

Weaving together art and craft: A practice-based investigation into artists' integrations of art and craft, with reference to the works of Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka.

Grace Mahogo (219091317)

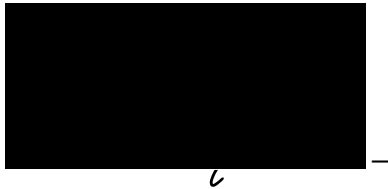
Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree Master of Arts (Fine Arts)
Centre for Visual Arts, School of Arts, University of KwaZulu-Natal

July 2023

Supervisor: Dr. Katherine Arbuckle

Declaration

I, Grace Kanyisa Mahogo, student number 219091317, hereby declare that this dissertation, submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Fine Arts at University of KwaZulu-Natal has not been previously submitted for any degree or examination at this or any other university and that the research reported herein, except for the acknowledged referenced citations, is my original work.



Student: Grace Kanyisa Mahogo

28/07/2023

Date



Supervisor: Dr. Katherine Arbuckle

28/07/2023

Date

Acknowledgements

I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God, who has been my source of wisdom and strength throughout this academic journey. To my parents, your unwavering support and boundless love have been the pillars that held me up during the arduous process of this dissertation. To my dear siblings, thank you for being my cheerleaders and constant motivators. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Hillensburg Trust for their generous financial support, which made it possible for me to pursue my studies without the burden of financial worries. Your contribution has been invaluable in my pursuit of knowledge. To my dedicated supervisor, your guidance, advice, and mentorship have been instrumental in shaping this dissertation.

Abstract

This study emerged from my creative practice, in which I used wool to knit, crochet, bind and combine with other objects and materials which in combination became art. This dissertation gives the context of my work, and explores the art and craft terminologies in detail, based on literature, investigating the origins of these concepts and how their meanings have altered across different periods and societies. To complement the practice side of the research, a case study documents a collaboration between Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka and Corina Lemmer, and their artworks made of repurposed clothing, fibre and beadwork. Gathering of data from multiple sources, such as interviews, the observation of craft processes, and documentation of my practices was appropriate for the qualitative method in the study.

The findings of this dissertation were that art and craft methods and techniques keep evolving, including the type of materials being used and platforms to reach a wider audience. It was discovered that when people merge these techniques associated with art and craft through collaborations and their use of materials, to make rich and meaningful work across boundaries. My own work developed, from using the crafts learned in my family, and my previously separate art practices, to using unusual combinations to make new and unique pieces based on my intuition. This journey was finally combined into my exhibition which combined my works in a playful manner.

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	3
Abstract.....	4
Table of Figures	9
Chapter 1: Introduction to the study	11
1.1. Background.....	12
1.2. My family history	12
1.3 Finding my case studies.....	14
1.4 Research Questions.....	17
1.5. Objectives	17
1.6 Methodology molds the process	18
1.7. The documentation and reflection on my artworks	19
1.8 Selection of the cases to study	20
1.9 Summary of the dissertation	21
1.10 Conclusion to Chapter 1.....	22
Chapter 2: Literature and examples to frame the research	24
2.1. Definitions of “craft”: International perspectives.....	24
2.2. What is “craft”?.....	24
2.3. Definitions of “Art”	25
2.4. The fusion of art and craft.....	26
2.5. Preservation of heritage	26
2.6. South African contemporary artists	27
2.7. Art and craft through history.....	32

2.8. The Renaissance: Art Ascends.....	33
2.9. Arts and Crafts Movement.....	33
2.10. Technological Advancements.....	35
2.11. Conceptual Shifts in Art: Dada and the surreal	37
2.12. Cultural Exchange and Globalization	38
2.13. Integration of techniques and materials	39
2.14. Artistic Practices as Hybrid	39
2.15. Challenging Hierarchies and Stereotypes	40
2.16. Interdisciplinary Collaboration	41
2.17 Collaborations between “makers” and “artists”	44
2.18. Technology and Tradition.....	46
2.19 The evolving craft.....	47
2.20. Conclusion	48
Chapter 3: Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka and Corina Lemmer	50
3.1 Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka	51
3.2. Khumalo-Kubheka’s background	54
3.3. Challenges that they faced in their collaboration.....	55
3.4. Khumalo-Kubheka’s understanding of art and craft.....	55
3.5. Corina Lemmer’s background	56
3.6. Lemmer’s description of her work.....	57
3.7. Two wrongs.	59
3.8. Conclusion	64
Chapter 4: My practical work	66
4.1. Introduction to my artistic practice	66

4.2. Wool, the string that ties together all my artworks	66
4.3. Materials used for my creative practice	67
4.4. Technique Exploration.....	67
4.5. Material Compatibility	68
4.6. Visualization of Colour and Pattern.....	68
4.7. The difference between knitting and crocheting.....	71
4.8. Structure	72
4.9. Versatility.....	72
4.10. My artistic voice	73
4.11. Forms of recording data	74
4.12. Elements that strengthened my creative practice	76
4.13. Processes in different stages	78
4.14. My experience with my artistic practice.....	85
4.15. My artistic practice and research	86
4.16. The playfulness theme across all the artworks produced for this study	88
4.17. Experimentation as a Result of Unexpected Outcomes	89
Chapter 5. Conclusion of the study.....	90
5. 1. The use of experimental mediums within my artistic practice	90
5.2. Value and purpose of artistic practices	90
5.3. Findings of my encounter with Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka	91
5.4. My upbringing in South Africa.....	92
5.5. Practical steps I took to broaden my artistic path	93
References.....	95
Appendix: Artworks on my exhibition	102

Table of Figures

Figure 1. Shadi, Lerato. Di Sa Bonweng. 2022, Wool. Blank projects.	28
Figure 2. Hlobo, Nicholas. 2011. Wool, thread. Stevenson.....	29
Figure 3. Adams, Igshaan. 2020. Getuie. Erin Jane Nelson	30
Figure 4: Mash. T Design Studio x Houtlander: Hlabisa bench. Image by Brett Rubin. Accessed on 17/06/2023. https://visi.co.za/wpcontent/uploads/2019/05/Hlabisabench6.jpg	45
Figure 5: Three-legged pot. Mthatha. Image by Grace Mahogo.	48
Figure 6:Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka and Corina Lemmer. 2023. Winterton, Drakensberg. Image by Grace Mahogo.....	50
Figure 7: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Neckline beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.....	51
Figure 8: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Neckline beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.....	52
Figure 9: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Glass ball ornament beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.	52
Figure 10: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Glass ball ornament beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.	53
Figure 11: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Necklace beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.	53
Figure 12: Lemmer, C. Winterton. Drakensberg. Image by Grace Mahogo.	56
Figure 13: Lemmer, C. Liminal nesting I. 400mm x 415mm. Watercolour, found feathers, and crochetwork.....	57
Figure 14: Lemmer, C. Liminal nesting II. 400mm x 415mm. Watercolour, found feathers, and crochetwork.....	58
Figure 15: Lemmer, C. Liminal nesting III. 400mm x 415mm. Watercolour, found feathers, and crochetwork.....	58
Figure 16: Lemmer, C. Kwikkie-nes. 400mm x 415mm. Watercolour and crochetwork.	59
Figure 17: Lemmer, C. and Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Two wrongs 170cm x 130cm. Embroidery on cotton & repurposed khaki clothing.....	60
Figure 18: Lemmer, C. Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Deursnit/cross section. 1360cm x 29cm. Fabric, Second-hand Khaki clothing, found objects, free machine embroidery, and beadwork	61

Figure 19:Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka and their artwork Loveletters. 2023. Winterton, Drakensberg. Image by Grace Mahogo.	63
Figure 20: Mahogo, G. (2022) sample (1). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.	68
Figure 21: Mahogo, G. (2022) sample (2). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.	69
Figure 22: Mahogo, G. (2022) sample (3). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.	70
Figure 23: Mahogo, G.(2022) sample (4). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.	71
Figure 24: Mahogo, G. (2022) ‘notas’. Centre of Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.	75
Figure 25: Mahogo, G. (2022) ‘notas’. Centre of Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.	76
Figure 26: Mahogo, G. (2021) Die rooi kas work in progress. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.	78
Figure 27: Mahogo, G. (2021) Die rooi kas work in progress with red wool crochet. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.	79
Figure 28: Mahogo, G. (2021) Die rooi kas work in progress after application of glue to the wool. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.....	79
Figure 29: Mahogo, G. (2021) Untitled. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal. ...	81
Figure 30: Mahogo, G. (2021) Untitled. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal. ...	82
Figure 31: Mahogo, G.(2021) Die naald. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal..	83
Figure 32: Mahogo, G. (2021) Untitled. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal. ...	83
Figure 33:Mahogo, G. (2021) Untitled. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal....	84
Figure 34: Mahogo, G. (2021) Untitled. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal. ...	84

Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

The title of this study is ‘Weaving together art and craft: A practice-based investigation into the techniques of blending art and craft, with reference to the works of Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka’. This topic emerged through my artmaking which has come to incorporate methods and materials such as wool used in traditional ways such as knitting but also in new ways with other materials and objects. In choosing the topic I followed I explored several options of how to contextualize my creative practice. This dissertation tells that story, and the story of what I have learned from understanding my practice as a form of research.

This chapter introduces the background and motivation for my research, the research objectives and questions, the methodology used, and summarizes the chapters in the remainder of the document.

Art and craft were long considered separate realms within the creative landscape, each possessing its own set of characteristics, techniques, and purposes. However, a growing number of artists and makers have been defying these boundaries, blurring the distinctions, and integrating elements of both art and craft into their work (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2013). The division has been breaking down over time, and for me, my research and work are a continuum of this. This paper explores this blending of artistic domains, investigating aspects of historical contexts, philosophical perspectives, and contemporary examples that have contributed to this creative convergence.

I am drawn to the artists whose artworks blur the boundaries of art and craft, especially South African contemporary artists. In the middle and late 1980s, South Africa was faced with the distinctions between "white art" and "black craft" and underwent a substantial shift. Several causes, such as the growing importance of postmodernist theoretical discourses, the critique of hierarchically organized binaries, the rise in interest in marginal cultures, and the blurring of lines between "high" and "low" art forms, all played a role in this change (Marschall, 2001). I find it interesting that I, a young South African artist have the privilege and freedom to practice my art the way I choose to and regard my practice as ‘art’ not “black craft”.

In writing about my research, I have sometimes used the word ‘makers’ to refer to people that produce ‘craft’, ‘artists’ to people that produce ‘art’, and ‘creatives’ referring both to ‘artists’ and

‘crafters’. It is interesting that I find myself making a distinction between artists and makers while at the same time investigating the possible integration of these categories. This shows how the debate is still there, and to talk about it is about seeing a separation as well as a coming together. I have also used keywords like weaving, hybridity, blurring, blending, and bridging to describe the vision I have for the theme of this study. The differences when I consider the subject of art and craft is that more conceptual themes and ideas are more frequently explored in art, testing preconceived notions and the limits of vision. In contrast, craft is more focused on usability and functionality. These aspects can be combined, which elevates the work above obvious utility by giving it a greater meaning or symbolism. That is how this distinction relates to integration, for me.

1.1. Background

The use of found objects in my practical work is something that started to blossom when I was doing my B-Tech. I majored in printmaking, but found a way to incorporate fabric, wool, and embroidery thread in my artworks. One piece that stands out for me is a quilt that I made which was made from unstretched canvas, wool, fabric, and embroidery thread. In the quilt I incorporated items that were very personal and dear to my heart such as my grandmother’s recipes, my grandfather’s ‘dompas’ also known as passbook which served as an official identity book during the Apartheid era in South Africa. I also sewed an apron as part of the quilt in honour of my late grandmother. This background passage is to show when my artistic practice started to embrace non-traditional art materials.

In my upbringing I realized at an early stage that my parents were very open to support my interests’ in art as a career. I never felt obligated to pursue a particular career but was encouraged to study the course of my choice and go on to venture in the field of my choice.

1.2. My family history

My father's dual roles as an architect and artist have been instrumental in shaping my own creative journey. Through his architectural work, he has not only demonstrated an eye for aesthetics but also an understanding of the technical aspects of design and construction. This fusion of artistry and craftsmanship has inspired me to explore the synergies between different

creative disciplines and to seek harmony between artistic vision and practical implementation. Witnessing my father's artistic process and seeing the impact of his work on the built environment has fostered a deep respect within me for the marriage of art and craft in creating functional and visually compelling spaces.

Similarly, my grandfather's work as a bricklayer, serves as a testament to the artistry inherent in craftsmanship. His ability to transform raw materials into structures of enduring beauty and functionality underscores the importance of technical skill, precision, and attention to detail in the world of craft. It reminds me that even within seemingly utilitarian trades, there exists a form of artistry that contributes to the fabric of our surroundings.

The creative pursuits of my mother, aunts, and grandmother further highlight the integration of art and craft within the South African environment. My mother taught me how to sew and my aunts taught me knitting and crocheting. I found this to be exciting as a child and thought, I must be better than them, just to impress them. The experience was fun for me, and I loved it. Through knitting, crocheting, and weaving baskets and grass mats, they imbued everyday objects with elements of cultural heritage, personal expression, and artistic beauty. Their dedication to these traditional crafts demonstrates the value of preserving ancestral knowledge and skills while infusing them with contemporary aesthetics (Yang, *et al*, 2018. pp. 6).

Being raised in an environment where art and craft are celebrated has had a profound impact on my own artistic journey. It has encouraged me to explore various artistic mediums, experiment with different techniques, and appreciate the inherent value of both creative expression and skilled craftsmanship. This upbringing has possibly instilled in me a desire to bridge the gap between art and craft (unknowingly), explore their interconnectedness, and challenge conventional definitions and boundaries.

This background instilled in me the conviction that art and craft are not mutually exclusive, but rather interconnected components of the creative sphere. I understand how artistry can be poured into everyday products, blurring the barriers between aesthetic and utilitarian value. The idea that artistic expression may take many forms and cross traditional boundaries piqued my interest, and I wanted to learn more about these intersections. As I became more immersed in the worlds of art

and craft, I became increasingly captivated by how they complement and enrich one another. I studied how artists used craft skills and materials in their artwork, as well as how artists incorporated artistic elements into their craft practices (Jessup, 2001. pp.29-30). In my opinion, I think people that have been practicing both art and craft are already fusing these two entities together regardless of the reasons, be it profit, to preserve cultural heritage, or career.

I have mentioned that my mother taught me sewing and my aunts taught me knitting and crocheting however, I could not learn everything I was being taught because after a while I would run off to go play with my siblings outside. I was not consistent, but somehow got quite good with knitting and sewing. Now that I am older, and technology has advanced so much since my childhood, I learn a lot from the internet. My crocheting and knitting skills have drastically improved due to online YouTube tutorials. This access to information is very convenient as it is just at a tap of a button wherever you are. This is the reason why I am including digital tools in a later section because these digital tools have equipped me with build-up information on the foundation that my family first laid, when they introduced me to ‘craft’. My body of practical work for this study was influenced by what I was taught at home and by online tutorials. In the literature in Chapter 2, I discuss the advancing technology and how it plays a significant role in the art sector.

1.3 Finding my case studies

My artistic practice greatly influenced the criteria I used to choose the artists I saw best fit to be part of this study. At an early stage, I knew I had to research and find artists that are relevant to my work. Researching and selecting artists who align with my own artistic practice is an important step to contextualize my work and be informed of other artists that use traditional and non-traditional materials to make artworks. Focusing on artists who use found objects, wool, thread, and fabric in their artistic practice indicates my specific interest in materials and processes that are aligned with my artistic vision. This targeted approach allows me to explore how these artists incorporate these elements into their artworks and how they create meaning through their chosen materials.

Studying the artworks of these selected artists (Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka) provides a reference point for understanding their artistic language and creative process. By

analyzing their techniques, compositions, and conceptual approaches, I gain a deeper understanding of how these artists navigate the use of materials and the possibilities they offer for creative expression.

In the very beginning of my study, I looked in different places for where I could find relevant information about craft and how it related to artmaking. I spent some time with Stella Pretorius at Usisi Designs, and she stated that to have a successful craft business one must conduct thorough market research to understand the target audience, competitors, and trends in the beadwork and jewelry industry. These are the examples I learned:

- Identify the types of jewelry and designs that are in demand among local and international customers.
- Determine what sets your craft business apart from others. You may specialize in specific types of jewelry, unique designs, or use materials to differentiate yourself in the market.
- Establish reliable sources for quality beads and other materials needed for your jewelry designs. Ensure that the materials you use meet the standards required for customer satisfaction.
- As Usisi Designs emphasizes, ensure that your jewelry pieces are crafted with precision and high-quality workmanship. Consistency and attention to detail are essential for building a reputable brand.
- Calculate your production costs and set competitive prices for your jewelry pieces. Consider factors such as material costs, labor, overheads, and market demand while determining your pricing strategy.
- Develop a strong brand identity that resonates with your target customers. Invest in attractive and professional packaging to enhance the overall customer experience.
- Establish an online presence through a website or social media platforms. Use high-quality images and engaging content to showcase your jewelry designs and attract potential customers.
- Consider selling your jewelry online through your website or on popular e-commerce platforms. This can broaden your reach and attract international customers.

- Marketing and Promotion: Utilize various marketing strategies, such as social media marketing, email campaigns, collaborations with influencers, and participation in craft fairs and exhibitions, to promote your craft business.
- Customer Service: Focus on excellent customer service to build a loyal customer base and gain positive reviews and referrals.

I think the information I received from Stella and what I learnt from Usisi Designs is very important because the business aspect of craft became clear to me. I was being equipped with information on how to run a business. The time came for me to move on to other aspects of craft and the rest of the significant points of my study which I needed to investigate.

In the process of my research, I began looking for South African artists that complement my research and fit well with my own artistic practice. In my research journey, I had to be mindful of establishments that could provide me with relevant information. This is how interacting with the Tatham Art Gallery (TAG) came about. I had the idea of looking for works in the TAG collection, because I knew they had a range including different craft pieces along with more traditional and contemporary art works. When I met the acting director, instead of looking at all the collection, I was directed towards artwork by Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka. It was so interesting and that is how they became the focus of this study.

I visited the TAG several times to gather as much information about these collaborating artists as possible. The gallery granted me access to their archives under supervision. This experience in the TAG was good, as I got some of the information that I was looking for about these artists. However, I soon came to the realization that I must meet Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka in person to gain better understanding of their artistic practices. When I first involved the TAG in my research, I had restricted myself to only use the artworks in their collection, but with the choice of Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka I soon realized that they only had two artworks by these artists in their collection. For this reason, I had to re-consider the involvement of the TAG in my study by not making it the focus of my investigation. I then contacted and met the artists in person, and they provided me with images of their artworks, and gave me in-depth information about their individual backgrounds, collaboration, and artistic practice. It was very helpful to be

pointed in this direction by the TAG. I was able to discover a creative practice I did not know about and document it in my study.

My own artworks and process directed me on a journey to my research questions for this dissertation. Below are the research questions and objectives of this study.

1.4 Research Questions

The background described above led me to formulate these research questions:

1. How do South African contemporary artists synthesize materials, objects, and methods of making in hybridized practices?
2. In what ways do Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka synthesize their creative practice in their collaborations?
3. How do the categories of ‘art’ and ‘craft’ combine in the collaborative relationship of these two artists?
4. What insights do the above questions provide me, in order to reflect on my creative practice as a South African artist who combines materials, methods and objects traditionally associated with craft?

