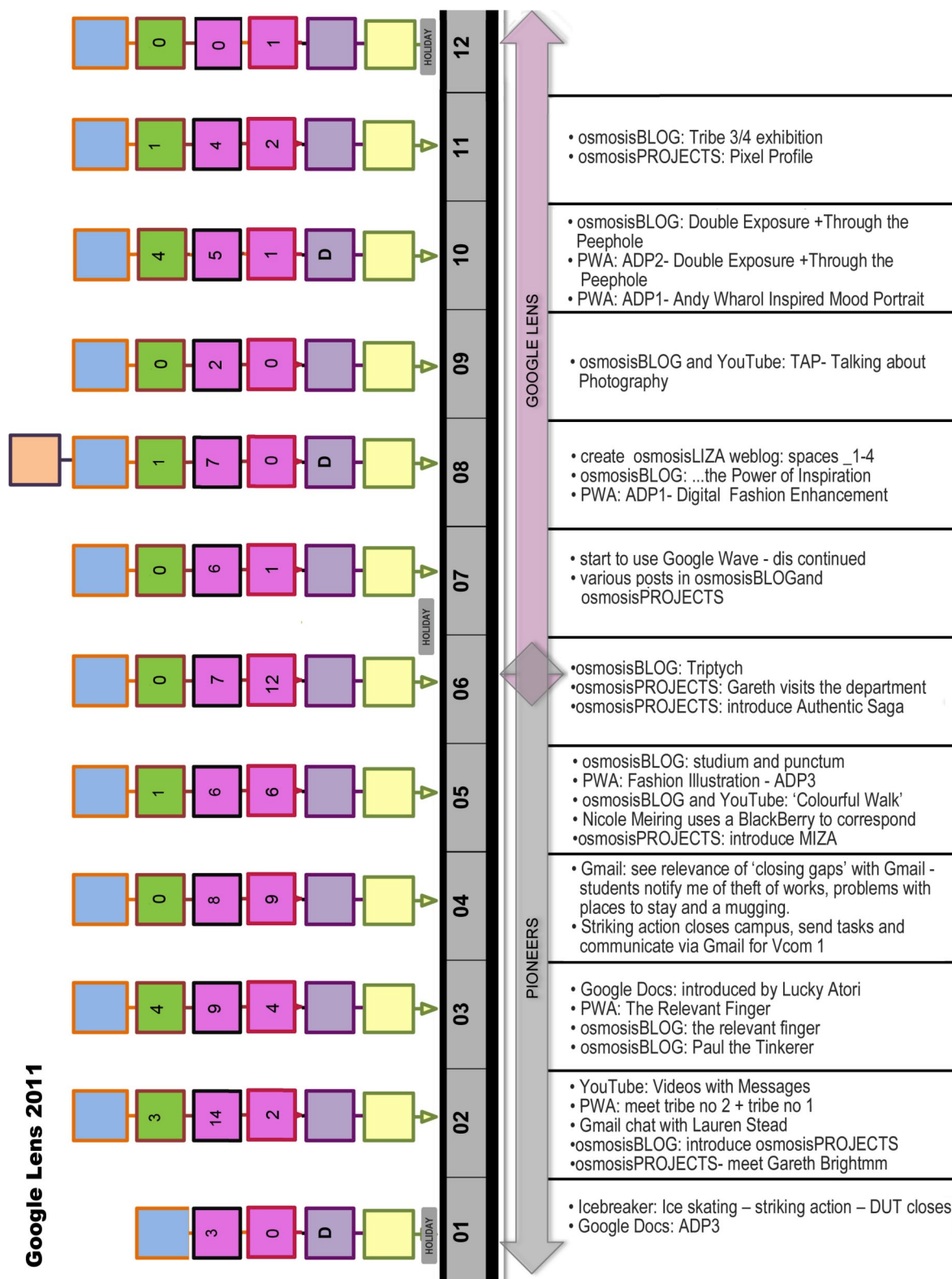


Figure 37: A timeline illustration of 2011 Google Lens activity – see index figure 38

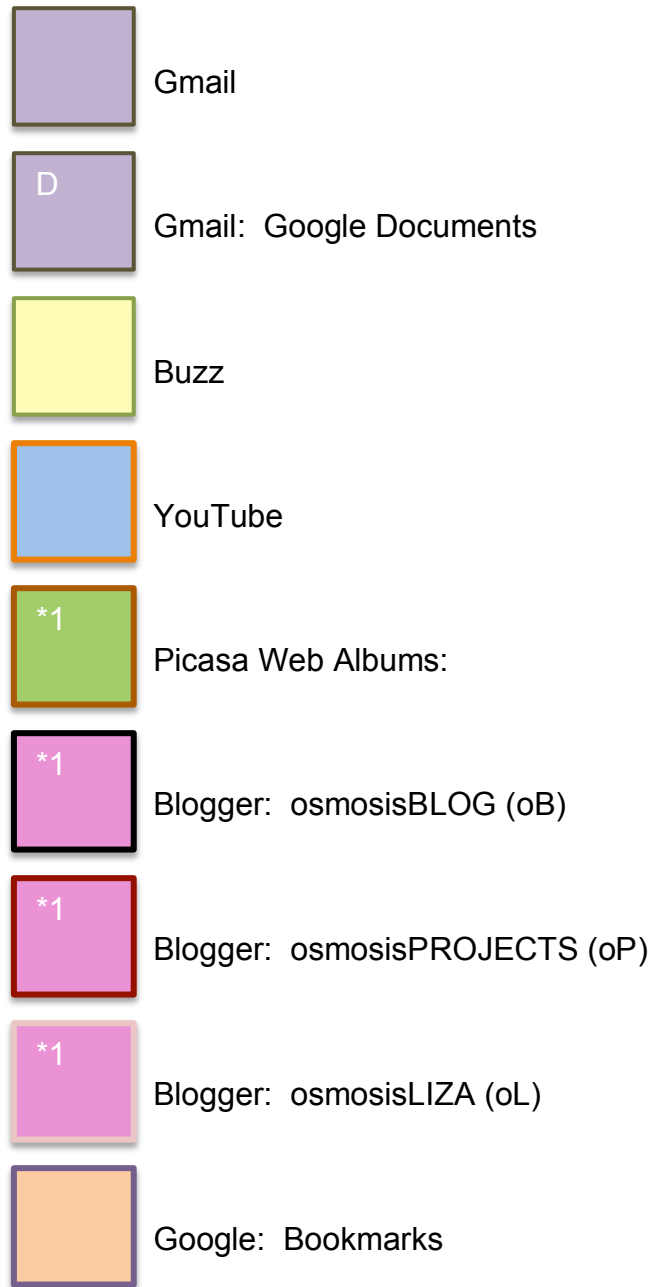


Figure 38: Visual index of the colours to denote the different Google applications that form the Google Lens, during 2010 and 2011. The numerical value indicates the number of blog posts created in that month.

What happened at f/5.6?

At f5.6 for my third level of data I chose “The Green Tear”⁵⁰ to tell a GL story to illustrate the kinds of actions I have been describing (McNiff 2008b) (***frame in a frame, antennas, crossroad, separating lines***) in my tables (Guillem and Gillam 2004). I noted how the actions and effects from one learner interaction with me led to multiple interactions in the GL, providing multiple learning spaces and places (physical and discursive), displaying osmosis (du Plessis 2010a) and social learning in a developing COP (Wenger 2000, Seely Brown & Alder 2008). Barthes asks photographers: “Why choose (why photograph) this object, this moment, rather than some other? (1980:06).

I chose “The Green Tear” because it expressed evidence of my educational influence on my learners in the following ways, by demonstrating:

- dialogues in/from external and internal worlds;
- learning through the act of photographs eg: terminologies, ways with the world;
- conversations on developing oneself as a body and a measure of photographic “knowledge”; the photographic elements for developing Visual Literacy;
- levels of “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship” of the “I” in the “eye” in both visual and written text;
- connectivity to osmosis philosophy – learning through movement;
- usage and integration of multiple GL spaces;
- evidence of cultivating CoP (the collective voice);
- good learner participation;
- possible identification of themes, actions and effects of engagement, confidence and motivation to develop critical thought;
- shortfalls in the GL and in mentoring and learning;
- how I value process and conversation;
- a developmental progress in learners engagement in the GL;
- shifts in use of GL from 2010 and 2011;
- steps forward for improvements to practice;

⁵⁰ see annexure (10): Case Study: The Green Tear.

What happened at f/1.4?

At f/1.4, I asked myself: “Where is osmosisliza in all this”? and “Where does my digitized heart, eye and brain lie?” (***a hollow muscular organ, eyeball, frame of mind***). I analysed the relevance of exhibiting my electronic postcards in osmosisLIZA weblog, and concluded that this body of work shows how I:

- find a sense of belonging in my practice as an artist (Batchelor 2006, de Lange et al 2007)
- assert my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship - by taking ownership of my voice in my electronic postcards as I try to resolve my personal identity dilemma (Authority) by telling my story(Authorship) with veracity (Authenticity).
- articulate personal ideas about my identity dilemma through a visual voice (de Lange et al 2007) with photographs – my “I” through my “eye”.
- position myself in my practice and self-study so that I can negotiate feelings, intellect and personal aesthetic from an artist body.
- look, regard and see the “movements between” (du Plessis 2011a), from artist to mentor, from mentor to researcher and vice versa.
- place relevance in a personal educational theory formulated from my beliefs and values in my practice and make it public (Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000:239)
- evaluate and value my key life-world experiences that underpinned my own professional practice and aspirations (Taylor 2009:04) as I develop as a mentor in photographs.
- use the GL to tell a personal story and offer content (Tapscott 2009), to contribute to multiple perspectives and visions about a way with photographs.

I identify with how Alexenberg sums up the significance of synergizing one’s life as an artist, as a qualitative researcher in a “conceptual age”, by “honoring” the unique way in which one puts “seemingly unrelated ideas” together (2008:231). This, according to Alexenberg (ibid) is signified through:

how one create(s) aesthetic significance, discerns(s) patterns” and ”craft(s) a meaningful narrative... integrating knowing, doing, making through aesthetic experiences that elegantly flow between intellect, feeling and practice to create and convey meaning

Through the Google Lens the artist, and mentor bodies of osmosisliza are now in view. In the previous chapters, I articulated who she can be, but in closing this document I articulate who she is now, at the end of this study. I adopted numerous vantage points (Szarkowski 2007) to look, regard and see different perspectives of osmosisliza. I viewed from below up, a worm's eye view, to understand my artist body more. I viewed at eye level, with the learners, to understand my mentor and online body more. I moved out from the middle of my data to a more elevated position to see the panorama of my life as a developing junior lecturer in photography. From a bird's eye view I did action research to find evidence to validate my educational influences. When I looked down from above, I gathered all the questions that arose from my identity dilemma search, to make my final statement. In the next chapter I state the way forward and answer my research questions.

Conclusion

Have you ever made a claim to know your own educational development and subjected the claim to public criticism? If you have, what does such a claim to educational knowledge look like?
(Whitehead 1989:41)

To show what kind of difference I want to make in our world (McNiff 2010) I return to my research questions and provide evidence of my educational influence to demonstrate my “educational development” (Whitehead 1989:41) and thereby contribute to “educational knowledge” (Whitehead 1989:41). My responses to the research question and sub-questions below are contextualised through the qualitative data collected and analysed in the Google Lens (Chapter 4). I also consider the numerous reflective questions (Whitehead 1989, McNiff 2010) asked in this document whilst I was investigating osmosisliza’s artist body (defined through electronic postcards in the GL), mentor body and online body (defined by the GL) (Chapters 1 to 3).

My main research question is addressed to my artist body:

How do I use online technologies to improve my practice as a mentor in visual literacy?

My sub questions are addressed to my mentor and my online body, respectively:

1.1 How can I use online spaces to produce a learner of photographs who is confident, motivated and engaged with the field of visual communication?

1.2. Which online spaces serve to empower learners as practitioners of photographs?

In order to answer these three questions I provide evidence of my educational influence in respect of my use of online technologies. I provide evidence in respect of my practice related to my sub-questions first. I answer both sub-questions together because the evidence of my educational influence in respect of these questions often overlaps and is mutually informing.

To enrich the photographs practice and professional development of learners, I have integrated web based communicative sites with learner assignments and formative class assessments. I observed that my learners communicated with me online with increasing confidence and this improved my relationships with my learners and the relationships between my learners.

I observed that as my learners' confidence grew with the use of a single GL application (like Gmail), and as they explored other GL applications until they had explored all the applications (viz. Gmail, Google Documents, Buzz, YouTube, Google Bookmarks, Picasa Web Albums and Blogger). Their confidence developed exponentially and this confidence then allowed them to venture into other spaces, which they had not previously explored. The spaces they ventured into with their newfound confidence extended beyond digital spaces into real life spaces. They gained confidence and expertise in classroom discussions and engaged more with each other, sharing and exchanging information from private feelings and thoughts to professional development. I watched as they worked alongside each other helping each other to know more, to learn more so that they could see and be more.

I observed with delight as my learners displayed a sense of self happening because of the "interplay of competence and experience" (Wenger 2000:226) between personal knowing and belonging, from similar passions that are bound by common goals, skills and collective imagination" (Hughes 2007). I observed my learners in a Community of Practice (CoP) where they negotiated, contributed and acknowledged one another through reciprocal participation, in relation to the world outside, and what is "not self" (Pithouse, Mitchel and Weber 2009b:47). I saw how sharing artefacts and repertoire online in a CoP developed a learner's confidence, motivation and engagement with the creative act of making and thinking photographs for professional development, because of influencing and being (in)formed by others. I watched their confidence and creative capacity growing parallel with their practice in the GL as they further explored the domain of photographs and online communities (Wenger 2000, Wenger et al 2002, Wenger 2006, Aguilar and Krasny 2011) independently. I saw how their levels of confidence, motivation and engagement in social learning developed with their practice in the GL.

