

## **Building an Arts-Based Curriculum: A Lesson from the Bowerbird**

**By Carol A. Mullen**

Deep within the brush of the rainforest, Nature plays curator to many ecological art galleries. These leafy shelters, or bowers, are constructed in such a way that they lie almost hidden from view. The artist, a Bowerbird, gathers food and objects from the forest's ground to use as material for its creations. We may think it is building a nest. To the trained eye, however, this bird's rhythms convey a more enriching story. Passionately engaged in the act of creation, the Bowerbird models the building of an arts-based curriculum by turning survival into a platform for living.

The Australian oscine bird is particularly noteworthy for its bowerlike structures that better resemble resorts than nests. To attract females, these "amorous architects" build towers using twigs, vegetation, and other found objects. Some even color their bower's walls with a paste of chewed fruit or charcoal, applying the "paint" with a "brush"—a wad of plant fibers held in the bill. Crushing berries, these artists create living, organic canvases on which the dynamics of regenerative imperatives unfold as aesthetic creation. Because the Bowerbird proactively responds to life's challenges

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and offerings, the bowers constantly change, reflecting the state of their ecosystems as well as the creative signatures of the artists themselves. The twig display that evolves over time is very elaborate, complete with bright orange cicada pillar droppings—a sign of distinctive taste in the Bowerbird’s world (Hamilton, 1998; www.PBS.org, 2001).

*Bowers* are not only fluid carvings of the ecosystem but also of the very “geocultural landscape of education” itself (Hasebe-Ludt, 1999, p. 49). Life, rhythm, and art are all integral to this process of making and remaking. The Bowerbird is remarkably adaptive in its capacity to turn even the most devastating of events into material for new growth, as this example from the PBS documentary *Bower Bird Blues* illustrates: A 40-year-old bower belonging to a Bowerbird had been destroyed during a storm in the rainforest. This bower was considered highly prized “property” due to its longevity, yet the loss of it became an opportunity for new building. In fact, an even *more inspired bower* was built close by, an activity that revealed the existence of a healthy ecosystem (www.PBS.org, 2001).

In a parallel universe, creative, proactive human beings press on despite what befalls us. The adaptive response may be a form of qualitative intelligence, as thriving educators know they will “never see the same classroom twice because teaching conditions change every day” (Kincheloe, Slattery, & Steinberg, 2000, p. 246). Despite what unforeseen misfortune may come our way, we need to trust in our innate abilities to create anew. In this special issue we use living and breathing organic systems as our curriculum palette from which human-environmental relationships are dramatized. Building an arts-based curriculum draws upon the many lessons we have learned from life, including that of the Bowerbird.

Organic systems extend beyond the strictly naturalist understanding of landscape and life systems. Classrooms and schools, buildings and streets, and relationships and communities are all ecosystems. Expressing oneself artistically by transforming raw materials into new living forms is the “Bowerbird” energy that connects the contributions to this special issue and countless communities of teacher-researchers. One such educator from New York City’s South Bronx transformed his arts class for students with special needs into a communal studio (Paley, 1995). This artist group used their own personal and cultural responses as raw material rendered artistically as a process for interpreting such literary works as Kafka’s novels. Through discussion and collaborative art making, *Amerika I*, among other captivating productions, emerged from this otherwise forbidding urban landscape.

Barone (2001) describes human and communal development in educative, art-making terms. Tucked away in the Appalachian highlands, an art teacher encouraged the students’ personal attachment to the physical materials at hand. The researcher, translating this experience, described that “One can observe in this process a dialogue between the student and the materials being shaped, a qualitative problem-solving process in which the student-worker-artist struggles with possi-

bilities, tentatively moves on the material, encounters resistance, and manipulates the component parts” (p. 25). The researchers published in this issue are also engaged as artists in qualitative problem-solving.

