A creative approach to information seeking: Visual artists as information users and

public library patrons

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Abstract

The purpose of the study proposed in this paper is to find out, through ten in-depth interviews of practicing Kansas City artists, how artists find and use information to sustain their creative process. An information use survey developed by Susie Cobbledick (1996) and amended by Jessica McClanahan will also be given to interviewees at the end of each interview. An extensive literature review reveals a gap in the literature on this subject, as well as some pros and cons of the methodology. Potential interviewees will be contacted via alumni associations and arts organizations in the Kansas City Metro area and will be chosen based on their status as professional, practicing artists. The study hopes to reveal not only a better understanding of artists as information users, but also how the public library can be of optimum service to these little studied members of the library community.

Introduction

Practicing visual artists are an elusive group of information users. While

masters of most other fields may be easy for information professionals to assess,

artists are a virtually unstudied, often misunderstood, and inadvertently neglected

group of library patrons. Their information needs differ from that of any other

information seeker in that they are constant and almost never finished – there is no

one question, and no one result that is sought out through a particular form of

research and information retrieval. The search continues always, informing the

creative process and inspiring the artist to do more work. The many types of

information that the artist uses in his or her professional practice are pulled from

countless subjects, media, and materials. The body of work is organic; an ever-

evolving being made up of concepts, questions, and answers developed by the artist

to inform his or her practice.

In Kansas City, Missouri, the art world is thriving. There are several schools

within the Metro area – the Kansas City Art Institute, University of Missouri Kansas

City, Rockhurst University, and Metropolitan Community College to name a few –

which offer degree programs in the fine, liberal, and studio arts, as well as a number

of organizations and foundations that offer financial aid and networking

opportunities to working local artists (Charlotte Street Foundation, Urban Culture

Project, Kansas City Artists Coalition, etc.). The downtown area alone is home to

over 70 fine art galleries and artist studios (Downtown Council of Kansas City,

2011). The high concentration of art galleries and museums, studios and collectives,

and arts organizations here suggest that the population of artists in Kansas City is quite substantial. The Kansas City Metro Area boasts a population of just over 2 million, with 459,787 living within the city proper (Wikipedia, 2011) and in the last year, the Kansas City Public Library system has served 2,492,118 patrons in its ten locations (Kansas City Public Library, 2011). While the actual number of artists living in the area is not known, it would be unwise disregard the professional artist community as important potential library users.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the literature on the topic of artists' information behavior, and use in-depth interviews with several local artists to find out how the Kansas City Public Library can be more in tune with the information needs of its community's practicing visual artists throughout the creative process. The study will use previous literature as inspiration, while localizing the problem to Kansas City in order for the public library to interpret the results in a useful way.

Problem Statement

The study proposed in this paper has two purposes: The first is to find out how artists, who are in constant states of research, learning, and discovery, with no specific question in mind, find and use the information they need to facilitate their creative process; the second is to use the information from the study to develop ways that the public library can support that process. While student artists are a valued part of the fine arts community, this research study will be focusing on professional, practicing artists, but not necessarily people who earn their main income from that practice. By interviewing ten Kansas City artists with

concentrations in different media and subject matter, the Kansas City Public Library

can start to get a sense of what drives these information users in their practices.

The idea for the study was formed when this researcher performed a

diagnostic interview with a friend and fine art photographer (see Appendix A) in

order gain insight into how artists look for and use information. A surprising fact

revealed in the interview was that the subject viewed the public library as a place

that would absolutely not have the information she needed. The knowledge

obtained from this interview spurred a curiosity that drove this researcher to

further investigate the question.

There is a small amount of literature that delves into the subject of the

information needs and behaviors of artists. Hemmig (2008) was not too far off

when he suggested that "anyone wishing to create an information service for artists

today will be nearly as information-deprived as Toyne was forty years ago" (p.344).

Many of the articles reviewed here are simply narratives written from the authors'

experiences in their particular library setting (Toyne, 1977; Nilsen, 1986; Dane,

1987; Layne, 1994), or are informal studies about changes that the library could

make based on the authors' observations (Stam, 1995a, 1995b). Some were formal

research studies involving art students (Day & McDowell, 1985; Frank, 1999;

Littrell, 2001; Bates, 2001; Bennett, 2006), while a few focused on art faculty

(Cobbledick, 1996; Reed & Tanner, 2001) and practicing professional artists (van

Zijl & Gericke, 2001; Hemmig 2009; Mason & Robinson, 2011). While the overall

literature reviewed suggests that there is a real concern among librarians regarding

artists and their relationship with libraries and information, there is still a large amount of work that needs to be done to learn more about this unique group.