I realised that all of this development evidenced my educational influence through introducing them to the GL. I observed the responses of my learners' to my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authorship and their efforts to explore and apply them in their lives. I watched as they explored their freedom of expression to publicise and participate freely and spontaneously, to act and be as they wanted, and to promote their integrity, conviction and accountability (Parker 2007, Hughes 2008, hooks 2010) in osmosisBLOG, osmosisLIZA, osmosisPROJECTS, Buzz and PWA.

I watched as their trustworthiness grew (Hamilton Pinnegar 2000, hooks 2010, Tapscott 2009) and as they build trust through “transparency” (Tapscott 2009:267), in Gmail. I mostly discovered that they could trust themselves and others.

My educational influence was evidenced in my learners asking each other for help, pooling their resources and exploring fun and humour in their learning, in PWA, Buzz, osmosisPROJECTS, osmosisBLOG, following my example. I observed how learners engage in cyberspace confidently and motivated, as new technologies change and develop (from Buzz to Google Plus⁵¹).

In the GL, I observed evidence of my educational influence when the majority of learners used new technologies **confidently** with decreasing assistance and guidance from me the mentor. Learners showed me that they could engage in self-regulated activities independently when navigating the Internet, using the GL and other social networks. Learners displayed competence and curiosity to build on existing knowledge and improve their own standards.

My educational influence was evident when learners:

- used the commentary boxes and made contributions by voicing their thoughts in writing, in a free form manner (PWA, osmosisBLOG, Gmail and Buzz);
- expressed personal viewpoints and point of view, showing an assertive grasp of self awareness and consideration for peers (PWA, osmosisBLOG, Buzz).
- uploaded their images for public viewing and gave me permission to share them with other year groups (PWA, osmosisBLOG). This indicated to me that they felt self-assured enough for scrutiny from multiple perspectives, and showing an increased willingness to be open for various suggestions;
- responded to other learners’ images with creative and positive individualistic replies, using text and emoticons showing imagination and boldness (in PWA, osmosisBLOG, Buzz);
- performed actively in group activities, collaborating and problem solving (PWA, osmosisPROJECTS);

⁵¹ Google. 2013. Google (online). Available: <http://www.google.com/google-d-s/whatsnew.html> (Accessed on 16 July 2013).

- voiced ways in which they liked and did not like learning activities, thus improving my practice and their learning experience (Gmail);

In the GL, learners showed evidence of **motivation** through their active or non-active membership in the Google Lens and their willingness to be identified. Learners showed that they were mostly open to new experiences and to building a community through technologies and connectivity with the Internet.

I noted the evidence of my educational influences when learners:

- created their own blogs, YouTube and Buzz accounts and then posted their photographs, using hyperlinks or announcements, independent of instruction;
- enthusiastically shared stories (osmosisBLOG, Buzz and Gmail);
- passed on warm affirmations or advice to other learners and gave each other feedback, using emoticons, pushed like buttons, reshared posts, used smilies, abbreviations, exclamation marks and bold lettering. This indicated to me an interest in encouraging others and building relationships to pursue common ground between practitioners (in PWA, osmosisBLOG, Buzz);
- received affirmation and used words of gratitude and words like “inspiring” or “we did it as a class” for acknowledgement. Their eagerness to give advice and receive affirmation suggested that learners were stimulated in this environment (in PWA, osmosisBLOG, Buzz);
- showed that they were experimenting, excited, having fun and being playful, initiating attributes to connect more with myself and others (in PWA, osmosisBLOG, Buzz and Gmail);

In the GL, learners showed evidence of **engagement** through participation, but more through tone, manner and gesture implied by their interaction and/or contribution.

I noted evidence of my educational influence when learners:

- got involved in the activities set by me in the GL and took part in the collaborative projects;
- viewed images in PWA, became followers for my weblogs and Buzz;

- expressed mutuality and acknowledgement when they passed on information and resources to me via Gmail;

I also noted evidence of resistance to my educational influence when a few learners did not want to participate in GL, from time to time. I found when I tried to get learners to engage more by formalising CoP, the GL in learner's study guides, or implemented these in assignments, class activities and marking rubrics, I was met with antagonism and irritation by some learners. I always engage learners to find out the reasons for not participating (like the PWA comments in Chapter 3 on page 117). I spoke candidly with learners during our lessons to find out their reasons for not participating. I articulated the benefits of working in a CoP. I encouraged participation through making the works and ideas of learners visible in the GL. I used Blogger as a tool to influence and inspire, to invite and tell stories that were related to happenings in our learning environment (namely in osmosisBLOG), and to show collaborative exchanges between myself and other photographers outside of the department (namely in osmosisPROJECTS). I also gave learners access to my own visual diary (in osmosisLIZA). I used PWA to showcase the photographs made for the assignments I set by learners from all the years and invited all learners to make comments. The lack of participation can be ascribed to learners who were absent or did not complete their works on time or others still grappling with navigating the platforms. Some learners told me verbally that they just did not like the GL. They told me: "I hate blogging", "Why you not on Facebook?", "I feel forced", "I don't want others to copy my work", "I always feel pressurised to comment", "Don't know what to say", "Takes too much time", "I forgot". I took these negative responses into account, because they were describing the boundaries they as learners needed.

But even this evidence of resistance to my educational influence displayed evidence of my educational influence in developing sufficient confidence and trust to speak their truth about their learning experiences. I regarded this as positive evidence of my educational influence. I encouraged that learners engage with me and indicate their limitations to what they are (un)comfortable with sharing and how much they would like to get involved in the GL. I recognized that to promote osmosis, to make movements in our learning we would need to cross these boundaries together. I accepted and acknowledged and took into account the obstacles of some learners and guided them through them to become more confident and engage with the GL.

Likewise when I was perplexed by a lack of movement in the GL I would engage learners. For instance, I found it puzzling that learners' images on PWA's were viewed 144 times and no comment was left, not even an indication if it was liked. I would often voice to learners that this disappointed me because I am moved by the Zulu greeting "Sawubona" – which translated means "I see you" (Boojumhunter 2005) – interpreted as "ubuntu", the humanistic recognition of a person is a person through other persons (Nabudere 2005). I encouraged learners to consider acknowledging the image maker by saying something to their peers for their efforts in making work, rather than just hit the "like" button. I regard this written gesture as a way of recognising "Authority, Authenticity and Authorship" in a fellow individual's endeavours and person. I also found it difficult to get learners to make critical commentary. However, Sontag reminds me that "silence remains, inescapably, a form of speech" (online)⁵². These types of soundless movements, were none the less also movements, and gave me recourse into what I have not done enough of, what I still need to understand and what can still be done. I discuss what can be done at the end of my conclusion and when I address my main question.

As co-ordinator of GL, the challenge exists in how I bring in motivating methods. I cannot reach every learner (approximately 75) and am not disconcerted or demotivated by this. If I can "awaken the creative spirit" (Henri 1923) in some, I trust these learners will motivate other learners to recognise and participate, osmosis style. My other undertaking is do more with what I have learnt about learner behaviour in the GL.

Having answered these two sub questions together, I now provide an answer for my main research question.

My research question is: **How do I use online technologies to improve my practice as a mentor in visual literacy?**

In order for me to create new possibilities for mentoring visual literacy in photographs using online technologies, I began with myself (McNiff 2008b).

⁵² A learner found this quote. I found it through their Visual Communication assignment (online). Reference: Sontag, S. 2003. Brainy Quote (online). Available: http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/s/susan_sontag_2.html#Ugpbwqu3mkegdG0fS.99 (Accessed 22 May 2012).

I used a self-study methodology and did action research to support and claim a living educational theory (McNiff 2002, Wood 2008, Whitehead 1989, 2008a, 2008b, 2009). I used my state of cognitive dissonance and dislocation as a starting point to look into why my values, beliefs, feelings and thinking about who I am as an artist felt dislocated in my practice. Then only, could I state who I could become as mentor (Batchelor 2006, Alfonso and Taylor 2009) and “Why I did what I did” (Pithouse Morgan et al 2009b:47). I used action research to reflect and investigate my practice, to improve it (ibid), so that I could come to a point of consolidating my internal mentor: my intuition, my gut brain (Timm 2013) and feelings of cognitive dissonance and dislocation, with my external mentoring. It matters to me that I feel confident, engaged and motivated in my practice. In this study, I adopted a cyborg persona, “osmosisliza”, to escape, learn, explore and invent an artistic identity in an educator’s role. I identified concerns in my mentoring practice, provided evidence for these concerns and imagined ways to overcome these concerns. I embraced my ‘osmosis’ philosophy on learning with movement to cross boundaries between learners and myself, between learners themselves, to level out the playing fields so that we could get to know each other better to learn together in a CoP (Wenger 2000, hooks 2010). I placed emphasis on finding spaces to promote “Authority, Authenticity and Authorship”, creative tools I identified for crossing boundaries, for claiming individual voices, for showing diversity and integrity in thinking and authorising one’s being (Hamilton and Pinnegar 2000).

I took into consideration that new technologies were presenting new paradigms and changing the “model of pedagogy” (Tapscott 2009:11), from a *teacher*-focused approach based on instruction to a learner-focused model based on collaboration (Sims 2008, Greenhow et al 2009). I developed the Google Lens, my attempt to move between social and educational needs in a contemporary age, and to improve visual literacy using New Technologies. I analysed the actions in the GL and investigated the learners experiences and the experiences I had with learners to evaluate the outcomes of my actions and explain our developments. The GL acted like a lens, probing and bringing into focus not answers but movement and connections, thinking and new action for placing my newly developed artist, mentor, online body in spaces that are driven by my passion for photographs.

In preparation for answering my overall research question all the reflexive questions raised in the process of writing and structuring this document are considered, including those implied in the pink parts stencilled from the electronic postcards in the osmosisLIZA weblog. The reflexive questions helped me to identify gaps and negative spaces in myself and in my practice. At the end of this document I authorize osmosisliza and show how I have “matured” (Bullough and Pinnegar 2001:13) because of my interaction with the learners in the GL. Bullough and Pinnegar remind me that as:

...educators have matured, their influence has grown, and with growing influence has come the power to shape the educational discourse. (2001:13)

To improve my practice as mentor I identify how my values and beliefs can be used towards claiming educational knowledge (Whitehead 1989) and shaping educational discourse by:

- influencing the learning environment and live actively as a photographer in a South African landscape;
- promoting an authentic learning experience with photographs as I mentor behind my artist self and my photographs;
- encouraging encoding and decoding (Rakes 1999, Bamford 2003) of signs, signifiers and semiotics from personal standpoints that are contextualized by South Africa;
- using actions, symbols and objects from learner’s voices to rewrite learning criteria and outcomes for developing creative professional photographers;
- empowering an individual in the context of a culture of learning (Rodgers cited in Zimring 1999, Montessori 1988, hooks 2010), rather than in a learning culture;
- putting my heart and mind alongside the learner’s heart and mind to strengthen our understanding of the world and build knowledge, to “expand our heart (feeling) and our mind (intellect)” and improve our learning experience (hooks 2010:22);
- initiating exciting and playful ways to communicate with others for influence and inspiration;
- assisting learners further to comprehend and act in an online environment to showcase their photographs online for professional opportunities;
- creating integrated projects across disciplines, sharing between subjects, levels and other artistic practices;

- publicizing my ideas and ways of mentoring photographers for the benefit (and scrutiny) of others;

At the end of this document after I have answered my research questions I subject my claim to public criticism (Whitehead 1989). However, in publicizing my lived experience (Whitehead 1989), I have become encouraged to find significance in my epistemology, my life's values and work ethos (Whitehead 1989, 2008a). This valuing of self provides the direction and permission to express and articulate my "life-affirming and loving dynamic energies" (Whitehead 2008b:103) in mentoring creatives, especially up-coming photographers. Whitehead uses the term "gifts" to describe a "generosity towards others", "a passion for supporting others... for exercising imagination, for strengthening of courage... for sustaining commitment and collaboration" (ibid). This self study did not clarify my identity or remove the layers, but rather gave value to the multiple layers that make and (re)shape osmosisliza all the time, my multiplicity. Joan Conolly wrote to me in an email, dated 06 March 2013, that I should think of who this document could reach and who it could benefit. Conolly also wrote that I had found courage to put my fears in writings because of other people's writings, testimonies and public speaking. This enabled me to think and say "I can do that".

This self-study serves to "provoke, challenge and illuminate rather than confirm or settle" (Bullough and Pinnegar 2001: 20) and provides an example for others to draw from, and for others to scrutinize. I offer my story of transformation to the reader to find some verisimilitude that endeavours to open up doors for other transactions with other stories, for better understanding, to make movement. In my closing statement I quote Kierkegaard because movement in cyberspace is quintessential to where osmosisliza is now and dictates who and where I can be next:

Becoming oneself is a movement one makes just where one is. Becoming is a movement from some place, but becoming oneself is a movement at that place.

(Kierkegaard 1989 cited in Bachelor 2006: 230)

Like pixels, my identity is defined by the ever-changing nature of human and machine interactions, collaborations made possible with the Internet. osmosisliza is about finding ways to keep creative and stay impassioned in cyberspace, exchanging knowledge, sharing experience and developing artistic insight from interacting with others.

This is the moment where I am pushing down the shutter button and releasing it, as I close off this document, sealed when my index finger lets go. I have finalized considerations and made choices to tell a story of the inception of osmosisliza. Where osmosisliza goes to next is listed in bullets below.

The questions I would now pose for further research, offer movement outside of this document. I ask: “How do I...”

- validate osmosisliza and osmosis philosophy outside of the institution into the community of Durban?
- critically push the notion of constructing an African aesthetic?
- expand concepts of the Google Lens to accommodate new technology updates, changes in social networking platforms and patterns?
- redesign learning material so that it that draws from conversations and current debates in South Africa?
- build a community of practice in Durban, for contemporary documentary photographers?
- make personal contributions for mentoring visual literacy in the diverse community of Durban so that it is culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts?
- promote art and mentor photographs as a medium and vernacular for social change?
- collect and gather multidisciplinary artworks and build an online library with the aim of curating other photographs exhibitions?
- close the gaps in art making development and practice, especially the disjuncture between institutions, like Galleries and Learning Centres?
- create and hold critical forums that are open to the public to widen perspectives and promote debate?
- promote upcoming artists and provide platforms for artists needs and ideas to be seen and heard?

