40.1 Teacher as Conceptual Artist

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Abstract

Teachers in arts education frequently struggle with their professional identity. When asked, arts teachers often answer that they believe that their main responsibility is education at the expense of understanding themselves as artists. The Mexican-American artist and teacher Jorge Lucero questions whether an occupation as teacher necessarily impedes a creative practice. The finding that both progressive pedagogy and conceptual art share certain characteristics forms the basis for his concept of 'teacher as conceptual artist'. In short, Lucero proposes that a teacher's practice, in and beyond the classroom, simultaneously can be his or her creative practice. This qualitative intervention study explored whether or not the concept of teacher as conceptual artist holds the possibility to narrow down the gap between teacher and artist identities. The intervention consisted of a three-day project led by Lucero in which nine arts teacher students were familiarised with modes of operation as a conceptual artist. In the three following months, these students implemented lessons in primary and secondary education based on those modes. Prior to the project, 'elicitation-interviews' were used to explore how students perceived their professional identity and at the end of project semi-structured interviews were conducted. The findings suggest that through the modes of operation as a conceptual artist, students who mainly identified as an artist were able to integrate a teacher identity in their artist identity, but the modes of operation also gave students who withheld their artist identity from the classroom an opportunity to live their artist identity in the classroom.

Keywords

intervention study, progressive pedagogy, conceptual art, artist-teacher, identity

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Introduction

Teachers in arts education might recognise the following situation. Socialising at a party, a guest might casually ask: 'So, what do you do?' The question seems easy to answer. However, teachers in arts education frequently struggle with their professional identity and feel conflicted (Freer & Bennett 2012; Hatfield et al. 2006; Huddleston Anderson 1981; Welch et al. 2011): Should they call themselves artist? Teacher? Or possibly both? Newly graduated arts teachers might answer that they believe that their main responsibility is education at the expense of understanding themselves as artists (Hall 2010). More experienced arts teachers could answer that their teaching practice requires all their time and attention, causing their identity as artist or performer to fade away (Graham & Zwirn 2010).

Graham & Reese (2014) characterise the arts teacher as a dual citizen: a teacher during the day, at night a struggling artist. Teacher and artist seem incompatible alter egos: Ms. Jekyll in class vs Mary Hyde at the gallery opening. Unwillingly, however, this conflict between identities can cause feelings of discontent (McConville 2017) as teachers can start perceiving themselves as failed or uncommitted artists (Imms & Ruanglertbutr 2013), or try to defend their artistic abilities as a teacher (Schlemmer 2014). Furthermore, the teacher/artist identity conflict can also lead to feelings of aversion towards school systems and pedagogical knowledge among (future) arts educators, as these are perceived as threats to being an artist (Mateus-Berr et al. 2019).

In this complex discussion about teacher/artist identities, Mexican-American artist and scholar Jorge Lucero (2011, 9) questions 'the needlessly polar opposites of art and pedagogy' and suggests that the profession of teacher does not need to stand in the way of nurturing an identity as an artist. He coined the idea of 'teacher as conceptual artist', and argues that the perceived gap between teacher/artist identities could be narrowed down through an understanding of how they overlap and integrate into each other (Bremmer et al. 2018). In short, he advocates the idea that a teacher's practice, in and out of the classroom, can simultaneously be their creative practice (Lucero 2016). To make his case, Lucero (2011) examined the similarities between progressive pedagogy and conceptual and socially engaged art, and the possibility for them to become an integrated practice.

Teacher as conceptual artist

Pedagogy as conceptual art

In general, the progressive pedagogies of scholars such as Dewey, Freire, Pinar and hooks informed Lucero's idea of teacher as conceptual artist. Although these progressive scholars offer diverse perspectives, they also hold similar views on education, for instance stressing the emancipation of the learner, formulating a critique regarding power structures in education, and placing learners in the world instead of just offering them knowledge about it (Hoekstra 2018). These views have paved the way for education to focus on real-life problems (Dewey 1938), to explore a more dialogical way of teaching and learning on the basis of equality (Freire 1970/1993; hooks 1994), to allow for an unfolding curriculum and reflexivity (Pinar 2004) and for the pupil's voice to be heard (hooks 1994).

