Arts-Based Evaluation Tools for Community Arts Programs:

A Case Study of Art City's 'Green Art' in Winnipeg, Manitoba

by

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A Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

Department of City Planning

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

Abstract
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Community arts are potentially valuable tools in building community and regenerating

distressed neighbourhoods. Community-based art organizations exist in most major

cities across North America and abroad. These groups are concerned with social and

environmental community issues (e.g., youth poverty, sustainability, racism) and use art

as a medium for social change through community empowerment and personal

development. Many of these organizations operate on limited funding and are required

to complete program evaluations to demonstrate the merit of their programs. While

some program evaluation literature touches on the role of arts-based research methods,

very little focuses specifically on using these methods with community-based art

organizations—particularly organizations with programming intended for children and

youth. This Major Degree Project seeks to address this gap and explore the role of

creative, arts-based evaluation methods for community-based art organizations'

program evaluation.

Research for this Major Degree Project adopted a case study approach, initially

focusing on an evaluation process for a community-based environmental art workshop

organized and facilitated by Art City—a community-based art organization in the West

Broadway neighbourhood in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Employing participant

observation, semi-structured key stakeholder interviews with staff and volunteers at

Art City, and a collaborative evaluation workshop, this study sought to understand:

how arts-based evaluation methods may enrich the data gathered through conventional

evaluation methods; what other community-based art organizations can learn from Art

City's experiences with arts-based evaluation methods; and, what community planning

practitioners can learn from arts-based evaluation methods.

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all my friends and family who have always provided endless support. In particular, Andrea who helped me maintain a rational schedule while completing this work and always provided encouraging words at the right moments. I would also like to acknowledge Vince, Jeff, Andrei, and Brock, who became close friends over the last few years and made Winnipeg feel like home.

I would also like to thank my committee members: Dr. Rae Bridgman, Dr. Javier Mignone, Jason Granger, and especially, my advisor Dr. Sheri Blake. Sheri provided support and advice throughout this entire process and arranged the initial contacts with Art City staff, enabling me to build a close working relationship with them.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone at Art City whose interest in the project and enthusiasm for evaluation made this entire experience a pleasure.

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1.1 - Preamble

Community-based art and city planning are distinct fields with seemingly little overlap in their literatures. Looking deeper into their respective bodies of literature we can find some overlap in the area of community development. Currently, few partnerships exist between planners and community-based artists and art organizations. However, there is potential for partnerships to develop (Dang, 2005). Community-based art organizations are committed to community development work. They seek to address local issues with art to improve conditions in the neighbourhoods they operate in.

The purpose of this Major Degree Project is to explore and discuss the role of creative, arts-based methods for program evaluations for community-based art organizations. This study is framed within a wider discussion of the role of community-based art organizations as one, among many, drivers of community development initiatives. During the study, I worked closely with board members, staff, and volunteers at Art City—a community-based art organization in Winnipeg, Manitoba—and some of their partners in the neighbourhood to develop an evaluation strategy for one of Art City's summer programs, Green Art. Art City depends on program evaluations to improve its programming and meets the demands of funders. Improving evaluation methods and, in turn, improving programming, for community-based art organizations may enable rippling benefits throughout their communities.

Chapter One: Introduction provides an overview of the entire project. In this chapter, I define the problem and research questions, and outline the research methods and benefits to planning practice and other community-based art organizations.

1.2 - Problem Statement

Much evaluation literature relies on the canon of qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, questionnaires) and rarely specifically addresses methodological concerns about evaluations involving youth and children. A large body of literature suggests research involving youth and children requires special considerations and is distinct from research methodology involving adult participants (Christensen & James, 2000; Punch, 2002). While the standard qualitative methods glean valuable information, there is a need to explore creative, arts-based methods for small-scale evaluation projects for community-based art organizations. Arts-based methods may complement conventional qualitative methods already used in program evaluations and enrich the evaluation data. Moreover, such methods would capitalize on the creative processes already at play in a community arts setting.

The arts are a ubiquitous part of life for many people around the world. In North America, for instance, the arts are a component of most school curricula, and various levels of government have formed departments tasked with funding and promoting the discipline (Belfiore & Bennet, 2005). Recent planning literature discusses the value of the arts for cities and the development of the 'creative city' feeding the 'creative economy' based around 'creative industries' (e.g., fashion, televisions, film, design) in the post-industrial era (Lee, 2008). However, much of this

literature focuses on the economic benefits of the arts and creativity as opposed to the greater social impact (Sandercock, 2005).

Through art it may be possible to identify valuable tools for community development initiatives. A large and growing body of literature has sought to demonstrate a causative link between participation in community-based arts programs and social impacts for the participants and the community. Some of these impacts include improved grades in school, mental and physical health, employability, and self-confidence and -image (Matarasso, 1996; Matarasso, 1997; Kay, 2000; Shaw, 2005; White & Rentschler, 2006). Moreover, funders increasingly require art organizations to conduct an outcome evaluation at the conclusion of a project to demonstrate the group is achieving the intended and stated impacts (Norris, 2006; Yoon, 2008). Many of the programs are large-scale, longitudinal studies for national arts programs and much of the arts evaluation literature focuses on large-scale evaluation projects.

By their nature, small-scale studies should not attempt to replicate the methods of their large-scale counterparts. Small-scale evaluations can be conducted by someone in the organization with little or no formal evaluation training. Thus, small-scale evaluations for community-based art organizations can be used to improve programming by outlining whether a program is achieving its intended goals and objectives and to recommend changes to the program for those objectives left unrealized. Robson (2000) describes small-scale evaluations as those which:

- Are local - rather than regional or national;
- Involve a single evaluator - or possibly a small team of two or three;
- Occupy a short timescale - perhaps completed in something between one and six months;
- Have to run on limited resources; and

- Take place at a single site - or possibly a small number of related sites (p. 3).

While program evaluations are common and widely accepted in the health and social care fields, comparable quantitative project evaluations present particular challenges in the community arts field (Newman, Curtis, & Stephens, 2003). Resonance Consulting (n.d.), a firm specializing in creative evaluation methods for community-based art organizations, claims arts-based evaluation methods can add to the richness of the results gleaned from conventional methods. They believe arts-based evaluation methods, in addition to conventional methods, such as interviews and questionnaires, provide benefits to both the group and the individuals.

This study seeks to examine and discuss creative, arts-based research methods in the evaluation of a small-scale community-based art program. The objective is to explore how arts-based evaluation methods can collect new information for community-based art organizations in carrying out evaluations to improve their programming.

1.2.1 - Research Questions

The research seeks to examine the following questions:

- What are arts-based evaluation methods and how do they differ from conventional methods in evaluation research?
- How can creative, arts-based evaluation methods contribute to the evaluation processes for community-based art programs and complement conventional evaluations methods?
- What can other community-based art organizations in Winnipeg and elsewhere learn from Art City's experiences with arts-based evaluation methods?
- What can community planning practitioners learn from these enhanced evaluation methods?

This study addresses three broad subject areas through the literature review and findings. These areas include:

- Value of community-based art programs for community development initiatives;
- Program evaluation models, in general, and, in particular, those small-scale evaluations directed towards arts organization; and
- Arts-based evaluation methods for community-based art organizations.

1.3 - Role of the Researcher

During the study I acted as an unpaid evaluation consultant for Art City. During meetings with Art City, they made it clear improving evaluation capacity and evaluation methods was a concern for the organization. During the early stages of the research, I immersed myself in evaluation literature (discussed in *Chapter Three: Literature Review*) to familiarize myself with the approaches to conducting an evaluation, including ethical considerations and methodological concerns.

The original intent of the project was to evaluate a summer drop-in environmental art program—Green Art (*Appendix A*). However, due to reasons outside my or Art City's control (e.g., inclement weather and park renovation construction), the Green Art workshops were sparsely attended. I continued working with Art City as an evaluation consultant and introduced the organization to arts-based evaluation methods. Although this study does not specifically focus on the Green Art workshops, they helped shaped the direction of the study from the beginning. Therefore, *Chapter Two: Case Study* includes a brief discussion of environmental art and the Green Art workshops.

1.4 - Significance of Proposed Project

This project is intended to be of benefit to Art City as they monitor and evaluate their programming. Art City, as a community-based art organization, is dedicated to building community in West Broadway. Thus, improving their evaluation and art programming is intended to enable rippling benefits throughout the neighborhood.

This study is also of benefit to other community arts practitioners interested in improving their community arts programming and in contributing to planning literature and practice. This study will also assist planners in understanding the role community-based art organizations can play in community development. Above all, this study demonstrates the role of art and creativity in evaluation and community planning.

1.5 - Benefit to Planners

This Major Degree Project is intended to be of primary benefit to the community planning realm of city planning practice. City planning is a broad field that has undergone a range of paradigm shifts through its short history. Simplifying these shifts, ignoring movements, and glossing over others, we can see the role of the planner moving from omniscient expert to engaging in community dialogue. Whereas previous planning paradigms saw urban renewal as a top-down process, current approaches see urban renewal as a grassroots, community-building process working with local assets—the people (Landry, Greene, Matarasso, & Bianchini, 1996). Moreover, current planning paradigms (such as participatory planning) incorporate the knowledge of artists and other engaged individuals into community development and planning practice. Participatory planning is a modern manifestation of city planning practice, which sees

the planner working with the community to arrive at local solutions to local problems (Wates, 2000).

Community-based artists and organizations can play a valuable role in a community planning processes. Community-based art organizations work to build community in their respective neighbourhoods. Dang (2005) claims, although planning practice has traditionally been reluctant to engage in community-cultural development, artists are engaged in building better communities at a local level. Important for participatory planning processes is effectively engaging members of the community (Lowry, Adler, & Milner, 1997). Thus, developing tools to engage different groups in communities can aid practicing planners in more effectively engaging all groups and residents in a community. Building literacy around evaluation strategies and refining methods for evaluation can aid community-based art organizations (and other non-profit organizations) in better understanding the effectiveness of their efforts and, in turn, better address the needs of the community.

1.6 - Research Methods

I relied on multiple methods to guide this investigation and answer my research questions. Using multiple methods highlights different vantage points and improves the validity and reliability of the results (Zeisel, 2006). For this evaluation study, I employed four research methods: literature review, participant observation, semi-structured key stakeholder interviews, and an evaluation workshop. This Major Degree Project adheres to the Joint Research Ethics Board's policy for research with human subjects (*Appendix B*). Therefore, prior to key stakeholder interviews and the evaluation

workshop, participants signed the informed consent form (*Appendix C*), acknowledging the risk and benefits of their participants in the study.

I employed these methods to understand the perceptions and reactions of staff and volunteers at Art City to some creative, arts-based research methods (discussed further in *Chapter Three: Literature Review*). Methods involving children participants require considerations distinct from those with adults. While ethical considerations are the common issues distinguishing research with children than with adults, they are not the sole concern (Punch, 2002). Developing rapport, avoiding researcher bias, and clarity are further details to take into consideration (Punch, 2002). Although Art City's Green Art workshops and regular programming are directed toward children and youth, one of Art City's goals is to attract a diversity of ages and not turn away any participants. Therefore, while children and youth were the primary participants, they would not be the only ones.

1.6.1 - Literature Review

Any research project begins with a thorough review of the relevant literature, providing a solid foundation for the subsequent study and grounding the topic in previous investigations. The purpose of a literature review is to provide an overview of existing scholarship in the research area, which, in turn, identifies gaps in the literature and areas for further study, hones the research objectives, and provides context for the entire study (Hart, 1998; Machi & McEvoy, 2008). The literature review both frames the entire study and contributes to the investigation.

The literature review section for this Major Degree Project addresses some of the research questions, focusing on three central bodies of literature: program

evaluation, community-based art, and community development. In addition to framing

the study, the literature review also answers some of the research questions. Therefore,

in this regard, the literature review is analogous to a research method in itself.

1.6.2 - Participant Observation

Participant observation immerses the researcher in the "daily activities, ritual,

interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the

explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture" (Dewalt & Dewalt,

2002, p. 1). While traditionally employed by anthropologists in ethnographic

fieldwork, participant observation was valuable in this context to document the

participants' activities and engagement during the Green Art workshops. Aside from

simply documenting these interactions, field notes from the workshops include

personal insights and experiences while in attendance. These insights and reflections

are included in Blake's (2010) *Colour West Broadway Green Art Report* to Fulbright Canada

(*Appendix A*).

1.6.3 - Key Stakeholder Interviews

Interview methods are a means of "posing questions systematically to find out what

people think, feel, do, know, believe, and expect" (Zeisel, 2006, p. 227). The purpose is

to develop an understanding of the respondents' intentions and impressions. In this

study, key stakeholder interviews were used in two phases. First, key stakeholder

interviews were carried out with board members to understand Art City's evaluation

framework, including current methods and reasons for evaluation, and opportunities

for arts-based evaluation tools. Next, following the evaluation workshop (discussed

below), key stakeholder interviews were conducted with Art City staff and volunteers involved with subsequent evaluation processes. These interviews were used to understand some of the strengths and challenges encountered during the application of arts-based methods in their program evaluations, what may be changed for future applications, and what other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City's experience with arts-based evaluation. For this study, key stakeholders are staff and volunteers at Art City.

1.6.3 - Workshop

Workshops provide a forum for the participants to express their differences of opinion and engage one another. For this study, I used a workshop to engage staff and volunteers at Art City, introduce them to arts-based evaluation, and discuss the potential value of art based evaluation at Art City. Moreover, the workshop allowed those involved to brainstorm and discuss arts-based methods that could complement their evaluation strategies and build on the creative energy already present at with the organization.

1.6.4 - Action Research

The rise of evaluation research in the United States in the inter- and post-war period was largely tied to the rise of social research and increasing investments in social programs to improve the quality of life (Rossi *et al.*, 1999). Also influential on the development of evaluation research during this period, Rossi et al. (1999) note, were Kurt Lewin's action research studies.

Action research is a social research strategy in which the researcher partners with local stakeholders to define and solve a social problem (Denscombe, 2007; Greenwood & Levin, 2007). This social research strategy "centers on doing 'with' rather than doing 'for' stakeholders" (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 1) in a mutual learning process. That is, action research contributes to a body of academic knowledge while building community knowledge and capacity. For this Major Degree Project, I worked with staff and volunteers at Art City to examine evaluation practices for the organization.

1.7 - Data Analysis

The analysis stage gives meaning to information collected by systematically parsing blocks of data to identify themes and patterns, allowing the researcher to draw conclusions and findings from them (Jorgensen, 1989; Neuman, 2006). I carried out the analysis of key stakeholder interview and focus group data using qualitative analysis methods.

Each key stakeholder interview and focus group was recorded and, following the sessions, transcribed. To give meaning to this large set of qualitative data, I used a coding method. This is the process of condensing a collection of raw data into a manageable form. Coding qualitative data is a means of assigning labels to data and generating themes to develop an understanding of the material. For this process, I adopted Strauss' (1987) three-phase coding method as outlined by Neuman (2006), which includes open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

Every research process likely has its flaws (Denscombe, 2007). These may appear in the choice of method, the execution of the chosen method, or other confounding variables. Identifying limitations brings the research flaws to the fore to discuss their possible effects on the findings (Denscombe, 2007).

This Major Degree Project is grounded in a single case study and, therefore, the findings may be limited. Although the findings are intended to be of benefit to other community-based art organizations in Winnipeg and elsewhere, they are grounded in the opinions of those working and volunteering at Art City. Art workshops and programs are structured in any number of ways depending on the intended participants, available staff and resources, organizational objectives, or funding. Therefore, while Art City may find a particular method valuable, others may not.

Another limitation of this study is time and funding. If more of each were available, this study could have been expanded to include a second case study at Art City or another community-based art organization. Expanding the study would help to improve the generalizability of the findings.

One final limitation of this study is experience. I began working with Art City on the Green Art workshops with a different focus but with the intent to produce a document of benefit to them. As the study developed, it became clear program evaluation of their Green Art workshop would be of greatest benefit to them. Without having conducted an evaluation, I began this study by reading and learning the jargon of a field new to me.

It is impossible to eliminate bias from social research. However, being cognizant of what those biases are and where they exist may help minimize their

adverse affects on the findings. The nature of this study meant I had to work closely with Art City's staff and volunteers throughout the process and develop rapport. Thus, my participation in the workshops and role as evaluator introduces an element of bias to the study.

Although there is little agreement as to the social impacts of children's participation in community arts, I believe community-based art organizations are a valuable asset in many neighbourhoods. Regardless of the ability of community arts practitioners to demonstrate a causal relationship between participation and social improvements, community-based art organizations provide an important creative outlet for those in the neighbourhood.

The limitations and biases of this study will be revisited in *Chapter Six: Conclusions* as a reflection on the entire process.

1.9 - Organization of Document

Following this introductory chapter, I provide the reader with some context to the study. *Chapter Two: Case Study* discusses some of the history of West Broadway, Art City's role in some of the neighbourhood-based renewal efforts, and how Green Art builds on Art City's commitment to building community in West Broadway.

Whereas chapter two provides a community and organizational context to the study, *Chapter Three: Literature Review* presents the reader with a theoretical context. Relying mainly on academic journals, textbooks, and academic books, the literature review presents an overview of community-based art evaluation research and arts-based research methods. This chapter examines three main bodies of literature, namely

arts-based research methods, community-based art organizations, and program evaluation.

Chapter Four: Methods discusses the methods and research methodology for the study as well as of the evaluation. Methods used for this study include participant observation, key stakeholder interviews, and an evaluation workshop. Each method section will include a discussion of the value of the chosen method in general, why I selected it for this study, and how I carried out the analysis of the data.

Chapter Five: Findings presents the research findings from the study. This chapter includes an analysis of key-informant interviews and reflections on the evaluation process drawn from an evaluation journal that I kept throughout the evaluation.

Finally, *Chapter Six: Conclusion* revisits the initial research questions and provides some closing commentary for the study. This includes outlining any biases that arose during the study, limitations to the findings (aside from those discussed in the introductory chapter), and what lessons community planners can learn from the study and the findings. Finally, the study closes with a suggestion for future directions for research in this field.

Chapter Two | Case Study

2.1 - Introduction

      This Major Degree Project is the product of my involvement with a community-based art organization—Art City—in the West Broadway neighbourhood in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Research for this project relied on a case study approach to investigate the value and application of arts-based evaluation tools for community-based art organizations. One of the strengths of the case study approach to social research is that it provides a specific context for the inquiry. In this case, the case study background outlines the neighbourhood demographics and geography, and history and goals of Art City. Although the group or organization under investigation may be unique, the reader can usefully compare the organization with others based on this information.

      During the research process, I worked with Art City volunteers and staff to arrive at the aims and objectives for a program evaluation, participated in the Green Art workshops, and collaboratively developed arts-based evaluation methods for future program evaluations at Art City. Although the original intent of the project was to conduct an evaluation of the Green Art workshops, several unintended factors precluded this outcome, as will be detailed below.

      Like many North American inner-city neighborhoods, West Broadway has changed significantly since the Second World War. A diminishing population, low socioeconomic profile, declining home ownership rate, and a deteriorating housing stock are a few of the many indicators of the neighborhood's decline during that

period (Silver, 2006). After reaching a low point in the mid- to late-1990s—having the epithets "murder's half acre" and "gangside" bestowed upon neighborhood streets by the Winnipeg Free Press (Silver *et al.*, 2009)—the neighborhood has slowly made improvements. These community-based initiatives began in 1996 with the formation of the West Broadway Alliance and soon expanded to the West Broadway Development Corporation, West Broadway Alliance's legal arm (Silver *et al.*, 2009).

Established in 1998, Art City is a non-profit community-based art organization "dedicated to providing high-quality, free-of-charge art programming to participants of all ages" (Art City, 2010) in a safe and inclusive environment. Art City represents continued efforts to build and strengthen community in West Broadway through creative neighbourhood participation. Art City's Green Art summer workshops were developed with the overall intent to achieve its organizational objectives while adhering to sound environmental art practices. Environmental art is an umbrella term to describe art projects dealing with issues of sustainability, environmental preservation, and ecological awareness (Bower, 2010).

The original intent of this Major Degree Project was to carry out an evaluation of the Green Art summer workshops and introduce arts-based research methods to the process. However, a variety of factors discussed in this chapter (such as low attendance at the workshops) precluded the research from taking this direction (Blake, 2010). Nevertheless, this Major Degree Project remains rooted in the Green Art workshops because they are held each summer and will be one of the programs Art City will subsequently evaluate.

Chapter Two: Case Study provides the community context for this Major Degree Project. In this chapter, I provide a brief history of the West Broadway neighbourhood

in Winnipeg, how and why Art City developed in the neighbourhood, and the intended purpose of the Green Art workshops.

2.2 - Geography & Character

West Broadway is an inner city neighbourhood located southwest of the downtown area in Winnipeg, Manitoba (Figure 1).
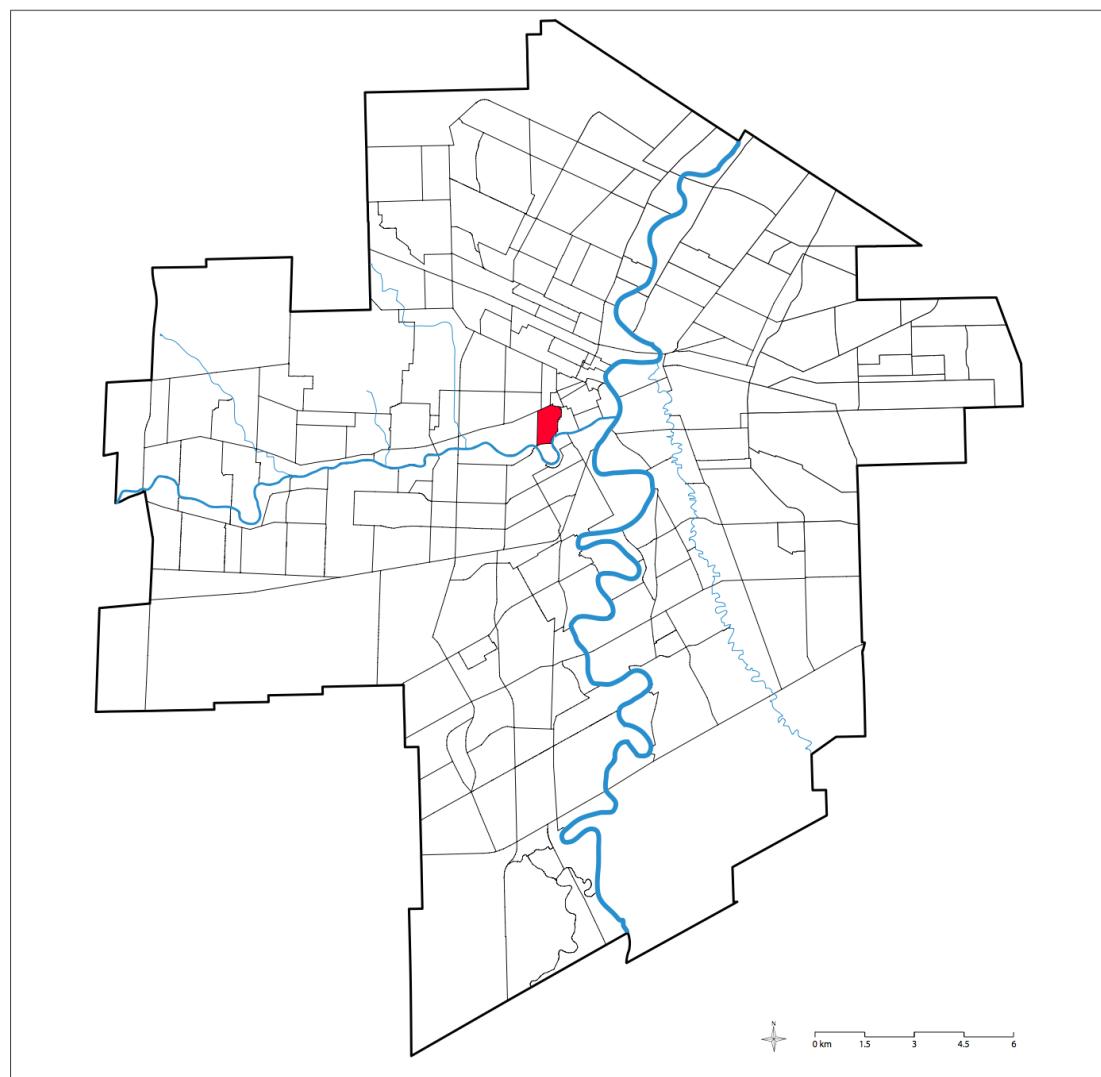
Figure 1 - West Broadway neighbourhood (red) in Winnipeg, Manitoba (adapted from City of Winnipeg, 2006a)

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According to the 2006 Census (City of Winnipeg, 2006b), West Broadway is home to 5,325 residents and has a land area of approximately 0.7 km^2, accounting for approximately 0.1% of Winnipeg's total land area and less than 1% of the population. The population density of West Broadway is 7,895.8 / km^2; nearly six times the city average.

