When matter and artist *become* together

A new materialist perspective on creation processes and the lessons that organizations can learn from artists

Jante Joske Janssens

Abstract

Despite the more than adequate and significant scientific literature on organizational creativity and creative thinking, no consensus has been established regarding what creativity actually is. In this paper, I move away from both the general idea that creativity is psychological, and the context of organizations that seem to homogenize creativity. Through a new materialist perspective on creative processes, I am aiming to generate a more comprehensive understanding of creativity that can be beneficial for organizations. The conceptualizing of creation that is proposed in this paper, is based on the idea of thinking in the virtual by Deleuze and intra-action by Barad. Creation is not 'just' the creative person, but is a combination of the artist in intra-action with matter. The terms, that I have recognized in this research, to be able to think in the virtual and get into an intra-active creative process are: working without a final product and approaching matter as if it is granted agency. Several creative behaviors that go hand in hand with intra-active creation are described; sketching, working with physical material, postponing the fixation of an art work and a flow-state of working. The approach to creation as described in this paper gives rise to creative freedom; artist and material intra-act and *become* something (truly creative) together. Adopting this approach to creativity in organizations can help to move from the capitalist narrative of creativity towards a narrative in which creation is honored for its other advantages regarding for instance employee satisfaction in the workplace.

Keywords: creative process, organizational creativity, new materialism, intra-action, Barad, Deleuze

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TABLE OF CONTENT

Introduction

As a child, I could lay on the lawn in my parents' back yard and watch a buttercup for hours. I could look at that little yellow flower changing color from light to dark yellow, as the clouds swept across the sky, sometimes casting a shadow, sometimes exposing the flower to bright sunlight.

As a child, I could wander around in my parents' front yard and lift up flowerpots for hours: my eyes following the fleeing centipedes, piss beds and larvae of them both with utter amazement. Submerged in a sense of unification with what took place under my eyes, in my hands, I was sometimes abruptly withdrawn into reality by voices. But I didn't want to return to reality. I just wanted to look, and feel, and smell, and listen, to the beautiful spectacle which took place before my eyes. No human words: just the world and me.

As a child, I was already fascinated by the creative power of nature, and guided by wonder; I could lose seconds, minutes, hours to the world around me. I felt myself becoming one with something bigger than solely myself: a feeling of a certain detachment from oneself, a feeling of oneness. I experienced this feeling not only when in nature; I also experienced this when I would play a beautiful piece of Händel together with my recorder ensemble. The tones, like the fleeing centipedes, dragged me along and gave me the ability to almost feel what Händel was communicating through his music. A similar feeling could overwhelm me, behind closed doors in my room, where I could let myself go completely and dance to beautiful classical music. Suddenly, a dance would emerge, and I would feel a connection to more than just myself. This feeling offered me as a child, and now as an adult, a place that feels like home, a place where I can shut off an endless stream of thoughts, a place where nothing is required, a place where I can feel;

I am.

That feeling, too, perhaps stems from the creative power of nature, because after all, I am human and thus I am part of nature.

As can be read in the opening story of this thesis, creative powers astonished me as a child, and have astonished me ever since: and it seems that I am not alone in this. Creativity has been extensively researched in organizational contexts, because in an ever-changing world, creative ideas and products lead to innovation; this is valued and needed in order for businesses to stay competitive and lucrative (Agars, Kaufman & Locke, 2008). As one can read, there has been a focus on final products in our understanding of creativity. Also, our current understanding of creativity, both inside and outside of organizations, arose in a psychological context, which has led to a research focus of the creative person and creative thinking. The common understanding of creativity does not resemble my personal experience with creativity at all, and again I am not alone in this. Artists have expressed their dissatisfaction with the common understanding of creativity; our knowledge does not resemble how creativity is experienced by them (Toulouse, 2018; Piirto, 2018). Thus, I became quite curious on how our conceptualization of creativity emerged.

In this introduction, I first describe the current conceptualization of creativity. The current conceptualization arose in a psychological research paradigm which has had influence on our understanding of creativity. I will also explain the view on creativity in organizations and the focus on final products in these organizations. The impact of understanding creativity in a psychological and organizational context is described afterwards. A paradox arises because by managing and controlling creativity, creativity is generalized which is a tendency that creativity primarily seeks to escape from. Managing and controlling creativity thus leaves us uncreative (Muhr, 2010). The common view on creativity is thus not a comprehensive understanding of creativity. I seek to escape the paradox by investigating creativity outside of the psychological and organizational context through a new materialist lens. I then present the research question and the organizational and academic relevance of this study. I aim to get a more comprehensive understanding of creativity, which can be useful for organizations. Thereafter, I explain the importance of being aware of my influence as a person on this research on the contextual knowledge that emerges in this study. The introduction closes with a reading guide for this thesis.

State of the art of the conceptualization of creativity

Focus on the creative person

Creative processes are assumed to take place in human minds and brains, and are therefore assumed to be psychological (Glăveanu, 2018). This view on creativity was not always the common view. In ancient Greece, creativity was seen as a divine experience and people served to express this divine power. People believed that artists would become one with the divine creative power of the nine muses (Ritook, 1989). In the Renaissance, the perspective on creativity changed towards understanding creativity as an internal source belonging to the individual. During this time, emphasis was put on individual human accomplishments (Lubart, 2018, p. 5), which is an idea that has influenced our understanding of creativity today. Graham Wallas (1926) for instance introduced the four-stage model of the creative process (preparation; incubation, illumination, and verification) based on analyzing introspective accounts of creative individuals. Guilford drew more attention to creativity because he considered Wallas' four stage-model to be too simplistic (1950, p. 451). A focus on creative thinking and specifically divergent thinking occurred (Guilford, 1950). Many scholars after Guilford focused on the creative brain; brain activity during cognitive tasks such as problem solving and generating ideas have been extensively researched (e.g. Vartanian, Bristol, & Kaufman, 2013). Another common view on creativity today is, the idea that creativity is the creative person. The creative person is the outcome of an interaction between several dimensions; namely the cognitive,

conative, emotional and environmental dimension (for an extensive summary of this approach see, Botella, 2018). In other scientific disciplines, creativity is understood as merely a psychological construct as well. Art historians have looked at creativity, and the role of the creative person alongside a social psychological study of the environment, in order to understand creativity (e.g. Sullivan, 2017, pp. 1-2; pp. 205-206). What becomes clear from the above is that the effect of interpreting creativity as a psychological construct is broad and not just limited to the discipline of psychology. By interpreting creativity as solely psychological, we have been focusing our research on humans and creativity with a narrow focus on the human mind.

Focus on the final product

For organizational creativity, the organizational context in which creativity has been analyzed has had an effect on the current conceptualization of creativity. Amabile shifted from having an isolated focus on the creative person, towards developing an understanding of creativity based on creative products (1983, p. 31) as a measurement for creativity (1983, p. 20). According to Amabile, "organizational creativity is the production of novel and useful ideas by an individual or small group of individuals working together" (1988, p. 126). Woodman, Sawyer and Griffin define organizational creativity as the creation of a valuable and useful new products or ideas, by groups of individuals (1993, p. 293). Organizational innovation has been linked to organizational creativity. Organizational innovation is linked to the successful implementation of creative ideas in organizations (Amabile, 1988, p. 126). These final products need to be valuable, useful and new, and on top of that implementable in the actual world. An emphasis on final products and novelty occurred in relation to creativity (Muhr, 2010, pp. 74-77; Ingold, 2014, p. 124). The measurement of success of these final products defines whether a product is considered creative. This then leads to the common view in organizations that creativity has to lead to valuable and new products, in order to be perceived as valuable (Muhr, 2010, p. 74). As a result, there has been a focus on creativity in relation to how it can be managed and enhanced in organizations (Muhr, 2010).

Impact of psychological and organizational context on understanding creativity

Our current understanding of creativity, both within and beyond organizations, arose in a psychological context. Despite the many attempts to understand creativity, no consensus has been established in regard to what the concept actually means (Parkhurst, 1999). The focus on creative products and ideas, alongside their novelty, has led to a specific conceptualization of creativity. The context in which creativity has been researched and analyzed has therefore influenced our understanding of creativity (Repko & Szostak, 2012; Muhr, 2010). Looking at creativity as a psychological concept, places it in a specific scientific context with a specific epistemology which influences and limits our understanding of the world. Analyzing creativity in organizational context has led to a focus on production and novelty. Understanding creativity within these contexts, has been leading to limits in our understanding of creativity.

The scientific research paradigm in which psychological research is executed, leads to a certain context in which a limited understanding of what is true and valuable knowledge is produced. In psychology, valuable and true knowledge is produced through conducting research in experimental settings (Repko & Szostak, 2012). An important assumption when attributing notions of "true knowledge" to psychological epistemology is the assumption that psychological constructs are always measurable (Repko & Szostak, 2012, pp. 128-130). There have been many attempts to measure creativity (e.g. Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby & Herron, 1996) though the reliability and validity of these tests have been highly debated (e.g. Kim, 2006). Creativity seems hard to pinpoint in one moment, in one person, in one situation. It is

therefore hard, if not impossible, to measure creativity (Muhr, 2010, p. 75). The problem with trying to measure and manage creativity, and the paradox that arises from doing this, is accurately explained by Toulouse (2018). According to Toulouse: "the linear retrospective and explanatory view [on creativity] has very little to do with what the artist's creative process is in reality" (p. 20). The road towards a creative product is always unclear. The creative thinker has to be able to make decisions during a creative process without knowing the end-result of these decisions.

"The path of a creation is always singular, because to create, it is, every time, to make something appear that had been never heard, never seen before. It is hardly quantifiable. Contrary to usual statistical studies, you cannot consider as unimportant infinitely minor occurrences because they are precisely the very ones that become the source of creativity. It is a general epistemological problem" (p. 54).

Attempting to understand creativity by measuring it and by reproducing knowledge via experiments resulted in the definitions and understandings of creativity that do not correspond with how creativity actually materializes in natural settings. Psychological findings do not fit the experience that artists have during their creative process when creative behavior occurs naturally instead of in experimental settings (Toulouse, 2018; Piirto, 2018). Our knowledge from the discipline of psychology can therefore not fully reflect what the concept of creativity really means. In the organizational setting, the obsession with novelty of final products leads to an obsession with measuring as well. This has led to less recognition of the processes prior to the final product (Ingold, 2014, p. 124). By interpreting organizational creativity with a focus on final products and their value, a contradiction arises.

"Creativity – when economized and valued – can be said to be totalized and its thinking homogenized. If this is the case, is it then possible to find a truly 'creative' creativity within an organizational context (as creativity in management theory is mostly seen according to its use value and success)?" (Muhr, 2010, p. 77).

The organizational context, within which creativity has been analyzed, seems to have the type of normalizing and homogenizing thought at its core that creativity primarily seeks to escape from. Creativity and new ideas, do not come from similarity, they come from differences. Muhr states that by managing and controlling creativity in organizations, we are trying to homogenize a concept that, in its essence, will always escape these very homogenizing tendencies; to be creative is to do things differently. The paradox that arises thus is that the process of trying to manage and control creativity in organizations, leads to exactly the opposite; it leaves us 'uncreative' (Muhr, 2010, pp. 75-77). Another consequence of understanding creativity with a focus on creative thinking / the creative person as well as a focus on final products, is that creativity is understood in a dichotomous and dualist manner. Cartesian dualism encourages a hierarchal division of the world where the mind is superordinate over matter which leads to an anthropocentric world view (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010). Foucault showed how anthropocentrism has impacted our thinking and how it has distorted our vision on the world and our strategies of studying and thus understanding the world (in Dolphijn & Van der Tuin, 2012, p. 88). Anthropocentrism and hierarchy are definitely present in the understanding of creativity today, since the focus has mainly been on creative thinking (Guilford, 1950; Vartanian, Bristol, & Kaufman, 2013), the creative person with a focus on cognitive abilities (e.g. Botella, 2018) and the social environment of this person and the effects of this on creativity (Amabile, 1983; 1988; Amabile et al., 1996). Little attention has been paid to matter and the materials which are used in the creative process.

It seems that the psychological and organizational contexts in which creativity has been researched and analyzed, have contributed to our understanding of creativity. Despite the more than significant and adequate scientific literature on the topic of creativity (Corazza & Agnoli, 2013, p. 168), our understanding of the concept is still not sufficient (Parkhurst, 1999).

Away from creativity as psychological and organizational

In the above, I showed that several factors that have contributed to our understanding of creativity are now starting to limit our understanding of creativity. Understanding creativity as a psychological construct, and analyzing it in organizational settings, thus also seems to have limiting effects on our understanding of creativity. Since creativity has been described as one of the most important 21st century skills, it is important to understand it better to be able to teach this organizational and life skill (Manyika et al., 2017). Moving away from both the general idea that creativity is psychological, and the context of organizations that seem to homogenize creativity, can offer opportunities to get a more comprehensive understanding of creativity.

To get a better understanding of creativity, it is important that we separate ourselves from the paradigm in which we have understood creativity until now. Muhr (2010), Ingold (2014) and Glăveanu (2018) advocate for a different view of creativity outside of the organizational context. Muhr states that creativity in organizational contexts should not only be approached economically in the sense of product innovation but also in a "more fundamental way that demands radical novelty and a change in one's basic assumptions and frame of reference" (Muhr, 2010, p. 82). Muhr states that deep novelty is created in relation to what is different from us (the other). Creativity is about combining different styles of thinking which then results in something 'new'. Creative processes therefore primarily depend on the ability to be open to 'the other' (Muhr, 2010, pp. 74-75). If one wants to be truly creative, one should always be open to differences and doing certain things differently, instead of looking for the same. This contradicts the homogenizing approaches that organizations have to creativity. Ingold advocates for a perspective on creativity that is more focused on the 'undergoing' of creativity to honor the process of creation (2014). It is important to not be focused on final products to do this, which is a challenge when analyzing creativity in organizations. Glăveanu calls for a different approach towards understanding creativity by looking at psycho-socio-material processes during creation. Instead of viewing creativity in a fragmented way, he calls for an integrated approach: "instead of asking what is psychological, what is material, and what is social in creative work, focus on how these facets collaborate within creative action." (Glăveanu, 2008, p. 302).

When looking at my own experience of creative powers in the opening story, I am in complete agreement with the calls for re-considering creativity. All in all, my experiences as a child, from playing Händel on my recorder to dancing to classical music and losing my mind in the process, do not seem fully present in the current psychological definitions of creativity. Creativity is still, to a certain extent, ungraspable. Creative powers of humans and nature evoke "an aura of wonder, mystery, and divine power" (Andreasen, 2005, p. 19) that cannot be accounted for. The aura of wonder that is described by Andreasen did not seem to have significance in recent literature on creativity, though this seems to be the mystery about creativity and a part that might be the missing piece in our understanding of creativity. I feel extremely encouraged by my own experience with creativity, the experience of others with creativity and the calls for reconsidering creativity and more specifically reconsider creativity in organizational contexts

(Muhr, 2010; Ingold, 2014; Toulouse, 2018; and Glăveanu, 2018) to look at this intriguing phenomenon from a different perspective.

In this study, I am eager to do just that: to move away from the common understanding of creativity in order to generate a more comprehensive understanding of creation. Moving away from our understanding of creativity as psychological and thus moving away from an anthropocentric and psychological research paradigm. Moving away from the context of organizations to be able to move away from a focus on final, novel products that are produced by 'creativity' and start looking at the creative processes prior to the final products. By moving away from this, I am opening up a new space to reconsider creation. I can contribute to the understanding of creation which then again contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of creation and how creative processes come about. This can be useful in the light of teaching this important organizational and life skill (Manyika et al., 2017). In this thesis, when using the word creation, I am referring to the re-consideration of 'creativity'. I will not use the word creativity when describing this, because in the word creativity hides the dominant psychological idea of creativity, and therefore in this word hides a dualist world view that chooses mind over matter (Barad, 2003; Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010; Glăveanu, 2018) which I am eager to escape from.

The path that I chose to focus on in this paper, in order to move away from our current understanding of creativity, is the new materialist movement. Several reasons make new materialism a path worth following in. On a more general account, new materialism is suitable since it rejects dualism, and thus the hierarchy between mind and matter and results in epistemological freedom (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010), an important quality when looking at Toulouse's aforementioned statement (2018, p. 20). Also, new materialism focuses on not only the mind, but also focuses on matter. By focusing on the creative person and the creative mind in the process of creation (Guilford, 1950; Vartanian, Bristol, & Kaufman, 2013, Botella, 2018), matter as factor in creation processes of artists is left out of the understanding of creation. I specifically use the concept of thinking in the virtual by Deleuze (in Jeanes, 2006) because it helps to move away from our current creative discourse and the associated paradigm that limits the ways of acting and thinking creatively. Thinking in the virtual can be viewed as a way of understanding the creation something that has never been seen or heard (Toulouse, 2018). Also, I use the concept of intra-action to theorize the data in this research. Intra-action focusses on both human and non-human matter in the becoming of the world. This therefore allows me to focus on what several 'bodies' of matter bring to the arena during creation processes. Creative work without the focus on a final product will be the main focus of this study, since it is important to move away from the focus on novelty and final products that is dominant in organizational settings currently (Muhr, 2010; Ingold 2014). The main question of this research that I attempt to answer in the specific context of my researched group is:

How can creation processes without the focus on final products be understood from a new materialist perspective, based on the idea of intra-action of human (artist) and matter?