Art making is a boundless, boundaryless process of reflective inquiry that can be expressed anywhere, anytime. One does not need to be in the formal setting of an art studio to experience deeply the value and meaning of one’s work. The researcher-artist-teacher, such as those represented in this volume, can be engaged with different forms of art making, within and beyond woods, cityscapes, and classrooms. In this spirit, we offer a range of teaching/learning spaces that include and reach past the conventional space of the classroom. By doing so, the promise of arts-based inquiry is more fully evoked. Selecting as our metaphor “the bower,” each work that we present has been reimagined as a “bower.” These fluid carvings represent the unique process and vision of each artist’s pedagogy, and together offer a provocative statement about the current educational landscape.

Returning to Nature’s own bowers for a moment, it is worth noting that these are decorated with brightly colored flowers, feathers, and stones that reflect the unique geographical area that the Bowerbird inhabits. As the world’s ecology changes and the rainforest recedes, bowers can be found on *the periphery*, that tenuous boundary between woodland and human place. Schools, military bases, and even cemeteries have served as sites for bower building. These amorous altars are composed of bone, marble, broken bottles, bottle caps, toys, chalk—whatever avails itself to the artist in the immediate surroundings (Hamilton, 1998; www.PBS.org).

Human artists, notably the British, have created environmental installations, often in remote places, that can be considered “bowers.” They have used rocks, leaves, soil, and other materials to produce spatial arrangements such as stone circles, tree cairns, and spiral jetties, in landscapes and seascapes (Lucie-Smith, 2001). Earth has acted as a guide for artists attuned to how ecosystems carry information and act as cultural catalysts for routine and ritual (Eiseley, 1970).

The Bowerbird is an ecoculturalist that takes high risks in the drama of life. Because only 10 percent of the male birds’ bowers actually succeed at attracting mates, all is gambled in “a single throw of the dice.” The female bird also risks what could be characterized as “her reproductive potential in the single throw of an egg” (Watson, 1979, p. 65). To increase the chance of mating success, the Grand Bowerbird has generated a unique strategy—collaborative bower building. This phenomenon is acclaimed as being the only example of building performed as teamwork. (Eventually competition takes over and self-isolation sets in.) Before these adolescent male birds can achieve independence and any success, they invest approximately three years at Nature’s “architectural school.” The twig towers transform during this time of life from simple structures to impressive “exhibits.” While the Bowerbird apprentices there is no master teacher, leader, or authority directing the show. This is a “classroom” where reciprocal learning and shared

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governance thrive, a place where team members assume equal responsibility for the work underway. Artistry lives in this postmodern space where Life's lessons are modeled and absorbed, and where experimentation is cultivated. Here, within remote places awaiting discovery, the robust "no conductor, many leaders" model thrives. Every bird leads and follows as part of a synergy that makes up the rhythm of work.

In the human world, we must search widely to find such displays of shared leadership. The Orpheus Chamber Orchestra is one example. The role of conductor has been eliminated in favor of leadership functions that are equally divided among all. This model is considered "radically different from that employed by any other orchestra in the world" (Seifter, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, & Economy, 2001, p. 11). Nature's garden and the music world remind us that "conductorless leadership" is an alternative, postmodern rhythm that needs nurturance in education and the academy.

Nonmusical ensembles have occasionally appeared in schools and schools of education. In such contexts, creative teachers and students work together toward meaningful learning, instead of simply reacting to external demands for measurable success. One such ensemble of 17 artist-teachers produced a bricolage of arts-based research using text and image (Mullen & Diamond, 1999).

In this special issue of *Teacher Education Quarterly*, a variety of ensembles that have implications for teaching and learning, as well as for arts-based research, await the reader. These include artistic productions undertaken by teacher education groups, as represented in Allen Trent's article. Another area represented is that of arts-based works fashioned collaboratively within mentoring relationships, as in Peter Gouzouasis and Karen Lee's article. Finally, we have included solo productions that suggest new ways of conceptualizing the artistic relationship, perhaps best illustrated in Nicholas Paley's piece that became a co-authored work with Anne Sullivan during the re-vision process.