West Broadway is bounded and bisected by several major transportation corridors, as well as the Assiniboine River. The boundaries, as defined by the City of Winnipeg, include: Maryland Street to the west; Portage Avenue and St. Mary Avenue to the north; Colony Street and the Assiniboine River to the east; and, Cornish Avenue to the south. The Trans-Canada Highway / Broadway Avenue bisects the neighbourhood east-west.

West Broadway is surrounded by six neighbourhoods (Figure 2): Armstrong's Point, Wolseley, St. Matthews, Spence, Colony, and Legislature. Armstrong's Point and Wolseley—relatively affluent and stable inner city residential neighbourhoods—border West Broadway to the south and west, respectively. Spence and St. Matthews neighbourhoods border West Broadway to the north and are, along with West Broadway, designated "Major Improvement Neighbourhoods" (City of Winnipeg, 2006a). Colony and Legislature—bordering to the north and east, respectively—are largely dominated by institutional uses, including the Manitoba Legislature, Winnipeg Art Gallery, University of Winnipeg campus, and Great-West Life Assurance Company.

West Broadway is primarily a residential neighbourhood, with residential zoning blanketing nearly the entire neighbourhood. The neighbourhood offers a mix of housing types, including large and small single-family homes, apartment buildings, and

senior housing (West Broadway Development Corporation (WBDC), 2001). Besides

the residential zoning, there are three concentrations of commercial zoning along

Figure 2 - West Broadway, and surrounding neighbourhoods (adapted from City of Winnipeg, 2006a)

Sherbrook Street, Broadway Avenue, and Portage Avenue, as well as commercial, institutional (including the Misericordia Health Centre and Balmoral Hall K-12 private girl's school), and recreation uses intermixed with the residential areas.

Art City (Figure 3) operates out of a storefront on Broadway Avenue / Trans Canada Highway in between Spence Street and Young Street.

Figure 3 - Art City (Art City, 2010)

2.3 - West Broadway

The area that is now West Broadway was once natural prairie land along the Assiniboine River with primarily First Nations and Metis residents (Maunder & Burley, 2008). The area began to take the form of a neighbourhood near the end of the nineteenth century as white settlers began to purchase land and subdivide their parcels

(Maunder & Burley, 2008). A map of Winnipeg from 1874 depicts the area that was to become the West Broadway neighbourhood as a "block of lots perched on the extreme western edge of the city, nothing but prairie reaching out beyond it" (Maunder & Burley, 2008, p. 5).

Those with higher incomes in a developing Winnipeg chose to build homes to the south in Armstrong's Point and along Wellington Crescent, and the lower-income immigrant groups built in the North End. In comparison, the West End was characterized as a "middle to lower-middle income strata" (Maunder & Burley, 2008, p. 5). By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, West Broadway had a higher income bracket due, in part, to its proximity to the original University of Manitoba campus, Manitoba Legislature, and Eaton's store (WBDC, 2001). Whereas homes north of Portage Avenue were built for between $1,500 and $3,000, homes in West Broadway were built for between $3,000 and $5,000 by the beginning of the twentieth century (Basham, 2000 as cited in WBDC, 2001).

Following the Second World War, West Broadway began to experience the ill-effects caused by the forces of suburbanization. By the late 1940s and into the 1950s, families that could afford to leave West Broadway moved out of the neighbourhood and into the newly constructed suburbs; businesses soon followed the families and left the neighbourhood (Silver *et al.*, 2009). Filling the places, left behind by the more affluent residents who were moving out of the neighbourhood, were lower income residents (Anderson, 2004). In the post-war period, a slew of demographic indicators emerged to mark the beginning of decline in West Broadway: declining housing stock, population, and home ownership, and increasing levels of unemployment and poverty painedt a grim picture for the neighbourhood.

Between 1971 and 1981, more homes were demolished than constructed, resulting in a loss of housing stock (Anderson, 2004). Moreover, during this same period, West Broadway's population dropped nearly thirty percent, unemployment climbed by nearly four percent, and by 1981 the average income in the neighbourhood rested at $12,578—nearly half the national average (Anderson, 2004). Although both the population and dwelling units increased in West Broadway between 1981 and 1986—by thirty-seven percent and forty-three percent, respectively—these increases were attributable to converting single-family homes into rooming houses (Anderson, 2004).

According to Anderson (2004), the period between 1981 and 1991 brought the most dramatic demographic changes in the neighbourhood. Silver (2006), citing the City of Winnipeg (1996), elaborates on the indicators of complete decline at the end of this period:

> ...average household incomes were about one-third of average household incomes for the city as a whole; more than three-quarters of West Broadway households had incomes below the Statistics Canada Low-Income Cut-Off; almost one-third of West Broadway residents were unemployed; and nearly two-thirds of households were in core housing need, spending 30 percent or more of household income on shelter (p. 12)

By the late 1990s, West Broadway was in a state of complete decline (Anderson, 2004). Crime was high and the neighbourhood image was poor. It was during this time the *Winnipeg Free Press* bestowed the epithets "murder's half acre" and "gangside" upon the neighbourhood (Silver *et al.*, 2009). West Broadway had reached its lowest point.

In 1999, the City of Winnipeg developed four designations to characterize neighbourhoods in the city to direct housing resources and investment incentives to

some of the most distressed neighbourhoods in the inner city. These designations included:

> *Major Improvement Areas*: older areas that have experienced significant decline to the point where housing and neighbourhood infrastructure require complete renewal.
>
> *Rehabilitation Areas*: areas where decline is having a spill-over effect to the extent that it is beginning to impact the overall stability of the neighbourhood. Some intervention would be required in order to stimulate private reinvestment and improve infrastructure.
>
> *Conservation Areas*: neighbourhoods which are physically and socially stable but are showing initial signs of decline.
>
> *Emerging Areas*: areas in which new development is being considered (City of Winnipeg, 1999).

In 2000, the City of Winnipeg designated West Broadway as a "Major Improvement Area" along with thirteen other inner-city neighbourhoods (City of Winnipeg, 2000). The "Major Improvement Area" designation was based on seven primary indicators—median selling price, housing condition, average effective age of residential dwellings, poverty, rental rate, crime, and unemployment—and five supporting indicators—placarded dwellings, rooming houses, maintenance and occupancy orders, demolitions, and total population (City of Winnipeg, 2000).

2.4 - Art City

Out of this state of affairs, West Broadway residents responded with a community-led renewal effort. Rather than one single, catalytic initiative, Maunder and Burley (2008) credit the renewal to a large group of residents working together to improve the neighbourhood and build community. These early efforts included creating public art,

identifying problem landlords, establishing community policing, and forming tenant groups in the neighbourhood (Maunder & Burley, 2008).

One of the landmark moments in the neighbourhood renewal was when a group of residents formed the West Broadway Alliance in 1996 (Maunder & Burley, 2008; Silver *et al.*, 2009). The West Broadway Alliance served to facilitate partnerships in the neighbourhood and develop programs (Maunder & Burley, 2008). Most notably, out of the West Broadway Alliance the West Broadway Development Corporation was established in 1997. West Broadway Development Corporation, a non-profit organization, was able to secure funding for community-building projects, including Art City (Silver *et al.*, 2009).

Established in 1998 under the direction of internationally acclaimed artist Wanda Koop, Art City is a non-profit community-based art organization in West Broadway "dedicated to providing high-quality, free-of-charge art programming to participants of all ages" (Art City, 2010). Its objectives are to:

- Encourage self-expression, communication, and creativity, thereby fostering a sense of self-worth, ownership, and accomplishment in participants;
- Provide a safe, supportive, non-competitive environment for children and adults which is an ongoing, integral part of the West Broadway community;
- Provide free, accessible, high quality art programming with local, national, and international artists, thereby enriching and supporting the West Broadway community, the arts community, and the city of Winnipeg;
- Be sustainable and available to the community day after day, year after year; and
- Be a model for future community art centres (Art City, 2010).

Art City represents continued efforts to build and strengthen community in West Broadway through creative neighbourhood participation. Art City has established

partnerships with organizations throughout the neighbourhood—including the West Broadway Development Corporation and Broadway Neighbourhood Centre—and elsewhere in Winnipeg (Lam, 2008).

Art City operates out of a former nightclub on Broadway Avenue, offering pottery, origami, painting, photography, computer, and dance throughout the week (excluding weekends) to participants of all ages (Lam, 2008). These activities and art projects are not constrained by the confines of Art City. Staff and participants at Art City have collaborated to paint murals and produce other forms of public art throughout West Broadway and, since 2001, Art City has organized an annual community parade. The parade is held during the summer and has a different theme each year. The Green Art workshops in 2010 began the week following the community parade. Leading up to the workshops and parade, related workshops were held.

Art City has been working to improve its evaluation strategies over the last several years. In 2009, a University of Manitoba graduate student in the Department of Human Ecology partnered with Art City to develop an evaluation plan, outlining some potential data collection ideas, recruitment strategies, data analysis methods and evaluation questions. However, these strategies focused on organizational evaluation as opposed to the evaluation of specific programs. Although an arts-based method, photovoice, was presented at that time as a potential evaluation method, it was never fully developed or implemented into their evaluation methodology.

Art City's Green Art summer workshops were developed with the overall intent to build on its organizational objectives while adhering to environmental art practices. Environmental art is a type of art that attempts to reconnect people with the natural world and natural processes (Greenmuseum.org, 2010; Hull, n.d.). Although there are many terms to describe environmental art (e.g., eco-art, land art, green art), environmental art serves as an umbrella term for these related practices (Bower, 2010). Thus, environmental art encompasses a wide range of projects, dealing with issues of sustainability using recycled or non-toxic products, or with environmental preservation using temporary outdoor installations. Art City's Green Art program used recycled and non-toxic products, intended to build environmental literacy among participants.

Art City piloted the Green Art summer workshops during July and August 2009. The 2010 workshops were intended to build on the successes from the previous year and establish it as a popular drop-in summer art workshop for participants of all ages in West Broadway. The 2010 Green Art workshops comprised one component of a larger summer programming strategy called Planet of the Plant People. Other activities included Environmental Public Art and the Growing Green Garden Parade. The parade has been running for several years now and is held on the last weekend in June to kickoff the summer. The parade is the culmination of more than twenty art workshops throughout June and is facilitated by Art City staff, volunteers, members of the community, and guest artists. The parade and workshops leading up to it were intended to integrate the community into Art City's programming and showcase participants' creativity and talent.

The 2009 workshops were held in Broadway Neighbourhood Park, located adjacent to the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre and immediately south of Art City. However, since the park was scheduled to be re-landscaped during the summer of 2010, it was not available to use for the entire summer (Blake, 2010). Instead, the 2010 Green Art workshops were originally intended to be held in various outdoor locations throughout the neighbourhood such as community gardens and parks (Blake, 2010). Art City staff decided to use St. Demetrios Romanian Orthodox Church garden on Tuesdays and the community garden space at Spirit Park Wednesdays to Saturdays (Blake, 2010).

Within three weeks, Green Art facilitators and Art City staff elected to use Broadway Neighbourhood Park for all Green Art sessions to attract more participants (Blake, 2010). Workshops at St. Demetrios Romanian Orthodox Church garden and Spirit Park lasted for three days (one day each week for three weeks) and four days, respectively. Attendance at both parks was low, with only three participants attending during the seven days at the two parks (Blake, 2010). Whereas Broadway Neighbourhood Park is a hub of activities in West Broadway, neither St. Demetrios Romanian Orthodox Church garden nor Spirit Park attract the same amount of activity. Both locations are located on lower-traffic streets and do not receive nearly the amount of foot traffic as Broadway Neighbourhood Park. Although Art City staff originally decided to avoid Broadway Neighbourhood Park because of the re-landscaping over the summer, delays in construction meant they could use the park until the final weekend in August. Once Art City staff relocated the workshops to Broadway Neighbourhood Park, attendance increased significantly (Blake, 2010). Three staff members from Art City ran the Green Art workshops, with one member organizing and facilitating the workshops and two playing a supporting role facilitating

the workshops. Workshops were held during July and August from Tuesday to Saturday between 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. In the event of rain, workshops were held in Art City. Materials for the workshops were mainly recycled, reused, or environmentally friendly (Blake, 2010). According to Art City's program description, Green Art's activities focused on "connecting with nature in an urban context, community building through creative collaboration, and positive interaction with the environment via neighbourhood beautification."

One of Art City's objectives is to provide a creative, inclusive environment. Therefore, although the workshops were tailored to child participants between the ages of six and twelve, all age groups, including adults and infants were encouraged to participate.

2.6 - Chapter Summary

West Broadway remains one of the most distressed neighbourhoods in Winnipeg. According to the 2006 Canada Census (as cited in Silver *et al.*, 2009), poverty and unemployment rates remain significantly above the Winnipeg average and the income and home ownership rates remain significantly below. Although this state was most evident during its lowest period in the late 1990s, it is still visible today. However, West Broadway is slowly making improvements. Much of this renewal can be attributed to neighbourhood organizations operating in West Broadway such as the West Broadway Development Corporation and Art City.

Art City is dedicated to building community in West Broadway by providing a free-of-charge creative outlet for those in West Broadway and surrounding neighbourhoods. Green Art evidences another effort to continue building community

in West Broadway, offering outdoor drop-in programming for children in and around West Broadway during the summer and attempting to build awareness around environmental issues.

Chapter Three | Literature Review

3.1 - Introduction

The arts are increasingly regarded as important tools in community development

efforts. However, instead of attributing these benefits to national, Western European

art institutions, community-based art organizations operate at the intersection between

the arts and community development and renewal. Community-based art organizations

exist in most major cities across North America and abroad. These groups view art as a

medium for social change through community empowerment and personal

development (Chew, 2009), and are "low-cost, flexible and responsive to local needs"

(Landry *et al.*, 1996, p. i). Community-based art organizations are concerned with social

and environmental community issues (e.g. youth poverty, food security, sustainability,

racism) and use art to address these issues and build community. Landry et al. (1996)

attribute the growing focus on community-based art organizations' community-

building efforts to "seeing local people as the principal asset through which renewal

can be achieved" (p. 8).

There is a large body of evaluation literature focusing on determining the

effectiveness of community-based art organizations' community-building efforts and

realizing the intended social impact and outcomes. However, while there is some

discussion of arts-based research methods for evaluation within the health care field,

program evaluation literature does not necessarily focus on using arts-based methods

with community-based art organizations or with artist groups. Arts-based research—in

program evaluations as well as social science research—allow the researcher to look at phenomena from a different vantage point:

> Artistic knowing in evaluation creates new opportunities for evaluators to express their creativity, for participants to overcome barriers to participation, and for both to advance the sophistication of evaluation practice (Simons & McCormack, 2007, p. 309).

Arts-based research methods are particularly well-suited to research with children and youth because they are task-oriented methods that do not require the mastery of oral and written communication, as so many social research methods require. Thus, arts-based research methods may be a valuable for community-based art organizations' evaluation frameworks.

This Major Degree Project seeks to examine and discuss creative, arts-based evaluation tools for community-based art organizations. This chapter is intended to address some of the research questions, focusing on three central bodies of literature: arts-based research methods, evaluation, and community-based art.

This literature review provides a foundation for the entire study. The purpose of a literature review is to provide an overview of existing scholarship in the research area, which, in turn, identifies gaps in the literature and areas for further study, and hones the research objectives (Hart, 1998; Machi & McEvoy, 2008).

3.2 - Arts-based Research

3.2.1 - Preamble

Selecting which method to use is an important stage in any research project. Each method comes with a set of advantages and limitations to its use and will be appropriate for a study depending on the research questions and phenomenon under

investigation. Denscombe (2007) likens the method selection process to a 'horses for courses' (p. 134) selection; that is, certain research methods are often matched with research strategies. Although questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews may be the most appropriate research methods for many evaluation studies, they may not necessarily be the most appropriate for community-based art organizations' program evaluations. In explaining the value of using art in evaluation workshops, Patton (1981), dismisses the 'horses for courses' approach and, instead, asserts the evaluator needs to respond to the situation and tailor the methods accordingly: "different types of programs demand different types of evaluations" (p. 223).

This section introduces arts-based research methods, looking at their origins in anthropological research and some of their current applications in community development studies and with children.

3.2.2 - Arts-based Research Methods

Arts-based research methods are a set of related emergent research methods which use different artistic mediums (e.g. performance, written, photography, video) to understand the participants' experience or perspective and address social research problems (McNiff, 2008; Leavy, 2009). The breadth of the field is large and descriptions of the approach vary. McNiff (2008) views arts-based research as remaining solely in the art:

> Arts-based research can be defined as the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies. These inquiries are distinguished from research activities where the arts may play a significant role but are essentially used as data for investigations that take place within

academic disciplines that utilize more traditional scientific, verbal, and mathematic descriptions and analyses of phenomena (p. 29).

McNiff approaches art as the data itself. On the other hand, Leavy (2009) and Holm (2008) extend the realm of arts-based research to mixed-method approaches, such as using art as a method to generate dialogue and form discussion. Regardless of how these researchers see the application of arts-based research, they approach the set of arts-based methods as a distinct alternative to conventional qualitative research methods.

The scientific method seeks to uncover the so-called "objective truth." This approach stems from the modernist belief there is a single reality which exists, independent of our values and beliefs (Cosgrove & McHugh, 2008). Arts-based methods, on the other hand, represent a postmodern research framework in that they do not seek to determine objective reality. Rather, arts-based research practices uncover the multiple ways of knowing and *subjective* realities (Holm, 2008; Leavy, 2009). Harper (2003), as quoted in Holm (2008), relates this view to photo-elicitation—an arts-based research method: "the power of the photo lies in its ability to unlock the subjectivity of those who see the image differently from the researcher" (p. 328). Rudkin and Davis (2007), citing numerous sources, claim arts-based methods elicit different responses than more conventional qualitative methods, allowing participants to "shape their own messages and convey them in ways they deem meaningful" (p. 109).

Leavy (2009) compares quantitative, qualitative, and arts-based research approaches (Table 1). Leavy's (2009) chart demonstrates the relationship between qualitative and arts-based research methods and contrasts these with quantitative

approaches. Moreover, she discusses how arts-based approaches naturally build upon the qualitative approach.

Quantitative	Qualitative	Arts-Based
Numbers	Words	Stories, images sounds, scenes, sensory
Measurement	Meaning	Evocation
Tabulating	Writing	Re(presenting)
Value-neutral	Value-laden	Political, consciousness-raising, emancipation
Reliability	Process	Authenticity
Validity	Interpretation	Truthfulness
Prove/Convince	Persuade	Compel
Disciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary

Table 1 - Comparison of Quantitative, Qualitative, and Arts-based Methods (Leavy, 2009)

Arts-based research methods can take numerous forms and employ any type of artistic media. Leavy (2009) divides the vast field into six areas. These include: narrative, poetry, music, performance, dance and movement, and visual art. These fields, Leavy (2009) claims, "are all useful strategies for accessing silenced perspectives, evoking emotional responses, provoking dialogue, promoting awareness, and cultivating an increased social consciousness" (p. 259). This section provides an overview of two different approaches to arts-based research most relevant to Art City's programming: narrative and visual art.

3.2.2.1 - Narrative

The narrative method is an interactive storytelling method between the researcher and participant. This approach builds on qualitative interview methods in a reflexive relationship. Narrative participants are engaged in the story they are telling and use it as a vehicle to "make sense of their lives" (Leavy, 2009, p. 27). Leavy (2009) claims narrative:

> attempts to collaboratively access participants' life experiences and engage in a process of storying and restorying in order to reveal the multidimensional meanings and present an authentic and compelling rendering of the data (p. 27).

Storytelling has appeared in planning discussions for some time now. James Throgmorton and Leonie Sandercock are two notable figures who have discussed the value of dialogue in planning processes. Throgmorton (2003) discusses the role of the planner-author writing alternate futures for cities. These 'texts' are not read nor interpreted by each audience member in the same way. Instead, "the meaning of the text is contestable and negotiated between the author and its many readers" (Throgmorton, 2003, p.129). Moreover, no single story exists; multiple, competing stories exist, constituting alternative and divergent futures and creating a web of narratives (Throgmorton, 2003).

3.2.2.2 - Visual Art

Visual methods rose to prominence around the mid-1960's as tools for anthropologists and ethnographers to paint a textual narrative of different cultures (Mason, 2005; Holm, 2008). Even as visual methods gained ground in these disciplines, the research was regarded as "too subjective, unsystematic, and unrepresentative" (Holm, 2008, p. 326). Banks (2000), as cited in Holm (2008), distinguishes between the visual methods

and simply capturing cultural practices with a visual medium: "using photographs as illustrations does not make it visual anthropology unless the photographs are analyzed in the written text" (p. 327). Although visual methods have a history in anthropology and ethnography research, these methods are more rare outside of these disciplines (Mason, 2005).