1.5. Objectives

These objectives have guided me to address the research questions mentioned above.

1. To identify and discuss selected South African contemporary artists whose work has relevance to my research and my creative practice.
2. To investigate the ways in which Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka synthesize their creative practices in their collaborations.
3. To document and discuss if, and how, traditions of ‘art’ and ‘craft’ combine in the collaborative relationship of these two artists?
4. To reflect on the relevance of the above to my creative practice of combining materials, methods, and objects traditionally associated with craft, in order to gain deeper insights into my artmaking processes.

In the section below, I discuss the research methods I implemented to explore my research questions and objectives, including my artistic practice.

1.6 Methodology molds the process

According to Gray and Malins (2004, p.18), your practice research hypothesis is supported by the data you gathered for your study as a researcher. They argue that the study's methodology is more important than its discoveries. The procedure holds significance, is intricate, and involves a journey. In essence, an artwork cannot exist without a process. “The most fruitful way to identify appropriate methodologies [for art practice] has been through an analysis of completed research, and through evaluations of research in progress.”

Methodology is one of the most crucial components of the research process because it directs the process and makes it trustworthy as research. The ups and downs of the study are acknowledged by the methodology, which is flexible (Gray and Malins, 2004, p.17). If it is kept transparent and a flexible tool that helps the researcher navigate through difficult terrains of research, it bears fruit. I have experienced the role of journaling as a research method and reflection on my own work process, as mentioned above (Gray and Malins, 2004).

I had to learn to understand my art practice as being a key element of the research. It was easy to fall back and think of the research as the written part of my study only, and the artworks as separate. I did not always know where I was going and experimented. This is how I investigated my research questions. “This stage (to answer research questions) might require you to test out the ground before venturing onto it, to retrace your steps, to use more than one vehicle, to go off in different directions, to explore many kinds of terrain, to collect a range of data to begin to provide enough evidence to be able to address your research question. The aim of the practice-based methodology is to help us understand, in the broadest possible terms, not the products of inquiry, but the process itself: to describe and analyze” (Gray and Malins, 2004, pp.15-17). Making art has allowed me to try out my thought processes, and it was through these intuitive techniques, I ultimately arrived at my research questions.

In my study I applied this advice: “To gain an understanding of your study, it helps to situate yourself as a researcher so that you develop a focus for your project. The review allows you to

acknowledge their different contributions, but also encourages you to state your views critically – both positive and negative” (Gray and Malins, 2004, p.14). This meant looking for things that would help me understand how my work fits into the bigger scene. This included referring to other artists, and finding relevant literature.

As mentioned above, to examine the blending of art and craft, this study employed a case study research methodology to complement my creative practice. This approach facilitates a detailed exploration of specific cases, allowing for in-depth insights and a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. (Yin, 2018). The methodology of this aspect generates interpretive and qualitative data, incorporating data semi-structured interviews and the analysis of artworks. The case studies will revolve around two selected artists as integral components of the research process. This is the reason why I implemented these methods in my study, to have a firm foundation ground to support the findings that will be discussed.

Among a variety of research techniques to gather pertinent facts to develop my practice, I also used journaling extensively in the process of my creative research.

1.7. The documentation and reflection on my artworks

I enhanced the validity of my study by triangulating the different sources of data and their findings. This allowed me to assemble a richer record of the process and discoveries. I was reflexive on my own practice and documented it, to support the conclusions and to ‘frame’ the artwork I produce. In addition, I believe that documenting my own practice and being reflexive about it demonstrates a strong methodological approach. This reflexivity allows me to critically examine my own biases, assumptions, and processes throughout the study, which can further strengthen the validity of my conclusions. By providing transparency about my own role and perspective, I add credibility to my research and enable others to better understand the context in which my artwork was produced.

“Reflective practice therefore attempts to unite research and practice, thought and action into a framework for inquiry which involves practice, and which acknowledges the particular and special knowledge of the practitioner” (Gray and Malins, 2004, p.22) This emphasizes that my

creative practice as a researcher should be backed by account capturing my research methods to provide cohesive evidence at the end of my study.

Methods that I used in my own creative practice during this study are observation, visualization, brainstorming, sketchbook/journaling, experimentation with materials (repurposed and found materials), reflection on my own creative practice, and review of study findings. I found discussing my works with others, and installing my work in different ways in the gallery space was also an important activity that helped me to move forward in the process.

A case study of Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka is part of this study because it enables me as a researcher to record the substantiality of the participants' work that is relevant and my experiences about the subject matter (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000. p.182). I chose this study design because it offers a multi-perspective analysis. It also makes it possible to answer the “how” and “why” questions rather than measuring and counting outcomes numerically. Methods such as interviews and artwork analysis, have been used in this study to allow for a rich exploration of participants' perspectives, experiences, and behaviors. These methods can uncover complexities and provide in-depth explanations of the theme under investigation.

1.8 Selection of the cases to study

The selection of cases is crucial to achieving the research objectives and is based on the following criteria:

- Artistic practices that challenge or transcend traditional categorizations of art and craft. The study seeks to identify artists and makers whose work defies conventional boundaries, pushing the limits of what is considered art or craft. Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka are collaborating artists who merge their artistic backgrounds in their work in the process, fusing together art and craft.
- Artists who have gained recognition and influence in the South African context, and whose work is relevant to my research topic and own work. In the past I have looked to Esther Mahlangu, and in this study, I refer to Lerato Shadi, Nicholas Hlobo, and Igshaan Adams as providing context.

- Local cases that exemplify the transformative nature of combining art and craft, thus the focus on KwaZulu-Natal-based Lemmer and Khumalo-Khubeka. By studying instances where traditional distinctions between the two categories have been challenged or subverted, the research explored the broader implications and consequences of this ‘blurring’ for how I understand my work.

1.9 Summary of the dissertation

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter aims to explore the historical context of the art versus craft debate, tracing the origins of the division and examining the socio-cultural factors that contributed to their separation (Greenhalgh, 2003. pp.3-4). The research will investigate significant art movements and craft traditions to understand the shifting perceptions of art and craft and identify historical precedents for their convergence.

Chapter 3: The work of Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka and Corinna Lemmer

This chapter presents and examines the case studies that I have chosen to investigate. I present what I learned from semi-structured interviews and viewing their work.

Chapter 4: My own art practice

In this chapter I document my practice and the processes I followed in my artmaking as research. I show the development of my use of materials and show photographs.

Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusion

In this chapter I discuss the research questions and how this research has explored them. I present the reflections and conclusions. I follow up on what the methodology has done for my art practice, and what recommendations I have for future research.

1.10 Conclusion to Chapter 1

At the beginning of this chapter, the overall idea of this study was introduced, and a few things stood out. Firstly, it was observed that artists and makers often navigate a fluid space between art and craft, drawing from both traditions and embracing hybrid practices. This highlights the potential for innovation and experimentation when combining artistic concepts with craftsmanship (Greenhalgh, 2009. p.1). The vision of the art and craft practices integrates to form a fluid narrative. This vision challenges existing boundaries, embraces collaboration, and expands our understanding of creative practices. As artists and scholars continue to engage with this theme, the art world stands to benefit from the rich and diverse tapestry of art and craft interwoven into a dynamic and interconnected whole.

Secondly, the study underscores the role of intention and context in distinguishing art from craft. While skill and technique remain essential in both realms, the underlying intention, conceptual depth, and intended audience can shape the categorization of creative work. The research demonstrates that an object's status as art or craft is not inherent but rather constructed through a complex interplay of factors. Exploring the perceptions, motivations, and experiences of artists and makers, reveals insights into the evolving nature of contemporary creative practices. Goggin, (2015 p. 162), implies that this modern viewpoint on art and craft aligns well with Aristotle's horizontal concept of art and artist, according to which artists stand out by being "wiser not in virtue of being able to act, but by having the theory for themselves and knowing the causes," rather than by the things they create. Artists, then, are those who have learned to know themselves. This study is not attempting to resolve the disputable debate about art and craft but rather adds a layer on an already existing foundation in literature for further discussions on the intersections of art and craft and their implications for the art world.

In the following chapter, we observe the definitions that scholars have given the art and craft terms. Discussing different collaborations between artists, and makers in detail, and addressing the disputed debate between art and craft. Crafts are mostly considered an exceptionally specialized professional art form, which is minutely regimented and factionalized, a scenario peculiar to Japan. Unlike in Anglo America, the distinction between 'craft' and 'fine art' and 'design' is ambiguous. Regardless of the sort of craft, creatives are all aware that they are artists,

and they all share the worldwide artistic tradition and perception of subjectivity that defined the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, while designers are also inextricably linked to craft-making (Kikuchi, 2015. p. 92). By examining such practices, this research aims to illuminate the ways in which these categories are being redefined in contemporary art discourse. Bryan-Wilson (2021) contends that though the craft was formerly a field of the amateur, the low, the decorative, or even the openly "kitschy", such as the iconic needlework from the 1970s, it became an undisputed symbol for opposition ideologies in the early 2000s.

In my opinion, craft frequently entails the mastery of skills and the creation of several items using pre-established patterns or designs. This may cause the finished products to appear repetitive or similar. It's essential to remember, though, that there can be a place for individuality and personal expression even within the craft. The idea of "originality" in the marketplace is a complicated subject. In the world of craft, the market frequently appreciates handmade, unique, or limited-edition items, which might be seen as original due to their uniqueness. But the market also reacts to trends and customer demand, which occasionally results in mass-produced products that look the same or lack a strong sense of originality.

Chapter 2: Literature and examples to frame the research

Art and craft have been subjects of ongoing discussion and debate throughout history. Scholars have sought to define and understand these terms, often leading to controversies and differing perspectives. In the current art world, definitions and practices are integrated and diverse, but this history is still interesting to me because of the way my creative practice in this study has developed out of craft I learned from my family members. In this chapter, I explore the definitions of “art” and “craft” put forth by various scholars over time and briefly examine the controversial debate that surrounded them.

2.1. Definitions of “craft”: International perspectives

Craft, according to Noriaki (2003), opposes a lack of variation because it embraces art, industry, and life. According to Harrod (2007), the word "craft" is too metaphorical. Kikuchi (2015), despite their differing perspectives, these scholars are one in their drive to bring the topic of art. Levine and Heimel (2008) define craft as neither art nor design, but rather as an ideological scenario for vernacularism, mediocrity, DIY, and the various "Indie" ornamental inventions. As demonstrated by Newell's *Out of the Ordinary: Spectacular Craft* (2007) and Racz's *Contemporary Craft*, craft is ordered within art. However, only if the final alternative is an open-to-interpretation, ambiguous, diverse, hybrid art (2009).

2.2. What is “craft”?

Even though art, craft, and design are still occasionally viewed as distinct fields, our contemporary world is increasingly moving toward a fusion of the traditional and the modern, creating an intriguing new hybrid that pushes the boundaries of new structures, materials, methodologies, capacities, and advancements (Rhodes, 2011).

Craft is sometimes regarded as a subset of the greater field of art. Craft is utilized on occasion to refer to skilled manual labor or the manufacturing of items with an emphasis on practicality and skilled work, whereas art encompasses a broad spectrum of inventive interpretations. It necessitates the use of methods, and traditions. The relationship between craft and art, on the contrary, can be unclear and subtle. Lees-Maffei and Sandino (2004. pp. 207-208) states that craft, art, and design have regarded as distinct subjects within the arts. The distinction between

craft and art can be hazy when studying contemporary methods that embrace hybridity and pluralism. In my opinion the literature states that one can refer to an “open-ended, vague, pluralistic, hybrid art,” which denotes a strategy that incorporates a range of influences, methods, and mediums. In this instance, craft is undoubtedly a part of this type of art. This kind of art frequently blends various elements, fields of study, and ideas, defying established classification theories and expanding the possibilities of artistic expression.

Craft components can help artists explore new ideas, fuse both traditional and contemporary processes, and produce original and thought-provoking works by merging them into open-ended, ambiguous, diverse, hybrid art. This method enables experimentation and a wide range of interpretations, making craft a crucial component of the creative process in this situation.

2.3. Definitions of “Art”

Tony Flores Fratto (1978) states that “The fact is, there is no such thing as art. That is, there is no such thing as art. Art is not a universal human phenomenon, but a synthetic Western category, and a relatively recent one at that. The concept has generated endless misleading ethnography, art history, and an esthetic theory, and has acted mainly to mystify the social conditions which keep acts of creation and sensual pleasure out of the experience of the socially exploited majority. I suggest that those acts and products which we have been calling art simply be returned to the domain of labor, or better, work. Work, in that sense, is the application of human energy to matter, and the consequent production and reforming of that matter in new forms.”

According to Tolstoy (2021), art is simply the transmission of feeling. The point of art is to make the feeling of the artist infectious. The more contagious, the better the art, and the more generally understood, the more successful. Art is about communication, a communication of feeling, just as speech is a communication of thought.

‘Artists’ and ‘makers’ have the freedom to experiment with various materials, colors, textures, and styles, enabling them to discover new ideas and innovative approaches to their work. The end products of a craft process are one-of-a-kind objects, each depending on the skill, judgment, and attention of the maker (Amit and Buechley, 2013). This process of exploration fosters a sense of curiosity and open-mindedness, encouraging artists to push boundaries and challenge

conventional norms. Through continuous exploration, artists are constantly evolving and refining their practice, leading to the development of unique artistic voices.

According to Capacchione (2015), forms of expression are drawings, doodles, scribbles, colours, abstract designs, images, and symbols. Doodles and scribbles, often seen as spontaneous and unconstrained, reveal the creative impulse and serve as outlets for free-flowing ideas. The maker's personal touch, artistic vision, and individual skill contribute to the distinctiveness of each object.

Melberg (1995, p.11) viewed art as a form of imitation or “mimesis”. He believes that this description, nonetheless, falls short of truly capturing the relevance and breadth of the concept. The imitational link between an artwork and its audience as well as between art and life has been referred to as “mimesis”. According to his perspective, art aimed to replicate the physical world and lacked the inherent truth found in philosophy (Potolsky, 2006).

2.4. The fusion of art and craft

To protect cultural heritage, fostering inclusivity, empowering makers, and encouraging creativity, the fusion of art and craft has a significant impact on socio-cultural dynamics. It broadens the possibilities for artistic expression and helps to create a more diverse, lively, and welcoming artistic community. To understand how this integration undermines long-standing hierarchies within the art world, this study acknowledges that there are changing meanings and value systems linked with these practices (Relyea, 2013). Additionally, it will look at how it may affect how artists and makers present themselves, how they are received by audience, and whether multidisciplinary partnerships are possible.

2.5. Preservation of heritage

Sennett (2008, p.26) states that craft often embody cultural traditions and techniques that are passed down through generations. When artists and craft makers share their knowledge and skills with others, they not only preserve their cultural heritage but also invite others to learn and engage with these traditions. This exchange of techniques and practices allows individuals to gain insights into different cultural perspectives and artistic approaches. For example, a ceramic artist from Japan sharing their traditional firing techniques with a potter from Mexico can lead to the

fusion of styles and the creation of unique pieces that reflect the meeting of these diverse influences.

According to Steele (2009), hierarchical organization of values is involved in the classification and institutionalization of art and craft. Within this system, certain forms of art and craft may be overvalued or undervalued by society. This implies that some works or practices are considered more prestigious or culturally significant than others based on the perceived distinctions between art and craft. Such distinctions can be subjective and vary across different cultural contexts and historical periods.

By acknowledging the existence of this value regime and its potential effects on the perception and evaluation of art and craft, Steele's statement suggests that the debate has wider implications beyond mere categorization. It points to the socio-cultural and institutional power dynamics that influence the perceived worth and status assigned to different artistic practices and expressions. (Steele, 2009).

Shiner (2012) argues that when used strictly, the term "hybrid" refers to how two previously recognized creative styles interact. Based on that, craft/art hybrids are possible. For instance, an art quilt fuses the craft form's material and method with the artistic goal and will serve as a practice piece for the artwork. This method suggests that rather than viewing craft, design, and art as exclusive endeavors, we should view them as overlapping fields. Hence, I mention some of the many South African contemporary artists that practice this in their work below.

2.6. South African contemporary artists

To curate the following list of artists who resonate with my own work, several key criteria had to be considered: my research questions, techniques used to make artworks, material, and themes. I have selected these artists because they are relevant to my research questions. The key points in my research questions are as follows: contemporary South African artists that weave together art and craft mediums through hybrid practices, finding essential principles about collaboration and materiality, and elements that define the artist's own creative practice.

Lerato Shadi, Nicholas Hlobo, and Igshaan Adams share a common thread in their work, often utilizing materials like found objects and wool. I use discarded materials, thread, and wool extensively in my art practice as well to make installation artworks. The shared exploration of identity, culture and personal narratives weaves a cohesive theme across our diverse yet interconnected artistic expressions.

Lerato Shadi



Figure 1. Shadi, Lerato. Di Sa Bonweng. 2022, Wool. Blank projects.

Shadi's works offer a lens into diverse perspectives on self-positioning and "being in the world". This artistic practice is intricately tied to evolving circumstances and a dynamic interplay of interconnectedness – a concept akin to "dividual participation" (Ott, 2015).

Some of Shadi's artworks are made of red wool, which is one of the dominant colours I used in my artistic practice for my MA project. There are similarities with the stitching as well between my work and hers.

Shadi's performance art encourages the audience to interact both physically and emotionally with the artwork, blurring the lines between performer and spectator. An audience's varied interpretation of an artwork is a testament to the multiplicity of meaning. Instead favouring one perspective above all others, or "some universal assumption," Lerato Shadi recognizes the opportunity for reflection and recognition, and the key role her body plays in this complex equation. Occupying the space of interpretation –the body, the exhibition, the gallery, the institution, or the room that collects reaction – Lerato Shadi's practice is "an ongoing conversation." She connects her thematic and intuitive pursuits across the timeline of their realization <https://artthrob.co.za/2022/05/02/moments-before-meaning-a-conversation-with-lerato-shadi/> .

Nicholas Hlobo



Figure 2. Hlobo, Nicholas. 2011. Wool, thread. Stevenson.

Nicholas Hlobo is a contemporary South African artist known for his diverse and innovative artworks that explore themes of identity, gender, and his cultural heritage. Hlobo employs various mediums, including sculpture, installation, and performance.

According to Goldstein (2022), as a child of apartheid, Hlobo experienced firsthand the impact of a system that rigidly classified people based on race, religion, and ethnicity. This exposure to the multifaceted ways in which individuals define themselves within such a divisive environment has profoundly shaped his artistic practice. This is one of the items I briefly discuss in my study, race, ethnicity and how it had an impact in transition of my family name.

Hlobo's life journey serves as a testament to resilience and a commitment to addressing complex issues through creative expression. By navigating the spaces in-between, he contributes to a broader dialogue about the fluidity and intersectionality of identity, not only in the context of South Africa's history but also in a global context where these themes resonate universally.

“It’s important to go astray,” Hlobo explains. “If you are in a foreign city and you get lost, then you’ll discover some alleyways and some avenues that you will not necessarily discover had you been placed on the right path” Goldstein, 2022). I resonate so much with this statement by Hlobo because I felt the same way when I first arrived in Kwa-Zulu Natal. I felt lost and out of place, my studio in the university became my safe place. It gave me hope and helped me navigate my way forward.