Similar to educational researchers such as Adams (2013) and Hoekstra (2018), Lucero (2011) observed that the emancipatory, people-centered and situational approach found in progressive education can be found in conceptual or socially engaged art practices too. In those practices, reflexivity, an unfolding working process, engaging intensely with daily life, as well as gaining a personal voice within or against the system, are also central. Thus, according to Lucero (2011), progressive pedagogies open up possibilities to bridge pedagogy and art.
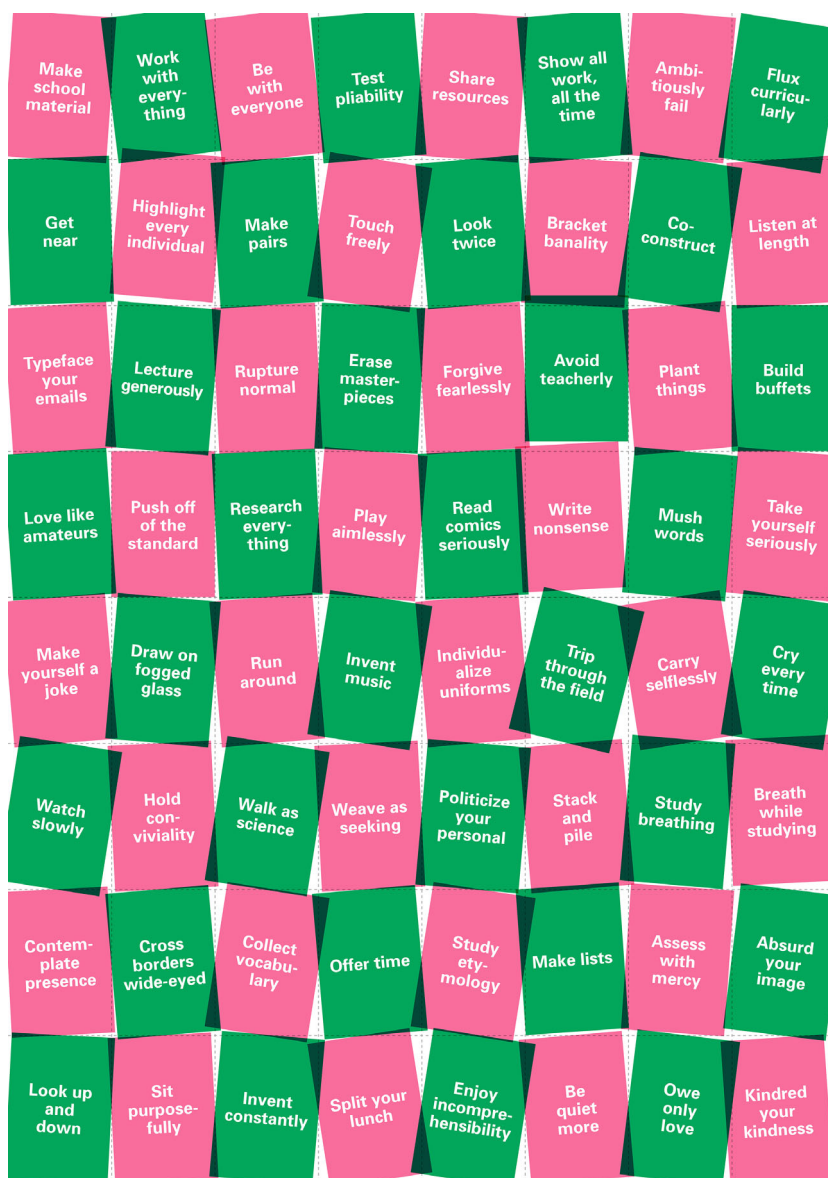

Figure 1
Poster based on Lucero's modes of operation for teachers as conceptual artists. Design: Meeusontwerpt

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Conceptual art as pedagogy

Besides progressive pedagogy, the idea of the teacher as conceptual artist is firmly rooted in conceptual art theory, with its basic assumption that art's main function is to engage the mind, rather than evoking aesthetical or emotional responses (Lewitt 1967). Just as in progressive education, Lucero strongly embraces the *democratic* features of conceptual art, including blurring the lines between art and daily life (Kaprow 1983), allowing for art to manifest itself in any form or discipline, even in dematerialised forms (Lippard & Chandler 1968). Furthermore, he embraces a view on artistic production that values (social) processes over final products (Rosenberg 1972). Lucero (2011, 25) notes that these ways of seeing, working, and being within a conceptual art practice, could be 'permissible in other practices', particularly those outside the artistic domain, like pedagogy. Hence, conceptual art can lend the teacher permissions for ways of working that have become quite common in the arts, but still seem underexplored in school contexts (Figure 1).