Distinct from visual anthropology are research approaches blending traditional social research methods (e.g., focus groups, interviews) with visual arts. Leavy (2009) refers to this sub-group as *visual arts-based participatory methods.*

> Most of these strategies involve research participants creating art that ultimately serves both *as* data, and may also *represent* data. These methods are frequently part of multimethod research designs (p. 227)

Leavy (2009) claims it is appropriate to use visual arts methods "when traditional methods cannot fully access what the researcher is after" and may be used after conventional methods "to elaborate on the data" (p. 227). That is, visual arts methods can be used to complement traditional social research methods and build on the data already garnered from such methods to provide a fuller picture of the phenomena. Moreover, Harper (2002) claims, visual stimuli, compared with verbal, is processed in evolutionary older areas of the brain. Therefore, he continues, "images evoke deeper elements of human consciousness than do words; exchanges based on words alone utilize less of the brain's capacity than do exchanges in which the brain is processing images as well as words" (p. 13).

Leavy (2009) claims visual arts are a rich source of information about social, economic, and political conditions and identity issues. Moreover, visual arts in community research amplify the traditionally unrepresented voices. Visual arts methods can be shaped in any number of ways to fit the research objectives (Leavy, 2009),

incorporating different types of visual arts media. Source material for visual arts methods may be produced by the researcher, the participant, or an outside/historic source and appear in any type of visual media.

Photography is the most common visual arts-based medium paired with traditional qualitative methods, referred to as photo-elicitation. Within this medium, however, there are two specific methods: photovoice and photo novella. Photovoice and photo novella are participatory methods in which the researcher gives the participants cameras to capture images from their own perspective and then discuss the images (Wang, 2006; Holm, 2008). However, the distinction between the two lies in the motivation for the subject matter.

With photo novella, the researcher guides the subject matter for the participants' photographs. For example, Castonguay & Jutras (2008) asked the youth to focus their images on areas of the neighbourhood they liked and disliked. In contrast, photovoice asks participants to select what aspects of their community they would like to document. Moreover, both approaches claim to empower the participants by creating a dialogue, enabling participants to discuss their images and how they relate (Hurworth, 2003 as cited in Purcell, 2007; Holm, 2008; Prosser & Loxley, 2008).

While photography is the most commonly used method, it is not the sole medium for this approach. Harper (2002) and Crilly, Blackwell, and Clarkson (2006) claim paintings, cartoons, graffiti, maps, videos, and "virtually any visual image" (Harper, 2002, p. 13) are appropriate to use in a visual-elicitation approach. Bagnoli (2009) discusses the value of graphic elicitation—a method using diagrams and self-portraits as part of the interview process.

3.2.3 - Arts-based Research With Children

Arts-based methods are commonly used to engage children and youth in social science research. Research with children and youth participants requires special concerns (Punch, 2002). Among the many concerns is the choice of methods. Punch (2002) suggests arts-based methods, such as drawing, photography, map making, and diaries are appropriate methods for children because they are based around performing a task and, therefore, may help place the children at greater ease.

There are many examples from community development and public health bodies of literature of studies using photography as a medium to engage people of all ages (children and youth in particular) to understand their community issues from their perspectives (Wang & Burris, 1994; Darbyshire, MacDougal, & Schiller, 2005; Wang, 2006; Purcell, 2007; Rudkin & Davis, 2007; Castonguay & Jutras, 2008). Holm (2008) claims there are three different approaches to using images in research. These include using images: produced by the participant; produced by the researcher; and, which are preexisting.

Many studies employing arts-based research methods with children—for example, map making in Blanchet-Cohen, Ragan, & Amsden (2003) and photographs in Rudkin & Davis (2007) and Castonguay & Jutras (2009)—reflect on the choice of method being appropriate for the study. In these situations, arts-based methods have the advantage, because they are not grounded in language in the same way as conventional methods.

3.3.1 - Preamble

Evaluation research is the systematic means of gathering information for the purposes

of making informed decisions (Patton, 1978). Program evaluation is important because

it helps program administrators understand the effectiveness of their efforts and

determine what can be done to improve on the results to more efficiently use resources

(Anderson & Postlethwaite, 2007). Although anyone can essentially evaluate for any

number of purposes, evaluation literature focuses on program evaluation as a means of

understanding program impacts, outcome, and/or outputs based on collected data and

other information (Patton, 1978; Robson, 2000). In this respect, Carol Weiss, as quoted

in Patton (1978), claims, evaluation "is meant for immediate and direct use in

improving the quality of social programming" (p. 24). Rossi et al. (1999), expand on

Weiss' motivation, outlining several additional reasons for carrying out an evaluation.

These include:

- to aid in decisions concerning whether programs should be continued, improved, expanded, or curtailed;
- to assess the utility of new programs and initiatives;
- to increase the effectiveness of program management and administration; and,
- to satisfy the accountability requirements of program sponsors (p. 3).

Much evaluation literature dealing with community-based art organizations discusses

program evaluation with a concern to the final rationale (Norris, 2006; Yoon, 2008)—

"to satisfy the accountability requirement of program sponsors."

This section explores four areas of program evaluation: roots of evaluation

research, program improvement, creativity in evaluations, and small-scale evaluations.

3.3.2 - Roots and Growth of Evaluation Research

Program evaluation is a commonplace task for most social programs in North America today. Program evaluations are, basically, the process of assigning value and merit to a social program. Program evaluations are commonly carried out for large-scale social programs to demonstrate the effectiveness of the intervention, satisfy accountability requirements, and justify improvements to the program (or terminate a program altogether) (Rossi *et al.*, 1999). Anderson and Postlethwaite (2007) see program evaluation as investigating, in detail, three areas of a program. These areas include: characteristics, activities, and outcomes. Characteristics refer to the context in which the program is operating (e.g., neighbourhood character, program participants) and the resources available. Activities refer to the steps that were taken to realize the intended outcomes. Finally, 'outcomes' refers to the results of the activities on the program participants (Anderson & Postlethwaite, 2007).

The rise of program evaluation in the United States is due in part to two developments during the inter- and post-war periods: the rise of the social sciences and the growth of government-sponsored programs (Patton, 1978; Shadish, Cook, & Leviton, 1991; Rossi *et al.*, 1999). During this time, social scientists strove to improve the quality of life by addressing literacy rates and public health issues through applied research (Rossi et al., 1999). The growth of governments with the New Deal and post-war social programs saw large public expenditures on social programs for education, housing, poverty, and urban development projects (Patton, 1978; Rossi *et al.*, 1999).

Bell (1983), as cited in Shadish *et al.*, (1991) claims between 1950 and 1979, public expenditures on social programs in the United States increased more than 600% in real value and 1,800% in nominal value. With these large investments in social

programs came conditions and calls for accountability—that is, governments wanted

proof these investments were achieving what they claimed they would (Shadish *et al.*,

1991). Patton (1978) summarizes these impacts on the development of evaluation

research:

> Evaluation research as an alternative approach to judging programs was born of
> two lessons from this period of large-scale social experimentation and
> government intervention: first, the fact that there is not enough money to do all
> the things that need doing; and secondly, the realization that even if there were
> enough money, it takes more than money to solve complex human and social
> problems (p. 16).

Thus, evaluation research in the United States is rooted in a desire to improve social

conditions—however those intentions were actually manifested—with limited funding

and a need for accountability.

By the 1960s and 1970s, evaluations of government programs were

commonplace (Patton, 1978; Rossi *et al.*, 1999). Having been reviewed favourably in

the United States, evaluation research subsequently spread to other countries,

influencing the development of bureaucratic evaluation in Canada, Sweden, Great

Britain, and the former Federal Republic of Germany (Derlien, 1999).

3.3.3 - Program Improvement

Since its origins in the post-war period in the United States, program evaluation has

continually evolved and responded to evaluation theory. Whereas early modern

evaluation was based on the dominant scientific method of proving, current evaluation

theory has moved towards improvement (Innovation Network, 2001; Hall & Hall,

2004). Early modern approaches to program evaluation asserted the primacy of the

evaluator, with program participants and staff taking a back seat in the process:

> This type of evaluation often disengaged program staff and others from the evaluation process; these stakeholders rarely learned answers to their questions about a program and rarely received information to help them improve the program (Innovation Network, 2001, p. 3).

Current approaches to evaluation strive to include program participants in the evaluation process rather than simply deeming a program a success or failure. These evaluations are referred to as empowerment evaluations and participatory evaluation since they seek to build evaluation capacity in the organization and collaborate with stakeholders in the gathering of data and dissemination of findings (Rossi *et al.*, 1999).

Providing much of the underlying theory in this shift from objectivist evaluation to constructivist are Guba and Lincoln in their text *Fourth Generation Evaluation* (Hall & Hall, 2004). In it, they characterize the evolution of evaluation as a process through four distinct paradigms, moving from the evaluator finding facts, to making sense of the multiple realities of participants (Hall & Hall, 2004). The three previous generations they characterize focus on (*First Generation*) measurement, (*Second Generation)* description, and (*Third Generation*) judgment. The *Fourth Generation* casts off the objectivist lens "by questioning how evidence is collected and presented and by prioritizing the views and meanings of those concerned with the program" (Hall & Hall, 2004, p. 53).

3.3.4 - Creative Evaluations

Each evaluation is unique and the strategies that work for one group may not work for another. Therefore, each evaluation needs to be tailored to each unique situation depending on a range of variables, such as the organization's political structure, time, resources, and intended results (Rossi *et al.*, 1999). In listing the myriad of variables

that shape the evaluation and need to be taken into consideration, Patton (1981)

concludes, "implicit throughout is the need for evaluators to be situationally responsive

rather than methodologically rigid and orthodox" (p. 23). Therefore, for a good

evaluation to take place, the evaluator must work closely with the organization and key

stakeholders to develop the evaluation plan. At the very least, the evaluator must

determine the purposes of the evaluation and select between either a formative (for

program improvement) or summative evaluation (for accountability and efficiency)

depending on the situation, but this process can also shape the scope of the project,

the questions to be answered, the methods of inquiry, and the relationship between the

organization and the evaluator.

Patton (1981) refers to this as a 'creative evaluation'; that is, responding to

unique situations in the evaluation and shaping it accordingly. In this way, he claims,

creativity is a fundamental component of all evaluations. Patton (1981) outlines five

prerequisites for carrying out a creative evaluation:

- Recognizing that there is something to be learned;
- Recognizing a need for and the importance of creative evaluation processes;
- Believing that learning to be more creative is possible;
- Committing to put time, energy, and resources into the creative processes; and,
- Possessing a willingness to take risks (p. 55-56).

Patton (1981) claims this move towards creativity is a result of paradigmatic and

methodological shifts in the evaluation field. Whereas previously the scientific,

"hypothetico-deductive" paradigm determined the methods for the evaluation, a new

paradigm has emerged in which alternative methods are accepted in a multidisciplinary

environment. This sea change is noted in the shift from a time when quantitative

methods dominated the field to qualitative and mixed methods playing a greater role

(Greene & Caracelli, 1997 and House, 1993 as cited in Simons & McCormack, 2007). Moreover, methodological questions are no longer even the primary concern for the evaluator. Instead, the evaluation process and ethics are emphasized (Patton, 1981) and the participants, rather than the program, are the focus (Simons & McCormack, 2007). Although both Rossi et al. (1999) and Patton (1981) call for the evaluator to respond to unique circumstances and plan the evaluation accordingly, Patton calls for a greater degree of creativity in the evaluation process. Rossi *et al.* discuss tailoring the evaluation into one of several conceptual and methodological frameworks (e.g. needs assessment, assessment of program theory, efficiency assessment), whereas Patton suggests an evaluation need not fit into a predesigned evaluation framework.

Patton's approach sees the evaluator developing innovative methods to respond to unique situations and organizations. For example, Patton discusses a situation when working with a group, which included a large number of artists and poets. During the evaluation the common methods he had used previously were not successful. He recalls working with the artists in the evaluation workshop, admitting,

> as I challenged them to be open to scientific ways of understanding and experiencing the world, they turned the tables on me and challenged me to be open to the experiences and understandings of artists (p. 216).

In this situation, Patton developed a set of methods that complemented the group's talents as a means to "see things in new ways" (p. 215). Patton (1981) refers to this incarnation of arts-based evaluation as *picturethinking*. Like other arts-based methods, he describes it as a way of "using visual stimuli to understand and communicate about the world" (Patton, 1981, p. 217).

Arts-based research, according to Patton (1981), is valuable because it represents people's different ways of knowing, literally. The localization of different skills in separate hemispheres of the brain—verbal and analytical in the left, "non-verbal information processing" in the right—mean different brains are hardwired to process information differently. According to Patton (1981), using photography in evaluation serves two purposes since "(1) visual data can be systematically collected and analyzed to *learn about* program implementation and outcomes and/or (2) visual data can be used to illustrate and communicate findings established through more conventional data collection and analysis techniques" (p. 234). Thus, he sees visual methods, such as photography, as complementing conventional methods and looking at phenomena from a different vantage point.

Particularly relevant to Art City's evaluation framework is Patton's insights about *picturethinking* when working with his son:

> It occurred to me then that part of the power of picturethinking may be its connection with the child in us. Children relate to pictures before they relate to words. When working with people for whom evaluation is a totally new (and often frightening experience), the place to begin may be with certain childlike understanding. Sages throughout time have urged adults not to lose touch with childlike wisdom. Picturethinking may play an important role in stimulating, connecting with, and building on childlike perceptions of elemental, but crucial, evaluation principles, thereby returning to the evaluation process an important reservoir of childlike wisdom (Patton, 1981, p. 228).

In addition to Patton's writings on the subject, Patricia Templin and Jon Wagner are two of the early academics to discuss the value of visual methods in evaluations, both writing articles in this sub-discipline in 1979. Each one agrees art can be used as a medium for representation and presentation of the evaluation, and as a discussion piece. Simons and McCormack (2007) echo Patton's (1981) statements that the use of

arts-based methods in evaluations "evokes different ways of knowing and understanding the values of the program" (p. 292). Moreover, Simons and McCormack (2007) claim using the creative arts in evaluation strategies enables a greater degree of involvement from the participants.

Every research method comes with certain limitations and arts-based research methods are not without their shortcomings. Simons & McCormack (2007) claim one of the main difficulties of using arts-based methods in evaluations is participants may be hesitant to showcase their artistic talents. However, the situations they discuss are primarily from programs not necessarily grounded in art itself, such as the healthcare fields. Thus, art is not the activity bringing the participants together.

Art City is a community-based art organization that uses the arts as tools for building community in West Broadway. All programming at Art City is based around art activities. Since art is a fundamental component of Art City, all participants are comfortable with art and, therefore, arts-based methods should not be an obstacle for their evaluations as they may be for other, non-art groups.

3.3.5 - Small-Scale Evaluation

Scale is an important consideration in program evaluation. Much evaluation literature discusses evaluations for programs in multiple sites in a national context and operating on large budgets over a long period (McGarvey, 1979). These types of programs can be considered large-scale evaluations and tend to evaluate the cost effectiveness of clinical treatments and social programs (Brophy, Snooks, & Griffiths, 2008). Some examples of these types of program evaluations presented by Rossi et al. (1999) are those looking at treating gambling addiction (p. 43) and cost-effectiveness of mental health treatments

(p. 73). On the other hand, small-scale evaluations are distinct from their large-scale counterparts in that they:

- Are local - rather than regional or national;
- Involve a single evaluator - or possibly a small team of two or three;
- Occupy a short timescale - perhaps completed in something between one and six months;
- Have to run on limited resources; and
- Take place at a single site - or possibly a small number of related sites (Robson, 2000, p. 3).

Generally, the findings from small-scale evaluations are of little interest for those outside of the small organization carrying out the evaluation and, therefore, do not require the services of a professional evaluator (McGarvey, 1979). These types of evaluations are commonly done by an insider with the organization (Robson, 2000) or as a collaborative, mutual learning experience between a student and a service provider (Hall & Hall, 2004). These organizational 'insiders' or students often do not have formal evaluation training. However, the lack of formal training is not often an issue because small-scale evaluations do not replicate the same methods as their large-scale counterparts and operate on a limited budget with fewer stakeholders (Anderson & Postlewaite, 2007; Brophy *et al.*, 2008).

Hall and Hall (2004) claim small-scale evaluations have an inherent advantage over large-scale evaluation simply because they are small-scale. Small-scale evaluations tend to be more exploratory in nature, with the results used to refine an existing approach or developing an innovative model (Anderson & Postlethwaite, 2007). They believe a small-scale evaluation promotes a stronger relationship between the evaluator and organization, and the results have a greater chance of being implemented. Moreover, by working with a smaller organization, the costs of changing a particular program are significantly less than changing one operating on a regional or national

scale (Hall & Hall, 2004). However, one of the drawbacks of small-scale studies is their generalizability. Since small-scale evaluations are grounded in a smaller population, results tend to be less generalizable and useful mainly to the organization (Anderson & Postlethwaite, 2007). Regardless, lessons can be extrapolated and applied to other groups and organizations.

Anderson & Postlethwaite (2007) claim a key feature of the small-scale evaluation is they serve as a stepping-stone to large-scale evaluations. That is, they provide the preliminary work that will then be used to expand a study to national or regional scale with more stakeholders and participants and a larger budget. Some of this preliminary work includes testing data collection methods and indicators.

Small-scale evaluation contrasts the early modern approach to program evaluation, which asserted the primacy of the evaluator (Hall & Hall, 2004). Small-scale evaluation leans more towards empowerment and participatory evaluations. A small-scale evaluation can narrow the gap between the evaluator and stakeholders, since it is more feasible to work closely on a local level rather than on a regional or national scale:

> The objectives of the study are determined through consultation with organization members, the research questions are checked with the members to make sure that all questions relevant to the organization's interests are included, and the research is carried out by the student evaluator on behalf of the organization (Hall & Hall, 2004, p. 59).

Small-scale evaluations rely on partnerships between the evaluator and organization since the evaluator need not be an expert in the field and the work may be carried out for a student project. Therefore, small-scale evaluations are distinct from the "hypothetico-deductive" paradigm which characterized the early modern period in evaluation.

3.3.6 - Conclusion

Evaluation research is a wide and expanding field of social research. From its beginnings, evaluation research has focused on improving social conditions and quality of life. However, beyond continuing to improve social conditions, evaluation research has shifted significantly since its post-war period origins. Among these shifts is the move from experimental evaluation design, using qualitative research methods, to people-focused, constructivist evaluations, incorporating qualitative and mix-method research methods (Rossi *et al.*, 1999; Simons & McCormack, 2007). Arts-based research methods are a modern approach to evaluation research.

Although arts-based evaluation research takes many different approaches—designing the evaluation, gathering data, and communicating the evaluation findings—each acknowledges art and creativity constitute different ways of knowing and enables participants to contribute in a different manner. Patton (1981) calls for evaluators to embrace flexibility in designing program evaluations. Arts-based research allows the evaluation to tailor the method to the participants and organization. Moreover, arts-based methods enable the research to "develop 'new' ways of evaluating" (Simons & McCormack, 2007, p. 307).

3.4 - Community-Based Art

3.4.1 - Preamble

The arts are commonly regarded as an urban panacea; artists and academics attribute a range of social and personal impacts to the arts, including improved grades in school, neighbourhood safety, mental and physical health, employability, and self-confidence and -image (Hamblen, 1993; Matarasso, 1996, Matarasso, 1997; Kay, 2000; Shaw, 2005;

White & Rentschler, 2006). However, while there is debate about the validity of these claims (White & Rentschler, 2005), community-based art organizations are increasingly being regarded as important neighbourhood institutions and engines of community development (Landry *et al.*, 1996; Kay, 2000; Dang, 2005).

Community-based art organizations can be important tools for community development initiatives and neighbourhood renewal as many are actively engaged in their respective neighbourhood, building relations between residents, celebrating a common culture, or bridging cultural difference. Granger (2004), as cited in Lam (2008) claims, like other community-based art organizations, Art City is a venue for participants to creatively express themselves, build leaderships skills, and develop an understanding of their place in the community. Dang (2005) claims that at the root of many social ills is cultural dislocation—a disconnect between culture and community as Alexander (2001, as cited in Dang, 2005) refers to it. Community-based art organizations attempt to ameliorate these social ills by engaging members of the community with art and creativity.

This section introduces community-based art practice, characteristics of community-based art organizations, how they constitute an engine of community development, the proposed benefits of the arts and creativity, and some of the critiques of the proposed benefits of the arts and creativity.

3.4.2 - Community-Based Art Organizations

European art forms, such as ballet, theatre, and opera, have traditionally been viewed as the indicators of a city's cultural capital and creativity. After all, it would be difficult to imagine a global city without national or regional, high art institutions such as these.

However, Chew (2009) claims, in an increasingly multicultural society, these institutions are no longer the sole cultural indicators as amateur and folk arts are increasingly regarded as "the window into a community's cultural soul" (p. 1).

Instead of viewing the arts as consisting solely of high art forms, art can be produced at the local level, dealing with neighborhood issues, promoting social causes, and enabling social change (deNobriga & Schwarzman, 1999; Chew, 2009). Community-based art organizations exist in most major cities across North America and abroad. Often, these organizations are located in distressed neighbourhoods and can be an important institution in enabling "affirmation, rebirth, and a new sense of identity" (Chew, 2009, p. 1) in these communities.

Community-based artists are concerned with social and environmental community issues (e.g. youth poverty, sustainability, racism) and use art to address these issues. Dealing with such subject matter, these groups tend to challenge social norms and approach art projects in various mediums with a degree of activism (Chew, 2009). However, community-based art is distinguished from political art, as community art is more concerned with *process* and *participation* as opposed to just challenging public actions and opinions (Cohen-Cruz, 2002). Moreover, not all community-based art has an activist agenda and may, instead, be a community celebration of shared culture and identity (Cohen-Cruz, 2002). Visual arts, performance art, music, dance, and writing are all mediums which community-based artists employ to communicate their messages. Community-based art organizations provide a venue for these and other artistic expressions, directing their programming to a broad audience at the neighborhood level rather than national or international stages.

Chew (2009) claims community-based art fully emerged in the 1960s, occurring largely in response to the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. However, he continues, elements of issue-focused folk and community art were present in the early part of the twentieth century. Like the previously discussed history of program evaluation in the United States, Roosevelt's New Deal provided funding for public art projects, including funding for fringe artists (Goldbard & Adams, 2006).

Throughout history, the arts have been used as tools for expressing feelings and communicating with one another (Shaw, 2003). In distressed communities, however, communication lines are poorly developed. Art and artists, Shaw (2003) argues, provide children, families, and the entire community with a voice. "The role of artists in a deprived community is to help communication – to use their creativity and imagination and to give them a view of a different future" (Shaw, 2003, p. 1). Chew (2009) claims community-based art organizations are important community development institutions because they seek to develop partnerships with other organizations in their neighbourhood, creating networks of non-profit organizations committed to improving social conditions. These networks provide strength to the organizations by exchanging knowledge and expertise (Lam, 2008) and strengthening the community through building social capital (Cohen-Cruz, 2002).

Many non-profit organizations (including community-based art organizations) operate on limited funding. Thus, partnerships between these organizations allow them to "fill service gaps within their organization" (Lam, 2008, p. 29). Art City names numerous partnerships through West Broadway and across Winnipeg, including the West Broadway Development Corporation, Broadway Neighbourhood Centre, and the YMCA/YWCA (Lam, 2008).