Igshaan Adams



Figure 3. Adams, Igshaan. 2020. Getuie. Erin Jane Nelson

The archetypal analogy implies that Adams creates comparisons or representations in his work that carry symbolic or universally recognized significance. His artistic expressions may tap into shared cultural or human experiences, making his work resonate on a deeper, archetypal level. The analogy of geological sedimentations suggests that Adams sees his creative process as akin to the layering of geological materials over time. This could imply a sense of accumulation, transformation, and the shaping of his artistic landscape through a gradual buildup of experiences, influences, and ideas.

The landscape carved over time by water, this could signify the transformative and shaping force of time and experience on Adams' creativity.

Commonalities between Shadi, Hlobo, Adams and Mahogo

These artists share an interest in personal narratives, identity, art, and craft. Their use of found objects and wool in their art making pushes their works to go beyond traditional mediums, incorporating installations and performances that engage audiences in a multi-sensory experience. In 2019, I attended Igshaan Adams' exhibition at the Tatham Art Gallery and the experience was exciting because his exhibition incorporated old carpets that engaged my sense of smell not only sight, which added another dimension to the artistic encounter. The use of multiple senses enriched the overall experience. It made the artworks more tangible and evocative. This use of multiple senses is part of my artworks as well as the audience has to see and feel the works in order to fully experience them.

Numerous contemporary artists and creatives are actively engaged in integrating art and craft, driven by diverse motivations. For some, the convergence of art and craft represents a means of reclaiming traditional craft practices and skills that have been marginalized or devalued. Laduma Ngxokolo is a well-known knitwear designer from South Africa, Eastern Cape. He drew substantial notice in the fashion world when he exhibited his outstanding knitwear creations at Design Indaba 2011, where he was an Emerging Creative. Ngxokolo's designs are known for their Xhosa pattern inspiration, showcasing a blend of traditional Xhosa elegance with contemporary trends (Design Indaba, 2013).

According to Design Indaba (2013), Laduma Ngxokolo's work not only illustrates his artistic skills but also commemorates the Xhosa people's rich cultural history. He supports and preserves Xhosa traditions through his designs while providing a fresh and inventive edge to the world of knitwear fashion. His brand, MaXhosa Africa, combines traditional craftsmanship with contemporary fashion, showcasing the beauty and versatility of South African cultural heritage. Ngxokolo's designs bridge the gap between fashion and art, incorporating intricate patterns and textures that reflect his artistic vision. Ngxokolo has made a name for himself in the fashion industry with his innovative and visually appealing knitwear creations since his debut. His designs frequently feature bright colors, elaborate patterns, and a blend of traditional and modern features, grabbing the attention of both local and international audiences.

According to Lees-Maffei and Sandino (2004. pp. 207-210), this evolving relationship between art and craft has significant educational and economic implications. Educational institutions are recognizing the value of interdisciplinary approaches, integrating art and craft into their curricula to nurture collaboration. Furthermore, as the boundaries between the two fields blur, economic opportunities for creatives continue to expand, as their works gain recognition in both art and craft markets. The collaborative efforts between art and craft have catalyzed a shift in perceptions, gradually dismantling the hierarchical framework. Art institutions, galleries, and museums are beginning to acknowledge and appreciate the transformative potential of collaboration.

2.7. Art and craft through history

Throughout ancient civilizations, such as Egypt and Greece, there existed a close association between art and craft, evident in the intricate craftsmanship displayed in artifacts and the Greek notion of methods employed. However, the Renaissance period marked a significant shift, as fine art began to be recognized as a distinct pursuit separate from craft traditions. This differentiation continued to gain momentum with the onset of industrialization in the 18th and 19th centuries. The historical relationship between art and craft has undergone diverse interpretations and transformations over time (Long, 2001). This study aims to examine the historical development of the interplay between art and craft, tracing its origins in ancient civilizations to the contemporary era.

According to Meskell (2021), object worlds in ancient Egypt, art, and craft were inseparable. The Egyptians viewed their craftsmanship as a sacred duty, incorporating aesthetics, symbolism, and functionality in their artifacts. The intricate carvings on sarcophagi, the elaborate jewelry, and the meticulous construction of pyramids exemplify the unity of art and craft in their culture.

Similarly, in ancient Greece, the concept of techniques encompassed both artistic creativity and craftsmanship. This holistic approach celebrated the skill and expertise required to produce objects of beauty, exemplified by the finely crafted sculptures, pottery, and architectural wonders of the time. Greek artisans embraced the fusion of artistry and technical proficiency, setting a precedent for future generations.

2.8. The Renaissance: Art Ascends

Ackerman (2002) states that the Renaissance marked a pivotal period in Western history, witnessing a shift towards the elevation of fine art as a distinct pursuit separate from craft traditions. Artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo emerged, emphasizing individual creativity, expression, and mastery of technique. This shift was driven by a renewed focus on humanism and the belief that artistic endeavors were expressions of the divine.

During this era, the notion of "art for art's sake" gained prominence, further distancing art from the utilitarian nature of craft. The emphasis on the aesthetic experience and intellectual engagement with art spurred a new appreciation for painting, sculpture, and architecture, fueling the growth of the art market and establishing artists as visionary figures (Cruz, 2016).

2.9. Arts and Crafts Movement

Büyükkök (2022) states that during the late 19th century, the Arts and Crafts movement emerged as a response to the mechanization and devaluation of craftsmanship brought about by the Industrial Revolution. Prominent figures such as William Morris played a pivotal role in advocating for the reevaluation of craftsmanship in both utilitarian and artistic domains, challenging the prevailing notion that art and craft were separate entities. At the heart of the arts and crafts movement was a desire to restore integrity and authenticity to design and production. According to Themel (2008), "Art is not a separate 'world' from Craft. These two things are not entities themselves but rather they are specific aspects of all creative work" the product's

contrived separation of craft from art. When the 'labelling' of techniques comes into play (art is painting, craft is embroidery; art is sculpture, craft is pottery) that is the root of the problem.

According to Luckman (2014), William Morris emphasized the detrimental effects of the degradation of craftsmanship. He believed that the mass production of goods stripped them of their quality and intrinsic value, while also having a negative impact on society. Morris argued that the mechanization of production devalued labor and created a disconnect between individuals and their work, resulting in a loss of meaning and purpose.

MacCarthy (2019) states that the Arts and Crafts movement sought to counter this trend by championing handmade and meticulously crafted objects. It rejected the soulless and standardized products of industrialization in favor of creations that showcased the skill, dedication, and individuality of the craftsman. This approach aimed to instill a sense of pride, creativity, and authenticity in both the makers and consumers of these objects. Morris and his contemporaries sought to challenge this trend by promoting a holistic approach to design. They emphasized the integration of artistry and craftsmanship, considering the aesthetic qualities of everyday objects and the environments they inhabited. This approach was reflected in Morris's own work as a designer, where he brought together various disciplines such as architecture, textiles, and printmaking to create cohesive and harmonious spaces (Usher, 2021).

Scholars and art historians have extensively explored the impact and legacy of the Arts and Crafts movement. In his book "The Arts and Crafts Movement: Making It Irish," Maurice Craig examines the movement's influence on Ireland and its role in shaping the country's cultural identity (Craig, 1952). Sennett in "The Craftsman", explores the importance of craftsmanship in a modern industrial society and reflects on the enduring relevance of the Arts and Crafts movement's principles (Fadini, Mari, and Giovannini, 2010).

Furthermore, the Arts and Crafts movement laid the groundwork for subsequent artistic and design movements that continued to challenge the art-craft dichotomy. The Bauhaus, for example, which emerged in the early 20th century, adopted a similar ethos by seeking to integrate art, craft, and technology. This interdisciplinary approach aimed to create a unified artistic practice that blurred the boundaries between art and design (Beardon, 2003).

2.10. Technological Advancements

The advent of new technologies has played a significant role in intertwining the limitations between art and craft. Digital tools and computer-aided design have enabled artists and craft practitioners to explore new possibilities and merge traditional techniques with contemporary mediums. Digital tools have also facilitated the fusion of different artistic mediums. Artists and craft practitioners can now combine traditional techniques with digital processes to create innovative and hybrid artworks. For example, a ceramist might use computer-aided design software to prototype and refine their ceramic work before using traditional materials and techniques to bring it to life such as glazing and firing the work in the kiln. This blending of traditional and contemporary methods not only expands artistic possibilities but also challenges the notion of what constitutes art versus craft (Buechley and Perner-Wilson, 2012).

Artists working in digital art often employ programming, 3D modeling, and other digital tools to create their artworks. The integration of technology in the artistic process raises questions about the role of craftsmanship in digital art and challenges traditional notions of skill and technique. Moreover, the proliferation of online platforms and social media has revolutionized the way art and craft are shared, exhibited, and consumed. Artists can now showcase their work to a global audience with just a few clicks, bypassing traditional gatekeepers and institutions. This has led to a diversification of artistic practices and a greater recognition of non-traditional forms of art and craft. The accessibility of digital platforms has also facilitated collaborative and interdisciplinary projects, where artists and craft practitioners from different backgrounds can come together to create innovative and boundary-pushing works.

According to Schlag (2019), Digitization has transformed the way we perceive and engage with time and space. With digital technology, images can be created, reproduced, and distributed rapidly and globally. The traditional limitations of physical distance and time constraints no longer restrict the production and circulation of images. This transformative aspect of digitization has profound consequences for the political and global dynamics surrounding images.

- Firstly, the production of images becomes a political act. With digital tools widely available, individuals and communities can create and share images that express their perspectives, values, and ideologies. This democratization of image production challenges

established power structures, allowing marginalized voices to be heard and countering dominant narratives. The ability to produce and disseminate images on a global scale empowers individuals and communities to engage in political discourse, activism, and advocacy (Kellner and Share, 2007).

- Secondly, the circulation of images is greatly influenced by digitization. Through social media platforms, online galleries, and digital archives, images can be shared and disseminated across the globe instantaneously. This unrestricted circulation amplifies the reach and impact of specific images, potentially influencing public opinion, mobilizing movements, and fostering transnational connections. The global accessibility of images challenges traditional boundaries and facilitates the formation of international networks and alliances (Spieler, Ballard, and Mazaheri, 2021).
- Thirdly, the display and exhibition of images undergo significant transformations in the digital realm. Virtual galleries, online platforms, and digital installations provide alternative spaces for image display, transcending the limitations of physical locations. This expanded exhibition space allows for diverse and inclusive representations, challenging the hegemony of traditional art institutions and enabling new narratives to emerge. The digital exhibition of images creates opportunities for cross-cultural dialogues, fostering a global conversation around art and politics (Styliani, S., *et al*, 2009).
- Moreover, the perception and interpretation of images are influenced by digitization. The abundance and accessibility of images in the digital age contribute to a visual saturation that can shape collective perceptions and understandings. Digital platforms and algorithms mediate the way images are presented, affecting the ways in which they are perceived and understood. The multiplicity of interpretations and perspectives that emerge from the global circulation of images can lead to complex dialogues, fostering critical engagement and challenging dominant discourses (Dufva and Dufva, 2019. p. 25).

While the weaving between art and craft presents exciting possibilities, it has also sparked debates and discussions within the art world. Sennett (2008) argues that in the past that the merging of art

and craft dilutes the distinctiveness of each discipline and erodes the value of traditional craftsmanship. Others see it as a necessary evolution, reflecting the changing technological landscape and expanding the horizons of artistic practice.

2.11. Conceptual Shifts in Art: Dada and the surreal

Early 20th Century art movements, such as the Dadaists, Surrealists, and Fluxus, challenged established notions of art by embracing found objects, ready-mades, and unconventional materials. This conceptual shift expanded the definition of art and helped to open the door for objects and diverse methods and practices to be regarded as art forms. The Dadaist movement emerged during World War I as a response to the absurdity and destruction of the time. Dada artists sought to dismantle established artistic conventions, advocating for the inclusion of everyday objects into artistic expression. Marcel Duchamp's ready-mades, such as "Fountain" (1917), a urinal signed "R. Mutt," challenged the notion of artistic skill and craftsmanship, effectively blurring the line between art and everyday objects. According to art historian Anne Umland's essay "Dada and Surrealist Objects," Duchamp's radical act of elevating mundane objects to the status of art laid the groundwork for future discussions on the relationship between art and craft (Umland and Sudhalter, 2008. p. 21). The work titled "Bicycle Wheel," by Marcel Duchamp, was created in 1913. An average bicycle wheel is put upside down on a wooden stool in this sculpture. It was referred to by Duchamp as "the first of his ready-mades." By exhibiting an ordinary, practical object as art, Duchamp challenged established notions of what could potentially be considered art and called into question the artist's role as the lone creator. In my body of work for this study, I have an artwork titled "The conversation", it shares some commonalities with "Bicycle Wheel" by Duchamp (Cros, 2013). I used a bicycle wheel, wood, masonite board, a chair frame and wool to make it. The bicycle wheel is mounted on the masonite board structure.

Surrealism, which emerged in the 1920s, aimed to tap into the realm of the unconscious and dreams. Surrealist artists, like Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, and Meret Oppenheim, embraced unconventional materials and techniques in their artworks. The Surrealists' use of assemblage, collages, and hybrid forms challenged the traditional boundaries of artistic media and techniques. By incorporating craft-oriented elements such as sewing, weaving, and object manipulation,

Surrealists blurred the distinctions between art and craft. The discussion about the profound impact of Surrealism in redefining artistic practices and legitimizing craft-based approaches gained momentum (Heuer, 2008. pp.10 - 11). Certainly, I experience the element of not knowing exactly where my ideas for making artworks come from, or what they mean, while I am making them.

Later, the Fluxus movement emerged in the 1960s and sought to bridge the gap between art and life. Fluxus artists, including George Maciunas, Yoko Ono, and Nam June Paik, focused on the process of creation and the integration of everyday materials and actions into their artworks. Their performances, installations, and event scores challenged the hierarchical notions of art, emphasizing the democratization of artistic practices (Harren, 2020, pp.14 -18). The Fluxus movement's embrace of craft techniques, such as quilt-making, printmaking, and ceramics, also blurred the boundaries between art, craft, and everyday life. Art historian Hannah Higgins explores the intersection of art, craft, and Fluxus in her book "Fluxus Experience," shedding light on the movement's impact on expanding the definition of art (Higgins, 2002).

2.12. Cultural Exchange and Globalization

According to Lemieux, Mashatan, *et al*, (2021), cultural exchange and globalization have facilitated the cross-pollination of artistic practices from different regions and traditions. This exchange has led to a blending of techniques, materials, and aesthetics, contributing to the convergence of art and craft. Improved transportation, communication technologies, and digital platforms have made it easier for artists from different regions to interact and collaborate. Artists now have greater access to materials and tools from around the world, enabling experimentation and innovation. To understand the convergence of art and craft, we must examine the historical context of cultural exchange. Throughout history, trade routes, exploration, and colonization have connected diverse cultures, leading to the exchange of artistic techniques, materials, and ideas. For instance, the Silk Road played a pivotal role in connecting Europe and Asia, facilitating the transmission of artistic practices such as ceramics, textile production, and painting techniques.

2.13. Integration of techniques and materials

An important aspect of the intersection between art and craft involves the integration of techniques. Artists are increasingly exploring and incorporating traditional craft techniques into their artistic practice, expanding the range of possibilities for creative expression (Sullivan, 2006. p.24-25). Contemporary artists, for instance, may embrace intricate embroidery techniques from diverse cultures, merging them with painting or sculpture to produce distinctive hybrid forms.

The exchange of artistic practices has also resulted in the fusion of materials and mediums. Artists now have access to a wide variety of materials sourced from different regions, enabling them to experiment with new textures, colors, and properties. This exchange of materials has not only influenced the visual elements of art but has also had an impact on the conceptual and symbolic meanings embedded within artworks (Halprin D, 2002).

2.14. Artistic Practices as Hybrid

Zheng and Nitsche, (2017. p.332), assert that many artists today engage in hybrid practices that combine elements of art and craft. They draw inspiration from diverse sources, incorporating traditional craft techniques alongside contemporary artistic approaches to create unique and innovative works. Craft traditions are put to the test by established crafts like jewelry as well as personal fabrication and digital technologies that frequently streamline and accelerate operations. Through a critical digital design debate geared toward "interactive jewelry," creations are enhanced. Tools such as 3D printers, and programmable sewing machines, are not entirely new, but their use in craft practices is still developing, which causes a collision and, because of the collision, "a new value for craft thinking, processes, and knowledge is beginning to emerge." This emergence starts in the workshop, not the lab, through craft-based methods. It manifests in makers incorporation of digital technologies into their current work.

The weaving together of art and craft has challenged traditional hierarchies of skill and value by incorporating digital technology (Beardon 2003. p. 174). Craftsmanship once considered a utilitarian pursuit, is now recognized as a sophisticated and valuable artistic skill. This reevaluation has broadened my appreciation for craftsmanship in the art world.

2.15. Challenging Hierarchies and Stereotypes

The convergence of art and craft has posed challenges to museums and galleries in terms of categorization and display. Institutions have had to adapt their curatorial practices to accommodate works that defy traditional distinctions (Altshuler, 2007).

Historically, craft has often been marginalized in comparison to fine art, seen as utilitarian or less intellectually rigorous. By blurring the boundaries, artists seek to challenge these stereotypes and elevate the value of craft as an artistic practice. Artists may purposefully employ craft techniques to challenge preconceived notions and disrupt established hierarchies within the art world (Pöllänen and Ruotsalainen, 2017).

Engaging in ‘weaved’ practices allows artists to explore the unique qualities of materials and processes associated with both art and craft. Artists may be motivated by the desire to experiment with different mediums and techniques, combining traditional craft skills with contemporary artistic concepts. This exploration of materiality and process can lead to innovative and hybrid forms of artistic expression. The role of materials and techniques in the creative process investigates the motivations behind artists' material choices and their impact on the creative process (Ratnam, 2011. p. 97-102).

For some artists, engaging in ‘weaved’ practices is a way to reconnect with cultural traditions and heritage. Craft techniques often have deep roots in specific cultural contexts, and artists may draw inspiration from these traditions while infusing their work with contemporary elements. This resonates with me, as I have explained in the background in Chapter 1, and in my creative practice now. This motivation highlights the importance of cultural preservation and the evolution of traditional practices within the realm of art. This text explores how artists use craft techniques to address cultural and social issues, emphasizing the motivations rooted in heritage and tradition (Mason, 2019. p.183).

The blending of distinctions between art and craft challenges the traditional hierarchies that have placed art on a pedestal above craft. This shift presents an opportunity to challenge the hierarchy and recognize the value and skill inherent in craft (Adamson and Padgett 2021).

2.16. Interdisciplinary Collaboration

The convergence of art and craft opens avenues for interdisciplinary collaboration. It is important to identify this as a significant opportunity for artists and makers to exchange knowledge, techniques, and ideas. By collaborating across disciplines, practitioners can push the boundaries of their respective fields and explore new creative possibilities (Dykes, Rodgers, and Smyth, 2009, p. 104-108).