I will perform this research based on qualitative research in the form of in-depth, unstructured, conversations with nine artists and (participatory) observation meetings with the same artists. Artists are chosen because creative action is quintessentially present in this profession and artists are considered an archetype of creators (Stanko-Kaczmarek, 2012). Also, I wanted to move away from the organizational context, as I did not wish to look into creativity in organizations, but into creativity in a more conceptual way. I will use arts-based research practices in order to gain more insight in creation processes. I will thereby focus on matter

10

instead of just human action by observing the creation processes of artists while working with matter.

Organizational and academic relevance

Looking at creation processes from a different lens with different epistemology is a great opportunity to gain knowledge that could benefit organizations, society and academics. First of all, the goal of this study is to get a more comprehensive understanding of creation by moving away from the limiting ways in which scholars have been conceptualizing creativity, as described above. By doing this, I hope to generate new insight into creation processes which could prove beneficial in an organizational context. In our digital and technological world, creation and innovation are more important than ever. Creation is not easily automated (Manyika et al., 2017) and therefore creativity and innovation are important assets for organizations in order to stay competitive in an ever-changing world (Agars, Kaufman & Locke, 2008). Creative behaviors are not only beneficial when it comes to organizations; they are also beneficial for employees. They increase employee productivity (Tavares, 2016, pp. 534-536), and go hand in hand with positive affect at work. This is of great advantage because negative affect has been linked to burn-out, alongside lower engagement- and accomplishment rates (e.g. Langelaan, Bakker, Van Doornen & Schaufeli, 2006). Generally, creative behavior infuses work with purpose and significance (Tavares, 2016, pp. 534-536). Looking at (post-)secular Europe (Habermas, 2008), I believe a person's job has become increasingly important to one's life and identity. Hence, a meaningful and purposeful experience at work is important for employees, organizations and society in general. Getting a more comprehensive understanding of creation and how creative processes come about, can help to be able to teach this important organizational and life skill (Manyika et al., 2017). Though creativity is arguably important in society today, it remains a concept that has not been understood thoroughly. Getting a more comprehensive understanding of creativity is therefore vital in order to expand its teachings as both an organizational and a life skill (Manyika et al., 2017).

The academic goals of this study are twofold. Moving away from disciplinary limitations in psychology will show the value of reaching an understanding of creation from a more interdisciplinary and different research paradigm. There has been a growing body of literature on the importance of a paradigm shift from a positivistic research paradigm, towards for instance a performative paradigm (Douglas & Carless, 2013, p. 54). In the light of this general invitation towards a paradigm shift, the first goal of this research is more specific; it can be understood as aiming towards a paradigm shift specifically in the understanding of creativity. From understanding creativity as psychological and thus human, towards understanding creation processes as an intra-active becoming between bodies of matter (both human and nonhuman). This is an ambitious goal, that I do not aspire to reach through one research paper, however I do believe that I can highlight the added value of approaching our world from a non-dualist, non-disciplinary perspective in our knowledge production in the light of creation. Additionally, I hope that this will show the freedom that arises within research when breaking free from a positivistic research paradigm. Secondly, I want to contribute to the knowledge that has already been produced on creation processes. By looking at creation from a different perspective, I believe we can learn a lot about the process that has otherwise gone understudied. Lastly, I want to emphasize that the goal of this research is not to yield objective knowledge or search for 'the truth'. The aim of this study is, instead, to present contextual knowledge that can be valued within its context.

Who am I to tell you this?

Lastly, I want to point out that I am entangled in this study. Barad describes research as a process that includes three components, namely, the researcher (observer), the apparatus (measurement tool) and the researched ('object'). The 'objective' measurements do not occur because the studied 'object' has pre-existing qualities, but because the tool that is used to measure with contains certain characteristics apart from the observer. The measurements of a studied 'object' therefore act as a reflection of an apparatus' ability to measure, and additionally relies on the observer's ability to interpret. In other words, the measurements of the studied object are a result of the intra-actions of the observer, apparatus and studied 'object', which all define each other through these intra-actions.

The researcher cannot occupy an external position in order to study a separated object, nor does the object have innate properties represented by the research. I can thus only view myself as entangled *in* this study. I am doing a qualitative study, meaning that I am an observer, but I am also the apparatus that gives meaning to the study, which as a result gives meaning to the intra-action between observer, observed and apparatus. I make certain decisions on what to include and what to exclude in this study, yet simultaneously what I include also alters and becomes a part of me, as the relational and entangled nature of the intra-action becomes clear. In the light of this view on research, a few things are important to know about me before you start reading this study. I am Jante, a 25-year-old student who studies organizations, management and change. I am also a student in fine arts and design in education, and thus am currently working towards becoming an artist. Therefore, I am becoming a member of my own research group. I graduated from clinical psychology, which has led to a strong positivistic training in research, which has undoubtedly proven challenging for me during this thesis process. I am a graduate of Liberal Arts and Sciences where I developed an opinion about psychological epistemology and where I developed my interest in knowledge production and the dominance and influence of paradigms on knowledge. I researched the topic of creation in education since 2016 and I am still amazed and extremely motivated to understand my own experiences with creation as well as the experiences I had in organizational contexts. I additionally found a worldview I align with through discovering new materialism.

Reading guide

In the first chapter of this thesis, I explain the theoretical framework that this study is based on. I describe the view on creation and a model of creative process which are used as a foundation for the interpretation of creation. Thereafter, I explain new materialist thought and the concepts of thinking in the virtual and intra-action. The following chapter is dedicated to the findings of this study: a combination of the results as well as an interpretation of these results. In part one of the findings chapter, I explain the attitude of artists in their creation process. In the second part of the findings, I account for three creative behaviors that come about due to the aforementioned attitude towards creation. A discussion chapter follows with a summary of the findings of this study and the implications of this study for organizations, academics and new materialism are described. I also describe the limitations of this study and present ideas for further research paths. After the discussion, I present a poem. I aimed to capture the themes of this study as well as the magnificent stories of the artists that I spoke to in this poem. In the Appendix, the methodology of this research is described. I choose to leave a detailed methodological description in the Appendix, because I believe that the flow of the text will be perished when put after the theoretical framework. At the end of the methodology section, several reflections of me, the 'researcher' as well as 'the artist', are incorporated. Lastly, the bibliography of the literature that I used is presented.

Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I offer the theoretical framework that I use in order to come to an understanding of creation processes without a final product. First of all, I explain the conceptualization of creation that I use. Thereafter, I expand on an argument that I already touched upon in the introduction; how and why new materialism is useful in reaching an understanding of creation without the focus on a final product. New materialism is explained in a more general sense. I then account for the metaphor of a rhizome which is used by Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1988) to mark the difference between a dualist and a monist ontology. The general description of new materialism is relevant as it describes why new materialism is useful as a framework in its separation from dualism and anthropocentrism. Furthermore, I focus on two concepts within the new materialist movement: thinking in the virtual (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006) and intra-action (Barad, 2003). I use the concept of thinking in the virtual by Deleuze because it helps to move away from our current creative discourse and the associated paradigm that limits the ways of acting and thinking creatively, and additional seeks to move away from the current hierarchy between mind and matter. I find intra-action useful to include as it provides a way of interpreting creation processes in the context of relationships with both artist and matter. This allows me to focus on what matter brings to the arena during creation processes.

Creation in this research

In the introduction, accounted for the long history of discussions regarding creativity. I also emphasized that I want to move away from the common understandings of creativity. However, I am not under the impression that I am able to conduct this study separately from current understandings of creativity. The common consensus regarding creativity from recent research paradigms has undeniably influenced the way in which I perceive creation. Therefore, I could never truly separate my own conceptualizations regarding creativity from current debates. Within the paradigm in which creation has been understood, and analyzed, I nevertheless sought a conception or model of creation that fits this research paper's aims. I want to point out though, that the goal of this study is not to expend or create a model on creation processes by generalizing creation. In the aforementioned statement by Toulouse (2018, p. 54), he describes creation as how I interpret it: creation is making something appear that has never been seen or heard before (2018). It is a process or action, to bring something into existence. There is room for rethinking creation as a part of this description as it goes beyond hierarchical notions regarding mind over matter. Additionally, this description leaves room for the inclusion of the "magical experiences" that I felt when I was dancing, singing and playing the recorder and other artists have described as well (Piirto, 2018).

One model on creative processes that is moving towards an understanding of creation, with room for a more dominant position for materials in the creation processes, is the descriptive model of creative processes by Mace and Ward. This model is solely based on qualitative research with a grounded theory approach, and encourages interpreting creativity beyond merely creative *thinking* or with a focus on the creative *person.* According to Mace and Ward, the four phases of art-making are 1) Artwork Conception, 2) Idea Development, 3) Making the Artwork, and 4) Finishing the Artwork and Resolution. The first two phases focus on creative *thinking* regarding ideas and problem solving and therefore is not described thoroughly because it is not in line with the focus of this paper. The second part of the model draws more attention to creative *action* and the role of materials during the creative process. In the third phase, Mace and Ward describe how artworks are created. It is recognized that the materials that artists use, influence the final piece of art. Making an idea physical has great impact on the concept of the work. Material and form influence content and vice versa. Experimenting with materials and methods is an inherent part of the art-making process in which the conceptual and formal result

of manipulating materials and methods is discovered. During the art-making process, artists generally find it hard to evaluate whether an artwork is finished or not (2002, pp. 186-187). Artists value the current aesthetics and conceptual qualities of the work and decide what next steps are needed to take in order to further develop their work. These decisions are often described as made on an intuitive or emotional basis (2002, pp. 186-187). The last phase, *Finishing the Artwork and Resolution*, an artwork is either considered finished and valuable, or shelved, abandoned, postponed or even destroyed (p.187). The model allows for a different and more dynamic view on creativity. Creativity cannot be pinpointed at one particular time or as one particular human trait, and I agree that it should not be understood like this either. Rather, it is a continual process and in constant development. Mace and Ward are slowly shifting away from understanding creativity from an anthropocentric perspective with an emphasis on the creative mind. They recognize that, not only does the artist and his/her mind influence an artwork, but also the material that is used has influence on the artwork. By viewing creation with this model in mind, I try to tackle the common view on creation but still keep a theoretical approach to the interpretation of my data, while still staying open-minded towards the data of this study.

New materialism

As aforementioned, creativity has been interpreted and explored from a psychological perspective for many years. Hand in hand with a psychological understanding of creativity, goes dualism. Dualist tradition of thought is dominant in our world. Dualism favors mind over matter, and the mind has been attributed to humans (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010, p. 153). This has led to a tendency towards interpreting the world from an anthropocentric perspective, which impacted our thinking and distorted our vision on the world and our strategies of studying and thus understanding the world (Dolphijn & Van der Tuin, 2012, p. 88). By rejecting the notion of a dualist worldview, alongside the dichotomies that this view engenders, the separation of academic disciplines decreases, which in turn allows new materialism to move from the disciplinary towards the meta-disciplinary (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010, pp. 162-163). New materialism suits this study because it helps to move away from our current psychological research paradigm in which much of our knowledge on creativity is produced. Thereby, it gives space to interpret creation without the strict epistemological rules that are followed as a part of psychological research, again an important quality when looking at the general epistemological problem that has always been present in research on creativity (Toulouse, 2018, p. 54). In the following section, I describe the new materialist theory and the concept of thinking in the virtual by Deleuze and intra-action by Barad.

From dualism to monism

Inspired by the thoughts of Deleuze and Guattari, the new materialist movement aligns with a monistic worldview that focuses its attention on matter. In the following section, I describe the metaphor of the rhizome by Deleuze and Guattari (1988). The metaphor of the rhizome is the basis for the monist world view that is adopted by new materialist movement. A monist view on the world is an alternative for dualism, and it has been proven important to move away from dualism and therefore fits this paper. The metaphor of the rhizome is considered as a foundation for new materialist thought, and it is therefore relevant to include, as I use new materialist theory throughout this paper. In A Thousand Plateaus, Deleuze and Guattari describe the metaphors of a tree and a rhizome to mark the difference between dualist and monist thought (1988). A tree is tidy, with a trunk, branches, and has a fixed hierarchical order. Nature does not work that way: in nature, roots are taproots with a multiple, lateral and circular branching system, instead of functioning as a dichotomy. Our system of thought is separated from nature in its understanding of multiplicity; we think in a dichotomous and fixed manners (Deleuze &

Guattari, 1988, p. 5). On the contrary, a rhizome is a subterraneous stem of plants such as ginger, that originates bulbs, tubers and diverse forms in all directions (1988, pp. 6-7). Six principles are applicable to the rhizome. Principles 1 and 2 are: "the principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be" (1988, p. 7). In other words; the rhizome exists as one and the same and is additionally connected to itself from within itself. Principle 3 is the principle of multiplicity. A rhizome is in the state of being various and manifold. The rhizome does not have objects or subjects; therefore, we cannot identify the multiplicities within the rhizome: the multiplicities are defined by the outside (pp. 8-9). In other words; 'things' are defined by their relationship to the outside and entities do not pre-exist the relationship to the outside. Principle 4 is the "asignifying rupture: against the oversignifying breaks separating structures or cutting across a single structure" (1988, p. 9). If a rhizome is broken or cut at a given spot, it will always rebuild itself from within itself (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, p. 9). This is why one can never think in dualism and dichotomies, because even though a rhizome is cut into two pieces, the two pieces consist of the same and thus there is no such thing as separate entities. Principle 5 and 6 are "the principles of cartography and decalcomania: a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model" (p. 12). A rhizome can be seen as a map with several routes. It is impossible to capture the rhizome in a model because this reduces the rhizome to a generative 'thing'. By generalizing the rhizome, we could never fully understand the rhizome, because it is defined by its relationship to the exterior. Reductionism is rejected by principle 5 and 6. The contrast between the two metaphors symbolizes the difference between dualist and monist thought. This different way of interpreting the world is showcased in different research and literature (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988).

By interpreting the world in a monist way, several of the issues that occur when trying to define creativity are addressed. Traditional hierarchies between humans and other bodies of matter can be challenged. The Cartesian cut between mind and matter disappears, because matter already includes the mind, since the mind is human matter. Humans are not prioritized over matter, which is valuable regarding the impact of anthropocentrism on our knowledge today. According to Braidotti, letting go of our traditional belief of the human as 'the knowing subject' is important. We need to redefine our consciousness in terms of variations of matter-energy flows. Processes, flows, in between-status have to be taken into serious account (Braidotti, 2002, p. 63). There needs to be space to focus on the process instead of the final product. There needs to be space to focus on matter, as well as mind. By focusing on what is material in creation processes, instead of just focusing on the creative person and creative thinking, it is possible to gain a different conceptualization of creation.

Thinking in the virtual

Deleuze uses the terms transcendent system and immanence to mark the difference between the metaphors of the tree and rhizome. Throughout the history of philosophy, most philosophers have structured ontology through the filter of dualism. Dualism leads to the idea that there are (more than) two modes of being, with one mode always being transcendent and thus superior over the other. An example is for instance the allegory of the cave by Plato. The ideas in the cave are superior to the shadows of the ideas that humans perceive in the cave. According to Plato, we should always strive to know the ideas instead of the shadows of The Ideas (Ursic & Louth, 1998, pp. 86-88). This understanding of ontology is considered outstanding since there has never been any clear reason to believe that there is more than one substance in the first place, and that one of these two substances should be viewed as superior over the other. These ontologies create hierarchies between the transcendent and other substances by constructing certain rules or limitations that create a hierarchy between the transcendent and the rest. Deleuze

turns his back on these ontologies by proposing an ontology of immanence. For an ontology of immanence, one needs to get rid of the whole substance hierarchy. There is no reason to assume that there are more substances, meaning that there is no reason to believe that there should be a system where in which those substances are ranked (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, pp. 44-51).

