

FOUND OBJECTS IN ART THERAPY

Materials and Process

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CHAPTER 14

Found Objects in Art Therapy Pedagogy

Significant Trajectories of Our Practice

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This chapter aims to surface the significance of found objects in postgraduate art therapy training and how two artists/practitioners/academics have used their unique understanding to enrich and enhance the student learning experience. The trajectories of conceptualizing and repurposing materials and found objects, within pedagogy at this level of teaching and learning, are traced alongside observations of these processes in situ. Each of the chapter contributors to this book provides perspectives in ways that interweave art, clinical practice and teaching in Southeast Asia as further influenced by our own artmaking, lived experience and postgraduate training in three distinct regions that include Australia, Canada and Singapore. The overall discourse is structured into two main segments, our individual perspectives, buttressed by both the context from which we engage with our students and a culmination of ideas that champion the use of found objects in art therapy pedagogy.

We acknowledge the incredible responsibility involved with art therapy education and how it influences, impacts and informs how the profession is received and embraced in communities, how this shapes the identity and practice of art therapists, and how this progresses the discipline in ways that are culturally relevant and meaningful (Backos and Carolan 2018; Deaver 2012; Kelly, Levey and Lay 2017; Lay 2018).

We also appreciate that although guided by international best practices, ethics and teaching guidelines, in addition to those sanctioned through our credentials, there is still opportunity to individualize and design art therapy training in creative ways that adhere to each of these as well as in response to the unique considerations wherein it is located (McNiff 1986; Moon 2003; Potash, Bardot and Ho 2012; Reader 2018).

Centralizing the art in the postgraduate art therapy training programme at LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore has not only been a priority but also a strategic and deliberate decision. This relatively new training acknowledges that art, artmaking and art practice are essential to the identity and practice of the art therapist, to the training of new generations of art therapists, to all those who receive art therapy services and/or are within the periphery of such services, and to the discipline of art therapy itself as it becomes illuminated as a viable mental health modality in this region (Backos and Carolan 2018; Carr and McDonald 2019; Deaver 2012; Fish 2019; Kelly *et al.* 2017; McNiff 2019; Moon 2003). This further extends to the art media and materials used, and how the introduction of found objects into art and art therapy in this region are being understood, (re)considered and creatively repurposed in novel, provocative and unique ways.

Experiential learning and arts-based teaching ground this two-year intensive training, wherein clinical supervision integrate art and artmaking as part of a comprehensive reflexive process, and the graduating cohort create and exhibit their art as a group, in their own gallery, as part of the larger college-wide annual art exhibition (Hjelde 2020). Gerber (2016, p.799) acknowledges, 'Arts-based learning and artistic enquiry allows the student to experience how aesthetic knowledge emerges, the metaphorical and symbolic forms of expression, and the assignation of meaning within the intersubjective context.' This clearly resonates with our intentions and observations of how our students are negotiating theory, clinical practice, art and artmaking as part of their learning and application, and of how many assume an artist identity as their training progresses (Moon 2002; Robbins and Goffia-Girasek 1987). Further juxtaposed with this is the sensitive consideration of what constitutes media and materials, and how these can be meaningfully accessed, manipulated and used with art therapy training, practice and one's art and artmaking. The following sections provide our two perspectives, and will expand on these ideas as linked to art therapy pedagogy.

Part 1: Found objects and the physical world around us (Daniel Wong)

In art therapy, we often engage in the art of 'bricolage', employing an array of diverse materials or bric-a-brac to construct an object imbued with personal meaning. This act of tinkering by mixing, matching and collaging can lead to discovery through imitation/pastiche, yet also to new interpretations or ways of knowing.

Markham (2018, p.43) writes: 'Bricolage can be characterized as an action one takes (as a bricoleur), an attitude (or epistemology), and the resulting product (or outcome) of both. Associated concepts include pastiche, collage, remix. Bricolage is used mostly in art, organizational studies, and interpretive sociology to describe a particular type of knowledge and artistic production.'