The contributors to this edition all communicate spatially and offer various perspectives on how this can be done. Not unlike the Bowerbird, the authors value the process of arranging their artworks (inanimate objects and artifacts) as purposeful displays (Hamilton, 1998; www.PBS.org). This sense of aesthetic display, operating at the genetic level for all creatures, has been described as a "mobile museum" (Watson, 1979, p. 59). Educators may be living out both vision and genetics when we arrange our pedagogy, art, and life in particular ways. Consider, for example, how we increasingly use graphics, interactive displays, and multimedia combinations in our teaching. This prized creative capacity is especially evident these days in distance education.

Discovery learning can become a space in which multiple modalities of learning and the arts are expressed. Within these constructivist bowers, rituals are enacted that correspond to the environment and to the cycles of life. The Bowerbird is not just a collector, arranging objects to produce an effect—this sacred place also

enables connection and growth through song, dance, and painting, as well as the proactive response to local conditions. The constructivist classroom and school where oppressive situations and dictatorships are not permitted thrive much like these bowers. More than ever, we are all being called upon to transform the negative energy that exists within our educational systems and in society into sources of creative tension for constant renewal.

Non-democratic forces of bureaucratic accountability and power intrude into our bowers, often against the occupant's will. Among these top-down, outside-in forces are high-stakes testing, teacher-led instruction, and stymied curricula, as well as discriminatory barriers and other inequities. The cultural might of standardized testing combined with bureaucratic accountability have already seriously bruised the art-making and empowering ideals of teaching and society (Mullen, 2002). The current "laboratory settings" of schools "suppress passion and authentic feelings of love, hate, fear and commitment" (Kincheloe, et al., 2000, p. 247). Because the thinking of students is often sequestered and disconnected, the artist's imagination has been squelched. Creative responses have emerged despite the dark clouds that linger over our ecosystems but more must be found.

Teacher-led instruction continues as the status quo in our own schools of education where prevailing teacher preparation practice emphasizes the realities of schools as they have historically existed. Student teachers are being forced to occupy the traditional and outdated bowers of their classroom learning that should have been deserted long ago. The "effective" teacher in today's accountability climate is focused on classroom management, direct instruction, state-driven curriculum frameworks, external authority, and high test scores (Nelson, 1999). This scenario robs us of sacred places or bowers that empower learners and teachers alike to develop artistic and spiritual approaches to the curriculum.

Constructivist bowers, then, prevail where adventurous and reflective practitioners have enabled learning, growth, and innovation (e.g., Mullen, 2002). Evidence is seen sporadically within alternative schools that address students' frames of reference and that model problem-based curricula as well as authentic assessment, inclusive access to technology, academic-vocational programs, and teacher mentoring and activism (Nelson, 1999).

To envision a constructivist bower as a model for schools, we are challenged to see differently. The naturalists provide inspiration, with such classics as *Lifetides*. Watson (1979) invites us to adopt "a three-dimensional perspective" where something is imagined simultaneously from all sides. By studying "patterned activity," such as that of the spider web, we defy the "linear visual bias" where "seeing" is confined to left-to-right, top-to-bottom, viewing (p. 21). This model of the universe envisions "objects" constantly unfolding in relation to each other, not independently. This worldview stands in stark contrast to the traditional "bower" of national accountability where goals have been decontextualized and dehumanized. The artificial, discrete function of testing and the value ascribed to high test

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scores forces learning into an unnatural mold and schools into an isolationist, competitive mode (Waite, Boone, & McGhee, 2001). In such places, schools have yet to restore the integrity of their bowers.

### **Introducing a Multitude of Bowers**

This special issue of *Teacher Education Quarterly* on arts-based research and teacher education is, in its display of ideas, relationships, and objects, itself a CONSTRUCTIVIST BOWER. Articles, artistically rendered essays, and rhythmic reflections (poetry) offer more variety than is usual, even for arts-based issues of journals. Educational norms are challenged in these sociopolitical pieces where qualitative inquiry and classroom learning are experienced anew, and where what might live on the other side of the schoolhouse is imagined.