Drawing on conceptual art combined with elements of socially engaged art and durational art, Lucero (2018a) gives a selection of examples of what could be considered as conceptual art's permissions for so-called modes of operation. He stresses that these modes are not an all-embracing set of fixed, hierarchical rules to work by. Rather, they should be considered as non-prescriptive strategies that allow teachers to detach themselves from mandatory craftsmanship and the expected output of traditional school arts practices and enable them to 'live simultaneously as a teacher and an artist' (Lucero 2018b, 1).

Modes of operation

A first mode, derived from conceptual art, allows for the consideration of 'School as material'. Teachers can purposefully rethink what counts as material for making art and start seeing the aesthetic potential of anything surrounding them (Lucero 2016). In this way, teachers can 'play' with the materiality and parameters of the institution 'school' and start to view it through the lens of conceptual art (Bremmer et al. 2018): teachers can question the pedagogical, physical and economic infrastructure of a school and wonder how those immaterial infrastructures can become an artwork. Through this specific mode, teachers can start reframing the act of filling out paperwork, taking attendance, planning lessons, giving out grades and attending meetings as conceptual art (Lucero 2006, 2018a). Thus, by redefining the school with its own rules, relationships and obligations as artistic material, educational and artistic goals can be pursued at the same time.

A second mode involves 'Accumulate' and draws in part on processes from durational art. Lucero (2018a) notes that one action, a singular thought, or object can remain unnoticed; however, their accumulation calls for attention. Teachers often feel there is a lack of time to work in a studio or participate in extensive rehearsals. The mode of 'accumulate' is so favourable because it challenges teachers to construct art from activities they are already doing: at school, while commuting, or at home. Many of these rituals and activities are repeated on a daily basis, and when documented can accumulate over time to form a work or collection (Bremmer et al. 2018).

Derived from conceptual and socially engaged art, 'Use closeness' is a third mode. It allows for the intimacy of relationships to be transformed into artworks (Bremmer et al. 2018). Closeness is not limited to physical bodies; it can be understood as the close relationships between people, objects, or spaces in school that hold the potential to elicit works of art (Lucero 2018a).

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'Co-construct', a fourth mode, is a way of working found in socially engaged art. This mode entails the idea that to make art, teachers might use different forms of collaboration – not only with pupils or colleagues; a partner, a location or situation in school, could also be an object (Bremmer et al. 2018). Furthermore, through the act of co-constructing teachers can be given parameters by pupils that evoke the production of art, or conversely, can give parameters that encourage their pupil(s) to enact art (Lucero 2018a).

A fifth mode involves 'Present narratives'. In many (conceptual) arts practices, works of art develop through the documentation of artistic research processes via notebooks, interviews, photographs and so on (Lucero 2006). In a similar vein, teachers in schools are constantly being asked to capture the process of learning in summaries and deliverables. By (hyper)documenting the teaching and learning process through stories, images, exhibitions, websites and social media posts, teachers can produce an artistic narrative of teaching and learning.

'Embrace invisibility' would be a sixth mode and derives from durational and socially engaged art. Lucero (2018b) notes the teacher as a conceptual artist can think and act through time-based, relational, dematerialised ways and thus produce invisible works, that are often difficult to document. As such, artworks might never see the light of day or be documented for others to see, but still could be, in their own right, works of art.

To date, Lucero's ideas and artistic/pedagogic strategies have neither been empirically studied in other contexts than in his own art classroom practice, nor tried in an interdisciplinary group of arts educators. As such, there is little knowledge whether or not the concept of teacher as conceptual artist holds the possibility to narrow down the gap between teacher and artist identity. As perceptions about the arts teachers' identity form during their teacher training college, this research study set out to explore the identity of a group of Dutch arts teacher students of the Amsterdam University of the Arts, coming from different arts disciplines (visual art, music and theatre). We mapped how they experienced their teacher identity before and after an educational intervention based on Lucero's idea of teacher as conceptual artist. Regarding the concept of 'professional identity', for example an arts teacher's identity, this study took a contemporary approach to identity: it is constructed in a social context, it is dynamic, and shaped by action (Van Lankveld 2017). Furthermore, following Van Lankveld (2017), (arts) teacher identity is observed to be an organising element in (arts) teachers' lives with identity-guiding behaviour: (arts) teachers tell themselves and others what kind of person they are and subsequently try to act out who they say they are.