I start with a trajectory of my practice in repurposing found objects and then pivot my observations in teaching, and in supervision. Found objects are, as Tim Ingold, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Aberdeen, noted, caught up in our everyday lives. They are very complicated material things, or, to use French sociologist Bruno Latour's term, quasi-objects, cultural products or things that were constructed and assembled (Latour 1993). They have a life, biographies and persona of their own. They touch us in our engagement and attempt to give form and significance, when we try to use them in our art practice, or locate meanings in the blending together or the unfolding of the personal, social and cultural narratives. Below, I will sketch several parallel threads, looking at how I use found materials in response art; assign meanings to them in the amalgam of my social and historical lives; and in the fostering of a bricoleur attitude with my art therapy students towards their material environment and appropriation of found objects.

In 2009, I relocated to Bangkok, Thailand, from Sydney, Australia. It was a time of excitement and disorientation as I found myself in a world where I worked *precariously*. Without a full-time job, I entered into itinerant modes of working: in the unpredictable, unstable and insecure working conditions shared by many creatives who are self-employed in artistic work (Oakley 2009). I connected with the Communities Healing Through Art (CHART) and volunteered as their regional coordinator in Southeast Asia. A year later, I began to teach part-time in the Master's in Art Therapy programme at LASALLE College of the

Arts, shuttling weekly between Singapore and Bangkok over two full semesters. I also met Dr Patcharin Sughondhabirom, who was then running the therapeutic studio Human Center (now renamed as the Art Therapy Foundation, Thailand). I would later team up with her to run a series of experiential art workshops across Thailand and latterly teach at the International Program of 'Art Therapy', a private programme that she set up in collaboration with Lucille Proulx from the Canadian International Institute of Art Therapy.

Soon I was dividing my time between Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong and Japan, running group art experiential workshops at various non-profit organizations, colleges and universities in the region. I had an active life, but by the end of 2011 I was inexplicably paralysed with anxiety. I started to have panic attacks, was irritable, had trouble sleeping and was highly sensitive to bright lights and noise in the environment. The incapacitation and disorientation rendered it impossible to enjoy reading, my favourite pastime.

I turned to the pile of found materials from various trips – corrugated cardboard, loose swatches of mixed fabric scraps as well as tickets and leaflets from museums and galleries, from thrift shops and souvenirs that were turned into miniature tableaus around window sills, on bookcase shelves, in pots or woven baskets on the kitchen countertop. The corrugated cardboard, in their previous incarnation, as wrappers for books from Amazon, angered me. They reminded me of my inability to focus, to read. Spontaneously, I tore them into pieces by hand and then cut up the rest with a pair of scissors. I then twisted a couple of the strips into gangly armatures; I then wrapped and bound the flimsy structure with leftover ribbons and cotton yarns.

The physical materials resisted when I attempted to fasten certain joints, via the actions of stitching, typing, binding and winding strips of ribbons and fabric scraps together. Initially, I focused on the way my hands interacted with materials, via layering and attaching. The physical properties of the cardboard, strings, ribbons, varnish and tools (needles) were keenly felt as they were circulated, acted and deliberated on in my hands. The physical manipulation and material entanglement (Ingold 2008) invited me into a labyrinth of evocative memories: the separation and relationship ties with long-lost childhood friends, significant teachers and my late grandmother. They allowed me to turn inwards, invoking and allowing latent memories and unconscious contents to surface.

In hindsight, the transformation that occurred in my psyche had much to do with the chance encounter with the corrugated cardboard. The repetitious act of wrapping *Astro 1.0* (see Figure 14.1) with fabric scraps created a ritual of security for me during a chaotic time. The appearance of *Astro*, a Japanese comic book and television character from my childhood, was unexpected. It offered me the first concrete reminder of how seemingly *ordinary* objects can be quite extraordinary in that they can offer opportunities for mourning and awareness of my predicament.



Figure 14.1. *Astro 1.0* [mixed media, Daniel Wong, 2011]

Clumsy and absent-minded at times with the needle, I would prick my finger, drawing blood. This would be accompanied by flooding of visceral, lucid sensations and associations. I reminded myself to be more careful and to be more compassionate. I learned, too, that I could endure the tiny hurts and draw new strengths with each muscular stitch. Working on this object over several weeks, I realized that I was creating a transitional object. I was mourning the various unfinished losses I had carried in me through the years, across oceans and islands. The gangly body frame gave way to a new armoured body, and the featureless head and feet were painted and overlaid with multiple varnishes until they acquired a lacquer-like hardness.