I am clicking the send icon in a new light. I will keep making movement, making contact little by little, edging forward, in an osmotic way “pouring out of personal feeling and thinking into the public domain, will a new public become possible?” (Professor Njabulo Ndebele 2012)⁵³.

My last electronic postcard in osmosisLIZA weblog, figure 39, entitled space_98: “inbox”, resonates the statement above in visual text. This electronic postcard was made to signify a pausing moment at the end of my study. This electronic postcard offers a place and space to make movement from, at the end of study after making my story public. When I was blogging electronic postcards, I was uncertain when I should stop, or know what space number I needed to reach to finalise my exhibition. I made 98 electronic postcards because I see the number “98” being close to “100”. Here I make reference to percentages. “100%” suggests ‘wholeness’, ‘full marks’, ‘complete’, whereas 98% shows ‘incompleteness’, but a ‘close to’ outlook, which leaves room for improvement. The snapshot shows a traditional postbox with the number “98” painted on it in a reddish colour. The pink parts trace the number “98”. A postbox is an old fashioned repository for receiving mail and messages. I use the word ‘old fashioned’ here, because in today’s age most people that I know, receive electronic mail and notifications on new technology devices. When I receive email on my computer or cell phone, I am notified by a ‘red’ figure in my ‘inbox’. I use the caption “inbox” with this electronic postcard, to juxtapose the traditional postbox and say to the reader that I am signing off here and the reader now has mail.

⁵³ *Durban University of Graduation Programme 2012 on the occasion of the award of an Honorary Doctorate to Professor Njabulo Ndebele.*



Figure 39: space_98 – “inbox” (becoming, crossroad, echo, frame of mind, indication mark, insides out, me you, tag, viewpoint)
 du Plessis, L.K. 2013. space_98. *osmosisLIZA* (image). Available:
<http://lizarduplessis.blogspot.com/2013/05/space98.html> (Accessed 21 April 2013)

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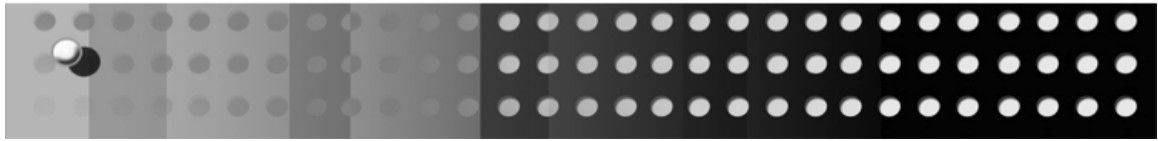
Annexure

(1) Copy and Paste (sic) ethical stance for Google Lens (GL) spaces and Ethical Consent form signed by learners.

ethical stance

I do not edit the student's responses or correct grammar in the spaces I define as the Google Lens (GL). I do not dictate how the students should speak. I do this in order to keep the flow of communication open and to be non-judgemental, so I can promote freedom of expression and show the authentic responses. Correcting grammar and language might embarrass students and alienate them. The intention is to promote dialogue and self-expression in that dialogue highlighting one's ability to express thoughtfully and unpack beliefs and ideas in a free form manner. I would rather encourage that if students did not understand what was being 'said', then they would ask questions (which is what I do) to invite alternate explanations. I would rather establish an ethos that mistakes can be made (even by me) and that different students express themselves in different ways, showing strengths in some and weakness in others. I have however found that providing a set of 'ready-made' questions helps students to unpack more or draw from their own knowledge. I also try to direct the conversation or line of questioning to get students to think and talk more about reasons behind the image, articulating photographic technical and conceptual choices (Guillem and Gillam 2004).

Ethical Consent Form:



Ethical Consent Form: Interviewees participating in Action Research

ACTION RESEARCHER: Liza du Plessis

QUALIFICATION: Masters of Technology: Photography

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH THESIS: Through the Lens of Google: Development of lecturing practice in Photography

OUTLINE OF STUDY: My research title is based on an enquiry to improve my practice through action research as an artist, novice educator and novice researcher in the field of Photography. Adopting an auto-ethnographic methodology that is arts based, I critically examine my role as a newly appointed lecturer concerned with current educational paradigms, discourses in knowledge creation and academic identity. I will trace my individual journey by means of a narrative outlining my educational concern and why I am concerned I will be utilizing action research and a 'self-study' framework from within which I act as researcher as well as the subject of my research and explain my own "living theory". Professor Jack Whitehead defines 'living theory' as "an explanation produced by an individual for their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formation in which they live". My method of inquiry will use qualitative data derived from my reflective journals students' online interaction and offline classroom interactions recorded on video. I will be utilizing these interactions to investigate, self-evaluate and account for my actions as I attempt to develop and critique online transformational 'spaces' for myself and my students to improve our practices. Furthermore my engagement with students, the encounters and relationships had with these students that will endeavour to articulate and evaluate my 'educational influence'.

Your participation will form a valuable contribution to my evaluation of these 'spaces' and provide qualitative data for comparative analysis. It will be examined for themes of engagement and development of critical thought in respect of visual literacy, as well as address the sub questions to my research. These being 'How can online environments produce a learner of photographs who is confident, motivated and engaged with the field of visual communication?' and 'Which online spaces serve to empower learners as practitioners of photographs?'.

Please note the following:

DATA COLLECTION:

The data collected will enable me to evaluate the use of online spaces to building on existing knowledge and in turn develop creative and conceptual potentials in photographic practices. This research project will make use of a variety of resources: text, spoken word, video and images. Conversations via email and video collected from class discussions as well as private interviews. Personal interviews will be between 15-20 minutes. Other data, in the form of comments and personal contributions from the six Web 2.0 applications: Buzz; Blogger (osmosisBLOG & osmosisPROJECTS); Picasa Web Albums; YouTube; Gmail; Google Bookmarks made in these spaces, will also be collected and used as findings in this thesis.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Information disclosed for this research study will be by your permission only. You have the right to read and make amendments to the transcript recorded of your participation. Any transcript of a sensitive nature will be carefully monitored or edited by your permission only. If one wishes not to disclose further information on a specific topic or shows signs of discomfort, the researcher will, with your permission deviate from that topic or withdraw that representation with no negative consequences. Should you wish to publish, but would like to remain nameless, you will be granted anonymity.

AUTHENTICITY & AUTHORSHIP:

The researcher respects your right to articulate your beliefs and opinions from a personal point of view and encourages that you do so, with considerations of feeling comfortable and ease with what you reveal about yourself and others. The researcher will show you respect and dignity and will not portray you in a negative light. Professionalism and sensitivity to your situation will of the utmost concern for the researcher. The researcher reserves the right to make a selection or edit 'your story', so long as it is not decontextualized, or a misrepresentation of your story and remains relevant to the discourse within the Masters thesis. The researcher also reserves the right to withdraw you from this research, or not to publish your data, should the circumstances warrant so.

DISTRIBUTION:

The researcher will not distribute or pass on any of your participatory transcripts without your permission to any parties. However the researcher is not held accountable for those interactions that are shared by you with others on the online 'public' spaces, should an unknown party distribute them. The researcher wishes to make you aware that parts of her thesis maybe published or referenced in other arenas or journals in the future, so it is important that you are content with your input and representation of that input.

STORAGE:

All of the data collected will be housed with the researcher. You are most welcome to have access to any of your information. Please contact the researcher personally. See the contact details below

AGREEMENT:

Date: _____

I _____ agree to participate in a Masters conducted by the researcher: **LIZA DU PLESSIS**. The researcher has discussed her research with me and I understand: the general purposes; that the project may not be of direct benefit to me; and that I will not receive a monetary sum. I am aware that my contributions will be used as qualitative data for a Masters of Technology in Photography at the Durban University of Technology. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about this research and I have received answers that are satisfactory to me.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time. I agree to take part because I am satisfied with the explanation given in relation to the project as it affects me and my consent is voluntarily given. I hereby agree to the publication of results from this study.

Signed by the participant:

Signed by the researcher:

Address of Participant:

(cell) _____ (email) _____

Should you have any queries concerning this research please contact:

Liza du Plessis

48 Burnham Drive

La Lucia

4051

0842531188 or email on osmosisliza@gmail.com

(2) A description of the contents of the accompanying CD

Insert the CD named “osmosisliza” in your CD-rom and double click it to open its contents.

This CD offers the reader two ways to view the series of electronic postcards assigned to a label. Contents of the cd:

- 1) Folder with contents: manual viewing by double clicking and viewing contents.
- 2) A Microsoft Word document with active hyperlinks that will open up the electronic postcards in osmosisLIZA weblog, when connected to the Internet.

What is in the CD folder?

This folder is called osmosisLIZA. In this folder there are 48 sub-folders named according to the labels found in osmosisLIZA weblog. In each of these sub-folders are screenshots from osmosisLIZA weblog of the electronic postcards that is assigned with that label. To view them singularly, double click them. To view the electronic postcards as a collection, select all and double click to view in supporting computer picture viewer program.

A screenshot of the Main folder called “osmosisLIZA” , figure 40.



Figure 40: A screenshot to demonstrate a folder

Below is a screenshot of the 48 sub-folders in main folder, figure 41.



Figure 41: A screenshot to demonstrate multiple folders in “osmosisLIZA” folder.

What is in the Microsoft Word document?

In the Microsoft Word document, name “osmosisLIZA_labels”, is a list of the 48 labels as found on osmosisLIZA weblog. Each label is underlined and in blue, indicating that it is an active hyperlink. If the reader clicks on this hyperlink and has access to the Internet, this link will open the label in osmosisLIZA weblog and the series of electronic postcards assigned to that label can be viewed on the weblog. The number next to the label, indicates the number of electronic postcards assigned with this label.

- [\(b\)lock](#) (14)
- [\(ds\)location](#) (19)
- [\(mis\)place](#) (20)
- [a hollow muscular organ](#) (23)
- [antennas](#) (11)
- [because of](#) (45)
- [becoming](#) (30)
- [big bad wolf](#) (13)
- [bucket](#) (14)
- [cornered](#) (6)
- [covering](#) (7)
- [crossroad](#) (25)
- [dis\(infect\)](#) (18)
- [ebb and flow](#) (29)
- [echo](#) (30)
- [eyeball](#) (7)
- [frame in a frame](#) (4)
- [frame of mind](#) (41)
- [g\(r\)asp](#) (29)
- [gaze](#) (10)
- [hang\(ing\)](#) (10)
- [indication mark](#) (32)
- [insides out](#) (34)
- [intuition](#) (11)
- [layers](#) (11)
- [looking glass](#) (22)
- [me you](#) (22)
- [muted](#) (11)
- [noose](#) (19)
- [outside in](#) (15)
- [over-exposed](#) (17)
- [pangs of conscience](#) (16)
- [peril](#) (21)
- [relevant fingers](#) (16)
- [responsibility](#) (25)
- [salty liquid](#) (16)
- [separating lines](#) (34)
- [shadow of me](#) (33)
- [sightless](#) (14)
- [solo](#) (28)
- [tag](#) (30)
- [taking form](#) (27)
- [tattooed](#) (11)
- [tear\(s\)](#) (16)
- [under-exposed](#) (13)
- [unseeing](#) (22)
- [viewpoint](#) (33)
- [walls](#) (16)

(3) ADP3: Study Guide 2011

Study Guide

2011

FACULTY OF ARTS AND DESIGN

DEPARTMENT: VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN (Photography)

QUALIFICATION: APHT 301

ND: PHOTOGRAPHY

This ADP3 Guide will be included in Applied Practical Photography 3 for SAQA credits_SAQA ID: 030516422

QUALIFICATION CODE: SAPSE CODE: 2201

SUBJECT: Applied Digital Photography 3 APD3 *Liza du Plessis*

SUBJECT CODE: APHT 301

SAQA CREDITS: 12

Name of Lecturer:

Liza du Plessis

Office

Photography Department

Campus location

ML Sultan

Telephone

031-3735378 or 0842531188

Fax No

031-3735430

E-Mail

osmosisliza@gmail.com

Consultation times with Lecturer:

Week A & B: during LECTURE TIMES or by appointment during CONTACT times

[subject to current Department timetable]

Digital Techniques: Week B: Mon • 8:30 pm - 12:30 pm.

Week B: Wed • 8:30 pm - 12:30 pm.

Week B: Fri • 8:30 pm - 14:30 pm.

Digital Practical: Week A: Tues • 8:30 pm - 12:30 pm.

Week A: Thurs • 8:30 pm - 12:30 pm.

Head of Department

Piers Carey

Campus location

City Campus

Telephone

031-3736698

Program Co-ordinator

Vernon Hoover

Campus location

ML Sultan: Ayesha Bee Building

Room number

AF0002A

Telephone

031-3735271

Fax No

031-3735430

Departmental Secretary

Sally Fraser

Contact details:

(email) sallyf@dut.ac.za

(tel) 031-3735405

(fax) 031-3715430

A WARM WELCOME TO YOU to your third year of study in Applied Digital Photography. This Study Guide is a guideline to what you will be taught in this subject. Please note that the indicative content (what you will be lectured on) is subject to change. Be reassured that you will be notified of these changes timelessly. This documents also conveys work ethics by outlining learner/lecturer responsibilities and important rules /regulations as required by the Department and the lecturer. This Learner Guide is prepared in conjunction with the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) ID 2201. The subject carries a credit value of 12 Credits.