Community-based art organizations are typically non-profit organizations (Chew, 2009) and, therefore, rely on funders for support. Some of the major funding bodies in the United States include the Ford Foundation, the Wallace Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation, as well as innumerable small public and private funders (Chew, 2009). Similarly, Art City relies on a variety of funders for programming, receiving money from more than forty different funders, evenly balanced between government bodies, non-profit organizations (art agencies and foundations), and private donations (Lam, 2008). However, funding is never guaranteed and annual applications and reports consume valuable time.

3.4.3 - *Community Cultural Development*

Art is about creativity and imagining new possibilities. The arts are potentially valuable tools for community development, as it allows participants to create a new world and imagine their own as something else (Scher, 2007).

Community cultural development is a collaborative "arts-based community-building tool" (City of Calgary, 2008) for empowering neighborhood residents, developing the cultural resources that contribute to a sense of place, and addressing important local issues (Baeker & Cardinal, 2001). This field of community development engages the community with art to build skills, develop the cultural resources that contribute to a unique identity, and attempt to counter the monolithic forces of cultural globalization (Baeker & Cardinal, 2001; Goldbard & Adams, 2006; City of Calgary, 2008). Community cultural development focuses on communities of place as opposed to spatially segregated communities of interest and see the community residents as the greatest assets (Carey & Sutton, 2004).

Cultural expressions are integral to effective community development: "it is our cultural values and practices, our ways of interacting with one another and with nature, our sense of belonging and connectedness...that shape our ability for action and progress towards social, economic and environmental sustainability" (Dang, 2005, p. 123). Baeker and Cardinal (2001) claim post-war cultural policy in Canada, as dictated by the Massey-Levesque Commission, has existed in two tiers, primarily focusing on the national cultural stage. Funding has been divided between one tier consisting of the high arts—mainly Western European art forms—and a second, minor tier consisting of the ethnic and community arts (Baeker & Cardinal, 2001).

The result of this distinction was the establishment of regional cultural hubs tasked with disseminating 'cultural' products to more isolated regions of the country: "Canadians outside these centres naturally...saw this approach as elitist and dominated by a central Canadian aesthetic" which "*failed* to address the need for local cultural expressions" (Baeker & Cardinal, 2001, p. 12). They refer to this approach to culture in Canada as cultural *policy* as opposed to cultural *planning* (Table 2).

Community-based art organizations fall under the latter as they are community-led groups seeking to build community assets. Baeker and Cardinal (2001) assert cities and communities are the drivers of cultural development since it is at the local level where artists live and work and, therefore, enact change. Moreover, aside from simple cultural development, they claim, " it is at the community level where some of the most innovative experiments in community-based problem solving exist" (p. 13).

	Cultural Policy	Cultural Planning
Perspective	*Discipline-based* - fragmented perspective driven by disciplinary 'silo' - theater, dance, museums, etc.	*Place-based* - more "whole systems" perspectives rooted in place.
Definition	*Arts-based* - largely European "high arts" and cultural industries.	*Cultural resources* - expanded view of local cultural assets or resources.
Rationale for Municipal Investment	*Inherent importance* - "arts-for-arts sake," plus economic impacts.	*Benefits-driven* - emphasis on contributions to urban development (broadly defined).
Vision of Government Role	*Top-down* - old public management focus on financing, regulating, owning.	*Bottom-up* - new public management focus on enabling, supporting ("steering not rowing") combined with community development approaches.

Table 2 - Cultural Planning v. Cultural Policy (Baeker & Cardinal, 2001, p. 14)

Artists and academics have long espoused the virtues of practicing and producing art. Many authors claim the participatory arts and community-based art organizations can engender deep individual and social benefits (Carey & Sutton, 2004). However, while the arts are credited with such impacts, *art* itself is not the direct catalyst of these benefits. Instead, the *process* of making art—community members coming together to express shared cultural values (or bridge cultural difference) and challenge social/neighbourhood issues with art—is the value-adding step to community-based art organizations. Scher (2007) shares a dialogue with eight community arts activists and community organizers discussing the value and potential of art for social and personal development. One of the participants, Richard, mentioned the distinction between *product* and *process*: "I had thought of the arts as a

product—a mural, a mosaic, sculptures, or pictures. I now saw the arts as a way of thinking making meaning in community"' (p. 5). *Process* enables participants to articulate the relationship between themselves and their environment and reflect on that relationship (Murphy, 1999 as cited in Carey & Sutton, 2004; Scher, 2007). On the other hand, high art forms, such as opera and theater are focused on *product* and, therefore, not connected with community to the same extent as the participatory arts (Baeker & Cardinal, 2001).

Regardless of its positive impacts on the health of our communities, community cultural development remains on the fringes of planning practice in Canada (Baeker & Cardinal, 2001; Dang, 2005). However, while planning practice is largely absent from the community cultural development field, community-based artists are actively engaged in it. Britain and Western Europe, on the other hand, are increasingly looking towards the participatory arts as a component of building stronger communities and urban renewal (Landry *et al.*, 1996). Landry et al. (1996) present some of the reasons why the participatory arts are garnering more respect in Britain and Western Europe:

- They engage people's creativity, and so lead to problem solving.
- They are about meanings, and enable dialogue between people and social groups.
- They encourage questioning, and the imagination of possible futures.
- They offer self-expression, which is an essential characteristic of the active citizen.
- They are unpredictable, exciting and fun. (Landry *et al.*, 1996, p. 10).

There are many opportunities for planners and community-based artists to collaborate, learn from one another, and exchange expertise.

3.4.4 - *Community-Based Art Evaluations*

Community-based art organizations largely rely on public and non-profit funding bodies to provide art programming for the community. Community-based art

organizations must compete for limited funding in this arrangement and demonstrate their programs are having the impacts they intended (Yoon, 2008). Thus, out of this need to demonstrate impacts, community-based art organizations have been forced into evaluating their programs to compete for limited funding. Although these organizations have to evaluate their programs, Yoon (2008) claims there is little research available in this area and many of the existing strategies focus on anecdotal information. Therefore, while these organizations must evaluate their programs, they are provided with little guidance in the area.

Three national arts organizations in English-speaking countries have developed evaluation frameworks for community-based art organizations. These groups include the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States, Arts Victoria in Australia, and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Yoon (2008) examines each of these evaluation frameworks and does a comparative analysis of the models, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each. These models acknowledge community-based art organizations operate in a way conventional evaluations are not well suited to and provide a framework specific to art organizations.

Arts Victoria's *Evaluating Community Arts and Community Well Being* (2002) and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's *Evaluation Toolkit for the Voluntary and Community Arts in Northern Ireland* (2004) provide comprehensive, step-by-step guides to evaluating the outcomes of community arts programs. Each of these frameworks encourages community arts practitioners to take a more holistic approach to program evaluation and build evaluation into the program. Often, evaluation is considered an afterthought of the program—once the program is complete or near completion, administrators search for the impacts. Instead, program evaluation needs to be a part of the entire

program, when planning the program, designing the activities, and determining the outcomes. Arts Victoria (2002) outlines six stages to an evaluation process:

- Prepare for an evaluation
- Plan the evaluation
- Determine the evaluation indicators
- Collect the Data
- Analyze the data
- Prepare the evaluation report and improve on current practice

Within each of the stages, the guide provides questions for reflection, reference tools, and discussion of issues.

Community-based art organizations operate on limited budgets with limited staff. Moreover, there are rarely trained evaluators on staff to guide an evaluation process. Thus, these evaluation frameworks are valuable for community arts practitioners, because they outline key stages in the evaluation process, define key concepts, and introduce the organization to considerations that may have been overlooked otherwise, such as the ethics of evaluation. Although these evaluation frameworks are tailored to specific national arts bodies, they are nevertheless valid for any community arts practitioner. Moreover, they can be adapted and changed to fit any context.

3.4.5 - Critiques of Community Cultural Development Evaluation

There is a growing interest in evaluating community development initiatives. As with the early growth of program evaluation in the United States in the 1960s, evaluating community development is due in part to the public funds that constitute a large part of community development total funding (Craig, 2002). Program evaluations are common and widely accepted in the health and social care fields. However, comparable

program evaluations present particular challenges in the community development field. The primary obstacle in evaluating community development initiatives is the timeframe. Whereas health and social work interventions may have a relatively short onset period, community development projects may take decades to fully mature (Craig, 2002). Thus, the 'time-lag', as Craig (2002) refers to it, is a major obstacle. As well, over a protracted period of time, many externalities may arise that call into question the validity of results (Craig, 2002), for example, whether the outcome is a result of the intervention or an unintended situation in the community. Since community-based art organizations operate in the community development field and aim for large social impacts, evaluating the impacts of these organizations present the evaluator with problems, and places limitations on the results.

Regardless of the claims made to the values of the arts and the social impacts they engender, there are debates about the validity of claims (Belfiore, 2002; White & Rentschler, 2005; Belfiore & Bennet, 2007). White and Rentschler (2005), citing numerous sources, claim, "despite a general acceptance within industry and government that there are positive social impacts as a result of the arts, there is little robust empirical evidence to prove this" (p. 2). In reviewing the vast body of literature on social impacts in the community cultural development, health, and arts policy fields, White and Rentschler (2005) conclude there are serious limitations to the studies. Among the limitations of these studies, they identify three areas for improvement: meaning—an agreed upon definition of ambiguous terms such as the arts and social impacts; methodology—more transparent and innovative methods need to be developed for the field and they need to be clearly outlined; mastery—a distinction

needs to be drawn between art for social impact and art for aesthetic purposes (White & Rentschler, 2005).

Newman et al. (2003) acknowledge the criticisms of positivism in a creative market, but argue if community-based art programs are going to claim their projects lead to improvements in health, reduction in youth crime, and increased employment, then these claims should be substantiated against criteria comparable to the outlined studies. However, they conclude, a broader range of evaluative techniques are necessary to draw links between community development and the arts.

3.4.6 - *Conclusion*

Community-based art organizations are community institutions and one driver among many of community-led renewal efforts and community development initiatives. While these groups are not necessarily focused on activist art, many groups use art to confront neighbourhood issues and engage community. However, while there may be an activist agenda in their art, community-based art organizations do not produce political art. Instead, *process* takes precedent over *product*.

Community cultural development focuses on planning at the local scale and asserts the important of *place*. Baeker and Cardinal (2001) suggest the "professionalization of the [city planning] field that occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, and its institutionalization as a function of local government" (p. 18) emerged from the earlier visions of citizen participation in community planning proposed by Patrick Geddes and Lewis Mumford. The community cultural development field seeks to renew the grassroots elements of city planning and return some control to the local level.

Whereas previous planning paradigms saw urban renewal as a top-down process, current approaches see urban renewal as a grassroots, community building process working with the local assets—the people (Landry *et al.*, 1996). Community-based artists and organizations can play a valuable role in these processes. After all, Dang (2005) states, "community-based arts practice often demonstrates community planning at its best: strengths-based, capacity building, participatory, inclusive, communicative, reflective, innovative and adaptive" (p. 123).

3.5 - Gaps in the Literature

Community development literature suggests community-based art organizations can be valuable drivers of neighbourhood-led renewal efforts and community-building. Regardless of the potential value of these organizations outlined in the literature, community cultural development remains on the periphery of planning practice. Dang (2005) addresses some of these gaps, suggesting there is a great deal of potential for relationships between planners and artists to develop. Although this Major Degree Project does not specifically focus on nurturing relationships between planners and artists, it is nevertheless a gap in the literature and an area this project begins to shed light on.

Arts-based evaluation methods are characterized in social science research as an "emergent method." Therefore, compared with other conventional social research methods, such as questionnaires and interviews, arts-based research methods receive little attention. This already narrow body of literature is further limited when looking specifically at program evaluation. While this field has touched on the value of arts-

based research methods in evaluation, large gaps in this body nevertheless remain. For example, Simons and McCormack (2007), Patton (1981), and Templin (1981) have all suggested the potential of the creative arts to be used in evaluation processes. However, only Patton (1981) has suggested the role of the arts specifically when working with artists.

Arts-based evaluation methods are valuable when working with children and youth because they are task-based and do not require a mastery of written and oral communication as most other conventional research methods. However, arts-based evaluation methods have not been fully discussed for program evaluations with children and community-based art organizations' program evaluations. Community-based art organizations could benefit a great deal from further inquiry into these areas.

Although there are some evaluation frameworks and guides specifically directed towards community-based art organizations and community arts practitioners (e.g., Arts Victoria's *Evaluating Community Art & Community Well-Being* and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's *Evaluation Toolkit for the Voluntary and Community Arts*), they do not discuss arts-based research methods. Moreover, Art Victoria's evaluation framework does not discuss specific evaluation methods at all. Thus, this Major Degree Project intends to address some of these gaps, exploring the value of arts-based research methods in community-based art evaluation frameworks.

3.6 - Chapter Summary

Planning literature suggests community-based art organizations are more than simply art venues for neighbourhood residents. Instead, community-based art organizations provide a space for personal development and sharing cultural values. Community-

based artists engage the community with art, using it to deal with local and global issues. Whereas national, high art institutions may be disconnected from the communities in which they exist, community-based art organizations are an integral piece of the community.

Program evaluation is an important process for community-based art organizations. Through this process, staff and volunteers can better understand the effectiveness of their efforts and tailor their programming to better address the needs of the community. However, while early evaluation strategies were methodologically similar to the prevailing scientific method, based around a hypothetico-deductive model, contemporary evaluation has shed these values. Late-twentieth century evaluation literature saw the rise of empowerment and participatory evaluation methods. Rather than asserting the primacy of the role of the evaluator, empowerment and participatory evaluations espoused the value of the participants' experience in the evaluation process and a multiplicity of opinions. Thus, with these paradigm shifts in evaluation literature came the need for social science methods.

Artists and academics have discussed the value of using art in social science research, both as one component of a multiple method approach (such as photo novella) and a method in itself. Regardless, arts-based research methods remain on the fringe of social science research and are regarded as an "emergent method" due in part to the debate about the validity of findings and methods of analysis. Arts-based research methods enable participants to contribute in a different way than conventional research methods, as they represent a "different way of knowing." Thus, arts-based research methods can be particularly valuable tools for arts-based evaluation frameworks, as participants are commonly comfortable expressing themselves in these

media. Moreover, arts-based methods are regarded as a valuable method when working with children and youth since they are commonly task-oriented methods and do not require the same mastery of written and oral communication as other social science methods.

This chapter provided an overview of evaluation literature, community cultural development, and community-based art organizations. In particular, the evaluation literature focused on the role of evaluations in community-based art organizations, small-scale evaluations, creativity in evaluation strategies and the application of arts-based evaluation methods. On the other hand, the community-based art literature focused on the role of community-based art organizations in community cultural development, existing frameworks for community-based art evaluations, and the limitations of evaluating the impacts of the participatory arts. The material presented in this chapter constitutes the bodies of literature relevant to this Major Degree Project. This chapter serves to contextualize the study and outline the gaps in the bodies of literature to frame the subsequent investigation and discussion.

Chapter Four | Methods

This Major Degree Project examines the use of creative, arts-based evaluation tools in community-based art organizations' program evaluations. The objectives for this study are:

- to explore how community-based art organizations can use emergent arts-based evaluation tools in carrying out program evaluations; and,
- to determine what other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City's experiences with arts-based methods.

This Major Degree Project seeks to examine the following question:

- What are arts-based evaluation methods and how do they differ from conventional methods in evaluation research?
- How can creative, arts-based evaluation methods contribute to the evaluation process for community-based art programs and complement conventional evaluations methods?
- What can other community-based art organizations in Winnipeg and elsewhere learn from Art City's experiences with arts-based evaluation methods?
- What can community planning practitioners learn from these enhanced evaluation methods?

For this project, I relied on multiple research methods to frame the entire inquiry, provide context, and answer my research questions.

Each method comes with particular advantages and limitations. Using multiple research methods provides the researcher with a different vantage point with each

method to improve the validity and reliability of the findings (Zeisel, 2006). For this study, I employed four research methods in a case study approach: literature review, participant observation, semi-structured key stakeholder interviews, and an arts-based evaluation workshop. I used the literature review (discussed in *Chapter Three: Literature Review*), to contextualize the study and answer some of the research detailed in *Chapter One: Introduction*.

I began the project working with Art City in a consultant role to aid them in developing their evaluation strategies. Robson (2000) recommends an evaluator in a small-scale evaluation keep a detailed journal of the process. A journal allows the evaluator to keep track of what strategies he or she used during the evaluation process and what the successes and failures were. Journaling during the workshops took the form of a participant observation method.

Semi-structured key stakeholder interviews followed the Green Art workshops to build on the results from the participant observation. The main purpose of the interviews was to understand Art City's current program evaluation framework and methodology. Additional topics included the design of previous Green Art workshops and how the workshops might be adapted in the future. The semi-structured interview questions were intended to inform some of the content of the methods workshops.

The evaluation workshop brought together Art City staff and volunteers to discuss arts-based evaluation methods and some of the potential limitations of using them at Art City. The intent of the workshop was to collaboratively develop arts-based evaluation tools for Art City's program evaluation. An Art City staff member then tested an evaluation tool over the course of one month during regular programming. Finally, follow-up interviews with those involved in the development and testing of the

arts-based method gathered their impressions and reactions to using arts-based methods. These methods were carried out with a case study approach and an action research methodological lens.

In this chapter, I discuss the research strategy and process for this study, the benefits and limitations of each of the primary research methods, and the data analysis process.

4.2 - Research Strategy and Process

4.2.1 - *Case Study*

Research for this project was based around a case study of a potential evaluation process for an environmental art program—Green Art—organized and facilitated by Art City staff and volunteers. Green Art is a drop-in art workshop for children and youth in the West Broadway neighbourhood in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The workshops ran from Tuesdays to Saturdays during July and August.

A case study is a type of research strategy in which the researcher focuses on one particular individual or organization over a long period to provide insight and generalizations about a given phenomenon in an in-depth study demarcated by time or activity (Stake, 1995 as cited in Creswell, 2003; Denscombe, 2007). The case study approach in this study is appropriate because it describes in great detail the history of West Broadway and Art City (*Chapter Two: Case Study*) and the context for the workshops. The overall objective of the case study approach "is to illuminate the general by looking at the particular" (Denscombe, 2007, p. 36). Thus, with this approach, it is intended this study will provide lessons for other community-based art

organizations interested in pursuing creative evaluation methods in their program evaluations.

Each community-based art organization operates in a unique context and, therefore, methodological approaches that work for Art City may not be appropriate for others. The case study approach grounds the study in that particular context, asking 'why' (or 'why not') a method or approach may be successful for one community-based art organization (Denscombe, 2007; Yin, 2009).

One of the main criticisms of the case study approach is the issue of generalizability (Yin, 2009; Denscombe, 2007). Although the case study approach looks at one example in great detail, its generalizability is determined by the degree to which the case study group shares characteristics with other groups or is a member of a type of group. Although Green Art may share very few characteristics with other workshops and programs designed by other community-based art organizations (or other Art City programs and projects), findings from the study may nevertheless be relevant to other community-based art organizations. Therefore, discussing the context for Art City and Green Art is important in this approach (*Chapter 2: Case Study*).

The strength of a case study rests on the ability of the researcher to immerse him- or herself fully in the activities of the group or individual being studied. Thus, one of the potential shortfalls of the case study strategy is negotiating access (Denscombe, 2007). I was introduced to the study through my advisor, Sheri Blake, who has worked with non-profit groups in Winnipeg and, in particular, West Broadway, for approximately fourteen years, providing technical and financial support pro bono. She has been involved sporadically with Art City since it began in 1998 and, in 2009, received the Art City Star Award for her support. Thus, my access to Art City

came through a trusted and long time partner of the organization. Once I was introduced to the group, staff and volunteers at Art City were always willing to accommodate any requests for information and provide support.

4.2.2 - Action Research

The entire study was carried out within an action research framework, a research strategy resulting in action and social change. This approach sees the researcher partnering with local stakeholders to define and solve a social problem (Denscombe, 2007; Greenwood & Levin, 2007). Action research is a social research strategy that "centers on doing 'with' rather than doing 'for' stakeholders" in a collaborative, mutual learning process (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 1). That is, action research contributes to a body of academic knowledge while building community knowledge and capacity. An action research strategy, according to Denscombe (2007), is characterized by four traits:

- *Practicality.* Action research seeks to solve, or at least address, real (as opposed to theoretical) issues affecting a group or organization.
- *Change.* Findings from action research are intended to result in action, or social change, within the group or organization.
- *Cyclical Process.* Action research is intended to result in further questions and research problems.
- *Participation.* Action research depends on the participation of the stakeholders (Denscombe, 2007, p. 123).

One of the limitations of using an action research strategy is it commonly places an extra workload on the stakeholders (Denscombe, 2007). As with many community-based art organizations and other non-profits, staff at Art City are busy with

administrative work, funding applications, and evaluation reports. Therefore, adding an extra step into their routine can be difficult to arrange. However, staff at Art City were interested in further developing their program evaluation practices and were willing to cede some time for several employees to meet and participate in workshops and interviews. Nonetheless, time was often limited.

As discussed in the *Research Process* section below, I worked with staff and volunteers at Art City through this Major Degree Project to examine evaluation practices for the organization. At the beginning of the study, Art City staff members suggested they were interested in developing their evaluation framework to improve their programming and better understand the effectiveness of their efforts. Focusing specifically on the Green Art workshops, I adapted two evaluation models developed by Arts Victoria (in Australia) and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and we collaboratively outlined the goals and objectives for the evaluation and indicators of success.

4.2.3 - Role of the Researcher

Action research requires the researcher to be enmeshed in the organization as opposed to studying phenomena at arms length. During the study I acted as an evaluation consultant for Art City. During meetings with Art City, they made it clear building evaluation capacity was an interest for the organization. During the early stages of the research, I immersed myself in evaluation literature (discussed in *Chapter Three: Literature Review*) to familiarize myself with the approaches to conducting an evaluation, including ethical considerations and methodological concerns.

Robson (2000) suggests when conducting a small-scale evaluation (such as the one for Green Art), the evaluator need not be a professional evaluator applying rigorous methods to observe phenomena. Instead, an evaluator can approach the study with little experience so long as the study is carried out ethically and the central tenets of a sound evaluation (as discussed in the literature review) are adhered to.

4.2.4 - Research Process

Throughout the study, I worked closely with Art City's staff and volunteers. I first met with the executive director of Art City in December 2009 to discuss the project, my aims, their aims, and how my research might benefit them. From then, I was in contact with the executive director periodically as Green Art was being designed, and, at the same time, refining my study objectives to ensure they remained in line with their own and the study would be beneficial to them at the conclusion. The original intent of this Major Degree Project was to carry out an evaluation of the Green Art summer workshops and introduce arts-based research methods to the process. However, a variety of factors precluded the research from continuing in this direction.