For this volume authors responded to the questions: “What does arts-based research and practice look like in teacher education?” and “How are arts-based approaches meaningful and useful in teacher education?” The authors, researcher-artist-teachers we now turn to, explore issues of theory and practice in arts-based education. Among the individual BOWERS or sacred works there are those that provide a sense of the whole (as an “imaginary” only); those that offer fragments threaded together into temporary/transitory states of being; and, more radically, those that depend upon the reader’s imagination for connecting loosely compiled fragments.

“Pedagogue’s Poetic Meditation” provides the creative backdrop to this special issue with the invitation, “Imagine yourself in a place / Where everything is growing . . .” Carol Mullen’s BOUNTIFUL BOWER conveys images of arts-based inquiry as recurring growth in “a timeless cycle of creation.” The poem communicates that readers can use this entire collection of artworks to “enable conditions for more growth” toward cultivating a life system of their own. Mullen imagines that, as a community of arts-based researchers, we are challenged more than ever to seek healthy ways for transforming “contaminated sight[s]” that have a “stranglehold upon the world” into “bright light / Of spiral shooting tendrils.”

Next, in “The Garden As Metaphor for Curriculum” Karen Baptist seduces with a potent ECOCLASSROOM BOWER. This generative portrayal of curriculum invites the reader to become the designer of one’s own “ecological learning laboratory.” Key curricular elements—creativity, cultivation, growth, connectivity, experience, and imagination—represent learning conditions for one’s literal and metaphorical gardens. In Baptist’s imagery, the curriculum is holistic and inspires spirituality, faith, ordering, and personal-cultural expression.

Educators who “garden” can transform curricula into “interactive gardens, play spaces, and green classrooms” for developing a kinship with “naturalized environments.” Curricula that impose rationalist agendas (i.e., high-stakes testing) on our sacred places distort positive growth, causing weeds to sprout that must be

pulled and siphoning energy that could be better spent elsewhere. We may all have within our worlds one or more gardens that are enriched or polluted with elements beyond our control. The author invites us to reflect on what our own meanings of “garden” might be and how we live these. Gardens vary—some are whole, transitory, and complex, while others are fragmented, wounded, and healed—yet all change in the mirrors of our selves.

Turning to “Dreams As Data: Art Installation as Heady Research,” readers encounter a theme discussed by several authors in this issue—arts-based learning in the preservice teacher education classroom. Allen Trent’s ART INSTALLATION BOWER offers an exciting curricular lens that links theory and practice through collaboratively produced arts-based autobiography. A view of teacher candidate/professor knowledge co-construction is illustrated through a mixed genre project. This mobile—a collaborative art installation consisting of 25 human heads inscribed with personal reflections—hung in a space that attracted wanderers’ reactions. After having reflected on their own dreams for the future of schools, students created the digital artwork for this display. The learning value of this provocative experience emerged from both display-and-text data and human responses.

Combining the theatrical with technology, such visual artists as Tony Oursler have created “talking head” installations throughout the ‘90s. These images, like Trent’s, were projected onto egg-shaped, public displays. Intended to provoke reflections about one’s own identity, these real-time images of the self (the artist) confronted the viewer, forcing engagement. By merging “the viewer” and “the viewed,” boundaries collapsed; metaphorically, the viewer became the artwork, in some sense completing it (Rush, 2001). Imported, it appears, into teacher education from the world of fine arts, Trent’s installation can be appreciated as a unique interactive display of practical value. This art form engages educators and students as collaborators in reenvisioning schooling through postmodern processes of learning.

In “Collaging Pre-Service Teacher Identity” Morna McDermott uses aesthetic knowledge in order to grapple with transformational projects for engaging preservice teachers in critical examinations of self. Her critical essay explores teaching philosophy, autobiographical experience, and especially cultural collage. The five layers discussed in this COLLAGE BOWER are critical aesthetics; emergence, relationality, and transformation; teacher perception; identity and pedagogy; and finally vision and bias.

Collage is treated as more than the formation of an alternative mode of arts expression in this text. For it is *dangerous*, McDermott writes, to engage in critical, transformative work aimed at social change. “Voice” is given to a preservice teacher group that created self-identity collages and engaged in meaning making about personal and cultural forms of understanding. Areas of self-understanding that are discussed in relation to collaging the self embrace relational modalities, encourage alternative methods of teaching and inquiry, and especially produce new

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frontiers in the democratization of schools. A sample of the student collages—artifacts of the new learning—is displayed and discussed.