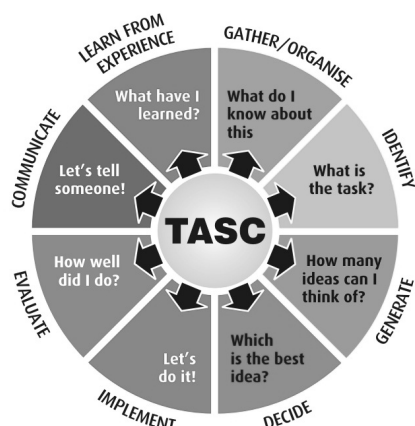
I believe in the concept of creating communities of practice. In other words I trust that in order to create dynamic learning and to improve one's personal and professional skills in Digital Photography, we must work as a team. We must strive to generate a class ethos, where we learn from and help each other to learn. We can achieve this by making the learning experience a group effort. This entails working with classmates, by implementing theory into practice, searching the Internet and sharing these findings or experiences with the class. One of the main elements in creating this community lies in gestures of sharing. By sharing our experiences and findings, it helps us to not only keep up to date with the enormous and 'speedy' ever-changing aspects of Digital Photography, but also creates an environment that acknowledges diversity, and promotes choice and freedom of expression. In this light, I encourage students to work independently of their lecturer and be active in their own learning through using the Internet and library as resources for gathering inspiration and information. Our 'linkage' through Gmail, enables us to connect, communicate and share these resources and findings with each other in cyberspace, through (other) Google applications like Docs, Bookmarks, Buzz, Picasa Web Albums and Blogger.

I find this quote below by Professor Joan Conolly inspiring and an affirmation of these beliefs:

“We work on the assumption that people already know
much of what they need to know,
but they often are **unaware that they know what they know**,
and that they become aware of what they know,
and how to use what they know,
by reflecting critically on their practice
and from interacting with others.”

2009

In order to promote 'active learning', I will use Belle Wallace's TASC wheel_ "Think Actively in a Social Context"_ as a framework for Digital Photography assignments, journal/ blog entries and will incorporate the cyclic tasks into the briefs, supported in the marking rubrics. The TASC wheel is a thinking skills framework, which empowers and encourages learners to:



- *work independently*
- *develop skills of research, investigation and problem-solving cycles for projects*
- *become an active learner*
- *develop and recognise their own strengths*
- *use embedded knowledge*
- *gain skills for self-assessment*
- *placing importance on process by documenting it*
- *see the necessity/value of utilizing a step by step process in achieving a project outcome (photograph)*

Wallace,B. 2000. The Tasc Wheel. Available:
http://www.nace.co.uk/tasc/tasc_wheel_hi.html_ (Accessed on 24 November 2011)

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Practicals:

The Digital lectures are based on practical applications of techniques and tools taught in a computer environment, across software platforms, and will require hands on approaches to grasp the applications. The teaching of Adobe Photoshop CS4 will be the predominant (but not exclusive) software learnt.

Tutorials:

Tutorials will occur during lecture times (see above) and will be sourced by students and myself. These can be found on the web, in books or magazines and may be in the form of a video, a pdf, webpage (hyperlink) or printed photocopies. All tutorials must be well referenced. Using tutorials presents opportunities for students to explore other ways of working tools and techniques with other instructors. Tutorials will be integrated in the form of open class discussions, online interactions via Gmail, Google Bookmarks, Blogs, Buzz or Docs. These forums hope to facilitate and refine Digital skills, whilst exploring specific subject content and provide an opportunity for students to voice their opinions and thoughts.

Reflective Journals:

The students will also be asked to develop their own Blogs and these will function as personal online Reflective Journals. Tasks, guided by the TASC wheel, will be set for students to make entries on their blogs and share these with their classmates. However it is also important that students work independently from lecturer guidance and use the blog as a way to explore the question of inquiry: Who am I?

Lecture/Practical/Tutorial Venue: *Digital Lab*

Duration: 6 BLOCKS per year (subject to current timetable: term 1_2011)

Teaching Methods:

- **Videos_ inspiration & discussion topics to inform ideas and practice_ TED & YouTube**
- **Web based/ book Tutorials_ supplied • discovered • shared with Google Docs / Google Bookmarks**
- **Online Crits_ Web Albums created for students to contribute and comment on own and others photographic images_ Formative assessment**
- **Practical application of Adobe Photoshop on own Photographs_ Students will be asked to use their own images when working with tutorials. The integration of tools with own images makes learning dynamic, personal and fun.**
- **Creating and conferring ideas with lecturer_ Students will be asked to show evidence of ideas and thoughts using Reflective Journals/Blogs and other sources [marks allocated in marking rubric]. Learners will be asked to converse on a one-on-one with Liza or to show progress using email correspondence_ osmosisliza@gmail.com or by appointment.**
- **Write up brief synopsis [marks allocated in marking rubric] and explain and support works at critiques as well as show evidence of documenting the comments made at crit.**
- **osmosisBLOG and osmosisPROJECTS_ online blogs run by myself used to house information, discussions and promote communities of practices whereby one learns and is inspired by others.**

RULES AND REGULATIONS IN THE DIGITAL LAB

- No eating, drinking or smoking in the Digital Lab
- No loud sound_ use earphones.
- Talk quietly
- Whilst in the Digital Lab, Learners may not use cell phones for any purposes. Please ensure that cell phones are on silent OR switched off. All cell phone calls are to be taken outside of the Digital Lab.
- Email, Facebook or any other social networking sites, may only be used in the morning between 8am-8:45am and during lunch hour, that being from 12h00 to 1h00.
- Learners are prohibited from using Facebook or any other website in lecture times that have no relevance to the class topic or subject. The Learner will be asked to leave the Digital Lab, regardless.
- Please do not pass on any of Liza du Plessis's email addresses to any website or other persons.
- No visitors allowed, unless Liza or Gee has issued them with a Visitors card. Only 2 Visitors permitted at a time. No groups.
- Learners are asked to safe keep computers and their peripherals.
- Do not leave bags, laptops or any other valuables lying around.
- Learners are not permitted to store images on the computers. All photographs must be copied on a disc [and back up discs] immediately after transfer from camera to computer.
- Computers are randomly "cleaned up" by Gee to make space on the hard drive. Learners will not be notified of these times. Gee will not be held accountable for loss of work.
- No computer is "owned" by an individual student. All computers are the property of the Photography Department and all students have free access to any computer, at times when the Digital Lab is not used for lecturing or practical purposes. See Department Timetable.
- Working on the computers is based on a FIRST come, first SERVE basis.
- Should a student need to utilize a computer, when there is not one available, any lecturer on duty may place a time limit on the computer usage so as to facilitate other students.
- The Computer Lab is open from Mon-Thurs: 08H00 – 16H00 • Fri: 08H00 – 14H30
- Gee is available for computer technical assistance daily at the following times: 09h00 - 09h55 and 14h00 - 14h55
- No studio bookings may be made during allocated DIGITAL times:
These times being [according the current timetable]:
Week B: Mon • 8:30-12:30 pm • Week B: Wed • 8:30-12:30 pm • Week B: Fri • 8:30 - 14:30 pm.

LECTURE ATTENDANCE

- Learners ought to be punctual and attend the entire duration of the lecture, to gain maximum benefit from the course.
- Learners must personally sign the REGISTER at the beginning and the end of the lecture, so that the attendance can be monitored.
- If a Learner is unable to attend a lecture or is going to be late, please notify Liza du Plessis either by sms or email.
- Should a learner miss a lecture due to serious illness, a doctor's certificate must be submitted to the lecturer when resuming classes.
- Learners are required to catch up work missed, on their own accord.
- Learners who fail to attend lectures on a regular basis will be addressed by the programme co-ordinator. Their parents, and or next of kin will be notified of their lack of attendance.
- Learners are expected to be courteous, respectful and helpful to other classmates.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Learners will be able to:

- Work confidently and unaided in the Digital Lab.
- Express ones individual thoughts and ideas in a Digital environment.
- Visualize and generate ideas in a weblog and/or Reflective Journal.
- Personalize a Reflection Journal/Weblog to question, document, log and reflect on their Digital Practice with their own initiative_ guided by Belle Wallace's Tasc Wheel
- Recognize and solve Adobe Photoshop problems using critical and creative thinking_ show evidence of this in weblog.
- Illustrate conceptual thinking by working with a triptych/narrative_ show evidence of this in weblog.
- Sustain ones own developed WORKFLOW from capture to output.
- Recognize, select and sequence appropriate software programs and their tools for the chosen task.
- Collect, store and file own work for personal and portfolio requirements.
- Operate a wide range of tools in Adobe Photoshop in conjunction with layer masks to correct, manipulate and restore Photographs with increased skill and greater scope for creativity.
- Maintain a diverse library of textures, backgrounds, skies etc
- Compose and work in document sizes that are not constrained by the viewfinder or standard printing dimensions_ square/panorama/A1
- Experiment with creative effects, vectors and displacement maps.
- Work intuitively with Adobe Photoshop masks, filters and blending modes.
- Update Adobe Photoshop knowledge independently with tutorials obtained on the Internet, books or magazines.
- Exchange knowledge and articulate experiences of Digital Capture amongst peers.
- Critically analyze, ones own and ones peers work.
- Converse both on a written and oral form at peer reviews and critiques.
- Search for national and/or international trends in Digital Practice.
- Direct Photography for Adobe Photoshop.
- Conceptualize an image in conjunction with Adobe Photoshop.
- Develop individual styles of practice.
- Explore education and entrepreneurial avenues with multifaceted knowledge gained from working in Adobe Photoshop.
- Synthesize theoretical and practical components of Digital Photography and apply to Specialist.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND STRATEGIES

Students will be required to do both formative and summative

Formative assessment: *Student's individual progress and development will be tracked on a Formative basis by the Lecturer through class tutorials, web albums, spoken/written discussions and Reflective Journal/Blog entries.*

Summative Assessments: *Students are assessed during the year at critiques. See critique and hand in policies below.*

At the end of the year Students will be asked to hand in 6x Digital images for portfolio (subject to change)*

- (i) 7 Deadly sins poster_A1 size*
- (ii) Fashion Illustration/Gustav Klimt inspired: 10"x10"*
- (iii) Triptych_3 images @ 8" x 12"/10"*
- (iv) Free Choice Panorama_ 8" x 24"*

CRIT AND HAND-IN POLICIES

- *All photographs are to be submitted on the CRIT DUE DATE.*
- *Failure to do so will result in a **0**.*
- *If the student is unable to hand in a photograph for a Critique due to unforeseen events, then the student needs to notify Liza du Plessis, via email or sms, on or before the due day, so that a consideration can be employed with regards to marking.*
- *The lecturer may grant an extension of deadline only if it benefits the entire class group.*
- *Students must bring their Reflective journal to all Crits, so that they may record suggestions and conversations made on their photograph.*
- *All hand-ins will require workings [that will be outlined in each brief] to be submitted with their photograph. These will be in the form of photocopied/printed sections from the student's Reflective Journal or Blog. These will be allocated marks.*
- *Please see Generic marking rubric*

BOOKS

Use iLink to find other books at the ML Sultan Library:

1. Beardsworth, J. 2006. Photoshop Fine Art Cookbook for Digital Photographers : Techniques for Recreating the Classic Styles of Great Artists and Photographers. Ilex.
2. Crawford, M. 2008. *Mastering Advanced Photoshop Techniques for Professional Photography*. RotoVision.
3. Evening, M. 2009. Adobe Photoshop CS4 for Photographers : A Professional Image Editor's Guide to the Creative use of Photoshop for the Macintosh and PC. Elsevier/Focal.
4. Evening, M. 2007. Adobe Photoshop CS3 for Photographers : A Professional Image Editor's Guide to the Creative use of Photoshop for the Macintosh and PC. Elsevier/Focal.
5. Galer, M. 2009. Photoshop CS4 : Essential Skills : A Guide to Creative Image Editing. Focal Press.
6. Huggins, B. 2006. Creative Photoshop Lighting Techniques. Ilex.
7. Pring, R. 2006. Photoshop Filter Effects Cookbook: for Digital Photographers. Ilex.

WEBSITES

www.worth1000.com

www.coolhunting.com

www.1x.com

www.abduzeedo.com

www.artsouthafrica.com

www.youtube.com

www.flickr.com

<http://photo.net/>

osmosisliza@blogspot.com

osmosisprojects@blogspot.com

www.americansuburbx.com

www.ted.com

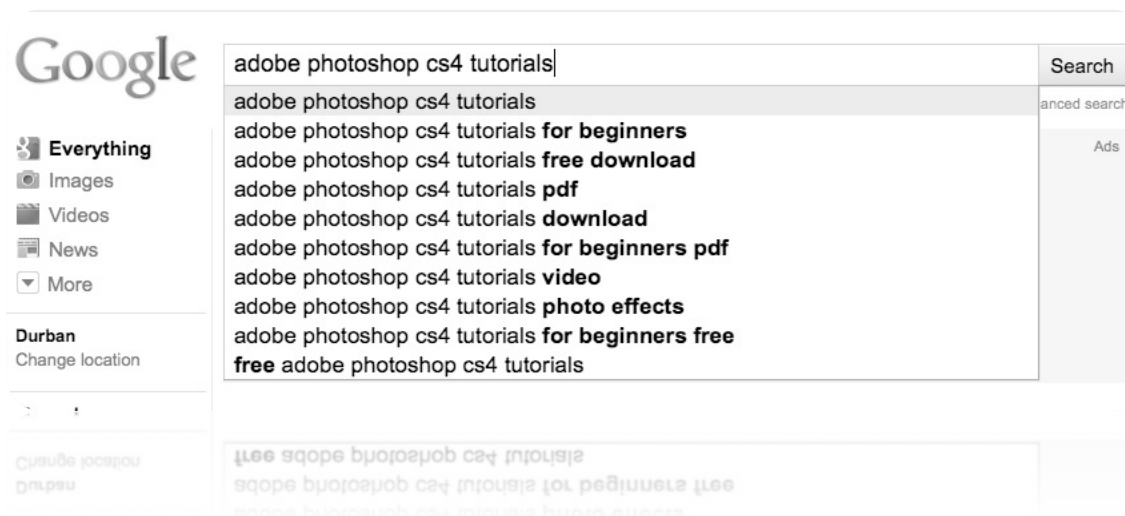
www.adobe.com

www.lynda.com

www.russellbrown.com

www.deviantart.com

or simply do a GOOGLE search



APPLIED DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY • GENERIC MARKING RUBRIC

