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Mobile Public Arts Spaces and Social Capital Building: A Hong Kong Perspective

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Abstract

Public space and community development are vital to the building of social capital. The creation of networks and connections between community members from different backgrounds is facilitated by the creation of public spaces that provide opportunities for social interactions. Hence a key to developing social capital is the creation of more public spaces. But what can be done in crowded cities with limited spaces such as Hong Kong? This paper

posits the close connection between public spaces, social capital, and community development, and examines a Hong Kong community-based project that demonstrates an alternative approach to the creation of public spaces. This project's mobile public arts spaces highlight the potential for adding the element of mobility to public spaces as well as the importance of artistic events in building social capital. These spaces also constitute a form of community-based education.

Key words

mobile arts space, public space, community development, social capital

Introduction

The dispute regarding the ground floor area of Time Square is another example of public concern about the use of public space in Hong Kong. In 2008, the Democratic Party demanded the government collect the proceeds from private property owners who had been renting out designated open public spaces for profit (Chui, 2008). The call came after disclosure that the ground floor area of Time Square was public space and the Time Square management had leased the space for profit. From 2003 to 2005, a corner of the piazza was leased to a coffee shop; the management claimed that this was an unintentional oversight. Complaints were made against security guards employed by the proprietor of Time Square for preventing pedestrians from sitting or remaining in the designated public area. These disputes over the use of public space reflect the growing awareness and concern about how public spaces are utilized.

Another concern related to the lack of public spaces and their use in Hong Kong is the high level of socio-economic segregation in the city (Monkkonen & Zhang, 2011). The widening gap between Hong Kong's rich and poor and the city's fast-paced lifestyle mean that people are constantly busy going about their own business with little time to stop and connect or relate with the people around them. Creating public spaces that provide opportunities for communication and relationship building is one way to combat such undesirable segregation. In addition, there is a strong relationship between arts organizations and neighborhood amenities. Arts organizations are closely linked with young professionals in the "creative class" (Florida 2002).

A project that sought an innovative way to create mobile public spaces with limited space is presented in this article. The article examines how relationships and networks can thrive in public spaces with the addition of the arts. It also shows that creating public spaces with an artistic focus contributes to community development from a social capital perspective. This project was initiated by a tertiary education institution in collaboration with a major bus

company in Hong Kong to create mobile public arts spaces to bridge diverse sectors of the community through arts. The project shares similar goals with the West Kowloon Cultural District, a US$3 billion project envisioned by the Hong Kong government to promote the arts in community and create public spaces for social interaction. However, the project differs from the government venture in its mobile approach to creating public arts spaces. Informed by theories about social capital, in particular bridging social capital, the project is designed to foster connections and communication between different sectors of the Hong Kong community.

Public Spaces, Social Capital, and Community Development

Social capital is a very important aspect of community development. The latter depends on the successful creation of social relationships that connect individuals; these relationships constitute what has been called social capital[1] (Hustedde, 2009). Quality social relationships are the cornerstone of society building and successful community initiatives and relationships are the essence of social capital. As Field (2003) put it:

> membership of networks and a set of shared values are at the heart of the concept of social capital… The central idea of social capital is that social networks are valuable assets. Networks provide a basis for social cohesion because they enable people to cooperate with one another – and not just with people they know directly – for mutual advantage. (pp. 3, 14)

There are primarily two kinds of social capital: bonding social capital and bridging social capital. While bonding social capital is defined as "the strength of relationships glued amongst in-group members", bridging social capital is defined as "the network of relationships between people from different social categories" (Chong & Ng 2010, p. 78). Chong and Ng singled out bridging social capital for examination because they recognized two of its important

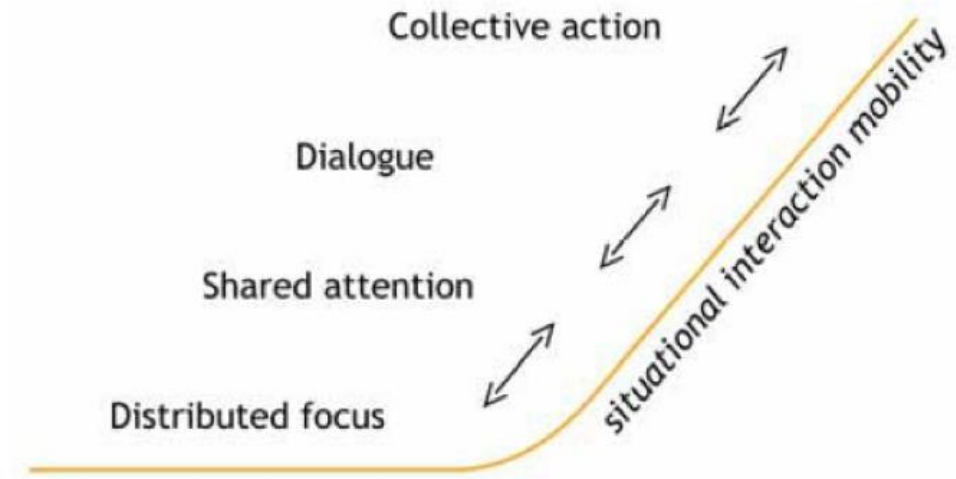
capacities: (1) its capacity to go beyond intra-group bonding to bridge different groups and social entities for "real capacity building" (p. 76) and (2) its capacity to secure new resources and opportunities by bridging external and diverse groups. They explained that bridging social capital offer benefits that go beyond bonding social capital as "bridging enables impoverished groups to secure resources that are not available among their homogenous members, but can be mobilized through interactions and ties with members across heterogeneous groups" (p. 82).

Social capital cannot be harnessed without the availability of public space, of which there are three main types: housing public space, commercial public space, and cultural public space. These public spaces provide opportunities for social capital building. Ijla (2009) suggested that public spaces "facilitate the exchange of words between people not likely to interact relative to their social groups" and "have the potential to bring people into contact with each other if the space is designed with a focus on beauty and activity" (p. 49). The Hong Kong Public Space Initiative broadly defined public space as "an area where everyone, regardless of his or her background, can enter without pre-requisite, such as an entry fee" (Hong Kong Public Space Initiative, n.d., p. 1). According to a study by Laughlin and Johnson (2011), young people and adults share a similar understanding of public spaces, which typically involves three characteristics: easy accessibility, a sense of belonging, and the ability to find and be with friends.