“Held Hostage by High-Stakes Tests: Drawing As Symbolic Resistance” is a vision of the harsh realities many teachers face today. Deriving his material from visual methods and critical theory, Tirupalavanam Ganesh’s *HOSTAGE BOWER* explores the impact of a state-mandated testing on educators’ lives. The question underlying this work is: How can educators bear the heavy burden of state mandates in their schools while trying to continue as human enterprises? Also, How might we make sense of an educator’s anguish, expressed by Ganesh in the form of a visual representation?

This article forces the reader/viewer to “face” and hopefully react to the landscape of imprisonment that has engulfed schools. Critical pedagogical concepts and texts are woven throughout this “reading” of alienation and estrangement: A teacher’s self-portrait conveys to us that her very center of being has been paralyzed by the culture of high-stakes testing that is education’s monstrous creation. The creativity and critical thinking of the author is unleashed in this political rendering, building upon the distress of one held hostage, a teacher-artist who reveals her slashed and bloodied vein. We are being asked to participate in a hermeneutical/ heretical reading of the work: “What is real, what is imaginary, and what is symbolic in making sense of this drawing?”

Elijah Mirochnik’s “The Centerless Curriculum” exposes the modernist assumptions that lie behind the notion of “center.” Offered, as an alternative, is “centerless.” Much is taken for granted in our everyday parlance, philosophy, and pedagogy where “center” is presumed to exist. The predictability of a single identity and center was lost, if not parodied, during the Madonna era of the 1980s where multiple, fluid selves kept erupting onto the music scene. The Montessori/Madonna collage and writing portrayed here extend beyond the critique of “center.” Illustrated is a postmodern, arts-based construct of “centerless.” Without the center as the source of meaning in our lives, we are forced out of complacency to think and act differently, a challenge that this *CENTERLESS BOWER* puts forth. The work that lies before us is imagined to be a holistic pedagogical and passionate endeavor: We are being asked to synchronize the continuing invention of our own selves with the processes of making and remaking identity in our classrooms as well as in our curriculum and art (Mirochnik, 2002).

With “Hood Initiation: Jewels of Leadership or Jinns of Temptation?” Margie Buttignol and Patrick Diamond (with Little margie) take us on a journey of becoming a professor in higher education. Initiation rituals unbridle “Little margie,” a creation myth (and imagined third coauthor) of tension and transformation where dwellers are plundered into the dark, unknown world of the academy. Dragons encountered along the way will be slayed before the self, tattered and torn, can emerge as a “creative leader self.” Spaces of creativity are ritualized in this *MYTHICAL MARGIE BOWER*, a work that reflects broken wholes in its heaped



fragments of dream scenarios, diary entries, poems, and meditations. Meditations offered especially for aspiring leaders remind us: “take care of your own little margie.” Little margie’s portrait invites others’ stories of institutional life and hood initiation, particularly that of self-invention along the perilous paths of conformity and surrender. We must constantly work toward renewal, manifesting the tensions experienced in art and self.

Anne Sullivan’s “Seminar in Teacher Education” portrays higher education as aching for soulful learning. The vision is one of learning without windows, connections, or quality experiences for students. Many of us in education know all too well the WINDOWLESS SEMINAR BOWER that deadens creative impulses. As though to accentuate this state of bareness, a bare bones’ structure is used. Images of scaffolding, construction, and creation fill this poet’s imaginary, as do those of solidarity and fluidity. “Qualities of stone and glass” and “a shimmering colored light” contrast in irreconcilable ways, suggesting the potential for momentous failure in teacher’s work as well as grand success. While both renewal and collapse seem inevitable, we who educate can choose to shape experience so as to avoid collapse—an end that must be avoided.