Nearly all of the literature reviewed recognized the fact that the creative process and the search for inspiring information was the major drive for artists in their research. There has been an unmistakable appeal for information professionals to find ways to better understand the creative process (Toyne, 1977; Layne, 1994; Cobbledick, 1996; Frank, 1999; Littrell, 2001; Cowan, 2004; Hemmig, 2009; Mason & Robinson, 2011). Toyne (1977), somewhat humorously, states, "Somewhere in the substratum of the mind lies a concurrence of interests, manias, quirks, insecurities, and beliefs which drive the artist to make his art" (p.26). Cowan (2004) addresses the fact that the creative process is not necessarily driven by a "problem" per se, but rather by a "dynamic process of perception and expression, a dialog with the world and [the artist's] materials" (p.18). Layne (1994) states that "almost any information might at some time or another be considered 'art information,'" (p.24) and Dane (1987) refers to artists as "multi-faceted clientele" (p.29). Inspiration and the creative process have been proven to be the main factor that drives the artist to seek information, and the literature is not lacking in this understanding.

The following literature review provides a broad background of the information professional's struggle to understand artists, yet there is an apparent gap in the data. A scrupulous qualitative study of a larger and more diverse group of adult practicing visual artists must be conducted in order to shed light on these elusive information seekers and their seemingly inconsistent information behaviors.

Literature Review

The first significant article concerning artists' use of libraries was written by Derek Toyne in 1977. Toyne was the first librarian at Falmouth School of Art (now University College Falmouth in the UK) and was assigned with the task of developing a library for the students. Toyne developed philosophies on how to make his academic art library work for the art students. He noted that creating art had two aspects: "practical or technical activity" and "inspiration and drive" (p.25-26). At the time of his research, Toyne was of the opinion that most art students were "anti-literate," and that their research skills were "not comparable" to undergraduates studying in most other fields (p.24). Toyne was determined to figure out what information the art students were using and why, how they were going about obtaining it, and what he could do to make the library better for them. Toyne's research was groundbreaking, to be sure, however it is markedly dated, considering the technological advances that have been made in the last forty years.

Day and McDowell (1985) conducted interviews with 25 art and design students at New York's Polytechnic Institute, and found that the students, some studying more vocational types of art and some more creative/academic, all were avid library users. The answer to whether they could complete their coursework without use of the library was a resounding "no" (p. 35). The study found that while the academic staff was quite supportive of the students' creative processes, they provided little or no guidance when it came to information and research (p.33). The

main objective of this particular study was to add "more weight to the argument for more user centered studies of information and use, rather than library centered studies which inevitably tend to judge user behavior in relation to what the library has already chosen to provide" (p.41).

Nilsen (1986) and Dane (1987) both wrote articles that encouraged art librarians to make their facilities more accommodating to their patrons. Nilsen wrote from her experience with the creative arts at Montana State University. Hers is a unique case simply for the fact that Montana is mostly isolated from the art world. Nilsen therefore had to find ways to bring the art world to her patrons, and is a prime example of a librarian who listened to her patrons needs, and through her own inventiveness and creativity, came up with helpful solutions.

Dane (1987) discussed how public art libraries could improve to meet the needs of artists and designers within the community. He believed that artists are an important group of public library users and should be accommodated, not only because of their creative impact on the community, but also because of their tendency to be repeat customers when met with a rewarding experience. He also addressed the fact that many artists are multifaceted, and that they actually use many, if not all, departments within the library. Dane had many ideas of ways to incorporate art into the public library and improve the library's overall usability by this group, however it is seemingly based on assumptions and opinions, with little or no actual research.

As with Toyne (1977), Day & McDowell (1985), and Nilsen (1986), most of the studies involving information needs of artists looked at art students or art

faculty. Although great strides were made in the past to ensure students and faculty made good use of their library facilities, these studies did not address the people who work as professional artists outside the protective bubble of academia.

Frank (1999) noted that although data on circulation and collection use provide valuable information, librarians must learn about how artists seek and use information in general, outside of these sources. Frank insisted that the best way to improve the general academic library for use by art students was to reach out to them, and to listen to what they have to say.