Public spaces facilitate the building of social capital by providing opportunities for social interactions. Ludvigsen (2006) designed a conceptual framework for describing the types of social interaction taking place in public spaces. The framework consists of four levels which denote increasing levels of commitment, availability, and engagement by the participants (viz., distributed attention, shared focus, dialogue, and collective action). The first level is when people are together in the same space but with *different* foci. They may be occupying the same space without interacting with one another. The second level is when

people are together and their attention is directed towards the *same* thing, for example a performance, and the communication is only one-way, for example, from the performer to the audience. The third level of dialogue denotes a "two-way communication and interaction as opposed to broadcast or one-way communication" (p. 45). The fourth level – collective action – is when people work together towards a shared goal and are engaged in the same activity. Situational interaction and mobility increase along with the levels, demonstrating "the change in level of social interaction in the framework, and how well a service, product or installation supports this change in engagement" (p. 46). Ludvigsen proposed that if a higher level of interaction is desired, "a greater emphasis [is] needed on the specific direction through, for example, a focus on aesthetic interaction, encouraging an explorative curiosity by the users" (p. 47.) Ludvigsen's framework is represented diagrammatically below:

Figure 1 *Ludvigsen's (2006) public space-social interaction framework, p. 47.*



Methodology

The research methodology adopted in this project was qualitative, which provided a flexible and iterative approach. In the process of data collecting, the design of research methodology was continuously modified based on ongoing analysis. This allowed the study of important new issues and questions as they arose, also, allowed the researchers to drop unproductive areas of study from the original plan. Data collection methods included participant interviews, direct observations, and systematic data collection. We used a variety of methods to achieve triangulation to increase the validity of the results.

Key informants such as the cooperating partner, student assistants, competition winners, participating students, and their parents were interviewed. Unlike an in-depth academic interview, the interviews in this study were conducted much like a dialogue between participant and interviewer, generating individual narratives that provided rich insights into the interviewees' lived experiences, shed light on the meaning of personal experiences (Carless & Douglas, 2013), as well as offered insights into the trajectory or arc of a life across time (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998). Questions were open-ended and the interviewer made a dynamic effort to build relationship with the interviewees. Sometimes, the interviewer explored appropriate topics as the interviewee brought them up during the interview. More than that, the interviewer interviewed the same interviewee quite a few times on different occasions to discuss certain issues in greater depth.

Direct observation emphasizes observing and recording actual behavior, rather than reported or recalled behavior. In this project, the observation focused on an individual, a location, or an event. The researcher recorded as much of the perceived behavior as possible, including activities, dialogs, and explanations of the locale and persons observed.

A Mobile Public Space Project

The close connection between public spaces, social capital, and community development has been discussed earlier. This section describes a mobile public space project, *Arts Bus: In the Community*, designed to create public arts spaces that provide opportunities for social interactions. The project facilitates the connections between different social groups and individuals by bringing artworks and events into the community at mobile arts venues, contributing to community development through fostering "bridging social capital" – building relationships and networks among heterogeneous groups. It also constitutes a form of community-based education.

The project echoed Ludvigsen's framework by including various artistic activities and performances designed for participation by the general public. The four levels of the project, as shown in Table 1 below, took one and a half years to progress from level one to level four.

Table 1 *Four levels of the project*

Level	Activity	Venue	Approx. number of participants
Level One: Distributed focus	Bus Body Design Competition	All Hong Kong	1,100
	Project Launching Ceremony	Stanley Plaza, Kwun Tong	350
Level Two: Shared attention	Exhibition	K11 Art Mall, Tsim Sha Tsui	6,000
	Opening of the Exhibition	K11 Art Mall, Tsim Sha Tsui	100
	Bus Body Design Competition Award Presentation Ceremony	K11 Art Mall, Tsim Sha Tsui	120
	Bus Groove Performance	HKIEd, Tai Po	100

Level Three: Dialogue	The School Tours! 1	Heung To Middle School, Tin Shui Wai	150
	The School Tours! 2	Po Leung Kuk 1984 College, Tseung Kwan O	160
	The School Tours! 3	Yew Chung International School, Kowloon	420
Level Four: Collective action	Free Music Festival	Sha Tin Racecourse, Sha Tin	1,500
	Artwork and music performances	Central Hollywood Road, Kowloon	250
Total number of the events participants			10,250

At the first level of distributed focus, a Bus Body Design Competition bearing a project theme invited proposals or artwork from primary and secondary school students across Hong Kong. Twenty winning works of art that conveyed the message of road safety were selected from amongst a large number of submissions. Design workshops led by professional art practitioners and visual arts students were then organized for the winners. The refined winning designs were then put onto twenty Arts Buses that went on public display while serving as regular transportation buses around Hong Kong for a period of around 6 months.

Apart from the bus body design competition, there was a variety of artistic activities that encouraged active participation and collaboration – entering the Level 2 of shared attention. These activities aimed to bring the arts into the heart of local districts and bring people from different social circles together. All the activities extended beyond the less active approach of arts appreciation, being designed in such a way that participants would be able to become actively involved in a more engaging experience of the arts.

By displaying the Arts Buses near school playgrounds, school campuses were transformed into art fairs that were open to the public. Three school tours were organized to three carefully selected schools with different backgrounds in different regions of Hong Kong.

The school tour activities were open for public participation and people living in the neighborhood had opportunities to interact with one another. Hence, dialogue with the community at Level 3 involved different groups of participants brought closer together by the arts bus activities to cooperate and communicate with each other.

In addition, the concept of sharing the arts via the Arts Buses displayed at different schools is being applied to a community outreach learning programme entitled 'Museum of Art on Wheels'. This programme is aimed at providing arts learning and aesthetic appreciation for schools and the wider community, and will be organised in the 2015-16 academic year. The programme will feature different themes of arts learning on the buses during school visits, targeting at least 100 schools and over 20 public spaces showcasing a series of supporting events and educational activities. As the circle of public arts grows, such programmes will provide students with valuable learning and volunteer opportunities in a real-world arts environment.

At Level 4 (Collective Action), the community was brought together with the belief that when given the opportunity, everyone can appreciate, create, and benefit from the arts. The project organized two "sharing festivals" – a Music Festival and an artwork cum music performance festival – which were participatory in nature and facilitated a higher level of social interaction. For instance, the artwork cum music performance festival included an Art Jamming competition that required participants to work in teams. During the competition, the participants went through all four levels of social interaction – sharing the same physical space and attention, conducting dialogue, and engaging in collective action when they worked towards the common goal of creating arts products. Participants and attendees at these sharing workshops included both students from the above-mentioned schools as well as members of the public. The two sharing festivals attracted a large number of participants (1500 and 250 people respectively), creating a platform for joyful participation in a range of arts activities.

Participants from different backgrounds and communities worked together to promote the arts in the community, raise public awareness, and boost interest in the arts. The primary purpose of these festivals was for the message "Arts for all" to be shared with the wider Hong Kong community.

Discussion

Creating mobile public arts spaces

The collaboration between a commercial bus company, a public university, tertiary arts educators, and arts practitioners enabled the transformation of buses into public arts venues. By adding an edge of mobility, these mobile spaces can reach out to more people than stationary arts venues. Of the 22 buses provided for the project by the bus company, 20 showcased winning students' artwork from the bus body design competition and 2 were deployed as event buses reserved for planned events and functions. The underlying goal of this project was to stimulate social interaction. The two event buses helped create mobile art spaces to facilitate communication and interactions among heterogeneous groups in a densely populated city setting.