Astro Boy (see Figure 14.2) is a fictional character created by Osamu Tezuka and the main protagonist of the Astro Boy franchise (Schodt 2007). My own *Astro 1.0* speaks to my need to project, and in the process incorporates a comforting image of future potentialities; within, it holds the sense of becoming that it embodied: an archetype of the divine child, a battler, despite the threat of annihilation. It also embodied the notion of redemption or signified possible development and growth, as well as my incapacitation due to primitive anxieties.

Art historian Margaret Iverson attributes this to André Breton's reading and positioning of the found object, where he places it in the space of the unconscious (Iverson 2004). The corrugated boards that were transformed into *Astro 1.0* provided a bridge for me to link to troubled and weakened ties with people who were close and new in my immediate environment. Through the elusive encounter, and within the artmaking, I was afforded the opportunity to grieve my relational losses in connection to identity, health, people and places.

The tinkering with various scraps of material and the final art product concretized insights of both subjectivist and objectivist accounts of my life. The physical materiality and metaphors located within the object itself enabled me to dwell in a body (Ingold 2008). It provided me with, as Isabel Harbison argues in her deliberation of beauty in art, 'a temporary stratagem, a Trojan horse, in order to go beyond the borders of the norm or the benign' and enable me to see my situation anew (Charlesworth and Harbison 2016, para.4).



Figure 14.2. Astro Boy, 2011 © Tezuka Productions

The found cardboards are irreplaceable and are both *lost* and *found*. The chance encounter calls to my experience of profound loss. The

encounter carries a function, in disrupting my ordinary perception, and allows me to see the hole in the fabric of my life. By responding to its invitation and engaging with it, it moved me out of my habits of thought and patterns of action. The transformation of materials into a physical art object allowed me to contemplate the possibility of dwelling with my deep wounds and in my mindsight. *Astro 1.0* provided me with metaphors for how the rejected and discarded parts can be reintegrated into a new sense of wholeness (Camic, Brooker and Neal 2011; Siano 2016). Internally, this reflection teaches me that meaning does not happen solely in the art object or within me, but instead takes place in between, in the space between senses and perception of the world around me. *Astro 1.0* has found me and has allowed me to dialogue with it in the transformation of both interior and exterior narratives, in reclaiming new grounds, identities and potentials.

Handling objects

The verb 'bricoleur' describes how I engage in everyday activities, with found materials and with students at LASALLE, where I have been teaching full-time since August 2016. Embracing a bricoleur attitude to artmaking, with the attendant skills, processes and understanding of the creative or artistic inquiry, is highly relevant in art therapy training today. It has become my teaching focus, emphasizing such things as creativity, imagination, critical analysis, empathy, experimentation, synthesis and voice. In my work, I strongly encourage students to pay more attention to and engage with unusual materials from their everyday environments in a focused way, with intentionality, in creating assemblages, bricolages and installations.

Anne Dezeuze cites William Seltz's definition of assemblage 'as an activity involving "the fitting together of parts and pieces"' (Seltz 1961, cited in Dezeuze 2008, p.31). This description of the do-it-yourself process of gathering *odds* and *ends* in a re-construction is described by the French word *bricolage* and theorized by the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. This process-based practice has been a feature in contemporary art since the late 1950s. Contemporary artists often transform discarded, unwanted, broken pieces of junk into assemblages with personal, social and cultural meanings (Dezeuze and Kelly 2013; Guruianu and Andrievskikh 2019; Whitely 2011). In their practices,

they 'tinker with and recycle cultural givens' but are 'equally concerned with the construction of "concrete spaces," as well as the "practice of everyday life"' (Certeau 1980, cited in Dezeuze 2008, p.33–34).

In art therapy, we are often entreated by Cathy Moon (2010) to develop a deeper understanding of our physical relationship to materials or things. This may come from just the joy in handling non-conventional materials, in the discovery and inventiveness of seeing what we can make with them, or we can use them to learn about how we can make choices in how we want to live. In foregrounding the materials' relations – their properties, histories and affordances – they can provide openings into what Tim Ingold called *material intelligence* or *consciousness* which is imbued in things in tangible ways (Ingold 2012). Thus, *material thinking* and *intelligence* came to being as the cardboard was torn up and refashioned with yarns and fabrics in *Astro 1.0*.