Littrell (2001) posed the question, "When artists joined the academic world, was there any effort made to determine their informational needs?" (p.291). She studied both art students and art faculty, noting that although they are all artists, based on their professional levels, they still use information differently.

One of the highlights of this literature review is the study by Susie Cobbledick (1996). While Cobbledick was the first to use in-depth questions, forming a qualitative study in order to develop a framework for further research on the subject, it is extremely limited for several reasons. First, the four subjects interviewed were not only practicing artists, but also faculty at the same institution. The fact that these artists worked in academia gave them an advantage over those who were not academically affiliated. Not only are the academic library and all of its resources easily accessible and freely available, they also have a close network of other art professionals in close range.

Cobbledick (1996) interviewed two men and two women, who each practiced art in a different media (a sculptor, a painter, a metal smith, and a fiber

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artist), a sampling decision that creates diversity even though the sample is quite

small. Cobbledick made it a point to distinguish the difference between art and

craft, noting that the fiber artist and the metal smith (both women) are crafters

whereas the painter and the sculptor (both men) are fine artists, in order to show

how the two overlap. This is helpful in terms of better understanding the art world,

however her gender selection only perpetuates the longstanding stereotype that

men do fine art, and women are simply crafters (Keathley, 2005, p.3). Researchers

who want to study artists should be careful to avoid gender bias, since it can be

quite a sensitive subject in the art world.

Aside from these few issues, Cobbledick's was one of the first studies that

took into account the needs of professional artists rather than students, and also

that investigated the types of information seeking done outside of the library and

print materials. Cobbledick's study provides insight and inspiration for more recent

studies, including the one being proposed in this paper. Other authors whose

research focuses on students and/or faculty include Reed and Tanner (2001), Bates

(2001), and Bennett (2006). It wasn't until quite recently that research has been

done on actual professional, practicing artists (Cowan, 2004; Hemmig, 2009; Mason

& Robinson, 2011).

Cowan (2004) developed a qualitative study, using an in-depth interview of

one female artist with a couple of goals in mind: "to find out what has been done in

the LIS field and try to come to grips with why [she finds] the existing research so

unsatisfactory" and to "find out through a case study what an artist's information

needs and sources in relation to her work actually are" (p.14). Cowan noted that

most of the past research relied on artists (students and faculty) within the

academic library who were already frequent library users. She criticized library-

centered studies (p.15) and emphasized the fact that most artists' information

seeking is not done to solve a specific problem or fill an information gap (p.18).

Hemmig provided both a substantial literature review (2008), as well as a

quantitative study (2009) in order to identify a model from the literature and

determine whether it applied. Like Cowan (2004), Hemmig believed that a study of

adult practicing artists was needed in place of the numerous studies of art

academics. His goal was to apply the model in order to provide a basis for further

research and to use it as a "template for mapping the information behaviors of other

communities of artists in order to render them less elusive" (p.683). Hemmig

insisted that in order to create a worthwhile study, it was imperative to avoid

seeking out library users, and to use only people who considered themselves to be

"practicing artists engaged in the marketing of their work," whether they were

academically affiliated or not (p.685). The data collected in Hemmig's research

support the notion that artists use information outside the realm of the category of

art in order to inform their creative process.   He also emphasized the importance of

community and that public libraries are among the most appropriate places for

visual artists to conduct research.

The most recent study of practicing artists, published just this year and

conducted in the United Kingdom, was done by Mason and Robinson (2011), and

focused on "emerging artists" who had "recently completed formal education in art

or design, are no longer in formal education or a formal career structure, and are

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engaged in building up their own practice of the arts" (p.159). They used an online

questionnaire to survey 78 artists who had graduated within seven years before the

study (p.159). While Mason's and Robinson's study found that the information

needs of emerging artists and artists to be quite similar, they noted a few key

differences: that emerging artists were short on money and resources, and that most

were not prepared by their education to live and work in the real world.

These last three studies mentioned are extremely insightful in regards to the

information behaviors of practicing artists and will be crucial to the research of

subsequent studies.

Browsing is another aspect of the information behavior of artists that has

been addressed in numerous ways throughout the literature. Most studies support

the notion that browsing is an integral part of the artists' information search

methods (Day & McDowell, 1985; Layne, 1994; Stam 1995a, 1995b; Cobbledick,

1996; Frank, 1999; van Zijl & Gericke, 2001; Littrell, 2001; Bates, 2001; Cowan,

2004; Bennett, 2006; Hemmig, 2009), and some who would like to refute the notion

that browsing is the most important mode of the information search (Mason &

Robinson, 2011). It is assumed, for the most part, that with browsing come

serendipitous discoveries. Serendipity should be considered important in some way

"for its role in connection building, discovery, and creativity" (Foster & Ford, 2003,

p.323).