The merging of disparities between art and craft impacts the art market and collectors' preferences. Shiner (2012) suggests that as the distinction between art and craft becomes less defined, there is a growing interest in hybrid forms that challenge traditional categorizations. This poses challenges for the art market in terms of classification and valuation but also presents opportunities for artists and makers to explore innovative approaches to their practice. A few scholars (for example, Peter Greenhalgh and Howard Risatti, 2009) have defined crafts in their own terms, based on their ideologies. Definitions like the absence of a guiding concept. Some define it in terms of methods, components, purposes, and classifications.

There are definitions demonstrate crafts' intuitive and practical nature, implying that they are frequently made without a rigid guiding concept or prior design. Crafts may be utilized for cultural expression, narrative, and identity formation. They may convey an ethnic group's beliefs, displaying its aesthetic sensibility and creative energy. Crafts can be spontaneous and arise throughout the production process. In my artistic practice, I worked intuitively on some artworks without any reference points or pre-planned ideas.

The debate surrounding art and craft remains contentious and subjective. Hierarchical Judgments: Critics argue that the distinction between art and craft implies a hierarchy, with art being considered superior. This perspective devalues the skill and creativity inherent in crafts and reinforces elitism within the art world (Ługowska, 2014. p. 286). The definitions of art and craft have often been influenced by cultural, societal, and historical factors. This bias has marginalized certain forms of creative expression, particularly those associated with indigenous cultures, women, and non-Western traditions. This hierarchical perspective is rooted in historical and cultural contexts. Throughout history, certain forms of artistic expression, such as painting and sculpture, have been traditionally associated with the highest forms of creativity and intellectual

pursuit. These art forms were often favored by institutions, art critics, and collectors, which further reinforced the notion of art's superiority. In contrast, craft practices, which involve skilled and meticulous craftsmanship, were sometimes relegated to the realm of functional objects, or considered "lesser" forms of creativity.

It is crucial to understand that the hierarchical distinctions between art and craft are arbitrary and shaped by social conceptions and cultural prejudices. Throughout history and across cultures, art and craft have been classified and defined in a variety of ways. What is viewed as craft in one setting may be viewed as art in another. The hierarchical paradigm is contested by modern viewpoints, which support a more inclusive and egalitarian approach to innovation. The divide between art and craft, according to many artists and academics, is arbitrary and constrictive since it places rigid boundaries on creative acts. They argue that creativity can be embodied in both art and craft and that both have artistic worth. The distinctions between the two are viewed as artificial and frequently influenced by culture.

The following are some of Paul Greenhalgh's findings and comments after reviewing some of the works that address this issue. In contrast to decorative art, craft as a discipline has received very little attention in historical writing. He contends that if we make a distinction between craft and decorative art, the absence of historical literature stands out even more. Understanding the differences between ornamental art and craft will help you better comprehend their respective histories and developments. The creation of aesthetically beautiful products with purely ornamental or decorative purposes is frequently referred to as decorative art. However, craft covers a wider spectrum of activities that entail deft manual labor and craftsmanship, resulting in useful or utilitarian products (Greenhalgh, 2003).

While there has been a lot of historical literature and scholarship on ornamental art, charting its growth and contextualizing it within various eras and civilizations, the historical investigation of craft as a discipline has not received the same level of attention. According to Greenhalgh (2007), craft history and its significance within the larger context of art and material culture are still largely unexplored.

This lack of historical writing on craft could be caused by several things. Craft techniques historically frequently had a utilitarian focus and were strongly related to daily living and functional things. Because fine art and decorative art were historically considered to be elite or high-status types of creativity, they might not have attracted as much attention or recognition.

Furthermore, social variables, technological developments, cultural transformations, and local traditions frequently influence the historical development of the craft. It is difficult to create a coherent narrative of craft history because of this richness and diversity. Additionally, artisan techniques are frequently passed down via families or communities over many generations, creating regional traditions that may not have been well-documented.

Greenhalgh (2003), asserts the significance of comprehending the history of concepts and practices particularly regarding concepts like "skill," "tradition," and "function." According to his assertion, these phrases have a rich history and have developed situations. As a result, any theorist who ignores or downplays these historical components may only offer fragmentary insights, making their ideas less applicable to or helpful to those seeking a thorough understanding of the subject matter.

Greenhalgh (2007) states that the concept of skill, is not fixed or universal but rather shaped by historical and cultural factors. The skills valued in different periods and societies can vary, and even the definition and perception of skill can change over time. Similarly, traditions associated with craftsmanship are not static entities but are subject to historical shifts, adaptations, and reinterpretations. Understanding the historical contexts of these terms is crucial for appreciating the complexities and nuances of their meanings.

The notion of the function also evolves over time. The historical context influences how function is defined and understood within different periods and cultures. The changing demands and expectations of objects or artifacts, as well as shifts in social, technological, and cultural contexts, can shape our understanding of their functions.

By acknowledging the historical dimensions of these terms, Greenhalgh (2007) suggests that theorists who do not consider these contextual intricacies may provide limited or incomplete perspectives on the subject matter. Their theories might lack depth or fail to capture the dynamic

nature of craft practices and ideas. However, these theories may still be of interest to other theorists who similarly overlook or discount the historical dimensions, creating a self-referential discourse that may have limited practical application or resonance outside of theoretical circles.

Greenhalgh (2007) explores the persistence of craft in contemporary society and its relationship to the art world. His review discusses how craft practices have evolved and adapted to new contexts, challenging traditional hierarchies and definitions.

Meskimmon (2010) explores the cosmopolitan nature of contemporary art and the ways in which it blurs boundaries, including those between art and craft. He discusses artists who work with diverse materials and techniques, challenging established categorizations.

Lechte (2010) argues that the complexities of artistic categorization and expression can be overcome through merging of disciplines, demonstrating valuable insights into the theoretical frameworks that inform discussions on the fluidity of art and craft boundaries.

2.17 Collaborations between “makers” and “artists”

Artists and makers frequently collaborate, combining their distinct skills and perspectives to create innovative and thought-provoking works. This platform allows artists and makers to break free from the constraints of their individual practices. By combining their distinct skills, they can venture into uncharted territory, exploring new materials, techniques, and conceptual frameworks. This sharing of knowledge and viewpoints encourages innovation, which results in the production of works that combine art and craft traditions.

Collaborations between makers and artists demonstrate unity of collaborating (two or more people from different artistic backgrounds to make one or a series of artworks together) and the transformative power of creative collaboration. By working together, these individuals create works that integrate diverse skills, perspectives, and artistic visions. Such collaborations foster unity in the society, promote community, and encourage the exchange of ideas and techniques. They result in visually striking and conceptually rich creations that challenge traditional boundaries and invite viewers to explore the interconnectedness of art, craft, and fashion.

Through these collaborations, a unified and innovative artistic landscape emerges, showcasing the potential of collective creativity.

Collaboration between Thabisa Mjo, Phillip Hollander, and Stephen Wilson



Figure 4: Mash. T Design Studio x Houtlander: Hlabisa bench. Image by Brett Rubin. Accessed on 17/06/2023.
<https://visi.co.za/wpcontent/uploads/2019/05/Hlabisabench6.jpg>

There is an innovative project that involves Houtlander, Mash T Design Studio, Phillip Hollander, Thabisa Mjo, and Stephen Wilson working together to produce a design. This collaboration, in my opinion, resulted in a unique and distinctive bench that perfectly encapsulates South African culture and its rich legacy. Brown (2019) states that by drawing inspiration from the three-legged pot, Thabisa incorporates elements of tradition and cultural heritage into the bench's design. The three legs of the pot likely influenced the structural aspect of the bench, giving it stability and balance. This connection to the pot adds a layer of cultural significance to the bench, making it more than just a piece of furniture.

Moreover, Mjo's association of the pot with hospitality and the idea of home suggests that the bench serves as a welcoming and comfortable space for people to gather and connect. It embodies the spirit of community, warmth, and sharing, much like the hospitality that is often associated with South African culture. Overall, Thabisa's choice to take inspiration from her grandmother's

three-legged pot brings a personal touch and cultural depth to the design of the bench, making it a meaningful symbol of home and hospitality.

The use of a basketweave suggests a thoughtful integration of design principles and craftsmanship. Design encompasses artistic vision, conceptualization, and planning, while craft involves the skillful execution of the technique. By selecting the basket weave, these makers and artists aim to combine these two aspects, emphasizing both the aesthetic appeal and the meticulous craftsmanship required to create the artwork.

Art and craft play a crucial role in cultural enrichment. They act as vehicles for preserving and celebrating cultural heritage and traditions. Different cultures around the world have unique artistic practices that reflect their history, values, and beliefs. Crafts used to be associated with more traditional African art forms. According to Nettleton (2010), the most typical kind of native basketry in Southern Africa used a technique called "coiling," in which thin stacks of sedge grass stalks are woven into coils and sewn together to make vessels of varying shapes for a variety of uses. Men in some ethnic groups weave warp-and-weft baskets with leaf or bark strips to create a variety of forms. In the past, grass, leaf, and bark techniques were typically for men to explore and create with (Klopper, 1992, 2008). However, over the course of the 20th century, it became increasingly employed by women, to the point where, in the 1980s, men considered it to work for women. Through art and craft, these traditions are passed down from generation to generation, ensuring their continuity and providing a tangible link to the past, just like Khumalo-Kubheka's experience of craft skills being passed on from generation to generation.

2.18. Technology and Tradition

The reference to technology shows that the makers and artists have incorporated modern tools or processes into the traditional basket-weaving technique. This integration has involved the use of advanced equipment, materials, and even digital technology to enhance or streamline the weaving process. By merging technology with tradition, the creatives seek to infuse the piece with a contemporary edge while honoring and preserving the cultural heritage of South Africa. The choice of the basket weave technique as quintessentially South African indicates that it holds a significant place within the country's cultural fabric. Basket weaving has a long history in South Africa, often associated with indigenous communities and their traditional craft practices. By

utilizing this technique, these makers and artists pay homage to the rich heritage of the region, showcasing the unique artistic expressions and cultural significance of South Africa.

2.19 The evolving craft

Wilson's statement about the weaving technique holding the energy of an evolving craft suggests that the creators have pushed the boundaries of traditional basket weaving. They have experimented with new materials, forms, or design elements within the established technique, resulting in an innovative and contemporary interpretation. This infusion of new ideas and approaches breathes new life into the craft, ensuring its relevance and continued evolution.

The concept gains a special cultural and natural touch attributable to the 3-legged Potjie Pot and the KwaZulu-Natal hills that served as inspiration for the bench's design. The design and form of the bench were inspired by areas well-known for their scenic beauty and abundant greenery. By incorporating them into the bench's design features, the designers aimed to capture the organic shapes and textures present in the surrounding environment. South African cuisine frequently uses the Potjie Pot, a distinctive cast-iron cooking pot with three legs. The foundation of the bench was inspired by its iconic style and cultural significance. The Potjie Pot is part of the lifestyle in which I was brought up as a 'farm girl'. I grew up in the former Transkei, now Eastern Cape, Mthatha on my grandfather's farm. We used to cook with the potjie pot outside, to this day, we use the three-legged black pots to cook food for special occasions like family gatherings, conferences, and big events. The Potjie Pot also comes in handy during power cuts, also known as 'Loadshedding' in South Africa. We call the food prepared with this three-legged pot, 'potjiekos'.

Below are images I took at home of the three-legged cast iron pot.



Figure 5: Three-legged pot. Mthatha. Image by Grace Mahogo.

Phillip Hollander, Beauty Ngxongo, Ma Ntuli and Thabisa Mjo brought a touch of traditional craft and indigenous flair, and Stephen Wilson with his exceptional woodworking expertise, the collaboration is good example of different art disciplines brought together to make a collaborative work. I suppose this gives each maker and artist involved a fair chance to demonstrate their artistic skills. By using materials that could be obtained nearby, they were able to weave intricate patterns that paid homage to South Africa's rich basket-weaving heritage. If they were incorporated within the seating area or employed as decorative embellishments, these woven elements offered the bench extra texture and cultural significance. This partnership resulted in the creation of a bench that is both aesthetically beautiful and important in terms of culture. It demonstrates the abilities of people involved, using the Potjie Pot and the landscape of KwaZulu-Natal as sources of inspiration, and combines traditional craft with contemporary design sense.

2.20. Conclusion

Literature describes the origins and the bridge between various artistic disciplines. By examining literary works that address the issues of art and craft, I hope to make connections and gain insights from the perspectives of authors, critics, and scholars. Literary criticism and analysis can

provide interpretations and theoretical frameworks for discussions on the blending of art and craft processes. Investigating interdisciplinary links allows for a fuller understanding of the cultural, historical, and social contexts in which art and craft exist.

Many crafts have deep cultural and historical roots. Engaging in traditional crafts can help individuals connect with their heritage, preserving and celebrating cultural practices that have been passed down through generations. By participating in these crafts, individuals may strengthen their ties to their cultural identity and gain a sense of belonging within their community. In my experience, craft can allow individuals to explore their perspectives and creativity. Each person brings ideas, techniques, and interpretations to their craft, sometimes resulting in hand-made one-of-a-kind creations. Through the blending of craft with artistic expression, individuals can establish a distinctive identity that sets them apart from others. In my experience, a craft like working with wool provides one with a sense of direction, fulfillment, and relaxation. Making something creative with hands can be therapeutic and help decompress, focus better, and find consolation in the work being done.

In the following chapter, I explore the collaboration between Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka. I also touch on their individual backgrounds and artistic practices.

Chapter 3: Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka and Corina Lemmer

In the previous chapter, I evaluated the controversy about art and craft, observed different definitions from several scholars, and discuss collaborations between artists and makers. In this chapter, I explore the collaboration between Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka, two artists who have joined forces to create unique and thought-provoking works. Their collaboration brings together their different artistic backgrounds (Khumalo-Kubheka produces beadwork, while Lemmer does paintings and fibre work). Their backgrounds and experiences, results in a fusion of art and craft and a body of work that challenges traditional boundaries and stimulates new conversations.

The artworks of Corina Lemmer in collaboration with Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubekha have been used in this study to investigate how artists integrate the techniques of art and craft. Lemmer is a fiber work artist that was born in Arusha in Tanzania, however, moved to Winterton, a small town on the banks of the Tugela Stream in the lower regions of the Drakensberg mountains, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa when she was five years old (Gerretsen 2010). Lemmer has exhibited her work in several places, namely: Empangeni Art Gallery, The Durban Art Gallery, The Margate Art Gallery, and Ulundi Palace (Sinkins 2014).



Figure 6: Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka and Corina Lemmer. 2023. Winterton, Drakensberg. Image by Grace Mahogo.

3.1 Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka

According to Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka, she got introduced to Lemmer in the late 1990s. They collaborated even though one was an artist (Lemmer) and the other was a maker (Khumalo - Kubheka). Khumalo-Kubheka was very little when she learned to perform beading. She imitated her elder sisters' beading techniques, picking up grass sticks after them to be useful while being close enough to observe and learn their weaving techniques. By being close enough to observe and learn the weaving techniques, Khumalo-Kubheka was able to develop her own understanding of beading and hone her skills over time.

Below are some of Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka's beadwork:



Figure 7: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Neckline beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.



Figure 8: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Neckline beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.



Figure 9: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Glass ball ornament beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.



Figure 10: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Glass ball ornament beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.



Figure 11: Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Necklace beadwork. Winterton, Drakensberg.

Practicing alongside more experienced individuals also provides opportunities for guidance which can further enhance the learning process. Learning a traditional craft like beading and weaving preserves cultural heritage. I think it is wonderful to see individuals like Khumalo-Kubheka embracing their cultural traditions and using their skills to create beautiful beadwork.

While her older siblings would sew with needles, Khumalo-Kubheka and her friends would use thin grass instead so that they do not hurt themselves. She eventually quit producing grass mats as an adult because she did not make any money off them. Lemmer intervened and gave her visual references as soon as she entered the business sphere. She was introduced to new beading patterns and methods as a result. Now that she had references to look at, she no longer relied on creating beading uniform patterns like her friends but used the references to keep up with current popular beading trends which helped improve her expertise.

When I read about this collaboration in the Tatham Art Gallery archives, I became concerned about the disparities between their practices (art and craft) and questioned how they collaborate since they come from different racial backgrounds, who leads or makes key decisions? Who develops concepts and ideas? However, interviewing them both face-to-face made everything clear to me and my concerns were addressed. They made it abundantly evident that they respect and understand one another above all else. In addition, nobody is taking advantage of the other. Although they have expectations from each other, they always try to meet halfway. They have found ways to overcome their communication challenges. Concepts, ideas, and procedures change depending on the series or project they are working on. They exchange ideas with one another about how to approach the task at hand and then start making.

3.2. Khumalo-Kubheka's background

Khumalo-Kubheka states that her collaboration with Lemmer is her main source of income. Despite being unemployed, she enjoys her beading work because she is talented at it, and it earns her some money. She cherishes the chance to do something even though she is not educated, not just anything, but what she loves and enjoys because she can at least provide for her family, although her collaboration with Lemmer is financially inconsistent (depending on the sales that they make, money comes in inconsistently). This showcases her resourcefulness, determination, and the value she places on contributing to her loved ones' well-being. I am amazed at her resilience and ability to make the best out of her situation. Based on my observation, Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka's relationship goes beyond their collaboration. They are both comfortable to work and excel in their craft as a team. I believe this is one of the contributing factors that makes

their collaboration strong. Even though their communication has hurdles, with help, they manage to clearly put their opinions across.

3.3. Challenges that they faced in their collaboration.

Since Lemmer speaks Afrikaans and Khumalo-Kubheka speaks isiZulu, they both agree that there is a communication gap between them. Lemmer can communicate in isiZulu and understand it just enough to get along. They occasionally request translation assistance from their family members, including their children and the Lemmers house managers. Additionally, this type of interaction between individuals proves that art and craft can serve as a means of cultural exchange, allowing individuals from diverse backgrounds to share their artistic perspectives and learn from one another, fostering intercultural understanding and appreciation. In my opinion, one way in which art and craft facilitate cultural exchange is by providing a common language that transcends linguistic and cultural barriers. Artistic expressions, whether visual, performative, or tactile, possess a universal quality that can evoke emotions, provoke thought, and convey messages that resonate across different cultures. This shared visual language allows individuals from diverse backgrounds to connect on a deeper level, creating a platform for the exchange of ideas and perspectives. For instance, a painting or sculpture can communicate themes of identity, heritage, or social issues, serving as a catalyst for cross-cultural conversations and mutual understanding.

3.4. Khumalo-Kubheka's understanding of art and craft.

Khumalo-Kubheka claims that she considers craft to be practical and that it is her safe space and comfort zone. She feels that art is too complicated for her and has no interest in trying it. She respects it and does not believe it to be of a greater caliber than craft, and vice versa, but wouldn't dare attempt to practice it. In her opinion these practices encourage individuals to delve into their creativity, facilitating personal growth and self-discovery. This is interesting to me because according to her background that she shared with me, she is not educated and is not on social media, grew up and still stays in a very small town - Winterton. Thus, I cannot say that her opinion and how she views or perceives both art and craft have been influenced by an awareness of what separates art and craft in a historical theoretical sense.

3.5. Corina Lemmer's background

Her tertiary training in art from the University of Pretoria gave her the basics she needed to be a practicing artist. Her mother did pottery and paintings (I think this may have been an influential factor in her career). In the early 1990s, she decided to do art with symbolism. She had a lot of interest in cattle and could identify with the cattle in the sense that they were not just animals to her but a representation of people, particularly black people during Apartheid. She made paintings of the cattle (shown below) on her and her husband's farm for a long time until she lost interest in painting the same thing and decided to work with other concepts to improve her skill further. She is inspired by her surrounding and believes that her spirituality does come through in her work. She worked with many types of media on various scales, not only that she also experimented with different themes.