Ingold wants us to develop an awareness and appreciation of the *things* we use in our surroundings. In the encounter, the *found* is now materials or *things* as they gather and circulate in my hands in the creative process. As the artmaking activity unfolds, I become aware of the material's tactility and resistance, its sensory and emotional experiences, and its subsequent transformation and change (both external in the artwork and internally) in my psyche. This process for Ingold is material knowing, a form of intelligence that comes into play in the interactions, gestures, energy, movements and manipulation with *things*. In the *form-giving* and the *form-making* process, 'thought goes along with, and continually answers to, the fluxes and flows of the materials with which we work' (Ingold 2013, p.6).

Art therapists have advocated for arts-based practices in art therapy (Alter-Muri 1998; Kapitan, Litell and Torres 2011; Marxen 2009; Moon 2002; Timm-Bottos 2012). In their conceptualization, art practices are inseparable from everyday relational activities, from the social and cultural narratives around us. Pamela Whitaker's (2013) fascinating work with innovative art materials and indoor and outdoor art environments is equally relevant. As she has stated in her web blog, art not only provides us with a personal narrative, but can similarly be 'socially engaged', and can 'act out upon the world'. Understanding the attitude and activities of contemporary artists' courage in taking risky experimentation and creative expression is paramount in art therapy training today.

The continued use of everyday objects in art, pedagogy and therapy reflects our concerns about the objects we surround ourselves with, while continually playing with the notion of art, creation and transformation. This broad understanding of art and areas of art therapy practices, of materiality and knowing as relational, is essential. There is now a variety of recycled materials for students to use in their response art, in class art experientials and in supervision. The art therapy studio space at LASALLE has a number of full cabinets that contain an assortment of bottle caps, egg cartons, a variety of plastic packaging materials, twist ties from various products and aluminium can tabs (similar to bottle caps) for the students to use.

The art of repurposing the found materials of everyday life creatively in art experientials, art response and/or in supervision provides limitless possibilities for insights and activities. They deepen the trainee's engagement with their creativity, imaginations, understanding of countertransference and material culture, pushing the limits of art and areas of art therapy practice. The transformative quality of repurposing found materials in art, music or therapy can mirror the processes of change. It can convey the kaleidoscope of feelings, metaphors and meanings that resonate with therapists and clients. They provide us with a bridge to the outer and inner world and can facilitate wellbeing, insights and health in astonishing ways.

Part 2: Conscious (re)conceptualizations (Ronald P. M. H. Lay)

My learning curve has been rather steep in terms of delivering a postgraduate art therapy training in Southeast Asia, to primarily Asian students, wherein the practice is essentially applied in Asian contexts (Lay 2018). It has been a rather profound experience thus far, in grounding the discipline in this culturally diverse and rich region, and to do so in sensitive, respectful and collaborative ways that promote discourse on identity, difference and diversity, wherein the teacher-learner relationship is optimized for the overall benefit of student learning (Backos and Carolan 2018; Fournier 2020; Gerber 2016; Lay 2018). The emphasis here is on *collaborative*, which only makes the best sense given the overarching collective society in which this training programme resides. I liken *collaborative* with the bringing together of

the multiple, which further hints at what happens through this process – something new emerges leading to new discovery, insights, reflection, application, and even ways of working (Fournier 2020).

Appreciating difference and being fully aware of the new context that I find myself in, transitioning from practitioner to educator and translocating from the USA to Singapore, I embraced familiar tools of the trade and fashioned a way forward in what was then foreign territory. Fortunately, the students were keen to learn and to make sense of the typically Western underpinnings of art therapy, and to somehow further translate these to the settings and client populations through their clinical placements in ways that are deemed culturally appropriate, relevant and meaningful. Rest assured, the art therapy training in Singapore has been deliberately scrutinized and designed to ensure that an Asian context is prioritized and that the multilayered dynamics of East/West are acknowledged (Kelly *et al.* 2017; Lay 2018; Potash *et al.* 2012; Reader 2018).

Although this part of the world has expansive art traditions, practices and history, not all students have/had experience with the arts and artmaking, and fewer still had their own art practice prior to coming into art therapy training (Kelly *et al.* 2017; Lay 2018). Nonetheless, the students embraced all opportunities to engage with art materials, to enhance their proficiency and skill sets with artmaking through exploration and research. They began to integrate materials from their everyday life into their own artmaking with extension into their art therapy practice. These materials include, for example, mahjong paper, rice paper, rice flour in a range of colours, local plants, leaves and seeds, chop sticks, traditional fabrics and calligraphy inks and brushes (Lay 2018). Noteworthy is that initially there was hesitation by our students to use second-hand and/or discarded everyday items as art materials given long-held local perceptions, beliefs and associations to such items.