Deleuze sees transcendent thought as a limiting paradigm in which one needs to think and act. In ''Resisting creativity, creating the new'. A Deleuzian perspective on creativity" (2006), Jeanes specifically connects transcendent thought to creativity. When talking about creativity and behaving creative, we primarily do this in the context of capitalism since new creations are seen as things that can be sold and are valued through capital units. This limits our imagination, which leads to conceptualizations about creativity and creative behaviors also being limited (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006, p. 130). This paradigm is limited by transcendent thought. The process of becoming – that what might / could become, the creation of what is not yet existing, is achieved by thinking in new, perhaps previously unthinkable, way. Deleuze describes this as thinking in the virtual. This describes the process of something new – something previously unknown – becoming actualized. For the virtual to become actual, it must create its own terms of actualization; with no order which has been pre-existing or pre-formed. A key point to the process of thinking in the virtual, and thus differently, is the ability to go beyond transcendent thought and action, and think beyond our current concepts of creativity. Thinking within the creative narrative limits us to replicate, think and create within these linguistic boundaries. Our ability to create the 'new' is limited by what we already know. We need to break from these transcendent ways of thinking in order to free creative thinking from the current paradigm (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006, pp. 128-129).

The limiting paradigm, which has arisen as a result of transcendent thought, can be compared to Muhr's idea of looking for the *same* in the paradigm of capitalism (Muhr, 2010, p. 80). Muhr's call for understanding creation based on openness towards 'the other', can be expanded by Deleuze's thought on thinking virtual and the process of becoming – that what might / could become; the creation of what is not yet existing. Deleuze's description gives meaning to the creation process because in the virtual, there are no preconceived rules or thoughts; one is creating something new through the previously unknown. This is in line with the description of Toulouse about creating, which I use in this paper (Toulouse, 2018), therefore the concept of thinking in the virtual is suiting this paper to theorize the description of creation of Toulouse. Additionally, thinking in the virtual shifts the focus from a final product of creation to the creation process. The only thing one can do in the virtual, is letting the previously unknown become actual in the actual world. This leads to a more central position of the process in our understanding of creation.

Becoming through intra-action

In this section, I explain the concept of intra-action by Karen Barad. I chose intra-action because it focusses on both human and non-human matter in the becoming of the world. This therefore allows me to focus on the effect of several bodies of matter during the creation processes. Afterwards, I explain how boundaries between different modes of matter arise due to these intra-actions. Barad coins the term intra-action because inter-action does not fit a monist world view. Inter means between, meaning that interaction is the action *between* objects. At least two separate pre-existing entities are needed to be able to carry out action between these entities. Intra means from within, so intra-action is action from *within*. There is no need of a pre-existing separation between entities and therefore it can lay the basis for a monistic interpretation of relations. Intra-action fits Glăveanu's call for understanding creation as the collaboration of the

psychological, material and social *within* creative action (2018, p. 302). Understanding creation from within creative action is in line with the idea of intra-action.

Theorist and quantum-physicist Karen Barad states that our current anthropocentric world view has neglected matter; matter is granted no agency and does not matter. Barad advocates for a different view, where matter comes to matter again. If Barad's conceptualizations of how matter comes to matter again, are to be fully understood, the role of agency must be (re)defined as well as intra-action being explained. In the common, representionalist view, matter is perceived as passive, immutable, less trustworthy and is granted no agency (Barad, 2003, pp. 801-802). Agency is understood as something that is attributed to someone, most often to humans (Barad, 2003, p. 826). The representionalist view assumes pre-existing, separate entities; entities to be represented (often by language) and the representations of these entities (Barad, 2003, p. 804). However, according to Barad, matter does have agency. Agency does not pre-exist in 'subjects' and 'objects' separately from intra-actions, but emerges from the relationships between bodies of matter *from within* the intra-actions (Barad, 2003, pp. 826-827). When two bodies of matter intra-act, the intra-action defines what the bodies of matter *are* at that particular moment in time. Through intra-action, both human and non-human matter comes to matter (*read;* matter gets agency). According to Barad, we need to reconsider our conception of nonhuman matter; "Matter is not little bits of nature, or a blank slate, surface, or site passively awaiting signification" (Barad, 2003, p. 821). Nonhuman matter does not require external signification from humans, because nonhuman matters can intra-act and be granted agency without being validated by humans. Nonhuman matter is of equal importance as human matter, as it intra-actively becomes a phenomenon. Matter therefore "feels, converses, suffers, desires, yearns and remembers (Barad in Dolphijn & Van der Tuin, 2013, p. 59)". Nonhuman matter is granted agency, which makes it an active (instead of the passive) 'factor' in the creation process, meaning that it should be viewed as an active factor during the creation process as well.

By focusing on the intra-active *becoming* of a something within the creation process, I can look at creation with a focus on the process. Through intra-action, I attempt to move away from anthropocentrism. By focusing on matter in this research as something that is granted agency within the intra-action, leads to a different framework in which I can understand the creation of something that has never been seen or heard before. If matter is granted agency in the intra-action and thus can influence the *becoming of* a final product through the intra-action, it could help explain the "magic" that occurs during creation. The creation of an artwork is thus not just the result of human action, as believed during the Renaissance (Lubart, 2018). Matter has its own agency as part of a creation process, which is an interpretation of the process that can be linked to the Ancient Greek interpretation of creativity where the artists become one with something divine that is bigger than just them (Ritook, 1989). The intra-active becoming of an art work, due to the intra-action between bodies of matter that all consists of the same substance, could explain how artists often feel a connection to something "bigger" as a part of the creation process, without reference to the divine (Habermas, 2008). Additionally, by looking at creation as a constant becoming, the idea that creativity is a separate entity that can be measured is disregarded. Through this, it is possible to break free from psychological thought and epistemology and the focus on creative products in organizations that contributed to a limited understanding of the concept of creation.

Boundaries within matter
Although everything is ultimately one in the new materialist movement, it is still possible to identify boundaries between bodies of matter. Barad argues that electrons, or matter, is not fixed or stable, and thus behave differently depending on the circumstances in which they emerge.

These differences and boundaries are not static but always temporary and anew. Intra-actions "cut together apart" in the sense that they temporarily include and exclude certain objects, subjects and matter, which in turn affects how those objects, subject and matter intra-act in their intra-active becoming (Barad, 2014, p. 176). The boundaries between (or rather within) bodies of matter are created by discursive practices; "Discursive practices are specific material (re)configurings of the world through which local determinations of boundaries, properties, and meanings are differentially enacted (Barad, 2003, p. 823)". The boundaries between human and nonhuman bodies of matter arise during their intra-active becoming (Barad, 2003, pp. 820-821). Discursive practices are comparable to language, though Barad does not use examples of language as it is strongly tied to representionalism, which does not value matter. Discursive practices can be understood as the words that are used to describe intra-active becomings of bodies of matter.

Boundaries between things emerge due to the relationship between things that emerge as a result of their intra-activity. This leads to an *agential cut* instead of a dualistic Cartesian cut between bodies of matter (Barad, 2003, p. 815; Barad, 2014). Language is no longer a part of the power play that exists within representionalism, regarding entities that can be represented and the representation of entities. Discursive practices can instead be understood as "boundary-making practices that have no finality in the ongoing dynamics of agential intra-activity" (Barad, 2003, p. 821). Language therefore has less influence and power in a world where the *relationship between* things is seen as important instead of the *representation of* entities. This is important for this research to point out, in the light of Deleuze's interpretation of transcendent thought leading to limiting the creative thinker in the current narrative that exists on creativity. The narrative on creativity seems to have a certain power to influence the way people think and behave creatively. It is thereby useful to develop an understanding and conceptualization of concepts that cannot be expressed through language, such as the 'aura of wonder, mystery and divinity' that occur as a part of a creation processes (Andreasen, 2005), in order to gain a full understanding of the concept of creativity. Moving away from representionalism in the form of language additionally allows for one to focus on creative action instead of creative discourse. Thereby, creation processes can eventually lead to boundaries between artist and matter / artwork and these boundary-making practices can help to understand the emerging of a new body of matter. Barad's framework might help to interpret what happens when an artwork and artists define the boundaries between them in the intra-action.

Overall, in viewing the world from a new materialist and intra-active point of view, the general understanding of the world shifts from focusing on language (which is seen as predominantly human) to focusing on relation (both human and nonhuman). Our positions as humans thereby change as a result of new materialist' thought. Humans are not separate entities; rather humans are a part of the world and its endless becoming. The hierarchy between human and nature perishes because it exposes how we are all a part of the same structure. Matter is not only parts of nature, matter is not passive; it does not require an external force like humans or history to be defined or completed. Matter exists autonomously (Barad, 2003, p. 821). This viewpoint allows for an opportunity to understand the world around us and specifically creation processes, in a different and non-dualistic manner. Through granting agency to matter, matter is viewed as an active (instead of the passive) 'factor' in the creation process, meaning that it can be viewed as an active influence in the creation process. This allows for an alternative, non-divine, understanding of the magic that is experienced by artists during a creation process (Andreasen, 2005).

18

Findings

The findings section of this research is based on in-depth interviews with nine artists and eight observations of artists. In the first part of the findings, I look at two different approaches to the creation process. The first example is a case study of artistic work *without* the focus on the final product. This includes seven artists that approached their creation processes with a focus on the process instead of the final product. The artists labeled this creation process as an *intuitive* creative process. They use the word *it* to describe the artwork that did not get into existence yet. The way in which they approached their materials was in line with Barad's idea of matter; where matter is valued and is granted agency. This can lead to a shift away from the dominance of the focus on the mind, and additionally moves away from a hierarchy between mind over matter as part of the creation process (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994; Barad, 2003; Van Der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010). The second example is a study of two artists approaching the creation processes with a focus on the final product. The first section of these findings asks whether or not focusing on a final product during a creation process has an effect on the creation process. To show the effects of these two different approaches to creation, I also describe the creation process with a focus on the final product (Muhr, 2010; Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006).

In the second part of the findings, I show three creative behaviors that seem to be characteristic for, what the artists construct as, *intuitive* creation processes. It is considered important to 'just' start making material. If one does not 'just' start, one will never know what *it* (*read:* the artwork) is about. Through sketching and working with physical matter, the artists start to get in touch with what the *it* is about. Another creative behavior that I recognized is the postponing of the fixation of the material. Artists seem to desire endless intra-actions with themselves, their material and the *it,* thus allowing for an endless becoming of the *it.* Lastly, the creative behavior of a flow state is described. If the artist and material intra-act, they *become* a new body of matter; the artwork. This becoming is described as a flow state of working.

Lastly, one can read a poem that I wrote, which describes the findings in a different way to give more meaning to the data which I present in these findings. I include this poem because I want to honor the theme of this study as well as the experiences of the artists in this study with an arts-based representation of the findings (Leavy, 2015).

Note on dichotomies and language
I need to note that I made a dichotomy between the two 'groups' in this study, as described in the above. I do not believe that these groups are distinct, though they are different. For the sake of the readability of these findings, I however differentiated between the two groups of artists. I do want to emphasize that the creative behaviors of artists who focus on the process instead of the final product, can also be recognized in artists that do focus on the final product. I therefore want to invite you to read this findings section with the six principles of the rhizome in the back of your head, and stay attentive to the idea that everything is connected and boundaries only exist within the context of their intra-active becoming.

One last important note on language and the use of the words matter and material needs to be made. I need to make a definitive distinction between the words matter and material. When I am talking about matter, I mean matter as defined by Barad. Matter as defined by Barad is nonhuman and human matter with agency that arises in intra-action between bodies of matter (2003). When the artists talk about material, they mean 'their' material as in, for example, the building bricks for their artworks.

To start imaging the artists in this research, one can read a short description of the inspiring and brave artists that I was fortunate enough to meet during this research process in the methodological reflections in the Appendix (pp. 57-59).

Creation as process

The artists I spoke to in this research, talked about the difference between working with a final product in mind, and working without a final product in mind. The differences between these two approaches were described by several artists. In the descriptive model of Mace and Ward, a slight discrepancy between working with an idea and working with a 'vague sense' is accounted for, but there is not much attention to what this difference means for the creative process (Mace & Ward, 2002). It, however, seems to have quite a significant effect on creative processes, which will be executed and investigated further during this study. According to the artists when one is working with a final product in mind, the creative process is different because rationality and thus one's mind has to be dominant during the process. Isaac describes the difference between the two processes.

> Me: Is there a difference between those two? Between a process with a clear assignment and a process without a clear destination?
> Isaac: Yes, they are different, often I do work towards a set end goal, I have a vision and I want it to sound like this […] But if you are really working towards something, there's just a lot more thinking involved.

Isaac states that when he is working towards something (*read:* a final product), his cognitive capacity of thinking is involved. His mind has a more prominent position in the creation process, which leads to a hierarchical relationship between artist and matter (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). Other artists describe this difference as well.

> Thomas: Well, I find working with an assignment way more difficult than when I'm just working with a certain concept... […], when I have to think about it, it becomes stiffer you know, I get a bit too formal…
>
> Willem: Often, I do have a vague idea of where I want to go in advance. […] If you know where you want to go, then you are looking for a path which will get you there.

Thomas explicitly states that his ability to think during the creation process has a limiting effect on his creation process; it makes the process stiffer. Willem explains what happens when he is working with an idea in mind. When he has an idea or vision about a piece of music, he is searching for a way to turn this idea or vision into reality. This means that he is chasing *after* the idea or vision and subsequently the execution of that idea / vision. In other words, the *it* pre-exists to the intra-action between artist and matter (Barad, 2003). What can result from a process with a final product in mind, is that one's rationality, is dominant during the process. This can be interpreted as thinking in a transcendent way, which leads to a certain paradigm in which the artist has to create. This paradigm limits creative abilities as our thought patterns already exist within the actual world, and thus only allows us to think in ways that we have already thought in before (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). In contrast to a process with an idea in mind and a focus on the final product, there is a what the artist label as an *intuitive* process, without the focus on a final product or a clear assignment in mind. Thomas describes an intuitive creation process and the effect of not working with a final product in mind during the process:

> When I'm making series where I work intuitive, you just allow failures and coincidences more. What you make, that's *it*, that's what you're just working with […] When I am making, I just see that some things just don't work. You can't plan this ahead or think this through. You just need to see how *it* is going to work.

I distilled several 'characteristics' of the creation processes that are vital for these artists, in order to work in, what they construct as, an intuitive way. I interpreted these intuitive creation processes based on the concept of intra-action by Barad (2003). Artist, matter and artwork (*it*),

all become a part of the intra-active becoming of the *it.* In the following section, I explain how these intra-active creation processes come about.

Matter matters: decreasing hierarchy between artist and matter

The artists in this research approach their material / matter in a different way to what is commonly done, as described by Barad. The current view on matter is a view where matter is characterized as passive, immutable, less worthy and is granted no agency (Barad, 2003, p. 801). The artists I spoke to, spoke about- and approached their material as if it were more than 'just' matter[1].

> Amarilis: This is a picture that I have saved for my décor, somehow this linked to the color, the shapes, the textures, the atmosphere of the performance […] I will just try *it* out during the rehearsal with the players and then, eventually *it* forms itself.

In the last sentence, Amarilis says that eventually the *it* forms itself. Amarilis attributes active properties to her material. By attributing these active properties to the material, she gives the impression that the material is more to her than just matter. *It* is not passive, but is described as if it has active properties to autonomously come into existence. Jonas attributes active properties to his material as well.

> In making a performance I always have to look again and again at how to take care of something, while sometimes you don't know what *it* needs.

Jonas says that he needs to care for his material, that *it* needs something. Viewing the material as needing something can again be seen as attributing active properties to the material. Amarilis and Jonas did not approach their material as passive objects, but as active subjects. This is in line with Barad's idea that matter; "matter is not little bits of nature, or a blank slate, surface, or site passively awaiting signification" (Barad, 2003, p. 821). It seems as if the artists view matter in exactly this way; matter is more than little bits of nature that are only valuable when signified. The fact that the *it* is not a physical bit of nature yet, does not mean that the *it* does not carry agency. This approach matches the idea of matter always being an already ongoing existence (Barad, 2003, p. 821) and is defined by the relationship with the outside (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, pp. 8-9).

Talking to material

During the second meetings with the artists, I observed them as they worked with their material. While they were working with material, several artists were regularly talking to their material.

> Faith is literally talking to matter which she uses during her creation process. Faith is talking about a negative of a picture which was still in mirror image "oh no, you have to go the other way around" (observation report fragment Faith, 09/09/2019).

Willem was talking a lot to his material while he was editing the music fragments into a music piece.

> Willem talks to his sound fragments:
> "You have to go over here"
> "You have to go a little more towards here"
> "You need to be louder"
> "Where are you?" (observation report fragment Willem, 13/09/2019).

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[1] From now on, when I write 'just' matter, I mean the common view of matter as passive, immutable, less worthy and granted no agency, as described by Barad (2003, p. 801).

Both Faith and Willem talk to matter (Faith) and their material (Willem). In the act of talking to, hides a certain granting of agency since one is talking *to something*. The something that the artists were talking to was in this case material / matter. This endorses the idea of the presupposition that material is granted agency. During the second meeting with Studio Figoer, the attitude towards material is outstanding as well.