In June 2010, I met with the executive director, program director, and Green Art facilitator from Art City, and two employees from the West Broadway Development Corporation to formalize the aims and objectives of the workshops as well as the indicators of success. This stage of research determined the course of the study as it formalized what Art City wanted to achieve with Green Art (aims and objectives) and how they knew they had achieved those objectives (indicators of success). This is the most important stage in any evaluation. Arts Victoria (2002) summarizes the value of these stages in the evaluation by referring to the adage: "If

you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you get there?" (p. 8).
Evaluation cannot be an activity that is tacked on at the end of a project for funding
requirements. Effective evaluation needs to be built into any project from the outset,
including outlining aims, outcomes, and indicators.

During the Green Art workshops, I researched arts-based evaluation methods,
which we had intended to use in conjunction with traditional evaluation methods
already utilized by Art City, such as questionnaires. During July and August, I attended
the workshops two or three times each week and participated in the activities. I used
participant observation to record my observations about the workshops and activities,
as well as my impressions of the workshops.

At the conclusion of the Green Art workshops, I used key stakeholder
interviews to build on the results from the participant observation. The main purpose
of the interviews was to understand Art City's current program evaluation framework
and methodology. Additional topics included the design of previous Green Art
workshops and how the workshops might be changed in the future.

Next, the arts-based methods workshops brought together staff and volunteers
at Art City to discuss arts-based evaluation methods. The workshop included an
overview of my research, demonstrations of arts-based methods, and discussion of
some potential methods for Art City. Since each community-based art organization
operates in a unique context, the workshop served to address some of obstacles
volunteers using arts-based methods may encounter and how these issues may be
mitigated. Staff and volunteers at Art City then incorporated the arts-based methods
into their program evaluation framework.

Finally, follow-up interviews were used to assess the evaluation method designed during the workshop. These interviews were conducted with staff involved in the development and testing of the arts-based evaluation tool. Some of the topics covered in these final interviews were: obstacles to the application of the method; what could be improved next time; and, what other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City.

4.3 - Confidentiality & Informed Consent

All efforts were taken to maintain the anonymity of interview and evaluation workshop participants. Direct quotes and specific responses were not tied to any particular participant. However, since key stakeholders were drawn from a limited pool of participants, readers involved with Art City or familiar with the staff and volunteers of the organization may be able to infer the identity of the interview participants. Regardless, participation in the interviews and focus groups did not pose a threat to their personal safety nor did it require them to disclose personal information about themselves or others.

Prior to the interviews and focus groups, I explained to participants the intent of the research project and outlined any risks associated with participating. This information was also provided in writing with the informed consent form (*Appendix C*), which participants signed prior to the interviews and focus groups, acknowledging their understanding of these matters.

Participant observation is a qualitative research method in which the researcher immerses him- or herself in the "daily activities, ritual, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture" (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002, p. 1). As opposed to gathering information about the participants' perspectives as with key stakeholder interviews, this method relies on what the researcher observes in a situation or social setting (Denscombe, 2007).

Participant observation is distinct from *systematic* observation (Denscombe, 2007). Whereas systematic observation is the observation *of participants as an outsider,* participant observation is the observation *of participants as a participant*, or what Zeisel (2006) refers to as the "full participant" vantage point for observing environmental behavior. Therefore, rather than simply observing phenomena from behind a barrier, the full participant is granted a more in-depth perspective on the phenomena: "through participation, the researcher is able to observe and experience the meanings and interactions of people from the role of an insider" (Jorgensen, 1989, p.21). For this study, I used participant observation to document the participants' activities and engagement during the Green Art workshops as I worked in a consulting role for Art City. Field notes from the workshops include personal insights and experiences while in attendance. I also used participant observation to inform the design interview questions for the key stakeholder interviews which were carried out following the evaluation study. Conclusions and findings from participant observation are intended to be of primary benefit to other community-based art organizations. With this

information, other community-based art organizations will be able to better understand the structure and content of the Green Art workshops.

4.5 - Semi-Structured Interviews

According to Zeisel (2006), the interview methods is a means of "posing questions systematically to find out what people think, feel, do, know, believe, and expect" (p. 137). Interviewing is a dynamic research method allowing the researcher to tailor the mode of questioning to the interviewee's responses. This allows the researcher to direct the questioning down a certain avenue and pursue a particular topic in greater detail than others. Within the broad category of interview methods, there are semi-structured interviews. With this approach, the researcher readies for the interview by outlining a list of topics to cover in the interview (*Appendix D & E*) and preparing questions within these topics (Denscombe, 2007). However, rather than a sequential progression through the topics, the researcher instead allows him- or herself to respond to the interviewee's responses and probe for additional information or pursue a topic area more appropriate to the previous response.

The semi-structured interview method strikes a balance between the rigid structured interview and the free-forming unstructured interview. The structured interview allows limited responses and demands the same questions be asked in the same way—"the structured interview is like a questionnaire which is administered face-to-face with the respondent" (Denscombe, 2007, p. 175). Selecting this method would have forced me to avoid pursuing different avenues of questioning as they emerged or employing probes to encourage further elaboration. On the other hand, the unstructured interview presents the respondent with a theme or issue and allows the

respondent to direct the conversation (Denscombe, 2007). I chose to use an interview method because it would allow me to sit down one-on-one with the staff and volunteers at Art City who were involved with the workshops and establish a dialogue.

I refer to these semi-structured interviews as key stakeholder interviews because interview participants possessed a firsthand perspective of the evaluation process and Art City. Goh et al. (2009) define key stakeholders as "individuals who are experienced with the local setting and issue under study, and who have sufficient information and knowledge about the situation to design effective social change processes" (p. 494). I identified key stakeholders myself during the study as those who were involved with the Green Art workshops or those with intimate knowledge of Art City and the organization's evaluation framework.

4.6 - Workshops

Effective community planning relies on local participation (Sanoff, 2000). Workshops are a common method for community planners to address community issues. Planning workshops bring together groups of people to work together to "create and maintain built environments that satisfy both individual and community needs" (Wates, 2000, p. 3). Planning workshops empower the participants by developing skills and community capacity, and building consensus (Sanoff, 2000; Wates, 2000). Similar to a focus group method, a workshop can produce "data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group" (p. 3) and allow the participants to build on each other's answers.

Sanoff (2000) sees the value of workshops in the learning experiences inherent with people interacting with one another:

Learning is most functional when it grows out of personally involving experiences that require reflecting, developing, and testing of new insights and approaches to problem solving (p. 80).

Learning was key to the workshops for this study.

The purpose of the workshop was to bring together Art City staff and volunteers familiar with the organization's evaluation process to discuss arts-based research methods. The overall objective was to discuss arts-based methods and obstacles and opportunities to using them at Art City. Following the workshop, this information was used to tailor a method to address Art City's unique challenges. A workshop is an appropriate method because it allows those involved with Art City to brainstorm and discuss methods that could complement their program evaluation strategies.

4.7 - Analysis

Qualitative research garners large sets of data. The analysis stage gives meaning to information collected by systematically parsing large blocks of data to identify themes and patterns, allowing the researcher to draw conclusions and arrive at findings from them (Jorgensen, 1989; Neuman, 2006). I carried out the analysis of the data gleaned from the participant observation, key stakeholder interviews, and the workshop using qualitative analysis methods.

Each key stakeholder interview was recorded and transcribed. To give meaning to these large sets of qualitative data, I used a coding method. This is the process of condensing and summarizing a collection of raw data into a manageable form (Neuman, 2006; Saldaña, 2009). Coding qualitative data is a means of assigning labels to data and generating themes to develop an understanding of the material. Moreover,

coding is an iterative process. That is, codes and labels are continually refined through each iteration to draw out themes and patterns in the data (Saldaña, 2009). As individual codes are interpreted, they are grouped into categories. For this process, I adopted Strauss' (1987) three-phase coding method as outlined by Neuman (2006), which includes open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

Open coding is the first stage, which entails reading through the raw qualitative data, identifying themes, and assigning codes (Neuman, 2006). The second stage in the process – axial coding – deals directly with the themes and labels generated in the open coding stage as opposed to the raw qualitative data (Neuman, 2006). This involves interpreting the open codes, grouping related codes, and parsing codes into sub-themes (Neuman, 2006). The purpose of this stage is to identify linkages in the data. Finally, in the selective coding stage, the researcher selectively examines the raw data. That is, the major themes from the axial coding stage are examined in detail and elaborated upon, drawing further information from the text (Neuman, 2006). Based on the literature review and experiences with Art City, some of the anticipated themes included:

- Limitations of arts-based evaluation methods;
- Evaluation with children versus adults;
- Lessons for other community-based art organizations;
- Ways to improve the methods; and,
- Value of creativity in evaluation.

4.8 - Chapter Summary

In this chapter I discuss the research strategy and process for this study, the value and limitations of each of the primary research methods, and the data analysis process. Each research method has strengths and limitations. Using multiple methods in social

science research is valuable because each method can build on the limitations of the other and provide a more complete picture of the phenomenon. Multiple methods selected for this study include: literature review, participant observation, key stakeholder interviews, and a workshop.

The literature review (*Chapter Three: Literature Review*) provides an overview of the existing scholarship in the field, identifies gaps in the literature, and contextualizes the entire study. Participant observation was used to record my impressions and thoughts on the Green Art workshops, and to inform the interview questions and workshop structure. Moreover, participant observation documented the entire process and rationale for the Green Art workshops. This information should be of benefit to other community-based art organizations interested in incorporating arts-based research methods into their evaluation framework.

Key stakeholder interviews were used before and after the workshop to explore several areas:

- Art City's current evaluation framework;
- Art City's evaluation methodology;
- Reactions and impressions to arts-based research methods; and,
- What other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City's experiences.

A workshop was used to bring together staff and volunteers from Art City in a brainstorming session to discuss ways in which arts-based evaluation may be used, experience using arts-based methods, and discuss some of the limitations of these methods.

Using these methods, it might be possible to determine how creative organizations—in particular, community-based art organizations such as Art City—can build on the creative processes at play in their workshops and incorporate arts-based methods to complement their program evaluations.

Chapter Five | Research Findings

<u>5.1 - Introduction</u>

Primary research for this Major Degree Project unfolded in three phases. First, key stakeholder interviews were used to understand the current evaluation framework at Art City. Next, an evaluation workshop with Art City staff and volunteers was used to introduce them to arts-based evaluation methods, collaboratively develop an arts-based evaluation tool, and discuss the value and limitations of these methods at Art City. Finally, follow-up key stakeholder interviews were used after Art City tested their arts-based evaluation tool during their programming. The follow-up interviews were used to understand how the tool worked, what some of the limitations of the tool were, and what other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City.

In this chapter, I refer to the evaluation approach we developed as "the arts-based evaluation tool," which integrated film, video, and art into the method of evaluation. This tool was developed through the involvement of and suggestions from Art City's staff and volunteers during the evaluation workshop. The arts-based evaluation tool discussed in this study, therefore, reflects Art City's needs and resources and is not intended to be something that other community-based arts organizations would incorporate for their own evaluations. Discussing this arts-based evaluation tool and Art City's experiences with it is intended to provide a description of one tool contributing to a toolbox for arts-based evaluations.

During the analysis stage, interview and evaluation workshop participants were each assigned a unique code to maintain their anonymity. Each quote from a

participant appears with this unique code. Interview participants were coded either "I1" or "I2"— depending on pre-workshop interviews (I1) or follow-up interviews (I2)—along with "P" for the participant number. For example, the second interview participant for the follow-up interviews would be coded "I2P2". Similarly, workshop participants were coded "WP" with a number depending on when they responded during the workshop.

This chapter provides a summary of the design of the collaborative evaluation workshop, discussion of the key research findings from the workshop and key stakeholder interviews, and a summary of the arts-based evaluation tool that was developed. The key research findings are divided into main themes that emerged during the pre-workshop interview, evaluation workshop, and follow-up interviews.

5.2 - Pre-Workshop Key Stakeholder Interviews

5.2.1 - Design

The purpose of the initial key stakeholder interviews was to understand the current evaluation framework and methodology at Art City, how this might be modified in the future, and how staff members view and value evaluation. The key stakeholder interviews were also used to begin to identify some of the potential obstacles for using arts-based evaluation methods with Art City and some of the perceived advantages. I carried out semi-structured key stakeholder interviews with three Art City staff members intimately familiar with all facets of the organization's evaluation process— from designing the methods and reporting findings, to carrying out the evaluations and implementing findings.

5.2.2 - Key Findings

During the analysis, several key themes emerged from the pre-workshop key stakeholder interviews. Each interview participant stressed the importance of evaluation for program improvement. While they acknowledged the role of funding requirements in the process, they suggested evaluation was more useful for the organization to learn what works and what does not, and to change programming accordingly.

Interview participants also discussed Art City's role in West Broadway and the surrounding communities. Art City staff discussed how they see their programming fitting into building community in West Broadway and bringing about positive change in the community. They discussed how their programming was based around encouraging people in the community to believe in themselves and develop their creativity, individually and collaboratively:

> We believe that if people are able to do this, their personal health and the health of their community will increase in a variety of ways: literacy, problem solving, communications, mental and emotional health, sense of self worth and pride in diversity. We evaluate so we can make out programming better...more creative and more engaging...and so we can document our impact (I1P1).

While it may be difficult to attribute long-term community improvement achievements to any single program or organizations, Art City wants to know how their programs might be impacting their participants outside of Art City.

This section discusses the key findings from the key stakeholder interviews organized according to the six main themes that emerged during the analysis: evaluation for program improvement; role of the funders; participant involvement in the evaluation process; integrating evaluation with programming; creative and innovative evaluation; and, challenges and opportunities for arts-based evaluations.

5.2.2.1 - Program Improvement

For Art City staff, evaluation was about learning and improving. They saw evaluation as a opportunity to hear from participants and staff what works, what does not, and change the programming accordingly. Art City continuously asked "why?" to their findings and questioned their relevance in the community. Every interview participant touched on this issue; if they observed something, they wanted to know why that was the case: "we can know if people are enjoying it or not, but what does that mean (I1P1)?"

> ...we want to make sure our programs are successful and the kids enjoy them. That's sort of the first level: seeing that people are having fun and they're doing something that they actually want to do. That's usually pretty easy to tell: if they don't want to do it, they don't. Then there's other kinds of things in evaluation like, well, if they didn't come, *why* didn't they come? Maybe there's other reasons. Maybe they wanted to, but something was holding them back. How can we break down barriers? So that's something we explore in our evaluation too. (I1P1)

Each interview participant stressed the importance of evaluation for program improvement. Providing the most engaging and valuable programs for participants is key to Art City's success.

5.2.2.2 - Funding

Interview participants were also really positive about carrying out evaluations for funding. Although evaluations needed to be carried out for funding requirements, the findings were mainly used to make sure programs, workshops, and guest artists were engaging for participants. In this regard, evaluations appeared to be for Art City and

the evaluation *report* for funders. Regardless, interview participants suggested reporting

for funders was a continual strain on the organization and stretched resources to the

limit.

Interview participants discussed how program evaluation enabled them to make

a case to funders that more funding was necessary and express what was happening at

Art City:

> …actually it just started with CIMM [Community Impact Measurement and Management] that we started counting our individuals and paying really close attention to our numbers and our numbers have gone up by like a thousand every year since then, and I don't know if we would have tracked that because we always used estimates before. (I1P1)

> We've been able to use those numbers that we wouldn't have been gathering otherwise and they're all really positive numbers. It really gives us leverage. Say we thought we had 500 individual participants and we had 2,000. It helps us apply for more funding cause obviously we're building a case that we're stretched to the limits. (I1P3)

Had Art City not taken evaluation seriously and continued estimating its participant

visits rather than counting, they would be unable to encourage funders to increase

funding amounts. In this way, interview participants saw evaluation as extremely

important for funding purposes.

5.2.2.3 - Participant Involvement

Art City's evaluation process has strongly supported participant involvement and

valued the opinions of participants. Programs were adapted according to what

participants and facilitators have to say and facilitators wanted to hear from

participants what works and what does not. While Art City staff reflected on each day's

activities as to what they thought worked and did not, they also talked with participants

to hear their voices and gather their impressions.

One of the most successful ways they managed to gather participants' thoughts and impressions of the workshops was with their Youth Council (see *Appendix F – Art City Evaluation Methods* for a glossary of Art City's methods). The Youth Council met once each month and consisted of a group of regular participants ten years of age or older. Membership in the Youth Council was always changing since members may not have been there every night.

The group was led by a staff member and was a way to review the previous month's workshops and discuss what participants would like to see for the next month's activities. Interview participants mentioned that Art City participants valued having a voice in what activities will be scheduled for the next month: "there's certain people who…like they really take pride in the Youth Council and they make sure when it's on the calendar they're here on that night" (I1P3). Art City participants knew they were taken seriously and wanted to see the programming reflect their opinions:

> Kids love the Youth Council. They love being able to express their opinions. They don't even care about the pizza. At first I thought it was just about the pizza but I can come in and sit down at any moment and the kids just want to have the meeting and they want to gather around. I think because they know that we're taking everything they're saying really seriously and writing everything down and there's going to be a tangible result. The things they're saying are going to be acted on in a really timely manner (I1P3).

However, involving youth participants, interview participants mentioned, brought out a lot of information. Therefore, dealing with that information in an efficient way was necessary:

> You're going to get a lot more information than you thought. You may think you know why something's successful or not successful, but you might not really know. I think that [evaluation is] important…you just can't possibly know everything. You can't read everyone's mind and you don't know (I1P3).

While it may be quick and easy to just find out whether something is successful or not, asking *why* brings out a multiplicity of factors. Rather than just bringing out key quotes from participants, Art City staff wanted to know *why* a program was successful:

> …all this Youth Council, log books, and CIMM things…we really do use that information and it's not just reporting to funders like, 'yeah, we know because the kids told us.' They, like, really love this program and they didn't like that, but they didn't like it because they got paint spilled on themselves. So maybe it was actually not that they didn't like it (I1P1).

Asking 'why' when working with workshop participants was key for Art City staff to better find out how their programs were being received and how they could adapt.

5.2.2.4 - Programming and Evaluation

Like most non-profit organizations, Art City operates on a limited budget provided by various funding bodies. Therefore, to satisfy the requirements of each of these funding bodies, Art City needs to evaluate its programming in an efficient way:

> We have our evaluation system in place, but because we have 26 to 30 different project grants, we can't just use the same results for each one because we evaluate our programs as a whole, not each project individually. So evaluation is really important to us as a whole, but we also have to 26 different evaluation repots on top of that (I1P1).

Using arts-based evaluation methods, Art City staff suggested, the evaluation process would be more integrated with their programming. Rather than preparing different evaluation reports, staff may be able to make evaluation part of programming. "Doing more with less" has been important for Art City. Arts-based evaluation may better integrate evaluation with programming and, in turn, make Art City more efficient.

5.2.2.5 - Creativity and Innovation

Prior to the outset of this project, Art City staff and volunteers were excited about evaluation. They wanted to be able to provide the best possible environment for participants to produce art and express their creativity. Therefore, evaluation provided a way for them to understand whether their programs were engaging participants or whether something was carried out in vain.

Art City has tried to be creative in its prior evaluation process. Recent evaluations have attempted to use art in the evaluation process and in the funding reports. Photos from the workshops "really show something that is happening that you can't really put into words, like the vitality and brightness and the colour and how much fun everyone is having…and how many people are there. All these different kinds of people coming together (I1P2)." Images helped to communicate the creative energy at Art City and "feed the whole picture that we can share with all of our funders, like one report that's really reflective of us (I1P1)."

Art City has attempted to incorporate art into the evaluation process. Recently, Art City staff tried to engage participants in an evaluation by leading an activity in which participants made a magazine of some of the art they made at Art City over the last year. The activity met with little success:

> I don't know if we were missing something, but the kids didn't engage with it as much as they normally do. Maybe we didn't give enough information to the facilitators but they [the participants] were like 'I don't really care what I did last year. Why are you making us do this?' Often what we do is so free that trying to get them to do something…I don't know…there was something that didn't capture their imagination (I1P1).

Art City tried to learn from their mistakes and tried a different approach. From this,

staff learned evaluation needed to be fun for Art City participants. If they are not

having fun, they will not participate.

Even if a program did not work, Art City staff wanted to know why so they can

improve the program and try again:

> …you can try some things a few times or for a while and then get in your mind
> that it won't work and then you just never try it again and then if…someone
> new comes in and says, 'Hey, how come we haven't tried doing this?' then
> someone will say, 'oh…back in 2003 we tried that and it didn't work.' That's
> just not the way to do it. You've got to be ready to take something on again.
> Maybe times have changed (I1P3).

Rather than accept an activity was unsuccessful, Art City staff wanted to learn from

that and try again.

As a creative outlet in the neighbourhood, Art City wanted their evaluations to

be creative, fun, and engaging for participants. Moreover, they wanted to evaluate their

programming in a way that works best at Art City and tailor it to their group. Doing so,

they discussed, will make the entire process easier:

> I think that the only way it would not be fun or that it would be a drag is if
> you're not doing it right. If you're doing it in a way that's boring for you and
> the people you're engaging in the evaluation….I just think it's up to everybody
> to find the right way to conduct their evaluations. If you can do that, it's no big
> deal (I1P3).

By putting some thought into how to engage the participants in a creative and

beneficial way, the evaluation process should be easy.

5.2.2.6 - Challenges and Opportunities for Arts-Based Evaluation

All interview participants were positive about using arts-based evaluation methods in future program evaluations at Art City. They discussed using art in the evaluation process as potentially opening new ideas, eliciting unique responses, and enabling different means of participation. Arts-based evaluation tools could "make the evaluation process more fun, more engaging, more memorable. People who are taking part in it can express themselves a little more and it probably breaks the ice a little more in that they're discussing the results (I1P3)." Using art in the evaluation process, they suggested, may enable a wider range of responses: "…if you ask a kid to draw how they feel about Art City, I think that allows a much wider range of responses than 'Art City makes me feel a) happy, b) ok, c) terrible.' That's just really restrictive (I1P2)."

Interview participants also saw some challenges to using arts-based methods in the their evaluation process. One concern that came up was validity and whether funders would find the results useful. Since arts-based research is an emergent field, it does not carry the same clout as conventional evaluation methods, such as interviews and questionnaires. However, staff believed arts-based evaluation tools can be used to complement other data:

> When I think of different types of funders, they really want numbers and a logic model…and I don't know if they would know what to make of it [results from arts-based evaluation]. I guess because it's not something that's commonly done. Some people might question its validity, but not if it's part of a whole framework that includes quantitative as well. If it's all part of creating a fuller picture of what's happening, I think that's great (I1P2).

By evaluating in a way that reflects the programming, Art City staff believed their evaluation process can be more efficient and findings can apply to more than a single funder.

5.2.3 - Conclusion

Interview participants appeared genuinely interested in the evaluation results; if a program was unsuccessful they wanted to learn why some workshops did not work. Participants were heavily involved in the evaluation process and their voices provided a degree of validity to their findings.