Figure 12: Lemmer, C. Winterton. Drakensberg. Image by Grace Mahogo.

Lemmer states that she grew up in the same area as Khumalo-Kubheka but had different privileges compared to her. She was fortunate enough to get an education and have a successful

career, whereas Khumalo-Kubheka had quite the opposite lifestyle. Lemmer says that she remembers that after meeting Khumalo-Kubheka, she promised her a bag of maize in exchange of her beadwork. Their relationship began from that point onwards until now. The relationship between their ancestors was non-existent, but the dynamics have evolved over time. It is interesting that their forefathers were fighting against each other, yet their offspring is now more of a family than collaborating artists or just friends. This intriguing evolution from enmity to familial ties serves as a compelling testament to the power of time, shared experiences, and a changing sociocultural landscape. Lemmer feels like they have a similar approach to life as they are both Christians and have a similar way of living. They regard their collaboration as fibre work.

3.6. Lemmer's description of her work

Lemmer describes craft as part of one's identity as engaging in craft activities allows one to express creativity, develop skills, and connect with cultural traditions. She describes her work as mixed media and the collaboration between her and Khumalo-Kubheka as fiber work. In their collaborative work, Lemmer is the one that communicates with galleries to plan for exhibitions and their purchasing of artworks by the two.



Figure 13: Lemmer, C. *Liminal nesting I*. 400mm x 415mm. Watercolour, found feathers, and crochetwork.



Figure 14: Lemmer, C. *Liminal nesting II*. 400mm x 415mm. Watercolour, found feathers, and crochetwork.



Figure 15: Lemmer, C. *Liminal nesting III*. 400mm x 415mm. Watercolour, found feathers, and crochetwork.



Figure 16: Lemmer, C. Kwikkie-nes. 400mm x 415mm. Watercolour and crochetwork.

3.7. Two wrongs.

The work was made together by Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka, who each worked on different aspects of the whole. The shared experience of both artists consists of a fusion of techniques: embroidery and beading. The artworks below are some of the works in the Tatham Art Gallery collection that show rhythm within the artworks, delicacy, and accuracy that points to the finer details of the works.

Their works of art, reflect both their lives and their experiences. Their joint effort combines beading and embroidery techniques. Their creative process combines several artistic aspects and methods to create a hybrid work. The convergence of beading and embroidery techniques in hybrid art offers a fertile ground for artistic experimentation and personal expression. Through this fusion, artists can transcend the boundaries of traditional categorizations, resulting in visually captivating and conceptually meaningful artworks (Smith, 2009).



Figure 17: Lemmer, C. and Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Two wrongs 170cm x 130cm. Embroidery on cotton & repurposed khaki clothing.

Lemmer states that the artwork ‘Two wrongs’ is one of the collaborative works that the Tatham Art Gallery bought. It is currently in the TAG collection. This work of art is a part of a series called Prayers to Heal the Land, which was inspired by the contentious discussion around land ownership in South Africa. The inability of the rational voice to be heard and the inaccurate portrayal of positive interpersonal connections by politicians and the media are the two wrongs. According to Lemmer, she has taken Khumalo-Kubheka with her to TAG to see their collaborative work on display and Khumalo-Kubheka enjoyed the experience.



Figure 18: Lemmer, C. Khumalo-Kubheka, N. Deursnit/cross section. 1360cm x 29cm. Fabric, Second-hand Khaki clothing, found objects, free machine embroidery, and beadwork

According to Corina Lemmer, the following is an overview of the people who worked the land beneath the Drakensberg: Farmers as well as farmworkers of all races, are represented by the Khaki clothing they wear. Descendants of British immigrants imported traditional Zulu beading, Suzie Cooper porcelain for teatime, and Voortrekker tannies' (direct translation is 'aunties') crocheted relics. Despite the remnants of our history of conflict lurking in perilous subsurface strata, a community is coexisting peacefully on the land.

The white beaded frame was created by Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka of the Amangwe tribe to symbolize our shared desire for serene lifestyles under the shadow of the mountains. The rest of the piece was done by Corina Lemmer. The grasslands soon got cumulated with khaki clothing, progressively devolved into mayhem as broken pieces of porcelain, crocheted items, Zulu beadwork, bandage fragments, and khaki apparel all come to a stop at a man's short's zip. The pieces of white handiwork and bones that are arranged horizontally in tranquil repose, possibly as in death, contrast with this.

There are hints of a challenge to manhood in the usage of components that are obviously male and female. The historical artifacts discovered reveal the perpetual cycle of sowing and harvesting, war and peace, which is still going on today.



Figure 19: Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka and their artwork Loveletters. 2023. Winterton, Drakensberg. Image by Grace Mahogo.

Corina Lemmer and Ngoneni Khumalo-Kubheka's collaboration emerged from a mutual desire to explore the intersection of their respective creative practices. After their first encounter, they recognized the potential for collaboration, given the thematic overlaps and complementary nature of their artistic styles.

3.8. Conclusion

I find it intriguing that Khumalo-Kubheka acknowledges the differences between art and craft in materials, techniques, and so on but appreciates their value equally. From what I have gathered, she is firm on the belief that art and craft are practices that provide a platform to explore, create, and express themselves, “it is now up to the creatives to distinguish under which entity their work falls” she said.

In my opinion, there are numerous angles on craft as an artistic medium that need to be examined, for example, based on what grounds a sewing needle (as one of the common tools that are used for ‘craft’ production) associated with craft and not art? How do these relate to conceptual art, and the art market? For instance, many of the South African households have or had in the history of their family people who sew, weave, knit, crochet, bead, pottery, doll-making, floral design, and the list goes on. These skills are still relevant to the contemporary art world and a source of income for some as Khumalo-Kubheka mentioned above.

What I as the researcher am observing from this collaboration is that craft intersects with contemporary art practices exquisitely. The combination of various techniques to make one or a series of artworks contributes or is a good example of blurring the boundaries between art and craft, as methods and skills from different practices are fused together.

Achieving unity among collaborators is crucial as it aligns their visions and goals, ensuring a shared understanding of the desired outcome. When there is unity, working together and making collective decisions becomes easier. While individual differences and opinions are valid, without unity, finding common ground and moving forward as a team becomes challenging. Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka's collaboration exemplifies the combination of different expertise, leveraging synergies and complementing each other's abilities. This collaboration enhances problem-solving, innovation, and productivity.

In the realm of hybrid practices that integrate art and craft, material involvement plays a significant role in the creative process. It maintains a dynamic interplay between art and craft, emphasizing the importance of exploring materials and incorporating embodied knowledge (Carter, 2004). Richard Sennett's book "The Craftsman" delves deeply into the nature of

craftsmanship, exploring its historical origins and the value of skill development. Sennett also examines the relationship between craftsmanship, art, and broader cultural contexts (Chakravarty, 2011. p. 58).

This study has shown that art and craft can coexist and grow to greater heights through blending together different methods and techniques to create a work of art. A significant critical effort has been put into developing another social term that can outshine 'modern' throughout the last three to four decades. Each effort has encountered difficulties because it has relied heavily on elements of the modernist cultural paradigm. While modernism refers to a social movement that is even older, the term "contemporary" designates art that may be several decades old. A remarkable transformation from the modern to the contemporary has taken place. Contemporary art is significantly different from modern and postmodern art since it is not just art that is being created right now (Smith, 2009). The blurring of boundaries is a feature of post-modernism and contemporary art practice.

Chapter 4: My practical work

In this chapter, I will be discussing my artistic practice, from the materials I used to produce my artworks, to the techniques I implemented in the process. The topic of my study is the idea of weaving together art and craft methodology and materials. My practical work consists of artworks made with materials that are commonly associated with 'craft', such as wool, and incorporates found objects that once had practical uses.

4.1. Introduction to my artistic practice

There are a few components of my artistic approach that resonate with that of Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka. Specifically, creating hybrid artworks (using a variety of materials and processes to create artwork), employing specific materials (such as embroidery thread, khaki, wool, and beads), and drawing inspiration from one's own experiences when creating art. These are a few factors that influenced my decision to include Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka in my research. Additionally, their practices and artworks merit documentation to add to the body of knowledge regarding artists working in KwaZulu-Natal.

4.2. Wool, the string that ties together all my artworks

The common denominator of my thesis and practice is exploring theory through my practice and investigating how it relates to my research study. In addition, blurring the boundaries between art and craft without stripping them off their roots and characteristics but appreciate them equally. The materials, the artworks produced, and display of the work all play a significant role in reflecting the different stages of the project, projecting the investigative findings of the practice at all stages. In terms of craft, crafted objects often have a practical use, such as a basket, or a knitted woolen garment. The functional aspect applies to cardboard boxes and furniture, items which I have found and used in my creative practice with wool. This changes the purpose or function of the items, so that they exist as items in my studio and installed exhibits. Their functions change and become mysterious even to me.

Wool is the common thread that connects my work because it is the primary material, I utilize to create artworks. These colors' meaning stems from sensitivity, fragility, and the need to explore and test (curiosity). I've learned to play with different colors without being 'blinkered,' which

might possibly limit one's creativity. It is through embracing a diverse palette of colors that I unlock the true power of my creativity. I am not bound by conventional color symbolism, but rather open-minded enough to have my own interpretation and symbolism of colors. For example, red is commonly used to signal danger, and anger, but it can also symbolize power, and love (Dutfield and Wolchover, 2022). This color could represent boldness or strength in my work. It is easy to become captivated by the allure of what is already known, confining our ideas within the boundaries of familiarity. However, by embracing the full spectrum of colors, we unlock a boundless well of creativity. We blend, experiment, and learn, weaving together ideas that transcend the limitations of our imagination.

4.3. Materials used for my creative practice

Though it was not intentional, most of the materials I used to make my artworks are fragile. Wool, recycled cardboard, recycled newspaper. Some of these materials are worn out, therefore require to be handled with care, just like the theme I am researching about. Art and craft are a sensitive subject that needs one to thread carefully when dealing with it. I think it is interesting that I get to produce artworks that are not frail and worn out like the materials that were used to make them. These materials get to be transformed from their ordinary state of being discarded or used objects to artworks.

Like many other practicing artists, my work is time-consuming because of the techniques and materials I use. I work at a steady pace to avoid making unnecessary mistakes, crocheting the desired patterned stitches (I used the slip stitch and the chain stitch) takes a while because of the large volume and scale of my work, making samples also takes time. To test out different techniques and materials, I tend to make small samples to see whether a particular technique will work on a certain material or not. Most of my artworks are big in scale, this makes it difficult to complete the work in a short period of time. I could be working on one artwork for weeks at a time.

4.4. Technique Exploration

Crocheting small samples allowed me to experiment with various crochet techniques, such as different stitches, stitch combinations, or pattern variations. By trying out these techniques on a

smaller scale, I was able to assess their visual effects, texture, and structural integrity before incorporating them into larger artworks. I used these small samples as a trial run to work on methods of ‘perfecting’ the artworks. This process also made it possible for me to roughly estimate how much time I would need to complete the actual artwork which would of cause be much bigger than the sample itself.

4.5. Material Compatibility

Testing different materials through small samples enabled me to evaluate how well they work with my chosen crochet techniques. Different wools or fibers can yield varying results in terms of drape, stitch definition, color absorption, or texture, so I had to be specific on the type of wool I would like to use and stick to it, so that my work can be uniform. I used double acrylic wool to make my installation artworks. Making samples with different materials like wood, wool, polystyrene, and fabric helped me select the most appropriate or suitable one for my desired outcome.

4.6. Visualization of Colour and Pattern

Making little crochet samples helped me see colour schemes and pattern arrangements, see below. I could experiment with colour changes, and striped patterns by using a small number of stitches and rows. By doing so, I could see in advance how colours blend or how patterns line up to ensure the ideal aesthetic before committing to a larger scale.



Figure 20: Mahogo, G. (2022) sample (1). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

This is among the first small samples that I made to test out acrylic wool on a rubbery material, to see if the individual stitches would hold tightly together or not. The structure of the material allowed the patterned wool to stay intact, but it is very flexible at the same time. I just had to ensure to secure the end loops so that the flexibility of the rubber does not unwind the stitches.



Figure 21: Mahogo, G. (2022) sample (2). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

I used the sample above to test how polystyrene would accommodate the stitched string of wool. I soon realized how brittle the polystyrene is when it easily broke when I tightly pulled the strings together. It was very exciting and educational to try out different materials to work on. It almost felt like being in a science lab, ‘experimenting’ with various techniques and materials.



Figure 22: Mahogo, G. (2022) sample (3). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

This is a knitted sample that I made to test how fast I work when I knit in comparison to when I crochet. Knitting seemed to be taking longer than crocheting. It also became challenging to move around with the two knitting needles (mainly because of their length, about 15 inches long) compared to the crochet hook (about 6 inches long). I can work anywhere with a crochet hook; its portability is much better than that of knitting needles. I usually jump at the opportunity to work outside my studio. Some bits and pieces of my artworks were worked on in different environments: at home, in the car, on the field, in the park, and so on. I enjoyed working in these spaces because they became my escape places to get some ‘fresh air’ and continue working. This experience made me feel free, I did not feel like I am stuck in my studio and had nowhere else to be productive. Instead, I looked forward to going ahead and working in these various areas as per my rotating schedule permitted.



Figure 23: Mahogo, G.(2022) sample (4). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

In the above sample, I cut polystyrene in circular shapes of different sizes, from small (about 10cm wide) to big (about 30cm wide). I then wrapped these circular shapes with wool and tightened the ends with knots so that they do not unravel.

4.7. The difference between knitting and crocheting

Like knitting, crocheting is a kind of fabrication that involves transforming a continuous strand of wool into interlocking loops to create a sturdy finished product. Knitting and crocheting are adaptable construction methods that allow for the creation of a huge range of geometries and textures. Fabric can be made from thread or wool in two popular ways: knitting and crocheting. There are several significant distinctions between the two procedures, even though they are similar and yield comparable outcomes. The key differences are as follows: - Tools: Two straight or circular knitting needles are normally used for knitting, whereas one crochet hook is used for crocheting. Knitting uses specific wool interlacing techniques to create new stitches by holding existing ones on the needle. On the other hand, when crocheting, the fabric is made by linking individual stitches together (Guo, Lin, Narayanan, and McCann, 2020).

4.8. Structure

Due to the way, the stitches are looped together, knit fabric has a more elastic and flexible structure. Although the cloth made by crocheting is frequently denser and stiffer, it can also be more textured and has a wider range of stitch patterns. Crocheting is generally regarded as being faster than knitting. This is because knitting often includes holding numerous stitches on the needles at once, but crocheting only requires dealing with one active stitch at a time (Donohue, 2016).

4.9. Versatility

A lot of patterning, layering, and design is involved in my artworks. This is why concentration is important, because a simple mistake could result in undoing the whole design and starting afresh. I sometimes start working on an artwork without a sketch, because during those times I just allow my hands to produce, without the influence of a pre-planned idea. Allowing myself to run with an unplanned idea is refreshing. It breaks the ‘routine’ of drawing a mind map, searching for references, and sketching. This is like writing the first thing that comes to mind about a particular subject without giving it much thought. It is an incredible feeling to allow myself to dive in the deep not knowing what awaits on the other end. Especially because I like to organize and plan my practical work thoroughly, from sketches, to materials to be used to the scale of the work. So, working on an unplanned artwork is always scary, exciting, and makes me curious, but keeps me on my toes as well.

During the process of making, I try to immerse myself in the work that I produce, not only to be the maker of the work but to be utterly involved with it. Allowing all my senses to be involved and letting my guard down and just being present. This is not easy though because I get tempted to criticize and cross-examine every detail of the progress made. Although it is rare, in some instances, I realize that some of my basic senses (hearing, touch, smell, and sight) contribute (maybe even inspire) one way or the other to what I am doing during the process of making an artwork. For example, I tend to listen to music (I could be listening to upbeat music or jazz) when I am working, ‘setting the mood’ depending on the genre of music I choose to play and how I feel at that time, I end up making an artwork that somehow ‘relates’ to what I listened to. The smell of wood could trigger a feeling of being in the forest (which changes my orientation mentally and places me

somewhere else far away from my studio). The softness or roughness of the material I could be using at the time introduces tangibility to the trance I am in.

A more practical way to create a complete reflection of my emotions is to use a paintbrush, pencil, carving tool, etc. rather than a pen or computer keyboard. My practical work in this study is a reflection or interpretation of my experiences, inspirations, and way to convey my thoughts and emotions using found materials. This body of work consists of numerous artworks with minor variances and several similarities. The small variances are that shapes, colours, and sizes differ from one artwork to the next.

4.10. My artistic voice

Understanding my individuality is helping me create a distinctive style that represents my own voice. Artistic expression is very personal, it is a way that allows one to express their thoughts and emotions. Practicing art has nudged me into taking risks and stepping beyond my comfort zone. It also encourages me to set new standards for my methods, supplies, and subject matter, and to aim for coherence and consistency throughout my body of work. While experimentation is crucial, I realize that identifying recurring themes and common threads in my artworks can help me develop a distinctive and cohesive style that expresses my artistic individuality. A distinctive style requires time and effort to develop. I am quite patient with my art practice, especially because my style of working does not entertain ‘shortcuts’. I would rather work step by step than take shortcuts, but at least I have the comfort in my mind that I have eliminated or minimized chances of making unnecessary mistakes. My style continues to develop spontaneously because of constant practice and experimentation.

Every artist possesses their distinct approach and preferences when engaging in their creative practice. While some may draw inspiration from thorough research and preparation, others may prefer to directly immerse themselves in the process of creating art. Both approaches hold significance and are valid ways to approach art. Ultimately, the key is to find a method that resonates with the artist and enables them to effectively communicate their thoughts and emotions through their artwork.

In my opinion, the act of creating art itself is a form of research and exploration. It can be a way of experimenting with materials, techniques, and concepts, allowing me to learn and grow as an artist. Through their artistic practice, artists may discover new ways of seeing the world or develop their own unique style. I have come to understand that creating a distinctive style does not include imitating others, but rather locating my own artistic voice. Keeping loyal to who I am, accepting my uniqueness, and allowing my art to express my life's experiences and vision. All these build up to a slow discovery of one's 'signature' in their artmaking. By 'signature' I mean that having a portfolio of artworks that the audience can identify has been produced by the same person because of certain visible characteristics in the artworks. These could be the artist's choice of colour palette, how their brush strokes stand out, the scale of their work in a distinct medium, and so on.

While research and writing certainly have their place in art, they may not be the primary focus for every artist. I suppose each artist has their own preferred medium and approach to their craft. I have come across visual artists that dislike writing and prefer to express themselves through their creativity and fervor for creating art. I am one of them; I prefer being in the studio with dirty aprons to sitting behind a desk writing. In my opinion, it makes sense for creatives to be more interested in investing most of their time practicing than collecting data through research. I can relate because as an artist myself, making artworks relieves me from 'everyday busyness', it allows me to escape reality for a while to a place that gives me control. When I am in this zone, I do not have to critically think about my next move or have much concern about the result of my artwork, I am just working. Whereas writing and research need reasoning and critical thinking.