An American tourist who participated in one of the events expressed being "impressed by the arts bus project as the use of mobility immediately breaks down the traditional art presentation or display barriers". The spaces in and around buses are narrowly excluded from being public spaces because fares are required for passengers to get on and thus they do not fulfil the criteria of free entry. In the case of our mobile project, no fares were required for anyone to get on the two event buses. The exemption of bus fares essentially transformed the bus spaces into public spaces which were free and open for all. Activities hosted on these event buses created opportunities for social interaction. While social interaction amongst passengers on ordinary public transportation is minimal, transforming bus spaces into public spaces

provided opportunities for the first level of social interaction – "co-presence". With the addition of artistic activities, opportunities for higher levels of social interaction were engendered. The artistic activities captured the attention of those who were present and afforded them with topics for conversation, thus creating shared attention and dialogue which relate to the second and third level of social interaction (cf. Ludvigsen's framework). In fact, the 20 remaining buses that were decorated with artwork from the bus body design competition also helped create shared attention and dialogue for passers-by as the eye-catching artwork clearly distinguished them from ordinary buses or those with commercial bus body stickers. In other words, these specially decorated buses created opportunities for social interaction in public spaces.

In addition to transforming bus spaces into public spaces, the two event arts buses also temporarily transformed school campuses into public spaces. The event buses toured the city to offer arts-focused activities: travelling to primary and secondary schools to bring to the public arts performances and sharing sessions organized around the development of arts knowledge and arts creation skills. Although school campuses are usually restricted areas inaccessible to the public, the community activities provided by the two event buses transformed the school campuses into arts fairs accessible to the public. The arts fairs offered artistic workshops that allowed participants to take part in arts making. The temporarily created public spaces on school campuses catered to the interaction of the diverse groups of people who came together to the organized events. A local resident, Mr. Tam, expressed his appreciation:

> In the old days, the actual level of connection between people was much stronger. For example, people were very close not only to their next door neighbours but possibly the entire estate or building, and neighbours will help out each other in their daily life matters such as looking after one's child when the mother needs to go out for groceries.

But, nowadays, more and more people in Hong Kong, including the youngsters, decided to live in a shut off style which means they choose not to communicate or build relationships with others.

Personally, after going through ups and downs in my life, I believe social interactions and relationships give people support, happiness, and when people have support in place then they can strive through hard times much more easily. Today, it is a pleasure to see this arts project in our community and through attending the arts bus activities it created and increased our neighborhood connectedness. After all, hopefully the arts bus event will remind individuals of the importance of building relationships with others.

A sampling of representative comments received is provided below:

I had a great time participating in this arts bus activity. It was a very good arts experience and I can see how this could replace the elite art galleries in Central (Vivian, a student participant in a school tour).

The arts bus is something productive for me, not only in relation to the creation of bus body banners, but I also have an art space to work with (student designer).

The project helped me gain more understanding of other people's cultures (local resident from Sha Tin).

The arts bus created mobile arts space so public passing by can drop in and look at the art and communicate with one another (Tony, a musician at a performance event).

The mobile arts bus is essential for a city like Hong Kong where space is so valuable and limited (Mr. H, a parent of a student).

This is a space for the exploration of ideas (Mr. K, a project director of an art mall).

All in all, the project provides encouraging evidence that public spaces can be created with positive impact, and how creating public spaces with a design and focus on the arts can

generate opportunities for social interaction amongst diverse groups of people. The desired outcome of community interaction was enhanced by the element of mobility. These public arts spaces were not fixed to one location. They were created wherever the buses went and thus could reach a wider audience. The idea of mobile public spaces represents a proactive approach to initiate social interaction by bringing public spaces to people as opposed to ordinary fixed public spaces such as parks that only provide spaces for people to gather and meet. The temporal nature of these mobile public spaces also overcomes the obstacle of insufficient land when creating public spaces. Without having to occupy a physical space permanently, mobile public spaces alleviate the problem of lack of space in Hong Kong. This mobile project takes a different approach to creating public space to achieve enhanced social interaction. It demonstrates that creating public space alone is not a proactive approach to bringing people together and bridging interactions between different social groups. Public spaces can provide opportunities for people to meet on their own initiative but the catalyst for bridging and bonding in this project was the artistic activities hosted within these public spaces. People cross paths every day in public spaces but seeing strangers' kick-starting dialogues and conversations with each other is a rare phenomenon. The arts possess powerful potential to act as a magnetic force drawing different people to one another as well as allowing them to work collectively in creative activities.

Building networks and relationships

Nowadays, people may experience similar changes when meeting with the natural sciences, but a distinct place are often claimed for the arts in terms of an ability to break down barriers (Weitz, 1996; Lowe, 2000). Besides, educational benefits, arts involvements are progressively recognized with nurturing social capital (Williams, 1997), a process which establishes

networks, mutual trust and co-operation within communities for the benefit of all (Kay, 2000; Kay and Watt, 2000).

As mentioned earlier, both the Arts Bus and Museum of Art on Wheels programmes were free art educational programmes tailor-made for primary and secondary school students, bringing different artefact reproductions and art activities to schools or popping up in public spaces to create an arts-based social circle. Such programmes are not just desirable to bring art to people, but also to promote art appreciation and to connect people with local artists. Different programmes in this project made use of different kinds of art themes to provide social interactive, multi-media, and hands-on experiences of art appreciation.

Social interactions contribute to the building of social capital. The essence of social capital is relationships and networks which cannot be garnered without social interactions. Since bonding social capital refers to the strength of relationships, its creation relies on active social interactions, namely dialogue and collective actions. Bridging capital, on the other hand, refers to the relationships amongst different people and social groups and builds on passive social interaction. Public space thus plays a very important role in creating networks and relationships amongst different people. As they are free and open to all, public spaces allow people from diverse backgrounds to come together; public spaces designed with a focus on beauty and activity can create opportunities for active social interactions for people co-existing in the same public space.

By creating mobile public art spaces, this community-based project facilitated the building of networks and relationships by connecting diverse groups from different sectors and localities. The project itself was a collaborative effort between organizations from two different sectors – the education sector and the commercial sector. Other groups and organizations were also involved in the project as sponsors or supporting partners. Members and representatives from these heterogeneous organizations came together at the events held at

the public mobile arts venues. The public space in which these events were held enabled face-to-face encounters that are vital in building networks and connections. The wide range of people who interacted included members from commercial organizations that sponsored the project, arts groups that performed at these events, media groups that reported on the events, as well as charity organizations, education organizations, government officials who supported the arts, and, most importantly, members of the public. Connections and bridges between these diverse groups and individuals were forged at the events. For example, friendships were formed between members of the performing arts groups and representatives from the bus company which was one of the two co-organizers of the project. Acquaintances were also made between participating university students and members of arts groups. A Facebook page that was created for this on-going project has become a significant platform for friendship and network building. With the help of social networking tools, brief encounters that take place in public spaces can easily evolve into friendships and long-lasting connections, as was the case with this community-based project.