Increasingly, however, found objects have proliferated within our art therapy classroom, discourse and practice, with some students and alumni newly specializing in this area. Moon (2010, p.60) asserts that 'art therapists are responsible for staying attuned to their own aesthetic sensibilities, including how materials beckon, intrigue, repel, or leave them cold', and that this is important as it leads to how clients respond to the materials that they are presented with. Overall, this is not surprising given that the teaching team have proactively invited international

and distinguished art therapy practitioners, artists, researchers and writers, who innovatively use a range of media, materials and spaces, to Singapore to work with and challenge our students. This purposeful interaction seamlessly complements the rest of our pedagogy that we position within the modules we lead as well as within the various conventions of supervision that we provide.

A psychodynamic paradigm guides the overall psychotherapy framework of our postgraduate training, and this permits art-based and experiential learning strategies to be implemented throughout (Dean 2016). As a practitioner who has transitioned into an academic, I find these strategies beneficial in illustrating complex theory through hands-on experience and insight through handling, manipulating, repurposing and exploring art materials and media within the classroom (Moon 2010; Robbins and Goffia-Girasek 1987). Not only is it essential that art therapy trainees learn about and engage in art and artmaking with media and materials, they must also acknowledge and consider the impact these may have on the therapeutic encounter in such areas as their identity, culture, position, privilege and difference (Deaver 2012; Fournier 2020; Gerber 2016).

Singapore is known to be a multiracial, wealthy and safe country; students must be aware of the layered contexts in which they provide art therapy and how they, in turn, influence their interactions with others (Fournier 2020; Kelly *et al.* 2017). Through these multilayered contexts, lenses and conscious awareness, through the processes mentioned above, and through ongoing contemplative and deliberative reflection, students have the aptitude of gaining deep insight, confidence and proficiency with the key tools of their chosen profession; these are further amplified through their training (Backos and Carolan 2018; Gerber 2016; McNiff 1986).

Curiosity, experimentation and innovation have also been benefits to student learning, and these seemed to have been instigated through their own interaction with materials and media, including found objects. As I consolidate my thoughts for this segment of the chapter, I'm reminded of connectivity and of Horovitz's (2018, p.9) statement that, 'In life, we are in relationship with *everything*: the dirt on the floor; the humidity in the air; the parched, dusty cornfields; the sweat trickling down our brow; the reverberation of a piano's key; even the words on the paper from which we read.' This also extends to modules

and lessons that strive to inculcate conscious awareness, sensitivity, empathy, compassion and effective ways of working, being with and perhaps even advocating for client populations that students may or may not be familiar with, especially for those who are somehow disadvantaged, marginalized and/or stigmatized (Deaver 2012; Fournier 2020; Gerber 2016).

From my extensive clinical experience in forensic mental health, I have volumes of clinical case material to draw on to enrich the modules I facilitate. It would be straightforward to provide a chronicled slideshow of artwork, discussing the course of treatment including a full introduction of the client, their diagnosis (if they have one) and so forth, to *properly* set the stage for the students and their learning about a particular client population, set of experiences and/or therapeutic art interventions. Rather than simply present carefully tailored and constructed case studies from practice and having theory-based discussions, I typically present client images and then entice and challenge students to create artwork through probing and excavating their own deep reactions, responses, understanding, insights, position and questions related to the overarching topic for that session. Discussions that follow, involving their own images and artwork, are rich given each student's culture, experience, articulation and reflection.

Acknowledging that many of the topics we explore and unpack in art therapy training are difficult and sometimes hard to describe in words, I often introduce lessons wherein the art and artmaking are given priority (Backos and Carolan 2018; Carr and McDonald 2019; Deaver 2012; McNiff 2019). Granted, there are many occasions when even the artmaking becomes a challenge and students turn to materials and media that they may not tend to gravitate to; increasingly, students are making full use of found objects and recycled materials for such experiential activities.