4.11. Forms of recording data

Making a few notes about an artwork while working on it, on the other hand, eases the writing 'pressure'. Because of how the ideas and inspirations came about, these little notes are now playing an important role in my thesis writing. Most of my notes are in my native tongue, Afrikaans (see figures 19a and 19b below) because it is easier to write down and explain my thoughts in their basic form. What I noticed about this way of recording information is that it allows me to be flexible. I do not feel nervous or need to be formal, I can even use slang and abbreviations in my notes just to write what I need to record and get back to my practical work. This makes writing less stressful. In this way, I have experienced the role of journaling as a research method, as mentioned previously

in the methodology chapter (Gray and Malins, 2004). For example, William Kentridge, a well-known South African artist uses sketching, animation, and performance in his work. Kentridge is renowned for his multidisciplinary style (Hagstrom-Stahl, K. 2010). As part of his creative process, he frequently creates detailed notes and sketches. These notes serve as references to expand on his notions and ideas. Contemporary artist Mary Sibande explores issues concerning identity, racism, and gender in South Africa through sculpture, photography, and performance (Baderoon, 2014). In her sketchbooks, she frequently draws and records her ideas and observations. These notes are a valuable resource for her continuous artistic research and are essential to the creation of her visual narratives.

These artists provide exemplary instances of how taking notes and gathering references are essential components of their creative processes. They improve their creative process, acquire a deeper conceptual grasp, and lay the groundwork for future research and growth of their art practice by writing down their ideas, observations, and references.

During my creative practice for this study, I also adopted this idea of recording information while practicing through notes, sketches, images, and video recordings. Below are some of those notes. I wrote how I felt, my ideas and my memories at the time of making various artworks.

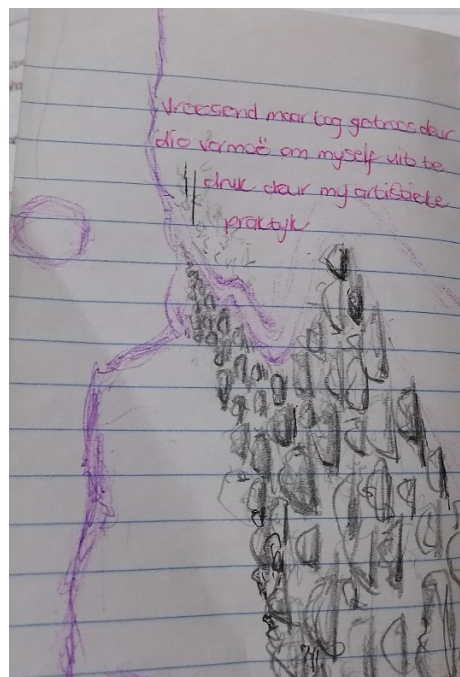


Figure 24: Mahogo, G. (2022) 'notas'. Centre of Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

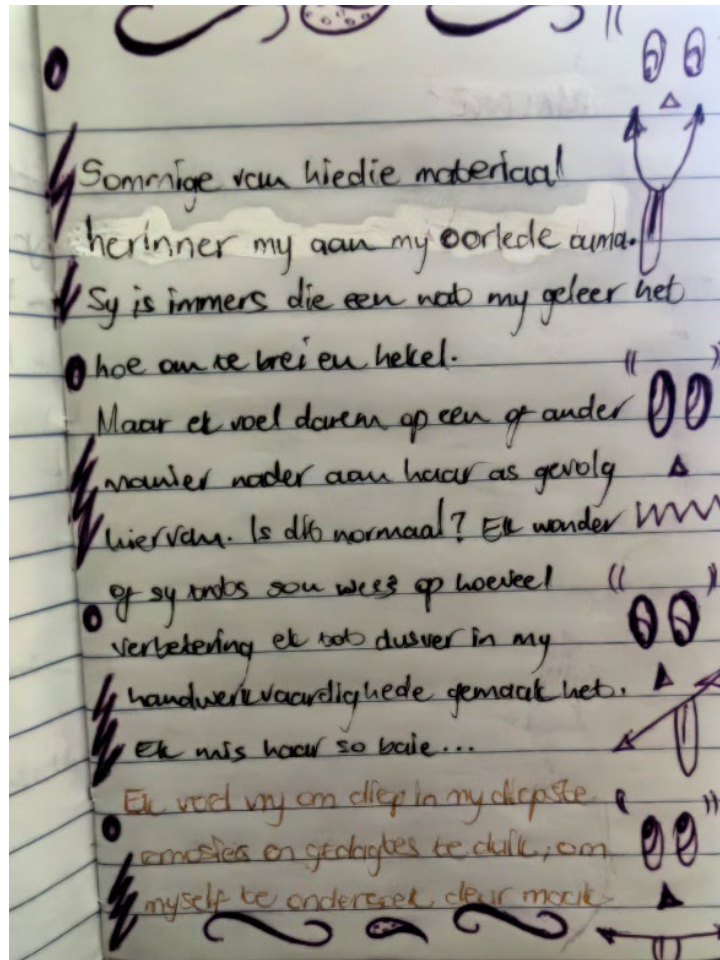


Figure 25: Mahogo, G. (2022) 'notas'. Centre of Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

4.12. Elements that strengthened my creative practice

Studio visits and critiques with other CVA postgraduate students and staff helped me a lot with thinking of the final display of my work, how I can improve my artworks, various ways of documenting my studio practice, progress and giving constructive feedback on the progress made in my practical work. Receiving people (artists) in my studio boosted my confidence a lot because they would encourage me and point out the good and the 'not working' in my work progress. Having crits also trained me to speak about my research and my practical work. The more I spoke about it, the more I gained a better understanding of what I am doing. All these exercises gave me a chance to learn, make mistakes, go back to the drawing board, plan, and implement what I have learned into practice.

During studio visits, I got feedback and criticism on my work from other artists, lecturers, and curators. These different viewpoints provided new insights, various interpretations, and helpful critique, assisting me in seeing my work from new perspectives and promoting development in my artistic practice. Having conversations with other artists during studio visits allowed me to share my thoughts, intentions, and creative process. By explaining my work and getting feedback, I saw an improvement in my artistic concepts, my artistic language became clearer, and I gained a deeper understanding of my own work. By verbalizing my ideas, I solidify them in my own mind and refine my creative skills.

Getting exposure to diverse perspectives from visitors in my studio helped me to have a more informed understanding of people's backgrounds, experiences, and influences which tends to affect the way they perceive my work as an artist; these diverse perspectives may introduce them to novel concepts, artistic movements, techniques, and ideas that they may not have previously encountered. I realize that this exposure may encourage one to broaden their artistic references and explore new artistic directions.

Overall, studio visits give artists a great chance to get feedback, have a conversation, build their network, and be exposed to various viewpoints. These contacts can help me as an artist to develop my work by giving me new sources of inspiration, perspectives, and opportunities for professional advancement. To make me understand that points of reference are not only the ones in my surroundings like the KwaZulu-Natal Museum, Tatham Art Gallery, Bat Centre, Durban Art Gallery, and KwaZulu-Natal Society of Arts only but everywhere I go. I do not have to be in an art space to be inspired. However, I am not under-estimating the influence, power, and the effectiveness of such establishments in my creative practice.

Artists' blogs and websites introduced me to another level of 'studio practice' for example, "Rivers and Tides" (2001) about artist Andy Goldsworthy, venturing into dynamics that contemporary artists face in their studio spaces. These blogs and websites show artistic practice, studio setups, and behind-the-scenes glimpses. In essence, one gets to experience the artist's work and see their progress online in live or pre-recorded videos. This online presence of these artists made me realize that it must have taken courage and confidence to document and upload their experiences online because artists can be very reserved (Kafai and Pepler, 2011. p. 89).

4.13. Processes in different stages



Figure 26: Mahogo, G. (2021) Die rooi kas work in progress. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

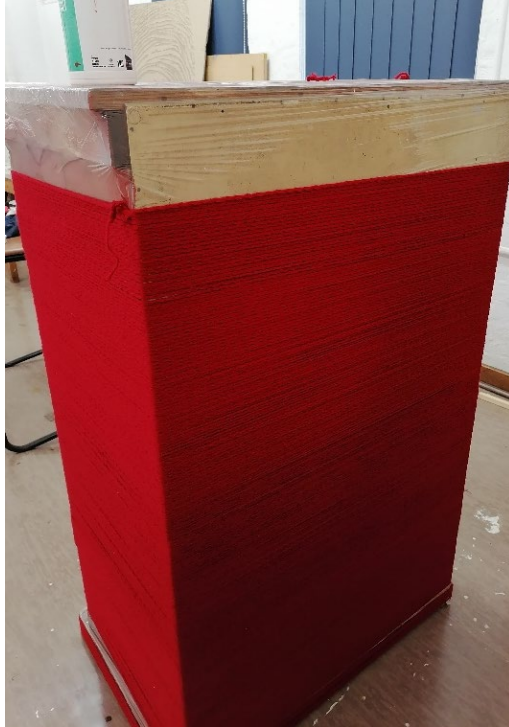


Figure 27: Mahogo, G. (2021) Die rooi kas work in progress with red wool crochet. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Figure 28: Mahogo, G. (2021) Die rooi kas work in progress after application of glue to the wool. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The materials needed to create Die rooi kas include wool, glue, and a repurposed cabinet. The cupboard served as a support structure for the wool. The cupboard's function has been altered because it can no longer be opened to store items. The wool took on the contour of the cupboard. The artwork has a firm texture on the outside yet a soft texture on the inside. The glue stiffened the wool and attached the single patterned strings of wool together.

The entire process of creating this artwork was difficult and time-consuming. The vast scale and shape of the cupboard made it difficult to wrap it up nicely without gaps in between. I had to securely wrap the woven wool strips around the cupboard using clingwrap to keep the wool from getting glued straight to the cupboard. I then used a large painting flat brush to apply glue to the wool to adhere the little woven strands together. This was a difficult task because the brushstrokes would pull the wool fibers, leaving gaps between the strips. Additionally, the weight of the cupboard made it impossible to have it placed (without lifting equipment) at a level that is off the ground because it is very heavy. This made the task of wrapping this big cupboard very difficult, as I had to bend down (for a long time) to ground-level to reach the cupboard's starting point. This made my back very sore, and I would struggle to stand up straight after bending for several minutes. The higher I went up with the strings of wool on the cupboard, the easier it became to work it. I was hesitant to stop when I thought I had accomplished what I had set out to do with the work, but I knew that if I worked on it any longer, I would have wrecked it. I would like the audience to interact with the artwork by touching both the outer and inside surfaces.

Making samples allowed me to practice and identify any mistakes or areas that require improvement. I could use these smaller pieces as a platform for learning and troubleshooting, addressing issues like tension, stitch count, or pattern accuracy. Correcting errors on a small scale is generally more manageable and less time-consuming. This allowed me to experiment with different ideas and techniques without investing excessive time.

One of the fundamental things about my practical work is that I do not usher the audience to perceive the work in a certain way. This opens a realm of possibilities and fosters a more profound and personal connection between the artwork and its audience. This approach, which celebrates individuality and subjective experiences, allows each person to engage with the work in a manner that is meaningful and unique to them. It is entirely up to the audience to interpret the work as they

want. I was deliberate about this throughout the process. This method encourages viewers to actively participate in the creative process, inviting them to bring their own background, emotions, and experiences into the equation. I believe to achieve this stage in making art there is a certain level of maturity and understanding that an artist needs to have for this engagement between their artwork and the audience to be possible. My work is very playful, colourful, and enticing. I am very open to trying out different techniques to explore my curiosity for example, (what would happen if I mixed wood glue and charcoal to coat a structure made of paper mache?). This way of being investigative, and diverse, remove any traces of a 'blinkered mentality', instead allowing one to be more flexible and tolerant of new methods, and practices. Numerous works examine the function of play in artistic expression and offer perceptions of how playfulness tends to prompt creativity.



Figure 29: Mahogo, G. (2021) Untitled. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Figure 30: Mahogo, G. (2021) Untitled. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Wool, glue, and a mannequin were all utilized to create the above piece. I had to cut the stiff patterned wool at the back to get it off the mannequin. What I found when I applied glue on wool is that it not only hardens it but also darkens the color of the wool. This means that the hardened exterior of the artwork is darker than the interior since I only applied glue on the outside and not the inside of the patterned wool. The weight of this artwork since its initial stages has changed, it is now heavy. Now that this artwork is ‘complete’, it looks quite different from its initial state, without glue. The documentation of its progress in different stages helped me because now I have a record of how each stage looked like and can make clear comparisons.

Below are some of the artworks I produced during this study in their ‘complete’ stage. They reflect my raw emotions and my interpretation of how art and craft could be woven together. I feel very attached to these artworks because of several reasons namely: I worked for at least two weeks minimum on each of these artworks. I excavated my deepest fears, thoughts, and emotions while making them, I did not hold back. I stepped outside my comfort zone, explored, took risks and I am delighted that I trusted the process and pushed myself even when I felt demotivated to work, because all those stages I went through during the production process ultimately paid off. I feel ‘resolved’ and content with what I managed to produce. To see my work from the conception stage to the final stage gives me a sense of accomplishment, my vision has come to life.



Figure 31: Mahogo, G.(2021) *Die naald*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Figure 32: Mahogo, G. (2021) *Untitled*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Figure 33: Mahogo, G. (2021) *Untitled*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Figure 34: Mahogo, G. (2021) *Untitled*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

4.14. My experience with my artistic practice

Cross (2001) states that the artworks in their structure and composition, also entail knowledge. It is crucial to record all research findings and experiments, even in the process of making an artwork. The importance of documentation and how it relates to reflection in practice-led research is enormous, making the conceptualization and collection of data possible. The artworks themselves tell a story, carry history and virtue. In my opinion, I believe that part of me will forever be in the artworks I produce because I made them with my hands. This sentiment has further inspired and encouraged me to inject sincerity and personal expression into my artworks. One of the things I discovered about myself and the artworks I produce is that I bond with them easily. This makes me sensitive towards my work, I am careful with how I handle the artworks, moving them from one place to another. This is a responsible way to maintain their preservation and integrity. I believe that I may contribute to their longevity and maintain the artistic expression they represent by taking safety measures and being conscious of their physical handling.

According to Makela and Nimkulrat (2018, p. 1), the concept of research through practice gives artists the chance to present seasonal theory and insights derived from their own artistic practice. However, to successfully couple research and practice together, the researcher must be disciplined enough to adhere to the guidelines for both writing and practice. Artistic practice is a unique approach to expressing thoughts, feelings, and points of view without relying largely on writing or research. Artists may communicate their ideas and connect with audiences on a deep level by using visual components, colour, texture, composition, and other artistic approaches. Making art may be therapeutic and cathartic, allowing space for personal inquiry and introspection.

Discovering what works best (technique, style, mediums, scale, and colour) for oneself allows for authentic self-expression. Whether it involves spending time in the studio, engaging in hands-on creative activities, or embracing a messy process, these approaches hold value and validity in artistic practice. Being subjective and open to interpretation is essential, as it enables one to fully embrace their unique creative processes and continue creating in a way that resonates with them personally.

Actively immersing oneself in a diverse range of artistic endeavors and experiencing art firsthand can ignite individual creative thoughts and serve as a powerful source of inspiration. By observing

how other artists explore various mediums, techniques, and ideas, one can find motivation and new avenues for their own creative pursuits. I find plenty of inspiration in nature. I allow nature's intricacy and beauty to inspire my creativity and influence my artistic endeavors. Creativity is a very personal and subjective process. Although references and outside sources might offer ideas and pointers, I understand that it is crucial to trust my own judgment and let my creativity develop naturally.

4.15. My artistic practice and research

To have my practice as one of the generators/sources of information for addressing the project-related experiences is the reflection that was conducted at various stages of this study. In terms of my practice being part of the investigative process, I experienced a different way of deriving information, of discovering as I produced. For my practice to be part of my research, gave me a different angle to appreciate my artworks. That they are not just artworks to be exhibited, but I get to experience them in another way, which is by writing about them in this case. It is great to see your work develop practically from one stage to another because as an artist you are physically involved with the work. Writing about my work is adding to the experience. Adding another layer of attachment with the body of work I have created.

I have tried to follow this advice: “To gain an understanding of your study, it helps to situate yourself as a researcher so that you develop a focus for your project. The review allows you to acknowledge their different contributions, but also encourages you to state your views critically – both positive and negative” (Gray and Malins, 2004. p. 14). The element of self-introspection and participation in the study by being attentive to developments and working in phases on both practice and research made it easier to trust the process. I have no idea what the outcome will be and must rely on the process to guide me to the conclusion that will determine the findings of this study. In terms of dealing with them, both practice and research have been eye-opening. There are parallels here and there, but I quickly learned that when “I'm in the zone”, I should just keep going.

The proactive approach to my artistic practice of incorporating components of research and self-introspection into my creative process was such an eye-opener that it took me to tunnels in both my research and practice that I had no idea existed. By positioning myself as a researcher in my practice, I was able to build a focused approach to my work and critically assess various

contributions and viewpoints. Allowing myself to be vulnerable and trusting in the process enabled me to develop a better knowledge of my work, spot emerging patterns or themes, and make more informed decisions along the way. This state of flow enabled me to be in tune with my art, where ideas and inspiration can flow more effortlessly.

How does my practice function as research?

My practice functions as research because I have done an exploration of themes and concepts. Through my creative process, I engaged with various themes, concepts, and ideas. This exploration is akin to research, where one delves into subjects of interest, investigate concepts, and develop a deeper understanding of their complexities.

As an artist, I constantly experimented with different materials, techniques, and approaches in my work. This experimentation served as a form of research, allowing me to explore the possibilities and limitations of my chosen medium and develop innovative ways of expression.

In the process of my art making, I documented the processes through sketches, journals, photographs, and videos. This documentation serves as a record of my artistic journey and allowed for reflection on my progress, challenges, and insights gained along the way. It provided valuable data for analyzing the evolution of my practice and the themes I explored.

I engaged in dialogues with peers and mentors about my work, those conversations provided opportunities for intellectual exchange, critique, and feedback, contributing to the ongoing development of my practice. This exchange of ideas and perspectives enriched my research by exposing me to diverse viewpoints and challenged my assumptions.

Overall, my artistic practice functions as a form of research by facilitating inquiry, exploration, experimentation, documentation, reflection, and dialogue. It is a dynamic and iterative process through which one can deepen their understanding of the world, craft, and yourself as an artist.

4.16. The playfulness theme across all the artworks produced for this study

De Koven (2013) states that playfulness in artistic practice and a valuable approach encourages experimentation, spontaneity, and a sense of joy in the creative process. It encompasses various aspects that contribute to a lighthearted and spontaneous approach to life. It involves being fully engaged and attentive in the present moment. It requires being open and responsive to the people

and environment around you, ready to interact and adapt to the situation. Playfulness often involves a sense of lightness, both in terms of attitude and behavior. It's about embracing a carefree and joyful mindset. It encourages a willingness to think outside the box and explore new possibilities. It involves the ability to spontaneously generate ideas, solutions, and actions, often with a sense of creativity. It often involves a willingness to immerse oneself in an activity, interaction, or experience.