> When Pippa starts playing with the puppet, I was able to observe her attitude towards her material. When she picks up the puppet, she is very calm and cautious and does not rush when putting the puppet 'on' (she needs to put her toes in the shoes of the puppet to be able to play with it) […] Pippa plays a few scenes with the puppet. At some point in a scene, Jonas wants to go on to the next scene and Pippa is still in the middle of playing with the puppet. She says in an indignant tone: "I can't just put him away!" (observation report fragment Studio Figoer, 04/09/2019).

The puppet needs to be handled with care. Pippa does not want to put the puppet aside immediately; she wants to take her time to do this. It seems that the puppet is more than 'just' matter to Pippa. Being careful with matter and material was also present during other observations, for instance with Faith.
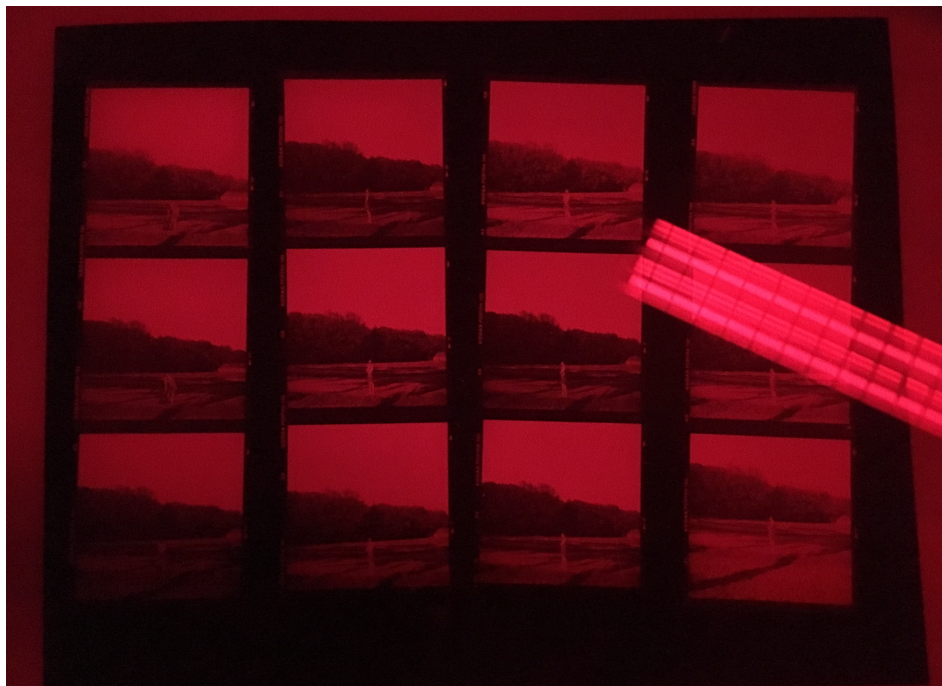

Figure 1: Faith's pictures in the dark room during the development.

> Faith treats the negatives, the photo paper and all other utensils in the darkroom with a certain attitude. She is careful and does not approach material as if it is only a utensil, she handles it with emotion. She is excited when the paper is in the chemical bath and she is both happy and excited when the image appears (observation report fragment Faith, 09/09/2019).

After watching Faith in the dark room, and after seeing how Pippa handled her puppet, I can conclude that both artists approached their material with certain cautiousness and with an almost emotional touch. They approached their material and matter as something that is more than 'just' matter. In the observation report fragment with Faith in the dark room, I was able to observe the effect of matter / material that is granted agency in relation to the hierarchy between artist and matter. There did not seem to be a hierarchical relationship between Faith and the

material, the material did something to her and she did something to the material. Also, the material / matter actively influenced Faith's and Pippa's behavior; they handled it with care. Matter absolutely matters to these artists (Barad, 2003). During the second meeting with Isaac, I was able to ask him about the attitudes that artists have towards their material and the presupposition of the material being granted agency.

> When I asked Isaac about my idea that artists approach their material as if it is granted agency, Isaac responded in a significant manner about this presupposition. He looked at me in a funny way and said; "but of course the material has agency!" (observation report fragment Isaac, 24/11/2019).

An important presupposition of the intra-active creation process is that the matter is granted agency by the artist (Barad, 2003). This presupposition can be seen as a move away from a hierarchy between artist and matter that emerges due to transcendent thinking (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, pp. 44-51). By working without a final product in mind, and thus working without a final product that pre-exists the intra-action, the artist tries to leave this mind-matter hierarchy out of the process. As described in the section in the above, when one is working with a pre-existing final product or idea in mind, it is hard to work without a hierarchy between mind and matter because one needs to *think* about the final product. Due to the equality between bodies of matter in the creation process, an intra-active creation process is possible.

The *it* is defined by the intra-action
As one can read in the above, one particular word is often used in the conversations with the artists; *it*. The word *it* could refer to both artworks that were still becoming and thus not yet perceptible, and to artworks that already "became" in the actual world and thus were perceptible (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). The artists approached the material and talked about *it* as if it has agency, even if *it* was in the stage of non-existence. Therefore, I will use the word *it* as well, since it honors the becoming of *it* without already defining *it* prior to the intra-action of matter / artist (Barad, 2003). In the following section, Jonas talks about the *it* when *it* does not yet exist in his mind or in the actual world yet.

> But there is an uncertainty, or a ... I think all artists will recognize that. You don't know it either. What *it* is going to be.

Jonas says that he does not know what *it* is going to be. This gives rise to the idea that the *it* does not pre-exist to the intra-action between artist and matter / material. The material is granted agency, even though *it* does not exist yet, which shows that the material is granted agency without yet being realized. Jonas does not grant agency to matter only when it is 'existing' in, and thus defined by, the outside world (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988), Jonas grants agency to matter that has not yet been differentiated from other matter. By granting agency to the *it* / artwork, which is not existing in our actual world yet and therefore has not been defined by the outside, Jonas seems to carry out the third principle of the rhizome. Matter exists in its multiplicities, and we do not need to recognize the differences between the multiplicities *in* the rhizome, as they are defined by outside factors (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1988, pp. 8-9). Other artists talked about the effect of working without a pre-existing *it* during their creation processes.

> Isaac: Because you did not necessarily have a plan that you have to comply with, but a pearl still arises. That's quite funny… When something just emerges, you keep on building upon that thing. And while building *it*, *it* is always just what *it* is at that point in the process. And if *it* is not perfect then you just look at *it* and look for what *it* can become, in that sense you are more creative. […] When you just start from scratch and you know, a pearl can arise, you may have fewer choices like that to make [adding a

bar]. If you end up in a kind of flow, you do have to make these choices but you attach less value to it because it does not have to conform to something you already had in mind […] You're just working intuitive and then you just 'have' something all of a sudden.

What Isaac describes can be seen as an intra-active creation process. He is intra-acting with his material, and as a result of the intra-action, the *it* comes into existence. When he says that *it* is always just what *it* is at that point in the process, he describes that the intra-action defines what the *it* is in that particular moment of the process. The definition of *it* emerges within the creation process and as part of the relationships between the two bodies of matter (artist and matter) *in* the intra-actions (Barad, 2003). Many artists touched upon the topic of the increase of creative freedom in intra-active creation processes.

> Thomas: I call this photo series "Useful LandArt" […] When they are building new districts, they make these metal frames, and I took a few photos of those frames and you literally bump into something and you think 'hey maybe this is better'. And then you leave it to chance. When I work intuitively, I don't look at what I want, I just go to a place and I watch what happens. Sometimes nothing happens, well then, I leave again, you know.

In this fragment, Thomas explains that it does not matter at all, whether he makes work during a process without a final product. He is free to go to a place, to watch what happens, and to leave again. There is no right or wrong because the relationship between artist and *it,* as it always arises during the process. Every intra-action is therefore new and exciting:

> Jante: I thought when you said; sometimes, you're just busy working on something and then suddenly a pearl emerges. And you don't know exactly where the process is going. It sounds like you're going on an adventure together. That sounds pretty exciting actually if you put it that way.
> Isaac: That feels very nice actually. Especially if you do that every week, that you have band rehearsals every week and you have such a great idea [like the pearl that arises as described in the above], and you just get started.

An intra-active creation process can thus be seen as a new adventure without any expectations: *it* is just what *it* is at that time, there is no right or wrong so there is space for 'true' creation (Toulouse, 2018). In the quotes above, it becomes clear why it is desirable for the artists to work without a focus on a final product. If it is not clear from the beginning of the intuitive creative process what an *it* is going to be, there is no success or failure, there is only *it* in the state that it is at a certain moment. When the *it* does not pre-exist the intra-action between matter and artist, a space to work freely arises for the artists.

> Willem: The moment you have no idea where you want to go, you can go in all directions. […] If you work on intuition without having thought in advance where you could end up, then suddenly you turn out to be able to end up in a lot more places then you could ever have thought off. You can get much further than your head can think […] So, all the things you devise, are per definition less, well not per definition, but there is always a limit to how far you can get by thinking.

An important quality of a creation process where the *it* does not pre-exist the intra-action, is the increasing creative freedom that it allows and the creation of *its* that they could not have thought of before starting the, what they label as, intuitive creative processes. When you create something new that you could not have even conceptualized beforehand, it can be more

renewing and as a result more creative. This is in line with the idea of thinking in the virtual as described by Deleuze. Thinking in the virtual is the process of becoming – that what might / could become, the creation of what is not yet existing. This process is achieved by thinking in new, perhaps previously unthinkable, ways (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006).

The artist is defined by the intra-action

Not only the *it* is defined by the intra-action between artist and matter; the artist is defined by the intra-action as well. Matter and artist are *becoming in* the intra-action instead of having pre-existing boundaries between them that define them prior to the intra-action. Jonas talked about becoming artist during a creation process and the importance of this for his work.

> Artists always have to develop themselves, you can never do anything the same. Sometimes, some things just work. But for instance, we always work with puppets and life film, that's becoming a style. But the fact that it's becoming a style doesn't mean that you should always do it […] You should always ask yourself; why am I doing this, because it is a style and it's working, or maybe because it is starting to be habit. You should always reflect on these things.

He explained that he thinks that being a 'good' artist means constantly asking yourself why you are doing certain things and to never do things just because they might have worked in a different context. Being an artist is thus a constant process; a constant becoming. Always trying new things and methods is also important for Isaac.

> I think I need that too, always trying different methods and trying different things. Not just sticking with one method too much.
> Jante: So, if you continue to do the same thing based on a certain method, then *it* will no longer be creative?
> Isaac: I wouldn't necessarily say that as a statement, but I do believe in that. What does creativity actually mean, creative is saying... fuck it, let's just do it this way this time. Creativity is often related to doing it differently.

Jonas and Isaac describe that they are in a constant state of becoming artist. They both think it is important to always let a certain process, a certain intra-action, define you as an artist and also to never do something just because it was successful in the past. According to Isaac, (re)defining yourself constantly as an artist, leads to more creative things. This matches the idea of thinking in the virtual. For the virtual to become actual, it must create its own terms of actualization; with no order which has been pre-existing or pre-formed (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). This seems exactly what Jonas and Isaac are doing. Jonas and Isaac describe that they constantly question their own ideas and working methods. They question the successful methods that they already have used in different creation processes. In that sense, they are constantly re-considering their creative actions and thus not creating within a paradigm that limits them in their creation process. They try to act differently in every creation process and attempt to constantly redefine themselves as artists.

Staying open to the intra-action with it *during the becoming of* it

When the *it* is becoming in existence due to the intra-action, the artists need to stay open to the intra-action with the *it*. Willem describes that he needs to stay attentive to the material and matter, in order not to let his own ego get in the way of what the *it* can become in the intra-action.

> It's a profession that keeps you humble. Sometimes I'm making music for a film and then I think, it's great! And then I'm going into the studio with some people to work it out and then I think oh this will be awesome! And then I am working in the studio and

invite the director and then you sit together, you sit on the couch and then you look at the material with fresh eyes and fresh ears, with the footage and with the music of which you, at that moment, think that it's great, and together, it just doesn't work. Shit! And you immediately feel that it doesn't work! I think that is one of the most beautiful things, that process goes completely beyond my ego and beyond me as a composer […] Those two things [the music and the footage] dictate what I have to do and not the other way around. And I think that is a very beautiful way of looking at it. Yes, and that dictates you and not the other way around.

Willem explains that the material (in this case his music and the footage for a film), leads him. He is guided by the material that is in front of him. If *it* does not work, the music he makes will be replaced, because *it* needs something else and he, the composer, needs to effectuate that. Though it can be painful to conclude that *it* does not work well in a given creative process, keeping a piece merely for the sake of it being good is not an option. The eventual *it* is more important for him than his own feelings. If the *it* needs something else, he will effectuate that. This section also spoke to me because it shows Willem's humble and equal attitude towards the material and, eventually, to *it*. Although it is hard for him to conclude that "it just doesn't work", his feelings and ego are of secondary importance, and are not defining in producing the final version of the *it*. He, as an artist, is letting the intra-action with himself and the material define what he has to do, instead of being guided merely by his own interests during the process. In the following section, it becomes clear that Pippa has the same attitude.

Almost every process, I make one puppet too much. That is just something that has happened in the past three processes. That I make a puppet and in the end it never came in the performance. And I'm absolutely fine with that.

Figure 2: The grey puppet in the form of a bomber jacket that did not end up in the performance of Pippa. She still keeps it in her atelier, next to her desk.

Pippa first makes several puppets and during the rehearsal periods, it turns out that one puppet does not fit into the performance and therefore does not end up being in the performance. Although she is proud of the puppet, as she repeatedly said during the conversation and tour of

her atelier, she is not letting her proudness getting in the way of what the performance needs. In the next section, Pippa's attitude becomes clear as well.

> I am now looking at my finished puppet and think, something needs to be done about *it*. I do see what works about the puppet, and I also see what does not work. So now I'm going to do something drastic. I'm going to demolish *it* and then reassemble *it*.
> Jante: Are you really going to demolish it?
> Pippa: Well, it's a bird, and the bird is a main character so it is very important so I can't demolish it until our last test play. But then I will just take off his wing cover completely and only his head will stay the same and the rest will all go off, then his carcass will remain […] And I'm going to make that carcass beautiful. And after that I will see what *it* still needs. Because now it's kind of just not quite a bird. And I do want you to see that it is a puppet, and that you still believe in it.

Though the puppet was a finished product, it did not necessarily mean that it was going to be kept in its original form. *It* needed something else so Pippa was willing to demolish her own work and rebuild it towards something that would work better. Willem, Pippa and their behavior are defined by the *it* during the intra-action between them and the matter / *it*. They do not put themselves, their ego, their proudness, above the eventual goal, thus allowing space for the potential *it* to evolve autonomously. An intra-active creation process means therefore that artist, matter, their material and eventually the *it* (artwork) are of constant becoming, due to the relationship that they have alongside their intra-action (Barad, 2003).

Creation process based on feeling and / or intuition

The moment that one opens to the intra-action between themselves, the matter and the *it*, truly new things can emerge as a result, as described by Toulouse (2018) and Deleuze (in Jeanes, 2006). One last characteristic of the intra-active creation process, which is labeled as intuitive by the artist, is the role of intuition and feeling in the process. All the artists described the role of intuition and emotion during the intra-active creation processes. In all the conversations with the artists that I have quoted until now, the words intuition, intuitive, feeling and feels were used.

> Jonas: I *know* where I want to go, but that's very much based on a feeling. So that's not rational at all. Because then it would be very easy, then it would be kind of like a puzzle. But I emotionally *know* where I want to go. […] I think asking yourself "why" [you do something or make certain decisions as a maker] is the most important question you can ask.
> Jante: Okay. And if I'm understanding you correctly, the answer to the "why" question is sometimes a feeling?
> Jonas: Yes certainly. Very often I think it's a feeling

Key 'decisions' in the creation processes were based on either emotions or intuition, which is in line with the descriptive model of Mace and Ward (2002).

> Isaac: In such a process, you always just feel whether it's a good choice or not […] It's not really a choice, often when you're creating something intuitively, it is just there, like; "oh we need another bar here", instead of really *making* that decision.

These key moments in the creation processes are based on intuition and emotion. Intuition and feelings are the basis for 'decisions' in the creation processes. They are described by the artists as something that guides them.

Isaac: I think that when you are making something, there is a certain truth that is actually saying to you, "Yes, this is beautiful and this is not." It is a feeling. […] It's just what feels good. And then it resonates for a moment.

The artists all turned to 'a feeling' or 'intuition' to explain why they do certain things during a creative process. Both intuition and emotion are granted agency by the artists as well. The artists base 'decisions' not on their rationality, but on their intuition or a feeling. Intuition and the feeling of *it* being right, is even shared with other people.

Amarilis: With some colleagues or friends, you just very easily quickly come to a kind of conclusion together where you feel together: yes this might be 'right'.