Building networks and connection between different social entities and individuals from different backgrounds is important because it allows them to secure resources and opportunities that are not usually available amongst homogenous membership groups. People who were involved in the project and participated in the events benefited from these friendships and networks created by encounters in these public spaces. For instance, students from the co-organizing university met with a professional music group at one of the events. The latter was impressed with the students' abilities in organizing events and offered them job opportunities. The professional music group which usually performed for charity organizations was also able to expand their audience to the commercial sector after meeting representatives from the commercial bus company and other commercial enterprises. A reporter present at one the events was introduced to a university arts educator who was later invited to host a radio show.

The co-organizing university made new acquaintances with principals of primary and secondary schools while hosting events on their school campuses that have led to the conceptualization of new projects. Several officials from a government bureau, after hearing the performance of a student band, spoke to the band about performing at government functions. The above examples show how different individuals and organizations managed to secure new resources from their brief encounters with one another at the events hosted at the mobile public spaces.

Conclusion

Networks and connections between individuals and organizations from different sectors are important sources of social capital because they facilitate the utilization of new resources and affordance of new opportunities in community development. Public spaces are crucial for the building of these networks and connections as they provide opportunities that could facilitate significant encounters between people from different backgrounds and localities. The organization of events that call for participation and engagement is essential in developing temporal encounters into networks and relationships.

The community-based project examined in this paper has demonstrated how creating public spaces with an artistic focus contributes to community development from a social capital perspective. The project demonstrates a proactive approach to tackling a seemingly insurmountable task – creating public spaces in a small city where land is scarce. It also offers an alternative approach to community development by creating mobile public spaces that do not permanently take up any fixed land. By organizing artistic events at temporal mobile public spaces, the project demonstrates a powerful approach to harnessing the community-building potential of normally unassessed public places and the potential of the arts for such purposes. These events contribute to transforming public spaces into avenues for community-based

education. They also serve as catalysts for engaging people who may never come together even though they may live in the same locality to share and interact together at the mobile public spaces – forming networks and relationships with the resultant creation of social capital and community development.

Notes

1. Defined as "resources intrinsic to social relations and includes trust, norms, and networks" (Hustedde, 2009, p. 22).

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How European Art Teachers in New Zealand Are Enabling Asian and Pasifika Students to Tell Their Stories Through Visual Arts

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Abstract

Paralleling the 2013 census statistics for the adult population in New Zealand, art teachers in Auckland, its largest city, are predominantly European. In contrast, young people under 20 are increasingly diverse with those of Asian and Pasifika ethnicities, the two fastest growing groups, comprising over half of Auckland's youthful population. Research conducted in Auckland in 2015 sought answers to how art teachers working in low to high decile schools are responding to the increasing ethnic diversity of students. Previous research had identified that Asian and Pasifika art and culture were largely absent from secondary school art programs compared with the emphasis on European and Māori. This paper focuses specifically on five European art teachers who are using culturally inclusive practices to enable 16-to-18 year old

students of Asian and Pasifika ethnicities to tell their stories through visual arts. These teachers believed that the students' art works which they brought to their interviews reflect their responsiveness to the students and their individual identities. The art works presented in this paper are eloquent devices that express meanings in ways that words cannot. They are not appendages to the research but an inseparable component for learning about the students and cultural aspects of their social worlds.

Key words

visual arts education, New Zealand, European art teachers, Asian and Pasifika students

Introduction

This paper draws upon research conducted in Auckland, New Zealand in 2015 which sought answers to how art teachers, working in different types of secondary schools, are responding to the increasing ethnic diversity of students. The paper focuses specifically on five European art teacher participants who use culturally inclusive practices to enable 16-to-18 year old students of Asian and Pasifika[1] ethnicities to tell their stories through visual arts. The research design was informed by the demographic contrast between predominantly European secondary school art teachers and the increasing diversity of Auckland's youthful population, particularly those of Asian and Pasifika ethnicities; by previous research which identified that Asian and Pasifika art and culture were largely absent from secondary art programs; and by national curriculum and assessment policies which emphasize 'cultural diversity'. It was informed by literature pertinent to teaching for success through culturally inclusive practices, and theoretical perspectives on using the 'visual' as a powerful tool in research.

This paper focuses on four key findings: art teachers in Auckland secondary schools continue to be European and female; the differences between low-decile and high-decile schools attended by Pasifika and Asian students, respectively, influenced students' art making; curriculum and assessment policies and culturally inclusive practices used by the five European-ethnic art teachers enabled Pasifika and Asian students to tell their stories through visual arts; and art programs in secondary schools had become more culturally inclusive.

Background to the Research

Demographic contrasts

In 2014, the *2013 New Zealand Census* (Statistics New Zealand, 2014) reported that the population of New Zealand was 4.24 million people. Nearly three-quarters (74.0%) identified with European ethnicities, followed by Māori (14.9%), Asian (11.8%) and Pasifika peoples

(7.4%).[2] The population of Auckland, the largest city, was 1.42 million (33.4%). While there were fewer people of European ethnicities (59.3%) living in Auckland, the number of Asian (25.1%) and Pasifika peoples (65.9%) was much higher there than nationally. Auckland had also gained a very diverse youthful population, with students of Asian (20.6%) and Pasifika ethnicities (35.7%) comprising over half of young people (56.3%) under 20. European youth (19.6%), along with Māori, Middle Eastern, Latin American, African and Other ethnicities comprised less than half of Auckland's youthful population.

A further demographic contrast was school decile, a socio-economic ranking from 1-10 used in New Zealand as a measure to support more needy schools. Reports show that 67.8% of Auckland's Pasifika students attend decile 1-3 schools, the lowest socio-economic ranking (Auckland Council, 2013). In comparison, many students of Asian ethnicities attend decile 6-7 schools, but most are enrolled in the highest decile 8-10 schools (NZQA, 2013).

Previous research established that Heads of Art Departments in Auckland secondary schools were predominantly European (83.0%) and female (76.6%) (Smith, 2005). The increasingly diverse student population, in contrast to the static European art teacher population, was confirmed in a later study (Smith, 2007). These demographic contrasts confirm a world-wide phenomenon in western societies that young people are becoming more diverse while teachers continue to be white and female (Feistritzer, 2011; Landsman & Lewis, 2006).

Curriculum and assessment policies

Art education is informed by the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2007) which contains eight learning areas, of which the Arts (visual arts, dance, drama and music) are one. It is stated that "the Arts are powerful forms of expression that recognize, value, and contribute to the unique bicultural and multicultural character of New Zealand" (p. 20); and that "European, Māori, Pasifika, Asian and other cultures add significant dimensions to

New Zealand visual culture" (p. 21). The curriculum cites 'cultural diversity' as one of eight principles that embody beliefs about what is important in education. However, an evaluation by the Education Review Office (2012), an independent government body, found that "cultural diversity ranked as the 'least evident' principle underpinning school decision making" in 201 primary and secondary school classrooms" (p. 19), and that bicultural Treaty of Waitangi obligations took precedence. This finding aligned with research which found that art education programs in secondary schools focused on European and Māori art and culture, a token obligation towards Pasifika, and an absence of an Asian dimension (Smith, 2007; 2011, 2014).