- The approach I use in my art is a sense of curiosity and a willingness to explore. Allowing myself to be open to new ideas, materials, and techniques helped my creativity to grow. To engage with references that spark my curiosity and inspire me to try something different. During this study, my point of inspiration was largely nature and outdoor activities. Looking at my work now as a collective, I get a sense of a “playground theme”. The artworks look like a collection of different types of games.
- Injecting an element of surprise or unexpectedness into my work is helping me develop, and sharpen my skill of making art. I achieve this by incorporating unconventional materials, using unexpected color combinations, or introducing unexpected techniques for example, I made ‘hair braids’ (see figures 25a-c above) with wool. References can serve as starting points, but I tend to deviate and add my own twist to personalize my artistic practice.
- Allowing myself to create without applying too much pressure on myself helped me to be productive and to work in a relaxed mode. Playing around with materials, experimenting with techniques, and letting my intuition guide me has helped immensely in terms of identifying where my interests lie. This sense of freedom and spontaneity has led to exciting breakthroughs and fresh perspectives in my art.

- Infusing different elements and techniques of play into my art has contributed to creating a sense of playfulness and unpredictability that encourages exploration and that pushed me outside of my comfort zone.
- During the process of making my artworks, I had to learn to embrace my mistakes and accidents as opportunities for playfulness and experimentation. This led to unexpected outcomes and exciting experiences. I had to be open to embracing the unexpected and let go of rigid expectations. The influential art educator and author, Sir Ken Robinson, (Insider and Talk), talks about the importance of creativity in education and in the workplace, also emphasizing the importance of playfulness in fostering creativity and problem-solving skills. When artists embrace mistakes and accidents, they tap into their innate curiosity, allowing them to develop a resilient mindset and adapt to new artistic challenges.

In traditional artistic endeavors, artists often strive for perfection and adhere to strict expectations. However, by letting go of rigid standards, artists can tap into a realm of creative freedom. Kleon (2022) argues that making mistakes and embracing accidents is a vital part of the artistic process. He suggests that the willingness to let go of expectations can lead to unconventional ideas and unexpected artistic breakthroughs.

4.17. Experimentation as a Result of Unexpected Outcomes

Embracing mistakes and accidents allows artists to view them not as setbacks but as opportunities for experimentation. The process of responding to unforeseen circumstances encourages artists to depart from preconceived notions and rigid expectations. By relinquishing control and embracing the unexpected, artists open themselves up to a world of exploration. The renowned artist Pablo Picasso once stated, "Every act of creation is first an act of destruction," emphasizing the transformative power of experimentation and the importance of embracing the unpredictable (Seaward, 2019. p. 151).

Chapter 5. Conclusion of the study

To conclude this research, I go back to my research aims, to explore how contemporary artists weave together art and craft mediums in hybrid practices, with reference to Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka's collaboration. This linked with my work to learn more about what elements in my own creative practice were developed by blending art and craft.

5. 1. The use of experimental mediums within my artistic practice

My artistic practice of using found objects and wool (to create artworks) as mediums offered me a chance to experiment, express myself, be playful, and learn new techniques other than the standard art practices, painting, drawing, printmaking, and so on. According to Sun *et al.* (p. 365), wool is a tactile and versatile material that offers artists a vast range of expressive possibilities. It possesses inherent qualities of warmth, softness, and malleability, making it conducive to both two-dimensional and three-dimensional creations. By working with wool, artists can engage with the tactile nature of their medium, exploring various techniques such as felting, knitting, weaving, or embroidery. The use of found objects requires resourcefulness, adaptability, and the ability to see artistic potential in the ordinary.

The use of wool, a natural and renewable resource, and found objects further reinforces the eco-conscious aspect of this artistic practice, emphasizing the importance of reusing and reimagining materials. This practice not only challenges traditional notions of art but also serves as a platform for social commentary and environmental awareness. Encouraging audience engagement and interpretation is my attempt to leave this discussion of weaving art and craft together open-ended. Additionally, to allow the audience to have their own interpretation of my work without being coached into it. By not imposing a single, definitive interpretation, I am making room for a more inclusive and expansive dialogue. This also acknowledges that the interpretation of art and craft is not static but can evolve and change over time, reflecting the evolving perspectives and experiences of the audience (Crossick and Kasznka, 2016. p. 114).

5.2. Value and purpose of artistic practices

One key aspect in the dynamics of art and craft is the concept of creative expression. Both art and craft involve the act of creation, with individuals employing their skills, imagination, and personal

vision to produce works that embody their ideas. However, the distinction between the two lies in the perceived intent and context. Art is often associated with self-expression, exploration of ideas, and the evocation of emotions, while craft is viewed as a disciplined and skilled practice focused on creating functional or decorative objects. Yet, these distinctions are not fixed, and many artists and makers blur the lines, infusing their craft with artistic sensibilities and imbuing art with elements of craftsmanship.

Another factor shaping perceptions of art and craft is the influence of cultural and historical contexts. Different cultures and societies have distinct views on the value and purpose of artistic practices. For instance, in some indigenous cultures, there may be no rigid separation between art and craft, as both are integral to everyday life and spiritual expression. In contrast, Western art history has often placed a higher value on art as a form of individual self-expression and aesthetic exploration. However, in recent years, there has been a growing recognition of craft as an art form, traditional hierarchies and highlighting the skill, innovation, and creativity embedded in craft practices.

In this study, it has been demonstrated that perceptions of art and craft are also shaped by social and economic factors. The art market and the art world, with its institutions, collectors, and critics, have played a significant role in defining and shaping these perceptions. The distinction between art and craft has often been reinforced through the art market's valuation of certain objects as a high art while relegating others to the realm of craft. However, this perspective is increasingly being challenged by artists, scholars, and institutions that advocate for a more inclusive and expansive understanding of creativity and artistic practices (Shiner, 2001. p. 16).

5.3. Findings of my encounter with Lemmer and Khumalo-Kubheka

Through the semi-structured interviews, I conducted with the participants, I managed to scratch beyond the surface into the opinions of individuals, allowing for a detailed exploration of their perspectives. By engaging in dialogue with participants, as a researcher I uncovered hidden insights, got clarification on ambiguous responses, and explored the various factors that influence their creativity.

Below is how I currently understand the commonalities and differences that I think are relevant to all our practices:

	Mahogo	Khumalo-Kubheka	Lemmer
Themes	Fragility, materiality (how materials used within my practice are interpreted and understood. Navigating the practical discourse of how art functions through materiality.	Fragility: her work is fragile since she uses mainly beads and thread materials to produce her work. Her beadwork has representation of her culture (Zulu), full of design and pattern.	Fragility, Meshing (that is a connection of fibres with open spaces that create a net-like structure).
Methods	Embroidery, knitting, crocheting, installation	Embroidery, and beading.	Embroidery, beading, painting, drawing, and crocheting.
Materials	Wool, found objects, cotton, embroidery thread	Found objects, cotton twine, beads, wire, fabric, linoleum.	Fabric, embroidery thread, beads, reed mat, khaki clothing, oil paint.

5.4. My upbringing in South Africa

I have mentioned earlier in this study that I was born in the former Transkei, now called Eastern Cape in Mthatha. This is one of the South African provinces that has a rich history in ‘art’ and ‘craft’ (Steele, 2009. p. 182). I am fortunate to have been born in an area that upholds its heritage roots. In this section, I discuss my upbringing, surroundings, and influences in my artistic practice today.

Growing up in an environment that embraces both art and craft in South Africa has provided me with a rich tapestry of creative influences and a profound appreciation for the intersection of these disciplines. Within my own family, I have witnessed the seamless integration of artistic expression and skilled craftsmanship, with my father being an architect and artist, my grandfather a bricklayer who contributed to the construction of one of the tallest buildings in my town, and my aunts and grandmother practicing various forms of fiber arts and basket weaving. These experiences have shaped my understanding of the intricate relationship between art and craft and have instilled in me a deep admiration for the cultural heritage and creative potential found within South Africa today.

The fusion of art and craft within my family reflects a broader cultural spirit prevalent in South Africa, where the boundaries between artistic expression and skilled craftsmanship are often blurred. In this vibrant and diverse country, traditional forms of art and craft have long been intertwined with daily life, reflecting the rich history, cultural diversity, and spirit of innovation that define South Africa's creative landscape.

5.5. Practical steps I took to broaden my artistic path

Pushing the boundaries and finding inspiration in the intersections of art and craft has given me a lot of satisfaction in my own profession. I attempt to create artworks that reflect the interdependence of these disciplines. Leaving traditional art processes behind and embracing unconventional materials has been a wonderful experience that has immensely expanded my artistic practice. The desire to explore new pathways and defy established standards has not only broadened my creative horizons but also introduced me to new ways of producing work. This growth in my artistic journey has been transforming and illuminating, setting the door for exciting possibilities in the next stage of my artistic practice.

One of the most exhilarating aspects of venturing into non-traditional materials is the liberation it brings. Breaking free from the constraints of conventional mediums has allowed me to tap into a vast array of materials that were previously unexplored in my artistic practice.

Exploring non-traditional materials has also fostered a deep sense of innovation and resourcefulness within my practice. By seeking out non-traditional resources and repurposing everyday objects, I have learned to see artistic potential in the ordinary. This has opened a world of limitless

possibilities, enabling me to create art that is not only visually compelling but also thought-provoking and environmentally conscious. Embracing non-traditional materials has thus allowed me to engage with broader concepts of sustainability and the role of art in addressing contemporary issues.

Moreover, the use of non-traditional materials has offered me a fresh perspective on the creative process itself. By incorporating non-traditional materials, I have been challenged to approach artmaking in unconventional ways (Ashby and Johnson, 2013. p.6). This has sparked a heightened sense of curiosity and experimentation, leading to unexpected discoveries and new techniques. The process of working with non-traditional materials has encouraged me to think outside the box, encouraging innovative problem-solving and pushing the boundaries of what is considered "acceptable" within the art world.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that the blurring of boundaries between art and craft is an inevitable and irreversible phenomenon. The ongoing evolution of artistic practices, the emergence of cross-disciplinary approaches, and the changing perspectives within the art world all contribute to this convergence. Rather than viewing art and craft as separate and distinct realms, contemporary artists are embracing their intersection to push the boundaries of creativity (Rotger, Roig-Sanz, and Puxan-Oliva, 2019). Perceptions of art and craft have varied across time and cultures. In some periods, art has been elevated to a realm of intellectual and aesthetic superiority, while craft has been associated with functionality and utilitarian purposes. This hierarchical view has often positioned art as the domain of creativity, originality, and innovation, while craft has been seen as a skill-based practice rooted in tradition and utility. However, such distinctions are not absolute, as the boundaries between art and craft have been challenged, questioned, and redefined throughout history.

The next step in my artistic practice holds the promise of continued growth and evolution. I am eager to dive deeper into interdisciplinary collaborations, bridging the realms of art, craft, technology, and other creative disciplines. I want to do this because I do not want to have a 'blinkered' perspective of artistic growth, and I think exploring and experimenting will help develop my skills. This interdisciplinary approach will provide fertile ground for experimentation and the creation of immersive and multisensory art experiences (Quan-Haase and Young, 2010).

References

- Ackerman, J.S. 2002. Origins, imitation, conventions: representation in the visual arts. Press.pp.12&15.
- Adamson, G. 2013. *The Invention of Craft*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Adamson, G. and Padgett, J. 2021. *Crafting America: Artists and Objects, 1940 to Today*. University of Arkansas Press. [Accessed on 10 June 2023].
- Ahlers, J. and Thomas, M.D. 2019. *Why Do You Knit?: Exploring the Role of Knitting in Identity and Wellbeing*. A Global Perspective on Friendship and Happiness, pp.111-134.
- Aloi, G. 2022. Igshaan Adams: Desire Lines. *Esse*, 106, pp.108.
- Ashby, M.F. and Johnson, K. 2013. *Materials and design: the art and science of material selection in product design*. Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Beardon, C. 2003. *The Digital Bauhaus: aesthetics, politics and technology*. Digital Creativity. 14(3), pp.169-179.
- Brown, A. 2019. Mash. T Design Studio X Houtlander: Hlabisa Bench. <https://visi.co.za/mash-t-design-studio-x-houtlander-hlabisa-bench/> [Accessed on 16 June 2023].
- Bryan-Wilson, J. 2021. *Fray: art and textile politics*. University of Chicago Press.
- Büyükkök, S. 2022. *Adolf Loos and Ornament*. Journal of Design Planning and Aesthetics Research, 1(1), p.67.
- Cahnmann-Taylor, M. 2013. *Arts-based research: Histories and new directions*. In *Arts-based research in education*. Routledge. p.6.
- Capacchione, L. 2015. *The creative journal: The art of finding yourself*. Ohio University Press. [Accessed on 21 June 2023].

Carter, P. 2004. *Material thinking: The theory and practice of creative research*.

Chakravarty, S. 2011. The craftsman. p.58

Corcoran, P.B. *et al.* 2004. Case studies, make-your-case studies, and case stories: a critique of case-study methodology in sustainability in higher education. *Environmental Education Research*, 10(1), pp.7-21.

Cros, C. 2013. *Marcel Duchamp*. Reaction Books.

Cross, N. 2001. Designerly Ways of Knowing: Design Discipline versus Design Science. *Design Issues*, 17(3), 49–55. <https://doi.org/10.1162/074793601750357196>

Design Indaba. 2013. Laduma Ngxokolo: Emerging Creatives Q& A. <https://www.designindaba.com/articles/design-indaba-news/laduma-ngxokolo-emerging-creatives-qa>. Accessed on 21 June 2023.

Dewan, S. (Ed.) 2010. *Craft and Contemporary Theory*. Berg.

Dewhurst, M. 2010. An inevitable question: Exploring the defining features of social justice art education. *Art Education*, 63(5), pp.6-13.

Donohue, N. 2016. *The Knitter's Book of Knowledge: A Complete Guide to Essential Knitting Techniques*.

Dutfield, S. and Wolchover, N. 2022. The meaning of colors: How 8 colors became symbolic.

Dufva, T. and Dufva, M. 2019. Grasping the future of the digital society. *Futures*, 107, p. 25.

Dykes, T., Rodgers, P. and Smyth, M. 2009. Towards a new disciplinary framework for contemporary design practice. *CoDesign*, 5(2), 99-116.

Eckman, E. 2015. *The Crochet Answer Book: Solutions to Every Problem You'll Ever Face; Answers to Every Question You'll Ever Ask*. Storey Publishing.

Fratto, T.F. 1978. *Undefining art: Irrelevant categorization in the anthropology of aesthetics*. *Dialectical Anthropology*, 3, pp. 135-136.

Gerretson, B. 2010. *Leading a beautiful life*. The Mercury. Available from:
<https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/the-mercury-southafrica/20101109/282501475014326>
[Accessed 22 July 2021].

Gray, C. and Malins, J. 2004. *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design*. Ashgate.

Greenhalgh, P. ed. 2003. *The persistence of craft: the applied arts today*. Rutgers University Press.
[Accessed 02 July 2023]

Greenhalgh, P. 2007. *The Persistence of Craft: The Applied Arts Today*. A&C Black.6.

Greer, G., and Huhtamo, E. 2011. *Craft in a Digital Age*. Berg.

Goggin, M.D. 2015. *Joie de Fabriquer: The Rhetoricity of Yarn Bombing*. Associate Editor.
pp.145-272.

Goldstein, C. 2022. See how South African Nicholas Hlobo takes inspiration from the intricacies of the Xhosa language. Artnet.

Guo, R. et al. 2020. *Representing crochet with stitch meshes*. In *Proceedings of the 5th Annual ACM Symposium on Computational Fabrication* (pp. 1-8).

Hagstrom-Stahl, K. 2010. Mourning as method: *William Kentridge's Black Box/Chambre Noire*. Vol. 54. Issue.2. 339-352,501.

Halprin, D. 2002. *The expressive body in life, art, and therapy: Working with movement, metaphor and meaning*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. pp. 33-34.

Harren, N. 2020. *Fluxus Forms: Scores, Multiples, and the Eternal Network*. University of Chicago Press.pp.14&18. [Accessed 1 June 2023].

- Heuer, E.B. 2008. *Going Postal: Surrealism and the Discourses of Mail Art*. pp.10-11.
- Higgins, H. 2002. *Fluxus experience*. University of California Press. [Accessed 21 March 2023].
- Insider, E. and Talk, E., The importance of creativity in education and in the workplace.
- Jessup, L. ed., 2001. *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*. University of Toronto Press. [Accessed 29 October 2022].
- Kafai, Y.B. and Peppler, K.A. 2011. *Youth, technology, and DIY: Developing participatory competencies in creative media production*. *Review of research in education*. 35(1), pp. 89-119.
- Kellner, D. and Share, J. 2007. *Critical Media Literacy, Democracy, and. Media literacy: A reader*. p.7.
- Kikuchi, Y. 2015. *The craft debate at the crossroads of global visual culture: Re-centring craft in postmodern and postcolonial histories*. *World Art*, 5(1), p. 92.
- Kleon, A. 2022. *Steal Like an Artist 10th Anniversary Gift Edition with a New Afterword by the Author: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative*. Workman Publishing.
- Kohl, M.A. 2021. *Under Construction. Performing Critical Identity*. Pp.63.
- Lemieux, V.L. et al. 2021. *A cross-pollination of ideas about distributed ledger technological innovation through a multidisciplinary and multisectoral lens: insights from the blockchain technology symposium '21*. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 11(6).
- Lees-Maffei, G. and Sandino, L. 2004. Dangerous liaisons: Relationships between design, craft and art. *Journal of Design History*, 17(3), pp.207-219.
- Levine, F. and Heimerl, C. 2008. *Handmade nation: The rise of DIY, art, craft, and design*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press. [Accessed 13 March 2023].
- Long, P.O. 2001. *Openness, secrecy, authorship: technical arts and the culture of knowledge from antiquity to the Renaissance*. JHU Press. [Accessed 13 September 2022].

Luckman, S. 2014. *Precarious labour then and now: The British arts and crafts movement and cultural work revisited*. In *Theorizing Cultural Work* (pp.11&12). Routledge.

Ługowska, A. 2014. *The Art and Craft Divide—On the Exigency of Margins*. *Art Inquiry*, (16), p. 286.

Makela, M. and Nimkulrat, N. 2018. *Documentation as a practice-led research tool for reflection on experiential knowledge*. Vol 11(2), p. 1. <https://doi.org/10.7577/formakademisk.1818>. [Accessed on 10 June 2023].

MacCarthy, F. 2019. *William Morris: A Life for Our Time*. Penguin UK.

Mason, V. 2019. *Craftivism. Dissident Objects and Subversive Forms*. *The Journal of Modern Craft*, 12(2), pp.179-183.

Melberg, A., 1995. *Theories of mimesis* (No. 12). Cambridge University Press. [Accessed 12 June 2023].

Meskell, L. 2021. *Object worlds in ancient Egypt: Material biographies past and present*. Routledge.

Pöllänen, S. and Ruotsalainen, K. 2017. *Dialogue between art and craft: Textile materials and techniques in contemporary art*. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 18(1).

Potolsky, M. 2006. *Mimesis*. Routledge.

Ratnam, A. 2011. *Traditional occupations in a modern world: Implications for career guidance and livelihood planning*. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 11(2), 95-109.

Relyea, L. 2013. *Your everyday art world*. MIT Press. [Accessed 19 September 2022].

Rotger, N., Roig-Sanz, D. and Puxan-Oliva, M. 2019. *Introduction: towards a cross-disciplinary history of the global in the humanities and the social sciences*. *Journal of Global History*, 14(3), pp.325-334.