One interview participant spoke at length about the value of participation and implementing the findings, touching on all the themes that emerged during every interview: learning from evaluation, improving programming, engaging participants, and dealing with funders:

> I guess we're our own audience. We're interested in what we find in evaluating and I think especially because we're a drop-in we have to know what people think because people aren't signed up to come here, they're not made to come here. They're here completely on their own will. The better you make it, the more input those people have, then the more they'll be interested in what you're doing and you can just make it a more meaningful experience. We could just have a bunch of boring creative ideas and guest artists that aren't really good with people and people wouldn't come. Or they'd come for all the wrong reasons like to use the bathroom or something. I think that people really are into what we're doing here because we concentrate so hard on making it as good as we can. That's just it (I1P3).

Although all interview participants mentioned the value of input from Art City participants and were excited about evaluation, funding is a constant strain. Therefore, improving evaluation practices without increasing the administrative budget will be important for future program evaluations at Art City.

5.3.1 - *Design of Workshop*

The intent of the collaborative evaluation workshop was to provide a forum for mutual learning. The workshop helped me understand some of the obstacles, limitations, and advantages to using arts-based evaluation methods at Art City. At the same time, the workshop introduced staff and volunteers at Art City to arts-based evaluation methods. I used an arts-based method to engage the participants, generate a discussion about Art City's role in the community, and introduce them to using arts-based methods with an applied example.

The workshop ran for approximately two hours at Art City on February 16, 2010 with ten Art City staff and volunteers in attendance. I began the workshop with a presentation of my own research to introduce myself to some of the workshop participants and provide them with some context to the workshop. The presentation focused on the basics of arts-based research and evaluation methods, how they have been used in studies, how they are different from conventional methods, and how they might work with Art City. From there, I introduced workshop participants to arts-based evaluation with a group activity. The arts-based activity was designed to introduce workshop participants to two arts-based methods and to generate discussion about using them. Below is an outline of the time allocated to each activity:

1. Introduction and presentation   15 minutes
2. "How does Art City fit into West Broadway?"   20
3. Discussion   15

4. Break   15

5. How does Art City make you feel?   15
6. Photo-Talk   15
7. Discussion   20

One of Art City's goals is to be an integral part of the community—in West Broadway and the surrounding neighbourhoods. Using large, simplified maps of West Broadway (*Appendix G*), I asked workshop participants to draw how they see Art City fitting in with West Broadway and the surrounding neighbourhoods (*Appendix H & Appendix I*). The arts-based activity encouraged workshop participants to express Art City's relationship with the community in ways other than simply words. The activity developed into a group discussion about the value of arts-based evaluation methods, the role of funders, and how to engage Art City participants.

Important to any discussion is the 'why'. After each group was finished, I posted the maps on the wall to discuss the drawings. I asked each group to comment on the other group's drawing and pose questions about why they chose to draw something in a particular way and what they were trying to express. Workshop participants began discussing their work, what they were trying to express, and how they see Art City's role in the neighbourhood.

Building on the findings from the earlier semi-structured interviews, I came to the workshop with two arts-based evaluation methods tailored to Art City. The intent of presenting these methods was to provide workshop participants with examples of arts-based methods that may work at Art City, including types of media to use and questions to ask.

The first—"How Does Art City Make You Feel?"—was a self-portrait exercise. This method, I explained, would allow Art City participants to visualize themselves and communicate their relationship with others. I had intended that this method be used as a specific activity, rather than integrated with regular programming. In this case, it

would allow Art City's participants to draw how they feel at Art City and talk about why they feel that way. Rather than a scripted interview or questionnaire, workshop facilitators could lead a casual conversation about how Art City makes them feel and how Art City may impact their life outside of Art City. Art City wants to ensure they are providing a safe and supportive environment for their workshop participants. Asking participants how they feel when they are at Art City would help Art City staff identify barriers to providing this environment. This arts-based method is discussed in Bagnoli (2009) in a research project to understand young peoples' perceptions of self and those around them.

The second, Photo-Talk, was a photo-elicitation method. Photography is the most common type of arts-based evaluation method and it would be possible to use it at Art City during the weekly photography workshops. I had intended that this approach would integrate Art City with the surrounding neighbourhood with their participants taking pictures around Art City or West Broadway. Afterwards, a facilitator could lead a discussion with them about the images; why they captured the images they did and what they see in them. Art City wants to enable positive community building in West Broadway. This approach would enable Art City staff to see Art City and West Broadway from their participants' point of view and engage them in a discussion about those images. Moreover, these images would help Art City staff identify areas their participants feel safe and unsafe. While Art City is not necessarily involved in public safety concerns, they may be able to propose an art intervention in the area to help improve perceptions of safety. Examples of photo-elicitation and other photography methods were also discussed in *Chapter Three: Literature Review.*

I presented each method to the workshop participants and led a group discussion of some of the limitations, obstacles, and advantages of using arts-based evaluation methods at Art City. This discussion continued beyond the two pre-conceived methods to touch on other types of methods that might be appropriate at Art City and how best to document and present arts-based methods. Staff and volunteers discussed the value of the two methods I presented and presented their own suggestions for potential methods. The tool we ended up using (discussed in *Section 5.4*) came out of a suggestion from a staff member and was further developed during subsequent meetings.

5.3.2 - Reflection

The presentation was clearly the least engaging component of the workshop. However, providing a foundation for the workshop was necessary to lead a discussion of arts-based methods. The arts-based activity with the maps improved the atmosphere considerably. Once the maps were laid out and workshop participants had markers in their hands, they immediately began to talk, joke, and explain with their pens and markers how Art City fits into West Broadway. Moreover, the activity loosened everyone up and made them feel more comfortable participating in subsequent groups discussions.

The entire evaluation workshop was successful because staff and volunteers are passionate about evaluation and know Art City's participants best. Trying to develop an arts-based evaluation tool for Art City without involving as many staff members and volunteers as possible would have ended in failure. Above all, the evaluation workshop provided a forum for Art City staff and volunteers to talk about evaluation: their

frustrations, excitement, and ideas. Constant evaluation and program improvement at Art City has created a culture of evaluation. Art City staff were knowledgeable about evaluation and interested in learning more. Therefore, the discussions strayed beyond the intended scope of the evaluation workshop, touching on the legitimacy of arts-based evaluation methods and difficulties of attributing long-term community impacts to community arts.

5.3.3 - Key Findings

Art City staff and volunteers are the experts about their participants. They know who shows up, how often, and how they interact with others. They are familiar with how to engage participants, what evaluation methods might be successful, and which might not. Therefore, collaborating with Art City staff and volunteers was absolutely necessary to develop an evaluation tool that reflects Art City's programming and engages their participants.

Workshop participants brought unique perspectives on evaluation practices, as many were regularly involved in the process and were concerned about program improvement at Art City. Many were critical of conventional evaluation practices and welcomed new approaches that may better communicate to funders the creativity at Art City. The main purpose of the evaluation workshop was to introduce Art City staff members to arts-based evaluation methods and collaboratively design an arts-based evaluation tool with them. The main findings that helped develop the arts-based evaluation tool are discussed separately in the following section: *Arts-Based Evaluation Tool: Developing and Testing.*

The evaluation workshop also encouraged discussion about the value of arts-based evaluation methods and how Art City may benefit from them. Art City provides a creative outlet in West Broadway for people of all ages. Staff and volunteers were supportive of using arts-based methods for evaluation purposes at Art City. Some workshop participants were initially skeptical of using arts-based methods. Prior to using the methods, one workshop participant asked:

> When you use arts-based evaluation, how do you qualify that? It's incredibly subjective. You can take one kid's picture and say, "Art City is the best place ever" or you can take that same picture and say, "this kid gets picked on in school (WP1).

However, these concern quickly faded once they had an opportunity to talk with one another. Another workshop participant pointed out it is important to hear from the participant what their art means; not trying to assign meaning to their work.

Other workshop participants recognized the potential of using arts-based methods in the evaluation process at Art City. They agreed amongst one another that qualitative data can provide a richer account of what happens at Art City and communicate some things numbers cannot. However, some expressed doubt as to whether funders will find this information valuable.

Overall, they believed qualitative data—stories, quotes, pictures and other difficult-to-analyze data from participants—can explain their impacts and role in West Broadway:

> Most funders are really reliant on quantitative data and there are some things that benefit a community or important things in community that are not quantifiable. Like trust. How do you quantify trust? You can't translate that with methods like this [surveys] and that's why you need other methods. I think there's an important aspect of training funders to change how they evaluate their recipients for work in these things. What ends up happening is programs start designing themselves to meet the needs of funders and not the needs of participants (WP2).

As artists themselves, they recognized the rich personal details that come out in creating art. They recognized the limits of using qualitative methods or close-ended methods to evaluate Art City's programming:

> It shows that when kids are asked certain questions, their response might be more telling how they feel about the question or being questioned. It's kind of difficult to get an honest answer. Everyone changes their mind about things or, depending on when you're asked, you might answer one way or another way. Even to get just beyond the questions is difficult. Asking "how does Art City make you feel?" and they might say bad…(WP1).

Another workshop participant interjected:

> You always have to ask "why." The *why* is important. You might find out that bad means "I got paint on my shirt a month ago and I got in trouble, but otherwise I had fun." The *why* is always the important part (WP3).

However, workshop participants did not completely dismiss qualitative evaluation methods. A great deal of Art City's funding is dependent on demonstrating demand. Art City staff have been careful to point out that simply beginning to count the number of participants they have each day, they have been able to build the case that they need more funding. After discussing arts-based evaluation, some participants noted those approaches could elicit different responses from participants and engage them in ways other methods may not. Rather than interpreting Art City program participants' art and assigning their own views, staff and volunteers involved in the evaluation should engage them in a discussion and always ask the *why*.

5.4 - Arts-Based Evaluation Tool: Developing and Testing

The arts-based evaluation tool was developed in collaboration with staff at Art City. Including staff in the development of the arts-based evaluation tool was important because they are the ones with the experience working with participants and the

knowledge of how Art City operates. In this section I discuss the arts-based tool we developed and how it was tested during the workshops.

Workshop participants felt, regardless of the medium or approach, programming at Art City could not be interrupted. Since programming at Art City is on a drop-in basis, if participants are not interested in what is happening on any given day, then they will not show up. From previous attempts at organizing an evening of evaluation, staff knew Art City participants would not be interested in evaluation. Therefore, any evaluation would need to be seamlessly integrated with art programming and not 'feel' like evaluation. Interviewing should feel like conversation.

The overall idea for the arts-based evaluation tool came out of a suggestion during the evaluation workshop and further refined during subsequent meetings. I came to the evaluation workshop with some pre-developed arts-based evaluation tools (discussed in *Section 5.3.1*) I believed would work with Art City's programming. These tools were developed to introduce staff at the evaluation workshop to arts-based evaluation methods and to illustrate how a method might work at Art City.

Staff members felt the arts-based evaluation tools I brought to the evaluation workshop—"How Does Art City Make You Feel" and the Photo-Voice method, which were discussed in *Section 5.3.1*—would be too narrow and disruptive to their programming. They believed asking participants to produce art based on a certain topic would turn participants off from the activity. If Art City program participants are making art they want to and making something they are interested in, staff felt, there would be more genuine expressions and responses:

> Certain kids are more attracted to certain media and so when you set the stage
> and the media is the right match then you get this outpouring of really genuine

expressive things. So then you get really honest responses, but sometimes they're more difficult to interpret (WP2).

Staff members also mentioned that asking participants about how they feel at Art City runs the risk of getting disingenuous responses: "If it's prompted, if I say, 'hey, draw a picture of how Art City makes you feel.' That kid knows that I want a picture of a smiley face (WP2)." Therefore, any arts-based evaluation tool, they felt, should not direct the participants to some particular theme, but should respond to what the participants are doing already. Moreover, it has to be casual and comfortable and easily recorded.

With these constraints, one staff member suggested someone take a video camera and simply record conversations with participants about their art. Instead of setting up the camera and recording the interview, someone could play around, have fun, and interview participants as if it is a television interview. Other staff members agreed, suggesting Art City participants would open up more and staff would not be directing what art the participants are making:

> I think if the camera is on hand and you are playful and informal about it then it has less of that framing of [in a serious, monotone voice] "i'm getting your impressions on Art City and the methods that we use to extract art from you" and it's more like [in a playful voice] "heeeeey what do you think about this great…"…you know? It's kind of joking and less on the spot…Usually kids will totally riff on that (WP4).

Staff liked the approach and also that "it's almost like you're making something else too (WP2)," like participants are involved in a television interview about their art.

The arts-based evaluation tool developed during the evaluation workshop consisted of three components: art, conversation (interview), and video. Being engaged in art provided an activity for Art City participant. An informal interview style enabled staff to direct the conversation at times and flow with the conversation at other times.

Video enable staff to preserve these conversations to review them at a later time. Each component contributed to the success of the evaluation tool; for example, without art, staff would have been just recording a conversation with Art City participants. Art City's analysis for their evaluation purposes focused specifically on the conversations. The other components served to support the conversations.

According to Leavy (2009), video is a common approach in arts-based research. She discusses examples of using video to record performances to preserve an ephemeral performance such as music and dance and later analyze it. Holm (2008), as cited in Leavy (2009), suggests *videodiaries* are an increasingly common arts-based method to record personal stories, representing "the latest innovation in visual anthropology" (p. 230). Video, on the other hand, in this report is used to record conversations for later analysis, much how Leavy discussed music and dance. These are conversations the facilitator may not be able to replicate again or record in the same way, again like music and dance performances.

The staff member who suggested the approach also volunteered to try it out as a prototype method. He, another staff member, and myself met twice after the evaluation workshop to further develop the method and what types of questions he would be asking participants. Reflecting on the overall approach and questions during the follow-up interview (fully discussed in the following section), he said:

> I would start very informally asking what various participants were working on and what their work was about in terms of the art they were creating and then I would sort of probe a little deeper if there was a natural segue in ways that their making art has either affected their life here, at home, or at school or whether or not they engage in artistic practice at home or school or other places other than Art City. Based on the responses from those questions I would probe a little more specifically into various events in the kids' lives that seem pertinent to the things we're doing at Art City (I2P2).

After we finalized the approach, he attended two workshops each week for four weeks as an additional staff member. Rather than worrying about facilitating *and* interviewing, he was able to focus on engaging participants and testing the method. The following section elaborates on the arts-based evaluation tool, including staff reactions to the tool, and what other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City.

5.5 - Follow-up Key Stakeholder Interviews

5.5.1 - Design

The purpose of the follow-up key stakeholder interviews was threefold: (1) to assess the evaluation method designed during the evaluation workshop; (2) to gather reactions to the method, identify obstacles, and what could be improved next time; and, (3) to understand what other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City.

The follow-up key stakeholders interviews took place after Art City staff had tested the arts-based evaluation tool developed during the evaluation workshop. After refining the method, a staff member spent two two-hour shifts each week for four weeks to test the tool. I conducted two follow-up interviews; one with the Art City staff member who carried out the method and another with the staff member responsible for developing Art City's evaluation framework and writing evaluation reports. Both staff members provided a unique perspective on what other community-based art organizations could learn from this study, including how to apply the tool and how the information can be used in an evaluation report.

In addition to the key stakeholder interviews, we organized a roundtable discussion with both interview participants as well as two more Art City staff members involved with the evaluation process. The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss

how to incorporate arts-based evaluation methods (including the one that was tested as well as others) into Art City's evaluation framework. Since the discussion also touched on the value of using arts-based methods, findings from this discussion will be included in the follow-up interview section.

5.5.2 - Key Findings

Overall, reaction to the arts-based evaluation tool—developed during the evaluation workshop and tested over the subsequent month—was extremely positive. Interview participants discussed the value of a program evaluation tool that does not interrupt regular programming. Moreover, they viewed the tool as a way to better engage participants in informal discussions and record those conversations. However, while everyone was positive about the tool, they acknowledged the limitations and challenges of arts-based evaluation tools for program evaluation. Staff members involved with testing the tool also provided some insight from their experiences for other community-based art organizations interested in developing arts-based evaluation tools for their own organization.

This section discusses the key findings from the follow-up key stakeholder interviews. The five main themes that emerged from the follow-up key stakeholder interviews include: benefits of arts-based evaluation tools; how their arts-based evaluation tool complemented other evaluation methods; reporting the evaluation data; challenges and limitations of using arts-based evaluation tools; and, lessons for other community-based art organizations.

5.5.2.1 - Benefits of Arts-Based Evaluation Tools

Staff at Art City agreed the arts-based evaluation tool was successful. They felt using

art in the evaluation process brought their programming full circle and helped

represent Art City's creativity. Two of the main factors they discussed as contributing

to the success of the tool were: (1) using art as an activity during the interviews; (2)

providing a comfortable, informal atmosphere to have a casual conversation; and (3)

being able to integrate the evaluation with art programming.

(1) Art As Activity

As discussed in *Chapter Three: Literature Review,* arts-based methods are particularly well

suited to working with children because they are activity-based methods. Punch (2002)

suggests arts-based methods place the participants at greater ease because the

participants are performing a task—such as drawing or painting or making pottery—

rather than engaging in a formal interview. Reactions to the arts-based evaluation tool

from Art City staff confirm Punch's claim.

Art City staff believed making art helped facilitate discussions and touch on

topics that may have been difficult otherwise. Staff members noted that participants

were comfortable making art and talking about their pieces while doing so. One staff

member discussed how being engaged in art activates creative areas of the brains that

facilitate other creative expressions and conversations:

> I found the advantages, as least in what I was doing, were tied to the process of
> making art. That was a key element and I think that that served as an ideal
> lubricant for people to open up and talk about things while they're focusing on
> another activity that itself is communicative and creative. So it's sort of like
> you're playing off that part of the mind that's already working while making
> art. They're making art and using this part of their psyche that's bound in
> communicating something creatively and developing an idea while you're talking

to them. Because those centres of the brain are active, they'll spew out all sorts of things (I2P2).

…it felt like while they were working on art and their focus was on that, they would just spew out all sorts of interesting information about what they do at school, making art or whatever. I think it really changed the nature of the responses (I2P2).

Making art and being creative, he discussed, provided an activity for young participants while talking about their experiences at Art City. Without being engaged in art while talking, staff felt participants would be less comfortable answering questions and just answer how they think they are supposed to:

When you're just asking people on the fly and they don't have too much time to put up a barrier around them and they're engaged in something and talk to you while making something…just that process of working on art while they're talking to you tends to really open up their ability to just chat about things (I2P2).

An activity, such as making art, opened up the participants to express themselves more easily than a strict interview style. Moreover, making a video—itself, a project grounded in art—while interviewing participants made the discussion more fun for the participants, as if they were discussing their art in a television interview.

Although most participants attending workshops at Art City are children, many adults attend sessions as well. While the literature discusses the value of using arts-based methods with children, this approach can work well with participants of all ages, including adults. Therefore, the arts-based evaluation tool was also used with adult participants. Much like working with the children, adult participants also opened up and appeared quite comfortable talking about how Art City has impacted their lives:

I had a really excellent discussion with some of the adult pottery participants in the basement, many of whom have been coming here for a long time, so they were more than willing to talk about how Art City has affected them and it felt like they had thought about it quite a bit in their own lives and the impact that Art City had made on all of them. All of them felt that Art City played an

important role in not just their creative and artistic lives but also their social lives in general. It was really interesting hearing people talk about that (I2P2).

Arts-based evaluation tools can be valuable for engaging all participants at Art City.

(2) Evaluation Can Be Fun and Informal

Art City staff repeatedly characterized the interview style as an informal discussion. While there were certain topics the facilitator wanted to touch on, the conversations were not scripted. Using this informal conversation style while working on art, Art City staff felt participants were more willing to talk and share information about topics they may not have in a more formal atmosphere:

> …if you were to set them in a slightly more controlled environment and either have a camera on them or a pen and paper in your hands or some way record what they're saying or even a one-on-one conversation in a close environment like an office or something, I think it would be different. You wouldn't get the same openness to respond and immediate impulse to say what's on their mind and what they're feeling. Rather, you get a mulled over response that they think about and in that process they sort of…the genuine nature of the response gets mulled over a bit and they say what they feel they should be saying (I2P2).

Several evaluation workshop participants suggested that posing direct questions and a formal interview style, participants would respond "how they think they're supposed to." The arts-based evaluation tool was developed with "the idea being that any time you sort of have a formal approach to things you risk having somewhat disingenuous responses from participants (WP4)." The staff member responsible for testing the arts-based tool was cognizant of power relationships between the interviewer and participants and, therefore, cautious of asking questions the participants felt they should answer a certain way. Instead, there were some general topics to touch on but no direct questions for how to address those areas. This general approach was always flexible. If the participant wanted to talk about something, then the conversation

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would go in that direction. However, engaging the participants in a free-form

conversation made the topics unpredictable.

Although the staff member focused on certain topics (such as whether Art City

participants made art outside of Art City or how art has affected them in some way

outside of Art City), he found the interviews easily strayed from the initial topics. If

participants wanted to direct the conversation into some other area and "spew out all

sorts of things," then the facilitator listened to what the participants had to say about

that. During the roundtable discussion, one staff member pointed out:

> I had thematic points I would revisit, but it's hard because—especially with
> youth—it's an interpersonal exchange, they tend to guide it just as much as you
> do. They'll talk about whatever the hell they want to talk about in the end. No
> matter what questions you ask them. I think that's part of interviewing kids in
> general—which is why television has had *Kids Say the Darndest Things* for so
> long—is that you can ask them a fairly pointed question and they'll respond
> with something completely unrelated (I2P2).

The conversations would usually stray towards unexpected areas that were nevertheless

valuable:

> There's a certain amount of digression you have to be ok with…because even
> in those digressions people tell you what they want to talk about which is very
> interesting, especially when you're feeling out the climate of the community and
> people's lives (I2P2).

The staff member testing the tool described one session in which Art City participants

provided some surprising insights into the role of media in their lives:

> It was actually astounding the depth of the discussion considering it was mostly
> seven year olds engaged in it. They were very much aware. Particularly, they
> were aware of being inundated with Justin Bieber press and felt over-saturated.
> So there was a lot of interesting discussion about that and how that played out
> in their own community and at school and how they were force-fed a lot of
> different imagery and stuff. It was pretty interesting (I2P2).

With a flexible approach such as this, participants would get onto topics they may not

have otherwise touched on.

(3) Integrating Evaluation With Programming

Interview participants suggested the main benefit of the evaluation tool was that it was fully integrated in Art City's programming. They believed the arts-based evaluation tool would be an appropriate tool for Art City because it would help represent what is already happening at Art City:

> I think it is particularly valuable to us as an art centre to have this approach [the art interviewing tool] because it's more relevant to us when the nature of the whole evaluation process is sort of bound up in the nature of our centre, which is creating art (I2P3).

One of Art City's goals is to be a venue for creative expression in West Broadway. Participants come to Art City because they want to express themselves and be creative. An evaluation process that incorporates art, interview participants mentioned, is a valuable tool for Art City because it can easily be incorporated into the programming.

In addition to being able to express themselves, participants come to Art City to have fun. Interview participants suggested that making future evaluations fun and interesting will make the process a lot easier. Previously, Art City had attempted to organize workshops that were just focused on evaluation. However, staff found when they tried these evaluation workshops, kids were not interested or engaged because they wanted to make art and have fun at Art City. With an arts-based evaluation tool in their evaluation framework, Art City may be able to share with their funders the creativity and energy at play at the centre without interrupting their programming or placing a significant additional work burden on staff.