Methodology

Research aim

The aim of this research study was to understand which modes of operation were used by students in transforming their classroom into a creative practice and if the project influenced the perceptions of the arts teacher students with regard to their professional identity. Therefore, the following questions were addressed:

- According to the arts teacher students, which modes of operation as conceptual artist were used in transforming their classroom into a creative practice?

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- How did the project 'teacher as conceptual artist' influence the perceptions of the arts teacher students concerning their professional identities?

Research design

This research study was designed as a qualitative intervention study (Needleman 1996), which makes use of qualitative research methods, exploring the lived experience of participants concerning an intervention, such as an educational project. The content of the project in this research study consisted of a weekend-long meeting with Jorge Lucero in Amsterdam. During this weekend, arts teacher students were familiarised with Lucero's idea teacher as conceptual artist through lectures on the different modes of operation, discussions, and workshops. In the three months following the intervention, arts teacher students were asked to develop lesson ideas based on Lucero's ideas, which they implemented and documented in different (primary and secondary) schools in the Netherlands. During the implementation phase, arts teacher students were supervised by Lucero through mail, Facebook, and Skype-sessions. Lastly, the artworks that were produced by pupils in schools were collectively exhibited at FramerFramed, a contemporary art space in Amsterdam (Figures 2–4). The intervention itself was presented as an elective project of two European Credits (totalling 56 hours).

Participants

The participants were arts teacher students of three Bachelors in Arts Education (theater, music, or visual arts education) and of the two-year interdisciplinary Master of Education in Arts (see Table 1).

Concerning research ethics, all arts teacher students consented to take part in the research study by signing an informed consent form.

Figure 2
Billboard announcing the *Teacher as conceptual artist* exhibition at FramerFramed, Amsterdam. Photo: Jorge Lucero

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Figure 3
Teacher as conceptual artist – Exhibition overview. Photos: Emiel Heijnen

Figure 4
Teacher as conceptual artist – Exhibition overview. Photos: Emiel Heijnen

Research methods

A day prior to the project, 'elicitation-interviewing' was used to interview the students (Wagner 2011): a method of interviewing using visual images or materials to elicit comments. In our study, the arts teacher students were asked to choose one

TABLE 1 Participants' study

Education	Year	Participant
Bachelor in Theater Education	2	One (female)
Bachelor in Theater Education	4	One (female)
Bachelor in Music Education	3	One (female)
Bachelor in Music Education	4	One (female)
Bachelor in Visual Art Education	3	Seven (six females and one male)
Bachelor in Visual Art Education	4	Two (females)
Master in Arts Education	1	One (male)

or two pictures out of 100 images that might visualise how they perceived their identity as an arts teacher. These images were without text, did not depict well-known people, and did not directly refer to art or teaching. The selection showed a mix of concrete and abstract images and people of diverse gender and cultural background. On the basis of the chosen image(s), the students wrote down the answers to the following questions:

- How do you describe your identity as an arts teacher?
- How do you want pupils to see you?
- How do pupils currently see you?

The chosen images and written answers functioned as a base measurement against which the development of the arts teacher students' professional identity after the project could be made insightful.

Three weeks after the project had ended, a semi-structured interview took place with the arts teacher students. During the first part, the interview focused on the identity of these students. They were asked to reflect on the images they had chosen and the written answers they had formulated prior to the project. Subsequently they answered the following questions:

- How do you describe your identity as an arts teacher *now*?
- How do you want pupils to see you *now*?
- How do pupils see you *now*?

In the second part of the interview, the arts teacher students were asked about their experiences with Lucero's six modes of operation they had possibly applied in their classroom practice.

Concerning the data analysis, the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim and the data were analysed through a thematic-analysis approach (Braun & Clarke 2006). Within the process of thematic coding, we applied deductive coding and chose the following themes:

- modes of operation (school as material, accumulate, use closeness, co-construct, present narratives, embrace invisibility)
- identity (teacher identity, artist identity, teacher as conceptual artist identity)

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Every interview was first separately coded by two researchers. Afterwards, we discussed the alignment of our interpretations to achieve interpretive convergence.