The literature indeed provides an informative background of the subject, but

is still lacking in terms of studying professional artists who are not affiliated with

the academic world. The earlier literature addresses the fact that there is a definite

need to learn more about how artists use information, and the latest does a good job

of getting more specific. There is still, however, a lack of information about the adult

practicing visual artist's information needs. Cobbledick (1996) and Cowan (2004)

provide substantial groundwork in the realm of artist studies, and their in-depth

interviews provide a framework for further qualitative research. Hemmig's (2009)

study supplies thorough quantitative data, but only uses a small community of

artists, and does not adequately address the technological advances made in the

past decade which may affect the way artists search for and find information.

Mason & Robinson (2011) provide the most current information, but exclude

practicing artists who do not have a degree, of which there are surely many.

　　　While some would agree with Hemmig's (2009) insistence that a non-library

centered study would uncover more about artists' information needs, the main

objective is to find out how libraries can be of better service, and that does not seem

possible without researching library use, or lack thereof.

　　　There is also need for the major technological advances that have happened

in the last five years alone (smartphones, broadband internet, digital cameras, social

networking, etc.) to be addressed. In Cobbledick's 1996 study, the only technology

mentioned are home computers, fax machines, and library catalogs, thus making the

data almost invalid at this point in time.

　　　There may be some conflict in the literature as to whether or not browsing is

the preferred search method, but the point is that artists simply search differently.

For the most part, visual artists want something tactile; they want to look through

the books and periodicals rather than read the titles from a list on a computer

screen. They need images. They need visual cues from the materials to know

whether something is worthwhile. A public library in a community with a high

concentration of artists should be aware of these proclivities.

Research Questions and Methods

In order to gain insight into the creative process, several questions will need

to be addressed. The main focus of the study will be to investigate how different

artists seek out and use information within their creative process. The primary

question for this study, as restated from above, is: how do artists, who are in

constant states of research, learning, and discovery, with no specific question in

mind, find and use the information they need to facilitate their creative process?

The best way to do this seems to be through in-depth interviews with a

number of visual artists. The goal is to speak with ten artists living and working in

the Kansas City area, of varying backgrounds, media, and points of interest. The two

studies from the literature that provide the most influence are those of Cobbledick

(1996) and Cowan (2004). Both studies use in-depth interviews with artists to

learn about their subject. The main objective of Cobbledick's (1996) interviews was

to provide her with a framework in order to develop a detailed library use survey

instrument. Cobbledick's (1996) survey instrument - a comprehensive checklist

broken down into sections such as "sources of visual and inspirational information,"

"shows, commissions, and sales," "libraries," etc. (p.366-369) – is thorough and

practical, but has been met with some criticism. Cowan (2004), for instance, claims

that Cobbledick's survey focuses too much on "the concept of information as *thing*,

or at least as something obtained from things, and a large proportion of the 'thingly'

information fulfillers that she includes in her survey questions are the province of the library" (p.15). Nonetheless, the survey instrument developed by Cobbledick (1996) will be handed out to supplement a library use inquiry at the end of each interview in this study (see Appendix B).

Cowan's (2004) in-depth interview serves as the primary inspiration for this study, however hers is less structured than the one that will be used in this study. Cowan (2004) believed that "information behavior is highly subjective and idiosyncratic, and to portray it otherwise is to falsify it to some degree," (p.17) and that belief is shared here.

The interviews will consist of open-ended questions regarding the individual artist's creative process and how he or she seeks/finds/uses information in his or her work. The questions asked will be the same for each artist, but the interview will remain flexible to allow for a natural conversation to occur. Each artist will be asked not only about information needs and use, but also to explain their work so that there can be an understanding of how different each artist really is. The transcripts will be studied to find recurring themes and similarities between the artists. The purpose of using the Cobbledick (1996) survey instrument is so that the library can have some easily quantifiable data to learn from. Interviewees will be called on to sign up for the study through alumni association announcements, the library website, and art organizations in the hopes that these sources will produce a diverse group.

While the qualitative nature of the in-depth interview may not provide the most concrete data, it is assumed here to be the best method to learn about a topic as subjective as art and creation.