Carol Mullen’s OCEANIC BOWER, “How Stingrays Swim at Seaside School,” ventures beyond the academy’s normative boundary to discover a different kind of school. As her “heeled shoe” brushes up against the water’s edge, the poet imagines Stingrays as “Sea Blue Angels” diving and soaring in harmonious formation. She admires the natural fluidity and harmonious movements of the Stingrays that collaborate synergistically, and longs for a collegial working environment in the more familiar “school of education.” Although the poet’s “heeled shoe” becomes a “naked foot,” it remains snagged on the “breaking boundary” between the natural rhythm of the oceanic classroom and “places of disrupted rhythm.” A school of education that resembles the oceanic ecosystem?! Such places are where “whales spout and children splash in the soft surf, where wandering through redwood forests we can listen to frog symphonies, and where in the twilight the garden glistens and whispers the sounds of all things being” (Thomas Nelson, electronic mail, May 2002).

Nicholas Paley in “Reverse Blackboard: Teaching and the Unseen” offers rich postmodern languages and fantasies for imagining what might live on the other side of classroom life. Anne Sullivan, a reviewer (of this work) recast as coauthor, responds creatively to Paley’s descriptive artworks. Paley, by in turn responding to Sullivan, furthers and deepens the qualities of this INTERACTIVE BLACKBOARD BOWER.

We, the guest editors, were inspired to invite these authors to construct a complicated weave of their two voices and perspectives. The original solo piece became a collaborative, dialogic work, with multiple foldings, unfoldings, and refoldings. The drawings have been grouped together so the viewer can reflect on them as a whole: One can exercise the freedom of running up and down the stairs of the panels/productions/drawings, moving as desired while exploring and enter-

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taining connections. This artwork sequence unfolds to Sullivan's poetic response and then to Paley's essay.

Rhythmic bower making can be felt in "A Curriculum of Beauty," a COMPENDIUM BOWER of four poems. Celeste Snowber explores the lived curriculum found in the cracks of life, as a source of knowledge in both our teaching and personal lives. This site for knowing is informed by a poetic sensibility, where one ultimately forms a vibrant connection to the details of our worlds. Her work challenges us to touch beauty as a place of transformation, a space where her poem, "Linguistics of Creation" expresses nature as having a language of its own, where we are invited to see and hear the marginalized tones, textures, and colors of our lives.

Snowber's poem, "Gull Child," in its simplicity explores the art of waiting as a soul practice. In "Unstoppable Work" the message is one of giving hospitality to the imagination and trusting the deeper work forming within us, despite one's tyranny of schedules. And finally, in "Moist Manna" the poet brings us back to why many of us were drawn to teaching in the first place—the original sense of wonder intrinsic to all children. Her young son's need for a curriculum of beauty, as on a snowy day, is a reminder that all of life is a place of learning where we can again behold the multishaped beauty that befalls us. This work attests to the reality that our teaching selves cannot be separated from our personal selves, for we are who we teach, and a deep openness to life will organically spill into our students' lives.

Peter Gouzouasis and Karen Lee offer a compelling, provocative narrative with their MUSICAL MENTORSHIP BOWER, "Do You Hear What I Hear? Musicians Composing the Truth." This narrative essay addresses a serious gap in arts-based research and teacher education involving the role and status of music. The authors engage in a mentoring dialogue about the broader philosophical issues involved in teacher education today. They are accurate in asserting that much of what has been written in arts-based research is rooted in visual art traditions, and they wish to extend the possibilities for music education.

Toward this end, the collaborators offer new ideas and language for developing music fluency and literacy in the lives of children and arts-based educators. Readers are also given the opportunity to learn how musical concepts can be used in the context of dialogic, mentoring relationships. Concerns about "truth" are the most salient thread in the montage of stories shared. With more music scholarship that is simultaneously artistically crafted research, these artists claim that this discourse could have an impact on teacher education and the field of arts-based education itself. The dialogue that is nurtured enables a new understanding about how musicians' voices need to be heard so that alternative modes of research and teaching can be extended. With this awareness, our developing arts community can be enriched.