During the second meeting with Willem, the feeling of *it* being right was shared between him and me.

At one point during the meeting with Willem, when he has been just trying some things out and moving music fragments around, Willem says "yes" and exactly at the same moment I say "yes" as well; as if the piece is right at that moment. Willem starts laughing and says, "I like it that you share the same enthusiasm as me". For me, this was quite a significant moment, because it felt very special to agree without verbal communication. The feeling was a shared feeling and we did not use words to sense that same feeling. We both felt at the same time, now it's right (Observation report fragment Willem, 13/09/2019).

Principle 1 and 2 of the rhizome are helpful in understanding this phenomenon of being able to experience this shared feeling of *it* being right. Principles 1 and 2 can be understood as; anywhere in the rhizome can be connected to any elsewhere at any part in the rhizome (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988 p. 7), the rhizome is thus one and the same and is connected from within itself. This shared experience of the feeling of *it* being right, might be better understood via the metaphor of the rhizome. A feeling or intuition can be a matter of matter as well. If both Willem and me, and the music piece are all part of the same matter, though defined by other boundaries, it is understandable that we experience a shared sense of things, because we are 'built' of the same bricks.

Intuition as a material experience

The artists in this study seemed to turn to their bodies as the knowing subject in their creation processes, instead of their minds as the knowing subjects (Braidotti, 2006). I asked a few artists during the second meetings if they could describe intuition, or that feeling, by a metaphor, or if they could point out where or how they felt that something 'feels right', they pointed to areas on their own bodies.

At some point, we talked about the feeling of *it* being right during the process. I asked her if there was a metaphor, image that represents that feeling, or if she could point out where she feels when it is right. She said that she could feel it in her body, in her chest, and then she pointed at her heart. She also pointed to her lower belly and said that she sometimes felt it there, but most of the time in the chest-area. Amarilis also showed me what happens to her body when *it* is not feeling right; she pulls up her shoulders, and she said that she would feel tension in her body (observation report fragment Amarilis, 07/10/2019).

If something feels " right" for Faith, it is based on intuition. I wonder if she can pinpoint where she feels that intuition. She says without a doubt and quite quickly "my stomach,

or, I know my stomach is situated there, but in my belly. Yes, my belly symbolizes that"
(observation report fragment Faith, 09/09/2019).

Building on the idea of Braidotti in the above, one can understand intuition and emotion as a material or embodied experience. The idea that intuition is an embodied experience is underlined by the fragments of the observation reports of Amarilis and Faith. Since the mind has been dominant in our understanding of the world, a different understanding of intuition can be found *in* matter. I would suggest understanding intuition and the experience of creation where you feel that it is just right, as a bodily experience. I would say intuition, which goes hand in hand with 'you just know because you feel it', is a way of giving words to an experience that is not explainable by mind or rationality, but by body and matter. Intuition in the light of creative behavior can be understood as an embodied experience or even embodied knowledge. I address this idea further in the discussion section of this research.

Creation as product

In phase 1 of this study, I observed two kinds of attitudes towards the material in the conversations with the nine artists. The first attitude towards the creation is described in the above as understanding creation as the process. The second attitude towards creation that I recognized was different. There were two artists with a more capitalistic attitude towards their profession; they often worked on commission and thus with a focus on final products. To show the effect of whether or not focusing on the final products affects the creation process, I wanted to show this second approach to the creation process that aligns with a capitalist paradigm (Muhr, 2010; Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). By describing and comparing the two cases, the differences between the two approaches become clear, which leads to a better understanding of the phenomenon of creation (Bryman, 2016, p. 72).

Working on commission

Working on commission or with an assignment often goes hand in hand with the final product already being set in stone. In other words, the *it* pre-exists to the intra-action, which affects the relationship between artist, material and the creation process. In the conversations with two artists, we did not discuss the *process* of creation, but mostly covered topic about final products. Lou and Manuel were focused on their final products during the conversation.

> The pictures that Lou took for the research were about her creative process. Though, she deviated from the initial three pictures, to show multiple pictures of finished paintings. She then talked a lot about these paintings and about the restrictions and wishes of her customers (fragment of notes after first meeting with Lou, 11/05/2019)

> Manuel took way more than three pictures with him for the research. Several of the pictures were pictures of final products instead of process pictures. The whole conversation, he was focused on explaining how he would work his way around an assignment and how he would 'bend' the rules to be able to fix an assignment. He started with explaining the final product and then explain what he had to do to come to this final product. When I tried to dig deeper in the process towards the final product, he often shifted to the next final product and explaining this to me. We did not discuss the creative process on a conceptual level to the extent which I hoped for (fragment of notes after first meeting with Manuel, 30/05/2019).

The focus on final products and working within a capitalist framework when creating art, affects the creation process. A client can have wishes and demands, that the artist must always prioritize.

> Lou: This is for instance a gift from a girlfriend for her boyfriend to celebrate his transfer to a new hockey club. She didn't want a portrait but a painting of him in action, and with his new sponsor [Osaka]. The stick that he had in his hands [in the picture for the painting] was another hockey stick. And I had to make an Osaka out of it. All of that is possible. Your wish is our command. Yes Yes Yes.

The restrictions and wishes of costumers lead to a certain paradigm in which the artist needs to work and think. Making something that has never been heard or seen before is less likely to occur because the artist needs to take certain wishes and restrictions of costumers into account. As a result, artists begin thinking in the actual world, in a transcendent and thus limiting paradigm (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). The focus on final products in this approach towards creation leads to a different attitude, which results in less innovative and creative products.

Artists as producers

Both Lou and Manuel explained their view on their role as an artist in the creative process. In the conversation with Lou, the view of artists as producers came across.

> Well, painting is, you can talk about passion and talent, but it's just craft. You just have to make your hours. And if you spend a lot of time painting, you will naturally get better.

Manual addressed his profession with a focus on production as well. Manuel stated the following about working in a collective with another artist:

> "Technically speaking, I'm just an executive builder" (observation report fragment Manuel, 11/10/2019)

The way that Lou and Manuel addressed their profession, resembled the capitalistic narrative of creativity. It seemed that both artists worked within the frame of capitalism and creativity (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). In the following section, the business oriented, capitalist, attitude of Lou becomes clearer.

> And then you start investigating in consultation with the customer, what kind of size of the canvas do they want, what kind color palette, composition, that's very important. […] And you sketch it first on a small size, because it is an immense waste if you have to do it all over again on the large canvas.

Lou describes the materials that she uses for her artwork more in a sense of 'utensils' when compared to the artists in the above. It seems that when one is working with a certain idea / vision / assignment in mind, the material that is used to generate an artwork has a more subordinate position in the creation process. A hierarchy between artist and matter seems to arise (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). The material is being shaped into something that represents the vision of the artist or the vision of the costumer and therefore has a passive role in the creation process (Barad, 2003). Working with a final product therefore generates a hierarchical relation between artist and matter (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). Thereby, in the conversations with Lou and Manuel, the words intuition, intuitive, feeling or feel in relationship to the creation process were not used at all. Compared to the other seven artists who all used these words in the conversations, this is quite outstanding.

In the remainder of this thesis, I mainly focus on the first group of artists that approach their creation process in a, what I constructed as, intra-active way. This is due to the fact that I want to investigate creation processes without a focus on the final product where something that has never been seen or heard before arises (Toulouse, 2018) and therefore creates advantages for organizations (Agars, Kaufman & Locke, 2008). The first group is more suitable for this goal.

Creative behavior

This section's purpose is to show the effect of an intra-active approach towards creation processes, on creative action. Inspired by -and absolutely agreeing with- Glăveanu's call to look at creative action instead of creative thinking (Glăveanu, 2018), I summarize creative behaviors which I recognize as being characteristic of an intra-active creation process. I have been inspired by the given that creativity research has not been researching naturally occurring creativity. This has led to an understanding of creativity that does not resemble the experience of artists (Toulouse, 2018; Piirto, 2018). I observed naturally occurring creation processes and behaviors. The experience of creative action is therefore interwoven in this section.

It became clear that artists have a certain attitude in their creation processes, which I have labeled as an intra-active creation process. The way of addressing the creation processes influences both the attitude of artist towards their material and the creation process as well as the way in which artists work with their material; their creative behavior, so to speak. As said in the descriptive model of Mace and Ward (2002), making an idea physical by creative doing, has a great effect on the actual artwork. Mace and Ward state that the physical material that is used to generate an artwork and the conceptual idea of an artwork, generated by the artists, influence each other. However, they do not describe how matter can influence the artist.

In the following section, I therefore describe three creative behaviors that seem to influence the actualization of an art work. Based on the information in the above, I interpret intra-active creative processes as follows. The *it* is not existing prior to the intra-action between matter and artist, though the artist still grants agency to *it.* The creative process can thus be seen as the becoming of the *it* from immaterial and non-existing to a material / perceptible form of *it.* The first creative behavior that I recognized is 'just' making material and is divided into two sub-behaviors. Only when artists just start to make material, the non-existing *it* can start to become into the actual world. Through sketching, an artist starts searching for *it.* Artists have also shown the desire to work with physical matter to, almost literally, get in touch with *it.* Although many artworks can be created without the use of physical matter, such as a theater performance, the artists still desire to work with physical matter. The second creative behavior that I observed is the idea of postponing the fixation of the final product, to allow for endless becoming between artist and matter. Lastly, I dig deeper into what artists call a 'flow'-state, where the transformation from immaterial *it* to material *it* happens.

Matter matters: making material
Sketching: searching for it
To be able to find *it,* artists need to 'just' start creating. Quite prominent in all conversations was the word 'just' followed by playing, painting, trying, starting, and so forth. All artists referred to the need to 'just' work. If one does not start, nothing will be created. Mace and Ward name 'testing and manipulating materials' as one creative act (2002), which I interpret as sketching. When I say sketching, I do not mean sketching the outline of a drawing by a painter, other artists use the sketch-method as well in their work. When one is working sketch-like, one is drawing the outline of a music piece, a series of photos, a puppet. In the following fragments, I illustrate this sketch-like working of artists who do not use pencils to sketch. As a photographer, Faith tries out different exposure times, photo paper with different contrast and different light settings.

> Yes, it's just ... Slowly just looking at it, the contrasts, the colors or the black and white tones and the light, your paper must also be well exposed. And then you spend hours just puzzling and trying and then, with the end result then I sometimes just think yes this is just it.

She tries and puzzles with her negatives until eventually the picture is 'right'. The puzzling with the development of the pictures is a form of sketching.

Figure 3: The utensils which Willem uses during his composing process.

As a musician, Willem uses different instruments, microphones, mixing programs and all kinds of utensils that can be used to make sounds (see figure 3).

> Yeah, this picture is just playing. This is when I write [music], I put down microphones and I just play, collect and try things and just see what comes out of it. And I think that the process of playing, I always try to just play the childish way. I always try to be guided my enthusiasm and just think, I want to know how this sounds, and hit your teapot and see if that is something you can use […] And then *it* becomes something. And then there are always pros and cons about what you're making, but it's good that you've tried it […] You can say [makes hand gestures and sounds] how is this? Maybe this is better. Or [makes hand gestures and sounds again] […] or if I do this [makes a noise] how is that? And then perhaps the director says; well just do what we came up with a while ago. Or perhaps it's brilliant, and you only know that if you check it, if you try.

According to Willem, sketch-like working is important. Sketching is important for the creation process of Willem because you 'just' need to try things to figure out if something is brilliant. Thereby, there is no problem in trying something and concluding that *it* is not brilliant, because there is no final product or vision that one is working towards. While artists are sketching, they are intra-acting with their material and/or matter. Sketching helps to explore the becoming of *it*. When just trying through using this sketch-like working method, the chances of getting towards something that works are bigger. Thomas talks about the importance of sketching as well.

> Jante: So, you don't know yet what *the point* is, what you want to show. And then by making things… What happens then?
> Thomas: By making work, you also see what you don't want to make
> (observation report fragment Thomas, 28/10/2019).

By making things, Thomas comes closer to the point of knowing what he wants to make and communicate with his work. Sketching helps to search for the *it* in intra-action with matter, which sets in motion the transformation from the immaterial *it* to the material / perceptible *it*. This transformation can be understood as the becoming of *it* through intra-action (Barad, 2003).

Getting in touch with it through working with physical matter
A creative act that goes hand in hand with sketching is the importance of working with actual physical matter. I shortly need to explain the difference between media and tools for this section. Media are the physical materials that are used to create an artwork and are fixed *into* the artwork. For a painter, the media are for instance paint and a canvas. Tools are used to be able to make the artwork, but are not built into the artwork, such as brushes. For many artists, the media which use for artworks do not necessarily have to be physical. Thomas points out that when he is creating something, it is important for him to use physical material, also known as media, during his creative process. Thomas points out that he likes that analogue shooting results in physical pictures, instead of digital immaterial pictures.

> As a photographer, Thomas could choose to work digital and select his pictures digital. Working with a digital camera is considered easier than working with an analogue camera, though Thomas prefers working analogue, both for shooting his pictures and selecting his pictures. He says that he needs to see the pictures printed out to be able to see what the work is about (observation report fragment Thomas, 28/10/2019).

He explains the effect of working with physical matter on his process. The *it* stays immaterial when not using physical material, thus it is harder to see how the *it* becomes in a material or perceptible state. By working with physical matter, Thomas knows what *it* is about. The media that are used to create an artwork, are even less obvious for the artists like musicians and theater directors. Nevertheless, they point out the desire to work with physical material. In the following section, Pippa talks about the importance of having physical matter during a creation process.

> And that's very funny, because Jonas also has that in his making process in a rehearsal room. He also wants all these little things, and me too. So that makes it a huge mess, we always have so many things. So much stuff, we can't go to a rehearsal room with just a bag. We always have a whole crate and another trolley and then we have to take the car the first time we go to a rehearse room otherwise we won't make it anyway.
> […]
> Pippa: It's such a mess with us. But at the end something good comes out. I think. […] There's just so much stuff, so much!

During a creation process in her atelier, Pippa also prefers to have matter present.

> I really need to have all my jars on my desk with all sorts of things in them, and a little this and a little that and a little bit here and a little bit there. Even though I'm not going to use that at that time, I know that I have it all and I can use it.
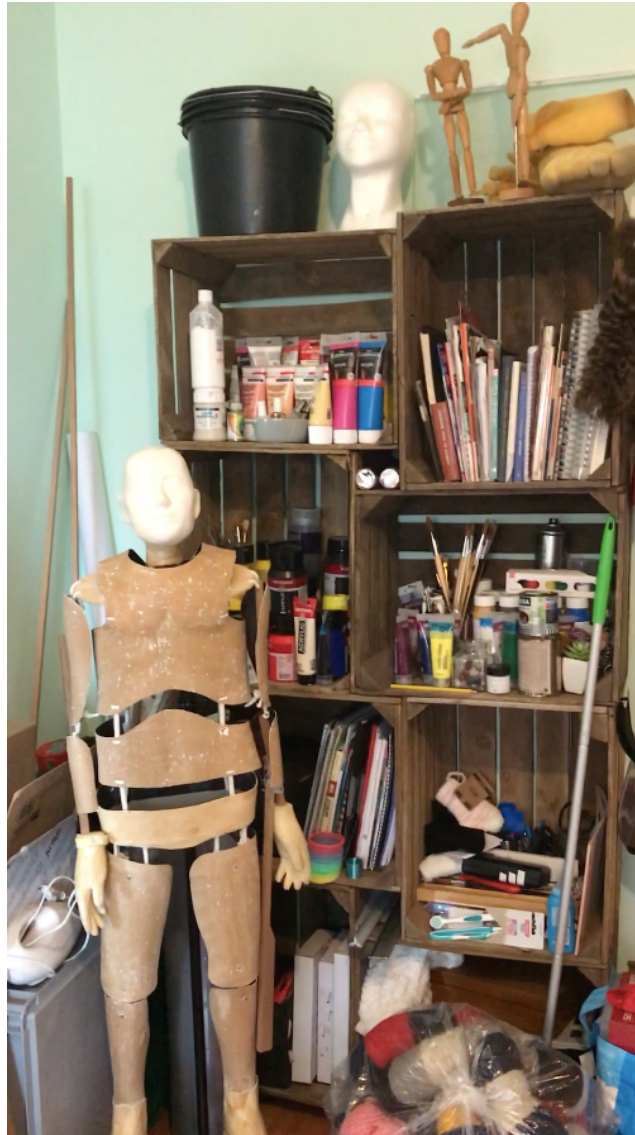
Figure 4: A picture of a little amount of the matter / material that is present in Pippa's atelier.

Having physical material on her desk helps Pippa create puppets. When working with actual physical material, and really getting in touch with matter, the process of the immaterial *it* becoming material seems to be easier. Getting in touch with physical material is important for the artists. The artists' behaviors are in line with Barad's idea of matter; matter matters in their intra-active creation processes (2003).