Results

The results from this study will be used by the Kansas City Public Library to better serve its artistically inclined patrons. While a group of artists in any given community are surely made up of all kinds of people, they also operate with certain similarities. The data collected of the in-depth interviews and the information use surveys will be studied and organized to the best of the researcher's abilities in order to paint a picture of the practicing visual artist's information behaviors so that the library can provide a welcoming and helpful environment for these highly valued and creative members of the Kansas City community.

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Budget

The only equipment needed to conduct this study will be for recording the interviews. Paper and a small amount of other office supplies are needed, but all interviews will be conducted in person, so there is no need for stamps or envelopes. Since the interviewees will be taking time out of their personal lives to participate in this study, small gifts will be given. Refreshments will also be provided so that the interviewer and interviewee can maintain focus and be comfortable during the meeting. Transcription services will be requested so that the recorded conversations can be easily referred to in print format and analyzed appropriately.

Item	Price	Quantity	Total
Recording Equipment:			
2GB Digital Voice Recorder	$50.00	1	$50.00
Noise-Cancelling Microphone	$20.00	1	$20.00
Incentives and Refreshments:			
Gift cards to Utrecht Art Supply Store	$10.00	10	$100.00
Refreshments during Interviews (bottled water, coffee, tea, snacks, etc.)	$10.00	10	$100.00
Supplies:			
Printer Paper (in Reams)	$8.00	1	$8.00
Box of Ballpoint Pens	$18.99	1	$18.99
One Subject Spiral Bound Notebook	$2.00	3	$6.00

Services Outsourced:			
Transcription of Interviews	$400.00		$400.00
Total Budget Amount Requested:			$702.99

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      to multimedia materials. Department of Information Studies, University of

      California, Los Angeles, CA. Retrieved from

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    http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_City,_Missouri

Resume of Jessica D. McClanahan

Education

2011 – current   **Emporia State University School of Library Management,** Master of Library and Information Science, Overland Park, Kansas

2001 – 2005   **Kansas City Art Institute,** Bachelor of Fine Arts, Kansas City, Missouri

1997 – 2001   **Booker T. Washington High School,** Tulsa, Oklahoma

Professional Experience

2009 – current   **Proprietor/ Bookbinder/Printer,** Quiet Hand Press, Kansas City, Missouri

2007   **Interior Design Manager,** Design Ergonomics, Westport, Massachusetts

2005 – 2007   **Volunteers and Demonstrations Coordinator**, Southern Graphics Council 2007, Kansas City, Missouri

2005-2006   **Printmaking Studio Technician,** Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri

2005-2006   **Teaching Assistant,** Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri

2004-2005   **Furniture and Antique Restoration Intern,** Teresa Dresslaer, Kansas City, Missouri

Awards

2005   **Kansas City Art Institute Dean's List**
Chameleon Curatorial Artist Residency
2005 Annual BFA Guest Critic Program

2001 - 2005   **Kansas City Art Institute Merit Scholarship Award**

Art Exhibitions

2007   **Here and Now: Kansas City Regional Prints,** Leedy-Voulkos Art Center, Kansas City, Missouri

2005   **Kansas City Flatfile Exhibition,** H&R Block Artspace, Kansas City, Missouri

2005   **Precious Onset,** with Jess Moffitt, Mpress, Kansas City, Missouri

2005   **2005 Annual BFA Exhibit,** H&R Block Artspace, Kansas City, Missouri

2004   **Interiors,** Kansas City Art Institute Photo/New Media Gallery, Kansas City, Missouri
2004   **Plint,** The Bank, Kansas City, Missouri
2004   **Making Meaning: The Artist Book,** H&R Block Artspace, Kansas City, Missouri

Appendix A
Diagnostic Interview Questionnaire
Artist interviewed by Jessica D. McClanahan on February 12, 2011

Section 1: Information Seeking Experience

1.   When you are doing research for your work, what kinds of sources do you look to first?

I look online for books that are related to the topic, and then I will go to the bookstore and look at before deciding if I want to buy them. I look online for related articles. I also spend a lot of time looking for films and images. If I can't find them in the US, I usually have to purchase them from overseas, download them via a bittorrent site. Images are more difficult because often they can only be found in specific libraries that are not located in my city.
I also look extensively at footnotes from art history or theory books that I'm reading and find new information from those sources.