Drawing on my work within forensic mental health, I have designed a lesson that illustrates the compelling need for art therapists to hold back their judgement when looking at artwork and/or meeting clients for the first time, to not pathologize the artwork or the client, especially within a contemporary framework, and to develop a keen observational eye that is sensitive to the art, the artmaking, materials and the context from which the artwork was created. In this case, I have stitched together several hundred PowerPoint slides containing images from one

client that were created over four years. Without providing the client synopsis, I simply begin the slideshow, which takes over 30 minutes non-stop. Understandably, this is overwhelming on many levels for the students, and they are invited to create artwork responses afterward in contemplative silence (Fish 2019; Nash 2020).

Although all of the client's images are two-dimensional, created mostly with marker, colour pencils, pen and a few collages, the students generally create three-dimensional artwork as their response. I find this intriguing on many levels, and believe that there is a potential research project to be designed and conducted here. In the meantime, however, I believe it confirms a need to process complex and confusing material in ways that do not necessarily rely on the verbal. Granted, I invited students to create the art responses and they also have their journals to further reflect on.

Over the past few years I have joined the students in creating artwork after this particular slideshow. Creating artwork alongside students has many residual benefits in that it reinforces the centrality of the art in art therapy, it models active engagement in the arts including the exploration of a full range of materials, and it shows students that I am just as affected and perhaps even vulnerable by the visuals of the client and must somehow make sense of or process what I have just seen and experienced (Carr and McDonald 2019; Fish 2019; McNiff 2019; Nash 2020). The artwork that I create outside of the classroom typically involves the collection of objects over time and then assembling them into a conceptual form once inspiration peaks; admittedly, photography has dominated my art practice since moving to Southeast Asia (Lay 2018). However, within the classroom I only have those materials that we have sourced and made available to all of the cohorts.

Like the students, I explore the materials cupboards and then go about creating an artwork. When I create artwork with students and/or within clinical contexts, I am very conscious that others are looking to me as leader, and therefore I carefully pace myself and create art that might be considered neutral. However, when I show the hundreds of images created by this particular client, I deliberately create artwork that is raw, genuine and perhaps even evocative. The intention is to encourage, and to even give permission to, the students to go beyond the obvious, to go to the depths of human emotion and experience,

and to somehow come to terms with being *comfortable* with the *uncomfortable*, as working with clients is more than simply working with images of sunshine, smiles and bright colours.

By openly discussing the artwork that I created in response to the intensive slideshow of the client images, the students learn of the successes, struggles and realities of clinical practice within a certain context and from a certain therapist's perspective. They also bear witness to how I attempt to articulate and re-conceptualize my understanding of the client and the narrative that I construct of this experience through and by art (Carr and McDonald 2019; Dean 2016; Fish 2019; Nash 2020). This particular client was quite aggressive, dangerous and intimidating. However, he was also a person deserving of compassion, dignity, humanity and the opportunity for creative self-expression. Figure 14.3 serves to depict the scars, brutality and cold reality of living a lifetime of incarceration through the use of the broken and exposed metal parts of a discarded umbrella, no longer a functional implement of protection. The flamboyant pink feathers sensitively stand in for this client's creative and resilient humanity, and his desire to be seen in spite of the circumstances.

Figure 14.4 was created with a different cohort of students who, incidentally, engaged in an unprecedented number of arts-based community projects both nationally and internationally with me over the course of their training. It is without coincidence that I stumbled across the gloves and decided to make use of them. Hands are loaded with potential meaning, associations and connotations on both symbolic and metaphoric levels that can either be positive or negative; this is amplified within forensic contexts. In my artwork presented here, however, the outstretched disfigured hands are intended to represent my reframed understanding of how my client, through his incessant artmaking and then his handing over of these to me, to be kept in *good* hands, had made a connection with me. He had lived a lifetime characterized by violence and aggression, mandated to treatment within forensic settings, yet he still had the capacity to create and share – a valuable final lesson here being that his legacy lives on through the artwork of others half a world away from where he first created his artworks, and that significant learning took place (Backos and Carolan 2018; Dean 2016; McNiff 2019).