Findings

Modes of operation as conceptual artist used in transforming the classroom into a creative practice

Mode 1: School as material

This mode was approached both literally and conceptually by the arts teacher students. Most students literally used the environment outside the classroom as artistic material. For instance, a music teacher student asked her pupils to collect sound samples from within the school for a film score. The conceptual approach entailed that students played around with the procedures and rules of school. For example, a theatre teacher student developed the project 'Lines', which hacks the punishment system of the school. Usually pupils are sent out of the classroom when they misbehave and have to report themselves to write lines or receive another form of punishment. In 'Lines', this student aimed to experiment with the 'time-out' procedure. By inviting pupils to make a work of art during their time-out she raised questions like: Could art production serve as an alternative for shame and punishment?

Mode 2: Accumulate

This mode was applied in two different ways by the arts teacher students. A few students used 'Accumulate' as a means to fuel their creative process. A theatre teacher student discovered that her photographic posts on the online project platform could function as an archive for new work: 'This project made me realise that continuously archiving things is valuable, as it gives you the opportunity to filter a core out of that, which can lead to new text or a solo play.'

Although few of the students used 'Accumulate' as a method to transform their daily routines into personal work, many of them used 'accumulative' strategies in their teaching (Figure 5). For example, students gave brief assignments that would produce experimental results to be reinterpreted, reused, or remixed into new pieces of work. Such prompts included, for example, 'write a film script on a 2x4 inch card' and 'note down an inner monologue in three minutes'. A visual art teacher student explained how these small assignments contributed to the creative process of pupils: '[brief assignments] allow you to experiment, without giving you the feeling the teacher is saying, "go experiment"'.

Mode 3: Use closeness

Firstly, many of the arts teacher students interpreted 'Closeness' as a form for intensified engagement with life. In that context, students made statements like: 'Recognizing small details of life and exploring them as art' (visual art teacher student), or 'Everything can be a work, if you frame it right. That was really new to me' (theater teacher student). Secondly, students observed 'closeness' could relate to the use of pupils' everyday popular culture as a source for arts production. The project of a visual art teacher student illustrated this idea. His class self-initiated a collective project entitled *This is our gang*, which included the production of masks,

Figure 5
Teacher as conceptual artist: work by a theater teacher student. Photo: Emiel Heijnen

dances, pictures and films. In their project, pupils used the online video game *Fortnite* as an important source, integrating elements from the game with personal views, local influences and actualities (Figure 6).

Mode 4: Co-construct

'Co-construct' was the mode the arts teacher students mentioned most in the interviews. Many of them explained they had experimented with taking a less-hierarchical position, allowing different forms of co-constructing to emerge in the classroom.

One form of co-constructing was explored in assignments in which pupils finished or continued the work of others: 'pupils made a video tutorial about something that they could do well and another group had to write a caption for it' (visual art teacher student).

A second form of co-constructing connected to understanding work processes as a collective endeavour of pupils and the teacher. A visual art teacher student explained: 'I serve as a source of inspiration instead of just telling the pupils what to do.' Another visual art teacher student observed how pupils produced initial works that were inspired by the teacher: 'I was talking about those coffee stains that were left behind on the table after a conversation. And then she took that idea and visualized it by expanding it on paper.'

A few students mentioned a third form of co-constructing, occurring when the teacher would follow up on the ideas of pupils. For instance, a visual art teacher student explained: 'There was a pupil who talked about working with light in an installation and then I discussed that idea with her. And that is how we actually came to my sculpture.' In this case, the pupil provided material for the teacher's oeuvre.

Figure 6
Teacher as conceptual artist: *This is our gang (excerpt)* – class of an art teacher student.
Photo: Emiel Heijnen

Students, however, did perceive the process of co-constructing as problematic. A visual art student teacher wondered whether following up on the ideas of pupils was in fact 'stealing' their ideas. Another visual art student teacher was struggling how to sign an artwork: the teacher's name first, followed by the pupils', or by coming up with a new name for the group to sign with?