2.   How much time, if any, do you spend in libraries? If you do go to a library, how likely are you to ask an information professional for help?

Unfortunately, I haven't been to a library in a long time because I feel so much of what I'm interested in comes from recent pop culture or sources.   If I go to a library, I will always ask for help if I need it.

3.   What is your experience with the Internet and online databases? Do you utilize advanced search options?

I do a lot of initial research online, but I usually go more into depth by buying a book. I used to have access to some academic online databases, but no longer.

4.   Do you often find yourself talking to friends, colleagues, or family members when looking for new information?

Yes. I talk to everyone who might know something about the topic or who might know how to find information on that topic.

5.   How much time do you devote to this research? Do you stick to a schedule?

I don't stick to a schedule generally. I am always looking at things, and reading things, and I often don't know where I am going to find inspiration. It could be found in the lyrics to a song, the chapter heading of a book, a phrase from a character in a film, a piece of work I saw in a gallery, or an experience I, or someone close to me, has had. I have been researching artists for a website I am starting, so my research for this project has been regular, meaning a day or two every week. But for my own visual sources, I consider almost everything I do to be some kind of research, even my daily interactions with people—the topics I discuss with someone over dinner, the man screaming at everyone on the train, my best friend's relationship and infidelity—this is what makes life, and I am interested in how people interact and deal with situations, what makes them tick, what hurts them, etc.

Section 2: Research Topic

1.   Since you practice ongoing research in order to inform your work as an artist, what kinds of filtering do you do, i.e. how do you determine the importance of the information you find?

I don't like to put things into a hierarchy of importance for visual research—it can come from anywhere and no one thing is more valid than another. But what draws me to something is if it affects me. If it is affecting, in some way, I know that it is important, because if it can stir a powerful reaction in me then it can affect other people as well. Our basic needs are universal and I am interested in finding that threshold. In my work, if the viewer can see part of themselves through an image or video that I have presented to them, then I have been successful, especially if it is something that they don't necessarily won't to recognize about themselves.

2.   What would you say is your main topic of interest?

Sexuality and identity from a female perspective. Who and how we desire, how we want to be desired and loved, how one's identity is constantly shifting to reflect those desires, and how we deal with the failure to reach those desires. Most explicitly, though, how love is inseparable from pain. Freud wrote extensively on the relationship between Eros and Thanatos as two conflicting drives inside of all human beings. He believed the drive for life, love and preservation was always related to the death drive, which continually seeks pleasure at all costs. Freud notes that we repeat our erotic disasters over and over and over again, despite our inevitable failure, and as a result, struggle with sadomasochistic tendencies. These themes are always reflected in my work, and while the images are beautiful, they are also full of the sorrow and desperation that this dynamic implies.

3.   When did you first decide that this was what you wanted to make your work about?

When I took my first photo class, I started taking pictures of women that were my friends and setting up narrative scenes that commented on different emotions I was having. It was a space where I could work out all of things that were going in inside my head, by externalizing them through the camera, I could try to make sense of them in the images. It became more sophisticated in college, and even more so in grad school when I began using myself as the subject. But I always photographed women

4.   How do you use the information you find interesting or important in your work? What kinds of ways do you incorporate it?

I use phrases, experiences or images that affect me in a conflicting way to generate my own visual image, using the site of my own body as the conflict. I am drawn to conflict and how it can be reflected on the body. I will stage different scenes based on something I find erotic, but it can never just be read on one level. So the staging of a scene may occur many times before I get it right, and where there is pleasure in eroticism it will always be tangled with a subversive comment, one that speaks to it's opposite: pain. I work to portray both an intimacy and honesty, but not without making the viewer aware of the potential vulnerabilities that are a result of that.
Incorporating these ideas takes experimentation. If a find a phrase or theory that is inspiring (Freud's Eros and Thanatos drives) then I will try my best to illustrate it from my own vision and performance of it. Trying to perform an abstract idea, like love or desire, is a difficult thing, because it is subjective and there is no right answer or interpretation of it. I perform the idea based on how I understand it and how it affects me.

5.   Since your artwork is ongoing and not text based, in what ways do you credit your sources?

I have credited artists in my titles.   I remade an image from a male Surrealist photographer, but from a contemporary and feminist perspective (i.e., using my own body rather than a doll), and I titled the image "After Bellmer". That is a more direct credit, but I've credited artists in other ways in titles— "Carved into Roses" is the title of one of my images, which was taken from a Kathy Acker book. "Eros and Thanatos" is another title, and, as I discussed above, it is taken from Freud's theory of the same name.