In the curriculum's visual arts learning area there is emphasis on students developing "visual literacy and aesthetic awareness" (p. 21). Theorists support the development of these competencies but recommend that art education needs to be framed around thinking, rather than formal art making skills (Duncum, 2010; Gude, 2007). These authors maintain that the inclusion of visual literacy, and a critical inquiry framework around images that expose diverse issues, is essential for meaningful art making by students.

In their final two years of secondary schooling, 16-to-18 year old students who elect to study art are assessed through the *National Certificate of Educational Achievement* [NCEA] Levels 2-3 Achievement Standards (New Zealand Qualifications Authority [NZQA], 2014). Underpinned by the curriculum, NCEA programs are designed by art teachers to enable their students to meet the achievement standards. At successive levels students are expected to demonstrate understanding of art works in cultural contexts; develop, clarify and generate ideas; and produce a cohesive body of work informed by established practice (the study of 'artist models') in one or more fields of painting, design, sculpture, printmaking and photography. The study of artist models is intended to enhance students' understanding of artists' art making processes and outcomes. The intention is not for students to imitate or

replicate artists' works, but to enquire into issues that artists depict, and draw upon their ideas, techniques and processes to make their 'own' art work (Duncum, 2002).

Literature on teaching for success through culturally inclusive practices

New Zealand researchers, Alton-Lee (2003, 2004) and Rubie-Davies (2008, 2010), assert that teaching is the most important factor in student achievement. This requires teachers to take responsibility for every student, value diversity, respect students' cultures, have high expectations, and build on students' experiences. Nash (2004) claims that achievement is affected by the degree to which a student's culture is respected, and the similarity between the culture of the community and the values of that school. In the context of Pasifika students, Si'ilata (2014) argues that the most important aspect is becoming knowledgeable about the languages and cultures of particular Pasifika ethnic groups, having high expectations, and taking into consideration the multiple worlds in which they live. For many students of Asian ethnicity, whether immigrants or New Zealand-born, there is pressure to conform by "fitting in" with the dominant European culture and western pedagogies that have prevailed in art education (Smith, 2014, p. 86). This acculturation points to "the imperative for art teachers to provide opportunities for all students to find their 'voice', and gain understanding of the voices of others" (Smith, 2014, p. 87).

Literature suggests that a critical approach to policy and pedagogy, and an ethic that gives priority to equity and democracy as social and educational objectives, is a way forward for an active engagement in cultural inclusion (Bianchi, 2011; Gay, 2010; Nieto & Bode, 2012). Hanley and Noblit (2009) claim that "culturally responsive pedagogy and racial identity are related to achievement and resilience" (p. 81). These perspectives informed the research.

Theoretical perspectives on the role of images in research

The decision to collect images as data was in response to the burgeoning literature on the theoretical grounding for using the 'visual' as a powerful tool in research. It was influenced by the notion that images are an illuminating means through which meanings can be expressed in ways that words cannot (Leavy, 2015; Weber, 2008). Stanczack (2007) argues that "images are not merely appendages to the research but rather inseparable components to learning about our social worlds" (p. 3). Weber's (2008) advocacy for "the ability of images to evoke visceral and emotional responses in ways that are memorable, coupled with their capacity to help us empathise or see another's point of view" (p. 47), resonated with the phenomena investigated. Leavy (2015) concurs that "as a persuasive social product visual art is a significant source of information about the social world, including cultural aspects of social life" (p. 227).

Using images as data also brings into focus the relationship between the image and the viewer. While images have the power to portray people's social worlds, many argue that it is the viewer who applies the power of giving images their last meaning (Duncum, 2010; Leavy, 2015). Others claim that meanings of images need to be negotiated according to particular historical and social contexts (Sturken & Cartwright, 2009), or that interpreting images should be the result of dialogue between the image and an individual's background (Sullivan, 2005). The collection of images in this research was intended to gain insights into the worlds of students in a sample of Auckland secondary schools.

How the Research was Conducted

Fifty-three state secondary schools in Auckland were randomly selected from the Ministry of Education's (2014) *School Statistics: Culture Counts* website on the basis of location, school type (single gender, co-educational) and decile (a socio-economic ranking from 1-10). An art teacher in each school was invited to participate in the research, for which the research question

was "How are art teachers responding to the increasing ethnic diversity of students in Auckland secondary schools?"

The research was conducted in two stages: an anonymous online questionnaire and an optional face-to-face interview. Rich baseline data were gathered from the questionnaire.[3] While not reported in this paper, these data informed the interviews. From the 28 teachers who volunteered to be interviewed, ten were randomly selected using the same criteria as for school selection. The ten art teachers were invited to bring to their interviews examples of students' art works which they believed reflected their responsiveness to those they teach. The university's ethics process required consent from students and their parents/caregivers, prior to art works being brought to interviews and used in reporting the findings. It was beyond the scope of this small-scale research to interview students, but it was anticipated that interviews with their art teachers, together with examples of art works, could provide important insights.

The research settings and participants

The ten art teachers interviewed taught across the range of decile 1-10 schools. Of the five European teachers who feature in this paper, three taught in decile 1-3 secondary schools with large numbers of Pasifika students, one in a decile 6 school with a wide diversity of ethnicities, and the fifth at a decile 10 school with predominantly European and Asian students.

Three art teachers were European-New Zealand, a fourth was European-New Zealand Māori, and the fifth was New Zealand-Dutch. The ethics process required pseudonyms to be used to protect the identities of schools and teachers, but students' art works were able to be identified by their first names, ethnicity and age. Prior to the interviews, teachers completed a spreadsheet detailing their professional and academic qualifications and the school's student ethnicity statistics. They provided a copy of their school's mission/vision statement. These data informed the interviews and provided a rich introduction to the settings and participants.

Data collection through interviews and students' art works

Each art teacher was interviewed for up to three hours in their art department, followed by photographic documentation of students' art works selected by the teachers. The semi-structured, audio-recorded interviews were informed by the research question and the underpinning contexts presented above, the influence of each school's philosophy and mission/vision statement and decile ranking, and whether teachers were enabling ethnically diverse students to tell their own stories through visual arts.

Limitations of the research

The shape and form of the research highlighted potential limitations. First, the art teachers who volunteered to participate most likely did so because they held a particular interest in the research question. Second, most of those who agreed to be interviewed taught in low-to-mid decile schools with ethnically diverse student populations. Although beyond the scope of this small-scale research, a third limitation was that the 'voices' of students were not sought. The foremost limitation could be perceived as the issue of validity, especially since validity of interpretations and meanings has long been questioned in debates over the legitimacy of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This research is not generalizable in the traditional sense. Rather, it has verisimilitude through "the creation of a realistic, authentic, life-like portrayal" (Leavy, 2009, p. 57), as evidenced in the findings.

The Findings of the Research

The data collected during this research are presented through five scenarios expressed through the voices of the European art teachers and visualised through examples of art works by their 16-to-18 year old Pasifika or Asian students who were completing NCEA levels 2 or 3 visual arts programs and assessments.