The Qualified Learner will demonstrate:

* RJ= Reflective Journal

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	10%	8%	5%	2%	0%
1. Size, file form resolution [submitted / checked electronically]	Size, resolution & file format is correct.	Size & resolution are correct but the file format is not a jpg.	Size, resolution still at a reasonable print dimension. File format is incorrect.	Size, resolution incorrect but file format is correct.	Size, resolution and file format is incorrect or non-existent.
2. Hand in Photo stat from RJ.	Learner has handed in.	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	Learner has not handed in.
3. RJ shows: • research • idea generation • thoughts • resources	RJ shows a high level of workings that are related to the assignment	RJ shows a good level of workings that are related to the assignment.	RJ shows an adequate level of workings that are related to the assignment.	RJ shows a low level of workings that are not related to the assignment	RJ shows no workings or was not submitted.
4. The Learner is present at crit. Articulates ideas & answers ?'s on their image.	Speaks clearly & confidently about their ideas. Show great authority to their image.	Articulates their ideas well, & claims some authority to their image.	Attempts to articulate ideas & claim authority to their image.	Not able to articulate ideas or claim authority to the image.	Learner is not present at the Crit.
5. IMAGE PRESENTATION Image submitted for crit is:	Image presentation is excellent, ie: • cut correctly • mounted neatly. • high quality print • correct colour.	Image presentation is jeopardized by a small amount of poor cutting, mounting or printing problems	Image presentation is jeopardized by a medium amount poor cutting, mounting or printing problems.	Image presentation is jeopardized by a large amount poor cutting, mounting or print problems.	Image presentation is jeopardized by bad presentation due to bad cutting, print colour or no mounting.
6. ASSIGNMENT TOPIC OR BRIEF	A successfully produced image that is within the assignment topic or brief.	An adequately produced an image that is within the assignment topic or brief.	Attempted to produced an image that is within the assignment topic or brief.	Unsuccessfully produced an image that is not within the assignment topic or brief.	Learner has not produced an image that is within the assignment topic or brief.
7. CONCEPT	The image has a strong concept, which is well portrayed & supported in the RJ.	The image has a good concept which is reasonably portrayed & supported in the RJ.	The image has a basic concept which is hardly portrayed & supported in the RJ.	The image has a poor concept, is poorly portrayed & supported in the RJ.	The image no concept and and is not support by the RJ.
8. DIGITAL SKIL Capture, retouch manipulate & enhance pixels.	Image shows excellent Digital skills.	Image shows good Digital skills.	Image shows mediocre Digital skills.	Image shows poor Digital skills.	Image shows little or no Digital skills.
9. COMPOSITION	Elements within the image are carefully considered & excellently composed.	Elements within the image are well considered & composed.	Elements within the image are relatively well considered & composed.	Elements within the image are not considered & badly composed.	Elements within the image are not considered or well composed.
10. LEARNER CREATIVITY	Overall image shows excellent authenticity, ownership & creative thinking.	Overall image substantially shows authenticity, ownership & creative thinking.	Overall image attempts to show authenticity, ownership & creative thinking.	Overall image shows very little authenticity, ownership & creative thinking.	Overall image lack authenticity, ownership & creative thinking.

* INDICATIVE CONTENT_ proposed as per timetable times per Block * subject to change

<p>Brief outline of syllabus</p>	<p>Assessment Criteria Practical /Tutorials</p>	<p>Assessment methods Formative= not allocated for marks Summative=Marks allocated for Course</p>
<p>BLOCK1 Practicals: > Week A: Introduction to the Year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline requirements for the year • Students to indicate own practices of Digital on Specialist_ use Google Docs • Introduce TASC Wheel and intentions • Video: Mena Trott_ BLOGs • Discussions on Blogs_ Who am I? • Create Blog: template/name/about me/gadgets Blog: 7 entries_ 1 for each sin Define each sin and research inspirational images or historical associations_ collect, log and reference in weblog A1: Storyboard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diagram • print from weblog • show inspiration and findings • express narrative/theme/idea on a visual form Techniques: > Week B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masking/ adjustment layers/ Paste into/Filters • Presentation: invited Guests • Discussions: commentary on osmosisBLOG </p>	<p>lectures & discussions</p> <p>weblog entries</p>	<p>Formative</p> <p>TASC wheel_ BEGIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gather/organise: What do I know about this? - identify: What is the task? - generate: How many ideas can I think about? - decide: Which is the best idea? Why? <p>Summative Crit 1 requirements: → STORYBOARD: display the workings of the above weblog entries and include a drawn diagram to show composition and positioning of elements on an A1 board.</p>
<p>BLOCK2 Practicals: > Week A: <i>*use Digital contact time to work on critique requirements, make weblog entries and work with Specialist.</i> Techniques: > Week B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fashion Displace Tutorial • background tutorials from workbook:www.biorust.com • Displacements • Show last years images • Creative Arts: Pete Harrison • Gustav Klimt_ see osmosisBLOG • Google Bookmarks: contribute/share findings • Research other tutorials on web and library </p>	<p>Self Propelled</p> <p>Formative (weblog) and Summative tasks</p>	<p>Formative: Fashion Tutorials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work on own image - upload for an online crit with Picasa Web Album <p>TASC: Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lets do it_ write short synopsis on your blog that outlines ideas and intentions, shows a timeframe and a 'to do list'. <p>Summative Crit 2 requirements: → 7 Deadly Sins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • subject (can be a sin) • inclusion of composite image_ 1 sin

BLOCK3

Practicals: > *Week A:*

**use Digital contact time to work on critique requirements, make weblog entries and work with Specialist*

Techniques: > *Week B:*

TRIPTYCH:

- Dangers of a single story_ www.ted.com
- Comments_open forum/class discussion
- Conversations on a Triptych
- Contextualization
- Ways to “bind” concepts in a Triptych
- Previous years works [Do & DON'tS]
- Colour to Black and White: 6x different ways
- High Key/Low Key Tutorial
- Digital Light Painting [Tips & Tricks pdf]
- Filters: Painting Effects [Workbook]

Practical Tutorials

Work, gather, prepare for:

- '7 Deadly Sins'_ insert 3 deadly sins
- complete Fashion tutorial

Crit 3 requirements:
→ **Fashion Displace**
→ **“7 Deadly Sins”**
(insert 3 sins)

BLOCK4

Practicals: > *Week A:*

**use Digital contact time to work on critique requirements, make weblog entries and work with Specialist.*

Conceptualize Triptych

- *Idea Generation: QUESTIONING of where, what, why, how, who*
- *Brainstorm idea ‘Self Portrait’ using Spider maps and storyboards*
- *TASC Wheel: Blog entries follow sections.*

Techniques: > *Week B:*

PHOTOMERGE

- on Location shoot a panorama: LANDSCAPE
- Photomerge
- Match colour
- Lens Correction
- Retouch stitch lines
- insert sky from Library

SPLIT TONING and HDR

- tutorials

Practical Tutorials

Triptych: use TASC Wheel and make Blog entries to show step by step workings for your triptych.

- *gather / organize*
- *identify*
- *generate*
- *decide*
- *implement*
- *evaluate*
- *communicate*
- *learn from the experience*

Crit 4 requirements:

- '7 Deadly Sins'_ insert 2 deadly sins
- Triptych

<p>BLOCK5</p> <p>Practicals: > Week A:</p> <p><i>*use Digital contact time to work on critique requirements, make weblog entries and work with Specialist</i></p> <p>Techniques: > Week B:</p> <p>FRAMING and LAYOUT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimenting with Framing & Layout Titles • Construct a template • Pen Tool • Soft Focus • Tutorial [Tips & Tricks] 	<p>self propelled</p> <p>Practical Tutorials</p>	<p>Formative:</p> <p>Work/gather and prepare for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - '7 Deadly Sins'_ insert last sin - consider lighting/color balance to bind and consolidate image - shoot & stitch panorama (make blog entries that show workings) <p>Make last Blog entries on '7 Deadly Sins':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evaluate: How well did I do? - communicate: Tell some-one about it - learn from the experience: What have I learned? <p>Summative</p> <p>Crit 5 requirements:</p> <p>→'7 Deadly Sins'_ insert 1 sin / overall image</p> <p>→Panorama</p>
<p>BLOCK6</p> <p>Practicals: > Week A:</p> <p><i>*use Digital contact time to work on critique requirements, make weblog entries and work with Specialist</i></p> <p>PREPARE for EXHIBITION ></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallery Visits • Printing Options • Display • Framing • Personal Write-up 	<p>self propelled</p> <p>Practical Tutorials</p>	<p>Prepare for Portfolio</p>

Date Revised: (3/2011)

Revised by: (Liza du Plessis)

See CALENDAR on the next page sourced at: <http://annystudio.com/calendars/> accessed on 10 March 2011

2 0 1 1

JANUARY												
Mo	31	3	10	17	24							
Tu		4	11	18	25							
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Designed by Anny, annystudio.com

(4) ADP2 - Assignment 2011: Double Exposure: Me and the other me.

Overview

This brief serves to outline your *second* Digital Assignment, which will also be part of 2/4 of your year-end portfolio hand ins. This assignment's theme is about revealing another side of your 'identity' that is normally not 'exposed' to others. **You** will be required to juxtapose (make a comparison, put side by side) what you show outwardly (external, exterior appearance, what people see) as opposed to that which is hidden or private (internalized, and in a sense 'unclothed'). Mark Galer says "The struggle to define and to recognize identity is one of life's most difficult tasks" (2007:42).

Some conversations below on being clothed vs being unclothed and the juxtapositions that can be created:

Being **physically clothed** defines many things, such as:

- The way you dress and style your outward appearance reveals part of your culture and identity
- Keeps you warm, secure and protected
- Hides your 'unclothed' body: body defects, skin or marks
- Act of concealing
- Act of secretness
- Artificial
- Formal
- Adorned
- Social constraints
- Public
- Be someone else
- Oppressed
- safe

Materials:

Digital Media &
Adobe Photoshop
CS4 onwards.

Glossary:

IDENTITY: *An awareness of self* → individuality, self, selfhood; personality, character, originality, distinctiveness, differentness, singularity, uniqueness, signature, avatar

SOCIAL: *the relationship between you and where you live* → living together_ relationship the community of people.

CULTURAL: *the relationship between you and the ideas, customs where you live* → ethnic, lifestyle, habits, arts, humanities, literature, music, philosophies.

POLITICAL: *the relationship and dynamics between you and the collective decisions made by groups of people* → status, authority, academic and or religious

METAPHOR: *something regarded as something else other than what it is* → make comparison or association

Being **unclothed** defines many things, such as:

- Makes you powerful or vulnerable or both
- Exposes nakedness: without covering/protection, easily harmed
- Is revealing
- Shows your skin: natural covering
- Informal
- Insecurities / Emotions
- Private
- Freedom
- Unsafe

Outline

Double Exposure [DE]: In Photography, **double exposure** is a technique in which a piece of film is exposed twice, to two different images. The resulting photographic image shows the second image superimposed over the first. This technique can be used to create an artistic visual effect by creating ghostly images or by adding people/objects to a scene that were not previously there. *For this assignment*, the term, DE, literally means_ to expose oneself twice or expose two personalities. To make a comparison between ones public and ones private self.

Requirements

For this assignment, you will be required to 'expose' two personalities by means of:

- juxtaposing yourself clothed (concealed) **contrasted by** yourself 'unclothed' (naked/revealed) in one environment.
- examining tensions and dialogues (see the suggestions listed above) between what one reveals (public) and what one conceals (private).

ALLEGORY: *something that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one*
→ story, poem

SYMBOLISM: *a shape or sign used to represent something* → meaningful, significant or representative

MONTAGE: *the process or technique of selecting, editing, and piecing together separate sections of film to form a continuous whole.*

JUXTAPOSE: *place or deal with close together for contrasting effect*

AMBIVALENT: *to have mixed feelings or contradictory ideas about something or someone.*

BODY ART: *the most common forms of body art are tattoos, body piercings, scarification, branding, sculpting (corsets etc), body painting.*

Objectives:

- This assignment will require that you interrogate as well as investigate who you are in relation to others as well as identify characteristics that make you the same/different to others.

- showing how ones outward appearance can be ambivalent (see glossary for definition).

Additionally, you will be required to adorn or scar your 'unclothed' self with 'body art' of your choice. These must be sourced from one's own photographs (eg photographs of textures, designs, patterns, shapes etc) and converted into tattoos, scars or body modifications utilizing Adobe Photoshop's blending modes, filters and masking capabilities. Use the characteristics, mode and placement of the body art with the intention to tell a story, to create a text about yourself and to add a conceptual element into your image.

***For example:** lines on a body, created by photographing tiles on a floor may imitate stretch marks which indicate a pregnancy etc.*

Create a story within a story using body art as text_ the idea of written or printed words that connect to your idea.

The web links below are sources you might find useful and informative.

Creative ways to construct composite images

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/07/imagination-erik-johansson.html>

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/07/clothing-and-identity-to-reveal-or.html>

Body ART

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/06/beauty-in-eye-of-beholder.html>

ARTISTS and their search and interrogation of an "identity"

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/04/first-uk-exhibition-of-contemporary-sa.html>

- You will be asked to weave both private and public persona's and feelings in and out of your personal lives.
- These will be revealed by stories and objects of the everyday, ones that you make strong personal associations with. These objects can be the voice to your culture, your political and social positioning.
- The Learner's findings (expressed on weblog or any other journal) and image should demonstrate:

- **Authorship:** by revealing a personal story in a visual, written or spoken manner.

- **Authority:** whereby the content expresses a strong and confident voice, in a visual, written or spoken manner.

- **Authenticity:** by displaying the real experience of the student, through capturing, expressing and articulating individualistic thoughts and concepts in from ones immediate environment.

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/07/lolo-veleko.html>
<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/07/ernest-cole-unalterable-blackness.html>
<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2010/12/asxinterview-gil-blank-with-thomas-ruff.html>
<http://www.americansuburbx.com/2009/03/interview-interview-with-artist-cindy.html>
<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2010/10/adp2-self-portraitexposing-another.html>
<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2010/08/self-portraitsfrida-khalo.html>
<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2010/10/photo-wisdom-part-3.html>

Book available from Library:

Galer, M. 2007. Photography Foundations for Art & Design: The Creative Photography Handbook. 4th Edition. Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.