I also discuss all of these sources more directly in my statement, specifically commenting on my influence from film, feminist film theory, and Surrealism, and I often use quotes from those sources.

6.   Is there a point when you might consider your research finished?

No, it will continue always.

Section 3: Personal Background

1.   Describe briefly where you grew up.

I grew up in Emporia, Kansas, a small town with one high school, one middle school, etc. I lived outside of town in the country.

2.   Do you find that your art stems from that upbringing?

Absolutely.   As an artist, and I believe, as any human being, we find out how much our upbringing influences many of our behavioral patterns, relationships, and decisions as adults. I think growing up in a small town, and growing up very fast, left a huge mark on my life. The pain, isolation, abandonment, and self-destruction I experienced, I still struggle with today. It is at the root of who I am and how my identity formed, and it will find its way into everything that I create. Even the palette, fabrics, and style of my childhood home are constantly reflected in my work.

3.   What is your first memory of research or libraries?

My first memory was in elementary school, we had a library session every week and our librarian we read us all kinds of different stories and teach us how to look up subjects in the card catalog. After, we would be able to pick out any books we wanted and check them out.

I also loved going to public library as a young adult. I remember my mom used to drop me off there and I would wander through aisles looking at titles and covers, and then just pick something up and read it. Coincidentally, one of those authors I randomly picked up, remains today one of my favorite fiction writers—Joyce Carol Oates.   I would do more in depth research as well, not just intuitive searching. I would hear about classics that were embedded in pop culture, and I wanted to understand why they were so influential. I realized that I wasn't going to learn about these authors in school, so I would seek them out myself—Shakespeare, for instance, or William Burroughs, or any number of poets including Sylvia Plath.

Appendix B
Library use survey developed by Susie Cobbledick (1996), with added questions from Jessica D.
McClanahan indicated with an *

Sources of Visual and Inspirational Information
Indicate the source(s) that inspired your present body of work.
__ personal life experiences
__ images and/or text in books on art theory
__ images and/or text in books on art (contemporary and histor- ical)
__ images and/or text in books on non-art subjects
__ images and/or text related to art in magazines, journals, and/ or newspapers
__ images and/or text unrelated to art in magazines, journals, and/ or newspapers novels and/or
poetry
__ images and/or text in art-related websites*
__ images and/or text in non-art-related websites*
__ images and/or text in social networking platform*
__ images found in online image database (i.e. Google Image Search)*
__ works of art seen in person (includes architecture)
__ man-made objects other than works of art
__ television programs, videos, and/or films on art and/or art theory
__ television programs, videos, and/or films on non-art-related subjects
__ photographs and/or slides of works of art
__ photographs and/or slides of non-art-related subjects
__ photographs found online through photo sharing websites such as Flickr*
__ forms occurring in nature
__ other(please specify)_____
Indicate the source(s) of the specific visual elements in your present body of work.
__ live models (figures, still lifes, landscapes, etc.)
__ images generated by your own imagination (working out ideas on paper, etc.)
__ the qualities of the medium itself
__ images of art in magazines, journals, and/or newspapers
__ images of non-art-related subjects in magazines, journals, and/or newspapers
__ images in books on art and/or art theory
__images in books on non-art-related subjects
__ images found online through art-related sites*
__ images found online through non-art-related sites*
__ images found using online image search*
__ images discovered through online social networking sites*
__ images generated by chance
__ works of art seen in museums, homes, etc. (includes architecture)
__ images in television programs, videos, and/or films on art and/or art theory
__ images in television programs, videos, and/or films on non-art-related subjects
__ photographs and/or slides related to art and/or art theory
__ photographs and/or slides of non-art-related subjects
__ other (please specify) _____

Sources of Technical Information

Indicate the source(s) you use most often to obtain information about materials and techniques with which you are not familiar.
__ technical manuals
__ artist colleagues
__ trial and error experimentation
__ manufacturers and/or suppliers
__ experimentation
__ videos found on YouTube and other online video databases*
__ online forums specific to the media in question*
__ asking questions through social media outlets*
__ other (please specify) _____