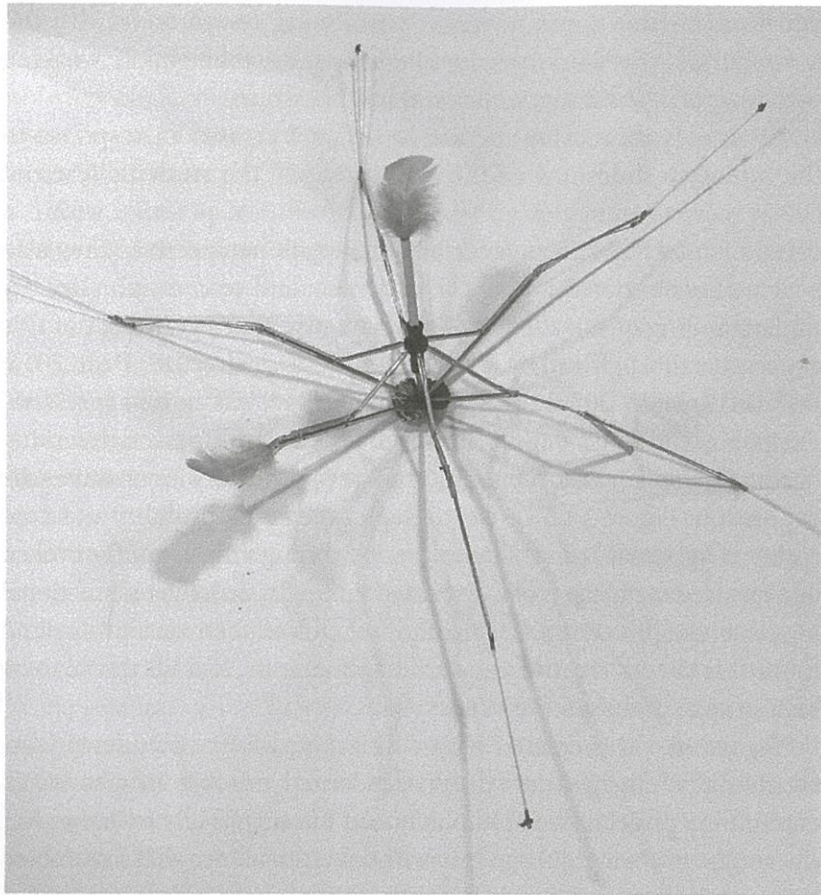


Figure 14.3. *(Re)framed 2018* [metal umbrella and dyed feathers, dimensions variable, Ronald P. M. H. Lay]



Figure 14.4. *(Re)framed 2019* [fabric gloves, shredded paper, dimensions variable, Ronald P. M. H. Lay]

I have been continuously impressed with how receptive our students are to the expansive teaching and learning made available to them, especially with the artwork they create through the experiential learning and through their emerging art practice. They have embraced opportunities to be inventive, innovative and self-initiating.

Concluding thoughts

In summary, this chapter profiled the perspectives of two artists/practitioners/academics on found objects in art therapy pedagogy, on practice, and on art and artmaking. The trajectories of each of our contributions were traced to highlight how these have been used, aiming to enrich and enhance the student learning experience. We acknowledge and appreciate the need for a comprehensive arts-based and arts-infused pedagogy that is culturally aware, sensitive and informed, that also stimulates rich discourse on difference and diversity (Deaver 2012; Fournier 2020; McNiff 1986; Potash *et al.* 2012). We have carefully orchestrated and integrated a range of theoretical underpinnings and practical understandings to the training of art therapists, primarily through the centralization of art and artmaking. As such, media and materials are critical components of the arts-based approaches of training, to the practice and, of course, to the art itself.

The discipline of art therapy is dynamic, and we have already begun to witness how it is evolving in Southeast Asia. Through our various roles we strive to continually challenge students, and the local art therapy community, to maximize their creativity, imagination and skill sets to optimize their therapeutic encounters, engagement and art interventions with those they provide services to (Lay 2018; Reedy and Wong 2020). Additionally, this serves to illuminate and stimulate the generation of new ideas and ways of using media, materials and space(s) outside of traditional art therapy texts, literature and practice (Backos and Carolan 2018; McNiff 2019; Moon 2002). In so doing, we hope to contribute to not only the development of art therapy in this region, but also to forge the discipline onward in forward-thinking ways wherein art is at the very core of art therapy training, of the identity of the art therapist, and of the practice itself.

Trajectories continue, and we look forward to the new discoveries, to new findings, to new applications, to new insights, and to new

understanding as surfaced through ongoing research and discourse. Indeed, found objects will continue to contribute to creativity and to the potential of art and artmaking in art therapy.

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