5.5.2.2 - Complementing Existing Methods

Art City had a well-developed evaluation framework with a variety of evaluation methods. Some of these methods included the log book, Youth Council, sign in sheets, and CIMM (*Appendix F – Art City Evaluation Methods*). Art City staff felt the arts-based evaluation tool they tested brought out different data than other methods in their toolbox. In this section I focus on how the *type* of information was different from that garnered through other methods.

Chapter Three: Literature Review highlights how arts-based research methods garner data that is distinct from conventional research methods. Rudkin and Davis (2007), citing numerous sources, claim arts-based research methods enable participants to "shape their own messages and convey them in ways they deem meaningful" (p. 109). Leavy (2009) echoes that statement, claiming arts-based methods are distinct from qualitative and quantitative methods in that they are more grounded in stories, images, and feelings.

After testing the arts-based evaluation tool, Art City staff made similar claims about the type of data coming out of the interviews. Their responses touched on how the information was much richer than what would come out with their other evaluation tools. Whereas the log books recorded facilitators' perspectives of workshops (as well as key quotes from participants) and the Youth Council records participants' perspectives, the arts-based evaluation tool brought out more stories and discussions of *how* participants relate to art and their community:

> There's more of a story and gradiated information. So really it is a lot more meaningful and we can include it with our reporting. We've always included stories and quotes and photos, but just to have it set up as a little bit more systematized makes it a little bit more valid and almost like archival in a way (I2P1).

This type of information complemented the CIMM survey, which addressed Art City's

goal to play a role in the community. However, while the CIMM survey only allowed

for a limited number of responses, arts-based interviewing enabled participants to

contribute in a different way.

One staff member noted that although the questionnaires were extremely

useful, they did not provide an opportunity for participants to elaborate on their

answers. Instead, the arts-based evaluation tool enabled participants to elaborate on

their answers and provide more information, weaving more of a story about the role

art plays in their lives:

> If it's a questionnaire they simply wouldn't have the time or the focus to sit
> there…if a [written] questionnaire said, "do you make art in school?" you'd just
> get a yes or no. Whereas by asking them, "do you make art in school?", the kids
> would be like, "yeah! I have art class with so and so and we do these things and
> last week we made this." People will tell you so much more information quite
> openly as you're going along rather than just a yes or no (I2P2).

Art City staff at the roundtable discussion noted the information from the arts-based

evaluation tool touched on some areas their current evaluation framework already

touches on. However, they discussed, the tool provided more information, for

example, being able pose a subsequent "why?" The arts-based interviewing tool was

not intended to replace the CIMM survey, or any other evaluation methods. Instead,

arts-based evaluation tools may, in future evaluations, complement the existing

methods and garner insights that may not have been gathered otherwise.

5.5.2.3 - Reporting the Data

Although all the staff members at the roundtable found the information from the interviews to be extremely useful for Art City's funding reports, they questioned whether funders would find it as valuable. During the evaluation workshop, several participants mentioned that funders were more interested in hard qualitative data: how many regular participants attended, how many new participants, how many under the ages of 15, etc. Arts-based methods simply cannot represent this data.

There was a conversation during the roundtable discussion about quantifying some of the information that comes out of the interviews. That is, track the number of participants that talk about a particular topic, such as noting each time Art City participants talk about how art has impacted their lives outside the organization. However, one staff member felt that doing so would lose the rich insights that would arise from using arts-based methods:

> In terms of getting hard statistical data, you'd have to…well, I don't think it's feasible really. We talked about some methods you could use to develop quantitative data from this qualitative style of evaluation and I think that would just be too hard and too uncontrolled to get that sort of info. So I'm not sure what it can provide (I2P2).

Taking personal stories and quantifying them simply abstracts the narratives.

During the follow-up interviews, staff members discussed how the data from the arts-based evaluation tool can build on the CIMM survey. However, quantifying the qualitative data from the interviews would not build on or complement the CIMM survey. Instead, it would garner nearly the same information. Fitting in stories, they suggested, may not be something that funders are immediately concerned with. However, providing those personal stories may help change funders' perceptions of relevant data and make this information more valuable to funders.

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Effectively communicating this rich information to funders and incorporating art into evaluation reports can bring out the full potential of arts-based evaluation methods. Incorporating photographs and visual art into evaluation reports is easy; Art City has already included photos in past evaluation reports to help communicate to funders what was happening at Art City and how full the space was. However, audio and video pieces can't be incorporated quite so easily into conventional printed reports. By exploring new media for evaluation reports, community-based art organizations can better incorporate these expressions into their reports. Some potential ways could be creating an interactive website or producing a video of the report with children and youth participants. I revisit this point in *Section 6.4 – Directions and Concluding Thoughts*.

5.5.2.4 - Limitations and Challenges

It is important to be aware of limitations inherent in any method. Certain research methods may be less appropriate for gathering certain types of data and more appropriate for others. While Art City staff discussed the benefits of using the arts-based evaluation tools, they also acknowledged their limitations. Two of the main issues that arose during the roundtable discussion and subsequent interviews included having the available resources for something like this and validity of the information.

The main concern was resources. This included finding a qualified staff member, and finding space in an already tight operating budget for a staff member to look after the interviews. For the purposes of testing the arts-based evaluation tool, one staff member volunteered to attend two sessions each week for four weeks to interview participants. Therefore, instead of facilitating workshops *and* trying to

interview participants, the staff member was able to focus on testing the tool.

Regardless, Art City attracts so many participants that some nights he found himself

facilitating some sessions as well:

> There were times when I came here to evaluate and ended up having to run
> things around at the same time because already it was stretched thin because
> there were so many people coming to make art and only so many staff. So that's
> a pretty serious limitation (I2P2).

He continued:

> If there are too many [participants] it's just a madhouse in here. One day I came
> in here and it was totally insane and quite honestly, the amount of interviewing
> I did pales in [comparison to] the amount of running around I did to help keep
> things afloat. If it gets too full in here it's just mayhem. There's a threshold. Up
> until a certain point it just becomes more and more jovial and people are quite
> talkative and there's a fair amount of hubbub so you get a lot of good random
> snippets and short responses to questions (I2P2).

When there were too many participants are at Art City, it became difficult to account

for an additional staff member to interview participants. On the other hand, too few

participants prevented a one-on-one conversation: "you can only ask the same sorts of

questions to the same number of people so many times…by that time, the jig is up

(I2P2)."

Art City, like most non-profit groups, operates on limited funding and scarce

resources. Therefore, doing "more with less" is, and will continue to be, a constant

challenge at Art City. While the arts-based evaluation tool integrated evaluation with

programming, it will still necessary to have one person focusing on just speaking with

participants if Art City decided to use this tool for future evaluations.

This topic also arose during the roundtable discussion. Although the tool was

tested during eight sessions over the course of one month, when it is fully

incorporated into the evaluation framework it will not be a weekly or even monthly

evaluation tool. Instead, it will be a tool used once every several months, much like the

CIMM survey. Therefore, it will be easier for Art City to plan for the evaluation and

incorporate the limited additional staff hours into the budget. Regardless, staff at the

roundtable felt the additional staff hours would be a minor cost for the evaluation tool.

The arts-based evaluation tool required a different skill set than other

evaluation methods. Interviewers, staff mentioned, need to be able to engage

participants in discussion and provide a comfortable and inviting atmosphere for

participants. With the wrong interviewer, Art City participants may not be willing to

chat about the art they are working on or what types of art they do outside of Art City.

During the roundtable discussion, staff members suggested the person who had been

testing the tool was the perfect person for the job. While describing his approach, one

member interjected and others uttered similar statements:

> I think you're the perfect person to do it. The kids know you (I2P3).

> I think you're good at it because the kids like you, the kids are familiar with you
> and you have a natural sense of…it doesn't sound like you're interviewing them
> because it's a conversation (I2P4).

Staff members felt the most important skill set for anyone doing this is being familiar

and comfortable with Art City participants and vice versa.

Finally, staff members also suggested that a solid understanding of evaluation

at Art City is extremely important:

> Sometimes a person can be a great facilitator and great with kids, but not
> understand the process of what we're actually looking for…and someone that is
> familiar with why someone does evaluation so they could see the value of doing
> it. You don't want someone doing it that's like, "why am I doing this (I2P1)?"

Without a solid understanding of any community-based art organizations' evaluation

and how it all fits together, it would be difficult to carry out directed conversations

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with participants. In order to get as much out of arts-based evaluation tools as possible, staff members involved in the project should be comfortable working with participants, be able to make participants feel comfortable when working with them, and be familiar with the organizations' evaluation framework.

One final challenge of a more informal approach to evaluation is ethics. During the design of the method, Art City staff discussed how the information was going to be used and whether or not a waiver would be necessary. Signing a waiver form prior to video interviews, Art City staff suggested, would have changed the dynamics of the entire conversation. Since the footage would be used only at Art City for recording purposes and not included in evaluation reports, we elected to forgo a formal waiver release form. However, in future evaluations using video interviewing, Art City staff may elect to redraft their general waiver to include recording for evaluation purposes. Doing so would grant Art City participants' consent while also maintaining an informal and spontaneous interviewing style.

5.5.2.5 - Lessons for Other Community-Based Art Organizations

Overall, staff at the roundtable discussion encouraged other community-based art organizations to develop arts-based evaluation tools that work with their programming. While each group is unique, community-based art organizations share a great deal in their approach to engaging participants and enacting positive change in their communities. Art City's experience can provide other community-based art organizations with valuable lessons. Staff provided three lessons that other community-based art organizations can learn from their experience: (1) arts-based methods can be easily adapted to the organization's programming and community; (2) arts-based evaluation, and evaluation in general, does not need to be a chore; it can be a fun

component of programming; and, (3) include staff in the development of the evaluation too; they know what they are doing. These lessons are discussed in *Chapter Six: Conclusion* in the discussion of the research questions (*Section 6.2*).

5.5.3 - Conclusion

Staff at Art City were impressed with the arts-based evaluation tool they tested and wanted to incorporate it, and others, into their evaluation framework. They discussed how the information that came out and the way they engaged participants was too valuable to pass up. They suggested arts-based evaluation tools can help integrate their evaluation with art programming.

Art City participants appeared comfortable and relaxed while making art and discussing the role art plays in their lives. However, facilitators will need to be qualified if the approach is to be successful with future program evaluations. Interview participants suggested that facilitators should be comfortable working with participants and familiar with the organization's evaluation framework to best engage participants. Many staff just felt with the resources already in place, using art in the evaluation process is simply a "natural step:"

> The fact that the tools are already there and they've already got people…if their staff is doing the same sort of work we're doing, chances are they're already engaging participants in informal conversations about what's going on in school, at home, in their community, and how the centre they're working with has affected them and all those sorts of questions…that should already be happening in some way. I mean, if they're already engaged in that and they have the tools, why not combine the two so that you can have a way of recording and then later go back and analyze (I2P2).

He continued:

> I think those [arts-based evaluation tools] are in general just really useful ways to get kids to open up…participants in general and not just kids. To get them to

open up and talk about things that might otherwise be hard to…it might be difficult to get across some of those concepts with those visual or artistic components, but that can help feed their ability to communicate what they mean…I think the benefits totally outnumber the burdens in this case (I2P2).

According to staff at Art City, using art in future program evaluations just makes sense. Community-based art organizations are already engaging participants with art, most have the resources available, and it reflects their programming.

The biggest distinction between arts-based evaluation tools and conventional ones, interview participants mentioned, was the type of information that came out. Staff felt that arts-based evaluation tools cannot replace any of their existing conventional evaluation tools in their evaluation framework; quantitative data cannot be captured with arts-based evaluation methods. On the other hand, the rich stories and insights that came out with arts-based evaluations tools cannot necessarily be captured through conventional methods.

The log book has been an important tool in Art City's evaluation framework. Each staff member mentioned the daily log book when discussing evaluation. Every day, workshop facilitators filled out a page in the log book outlining what they think worked and did not work in the workshop. Staff members talked about it as a simple task that has become a habit for everyone and provides so much valuable information for other facilitators and for evaluation reports:

If we didn't have that set up, we would be lacking so much information. Sometimes, probably every day, our facilitators have great conversations with the kids but we have no system in place to record that (I2P1).

Similar to the log book, arts-based interviewing can become a valuable and integral part of the evaluation process at Art City.

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Even prior to the outset of this project, Art City staff and volunteers took evaluation

very seriously. During the pre-workshop interviews, Art City staff elaborated on the

tools they already have in their evaluation framework: CIMM survey, Youth Council,

sign-in sheets, and so on. Moreover, they were excited about evaluation and interested

in the results. They did not evaluate *just* because they had to for funding; they evaluated

because they wanted to know what participants have to say, how many people attend,

and what impact their programs have. The staff and volunteers' interest in evaluation

was apparent during the evaluation workshop. Every person at the workshop

contributed to the dialogue and provided valuable information about how best to

engage participants at Art City. After a tool was developed with participants, a staff

member eagerly volunteered to attend additional sessions to test the tool.

Staff and volunteers were also interested in developing new tools to learn more

about their programming from participants. During the pre-workshop interviews, staff

and volunteers felt arts-based methods would be an innovative way to engage

participants and elicit different responses. They believed using arts-based evaluation

tools could potentially bring out information that conventional methods may not,

thereby learning more about their programming and the impact it has in the

community. Follow-up interviews largely confirmed this, noting the data was more

grounded in stories, painting a richer picture of what actually happened at Art City.

Chapter Six | Conclusion

6.1 - Preamble

This Major Degree Project examined the role of arts-based evaluation tools for community-based art organizations' program evaluations. Evaluation literature encourages evaluators—whether professionally trained or carrying out an evaluation for the first time—to be responsive to the situation and adapt the evaluation to the group. Thus, the cookie-cutter approach to evaluation is not desirable.

This chapter provides some concluding thoughts on the research process, working with a community-based art organization, and introducing an innovative evaluation tool to a community-based art organization. In this chapter, I revisit the research questions guiding this Major Degree Project, discuss biases and limitations which arose during the study, present the overall lessons learned from the study, and present some future directions for community-based research with community-based art organizations.

6.2 - Revisiting the Research Questions

This Major Degree Project was grounded by four research questions, stated in *Chapter One: Introduction*. The research questions laid the foundations for the literature review and directed the primary research. The questions attempted to outline what other community based art organizations and community planning practitioners can learn from this study and how this research can contribute to the body of knowledge about emergent research methods. These questions included:

- What are arts-based evaluation methods and how do they differ from conventional methods in evaluation research?
- How can creative, arts-based evaluation methods contribute to the evaluation process for community-based art programs and complement conventional evaluations methods?
- What can other community-based art organizations in Winnipeg and elsewhere learn from Art City's experiences with arts-based evaluation methods?
- What can community planning practitioners learn from these enhanced evaluation methods?

In this section, I revisit each research question and synthesize the findings discussed in *Chapter Five: Research Findings*.

What are arts-based evaluation methods and how do they differ from conventional methods in program evaluation?

Arts-based research methods form an emergent area of social research methodology. They represent post-modern research methods using art in the research process to uncover the multiple ways of knowing and subjective realities. The small (but growing) body of arts-based research literature discusses multiple ways art can be used in the research process. For example, art can be used as a means of generating dialogue, as it was used by Art City. This involved engaging research participants with art to facilitate a conversation and better understand the participants' experience. In this case, the final art product has little relevance to the findings and, instead, builds bridges between researcher and participant.

On the other hand, art can be used in the representation of the findings. For example, the researcher could use their own or participants' art or performance to present the findings from the study. Finally, art can be used as the data itself.

Researchers have used this approach in self-portrait exercises to understand participants' relationships with others and perceptions of self. This approach sees the final art product as the most important piece, which the researcher analyzes.

Arts-based research methods can use any type of artistic media in the process, including visual arts, music, and dance. Although photography is the most common type of medium for arts-based research, the literature also discusses the value of dance and music in the research process. Common to these media and what distinguishes them from conventional research methods, is that they enable participants to express themselves in ways conventional research methods do not. Different media for arts-based research, Leavy (2009) claims, "are all useful strategies for accessing silenced perspectives, evoking emotional responses, provoking dialogue, promoting awareness, and cultivating an increased social consciousness" (p. 259).

Arts-based *evaluation* methods largely mirror arts-based research methods. Rather than addressing social research issues, arts-based evaluation methods evaluate programs and are tools for organizations to ensure they are meeting their programming objectives. Arts-based evaluation methods differ from conventional methods in program evaluation in how they engage participants, particularly children, and elicit different responses.

Evaluation and research methods need to be carefully thought through when working with children. Arts-based evaluation tools have the advantage over conventional methods in that they do not need to be grounded in language to the same degree. Young participants can participate without mastery of oral and written communications skills. Moreover, arts-based evaluation methods are activity-based. That is, young participants are engaged in making art in the process of discussing their

art and, if part of an interview such as with photo-elicitation, they are less distracted and more involved in the process. Most importantly, arts-based evaluation methods make the evaluation process fun and engaging for young participants.

Arts-based evaluation tools have the advantage over conventional methods in that they elicit different responses from participants of all ages. Whereas conventional interviews may only focus on a narrow area, and questionnaires limit participants' responses, arts-based evaluation methods can bring out responses that may not have come out otherwise.

How can creative, arts-based evaluation methods contribute to the evaluation process for community-based art programs and complement conventional evaluation methods?

As discussed in the previous section, arts-based evaluation methods elicit *different* responses from participants. Rudkin and Davis (2007), citing numerous sources, claim arts-based methods elicit different responses than more conventional qualitative methods, allowing participants to "shape their own messages and convey them in ways they deem meaningful" (p. 109). However, it does not make these responses any better. Nor, in turn, does this make arts-based methods any better than conventional methods.

Arts-based evaluations draw out valuable responses from participants for organizations' program evaluations. Likewise, conventional evaluation methods garner valuable data that cannot come out with arts-based evaluation methods, such as participant visits, ages, which programs are successful, which are not, and so on. This information is invaluable for organizations' program evaluation reports and reports to funders. It would be futile to attempt to completely replace conventional evaluation methods with arts-based evaluation methods.

Art City's experiences with arts-based evaluation found the data to be more grounded in narrative than other methods. There was discussion during the final roundtable discussion about quantifying some of the qualitative data. However, doing so would lose the rich information in these stories and images. Moreover, there are already conventional evaluation tools for that purpose.

Simply, arts-based evaluation methods bring out their own unique data. There was also discussion during the roundtable about where the findings might fit into Art City's logic model. The CIMM survey already touches on areas of personal well-being, community rootedness, and impacts of art outside of Art City. Arts-based evaluation methods can touch on those same areas that are already covered with a questionnaire, because arts-based evaluation methods bring out *different* information. The stories and images that come out from using these methods can effectively complement the conventional methods already developed for the existing evaluation framework. Arts-based evaluation methods can complement conventional evaluation methods but cannot replace them. One participant at the roundtable noted: "with quantitative data you get the what and with qualitative you get the why." These approaches can work hand-in-hand. Arts-based evaluation methods can elaborate on questionnaire findings.

Finally, arts-based evaluation methods can contribute to the evaluation process because they are fun. Participants attend workshops at Art City because they know they will have fun and be able to make art. Therefore, evaluation needs to be fun or participants will not attend. In the first round of interviews, one participant pointed out evaluation will be fun as long as it is done properly:

> I think that the only way it would not be fun or that it would be a drag is if you're not doing it right. If you're doing it in a way that's boring for you and the people you're engaging in the evaluation….I just think it's up to everybody

to find the right way to conduct their evaluations. If you can do that, it's no big deal (I1P3).

Engaging participants in a fun manner in any program evaluation is important. This is all the more important when working with children at an organization where they know they already have fun.

What can other community-based art organizations in Winnipeg and elsewhere learn from Art City's experiences with arts-based evaluation methods?

While all community-based art organizations have different mandates and operate in unique community contexts, there are, nevertheless, things they can learn from one another. After using the arts-based evaluation tool for a month, Art City staff felt there were many things other community-based art organizations could take away from their experiences. The three main lessons other community-based art organizations could take away from Art City's experience are: (1) arts-based methods can be easily adapted to the organization's programming and community; (2) arts-based evaluation, and evaluation in general, does not need to be a chore; it can be a fun component of programming; and, (3) include staff in the development of the evaluation tool; they know what they are doing.

As discussed in *Chapter Two: Literature Review*, arts-based research methods can include any type of artistic medium in the process. Therefore, while different groups may focus on specific media, they can still adapt Art City's tool for their use. During the testing period, an Art City staff member engaged participants while they were working in almost every type of media at Art City, including painting, mixed media, collage, and pottery. The main point to take away is that it does not need to be rigid or an obstacle to the group's programming:

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...it doesn't need to be a big thing. It doesn't need to be a scary thing, but it can just be little things that are done regularly and then add up to something that is very informative. Doing small things regularly (I2P1).

Evaluation does not need to be a chore. If evaluation is integrated with the programming and becomes a habit, then it will make it easier for the organization and fun for the participants. In fact, making the evaluation informal and fun contributed to its success at Art City.

For any community-based art organization with drop-in programming, it is important that programming, and in turn, evaluation, is fun.

I think what works for us with our evaluation is just making it a habit and not being too worried about it. What we've tried with our previous Art City Connects projects is to make a full workshop about evaluation, but sometimes they're too dry and not fun for the kids. I like this interviewing method while the workshop is happening and it can be any workshop (I2P1).

Art City learned, from previous workshops dedicated to evaluation, that kids just want to make art and have fun.

Community-based art organizations should not approach arts-based evaluation tools as unmodifiable research methods. Methods should be made to adapt to the situation. Over the one-month period the arts-based evaluation tool was being tested, some regular participants became familiar with seeing a staff member with camera asking other participants questions. In fact, it looked so fun the participant wanted to interview other participants as well:

He was very interested! In fact, I didn't even have to ask him, he asked me if he could interview people and I was like, "Yeah, of course!" I gave him a camera and told him the general questions I had been asking about art, people doing art at home or school and how art city affected that. He ran around to adult pottery and when I came back down to check on him a little later and watch some of the footage he had in camera it was tremendous. The questions he was asking and the responses he was getting from some of the adults. They were just excellent (I2P2)!

Over a short period, the interviewing method became something participants wanted to try for themselves. If participants want to be involved in the evaluation process, they should be able to. After all, it is about engaging them, not studying them.

When developing an arts-based evaluation tool, it is important to include as many staff members as possible. Including them in the development of arts-based evaluation tools—or any evaluation tools for that matter—incorporates their experience with participants and helps ensure their buy-in in the evaluation process. Staff and volunteers working with participants on a daily basis know what will work and what will not. When I brought my ideas for some potential arts-based evaluation tools to the evaluation workshop with Art City staff, they knew certain approaches would not work. The evaluation tool tested was developed through input and suggestions from the people familiar with the organization and participants.

Art City staff pointed out one of the important qualities for a successful interviewer is understanding why evaluation is important and what the organization is looking for. Including staff in the development of evaluation tools will get more buy-in from the staff and volunteers.