Method

1. Create a composite image (a montage) by utilizing a collection of separate Photographs and join them to create one story, one reality_ size 8"x10"/12"
2. Photograph:
 - yourself 'clothed'
 - yourself 'unclothed'
 - background
 - body art designs/patterns
 - any other objects that will add to the idea
3. Format: 8"x12"_ 300dpi_ high jpg
Landscape/Portrait
Printed copy for Portfolio
4. Burn on a DVD: psd, images and final jpg
5. Resize for Online Critique:
1024 pixels 768 @ 72

- To develop ones idea's and findings share these on your Blogs_ use the TASC Wheel as a guide.
- Create an awareness of expression through metaphor, allegory or symbolism.

Assessment:

Online Critique: Picasa Web Album
 Peer Assessment & Commentary
 Marking Rubric: to be supplied

Adobe Photoshop focus

Clipping Groups
 Deep Etching: Using Quick Masks
 Adjustment Layers
 Layer Masks
 Colour Adjustments & Enhancements
 Blending Modes

Due Date: to be announced

(5) Meet the Digital Natives Questionnaire:

LIVING DIGITALLY_ Meet the Digital Natives Questionnaire.

Questionnaire designed by: Liza du Plessis

Occupation: Junior Lecturer, Photography Department, DUT

Date: 28/06/2010

Target MARKET: Photography Students at DUT_ year 2010

Age: 18 – 25

OUTCOMES: This Questionnaire serves to show the digital environment a student utilizes in their day to day living_ from educating, playing, purchasing, news, updates to interacting with lecturers, peers and/or family members. The information filled in by students who enter and/or study at the photography Department will be used as findings to introduce and show that many of the existing students already have the means, know how and inclination to flourish in an e-learning environment. This questionnaire also hope to highlight that those students who do not have internet access or computers at home, are benefitted by the online environment provided by the department on a greater level, as these students connect, play, share and learn with others.

NOTE TO STUDENTS:

- Fill in the blank spaces provided
- When an “other” option is available please name this first before explaining it.
- Use the “comments” sections to add data or thought about your choices or any other topic one feels may be relevant to that section.

BACKGROUNDS_PERSONAL HISTORY:

NAME		AGE		YEAR Born	
PLACE OF BIRTH [town/country]					
PLACE SPENT GROWING UP [t/c]					
PRIMARY SCHOOL	Name		Place		
HIGH SCHOOL	Name		Place		
COMMENTS:					
GROWING UP with Digital Devices: Place x			VIDEO PLAYER		RADIO
TV		CD WALKMAN		Other:	
COMPUTER		HAND held GAME		Other:	
COMMENTS:					
SCHOOLING with Digital Devices: Place x			VIDEO PLAYER		CD PLAYER
TV		OVERHEAD PROJECTOR		Other:	
COMPUTER		PHOTOSTAT MACHINES		Other:	
COMMENTS:					

CURRENT “screen” DEVICES: Do you own or have regular access to: Place x

TV		CELL PHONE		Hand Held games: DS Light, Gameboy, PSP	
COMPUTE R		GAME CONSOLES: Playstation, Wii, X- box		DIGITAL CAMERA	
Other: name		Other: name		Other: name	
COMMENTS					
DATE enrolled at DUT		AGE		YEAR enrolled	
Before enrolment_ what had you being doing before / where were you?					
When entering the department, did you have a stronger pulling towards Digital or Analogue Photography?					
Why?					
What does Digital Photography mean to you?					

TERIARY EDUCATION_ studying PHOTOGRAPHY_ DUT**DIGITAL DEVICES**

List the **Digital Devices** you predict you will be using in your chosen field: that being Photography.

List the **Digital Devices** you now own.

CELL PHONE

Do you own
one? yes/no

Make/type

Contract? yes/no

Service
provider

Use Daily? yes/no

WAP? yes/no

Has a Camera option? yes/no

What Mb?

Do you use your cell phone
Camera? yes/no

When?

Who pays for the phone?

I use my cell phone to...

**DIGITAL
CAMERA**

Do you own one?
yes/no

Make/type

Use Daily? yes/no

Year
Purchased

Who paid for the camera?

I use my camera for...

Do you own or have access to more than one camera? yes/no			How many?		
List the types of camera and whom they belong to.					
When do you use these cameras?					
<hr/>					
COMPUTER	Do you own one? yes/no		Make/type of owned computer		
Where is this computer situated?					
Who paid for your computer?					
Do access this computer daily? yes/no		How often?			
Do you share a computer? yes/no		Family/peers?			
How many people do you share this computer with?					
Make/type of the computer shared with others					
Where is this computer situated?					
Who paid for the computer you share?					
How often do you use this shared computer					
List the programs installed on the computer you access most frequently.					
List the programs you use on a daily basis.					

List the First 3 operations you do once you have switch your computer on.

I use a computer to...

INTERNET

ACCESS:	Contract? yes/no		Service Provider	
Where do you access the internet?			How often	
Who pays for you having access to the Internet?				
The purpose of the internet is to...				
I use the internet to...				
EMAIL: Personal	email address[es]			
Where do you access your emails?				
How often do you check your emails?				
What devices do you use to check/send your emails? [eg computer/cell phone?]				

Who do you chat with via email everyday? Name 10 people and your relationship with them. List them in order of “most frequent” person I chat with on email.

1.	NAME_relationship	6.	
2.		7.	
3.		8.	
4.		9.	
5.		10.	

In my PERSONAL emailing I email to...

EMAIL: Tech	Do you have email contact with Lecturers? yes/no	
--------------------	--	--

Name the Lecturers	
--------------------	--

For what purpose do you contact Lectures?	
---	--

What devices do you use to send these emails?	
---	--

Do you chat with lectures via email other than during/for class activities?
If so, what are the emails about?

If not, would you like to? Why?

What other kinds of information would you like for Lecturers and Students to exchange via email?

List 5 advantages and 5 disadvantages with corresponding with a lecturer via email.

ADVANTAGES

DISADVANTAGES

1.	NAME_relationship	1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	
4.		4.	
5.		5.	

WWW	Name the browser you use to make searches on the Internet.	
------------	--	--

Where do you access the internet?		How often	
-----------------------------------	--	-----------	--

Who pays for you having access to the Internet?

Internet Download: Discuss and indicate Internet download contents by checking the box and making a comment with regards to your check.

Name Download	yes	no	Comment
Youtube Music Video			
Youtube educational video			
Youtube: name other			
cell ringtones			
wallpapers			

music			
movies			
documentaries			
animation			
ebooks			
tutorials			
free software			
other freebies: name and list			
Games: name which device you play these games on {eg computer, PSP, Cell etc]			
game cheats			
torrents			
other: name			
other: name			
other name			
<p>Name 5 internet sites you visit most frequently: [copy and paste URL if possible]</p> <p>1. _</p> <p>2. _</p> <p>3. _</p> <p>4. _</p> <p>5. _</p>			

(6) Words associated with fecund for confidence, motivation and engagement

Confidence (√)	Engagement (√)	Motivation (√)
develop creative potentials	digital environment	self driven
build on existing knowledge	peers	creative
Practice_doing	Self? Membership	show/be example_inspiration
ownership	internet	Fun
appreciation	critically reflect	conceptual
Awareness of self/others	Articulate_ verbal/visual/written	Imaginary/play
Honest/Accepted (diversity)	express	empower
Trust_ honesty_ integrity	collaborate	New experiences
Send + receive (communicate)	interactive	affirmation

(7) Pioneers application form 2009

Application Form

Short Course in Web-based Learning Pioneers Online

July 2009 – June 2010 *Please print, fill out and return to*

Marí Peté

Educational Technology

Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)

Mariam Bee Building - First Floor

ML Sultan Campus

DUT

mpete@dut.ac.za

Ext. 6810

Deadline: Monday 8 June 2009 at 13.00

Applicant		Head Of Dept	
Title	Lecturer_Ms	Title	Programme Co-ordinater_ Mr
First Name	Liza	First Name	Abdul
Surname	Du Plessis	Surname	Bhorat
Department	Photograpy_ Dept Viscom and Design	Department	Photograpy_ Dept Viscom and Design
Faculty	Faculty of Arts	Faculty	Faculty of Arts
Signature		Signature	
Telephone	084 253 11 88	Telephone	
Email	lizadp@dut.ac.za	Email	
Date	02/06/09	Date	

Your preferred training slot:

(We will do our best to accommodate you as such.)

Friday 9.00-11.00	MORNING {this one please}
Friday 12.00-14.00	

Please note:

- *In order to attend the course, you should set aside two hours every Friday, from July 2009 until June 2010.*
- *You should be computer literate in order to benefit from this course.*
- *We have a limited number of seats available for this round of training (July 2009-June 2010).*
- *Another training cycle will start in January 2010 until December 2010 – the call for applications for this period will go out in October 2009.*
- *Pietermaritzburg: No workshops will be run in Pietermaritzburg during the July 2009 to June 2010 cycle, but another cycle will be launched in January 2010 to December 2010. I.e. if you are from Pietermaritzburg, you need not fill in an application now, please wait for the next invitation.*
- *Due to Educational Technology's limited capacity to train and support lecturers in e-Learning, the following factors will be considered in selecting candidates:*

Lecturer's Background and Skills

Do you have access to an Internet workstation?

yes

How computer literate would you say you are?

Not at all	
Somewhat	
Fully	yes

Can you:

Use the Windows Explorer to create and delete folders?

I am a mac user BUT can adapt/learn.

Use the Windows Explorer to copy, move and delete files?

I am a mac user BUT can adapt

Insert a picture in a Word document? **yes**

Insert a table in a Word document? **yes**

Can you:

Use a web browser to browse the World Wide Web? **Yes _ Firefox**

Use a web search engine to find information? **Yes_Firefox**

Use email to send and receive messages? **Yes**

Use email to send and receive attachments? **Yes**

Details of Future Online Subject

Name of subject you are considering for online delivery
Photography_ Visual Communication 1 and Digital 1/2/3
At what level is the subject offered (first/second/third/fourth year) 1/2/3 years
Is this an existing DUT subject (i.e. have students enrolled for the subject previously)? yes
In which department is the subject offered? Photography
What qualification(s) is served by the subject? National Diploma
Why do you think that putting your course online will increase its effectiveness?
Online learning meshes education with new technology and nurtures this generation of student's mindset with a mode of expression and system of communication that they are drawn and accustomed to. Online learning is a channel to bridge the gap between student and lecturer dialogue by providing the means for students to access contribute and complete assignments online, through a contemporary medium that feeds, fascinates and connects.
Why would you like to join the Pioneers course?
I would like to create an interesting and creative forum for students to discover, navigate and explore whereby they acquire knowledge and skill not only in their chosen field, Photography, but also gain insight into other disciplines that are united through access to the World Wide Web. I would also like to create a platform whereby students may present their photographs and generate conversation around their photographs with other classmates. I hope that the Pioneers course will facilitate my lecturing skills by providing a means to keep students inspired and creative through new technology.

Students' Background and Skills

How many students are likely to access your course online? 85
--

Are you able to organise access to Internet workstations <i>on campus</i> for your learners? Please provide details of venues.

Yes_ in the Photography Department Digital Lab.

Computer & Internet Literacy Can your learners, or are you willing to teach your learners to: **MOST [95%] STUDENTS ARE COMPUTER LITERATE IN THESE AREAS LISTED BELOW.**

Use the Windows Explorer to create and delete folders? Yes

Use the Windows Explorer to copy, move and delete files? Yes

Use a web browser to browse the World Wide Web? Yes
--

Use a web search engine to find information? Yes

Use email to send and receive messages? Yes
--

Use email to send and receive attachments? Yes

Thank you for your application.

(8) ADP3 Assignment Brief: Fashion Illustration with Adobe Photoshop 2011

PORTFOLIO DIGITAL REQUIREMENT 3:

ADP3_28/04/11

Fashion Illustration with Adobe Photoshop

CRIT: DUE DATE_09/05/11

TASK: Submit your own Fashion illustration photograph inspired by the tutorial created by Pete Harrison [Computer Arts Magazine_ March 2006], which was done in class on 14/04/11. Apply some of the methods and techniques learnt from the tutorial into your own Fashion Photograph.

Find out more about this illustrator on: click on web addresses to take you to site.

www.aeiko.net or www.funkrush.com or www.desktopography.net

AIMS: This assignment hopes to unlock an experimental and painterly way of working, as one will gain insight into the illustrative potential in Adobe Photoshop. The tutorial has given you greater knowledge and scope into possible ways, in which one may explore certain tools and effects to create a painterly look in a Fashion photograph. Through this tutorial one has learned how to create interesting backgrounds and effects, by utilizing gradients, blending modes, layers and layer masks. Through experimentation, one has also discovered the creative potential in displacement maps.

REQUIREMENTS:

Size:

- The worked document size must be 8x8 inches @300dpi.
- The Web Album document: resize to approx.1024 x 1024 pixels @ 72dpi

Technique:

- Complete the Tutorial in your own time. Work in groups and/or converse with me if one has any problems with understanding it's content. Your image must show diverse usage of a displacement maps. Experiment with other displacement maps, supplied to you in a folder by Liza.

ONLINE CRITIQUE:

- This image will be critiqued online. I will create a Picasa Web Album and share the link with you. Please upload your own 'compressed' image to the Web Album on the 9th of May.

1> Write a short comment on the ideas and inspiration that facilitated you in creating this image (edited from your blog post) . EG: ***The idea for around this image is.../ I got the idea's for this image from.../ I was inspired by...***

2> You will be required to critique two of your peers work from 10th May to 16th May.

Marks will be allocated in the rubric for the all the commentaries above.

RJ/BLOGGING:

- Remember the guidelines from the TASC WHEEL.
- gather/organise: What do I know about this?
- identify: What is the task?
- generate: How many ideas can I think about?
- decide: Which is the best idea? Why?