Scenario 1: Art teacher Jacqui and her Pasifika students Vera and Nimo

Jacqui, who identified as European-New Zealand Māori, was in her tenth year of teaching. Her state co-educational school reflected the youth demographic and statistics for decile 1 schools. Of the 922 students enrolled, 77% were from Pasifika ethnic groups. Māori students at the school comprised 19%, and the remaining 4% included 24 Europeans. The school's mission statement was "To nurture in each individual a belief in the self, a commitment to achievement and the spirit of aroha (caring)." Core values were "acknowledgement of Māori as tangata whenua (the first people of the land), positive affirmation of cultures in the school and respect for all." The art department's mission statement was "to inspire in each student a creative outlet that will develop their confidence, support their wellbeing and help shape their personal identity in a positive way." Jacqui spoke of how language literacy level was low in the school and her priority was to develop "visual literacy" in art across all levels, from years 9-13. She approached this emphasis through the art curriculum strand, "Understanding the visual arts in context," and through the NCEA achievement standards for which students are required to demonstrate understanding of art works in cultural contexts.

The examples Jacqui brought to her interview were portfolios in progress by her year 13 painting class. She said, "It is at this level that the students, mostly 17-to-18 year olds, really want to make art about themselves." The mixed media works of Vera [Figure 1], a 17 year old Samoan girl, were indicative of the "personal identity" subject matter that most of the girls in this class explored. Jacqui spoke of how "the girls like to focus on their own image, especially their face, but also placing themselves in their own cultural contexts." She explained that many Samoan students, although New Zealand-born, are very proud of their heritage. This is constantly reinforced by the large Pasifika community in which they live and where the school is located, and by the positive affirmation of all cultures at the school. Jacqui explained that

when each student has decided what ideas they want to explore, what messages they want to convey, and what artists' styles and techniques they are attracted to she helps them locate "artist models" for inspiration. This happens primarily on the school's intranet because "for families in this low socio-economic area buying art books is not a priority." Jacqui spoke of how Vera's paintings tell the story of her dual contexts, living in New Zealand while retaining connections with Samoa. The portrait at left portrays Vera in reflective pose, wearing European dress, and seated before a backdrop of leaves from the taro plant, a root vegetable staple in the Pacific. At centre, she wears the casual attire worn by Samoan women in their day-to-day lives, a lavalava and shirt decorated with Pasifika patterns. This attire was introduced post mid-19th century when Christian missionaries taught that showing the naked body was shameful. The stylised hibiscus tucked behind Vera's right ear signifies she is unmarried. Employing techniques of line, blocks of solid or transparent colours and overlapping shapes, inspired by her artist model Jeffery Harris, Vera has overlaid this image with her outstretched arms. Jacqui suggested that this gesture could indicate a sense of loss or longing. In the third image the puletasi, a matching skirt and shirt worn for church, implies the importance of religion for Vera. A taro leaf, held out to her, signifies the importance for Pasifika peoples of growing and harvesting food, and of maintaining traditions. Vera's art works reflect Sullivan's (2005) view that interpreting images should be the result of dialogue between images and the individual's background.

Figure 1. Vera, Samoan girl, 17 years

The paintings by Nimo, a 17 year old Samoan boy [Figure 2], conveyed an immediate sense of sadness. Jacqui explained that Nimo's paintings were about his two siblings, the pain of losing his older brother in a house fire and the love he has for his little sister, Orchid. Nimo has drawn upon the work of David Schnell, who creates the illusion of architectural and foreshortened constructions through lines of perspective; and upon aspects of paintings by street/graffiti artist Connor Harrington. He has applied the subdued side of Harrington's work which relies on a dark palette, painterly gestural style, and juxtaposition of sharp lines alongside realistic self-portraits. The New Zealand ensign, with its Union Flag on the canton and the white stars of the Southern Cross, indicates Nimo's country of birth. Jacqui considered the black silhouetted images of Nimo holding Orchid's hand as they walk towards, and stand before their brother's coffin, to be his most powerful painting. This student's art work supports Weber's (2008) advocacy for "the ability of images to evoke visceral and emotional responses in ways that are memorable" (p. 47). It illustrates Jacqui's pedagogical approach to providing opportunities for her students to find their 'voice' and make art that was meaningful to them.

Figure 2. Nimo, Samoan boy, 17 years

Scenario 2: Art teacher Matthew and his Pasifika students Tafu and Brandon

Matthew, a European-New Zealander, had been teaching for over 30 years. He was head of art at his decile 1 state co-educational school which had a roll of 721 students, of which 570 identified as Pasifika (79%). Along with four European students, there were a number of refugees from South East Asia, India, and Middle Eastern countries. Matthew explained that the school's philosophy focused on the wellbeing of students. A feature of his teaching was transitioning students from being dependent on him at year 11 to a stage where they "develop their own ideas and bring something of themselves at years 12 and 13." A strategy Matthew uses is to show examples of previous visual arts portfolios by students' siblings, cousins, friends, and even aunts and uncles, to help them understand what lies ahead. He said he consciously thinks about the students as individuals when planning.

Matthew explained how his students "want to tell stories about themselves, but in their own way." He said he had "learnt to accept the student voice" and how important it is to back students up and support their ideas. The boy's stories were mostly about rough and tumble, bodily contact, fighting, wrestling, music, dancing and sports. Because Matthew is anti-

bullying and opposed to images of physical violence he had taken the fighting into animé which he found more acceptable. He looks for artist models which resonate with themes students want to explore. A favourite is Jon Cattapan whose political and social representations of the urban environment are generated through the internet. But it is the artist's techniques of using dots and lines, outlines of figures and blocks of colour that students exploit to give a sense of dynamism to their own work. Elements of movement and dramatic contrasts of light and shadow are used by the students to express aspects of their cultural milieu.

Matthew said he has no problems getting students to generate a cohesive body of work for their NCEA portfolios: "They take photos of each other, they do leapfrogs, it's just fantastic, but it's all about the hook isn't it?" Matthew's approach was evident in the paintings of 16 year old Tongan boy, Tafu [Figure 3], who uses sound waves, head-phones and gestures to depict his passion for music and aspiration to be a DJ.

Figure 3. Tafu, Tongan boy, 16 years

Matthew described the mixed media paintings of 17 year old Samoan boy, Brandon [Figure 4] as "high and low art and popular culture blending together in a animé theme, and that whole powerball thing…lots of physical contact…he's dealing with what he wants to deal with."

Figure 4. Brandon, Samoan boy, 17 years

Both Tafu and Brandon have referenced connections to their ethnic heritage through rhythmic depictions of traditional Pasifika patterns. Their art works implicate the power that visual culture has on "identity" (Freedman, 2003). Grushka (2009) concurs that the value of visual culture is that it contains images and issues that are relevant for adolescents because the visual is a large part of their daily lives.