What can community planning practitioners learn from these enhanced evaluation methods?

Community planning is a vast field of planning practice. Community planning is about connecting with stakeholders and incorporating local knowledge into planning processes. Communities include many stakeholders with valuable local knowledge to contribute. Participating in different ways and contributing different ways of knowing

are important to meaningful community planning processes. Effectively engaging marginalized stakeholders is essential to building strong and vibrant communities.

In the introduction to his community planning engagement methods handbook, Nick Wates (2006) asks, "How can local people—wherever they live—best involve themselves in the complexities of architecture, planning and urban design? How can professionals best build on the local knowledge and resources?" (p. 2). Arts-based evaluation tools allow professionals to access different types of local knowledge and enable artists to contribute in a unique way. Arts-based research methods and evaluation tools enable practicing professionals to creatively engage different stakeholder groups and draw out unique stories and images.

Dang (2005) encourages more collaboration between practicing planners and community-based artists. While Art City, and other community-based art organizations are not directly involved in community planning processes, they are important community development institutions. They engage community members, provide a venue for creative expression, and help strengthen communities. Community-based art organizations are involved in building community and, therefore, are an invaluable component of any community planning process. Community planners can incorporate the knowledge of artists and other engaged individuals into community development and planning practice.

Dang (2005) claims planners can learn a great deal from community-based art organizations and vice-versa. Community-based artists are aware of the role they play in their community and the impact their efforts have on their members. Community planners are skilled at reaching out to different stakeholders in a community. Community-based artists can learn from community planners how to engage other

community members and reach beyond the confines of their organization. On the other hand, community planners can learn that community members can participate in community planning processes in different ways and contribute in their own unique ways. Artists are aware of the rich personal expressions that go into producing art. Participation in community planning workshops can incorporate these unique expressions. Engaging participants using art can uncover stories and pictures that may not come out otherwise. Just like Art City's experience with arts-based evaluation tools, community planners can incorporate the rich images and stories that come to the surface with arts-based evaluation tools and research methods.

6.3 - Biases and Limitations

The results from this study contribute to the growing body of literature of arts-based research methods and program evaluation. However, the scope of the study limits the generalizability of the findings. This Major Degree Project is grounded in a single case study of Art City's experiences with using one arts-based evaluation tool for their program evaluation. Throughout the research process, I worked solely with Art City staff and volunteers to develop an arts-based evaluation tool, test the tool, and explore their reactions to it. If the scope of the study were expanded to include a second comparative community-based art organization in Winnipeg or elsewhere, the project could provide more lessons for other community-based art organizations.

Since this study was not extended to working with another community-based art organization, the findings from this study are anecdotal. While the findings from this project provide valuable lessons for other community-based art organizations, there are no hard conclusions about what will work for all community-based art

organizations. This study does suggest creativity should be a key consideration in community-based art organizations' program evaluations. Therefore, the approach outlined in this study should be adapted to work with a particular community-based art organization, rather than adopted without tailoring it to the organization's objectives and participants.

Action research sees the researcher working closely with a community group or organizations in a mutual learning process. During the course of this research between May 2010 and April 2011, I found myself in two distinct roles: as an unpaid evaluation consultant and as a student carrying out my own research. Entering the project as an unpaid evaluation consultant I was able to introduce Art City staff to some best practices in evaluation and begin a discussion around evaluation ethics. I was not an expert in evaluation, but I was sharing with Art City everything I was learning about the field. I attended meetings and participated in discussions with staff and volunteers and also contributed my evaluation knowledge. In this role, I developed close relationships with several staff members, building a solid foundation for my role as a student researcher. My research objectives were furthered by this relationship developed as an evaluation consultant. However, the same relationships also introduced bias into my findings. While I was studying arts-based evaluation methods, I was also enmeshed in the process with Art City. In this way, the findings of this research project are inevitably biased.

Finally, my own recording of data presents a final limitation of this Major Degree Project. While the Art City staff member was testing the evaluation tool, I was not able to participate in the evaluation and nor was I able to observe. My approved ethics protocol did not include direct participation in these workshops. I could have

amended my ethics submission in order to participate, but in the interests of expediency, I elected to remove myself from being directly involved in the evaluation. Therefore, I did not view any of the footage and was unable to record the exact questions staff posed to Art City participants. Together, these omissions limit what other community-based art organizations can take away from this study.

6.4 - Future Directions and Concluding Thoughts

Community-based art organizations are important institutions for communities they operate in and are committed to building stronger communities. Any additional tools in their evaluation frameworks to assess their community impacts are important for these organizations. This study helped shed light on some previously overlooked areas in program evaluation and arts-based research literature. At the conclusion of this study, there at least four potentially fruitful areas for future research: replicate the arts-based evaluation tool with another community-based art organizations; verify the results with children and funders; test additional approaches to arts-based evaluation methods; and, focus on developing partnerships between community planners and community-based artists.

This Major Degree Project was grounded in a single case study. Therefore, the findings are specific to Art City and not representative of all community-based art organizations. All reactions to the arts-based evaluation tools represent the views and the opinions of Art City staff and volunteers. The study is careful to point out that other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City's experience. However, this study does not claim arts-based evaluation methods will be beneficial for all community-based art organizations. Each organization responds to its own unique

constraints and may not come to the same conclusions Art City has. While Art City may find a particular method valuable, others may not. The case study provided the community and organizational context Art City operates within to help generalize the findings. Regardless, the findings are grounded in Art City's experiences.

Research with other community-based art organizations would help to strengthen the case for the value of arts-based evaluation methods for community-based art organizations' program evaluations. Further research into arts-based evaluation tools for community-based art organizations' program evaluations will help to develop the field and be of potential benefit to other community-based art organizations.

All reactions to the arts-based evaluation tool were conducted with staff and volunteers at Art City. No funders attended the evaluation workshop or participated in the interviews. During the evaluation workshop, one Art City staff member was concerned about how to actually communicate to funders the findings from arts-based evaluation tools. Future research with funders *and* community-based art organizations would further the field immensely and help validate arts-based evaluation methods for these organizations. Future research in this area would help shape how organizations can work with funders to engage participants and communicate that information to funders in the most beneficial way.

The arts-based evaluation tool developed with Art City staff used art as a means of generating dialogue between participants and facilitators. As discussed previously, other approaches to arts-based research methods include using the art to represent the findings and using art as the data itself. Developing additional arts-based evaluation tools for community-based art organizations and testing them out, would also help to

grow this field of literature. Future research in the area can help shed light on these other approaches.

The collaborative evaluation workshop was the most valuable component of this Major Degree Project. Like any community planning process, participation is essential to successfully addressing complex issues. Bringing as many Art City staff members and volunteers together to discuss evaluation practices helped to develop an arts-based evaluation tool that worked with their programming. Moreover, engaging workshop participants in a creative manner, such as with an arts-based strategy, can encourage participation in different media. While I was initially hesitant to incorporate an arts-based method in the workshop, asking participants to draw how they see Art City in West Broadway enriched the entire evaluation discussion.

This study discusses the role community-based art organizations play in building stronger communities. Dang (2005) claims community planners have typically been absent from the community cultural development field while community-based artist are actively engaged in it. Regardless, he claims, "community-based arts practice often demonstrates community planning at its best: strengths-based, capacity building, participatory, inclusive, communicative, reflective, innovative and adaptive" (p. 123). He suggests there is a great deal these two groups can learn from one another, leading to the development of valuable partnerships. While this study does not focus on nurturing partnerships among community-based artists and community planners, addition research in this intersection of disciplines can help to incorporate the role of creativity in the community planning process.

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Colour West Broadway Green Art Program

Date: September 14, 2010

Report Author: Sheri Blake, D.Eng.(Arch), MCIP, Professor, Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba

Support was provided by Jacob Edenloff , a graduate student in the Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba and Janessa Brunet, an art workshop facilitator at Art City. Special Thanks to Cam Forbes, Executive Director, Art City, her staff and volunteers.

Partial funding for this project was provided by Fulbright Canada, Eco-Leadership Project, 2009-2010.

Participants

The Colour West Broadway Green Art workshops, run by Art City, were held from July 6 to August 27, 2010, daily from Tuesday to Saturday. Over a period of 35 days, 170 people participated in workshops, ranging in age from 4 to 28 years old. This averaged out to approximately 5 people per workshop. Participant numbers varied daily from zero (0) to eighteen (18).

Sites

Four exterior sites were tested in the West Broadway neighbourhood, including the Edible Heritage Youth Garden (3 days, once a week in July and 1 day in August), Spirit Park community garden (4 consecutive days in early July), Broadway Neighbourhood Centre Park (14 days, primarily consecutive days in mid-July to mid-August), and Boulder Park community garden (6 consecutive days in mid to late August). Due to frequent rain throughout the summer, several workshops were held indoors at Art City's storefront facility (7 days).

What Worked

Kick-off Event: Each year, Art City holds a parade in the West Broadway neighbourhood. The intent of the parade is to foster a sense of pride, accomplishment and fellowship among community members, while showcasing and promoting neighbourhood spirit, creativity and talent. **The Planet of the Plant People Parade** theme for this year was selected to kick-off the summer green art programming (see article on page 1 in "The Art City Star" newsletter attached). Held on Saturday, June 26, 2010, Art City began preparations in April, planting and nurturing plants in the studio to be used on floats, costumes and decorations. Guest gardeners and artists provided support to staff, volunteers and participants to create costumes, food wheels, and giant people puppets.

1

Participants built a scrap wood city model of buildings, houses and shops and filled them with plants grown in the studio, referred to as Seed Sown Civilizations. This became one of the floats for the parade. The parade attracted hundreds of participants and spectators.

Location and Set-up: The Broadway Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) was the most popular site for the green art workshops. Children frequently use the park for other services, including playground, soccer field and wading pool, or passing through for activities at the local community centre, so they often stop to do outside art activities. As well, Art City is located directly in front of the centre, so children and youth familiar with the inner-city art program do not have to go far from the main facility to find the outdoor programming site. Convenience to other facilities frequented by children and youth, convenience to the indoor art programming site, as well as frequent foot traffic are all important issues when selecting sites. Bring a tarp to work on, with tent pegs to secure it to the ground, particularly if the site does not have picnic tables. If access to water is problematic, consider setting up a rain barrel on site for water collection. This would eliminate the inconvenient and heavy transportation of water, necessary for many aspects of art making.

Programming: The drop-in structure provided flexibility for children and youth to stop for a while, make art, leave to do other activities and return for more art programming. Programming should be adapted in response to the abilities of the participants. For example, the workshop facilitator designed a weaving activity that many children became frustrated with, due to its intricacy and use of small weaving materials. This was easily adapted by using thicker materials and simple looms.

Advertising: Art City signs were posted both at the Green Art site and around the large park providing direction to the outdoor program site. This drew in more participants, and people became aware the workshop was open to everyone.

Activities: Fence weaving was popular, as it allowed children to make pictures on chain link fences. Clay sculpture, in the "Clay Creatures" workshop was also popular, as it is a material many people are familiar with. Participants were encouraged to find hiding places for their creatures in the natural environment. The artist facilitator explained to the children that clay is a naturally occurring material and if the sculptures are left outside, they will eventually break down and return to the earth. Returning to the site over several days, participants were able to watch the creatures slowly disintegrate into the earth. Activities like these require little explanation, allow and encourage greater independence among workshop participants, and provide more flexibility for participants to come and go during the day. This discussion about environmental connections could be further reinforced in future activities. Activities focused on interacting with the environment specifically (as opposed to simply using recycled materials) were also successful. In "Collect, Inspect, Insect Detectives!" participants captured live insects in small containers and examined them with the help of magnifying

glasses. Books were provided for further research or for small children who were uncomfortable looking at real bugs. Another successful activity was making birdhouses out of milk cartons. Participants had to find twigs or sticks on the ground to make perches for birds. "Self Portrait Planters" involved cutting the tops off jugs and painting a self-portrait (not necessarily a realistic portrait). Compost from a local community garden was added to the jugs, providing an opportunity to discuss composting. Participants selected seeds, while discussing various types of plants and seed planting techniques. A good activity for drawing in more participants is the "Boat Float". Floating devices were made from recycled materials and floated in the local wading pool. Children playing in the water became interested and began to participate in the workshop. Note: For a full list of activities, see the Green Art July and August calendars attached.

What Did Not Work

Location: The three community garden sites were not successful in attracting participants. Spirit Park, an established community garden, was the main site selected for July workshops. However, due to low participant numbers, the site was moved to Broadway Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) after a few days and attendance increased significantly. When the BNC site was under construction, the programming moved to Boulder Park, another established community garden. Participant numbers dropped again. As well, few participants showed up to the Edible Heritage Youth Garden, established at the beginning of this summer by the West Broadway Development Corporation. The community garden sites are destination specific only to gardeners who have plots there. There is limited foot traffic, particularly children and youth. In addition, two of the three sites are fairly closed in. As the gardens mature, the plants act as screens and few people can see into the site to the art activities. Visible sites with frequent foot traffic are critical to the success of outdoor summer art programming.

Activities: Activities requiring detailed explanations or that take place over the course of two or more days may not work well. In the latter case, participants rarely showed up for two consecutive days. Alternatively, rain interfered with outdoor activities that required consecutive days. In one case, a paper mache activity required overnight drying time. However, the work did not dry in time and the activity for the second day had to be reconfigured. Activities that can be completed in two hours or less were the most successful and are recommended for future workshop design.

Issues

Weather: Frequent rain over the summer months (unusual for Winnipeg) limited access to outdoor sites. It is possible that the subsequent rise in the mosquito population also hindered participant numbers. However, having the Art City facility nearby the BNC site allowed for art programming to move back indoors quickly.

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Location: Use of the BNC site, the most popular location, was hindered by re-landscaping of the park. Once construction started in mid-August, activities were moved to Boulder Park, one of the community garden sites. As noted above, community garden sites were generally unsuccessful in drawing in participants, limiting the number of children and youth who generally access Art City programs.

Evaluation

A graduate student from the University of Manitoba, Department of City Planning, intended to conduct an art-based evaluation, near the end of the summer green art workshops, using the photo novella method. Photo Novella is an art-based method in which participants take photographs according to a particular theme, selected by the researcher, then discuss their photographs. Although photovoice, photo-elicitation and photo novella are similar methods, they differ in who selects the images and subject. In photovoice, participants choose the subject and take their own photographs. In photo-elicitation, the researcher selects the subject and takes the photographs. Photo novella is a balance between the two. The graduate student researcher intended to adapt the method, using drawings and paintings, produced by workshop participants, in the same way photographs are used in photo novella. Based on aims and objectives determined at the beginning of the evaluation, the researcher would focus on certain subjects, in this case environmental themes, to guide a drawing activity and discussion. The intent of the method was to determine how much environmental knowledge was built, through workshop activities held over the summer.

The graduate student researcher was unable to conduct this evaluation method. As noted above, due to frequent rain, the key site impacted by construction, and the limited value of the community garden sites, participant numbers were down frequently, particularly at the end of the workshop period when the researcher was planning to apply the method. Few participants came to the final Boulder Park site, not enough to complete an evaluation of this type. The student researcher is planning to incorporate this method during this upcoming academic year (2010-11), as part of his graduate practicum, with participants of Art City and Graffiti Gallery. He will need more time to determine how an environmental theme can be built into the process in a studio setting.

Attachments:
    Summary of Expenses
    Original receipts (to be mailed)
    The Art City Star
    Green Art July Calendar
    Green Art August Calendar
    Photos

4

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA | Ethics
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APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

December 20, 2010

TO: Jacob Edenloff   (Advisor S. Blake)
           Principal Investigator

FROM: Brian Barth, Chair
           Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

Re: Protocol #J2010:161
           "Community-based Art Evaluations: A Case Study of Art City's Green
           Art"

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received human ethics approval by the **Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board**, which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement.   This approval is valid for one year only.

Any significant changes of the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to the Human Ethics Secretariat in advance of implementation of such changes.

Please note:

-      If you have funds pending human ethics approval, the auditor requires that you submit a copy of this Approval Certificate to the Office of Research Services, fax 261-0325 - please include the name of the funding agency   and your UM Project number. This must be faxed before your account can be accessed.

-      if you have received multi-year funding for this research, responsibility lies with you to apply for and obtain Renewal Approval at the expiry of the initial one-year approval;   otherwise the account will be locked.

The Research Ethics Board requests a final report for your study (available at: http://umanitoba.ca/research/ors/ethics/ors_ethics_human_REB_forms_guidelines.html) in order to be in compliance with Tri-Council Guidelines.

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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA | Faculty of Architecture

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Title of Project:
Creativity in Community-Based Art Evaluations: A Case Study of Art City's Green Art

Description of Project:
The purpose of this Major Degree Project is to explore the role of creative, art-based evaluation methods for community-based art organizations. Research for this project includes initial interviews with Art City directors to understand the evaluation framework and methods, and a followup interview after the method has been tested to gather impressions and reactions about the method.

Audio-Taping
With your permission, interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed at a later date for research purposes. Audio-recordings will be kept in a secure place on an external hard drive in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's home, and destroyed after they have been transcribed. Your name or any other personal information will not be included in any publicly disseminated materials arising from the study.

Confidentiality
Information gathered from this research will be used in the findings of my Major Degree Project. Participants will not be identified by name in any research. However, readers of the document who are familiar with Art City may be able to infer the identity of interview participants. Regardless, interview sessions will not deal with topics of a personal or private nature. All information will be treated as confidential and stored in a private and secure place on an external hard drive locked in a filing cabinet at the researcher's home, and subsequently destroyed after completion of the project.

Risk
There is no risk beyond normal, everyday risk associated with this project.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the course project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and / or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Contact Information:
Jacob Edenloff
6 - 30 Spence Street
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 1Y1
Telephone: (204) 955-6084
Email: umedenlo@cc.umanitoba.ca

This course project has been approved by the Joint Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB) of the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Thank you for participating in this project. Your cooperation and insights are very valuable, and are greatly appreciated.

Do you agree to have this interview audio-recorded?
    □ Yes
    □ No

I, _____, consent to the dissemination of
       [Name of Participant: *please print*]
information provided to the researcher. I understand that the information I provide will be incorporated into a Major Degree Project and that it will be treated as confidential, stored in a private and secure place, and subsequently destroyed at the end of the project by the researcher.

Signature of Participant   Date

_____

Name of Researcher   Date

_____

Signature of Researcher   Date

_____

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Objectives

In this study, the initial interviews will be used to understand Art City's current program evaluation framework and methodology, the design of previous Green Art workshops, and how they might be changed in the future. The semi-structured interviews will also be used to define Art City's objectives for using art-based evaluation methods.

Participants

Participants for the interviews will be the staff at Art City who are familiar with the evaluation process at Art City and are involved with the design and facilitation of previous Green Art workshops. Two key informant interviews will be conducted.

Topics for Discussion

Evaluation

      Current evaluation framework

      Previous evaluation frameworks

      Reasons for evaluations

Methods & Analysis

      Types of evaluation methods

      Successes with methods

      Failures with methods

      Analysis

Introduction

- Can you please introduce yourself?
- Can you please describe your role at Art City?

Evaluation

- Can you please define evaluation?
- Can you please describe your evaluation process?
    - Current evaluation framework?
- Can you please describe how Art City has approached evaluation in the past?
    - What are some of the methods you used?
    - Were there any that were particularly successful?
    - What is great about evaluation?
    - What is awful about evaluation?
- Why does Art City carry out evaluations?
    - Who is typically the audience for these evaluation?
    - Funders?
    - Internal?
- Has an evaluation been used to redesign a process?
    - Did you intend to make changes?
    - Did you act on it?

Methods & Analysis

- What methods does Art City currently use?
- What do you see as some of the challenges in using art-based research methods for your evaluations at Art City?
- What do you see as some of the strengths of using art-based research methods for your evaluations at Art City?

Objectives

In this study, the semi-structured interviews will be used to follow up on the findings from the evaluation workshop. The interviews will take place after staff and volunteers have implemented the method into Art City's evaluation framework. The purpose of the interviews will be to assess the evaluation method designed during the evaluation workshop, gather the reactions to the method, identify obstacles to the method, what could be improved next time, and what other community-based art organizations can learn from Art City.

Participants

Participants for this study will be those involved with applying the evaluation method in Art City workshops.

Topics for Discussion

- Method
    - How the method was applied
    - Program or programs for evaluation
    - What other methods were used in the evaluation
- Reaction
    - Strengths of the method
    - Limitations of the method
    - Was it modified in any way in the evaluation
    - Can the tool be modified in any way?
    - Lessons for other community-based art organizations

Method

- Can you please describe in your own words the interview/evaluation that was developed and how you used that?
    - What types of art were the participants engaged in?
    - Were any of these particularly successful or unsuccessful?
    - Did the number of participants have any impact on how the method worked during the workshops?

- Over the course of the month that your were doing this, how did this method evolve?
    - How did you change your approach?

- Do you feel that participants were more open to talking with you in this situation that if you were to just ask questions?
    - Or, did they provide more information than you may have gotten from a questionnaire?

Reactions

- What do you see as some of the strengths of using art-based research methods for the evaluations at Art City?
- What do you see as some of the challenges or limitations of using art-based research methods for your evaluations at Art City?
- Is there anything that needs to refined with the method?
- Do you think that this information is useful or relevant for your evaluation reports?

- What do you feel came out of the art-based method that may not have come out with conventional evaluation methods, such as questionnaires and interviews?
- What do you think other community-based art organizations can learn from this study?

Community Impact Measurement and Management (CIMM)

CIMM is an outcomes-based evaluation model developed by the United Way
and launched in 2007. The model provides five suggested outcomes to form the
basis of the evaluation process. These outcomes include:
  o Positive Social Skills/Competance;
  o Healthy behaviour for children and youth;
  o Leadership;
  o Academic achievement/school engagement; and,
  o Family relations/support (United Way, 2010).

Art City adapted CIMM as a survey for its participants and administers the
surveys once every three months or thereabouts. The survey touches on each of
the five outcomes at Art City and outside. Art City participated in the initial
pilot project in 2007 and continues to use the model for its evaluations.

Log Books

The log book is an essential piece of Art City's evaluation process. After each
shift, staff and volunteers write notes, reflections, and comments in the log
book. Staff and volunteers reflect on the results of that day's workshop, what
worked, what didn't, and what could be changed for the next activity. Prior to
the next shift, staff review the previous day's notes and change the activities
accordingly.

Sign-in Sheets

Sign in sheets are a simple method Art City has used to record participant
attendance. Previously, Art City estimated the number of visitors. Since
implementing the sign in sheet, they realized they were far underestimating their
attendance figures. Visitors can also include which school they attend so staff
members can also get an idea of where outside of West Broadway participants
come from.

Youth Council

Youth Council is monthly meeting with an Art City staff member and Art City
participants. During the meeting they discuss what workshops worked, what
didn't, and what participants would like to see in the coming months. Youth
Council membership consists of a core group of regular Art City participants
but not every member attends each month.

Colony

Spence

St. Matthews

Legislature

Wolseley

Armstrong's Point

N

0 Meters   250   500