In your Reflective Journal/Blog discuss the following. It is advisable that one uses multiple blog posts to discuss and show the following:

- 1> Show inspiration/research (links, video, images or a written account)
- 2> Identify what the task is and how you will go about doing it
- 3> Come up with ideas_ document thought processes
- 4> Give reasons for choices made
- 5> Discuss composition/colour/rhythm/texture/shape- the surprises and the considerations.

Print this out with your name clearly marked on this for presentation at crit. Your text will accompany your image.

Marks will be allocated in the rubric for the all the commentaries above.

MARKS: 50% of your marks will be allocated for the tasks stated above. The other 50% of marks will be given for creativity and experimentation. Marks will be assigned for: *[Please see marking rubric and checklist below]*

- > One's ability to utilize the illustrative potential in Adobe Photoshop in conjunction with your Photographic component and how you merge these two disciplines.
- > The photographic component: that being your choice of model, styling, pose and the photographic quality.
- > Usage of displacement maps, gradients, masks and other blending effects: Adobe Photoshop tutorial information.
- > Personal articulation and understanding of the tutorial: how you interpret and rework tutorial in your own photograph.
- > The overall effect and mood generated by the merging: the concept

Marking RUBRIC & CHECKLIST: TOTAL:100%

✓	WHAT NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED	MARKS %
	Correct document size & resolution	5
	Comments: own	10
	Comments: peer 1	10
	Comments: peer 2	10
	Reflective Journal: BLOGGING	15
	CREATIVITY: illustrative/painterly effects	10
	PHOTOGRAPHY: model type/style/pose	10
	Adobe Photoshop Techniques: displace/masks	10
	personal articulation/understanding	10
	CONCEPT: overall effect/mood	10

NB: handin> Due Date> FRI: 9th MAY 2011



online CRIT: 10-16 May 2011 ldp110428

(9) Personal Notes: Summary for timeline diagrams for 2010 and 2011

See the timeline below for the developments of Google Lens practices.

2008 July 1_ first day of Junior Lecturer position

2009 - *Learning about e-learning, photography, creating a syllabus for ADP1, 2, 3 and revising existing syllabus, Vcom 1. Formation of my inquiry_ to get students to see each others work and interact with each other about their work_ but was not certain how this would happen. _*

January: receive lecturing load of ADP 1, 2, 3 and Vcom 1 (new)

July: one year in Junior Lecturer position • start Pioneers online Learning Course at Celt.

July – August research of discourses on e-learning

September – November : introduction to Blackboard CMT • begin to design and build classroom: focus on Visual Communication Syllabus_ teaching visual literacy in Photography

November: Departmental capacity building Workshop facilitated by JC, SR. Develop a learning criteria (outcomes and Marking rubric) for RJ/Reflective Journal with OM. Formation of the 3A's as criteria for professional development of a Photographer.

2010 - continue with Pioneers course: complete 'mock-up' for BB classroom and do report, inception of osmosis and osmosisliza, freewheel and experiment with Google, test the formation of Google Lens practices, tutor and integrate into subjects I teach, link students via Gmail, create communities of practice, devise assignments and slideshows, both formative and summative, that endorse 3A's and find ways to develop COP via proposed developmental 'Google' spaces, use www.ted.com videos to create dialogue on various subjects about engagement, self development, experimentation, story-telling_ with an emphasis on New technology , use the TASC wheel as a guide for active thinking and engagement in own practices.

January: osmosis identity, persona of lecturer in Cyberspace • the process of gradual or unconscious assimilation of ideas, knowledge from one source to many.

February: open osmosisliza@gmail.com and Buzz (launched in February 2010 and stopped in December 2011. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gmail#Google_Buzz) • use Firefox browser as the teaching browser • more aligned with customization of spaces and personalizes Internet browsing • use YouTube (case study 1) as a means to talk about diversity and express the 3A's

March: encourage submission of assignments for Vcom1 via Google Docs • use YouTube and Google search engine for tutorial based learning to teach Adobe Photoshop. Students are encouraged to work independently and build on knowledge.

April: striking action at DUT closes campus and all lecturing tasks and some assignments are distributed via email.

May: Colourful Walk (case study 2) *use of YouTube and Gmail as a repository for assignments, correspondence and images • creating COP by moving outside of the Classroom into the streets and Gallery* this event is later place in cyberspace (see below)

May: Nicole Meiring uses a blackberry to correspond via our Gmail.

June: creation of osmosisBLOG (21.06), first PWA: “the warmest place to be” (26.06)

du Plessis, LK. 21 June 2010. No title. *osmosisBLOG* (online). Available:

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2010/06/world-cup-fever.html> (accessed 27 June 2013)

July: Google Apps: sign in and register (have not explored further) • hand in Pioneers Report • devise Questionnaire: Meet the Digital Native • Google Wave (use but do not continue_ was discontinued by Google in August: <http://techcrunch.com/2010/08/04/wave-goodbye-to-google-wave/>)

August: experiment with Google Maps street view_ students find their home on Google • first time to use Google Docs (work together on a shared Document) and Bookmarks for lesson adp3 “7 deadly sins” • integrate blogger + PWA for “satisfied poodle album” images I took of 3rd year trip to the Drakensburg. Use osmosisBLOG to announce and first posting of video on YouTube: osmosislizatube.

September: Colourful Walk (case study 2) in cyberspace. My video Trilogy and 10 of the students slideshow e=which were created in Picasa (also by Google_ image editing and sharing of images freeware_ tool for Google Lens) for vcom1 assignment. Youtube, and Blog entries_ comments on Buzz and Blogger • Webinar : osmosis_ movement and connections via cyberspace

PWA: online crit ‘Child at Play’ (adp1)_ supported questions and Perfume Ad (adp3)_ unsupported _ freewheeled_ ‘mood portrait’ (adp1)_ unsupported_ no comments only viewed numerous times

Vcom 1: “interview 3/4th years” this assignment and the responses from students Influenced my line of questioning for “meet...” which I used as a standard format for my blogs and also use it for the students to introduce themselves on their own blogs.

PWA: self portraits, shared with Joey and Abdul and past student Paul and Gee.

October: “say blackberrrrrrriiii” announce on Blog the excitement of getting a Blackberry. Take images around the department and post on blog_ include the ECP students

November: showcase some of the works of 2nd years that they submitted for portfolio.

Enoch Hale Workshop on critical Thinking and Jack Whitehead on Living Theories

2011 - continue with Google Lens_ emphasis on t&l and collaboration_ start 2 new blogs test the use of Google Lens as a teaching and learning tool, formation of communities of practice in 2010_ watch and make it grow, attempt to improve on assignments and slideshows, both formative and summative, that endorse 3A's and find ways integrate 'Google' spaces_ establish that the Google Lens is about the interconnectivity of numerous diverse spaces, use the TASC wheel as a guide for active thinking and engagement in own practices, begin to claim feel more comfortable as osmosisliza_ but ask **Who am I who teaches?** (Boullough and Pinnegar, Whitehead, McNiff).

January:

osmosisBLOG <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/01/welcome-backbuck.html>

welcome back/buck: blog post say **osmosisliza** is *still* excited to collaborate and exchange thoughts with you in... **2011**

- **ADP3: Chimanda Adichie:** Dangers of a single story_ www.ted.com available on: (accessed 30 January 2011)
http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html
Comments/discussions_ open forum/class discussion
- use of Digital in Specialist _ show Google Docs_ use to send thoughts and reflections_ tell me more
- BLOGGERS: What goes in?

February:

- > striking action at DUT closes campus • do ice breaker • ice-rink • tribe skates
<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/06/tribe-skates.html> • YOUTube & PWA:
<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/TheTribeSkates?authkey=Gv1sRgCKjli5ySrhs&gsessionid=aNMvBx588hWVhBzysdbqMA>
- > use FireFox browser as the teaching browser • more aligned with customization of spaces and personalizes Internet browsing • use YouTube (case study 1) as a means to talk about diversity and express the 3A': Messages with YouTube
- >meet the tribe: TRIBE 1:
<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/TribeNo1#>
<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/TribeNo2#5573846184159787714>
- > ADP2: Blogs • Open a Google Docs: Outline of Blog • My first blog experience • What I like • What was frustrating • How can I improve my blog • Who have I shared it with • Any feedback • the way eye see the world
- > Shannon Truters gmail chain mail_ the personal
- > introduce Paul <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/02/10-questions-paul-reichle.html>
- > introduce Lauren: <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/02/10-questions-lauren-stead.html>
- >meet the tribe: TRIBE 2 • PWA •
<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/TribeNo2>
- > osmosis happens: osmosisBLOG announces osmosisPROJECTS
<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/02/osmosis-happens.html>
- link to chat with Gareth: <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/02/meet-gareth-bright.html> (see 02.22 email from Gareth) +

> introduce Gareth: first post osmosisPROJECTS 27/02 <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/02/10-questions-gareth-bright.html>
<http://todaystumult.blogspot.com/2011/06/sixteenth.html>

March:

sick tasks sent via Gmail adp3 • blog - 7 deadly sins

Mr Gee: chocolate gentle man

Follow Gareth to ruwanda operation smiles <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/03/gareth-off-to-rwanda.html>

03.07: the way eye see the world

03.09: are we cyborgs: adp1 fun with Photobooth Google Docs • post on 03.17 on osmosisBLOG <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/03/scary-or-funny.html>

03.17 meet Chillies _ a Master student <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/03/meet-noxolo-chillies-zwane.html>

"Let us all work towards eliminating the stereotype that associates nudity with porn or sexuality, because the human body must be celebrated, in any shape form or size and must be tastefully portrayed." (above quote by Noxolo Zwane)

03.17 Collaborate: relevant finger

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/03/relevant-finger.html>

<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/TheRelevantFinger?locked=true>

Gmail: problems > with virus > stolen car >late assignmnets

03.18: Adam's gmail bb 2 bb Tinkering with Light

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/03/tinkering-with-light.html>

Paul's tinkering <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/03/paul-tinkerer.html> on the 03.07

ECP students visit department

03.18: meet Fabian and Liz over Gmail _ talk about project with Gmail

03.23 Displace Tut: Fashion and Illustration effects share and contribute via Google Bookmarks: [contribute/share findings](#) • Research other tutorials on web and library

03.29_ year one learn Picasa on own • make collage Journey so far: PWA made on 30 March students only start commenting from August the 11 when sent an email to say they will be marked_ some students star to submit

April:

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/04/list-of-self-assignments.html>

As I am always **more** captivated by images (make me speechless) than words (have to find the words to express myself), I am going to include student images from my collection of past third year student works to illustrate these points. Get to know yourself, your voice, your industry and its history, your goals, your market, your professional identity, your toolkit, your community, your gifts.

PWA: ABC's <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/04/abcs.html>


hyperlink to PWA:

<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/Abc?authkey=Gv1sRgCLD13aGppbq3JA&gsessionid=5joc6yz8Gd0GzamoC8OkAA-5592472908354350850>

share their 'collection' **'osmosis' style**

Peter: <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/04/what-kind.html>

Gmail ADP3_ to motivate to use blogs 4.21: Hi All. Hope you have a wonderful easter week-end_ Those of you that are up to it_

Please make an entry on your blog ... with images for each of these 5 points and share a little about yourselves and your feelings and experiences on Photography... P L E A S E_ don't want to have to force you!  Here are the 10 ?'s -----> **1. What does Photography mean to you? 2. What genre of photography are you passionate about? Why? 3. What aspects of Photography do you love? 4. What aspects of Photography do you find challenging? 5. If you could share one thing with others who are also interested in Photography what would it be?**

Graduation: 0421 photo-story... use this 'space' to share their stories on 'Grad'... because I was not there! **my “lonely” blue shirt hung over my chair... seperated from the herd!**

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/04/i-didnt-graduate-but-i-can-still.html>

04.23 meet Fabian <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/04/meetfabian-pflaum.html>

04.27 MIZA intro: <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/04/introductionmich-ihnen-zu-antworte.html>

04.27 MIZA 25 January 2011+ 04.28 Miza 09 March

<http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/04/miza-25th-january.html>

<http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/04/miza-09-march.html>

2010 striking action at DUT closes campus and all lecturing tasks and some assignments are distributed via email.

04.27: meet Dena <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/04/meet-dena-churchman.html>

04.28 bbm chat with Werner over his works

May:

05.10: PWA_ online crit ADP3 face to face and online comments as requested by students in previous crit LaVernes email_ 11/21 pitched

<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/FashionIllustration?locked=true>

Feedback from Crit via email_ see Sakhiles comments_ they address questions asked.

05.14 studium/punctum_ Joshua image <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/05/studium-and-punctum.html> year 1 asked to comment for viscom 1• include what I refer to as an irritating video but it gives me an idea for viscom exercise.

05.08:MIZA 14 March: <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/05/miza-14th-march.html>

05.15: MIZA 18 March: <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/05/miza-18th-march.html>

05.18.<http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/05/blogpal-gareth-visits-department.html> blogPAL Gareth visits the Department _ see entry on table I give feedback via a blog post and he say thanks. “Yesterday having his presence in the real rather than virtual was a reminder, that no matter how accessible and 'wonderful' technology is nowadays for keeping in contact, exchanging and communicating_ conversing with someone at face value is still the most engaging”. Because of lack of commentary on Blogs I typed out (by me) responses from some of the written responses I asked students to write about straight after the presentation. Gareth gave me images to put on harddrive_

I chose some of my favourites. _ also shares video via YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySvqIKiyg48>

05.19: Moses <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/05/mkhulu.html>

05.19: MIZA 20 March: <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/05/miza-20th-march.html>

05.28: <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/05/vegetarians-do-not-look.html>

05.31+ 06.02 oB: feelings of emptiness

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/06/feelings-of-emptiness.html>

Gmail: Yolanda (thanking) +Buzz: Bwalya comments

June:

Authentic Saga Introduction.