John Knapp and Tonya Huber's article, "Can Virtue be Taught? The Evolution of the Lighthouse Effect," asks whether English and ethics can be taught as a whole and whether this curricular direction should be pursued. In this LIGHTHOUSE

BOWER the authors discuss how debate engulfs the topic of ethics or character education, and how the voice for ethics education has grown even louder despite the resistance to change in secondary schools.

For this narrative arts-based study, the effects are charted of a curriculum focused on moral readings from the classical literary genre; multicultural works were included. Seniors in a secondary English class were encouraged to explore the nature of ethics, morals, and values using such techniques as personal codes and narratives. A series of events unfolds that highlights possibilities for helping students to internalize the concept of virtue and corresponding actions. The focus of this composite, Arthur, provides the lens for in-depth analysis of one student's journey of learning through metaphorical essays, reflections, and poetry. The lighthouse is Arthur's personal symbol or "code" that emerged from the "virtue building experience." The article is itself an arts-based product considered iconic of student moral development.

Our last work, "Performing a Pedagogy of Endurance," offers a radical opening onto a new beginning for the field of teacher education. Author-performer Charles Garoian presents an "out of the box" picture by bringing to life the intersection between performance art and critical pedagogy. Critical theory evolves into "performance art pedagogy" in this worldview, where "a creative and intellectual space" is enabled for students and their critique of dominant cultural paradigms. In this PERFORMATIVITY BOWER, the discourse and practice of performance art provides stimulating material for arts-based, critically thinking teacher educators. We learn that students can be empowered through performance art to challenge the norms in which their very being has been "schooled."

Examples in Garoian's work are inspired beyond the teacher education classroom. They build upon the postcolonial performance work of minority performance artists as well as university level students. This article stretches readers trained in traditional teacher education programs and who teach in these. Performance art has the great potential to liberate the self by expressing the "body's subjectivity," the stage upon which this vibrant script unfolds.

### **Extending Our Bower**

Finally, with this issue we add to the search for artistry in teacher education by extending our bower to others, encouraging efforts to reach further and go deeper. Complex networks of interrelated people already vibrate across various arts-based communities, knowing that creativity is a process that is soulful and greater than anyone's own. We invite other "Bowerbirds" to participate in making meaning of the montage of arts-based experiments and possibilities that comprise this "bower" or volume. We look forward to discovering others' sacred "bowers" as they appear on the breaking boundary of teacher education.

May this volume evoke a visceral feeling that will be long remembered.

## Notes

The works appearing in this special issue are the result of thoughtful and critical reviews from arts-based specialists in combination with the close editorial attention of Carol A. Mullen and Thomas G. Nelson. All authors received detailed, specific suggestions for revisions and refinement, which they used in their final works. Carol Mullen nurtured the development and preparation of all of the “bowers” shown herein.

Please visit the *Teacher Education Quarterly* website at <<http://www.teqjournal.org>> for information on submission processes, subscriptions to the journal, access to back issues, and membership in the California Council on Teacher Education. Forward questions to the Editor, Thomas Nelson, at E-mail: [tnelson@uop.edu](mailto:tnelson@uop.edu).

## Acknowledgements

We thank Sylvia Wilson, an artist, for the original artworks displayed on the covers of this special issue. This Ph.D. student teaches art education classes at the University of British Columbia. The exhibited images, called Fragments, are from a quilt artwork made for her Masters thesis (1999): One of these artworks offers a detailed view of the quilt (front cover), the other an enlargement of one of its squares (back cover). These “bowers” were together made from hand-dyed cotton, organza, gauze, silk, leaves, rocks, shells, twigs, seeds, moss, lichen, kelp, acorns, pinecone, wool, sequins, and mirrors. The images are available in full color at <[www.csci.educ.ubc.ca/publication](http://www.csci.educ.ubc.ca/publication)> (Vol. 7, June 2002).

With Susan Finley, Assistant Professor at Washington State University in Vancouver, Washington, Carol Mullen created the *Teacher Education Quarterly* Call for Papers for this special issue, which involved Thomas Nelson. We warmly thank Susan for this contribution.

We are also grateful to Alan Jones, publisher, for his continuing openness and innovations in publication that permit artists to express themselves as creatively as possible.

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