Allowing for endless becoming: postponing the fixation of material

The second creative behavior that I recognized is postponing the fixation of material. This behavior has been described briefly by Mace and Ward (2002) in their descriptive model of the art-making process. Artists either finish the work, destroy it or postpone it (Mace & Ward, 2002). The postponing of finishing the artwork is described by almost all artists in this research. Manifestations of this creative behavior were also observed during the second meetings with the artists. Fixation of material is described by Willem.

> This is the fixation phase. And you say okay, this is how we are going to do it. We are going to write it down now, we are going to fix it, this is what it has become. It's like editing a movie, such a process.

According to Willem, fixation of a final product lies in the act of deciding: this is what *it* has become, and eventually saying *it* is 'done'. When working intuitively, the fixation of material is an activity that artists try to postpone. The artists mentioned behaviors or situations where they tried to keep their creation process open. A clear example of this behavior was evident in the conversation with Amarilis.

> Some people really work like this; "I am going to build this installation and this is what it will look like" and from the start, a lot is already clear cut. While we work more like this; our starting point is always certain: we are going to play in a theater, we have musicians and a composer but that's it. We don't really know anything else, and then until the premiere and usually after the premiere as well, we are still very open to change. […] And of course, the changes become less and less big when we've had the premiere, you are not going to change big things, but we once for instance cut out a whole scene after the premiere.

Even after the premiere of the performance, a point where you normally expect a performance to be fixed, Amarilis and her theater company still change things in the performance. The *it* never seems to be truly finalized, one could always go further with it. Willem also shows the creative behavior of postponing the fixation of material. In the second meeting, he says that his editorial work is basically fixating the material, though the behavior he showed during the second meeting while editing his music did not meet his own definition of editing.

> Willem says that he thinks editing the music is a silly job, because he is 'just' putting the recorded fragments into the right place. When observing him during the editing process, I do not agree with his idea of what editing is, because he is not 'just' putting the recorded fragments into place, he is constantly recording new sounds, using new instruments, using new utensils which can create a certain sound such as a pepper and salt grinder. Thereby, by saying he is 'just' putting the fragments in the right place, it sounds like he already knows what the right place is for the fragment before starting the process. This is not the case, if he had a particular plan for the fixation of the material, he would have been done faster with the editing, and he would not record new sounds. It took him more than three hours, several phone calls to his parents that he would be home later "because this really needs to be done!" (observation report fragment Willem, 13/09/2019).

Based on this fragment, it becomes clear that fixation of the material is postponed by Willem. During the second meeting with Studio Figoer, I was able to observe them while being in intra-action with material.

> They aimed to be done with the pitch around six in the evening, but they continued rehearsing for and making the pitch until they really had to stop because they needed to get dinner. The pitch was not done in the sense that they were not pleased with the pitch yet. Everyone naturally grabbed their agendas and they made a new appointment to work on the pitch. There was no debate about whether they would meet again to finish the pitch, this was instantly assumed. The pitch was not done how they wanted it to be, so they had to keep on working. Time and their own plans for the rest of the night seemed to play little role in the creative process (observation report fragment Studio Figoer, 04/09/2019).

If they wanted to, they could have been done way earlier with this pitch, though they did not seem to be in a rush to finish it. It seems that postponing the fixation of material is a creative behavior that is carried out by several artists. In the second meeting with Thomas, he explains

why he does not like to fixate his work. During the second meeting, Thomas printed many pictures and he, as well as I, saw the pictures for the first time in physical form.

Figure 5: Thomas' physical pictures during a selection process

Thomas is explicitly talking about the restrictions for this project and brain-storming about 'what *it* is about'. We are shuffling through his printed photographs which are part of an intuitive process. This meeting was the first time he saw all the pictures he took, in physical form together. Gradually during the meeting, he explicated more and more restrictions for the photographs in the series […] At some point during this process, Thomas stated the following: Sometimes I find selecting very dangerous. At this moment, I am actually going towards a dangerous point, because now you go ... I still have to explain *it* all, and then you start to see what you want to make. And then *it* actually becomes concrete (observation report fragment Thomas, 28/10/2019).

Thomas was talking about what '*it* is about', which leads to more and more restrictions and the *it* is formed more and more towards a material / perceptible *it* and as a result towards a new body of matter. Thomas even describes the process of selecting pictures and talking about what *it* is about, thus the process towards fixating the *it,* as dangerous. Barad's ideas help me in understanding this behavior and the dangerousness that Thomas describes to have experienced. One particular train of thought by Barad interests me; the idea that bodies of matter are not objects with inherent boundaries and properties; they are material-discursive phenomena (Barad, 2003, p. 823) and thus the idea that discursive practices are boundary-making practices (2003, pp. 820-821). By talking about the work, the boundaries between Thomas as an artist and his project as a separate body of matter start to arise. This means that by talking about the work and what *it* is about, Thomas also 'admits' that he needs to let his work have agency without him as the artist. The work will be a body of matter of its own, open to intra-actions between other bodies of matter, without Thomas being a part of this intra-action. It is almost as if discursive practices separate Thomas from the *it*. The following quotation endorses this idea of separation between artwork and artist.

Thomas: When it's finished, it's done; then I distance myself from *it*.

This distance might be explained by the boundaries that emerge between artist, matter and the final product when *it* is fixated. Once a final product is really fixed and done, there is no creative intra-action anymore between artist and matter. A new body of matter emerges, which has agency that is separate from the intra-action of Thomas and material (Barad, 2003). It seems as if the artists do not want to create boundaries between the *it* and them, because then the intra-active becoming of *it* stops. The idea that the *it* becomes something apart from the intra-action between artist and matter, is endorsed by Willem:

> As soon as I've made something […] it will lead a life of its own, it will get a new identity […] When you make something, it becomes something that stands on its own.

Based on the statements in the above, fixating material can be understood as the ending of the intra-action with artist and material and therefore the ending of the *becoming* of a new body of matter, because the *it* became. The state of intra-action between artist and material is generally experienced as very pleasant by the artists that I spoke. This makes it more understandable that the artists would like to postpone the fixation of material because the intra-action that produced the artwork is 'done'.

When matter and artist become together through flow

The only big question remaining is, what does it look like when artist and material intra-act, when they become together and form *it;* a new body of matter. This is where the magic happens, this is the "aura of wonder, mystery, power and divinity" Andreasen talks about (2005, p. 19), this is the moment when the poet is bestowed by a muse, bestowed by the gift of divine power (Ritook, 1989). This magical moment is what I would now understand as the process of matter and artist intra-acting, of the two becoming one, which leads to the becoming of the artwork from an immaterial and not perceptible *it* to a material / perceptible *it*. This moment is an opportunity that needs to be seized. Isaac describes this state.

> Before that moment of inspiration comes, it's always search. A process doesn't always start with inspiration like this [referring to a picture which he describes as a very inspirational moment]. That I really find the inspiration like this, it is true that I am making something and looking for what *it's* about and then eventually there is this big drive and from there you suddenly get this feeling like 'oh this is what it's about' and then *it* all comes together and all of a sudden, it's like you're in a steam train [Dutch expression meaning: all of a sudden, it goes really fast].

This state is labeled as a flow state and is experienced as a nice state to work in.

> Thomas: Sometimes when I'm working intuitively, it is super nice to keep on working in a flow.

In the moment of a flow state, transforming the *it* into something material seems to be the only thing that matters. In one section during the conversation with Pippa, she talks about the state in which she can be during the creation process. She talks about cutting foam; the foam being the media that is used to build up the puppet.

> You can do the cutting above a garbage bin. But, you're just there, you're just *in* there [makes hand gesture which portrays extreme focus on the foam block] and if you are working on *it*, you are not concerned about your environment and that the environment should be neat during that moment […] So you see something in your head and that needs to be translated to something material at *that* time. And the rest really doesn't matter. And it's very pleasant if the rest doesn't have to matter.

The image in Pippa's head can be understood as a vision of the *it* that is moving towards a clearer form. Once the *it* is getting closer to a physical form, there is no time to waste to get this immaterial form into a material form. In this section, Pippa also talks about her atelier at some point exploding because she was making such a huge mess. Pippa states that making a mess while working on material does not concern her, as it is a part of the process. Her surroundings are of secondary importance once the *it* needs to be translated into material. The rest does not matter to Pippa. The state that Pippa is describing, shows that making the *it* material, is her only priority.

> But if I made something here [at home, her atelier is in her home] I immediately say "Jonas, come and look! [Pippa and Jonas are partners living together]". And then I will show it like this and then he makes a sound like; "hmm" and then I think "HMM?? Is it not good? Shit! Okay, keep on working!!"

What Pippa describes in this section can be understood as a dedication to the becoming of *it*. During the making process in which the *it* is becoming, the artist does not stop working on *it* until *it* is good. Nothing seems more important in that moment than creating *it*. As mentioned before, for Willem's personal appointments seem to be of secondary importance when creating *it* in flow (observation report fragment Willem, 13/09/2019). Not only do his personal appointments come second for the creation of *it*, Willem's politeness changes when he is in this flow-state.

> Once Willem is concentrated, it seems important that he is not distracted. I want to say something and he is very quick with asking; "can you be quiet for a moment?". This of course can simply be asked, but the intonation with which it is asked is different than the previous intonation. He sounded a bit agitated, and as if it is of great importance that it is quiet instantly. He acted as if he had to seize this moment and could not lose his concentration because then he could lose something (observation report fragment Willem, 13/09/2019).

Capturing the *it* seems to be of top priority to Willem, staying in the flow state and not being distracted by external stimuli is therefore important. Capturing the *it* also seems to go hand in hand with the artist feeling a sense of urgency in either the process or the moment.

> While moving around in the dark room, Faith seems to be in a hurry when she is working with the materials. She seems very excited and says that she is curious about the pictures and how they will turn out. She also seems to be in a certain rush, she is walking and switching quite fast between the chemical trays to the light exposure area (observation report fragment with Faith, 09/09/2019).

What the artists seem to describe here is a kind of flow state that one can enjoy while working on *it*. The idea of a 'flow'-state has been described in several models of creative processes; Wallas for instance called it the illumination stage (1926). It has, however, not yet been fully understood. Braidotti shortly touches on the subject of matter-energy flows. According to her, we need to redefine our consciousness in terms of variations of matter-energy flows. Processes, flows, in between-status have to be taken in to serious account (Braidotti, 2002, p. 63). The idea of new materialism and the matter-energy flows between bodies of matter help interpret what happens during a flow-state. In the discussion of this paper, this idea is further developed.

Becoming together

Many artists mentioned during the conversations that they put a lot of themselves in their work. The idea of putting a lot of one's self in the work is quite compatible with the idea of the intra-active becoming of artist and matter which results in a new body of matter; the *it* (Barad, 2003).

Several ways were described by the artists on how to put a lot of one's self in the *it* by. Faith for instance, puts 'herself' in her work by looking for parts of herself in the photographs she makes.

> So, I'm actually constantly looking for myself in the people I portray. It is one big self-reflection. The question for me is, what fascinates me, and based on those fascinations I start to do research and that is the basis for my footage. So, it's always very personal. […] For me, it always starts inside of me. Questions I have, questions I have about myself, I kind of reflect those on other people.

What comes from within Faith, is a basis for the translation of the non-existing *it* into a perceptible form of the *it*. Due to the intra-active becoming of matter and artist, a new body of matter arises; namely the *it*. The becoming together of artist and matter, can lead to the idea that artists put a lot of themselves into their work. The *it* therefore is a combination of matter and artist transforming together in a new body of matter. I was almost able to observe the magical becoming of a new body of matter. During the second meeting with Studio Figoer, Pippa starts to play a scene with the puppet.

> When Pippa is playing a scene with the puppet, it is almost as if she disappears into the puppet. The material off which the puppet is build and Pippa become a real living together. It was hard for me to look separately to the puppet and Pippa, I did not see two different entities, I really just saw one living thing. It was really amazing for me to observe this (observation report fragment Studio Figoer, 04/09/2019).

Pippa and the matter that the puppet consisted of, became more than just Pippa and the puppet, they became one together. The puppet came alive. What I observed when Pippa became one with the puppet was a result of their intra-action; is comparable to mixing primary colors. You start with for instance yellow and blue, two bodies of matter that are perceived as different. When you mix these two different bodies together, the yellow and the blue morph into a new color, green, and we cannot perceive the yellow and the blue color separately anymore. We can only perceive the green. A new body of matter with different boundaries comes into existing. Although the yellow and blue are not perceptible anymore, they are still *part of* the new body of matter and built up the new body of matter. I want to close this chapter with the following section.

> Jante: I always end these conversations with one question: what about your creative process didn't you photograph?
> Pippa: Well, these photos are always taken by someone else, because when I am making something, I disappear in it, I forget the world around me. Then I also forget to take photos. So that. That I forget the world.

Pippa describes the experience of this becoming beautifully, she describes that she is *in* the process of the making. She completely forgets the boundaries between herself and the 'rest' of the world, as if these boundaries do not exist anymore. As if she is part of a bigger whole, like the rhizome (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988). She becomes one with what she is doing; creating a new body of matter altogether (Barad, 2003).

Discussion

In the discussion section of this research, I attempt to answer the research question by summarizing the findings of this study. I give a description of my interpretation of what I called an intra-active creation process. What follows can be seen as an integration of the knowledge that I gathered in this research as well as the organizational and academic context. Firstly, I list the academic and organizational implications of this research. Then, by returning to the literature on creativity and creation, I point out the added value of this study to our conceptualization and knowledge of creation. I then go on to explain the added value of a new materialist approach to research in general and its implications in regard to creating for organizational contexts. Thereafter, I reflect on the Deleuzian and Baradian perspectives that I used to give meaning to the data in this study. Lastly, I point out the limitations of this research. Suggestions for further research and the lessons that potentially can be learned by organizations from artists are also interwoven throughout the discussion section.

Answering the research question

In this research, I tried to understand creation processes from different perspectives than the common view on creativity. By moving away from the focus on creativity as psychological, I attempted to avoid an anthropocentric view on the concept of creation. By moving away from an organizational context in which creativity has been analyzed, I attempted to move away from the general fixation on novel and final products. The main question I tried to answer as a part of my research is:

How can creation processes without the focus on final products be understood from a new materialist perspective, based on the idea of intra-action of human (artist) and matter?

I answer the question based on the results of this research. It is a broad research question and in the light of the new materialist theory, I do not assume that I am able to completely understand creation processes, though I am able to better understand creation processes in the context of this research.

Creation is process versus creation is product

Understanding the creation process without a focus on a final product from a new materialist perspective has been the goal of this study. Based on the conversations with different artists, I recognized a difference between specifically two 'groups'[2] of artists. The differences between these two groups illustrated a difference in creative approaches, between a creation process focused on the *process,* and a creation process focused on the *final product*. By illustrating the difference between the two groups, I attempted to give more insight into the creation process without a final product.

Creation is process

In the conversations, the first group carried out their creative projects with a focus on the process. They preferred to work without a final product in mind. Creation processes without a final product in mind, allows for an equal relationship between artist and material / matter (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). This equal relationship between artist and matter became apparent in the way that the artists talked about their material; the artists in the first group talked about material / matter as if it was more than 'just' matter to them. Matter is thus granted agency, in line with Barad's view on agency (2003). This can have an effect on the relationship between

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[2] For the readability of this thesis I differentiated between these two 'groups', though in reality these groups should not be interpret in a dichotomous sense

artist and matter in the creation processes. The traditional hierarchy between artist and matter / material is challenged because the artist does not act like, or experience his/herself, as superior to the matter. This is in line with Deleuze and Guattari's idea on immanent versus transcendent thought. By moving away from an ontology rooted in transcendent thought, the hierarchy between different bodies of matter decreases (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). Matter is not used and shaped for the sake of the creation of a certain final product by the artist. Rather, matter and artist are becoming together and thus the boundaries between them are (re)defined as part of the intra-action. This intra-action leads to the becoming of *it*. The word *it* is used by the artists to describe both 'artworks' that were still becoming and thus not yet perceptible, and to artworks that already became in the actual world and thus were perceptible (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). The intra-active creation process of matter and artist, defines *it*, thus the *it* does not pre-exist the intra-action. Matter, in these intra-active creation processes, does not passively await signification (Barad, 2003, p. 821). Matter / material thus has an active and prominent spot in the intra-active becoming of the *it* (Barad, 2003) and influences and affects the intra-action.

Something that I noticed when observing artists working without a final product in mind, and letting the intra-action define their work, the matter and the *it*, was that a certain creative freedom arose as part of the process. The *it* is always just what *it* is in a given moment of the intra-action between material / matter and artist. The final products of the creation processes can be more 'creative', because when an artist allows the material to influence the intra-active becoming of *it*, and when the artists allow themselves to work without a clear idea in mind, the artist can create something that they could have never thought of beforehand (Toulouse, 2018). This is in line with Deleuze's idea of thinking in the transcendent versus thinking in the virtual. When the artist thinks within a transcendent paradigm, he/she will always replicate or reform already existing concepts, which prohibits the artist from ever unlocking true creation. However, when thinking in the virtual, there is no such thing as existing concepts (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006).