<http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/06/introductionthe-authentic-saga.html>

06.06: oB_ triptych <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/06/triptych.html>

Google Bookmarks for collecting

06.05: subject of Viral: Nduduzo and Erin and Jerome

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/06/when-student-whereabouts-go-viral.html>

06.08 Body Art • adp2• tuts on Google Bookmarks, PWA

oB Beauty in the eye of the beholder: Quraisha:

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/06/beauty-in-eye-of-beholder.html>

oB: Massimo: <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/06/1-guess-who-this-is.html> Can make-up **really** disguise WHO (and what) you are?

06.14+18_ Gmail: at risk students for vcom1 • Gmail: class activity on “colour” vcom 1

06.18-21- Authentic Saga posts Q 1-10: <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/search/label/the%20authentic%20saga>

July: Google Apps: sign in and register (have not explored further) • hand in Pioneers Report • devise Questionnaire: Meet the Digital Native • Google Wave (use but do not continue_ was discontinued by Google in August: <http://techcrunch.com/2010/08/04/wave-goodbye-to-google-wave/>)

August:

08.18: Mbuso sends email to say he inspired by my image_ I make a blog entry on Shadows and reflections and lighting lesson on YouTube

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/08/shadows-and-reflections.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2Cfg3swvbc> photography lighting lesson

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM7CcUrUD2g>

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/08/shadows-and-reflections.html>

using past students and some of my images_ refer to roland barthes quote.

Mbuso's blog <http://granpixxx.blogspot.com/>

08.21 OB: ... the Power of inspiration_

Jerome_ <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/08/power-of-inspiration.html>

WELL **Jerome** YOU inspired me and yesterday afternoon I started my 3rd BLOG (which I have been wanting to for a long time), the trilogy to osmosis weblogging: [osmosisliza](http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com) ---> **making sense of the movement between...**

08.20 osmosisLIZA <http://lizarduplessis.blogspot.com/2011/08/space1.html>

see 22/ 24 august : Yr2: osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/08/viral-experiment-1-tribe-2-liza-2010.html

Yr3: <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/08/viral-experiment-1-tribe-3.html>

07.27 Gmail: to say what to write in comments for PWA:Journey so Far... students make comments and add more images

September:

Ob and YouTube: TAP

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/09/talking-about-photography-tap.html>

For one of my Visual Communication 1 lessons (sometime in May)_ I asked the first years to get into groups of three to record a video about a conversation they 'will have' on a Photograph to express their viewpoints about the photograph in conjunction with a set of questions provided. This was a exercise in 'visual literacy'.

[osmosislizatube](http://www.youtube.com/user/osmosislizatube) on Sep 29, 2011

<http://www.youtube.com/user/osmosislizatube?feature=watch>

October:

10.01 Picasa Web Album

<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/DoubleExposure>

10.07. <http://osmosisliza-osmosisprojects.blogspot.com/2011/10/anti-hipstamatic.html>.

Anti Hipstamatic: tree resin, blood and india ink The trained artist could draw a head or a hand from a dozen perspectives. The photographer discovered that the gestures of a hand were infinitely various.

10.13: <http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/10/oooooodles-of-google.html>

10.24 adp2 reaches 76 OB: Through the Peephole provides link to PWA

<http://osmosisliza.blogspot.com/2011/10/through-peephole.html>

<https://picasaweb.google.com/109191148911167212448/ThroughThePeephole>

November: showcase some of the works of 2nd years that they submitted for portfolio.

Enoch Hale Workshop on critical Thinking and Jack Whitehead on Living Theories

(10) Case Study: The Green Tear

The list below gives the case study a time, place and context where and how GL interactions took place.

context

Dates: April 2011 and May 2011

Level of study: ADP1 and Vcom 1

Reach: followers on Blogger and Buzz

Google Lens applications: Gmail, YouTube, Buzz, Blogger

Other linked spaces: Youtube, hyperlinks and DUT Library (books)

I have named this case study “The Green Tear” based on an image made by student Joshua Jordan. Jordan shared this photograph with me unexpectedly through Gmail on the 14 of April 2011, figure 42. The photograph shows a child’s face with green dash of paint below one eye, which made me think of a tear. This image also became the precursor for the discussions in the weblog post titled “studium and punctum” (du Plessis 14 May 2011) in osmosisBLOG..

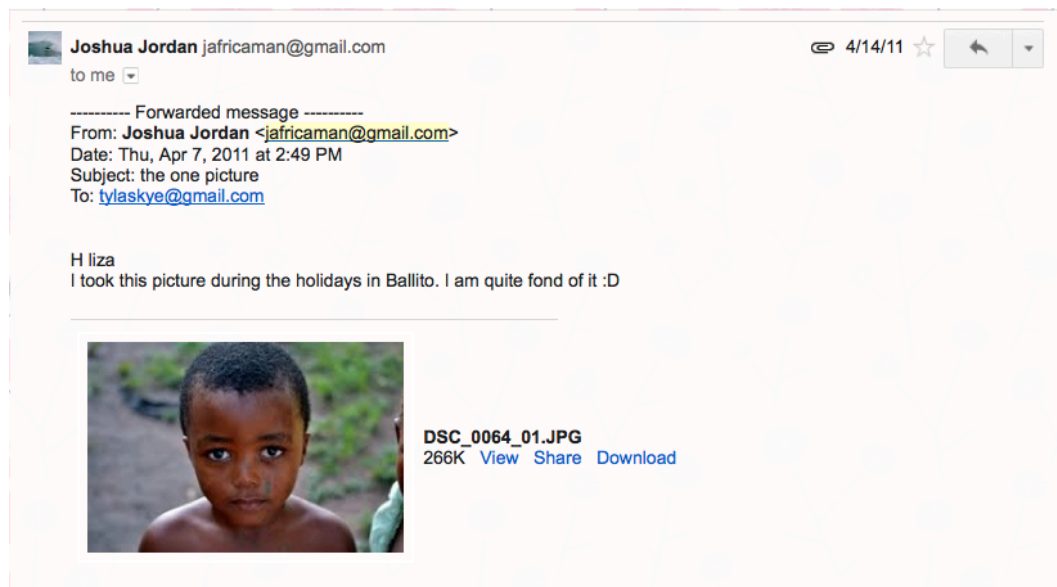


Figure 42: A screenshot of the Gmail sent to me by Joshua Jordan showing the photograph as an attachment that was the precursor for a weblog post and visual literacy discussions thereof made in osmosisBLOG.

story

When Joshua Jordan, then a first year student, shared his image with me in Gmail, taken in the holidays, he wrote that he was “quite fond of it: D”. I saw this as his reasons for sharing. I was ‘touched’ and inspired by his gesture and found the image to be immediately engaging and powerful. Jordan’s attachment sat in my my inbox for a while but played on my mind. I shared it only a month later, because I needed to find a teaching and learning context to explore it further. Reading about Barthes’s concepts of the ‘studium’ and ‘punctum’ in discussing visual literacy for photography (1980:26-28) at the time, I was reminded of the experience I had when I first engaged Joshua’s image and the way it had struck me. Barthes uses the words ‘studium’ and ‘punctum’ to describe how a photograph becomes of interest to a spectator and acts on the body and mind (ibid). The studium is the “order of liking, not of loving” (Barthes 1980:27) whereas the punctum is “that accident that pricks (but bruises me, is poignant to me)” (Barthes 1980:27). Jordan’s image and response had ‘pricked’ me. I recognised that the image provided a simple yet direct example to draw off to explain and locate these concepts and explain them with this image.

I asked Joshua to write a ‘blurb’ and in another Gmail he said the following (sic):

I took this picture while ago in ballito. My aunt is building a creche on the farm and she told me to come along. I decide to take my camera along as there is always an oppurtunity for pictures. I am fond of this picture because you can see the childs innocence and soul (if you like). I actually know the child and his mother and had a recent opportunity to show her the photo which is also enjoyable. She loved it as do many other people. I am also fond of this photo, because this was the first day I started seeing my skills actually improving towards photography and it improved my ego (as you like?) (email dated 05 May 2011)

With Jordan’s permission I copied and pasted his email directly in the weblog post “studium and punctum” (du Plessis 14 May 2011) unedited, because I recognised strong uses of “Authenticity” (true to self), “Authorship” (personal story) and “Authority” (strong voice). Jordan described how he got involved in the photographic opportunity, knowing the subject matter, engaging with his surroundings. Jordan also sees in himself his own developments and there is a sense of confidence as he notes an improvement in his ego.

He showed ownership of how he made the photograph. I publicised this experience and photograph, using osmosisBLOG as a “pedagogical tool” (Luehmann 2008:228) to also sample my voice, my mentor values and beliefs for what I ‘credit’ makes a photograph meaningful. The way I directed and chose what to post, the writings, images, videos¹⁰⁹, the labels, hyperlinks that accompanied it (multi-media platforms), were telling, as they provided evidence of my living theory values: Authority, Authenticity and Authority – my creative frameworks for mentoring photographs, figure 43.

I posted my response (sic) to Joshua via email and answered my own question: “What is the ‘punctum’ for you in Joshua’s image?” in osmosisBLOG (du Plessis 14 May 2011):

osmosisliza says: *I would call it the 'green tear'_ the directness and engagement of this child's eyes with you the photographer/viewer is astonishing and absolutely beautifully as he seems to 'hold' you_ such an 'innocent' sense of trust_ but so captivating. In some cultures the photograph is said to remove ones soul_ but I think this child engages the soul of the photographer and the viewer_ like a mirror reflecting back. Here lies the tension for me between trust and being overpowered by the camera. Despite all the tension, it is still the green paint just under the child's eye that "pricks me" and this would be my punctum.*

¹⁰⁹ Grytko. 2010. *Film on Barthes, Punctum and Stadium* (video online). Available: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuiaDE6dk90> (Accessed 21 April 2013).

For a class activity for Visual Communication 1, I put time aside for learners to click on the blog link (shared via Gmail) and make a comment about the image in relation to the text and question posed in the blog, figure 42. Eight learners commented (class total has 26), figure 43.

The learners responded in a friendly and playful manner. Some learners showed evidence of learning about photography and others voiced and acknowledged Jordan's involvement with the act of photography. The learners's responses are positive, the overall responses were diverse and revealed how the blog post had made them think about their own photographs, figure 41. The collective voices showed engagement with the image, image story and the photographer. These overall surveys supported my photographs body thinking. I openly acknowledged my 'happiness' about this in a comment on the blog, figure 44.

I put my present survey upfront first, because when I first read the comments, a year before writing up this document, my research thinking and criteria were not yet in the frame. What I wanted to happen in the GL prescribed by what I thought should happen was short sighted. I kept thinking what am I doing wrong! What am I not noticing? What am I not showing? Instead of asking: What did this tell me about osmosisliza and the Google Lens?


Anonymous May 16, 2011 9:21 AM
 hey joshy poo your picture is soooo cute and really does bring out your good side :) daddy taught you well hey hahahaha A.K.A me, Massimo Rinaldi.

 see you around my boy...xxx
 Reply Delete


nthabeleng juliana May 16, 2011 9:24 AM
 jj photograph ntombie and nthabz : we think its an interesting image because of the story behind it and how joshua connected with the child through his camera which was amazing because he was able to show the emotions and the personality of the child.

 Reply Delete


bhuti May 16, 2011 9:27 AM
 ja today i got sum terms that re being ysed in the photography.

 Reply Delete


Wanda May 16, 2011 9:52 AM
 The image is really showing the realness of the child as you can see the innocence and the freedom to be a child. The freedom to be yourself and the spacle in the eye gives joy to other people.

 Reply Delete


francesca May 16, 2011 9:53 AM
 the photo shows the innocence of the child
 and for us as soon to be photographers we should always have our camera with us because there are always something good to photograph and moments that we want to capture

 Reply Delete


Slindile May 16, 2011 10:05 AM
 The image is interesting the contact of the child's eyes and the camera.It shows that the photographer had good connection with the child that he was able to show the child's emotion.big up Josh... Slidile and Sam.

 Reply Delete


Paulo May 16, 2011 6:27 PM
 A really breath-taking photograph! Well Done!

 I feel the punctum, for me, is the child's eyes.. but more so, the size of the eyes. The mood of the image has been captured so successfully through the eyes that a story can be told even if the rest of the image was removed and just the eyes remained (crop with your hands :) Great photograph!

 Reply Delete

Enter your comment...

Comment as: osmosis liza (Google) Sign out

Publish Preview

[Subscribe by email](#)

Figure 44: A screenshot of the eight learners response (an audience) my weblog post in osmosisBLOG (du Plessis 14 May 2011)

In the GL learners tend to write quickly, from the heart (which I want) and then stop after about 1 or 2 lines. What had I not done enough of? What did the learners need in order to be enticed and inspired to say more or even just to show recognition of others endeavours? I was caught between wanting to make them do more not wanting to be forceful, prescriptive and bossy. So I acted on this dissatisfaction, but tried to maintain the same positive attitude and enthusiasm I had seen happening in the eight comments. I made a second comment on osmosisBLOG (du Plessis 14 May 2011), figure 45.

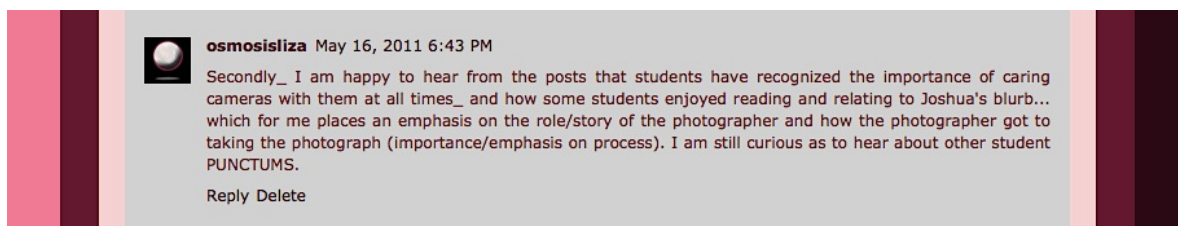


Figure 45: A screenshot of my comment in osmosisBLOG on 16 May 2011 to motivate learners to write responses