Scenario 3: Art teacher Kaitlin and her Pasifika student Jade

Kaitlin, a European-New Zealander, had taught for six years. Her large state co-educational school had a decile ranking of 3 and an enrolment of 1892 students of whom 941 were Pasifika (50%). The next largest ethnic groups were Māori (24%), Asian (15%) and European (9%). Kaitlin explained that the school's Mission Statement focused on "respecting each other, striving for academic and self-excellence, whanaungatanga[4]…sharing family values and embracing each other's cultures, and akoranga…the education side of it." In accord with Nash's (2004) view, student achievement was enhanced by how the school and Kaitlin respected the students' cultures. A feature of her programs was "placing cultural diversity at the centre of planning at all levels" and involving students as teachers with their peers.

Kaitlin's year 12 students, mostly 16-to-17 year olds, created "Symbolic Portraits" which included objects with which they identify. They are introduced to how artist models, such as Frida Kahlo and Rita Angus, treat symbolism in portraiture. For her striking self-portraits 16 year old Cook Island Māori girl, Jade [Figure 5], was inspired by the line and ink washes on woven cloaks depicted by Māori artist, John Bevan Ford. In some portraits her hair becomes a cloak. It is customary for Cook Islands women to wear flowers in their hair, notably the ei katu, a head wreath made of frangipani and gardenia flowers that symbolises friendship, love and respect. Kaitlin explained that "Jade really liked the symbolic gesture with flowers and because of the community she grows up in, the grid format of Pasifika patterns and tapa-effect is her anchor." As an outside viewer, who applies the power of giving images their last meaning (Duncum, 2010; Leavy, 2015), I was struck by Jade's frank depiction of herself with her ample figure and mole above her chin. The absence of idealization added power to these self-portraits. Kaitlin commented, "It's like a self-identity unit in some respects because I don't think the students realize exactly who they are until they start doing this."

Figure 5. Jade, Cook Island Māori girl, 16 years

Scenario 4: Art teacher Yvonne and her Asian students Lydia and Jeeun

Yvonne is New Zealand-European Dutch and had taught for over 20 years. Her decile 6 state co-educational school had a roll of 1900 students, including an international school. Although the largest group of students was European-New Zealand (47%), there were over 60 ethnic groups at the school. East Asian students comprised the next largest group (18%). The school's Mission Statement was twofold: "To inspire students to achieve educational excellence through a rich learning and social environment; and for students to become the best person they can be and contribute to society." Yvonne described the school as "multicultural in a harmonious way, in an environment of acceptance and respect." She recalled how her earlier teaching was from a western perspective, and that part of her subsequent learning had been to broaden her knowledge about a range of different art approaches connected to various cultural groups in order to support students. Yvonne was intrigued by how some of her year 13 students used visual arts as a research project of their own heritage, and as a means of connecting with their parents or grandparents through their art work. She noted that, for these students, "art making becomes a vehicle for research and output, rather than just output."

Yvonne discussed the work of Lydia [Figure 6], a 17 year old Chinese international student in her year 13 painting class. Lydia had become aware of how different the air and water quality was in New Zealand compared with her homeland, thus her focus became pollution in China. Yvonne said that through discussions and research, she and Lydia "came to understand what causes pollution, what underpins it, its effects, and how it's informing current art making practice in China." By doing research, Yvonne felt more informed and able to pose different questions. This approach also helps international students to understand the NCEA Level 3 assessment requirement to develop a cohesive body of work, and the emphasis in New Zealand on developing and expressing ideas, communicating and interpreting. In her multi-media paintings Lydia depicted pollution from coal used to generate electricity, water pollution

through dying fabrics, and consumerist forces of the garment industry and its purchasers, both in China and the western world. Her main interest was the decay that occurs. Yvonne described how, in the art work at left, Lydia embedded scientific information to reference areas in China that were guilty of the greatest pollution. Her transition from conventional painting techniques to experiments using rust and verdigras paint and gold leaf were designed to create differing textural surfaces to echo that decay. In Lydia's final works the buildings became grids of decay.

Figure 6. Lydia, Chinese girl, 17 years

Another example Yvonne brought to her interview was the work of Jeeun [Figure 8], a 17 year old Korean girl who had immigrated to New Zealand with her family. Jeeun had chosen to explore how a large percentage of young women in Korea undergo plastic surgery for their face. Yvonne said she had assumed that procedures to change eyelids, jaw lines, noses, and even lengthening the legs, were to meet a western ideal because that is how it is often portrayed on the internet and through imagery. But in conversation with Jeeun, and in research she felt compelled to do, Yvonne said she had discovered that it is driven by the role women have in Korean society, and how they gain value in their world is by looking after the physical body.

"Jeeun talked to me about 'reading the face'… that it's preferable to have a 'happy face' and more likely to lead to employment." Through her art works Jeeun created a journey that told a very potent story. Yvonne concluded that "Jeeun's work has tracked the research, and she seems to have located herself in it in terms of what her position is. She started off anti but now she's researched it more…well this might be a possibility for her eighteenth birthday. About 80% of young women have this done, and that was part of our conversation."

Figure 7. Jeeun, Korean girl, 17 years

Lydia's and Jeeun's use of research in art making resonated with literature about the role of images to enrich research (Smith, 2014). Their images were firmly located in the context of Jacqui empowering her Asian students "to find their voice and tell their own stories" (Smith, 2014, p. 87).

Scenario 5: Art teacher Sandra and her Asian student Hyemi

Sandra, a European-New Zealander, was in her tenth year of teaching. Her decile 10 state co-educational school had a roll of over 1700 students. European-ethnic students comprised 63.18%, with Chinese and South-East Asian students (20.16%) being the next largest ethnic groups. Sandra explained that the school's Mission Statement was about "striving for our students to do their best and to achieve good academic results, but they also want students to

be good all-rounders." She added, "There is definitely that care for students of different ethnicities and wanting the best for every student no matter where they have come from."

A painting portfolio Sandra brought to her interview was by year 13 student, Hyemi [Figure 8], an 18 year old Korean girl. Hyemi was educated in Korea and New Zealand and, according to Sandra, "had a worldly response to certain things and a different take." The issue she explored was connected to her homeland and cultural heritage, the "strict education prevalent in East Asian countries, pressure to succeed, and social problems students face as a result." Sandra discussed how Hyemi had used her own image to convey her messages in a particularly powerful way. Drawing on the neoclassical works of Jacque Louis David (in particular 'The Death of Marat', 1793) and the blue-tinged porcelain-like portraits of Ivan Alifan, Hyemi seemed less concerned with rendering realistic physical characteristics, and more with creating a language of underlying sub-texts. In some of her works there is a feeling of drowning, of "sink or swim" and of keeping her head above water. In others, education is portrayed as a conveyer belt. Sandra explained that for Hyemi "schools are like factories that produce skilled individuals like a manufacturer." In these paintings she has used Shane Cotton's device of including small, but significant objects, outlined in white on a darker ground and using changes in scale. Hyemi has used her images to tell a particular story, and had been empowered by her teacher to do so. The art works in this student's portfolio represent "inseparable components to learning about our social worlds" (Stanczack, 2007, p. 3).