Creation as producing
In the conversations with the second group of artists, the focus was more on the final product than the creation processes towards these final products. Their attitude towards creating seemed more capitalistic in the sense that the final products were considered very important. One could say that a hierarchy between matter and artist exists amongst this group. The material / matter is used to create a product. Instead of the intra-action defining the artist and the matter towards the becoming of an *it*, the *it* already pre-exists the intra-action in the form of a final product. Therefore, the material is used to create that final product because the artist needs to deliver a certain product to a client. In the working method of these artists, exists a transcendence hierarchy (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988); the artist and the ideas about the final product are prominent in the intra-action. The matter is 'used' to execute a certain idea. This attitude could lead to a decrease in creative freedom, because the artists have to adjust to restrictions of an assignment and consumer demand. Thereby, they are thinking in a paradigm that limits their freedom to create whatever they want; in Deleuzian terms also known as being restricted to "the actual world" (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). This makes it harder to create truly *new* things (Toulouse, 2018).

The differences in approaches of the creation processes as described by the artists in this research, can be of great value for the organizational context, since organizations have longed for the type of creation that is described by Toulouse (2018) and Deleuze (in Jeanes, 2006). True creative freedom can arise when one is completely open to the intra-active creation processes as described in the above. For this type of creation to arise, it is important to respect

the material with which one is working; the matter has to be viewed as an active actor in the becoming of a final product as well. In order to get into this type of mindset, one needs to work without an idea or final product in mind and outside of the boundaries of our actual world. It is thus not favorable to think in terms of novelty or to what extent something is implementable as this type of thinking restricts one to the context of the actual world, and does not allow for the expansion into the virtual (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). If organizations want this type of creation, it is important to consider creation without the focus of a final product (Muhr, 2010; Ingold, 2014).

Creative action

Since creation is more than just the final product, I also wanted to look at the process prior to a final product. One way to do this is by looking at the creative behaviors that artists discussed during the conversations, and showed during their second meetings. Looking at these behaviors and trying to signify these behaviors will help to understand the creation process without a final product better (Glăveanu, 2018). In the second part of the findings, I therefore recognized and signified three creative behaviors that go hand in hand with an approach towards creation as a process. In the second group of artists, the main focus in the conversations was on the final products that they produced; this (contextual) knowledge therefore draws from the creative behaviors from the first group of artists.

First, I recognized the creative behaviors that go hand in hand with the idea that matter matters to artists. When working without a final product in mind, it is important for artists to work with matter and to 'just start making material'. Through sketching, the artists come closer to the point of realizing what *it* is about. Sketching helps to search for the non-existing *it* in the matter, which helps the *it* transforms from immaterial (and thus virtual) to material (and thus actual). A creative behavior that is closely linked to, but not the same as, sketching, is the desire to work with physical matter. Although many artists do not necessarily need to work with physical matter, they still show a desire to work with physical material. Working with actual physical material leads to *literally* getting in touch with matter and eventually with *it*. The creation process of the immaterial *it* becoming material seems to be more easily achieved in this way.

The second creative behavior I recognized was the postponing of the fixation of material. Fixating material can be understood as the ending of the intra-action with artist and material. Boundaries emerge between artist, matter and the *it* when the artwork is fixated. This results in the ending of the intra-active becoming of a new body of matter because *it* is 'done'; a new body of matter, an artwork, emerges. This artwork is then granted agency and thus open to new intra-actions, in which the artist does not necessarily play a role (Barad, 2003). The state of intra-action between artist and material is experienced as very pleasant. Postponing the fixation of a final product allows for endless becomings and intra-actions, which seems to be more pleasant than distancing oneself from the artwork by fixating the *it*.

The last creative behavior that the artists described was the "flow state" in which artists work. When the artists become completely open to the intra-action between themselves and the matter or material, they are becoming together towards a new body of matter. The artists called this a flow-state, where they almost disappear into the creation process. The artists reacted to this moment with a great sense of urgency and additionally showed an immense dedication to the intra-action; the rest of the world seemed not to matter anymore. When understanding the becoming of a new body of matter as an intra-action between two bodies of matter, it is getting more understandable that an artwork is more than the sum of its parts and thus a certain magical experience is felt (Andreasen, 2005). The magic is literally 1 (artist) + 1 (matter) = a third party

(*it,* artwork, new body of matter). The *it* is thus more than the sum of its parts. We should not forget that matter has the potential, as an active factor, to influence the intra-active becoming the *it* as well.

The acts of creation were experienced as very pleasant by the artists. Focusing on the process instead of the pressure of producing a final product, seemed to lead to a certain experience of this process. Painting a picture of these creative behaviors that are based on a working method that is characterized by the absence of a focus on a final product, can be considered by organizations that want to enhance creation in their workplace. This way, the focus on the final product decreases and shifts towards a focus on the benefits of creation for employees (Tavares, 2016; Langelaan et al., 2006).

Implications

In the following section, the implications of this study are described. The implications for organizations are summarized first. I focus on a paradox that arises within the organizational context in light of creation. Organizations want 'true' creativity, because true creativity goes hand in hand with economic advantages due to novel products and thus with innovation (Agars, Kaufman & Locke, 2008). This study has shown that working with a focus on final products leads to less creative final products, and therefore is in line with Muhr's (2010) and Ingold's (2014) ideas regarding the effect that the focus on final products has on creation processes. The economic advantages of creativity therefore decrease as well (Muhr, 2010). If organizations want to generate economic advantages through creation, they need to let go of compulsivity seeking for final and novel products. I propose that it might be possible to eliminate this paradox by a shift from focusing on the economic advantages of creativity (Agars, Kaufman & Locke, 2008) to focusing on the advantages of creation in the workplace (Tavares, 2016; Langelaan et al., 2006). Afterwards, I describe what the conceptualization of creation in this research means for the current understanding of creativity as described in the introduction. Then, I explain the role of intuition in the creation processes without a final product in mind and propose a new way of interpreting intuition. Lastly, I describe the general value on our current research paradigm of this research through application of the implications of organizational context to the academic context in light of the research paradigm in which scholars are creating knowledge.

Implications for organizations: what organizations can learn from artists
Interestingly, the difference between the two groups that have been observed as part of this research, account for the exact same differences that have previously been described in past literature on creativity in organizations. The focus on final products leaves one 'uncreative', as said by Muhr (2010, pp. 75-77). I recognized a difference between the two types of artists before I turned to the literature. This study therefore endorses the idea that there are different ways of approaching creation processes and that these differences can hugely affect the outcome of a creation process. When connected to, and executed in a, capitalist paradigm, creation leads to less 'creative' final products (Muhr, 2010) due to the focus on final products (Ingold, 2014). In the light of this study, I would understand this focus on final products and the effect on creative freedom as follows; artists are working within transcendent ways of thinking and thus in the actual instead of the virtual world (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). They therefore reproduce what they already know. A few artists explicitly said that if you are working towards a certain final product, they have to *think* about it instead of 'just' working. This difference was marked as a difference between making decisions in the creation process based on rationality and based on intuition. Working within the sphere of rational thinking, leaves us uncreative. The difference between the creativity that is present in many organizations today and the creativity that is

longed for in those same organizations is rooted in the difference of approach to the creation process. When looking at all of the above, I would say that organizations are longing for the type of creation that is in line with thinking in the virtual (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006) and intra-active creation as described in this study. This attitude towards creation has the potential to generate novel and innovative products and thus has the potential to bring truly 'creative' results in organizational contexts. This is advantageous to organizations in our ever-changing world, especially economically (Agars, Kaufman & Locke, 2008). What is, however, still present in most organizations today is the need to produce and deliver final products. This is more in line with the capitalist artists' approaches, which often results in creations that *have* been seen and heard before; thus reproducing more of what we already know. If organizations wish to establish 'true' innovation, the capitalistic idea of efficiency and the focus on final products must be abandoned. Clearly, in the pursuit of producing truly creative *its,* we need to break free from a capitalist view of creativity (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006; Muhr, 2010; Ingold, 2014). If an organization wants to achieve true innovation and creation, the approach towards the creation process that has been accounted for in this thesis, would be beneficial to use. Final, creative, products should not be the goal of an organization, but more emphasize should be put on the processes. This, however, leads to a paradox, since the generation of economic advantages is a goal in itself that is closely related to the capitalist system in which organizations must manifest themselves. To be truly creative, one would have to get out of this system of production with focus on efficiency and final products and thus break with transcendent thought.

Tackling this paradox is vital for creation in organizations and the advantages that come hand in hand with it. It could therefore be interesting to look at how to establish an environment in which one can be truly creative within organizational contexts today. As described by Muhr, creativity has become a tool one can use to generate economic advantages via final products (2010). It seems that the value of creation processes in itself, are lost out of sight in the organizational context. Organizations should start to focus on the advantages for employees when acting creatively in the organization (Tavares, 2016), instead of merely focusing on the economic benefits of creativity. Without a focus on final products, and in this way taking the organization out of a capitalist context, the power of creation can still contribute to the success of organizations. Undertaking a creation process without the goal of a final product is described by the artists in this study as a very pleasant experience. This pleasant experience seems to affect employees as well. For instance, the presence of creativity in organizations tends to increase employees' productivity at work and generally adds more significance and purpose to people's jobs (Tavares, 2016). This advantage and function of creation in organizations has not seemed to be valued enough, because the focus has primarily been on the added value of novel products (Amabile, 1988; Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993), economic advantages and the advantage of human creation versus artificial creativity (Agars, Kaufman & Locke, 2008; Frey & Osborne, 2017). If the focus of the value of creation in the workspace shifts from economic advantages towards advantages for employees, it is possible to move away from the focus on creativity as final products in organizational settings. Creativity is not the final product; creation is the process. Creation as a pleasant experience for employees should be the primary focus when incorporating creativity in the workplace. In this way, creation processes can occur more naturally and without the pressure of production and therefore might even, incidentally, lead to the creating things that have never been seen or heard before (Toulouse, 2018).

Academic implications
Creation: a matter of matter and artist
In the introduction of this thesis, I summarized several understandings and theories of creativity. They were all rooted in the idea of creativity as a human trait (Guilford, 1950), which has led

to a certain understanding of creativity within a psychological research paradigm (Repko & Szostak, 2012). The emphasis on understanding creativity has been laid on creative thinking (Guilford, 1950; Vartanian, Bristol, & Kaufman, 2013) and the creative person (e.g. Botella, 2018). Despite the more than adequate and significant scientific literature on creativity and creative thinking (Corazza & Agnoli, 2018, p. 168), no consensus has been established regarding what creativity actually is (Parkhurst, 1999). This study was conducted in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of creativity / creation by moving away from the psychological paradigm in which we have mostly been conceptualizing creativity. One goal of this study was to understand the magic in the creation process without drawing on the concept of divine power in order to explain this magic. When artist and material come together, that's where the magic happens. When we understand the becoming of *it* as an intra-action between two bodies of matter, it is getting more understandable that a certain magic can happen because the magic is literally 1 (artist) + 1 (matter) = 3 (artwork, new body of matter). The artist brings some stuff to the occasion of the intra-action, but the matter does as well. A part of oneself is "fixed" into the new body of matter, the *it,* the artwork. With our anthropocentric view on creativity, we have forgotten that matter can bring stuff to the arena of intra-action as well. The event of material and artist becoming together and forming the *it* as a result of their intra-action, is comparable to what takes place when mixing primary colors. When one mixes primary colors, you start with for instance yellow and blue, two bodies of matter that are perceived as different. When you mix these two different bodies together, the yellow and the blue morph into a new color, green, and we cannot perceive the yellow and the blue color separately anymore. We can only perceive the green. A new body of matter with different boundaries comes in existence. Although the yellow and blue are not perceptible anymore, they are still part of the new body of matter and built up the old body of matter.

By focusing on matter as well as the artists and their intra-active becoming, I showed that creation processes are not just a matter of the creative person and their creative thinking, but also a matter of the creative person and the matter that is used in the creation process. If creation of an *it* / artwork is perceived from this point of view, it is more understandable that an artwork is experienced as magical, as 'more than just me', because it is more than just the artist; it is artist and matter together forming a new body of matter. By adding a new active factor in the creation process, a more comprehensive understanding of the process arises. Creation is not 'just' the artist, which has been the common view in our current academic paradigm, based on the Renaissance view on creativity (Lubart, 2018), but is the artist in combination with the matter / material. This could explain the feeling of 'becoming one with something bigger than just you', in line with the idea of an artist becoming one with the divine creative power of the nine muses (Ritook, 1989). This research, in its own context, has given an understanding of the magical in the process of creation (Andreasen, 2005), without explaining this magic as a divine power which would not be a suitable explanation to use in (post-)secular Europe (Habermas, 2008).

Creation and intuition
The word intuition has been used extensively in the conversations with the first group of artists. Artists talked about an intuitive creative process, meaning a process where one is not thinking about what one is making, letting oneself go into the process, not having an idea where you will end up. Wallas already named intuition in his four-stage model of creativity. The illumination stage is described as an intuitive feeling of 'knowing' what to do (Wallas, 1926). This is in line with the description of the third stage of the descriptive model of Mace and Ward; 'decisions' during the making of an artwork are often based on intuition and emotion (2002). Intuition seems to be an explanation for decisions that we are not able to explain with our mind, and thus

leads to a certain aura of magic (Andreasen, 2005). Although these magical experiences, that are connected to the intuition of the artists in this research as well as to other models of creative processes, seem to play a key part regarding creation, the literature on the phenomenon is scarce and consensus on the conceptualization of intuition has not been reached (Policastro, 1995; Shirley & Langan-Fox, 1996).

The rational mind is said to be less dominant when one is guided by intuition. Contrary to the rational mind is the intuition and emotional basis for decisions; the artists feel it, when *it* is right. A different approach to understanding intuition can be found *in* matter. I would suggest understanding intuition and the experience of creation where you feel that it is just right, as a bodily experience. Maybe intuition is a way of describing an experience that is not of the mind, but of the body. I propose that intuition, or intuitive creative processes, are based on embodied knowledge. In embodied knowledge, the body is the knowing 'subject' instead of the mind. This fits Braidotti's statement that we, as humans, need to rethink our vision of the 'knowing subject' (2002). Looking at intuition as embodied knowledge, the body is granted agency as the knowing subject and the Cartesian distinction between mind and body (for the mind is always already the body and the body is always already the mind) disappears. Understanding intuition from a new materialist perspective, combined with the idea of embodied knowledge could be an interesting next step to take, in further understanding the idea of intuition.

What scholars can learn from artists: research without the focus on a final product
This research can be valued at a more general level of academia as well. The value of this research on the current view on research is twofold, yet still interconnected. First of all, one academic goal of this research has been to show the value of shifting from a positivistic research paradigm towards a more performative research paradigm. By investigating the concept of creativity, which has been analyzed mostly from psychological perspective, from a new materialist perspective instead, I showed the added value of integrating performative research as part of shaping our knowledge and understanding of creativity (Douglas & Carless, 2013, p. 54). For a long time, research has been conducted within disciplines. If we think in the disciplinary and the associated epistemology, we think in a limiting transcendent way and thus within the limits of a certain paradigm (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). Scholars could be reproducing research and thinking within a certain research production paradigm as well. This will lead to new journals, articles and books, but it will not necessarily lead to new knowledge about the world. Also, the academic sphere today can be seen as a capitalist paradigm; via the pressure to publish articles, a focus on final products in the form of publications has emerged as well. The pressure to publish has even been held accountable for a decrease in creativity and innovation in research (Miller, Taylor & Bedeian, 2011, pp. 436-440). The research creation processes can thus be viewed as focused on final products as well. Here comes in the second value of this research for academics. New materialist theorizing opens up a new space for research. By moving away from a dualist worldview and the dichotomies that this view engenders, the separation of academic disciplines decreases (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010, pp. 162-163). This opens up a space for intra-active knowledge creation processes. More specifically, this research paints a picture of a certain attitude of the artists that work without a final product in mind. If academics adopt this attitude in research creation, it can lead to knowledge that we could not have thought of beforehand. It would be interesting to see what would happen if scholars started taking an intra-active approach to research, and thus allowed themselves to work without a clear epistemology, without a certain paradigm and thus without a clear final product in mind. This could lead to generating new knowledge about the world, which just as with creation processes, we could not have thought of beforehand. In that sense, the academic world can learn both from artists and their creation processes as well as a new

materialist approach towards methodology and epistemology. The relevance for organizational context of this research can and should therefore be adopted in an academic context as well.