Sources of Information about Current Developments in the Visual Arts
Indicate the source(s) you use most often to obtain information about developments in both your own discipline and other disciplines.
__ craft arts journals
__ fine arts journals
__ conferences
__ artist colleagues
__ popular magazines
__ craft arts exhibitions catalogs
__ fine arts exhibition catalogs
__ craft arts shows
__ fine arts shows
__ craft arts websites and/or blogs*
__ fine arts websites and/or blogs*
__ social networking sites*
__ online magazines or journals*
__ other (please specify) _____

Shows, Commissions, and Sales
Have you participated in any shows in the past twelve months?
__ yes
__ no
If yes, how did you find out about or gain admission to the last show in which you participated?
__ notice in an art magazine, journal, or newspaper
__ notice in a non-art-related magazine, journal, or newspaper
__ notice in an online art magazine or journal*
__ notice in an online non-art-related magazine or journal*
__ notice on an art-related website*
__ notice on a non-art-related website*
__ invitation
__ invitation received via a social networking site*
__ invitation received via an email list that you signed up for*
__ prospectus received in the mail
__ prospectus received in an email*
__ prospectus obtained by some other means
__artist colleagues
__ other (please specify) _____
Have you applied for any commissions in the past twelve months?
__ yes
__ no
If yes, how did you find out about the last commission for which you applied?
__ invitation to apply

__ notice in an art magazine, journal, or newspaper
__ notice in a non-art-related magazine, journal, or newspaper
__ notice on an art-related website*
__ notice on a non-art-related website*
__ invitation via a social networking site*
__ notice on an online classified forum such as Craigslist*
__ by browsing online marketplaces (such as Alchemy on Etsy.com)*
__ artist colleagues
__ other (please specify) _____
Have you sold any work in the past twelve months?
__ yes
__ no
If yes, by what means was the last sale made?
__ consultant
__ gallery that represents you
__ show outside of a gallery(s) that represent(s) you
__ personal contact with buyer
__ through use of an online marketplace such as Etsy or Ebay*
__ through online classifieds such as Craigslist*
__ through social networking sites*
__ other (please specify) _____

Libraries
Do you ever use libraries to obtain information related to your work as an artist?
__ yes
__ no
If yes, indicate how often you use these different types of libraries for this purpose.

	very often	sometimes	rarely	never
university/college library	_____	_____	_____	_____
public library	_____	_____	_____	_____
art library	_____	_____	_____	_____
other (please specify)	_____	_____	_____	_____

If yes, indicate the mean(s) you use most often to locate information in the library.
__ card catalogs/automated library catalogs
__ online library catalogs accessed outside of the library*
__ reference librarians
__ AskALibrarian or similar online reference tool*
__ browsing
__ indexes
__ other (please specify) _____

Technology
Do electronic technologies play a part in your work as an artist?
__ yes
__ no
If yes, indicate which form(s) of electronic technology you use most often in your work as an artist.
__ fax machines
__ copy machines
__ CD-ROMS (please specify) _____
__ DVDs* (please specify) _____
__ Mp3s*
__ electronic databases (please specify) _____
__ Email
__ graphics software

__ video and/or sound editing software*
__ open source software*
__ online search engines* (please specify)_____
__ cellular phone and/or smartphone*
__ desktop computer*
__ laptop computer*
__ tablet/eReader*
__ digital camera*
__ word processing software
__ PDF viewing software*
__ other (please specify) _____

Gatekeepers and Invisible Colleges
Are there any individuals with whom you discuss art-related issues at least three times a year?
__ yes
__ no
If yes, indicate the category(s) of persons with whom you discuss these issues on a regular basis.
__ librarians
__ artist colleagues
__ museum directors and/or curators
__ art historians
__ students (if you are an instructor)
__ gallery directors
__ consultants
__ manufacturers and/or suppliers of materials
__ art critics
__ friends
__ people on social networking sites whom you know*
__ people on social networking sites whom you do not know*
__ participants on online forums or discussion boards*
__ other (please specify) _____
Are there any individuals to whom you turn at least three times a year for advice and information
relative to art in general and/or your work in particular?
__ yes
__ no
If yes, indicate the category(s) of persons to whom you turn for this advice and information.
__ librarians
__ artist colleagues
__ museum directors and/or curators
__ art historians
__ students (if you are an instructor)
__ gallery directors
__ consultants
__ manufacturers and/or suppliers of materials
__ art critics
__ friends
__ people on social networking sites whom you know*
__ people on social networking sites whom you do not know*
__ participants on online forums or discussion boards*
__ other (please specify) _____

Books
What books have you read in the past twelve months? Cite specific titles please.