Figure 8. Hyemi, Korean girl, 18 year

Discussion

Key findings that emerged from the conversations with the five art teachers encapsulate their professional beliefs, their pedagogical approaches informed by curriculum and assessment policies to support Asian and Pasifika students to tell their own stories through visual arts, and how the students' art making was positioned within the context of their decile 1-10 schools.

The art teachers' beliefs

These five art teachers firmly believed in the mission/vision statements and philosophies of their schools. Reflecting Nash's (2004) argument, each teacher was confident that the students' cultures were respected by their school, and the degree of similarity between the culture of the community and the values of that school were closely aligned. Si'ilata's (2014) concern for teachers to become knowledgeable about the languages and cultures of particular Pasifika groups, and the multiple worlds in which they live, was positively exemplified in Jacqui, Kaitlin, and Matthew's beliefs about teaching. Each was aware of their Pasifika students' ethnicities and cultural milieu. The effects of acculturation of Asian students and the pressure to confirm by 'fitting in', reported in earlier research (Smith, 2014), had changed to a position

whereby students were enabled to find their own 'voice'. This was exemplified in the beliefs held by Yvonne and Sandra about teaching students of differing Asian ethnicities.

These five teachers demonstrated that they felt responsible for their Asian and Pasifika students, had high expectations of them, built on students' experiences, and emphasized a drive towards students achieving success (Alton-Lee, 2003, 2004; Bianchi, 2011; Hanley & Noblit, 2009; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Rubie-Davies, 2008, 2010). The visual arts was an ideal vehicle through which the teachers' pedagogical beliefs could be realised.

The art teachers' pedagogical approaches

The art teachers' pedagogical approaches drew upon two key aspects of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (MoE, 2007). 'Cultural diversity', as a key principle that embodies beliefs about what is important in education, underpinned each teaching program for these 16-to-18 year olds. This was exemplified by Matthew who said he consciously thinks about his Pasifika students as individuals when planning, and Yvonne who spoke of how her teaching had changed from a western perspective to approaches connected to various cultural groups in order to support students. An emphasis on students' developing 'visual literacy' was an imperative, particularly for those working with Pasifika students. Jacqui noted the low language literacy level in her school and how her priority was to develop 'visual literacy' across all year levels.

A key aspect of assessment for the *National Certificate of Educational Achievement* (NZQA, 2014) was also evident. The study of 'artist models' to enhance students' understandings of artists' art making processes and outcomes was prominent in conversations with the teachers. Without exception, each teacher assisted their students to locate artist models whose processes and outcomes resonated with the students' aspirations for their art making.

The findings highlight that Asian and Pasifika art and culture, which were largely absent from art programs in secondary schools in the past (Smith, 2007, 2010), were being addressed by these art teachers through their pedagogical approaches.

The students' performance in art in the context of their decile 1-10 schools

The Pasifika students whose art works feature in this paper reflect the 2012 NCEA report that Pasifika candidates are heavily represented in decile 1-3 schools, less so in decile 4-7, and even less so in decile 8-10 schools (NZQA, 2013). In contrast, the Asian students whose art works are included were less likely to be represented in decile 1-5 schools, more likely in deciles 6-7, and even more likely in decile 8-10 schools. In 2012, overall achievement at NCEA Level 2 by Pasifika students was 69% compared with 85% for Asian students, and at NCEA Level 3, 60% compared with 80%. In this research, which focused on students' performance in visual arts, it was evident that each student, whatever their Pasifika or Asian ethnicity, had gained success regardless of their school's decile ranking.

Assumptions can be drawn from an analysis of themes portrayed in the images. The art works by Pasifika girls, Vera and Jade [Figures 1, 4], at decile 1 and 3 schools, focused primarily on their ethnic selves, portraying their physical appearance, including ethnic signifiers, and placing themselves within their cultural contexts. In the art works by Pasifika boys, Nimo, Tafu and Brandon [Figures 2, 3, 4], at decile 1 schools, there was greater preoccupation with placing themselves within their 'cultural milieu', the 'scene' with which they identified and their personal circumstances. The art works by Asian girls, Lydia, Jeeun and Hyemi [Figures 6, 7, 8], at decile 6 and 10 schools, were characterised by an exploration of 'issues' connected to their homelands and cultural heritage.

A key aspect of NCEA is for students to convey their 'personal signature' in art making. These eight students neither imitated nor replicated artists' works but, rather, enquired into

issues that artists depict and drew upon their ideas, techniques and processes to make their 'own' art (Duncum, 2002). The images presented in this paper are persuasive statements about the individuality of each of these 16-to-18 year old Asian and Pasifika students. They carry what Becker (2002, p. 11) refers to as "real, flesh and blood life" and are used not just as evidence, but as statements in a persuasive way. The students' impulse to tell their story through visual arts is vividly portrayed in art works which reflect their ethnicities, cultural perspectives, and cultural background. This impulse aligns with Leavy's (2015, p. 227) view that "as a persuasive social product visual art is a significant source of information about the social world, including cultural aspects of social life".

Conclusion

This research sought answers to the question of how predominantly European secondary school art teachers are responding to the increasing ethnic diversity of their students. This paper reports specifically on how five European teachers enabled students of Pasifika and Asian ethnicities, the fastest growing groups, to tell their stories through visual arts.

The knowledge generated by this research is significant in its own right. The data collected through teachers' 'voices' and examples of their students' art works highlight the importance of building relationships between predominantly European-ethnic teachers and the increasingly diverse youthful population. The art works illustrate that "culturally responsive pedagogy and racial identity are related to achievement and resilience" (Hanley & Noblit, 2009, p. 81). The stories these students told through their art works encapsulate the importance of teachers empowering them to be themselves, and the capacity of images "to help us empathize or see another's point of view" (Weber, 2008, p. 47). This research fills a gap in the literature. It has the potential of transferability of the teachers' beliefs and pedagogical approaches, and of the role of images in research, to other settings within and beyond art education.

Notes

1. The term ‘Pasifika’ is unique to New Zealand and is used to describe migrants from the Pacific region and their descendants who now call New Zealand home (MoE, 2010). The largest group is Samoan (48.7%), followed by Cook Island Māori (20.9%), Tongan (20.4%), and Niuean (8.1%) (Statistics New Zealand, 2014).
2. Where a person reported more than one ethnic group in the *2013 New Zealand Census* they were counted in each applicable group, thus the population statistics are not rounded off to 100% (Statistics New Zealand, 2014).
3. The online questionnaire sought the following: teacher data (gender, ethnicity, academic and professional qualifications, years teaching); school data (type, location, decile, student population (including ethnicity percentages); curriculum data (‘cultural diversity’ directives); culturally inclusive pedagogy data (teacher knowledge, disposition).
4. “Whanaungatanga” describes the relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides a sense of belonging (maoridictionary.co.nz/word/10068).

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Dr Jill Smith is Associate Professor in the School of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the Faculty of Education, University of Auckland, New Zealand. She has been involved in graduate pre-service art teacher education in the secondary sector for over thirty years and leads these programs. A Pakeha (European) New Zealander, Jill's teaching and research interests include

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