Mode 5: Present narratives

This mode was also interpreted twofold by the arts teacher students. In a literal sense, many of them implemented assignments that involved writing, like thinking up a story, making lists, writing a letter, or noting down thoughts. In a more conceptual sense, 'present narratives' was interpreted as an incentive to document and collect as much as possible, which is also related to the 'accumulate' mode. For a music teacher student, the urge of documenting was one of the most valuable aspects of the project: 'Document everything, so you can tell these stories. I have noticed that I have been neglecting this too much.' A visual art teacher student stressed the importance of documenting as a way to increase the visibility of the arts in school, a strategic gesture that will be 'noticed unconsciously' by the pupils.

Some students, however, were critical regarding the urge to document. A theatre teacher student explained that one can 'over document', and risk getting lost in an excessive amount of data. A visual art teacher emphasised that meticulous documentation of creative processes in class might have an intimidating and stifling effect on pupils.

Mode 6: Embrace invisibility

This mode was recognised by many arts teacher students as an important mindset that counterbalanced the pressure to document 'everything' as a potential idea or

work of art. As a music teacher student put it: 'Tourists take pictures of everything around them. I am afraid that this is what will happen when you document everything – you cannot enjoy the moment itself.' Embracing invisibility was also interpreted as stressing the 'togetherness' of a group during learning processes: 'A group is allowed to have things that are only for the ones present, that will not be shared with others, that is a work just there. Just like breathing, as Duchamp pointed out. That is how life becomes art' (theater teacher student). Some students, however, pointed out how this mode also can be problematic. A visual art teacher student observed: 'It is difficult to cherish the things that will never be seen by others.' Another visual art teacher student said: 'You cannot document everything, but I think that if I would not document, I would forget it happened.'

The perceptions of arts teacher students concerning how the project 'teacher as conceptual artist' influenced their professional identities

Integrating a teacher identity into an existing artist identity

Some students described that prior to the project they had mainly identified themselves as being an artist and that they were anxious that this identity might be suppressed when taking on a teacher identity. Through the project, these students described they had become more confident that their artist identity could be integrated into teaching. A theatre teacher student explained: 'I am a theater maker – and will remain so. But I now know I don't need to take on a different identity as a teacher but can integrate my artist identity in teaching.' Similarly, a music teacher student observed that the project had made her sensitive to the fact that her expertise as a musician has common grounds with her expertise as a teacher – for example, both communicate and share musical information – and thus could be integrated. This led her to conclude 'it is very valuable to remember that I am a teacher too, not just a musician'.

Living the artist identity through co-construction

Some visual art teacher students mentioned that due to the project, they had experienced that an artist identity could be lived within the school, not just beyond the classroom. These students were used to showing their art at the very beginning of a lesson, but straight afterwards would take on the identity as teacher and supervisor. Through the project, these visual art students now noted they found it easier to keep their artist identity alive in their teaching, specifically through the mode of co-constructing: 'What kind of changed is that I now let pupils inspire me *during* teaching [...] and work together, that was new to me'. By acting as a fellow artist, these students felt they could keep their artist identity alive in the classroom.

Becoming a teacher as conceptual artist

Prior to the project, some arts teacher students explained they intuitively had felt the need to integrate their artist and teacher identity – but simply did not know how to do so. Through working with a strong role model like Lucero, discussing *and* experiencing the idea of teacher as conceptual artist, the students felt empowered to realise their ideal. A visual art teacher student noted: 'Seeing other teachers [e.g. Lucero] who have the same playful approach to teaching arts [...]

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strengthens my confidence that I can be a successful teacher too'. It also provided students with a clearer idea of how to *practically* integrate an artist and teacher identity into the classroom. A visual art student noted: 'This project has given me more certainty that it is possible [integrating artist and teacher into the classroom]'. This same student, however, also expressed some doubts whether she would be able to maintain an integrated identity once she started working as a professional arts teacher in school.

Conclusion and discussion

Based on the experiences and perceptions of the arts teacher students, this study suggests that the idea of teacher as conceptual artist holds the possibility to narrow down the gap between the teacher and artist identity, through applying different modes of operation in the classroom.

Based on the data, three modes of operation stand out for different reasons. First of all, 'School as material' seemed to be the most challenging mode. Although this mode implies working with *immaterial* structures of a school through a conceptual lens, most students interpreted the mode in a literal way by using objects and sounds of the school environment as artistic material. The literal approach could be result of the students' inexperience with conceptual art, which was felt most strongly among the music students, who tend to work in practical ways.