Risatti, H. 2009. *A theory of craft: function and aesthetic expression*. University of North Carolina Press. [Accessed 28 July 2023].

Schlag, G. 2019. *Thinking and Writing Visual Global Politics*—a Review of R. Bleiker’s *Visual Global Politics* (2018, Abingdon and New York: Routledge). *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 32, p.109.

Seaward, B.L. 2019. *Essentials of managing stress*. Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Sennett, R., 2008. *The craftsman*. Yale University Press. [Accessed 11 July 2023].

Shiner, L. 2001. *The invention of art: A cultural history*. University of Chicago press. [Accessed 09 March 2023].

Shiner, L. 2012. “*Blurred Boundaries*”? *Rethinking the concept of craft and its relation to art and design*. *Philosophy Compass*, 7(4), pp.230-244.

Sinkins, E. 2014. The fragility of our lives. *The Witness*, 08 October. Available from: <https://www.news24.com/witness/archive/The-fragility-of-our-lives.20150430>. [Accessed on 19 July 2021].

Smith, T. 2009. ‘*What is Contemporary Art?*’ *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*.

Spieler, B. et al. 2021. *Social media in radiology: overview and usefulness of online professional# SoMe profiles*. *Academic radiology*, 28(4), pp.526-539.

Steele, J. 2009. *Tackling art/craft nomenclature, again, with particular reference to octogenarian potter Alice Qga Nongebeza, of Eastern Cape, South Africa*. Vol. 24(1). p. 182.

Styliani, S. et al. 2009. *Virtual museums, a survey and some issues for consideration*. *Journal of cultural Heritage*, 10(4), pp.521-522.

Sullivan, G. 2006. *Research acts in art practice*. *Studies in art Education*, 48(1), pp.19-35.

- Sun, R. *et al.* 2020. Weaving a second skin: exploring opportunities for crafting on-skin interfaces through weaving. In *Proceedings of the 2020 ACM Designing Interactive Systems Conference* (pp. 365-377).
- Themel, Kate. 2008. “*ART & CRAFT Cannot Be Separated.*” Ragged Cloth Café, Serving Art and Textiles. [Accessed on 20 June 2023].
- Tolstoy, L. 2021. *What is art?* Standard Ebooks. [Accessed on 13 June 14, 2023].
- Tung, F.W. 2012. Weaving with Rush: *Exploring Craft-Design Collaborations in Revitalizing a Local Craft*. International Journal of Design, 6(3).
- Umland, A. and Sudhalter, A. 2008. *Dada in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art* (No. 9). The Museum of Modern Art.p.21.
- Usher, M. 2021. *Design and revolution: Morris, modernism and urban gothic*. Urban Geography, pp.9&11.
- Quan-Haase, A., and Young, A. L. 2010. *Technology and Society: The Influence of the Internet in Interdisciplinary Art and Craft Work*. Sociological Perspectives, 53(3), 307-329.
- Yin, R. K. 2018. *Case study research and applications: Design and methods*. Sage Publications.
- Yang, Y. *et al.* 2018. *Preservation of cultural heritage embodied in traditional crafts in the developing countries*. A case study of Pakistani handicraft industry. Sustainability, 10(5), pp.1-18.
- Zheng, C. and Nitsche, M. 2017. *Combining practices in craft and design*. In Proceedings of the Eleventh International Conference on Tangible, Embedded, and Embodied Interaction (pp. 331-340).

Appendix: Artworks on my exhibition





Mahogo,G. (2022). *Untitled*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2022). *Untitled (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

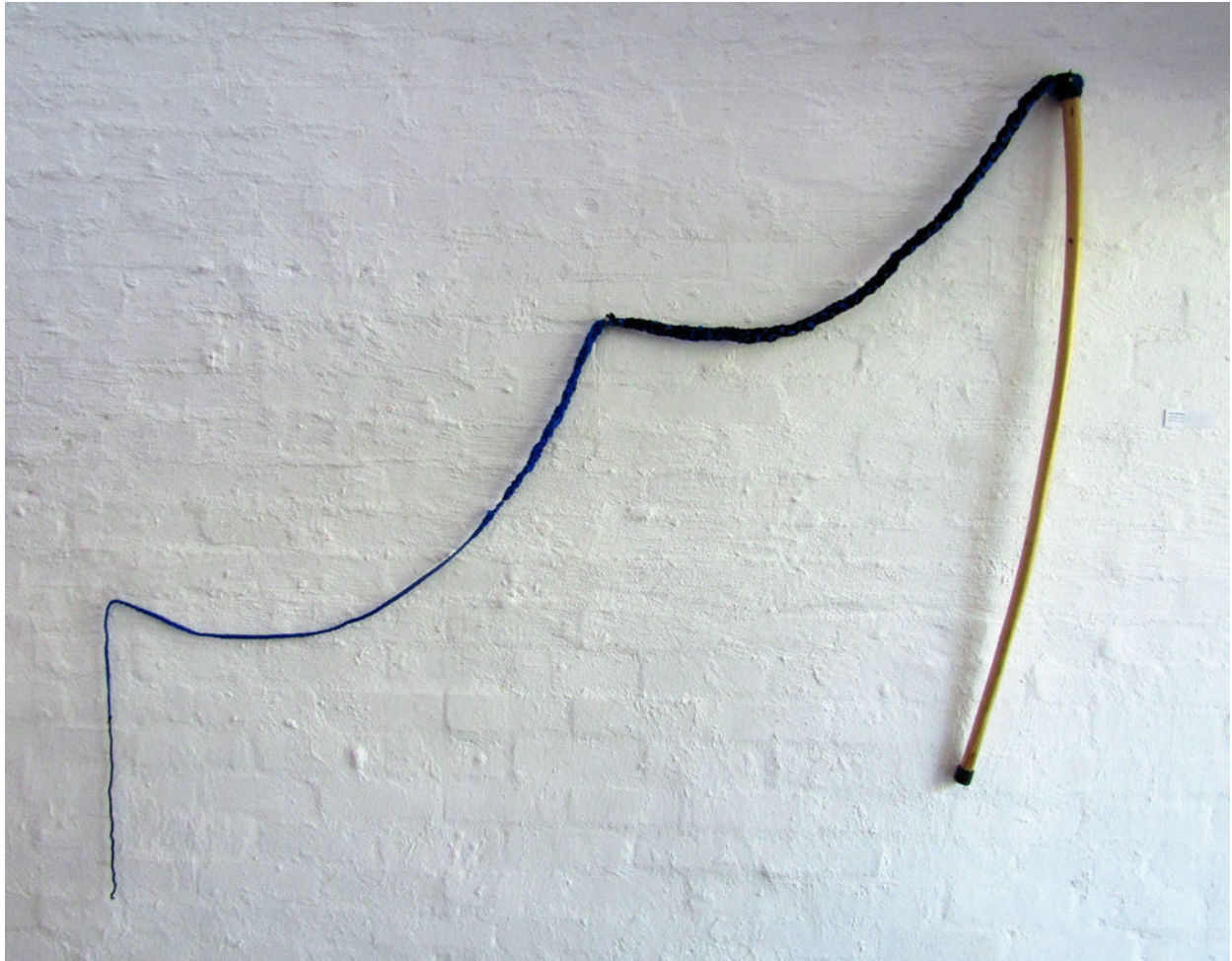


Mahogo,G. (2021). *Die rooi kas*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2021). *Die rooi kas* (close-up). Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.





Mahogo,G.(2022). *Sjambok*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo,G. (2022). *Sjambok (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2022). *Bolyf 1 & Bolyf 2*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2021). *Verbind*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2021). *Verbind (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



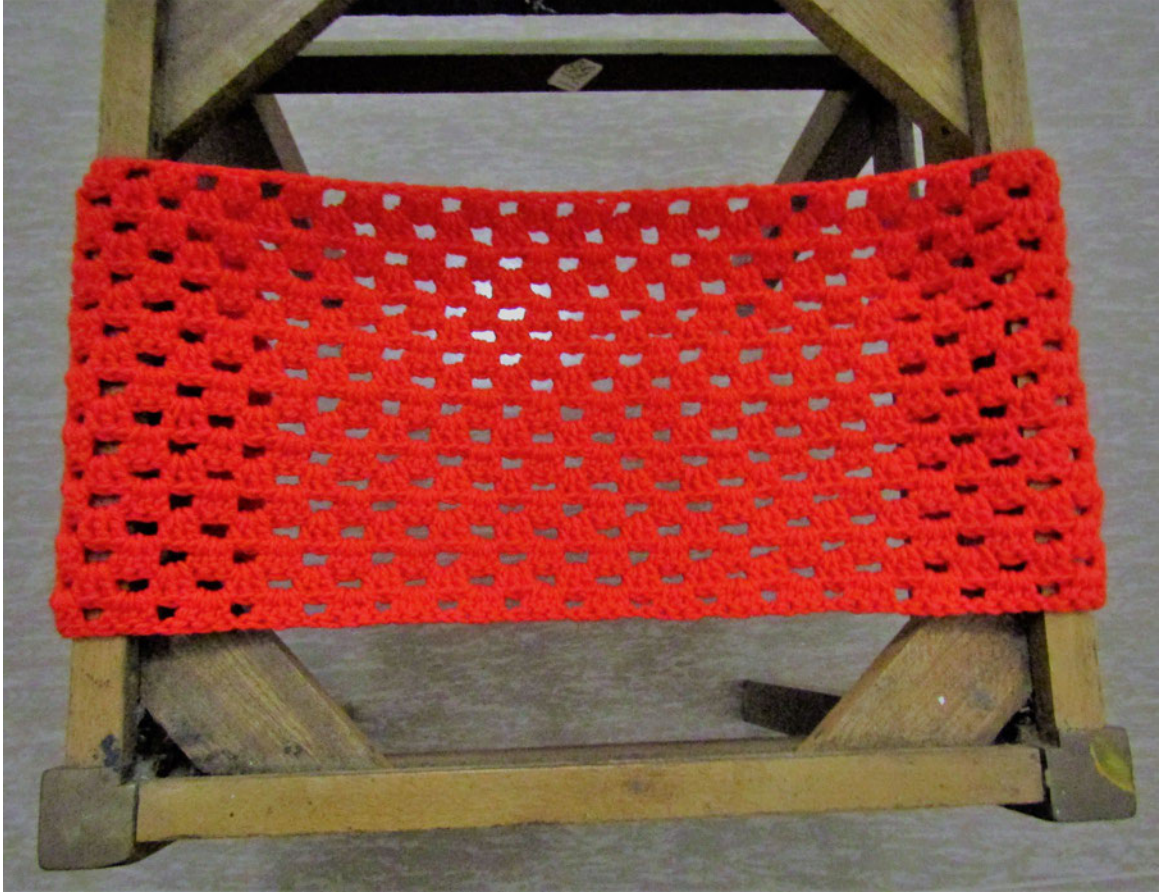
Mahogo, G.(2022). *Die Naald*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.







Mahogo, G. (2023). *The Conversation*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo,G. (2023). *The Conversation (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.





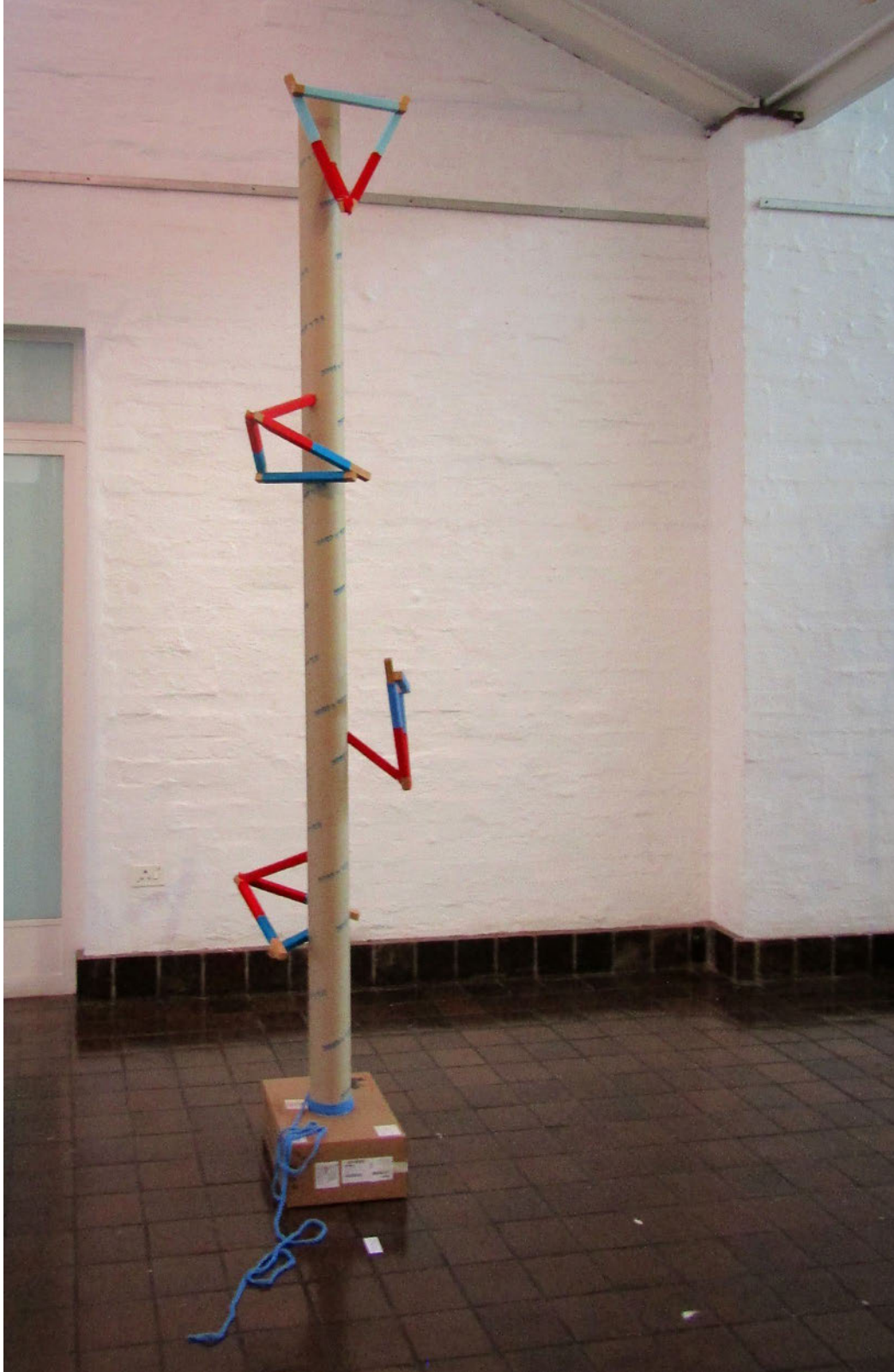
Mahogo, G. (2023). *The Conversation (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



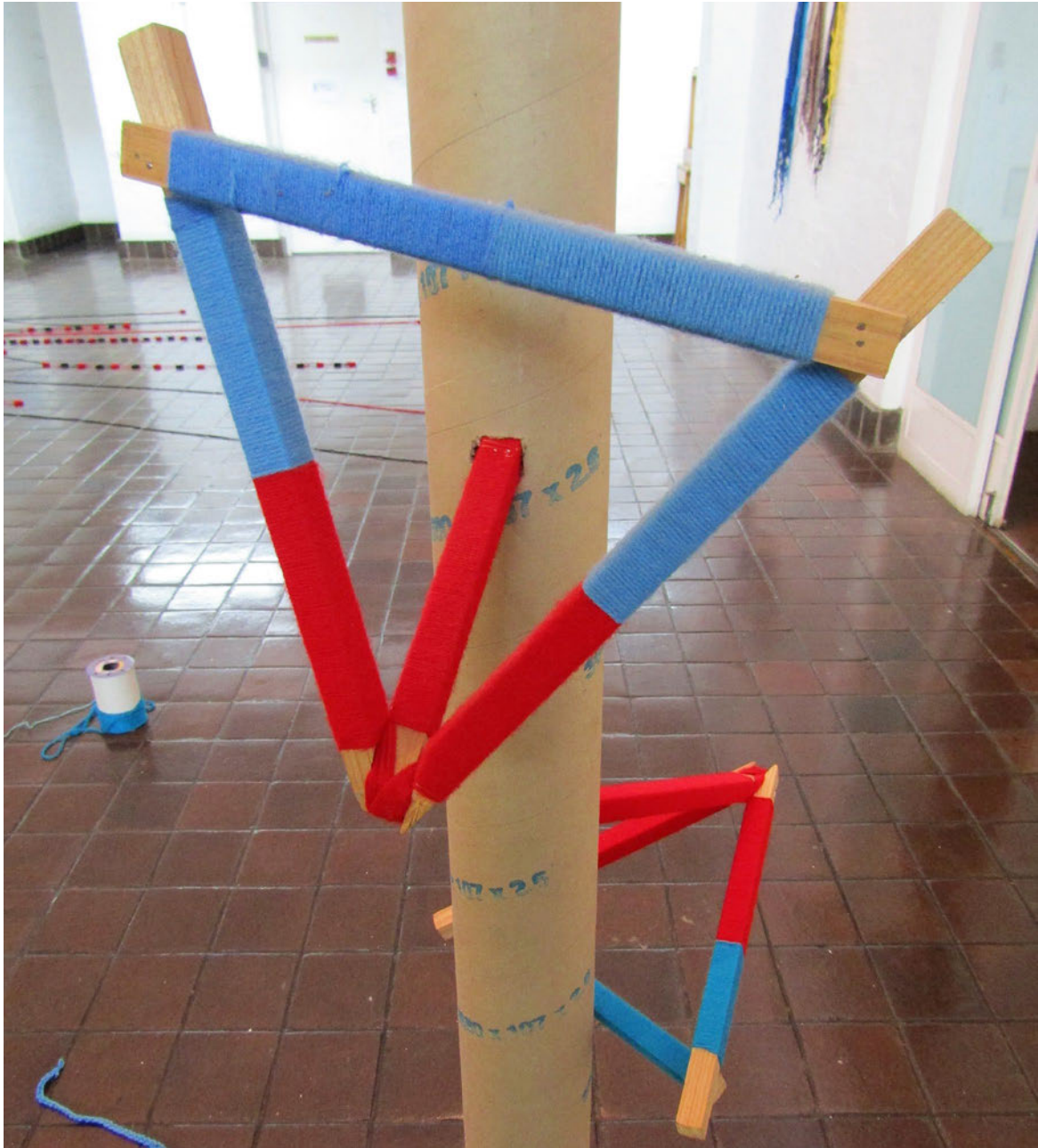
Mahogo, G. (2022). *Braids*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2022). *Braids (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2021). *The playground tower*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal



Mahogo, G. (2021). *The playground tower (Close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal



Mahogo, G. (2021). *Dancing hoops*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal



Mahogo, G. (2023). *Bundle of joy box*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo,G. (2023). *Bundle of joy box (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2021). *Sluier*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal



Mahogo, G. (2021). *Sluier (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal



Mahogo, G. (2022). *Untitled (close-up)*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Mahogo, G. (2021). *Platter 1, 2, 3 & 4 and Untitled*. Centre for Visual Arts. University of KwaZulu-Natal.