Secondly, the mode 'Co-construct' was applied the most. Possibly, co-constructing is a recognisable common skill between artists and teachers for these students (Owton et al. 2016). Therefore, it seemed to be an accessible mode for them to transform their classroom practice into a creative practice. At the same time, it was a mode that prompted a complex discussion about whether or not it was ethical to 'use' pupils for personal work, and who could or should be considered the author of participatory artworks. Students struggled with this issue, and interestingly, it touches both on discussions in the art world *and* in progressive pedagogy: who is in power, and who is being seen and whose voice is being heard (Helguera 2011; hooks 1994)?

Thirdly, the mode 'Present narratives' posed the greatest dilemma. On the one hand, this mode urged students to use documentation as a valuable, process-based artistic strategy. Yet, students' hyper documentation of learning processes might cause feelings of continuous surveillance among pupils, which can obstruct their space for experiment and failure.

Furthermore, the modes *combined* challenged the students to work with their pupils differently altogether. As students started exploring conceptual modes of working, they designed assignments beyond their own discipline, focusing on themes and personal concerns rather than on media or techniques. Moreover, students felt encouraged to take more freedom within the school system, taking a more process-orientated view towards curriculum. As schools tend to over focus on final products and results, a process-orientated curriculum gives both pupils and arts teachers more freedom to experiment. As such, we believe that through applying the modes of operation the teaching skills of these students became more aligned with progressive pedagogy. They also accommodated them to integrate their artistic and pedagogical practice, giving way to a more conceptual and contemporary teacher/artist's practice.

Concerning professional identity, the overall project allowed students who mainly identified as an artist or performer to integrate a teacher identity into their artist identity. It also gave students who kept their artist identity out of the classroom an opportunity to live their artist identity in the classroom. Although this study suggests that the gap between the teacher and artist identity was narrowed down during the project, we do realise that it is unclear how long this sense of integration will last once students start working as a professional arts teacher in a school (Ballantyne 2007).

Also, the project made us wonder whether the students' conception of an integrated artist/teacher needs to be induced, or simply fostered, or made practical (Van den Bos & Brouwer 2014). Some students had ideas about the integration of a teacher and artist identity but simply did not know what that could look like in practice. Other students could verbalise their role as teacher much clearer than their role as artist, which made us question whether teacher-educators give the artist identity enough explicit attention. In both cases, a role model who materialises the integration of the artist/performer and teacher identity, could give students a language and confidence to become a teacher as conceptual artist themselves (Hatfield et al. 2006). Currently, however, arts teacher students often get taught arts and pedagogy as separate courses, perpetuating the notion of arts and pedagogy as two distinct domains (Hoekstra 2018). Teacher as conceptual artist could be an alternative for this traditional artist/teacher model. By integrating both practices, the identity construction of the artist/teacher could be dialectically engaged and a *dynamic* interaction between the teacher and artist identity could leave open the potential for increasingly diverse conceptions of identity (Schlemmer 2014). A better understanding of the development of arts teachers' identities offers new perspectives on the practice of arts teachers and can lead to revisions in the curricula of teacher training colleges (Vella 2016).

Taking a broader outlook, Lucero not only offers a theoretical framework but also practical guidelines for arts teachers to bridge professional identities and innovate their arts educational practice. Thus, teacher as conceptual artist holds a strong potential to vitalise the field of arts education and to broaden the teaching strategies of arts teachers, aiding teachers to relate contemporary views on learning/teaching to changing conceptions of the arts (O'Donoghue 2015).

Lastly, we also believe that teacher as conceptual artist can contribute to the domain of the arts. Lucero's practice can be situated in an ongoing tradition of artists operating on the cutting edge of arts, participation, and education, such as Yoko Ono, George Maciunas, Tim Rollins + K.O.S., Suzanne Lacy, Miranda July and Harrell Fletcher (Berry 2009; Desai & Chalmers 2007; Heijnen & Bremmer 2020). Yet despite the fact that education has become a hot topic among artists and curators (Rogoff 2008; Finkelpearl 2013; Heijnen 2015), the artworld's impact on the educational methodologies and systems it critiques is rather limited (Graham et al. 2016). Lucero's teacher as conceptual artist shows that arts educational reform requires both pedagogical and artistic knowledge and the willingness to not only discuss school systems, but to really engage with them.

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