Reflections on Deleuzian and Baradian perspectives

Talking back to Deleuze: the characteristics of the virtual

When looking at the group of artists that work without the focus on a final product, I showed how creative behaviors and characteristics are shaped without the focus on a final product. These characteristics and behaviors can be interpreted as the terms of actualization of the virtual world as described by Deleuze (in Jeanes, 2006). These terms are: working without a final product in mind, approaching matter as if it is granted agency so that the hierarchy between artist and matter decreases (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994) and allowing for the matter to influence the intra-active becoming, as a result (Barad, 2003). For these particular artists in these particular contexts in which I observed and spoke to them, these characteristics seemed helpful to define in order to label what they defined as intuition. These characteristics can be understood as terms for creation in the virtual world and thus assist in moving away from transcendent modes of thinking (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). For these artists, this helps to create something that has never been seen, heard (Toulouse, 2018), or even thought before. This research and the context-dependable knowledge that it has generated, has given a description of the terms of actualization of the virtual world. These terms could be taken into account by organizations that want to re-think creation processes and who want to get started with creating an environment in which employees can think in the virtual and thus in a 'truly' creative sense.

Talking back to Barad: intra-active creation

In the light of intra-action, this research has given a more in-depth understanding of the process of an intra-active becoming of different bodies of matter, which results in the becoming of a new body of matter. Intra-action has mainly been used to explain the agential becoming of matter. It has not been used to understand the *becoming into existence* of a 'separate' new body of matter (*it* / artwork) *due to* the intra-action of two other bodies of matter (artist and matter). I interpret intra-action in this study therefore not only as an agential matter but also a matter of the *becoming in existence* of a new body of matter. Intra-action has helped a great deal in order to understand the becoming of an artwork. In this particular research paper, it has given a theoretical definition that helps conceptualize and describe the feeling of magic that occurs as part of a creation process. Though it has given a theoretical, philosophical and conceptual understanding of the becoming of *it,* intra-action has not given a practical or specific understanding of this process.

I think it would be interesting to start looking at this becoming of a new body of matter through the idea of variations of matter-energy flows (Braidotti, 2002, p. 63). The metaphor of mixing (primary) colors is helpful in this sense. When material and artist become together and form the *it* due to their intra-action, what happens is comparable with mixing primary colors. When primary colors are mixed, you start with two bodies of matter; yellow and blue that are perceived differently. When these two different bodies of matter are mixed together, the yellow and the blue *morph* into a new color, green, and we cannot perceive the yellow and the blue color separately anymore. The particles of the bodies of matter become together and thus there is some kind of flow between these bodies of matter. The flow has been described by the artists themselves in this research paper as well. There has not been much theory generated regarding this idea yet, but I believe that understanding the becoming of a new body of matter in terms of energy *flows* between bodies of matter (the artist and the matter that is used to create an artwork), can expand the concept of a creative flow which has been described as the becoming

of a new body of matter, and can additionally help in gaining yet a deeper understanding of this process.

Integrating Deleuze's virtual world and Barad's intra-active becoming

In organizations, there has been a general tendency towards homogenizing creativity by thinking within a capitalist paradigm. This research has drawn on new materialist theory to interpret creation processes outside of a capitalist paradigm. In the following section, I summarize my understanding of the Baradian intra-active becoming of the *it* and integrate it with the Deleuzian idea of thinking in the virtual. The value of this study and specifically this integration is described for organizations who want to re-think creation processes. I suggest lastly, how this environment can always redefine itself and how this environment always needs to be attentive of this redefinition.

The artists who work without a final product in mind and thus with a focus on the creation process, experience a, what I call, intra-active creation process. The artists in the first group, approach the creation process in a way that can be understood through new materialist theory and the approach to matter. The matter is granted agency in the creation process, and is not perceived as a passive entity, awaiting human signification (Barad, 2003). There is no existing hierarchy between matter and artist, artist and matter are in an immanence system of thought (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). Matter has influence on both the artist as well as the *it* that is created through intra-action with matter and artist. The intra-active creation process can be addressed as, and is experienced by the artists, as an adventure. The *it* does not pre-exist the intra-action of artist and matter. The artist and matter search for *it* together. Intra-active creation processes start with two bodies of matter, namely the artist and the matter. Thereafter an intra-action between artist and matter takes place. This intra-action can be stimulated by 'just' starting to work; sketching leads to the creation of material, and by working with actual physical matter, the artists get in touch with matter which makes it easier to literally getting in touch with *it*. The *it* that becomes from this intra-action between artist and the matter / material, is a new agential matter. This body of matter exists due to both the artist as well as the matter; the artist and matter intra-act which leads to the becoming of *it*. This is described as a very pleasant experience. If an artist fixates the final product, the specific intra-action and thus that specific pleasant experience is ending as well. It seems hard to 'let go' for the artists. The artists showed a tendency towards postponing the fixation. When one is fixating an artwork, boundaries between matter and artist are defined and the artists need to distance themselves from the new body of matter. The desire to postpone fixation of a final product allows for endless becomings and intra-actions of artist and matter. The *it* that is created, does not pre-exist the intra-action between matter and artist. Intra-active creation is therefore the process of something new – something previously unknown – becoming from the virtual world into the actual world (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). This approach to creation processes gives freedom to the intra-action that can possibly take place; artist and material intra-act and *become* together.

One way to move past the capitalist paradigm within organizations that use creativity as a tool, is to think in the virtual as described by Deleuze (in Jeanes, 2006). The terms that I identified and described in the above, for thinking in the virtual world, can be taken into account by organizations in order to enhance creation. However, I have to note that organizations must always stay attentive to the risk of generalizing. These 'terms' should never be used as a generalized tool to produce creativity, because then thinking in the virtual becomes pre-formed. The terms of actualization of the virtual then lead to thinking within a certain paradigm again (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006) – this would make organizations fall back into following a strict paradigm as a part of their approach to creativity. The fine line between thinking in the virtual

and thinking in the actual world needs to be considered. One way of overcoming this paradox in organizations, is by learning from how artists let themselves and their behavior be defined by every intra-active becoming in a creation process. Artists do have certain (creative) behaviors and working methods in the process of creating something, though they always stay open to the intra-active creation. They are constantly re-considering their creative action and are thus not creating in the actual world within a paradigm that limits them in their creation. The attempt to act differently in every creative process and constantly redefine themselves as artists is therefore present.

The process of creation that has been described in this research goes hand in hand with a certain mindset that needs to be (re)defined as part of every creation process and therefore is, in a way, always endlessly becoming. Being attentive of this mindset and the approach towards creation that goes hand in hand with it, can keep a creation process open. Adopting this mindset can help to move from the capitalist narrative of creativity towards a narrative in which creation is honored for its other advantages regarding for instance employee satisfaction in the workplace. Eventually, this could potentially lead to concepts that one could have never thought of beforehand.

Limitations

In this research, several choices were made and several choices could have been made differently.

Video footage

The first thing that I would have done differently is the videotaping of the artists. The goal of videotaping the conversations was to gather non-verbal communication as well as verbal communication, with the underlying goal to gather information on how artists behave during a creation process. Though the videos were informative during the data processing and creating the findings section of this research[3], I did not meet the goal of capturing the behavior of artists in their creation processes because the first meetings were mainly verbal instead of non-verbal and behavioral. Since I did not plan the second meeting ahead of the research, I started with the videotaping in the first meeting with the artists. This made them vulnerable. In at least one case, this has had an effect on the conversation that was held. The artist was worried about what would happen with the footage and only gave consent to me using the videotaping if s/he was allowed to check the footage first. This artist explicitly talked about the uncomfortable feeling with the videotaping. I assume that there could be others that felt uncomfortable with the videotaping as well. This could have affected the relationship between artist and researcher, for instance on the trust between the two. It thereby had an effect on the data that was gathered, and in the conversation with this particular artist I was not able to get into an in-depth conversation. It could have also affected the data gathering in the other conversations as well. It would have been more fruitful for this research to videotape the second meetings with the artists. First of all, in the second meetings, I observed the artists working with matter. If these meetings were videotaped, I would have been able to gather information on how artists and matter intra-act and behave during a creation process, which eventually turned out to be the goal with the videotapes. Thereby, the foundation of trust would have already been built in the first conversations and thus the intrusive effect of the camera on the relationship between artist and researcher would not have been present. In hindsight, videotaping the first conversations did not lead to the desired outcomes and has had a limiting effect on the data-gathering process.

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[3] For a detailed description of the use of the video footage, see the methodological reflections in Appendix

Creation as an intra-action with human / matter

In this study, I focused on humans and matter and the intra-active becoming of an *it*. The focus on matter and artist, and thus moving away from our current scientific paradigm, has led to an understanding of creation that moves away from the anthropocentric view on the world. The findings have shown that understanding our world without an anthropocentric view can have implications regarding our knowledge of the world. Foucault draws a very thorough picture in his recently published accompanying dissertation Introduction to Kant's Anthropology on how anthropocentrism has impacted our thinking and how it has distorted our vision on the world and our strategies of studying and thus understanding the world (Foucault, in Dolphijn & Van der Tuin, 2012). Although I attempted to understand creation in a bigger, non-Cartesian, perspective, I still have mainly focused on humans and the intra-action with matter. To move away from this this anthropocentric understanding of the world, and thus moving away from the idea that creativity is a psychological and human trait, I think it would be extremely interesting to start looking at nature and her power to create. This way, we can move even further away from our anthropocentric understanding of the world. It would be interesting to look at creativity, what has been understood so long as a human trait, from a biological perspective. Moving away from the disciplinary and into the meta-disciplinary (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010) by combining our understanding of creation and the knowledge that has already been gathered on the creative power of nature in the discipline of biology, has the potential to teach us a lot about creation for both humans as well as non-humans[4].

I can dedicate many more words to the things I could have done differently, but I also want to point out that those mistakes became part of this study (for a more detailed description see the methodological reflections in the Appendix). The contextual understanding of creation that occurred as a result of these mistakes, comes closer to my experiences as a child, where I felt that I was becoming one with something bigger than solely myself, from playing Händel on my recorder to dancing to classical music and losing my mind in the process. The magic that has been described and experienced by many artists and others while being in contact with the creative powers of nature has a place in this understanding of creation. Since this understanding is dependable on the context in which I have created it, I want to invite you, as a reader, to be critical of what you have read and invite you to drop your thoughts (jantejoske@gmail.com) and thus give this study the chance to become endless as well.

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[4] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEejivHRIbE This video of the becoming of a salamander is for instance showcasing true magic to me and combining our current disciplinary knowledge on creation could give even better insight into creation.

how does it feel
to completely expose oneself
take away your shell
open your skin, open your shell
take away your skin
expose oneself to
matter in all its forms

give up on your needs, desires, will
letting all of you
slip through
your hands

to open space in *those* hands
for (what) matter(s)
matters in many endless forms
matters as you
me,
us,
all

completely receptive to everything

The poem that 'closes' this research, is a poem that I wrote during the final stage of the creation process of this paper. Generally, I describe the monist perspective that gave me an alternative world perspective and an alternative for dualism. The poem touches upon several themes that are related to this research. I tried to capture the magnificent stories of the artists that I spoke to. It incorporates experience of a process, being open within the intra-action, leave your personal desires to be able to create *it*, the idea of the importance of working with physical matter, and it touches upon the notion that intra-active creative processes enhance creative freedom by being receptive to *it*, without a pre-existing idea (or final product) of *it* and therefore can lead to more authenticity.

Lastly, I hope one reads through the several (other) meanings of this poem when reading it with and without brackets. This way, I showcase that the interpretation of *it* relies on the intra-active becoming of writer, reader and discursive practices (Barad, 2003).

Appendix: Methodologic reflections

In this chapter, I describe the choices I made in the research, why these were made and how they influenced the research. The goal of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the research strategy and to be transparent regarding how the data is collected and processed, so that one can value the study and thus can form an opinion on the value of the contextual knowledge that has been generated in this research paper (Barad, 2003; Tracy & Hinrichs, 2017). To this end, I first describe the general research strategy. Thereafter, I describe the data collection methods which I used. A description of the conduction of the analysis, of every artist and the meetings which we have had follows. Additionally, I describe the data processing of this research and the methods that have been used during this process. Then, I point out the qualitative quality criteria which I used for this research. I describe how I aimed to meet these criteria. Finally, the chapter provides a reflective account of the researcher.

General research strategy

The new materialist movement has challenged me to look for ways of doing research outside the dominant paradigm. I took this freedom and adopted an attitude and mindset towards knowledge gathering which matches an iterative approach to research, and also gives freedom to explore, as wayfaring. Wayfaring is a way of approaching the world around you as described by Ingold in the book "Lines". A brief history" (2007). The wayfarer is continually on the move; the wayfarer *is* movement. We gather knowledge of the world around us while *moving* through the world. The wayfarer literally knows as he goes along a line of travel (pp. 87-89). Knowledge is thus always context-dependable. The wayfarer, the route and the context define the knowledge that is gathered, for there is no such thing as 'the' truth. Wayfinding therefore matches the concept of the intra-active becoming of a relationship of researcher, apparatus and researched (Barad, 2003).

More specifically, this study can be viewed as iterative. In this study, there is an ongoing interplay between collection and analysis of data. Analysis starts after data collection, which then shapes the next steps in data collection (Bryman, 2016, p. 566). This way, the material (data) is granted agency in the process of the production of knowledge of the analysis (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, Barad, 2003) and thus shapes the design and process of it. I performed two phases of data-gathering. In phase 1, I worked in an inductive manner. I gathered data before reading literature and thus before a research question was generated. Hereafter, I turned to literature and did theoretical reflections on the data. These reflections led to the choice to collect more data by returning to the artists I already spoke to in order to get more in-depth information on the creation processes to build upon the ideas that emerged in phase 1 (Bryman, 2016, p. 26). Returning to the artists had the advantage for the participant and the researcher. The already established relationship with a foundation of trust, offered the opportunity for deeper understanding of creation. The theoretical framework was formed after the first phase of data-gathering and processing, and simultaneously during the second meetings. I chose this strategy because I wanted to guarantee openness of the researcher towards the subject. This strategy challenges the current body of literature about creative process in the sense that I start from as little pre-knowledge as possible to make sure that I am not conducting this study while thinking within the dominant paradigms (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006, pp. 128-129). Having adopted the attitude, mindset and strategy, as described in the above-mentioned paragraph, have contributed to my continues attempts to move away from the hierarchy between mind and matter, to give the data a role in the intra-active becoming of this knowledge during the data processing, analysis and writing of the findings section.

Data collection

I used several data collection methods in this research. The methods that I chose, have contributed to equalizing the traditional hierarchical differences between researcher and participant. Due to the vulnerable character of the subject (Muhr, 2010), I considered an equal basis in this study as a necessary condition for the data collection. I therefore addressed the artists that participated in the study as co-researchers instead of participants (Coghlan & Brannick, 2019, p. 17) and the artists had ownership of the first meeting via photo-elicitation and the second meeting via co-creation.

Qualitative unstructured in-depth interviews

All conversations in phase 1 and meetings in phase two of this research are based on qualitative unstructured in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews with artists have been contributing to a better understanding of creative processes (Mace and Ward, 2002). The artist was able to suggest themes during the conversation, which allowed for ownership of the conversations and broader and different insights in themes since the information was not based on the topic-list of the researcher (Copes, Tcoula, Brookman, & Ragland, 2018, p. 477) and the interviews were unstructured.

Photo-elicitation

It has been difficult for the artists to explain the creative process in words (Policastro, 1995, p. 100). Therefore, I used an arts-based research practices as a supportive tool during the conversations in phase 1. Participant-driven photo-elicitation (PEI) is a qualitative research technique by which a researcher can inquire information via photographs. The pictures guide the conversation between participant and researcher. Participant-driven PEI is mainly used for inductive purposes and therefore matched this study. Pictures also gave the opportunity to 'materialize' the experience of the creative processes, since the process is hardly representable in words. Personal photographs allowed for the ability to put forth reactions, emotions, memories, associations etc. that just words cannot (Copes et al., p. 476).

Co-created meetings

The meetings in phase 2 were unstructured observations except for two, which were unstructured interviews. I invited the artists to co-create the meetings. Co-creating the second meeting could give diverse and different information on their process then when I would design the second meeting alone. After all, the artists themselves are experts on their own creative processes (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014, p. 17). The goal was to record and observe as much behavior as possible and develop a narrative account of the behavior (Bryman, 2016, p. 273). Generally, the meetings can be divided in three categories: observation (1), both observation and conversation (4) and solely conversation (1). The data gathered in the second category was of great value, because I was able to observe artists while working with matter / material and subsequently talk about these actions. The verbal communication was enriched with the non-verbal data and vice versa, which gave me a better understanding of the creative processes. All the meetings during phase 2 were diverse and dynamic.

Conducting the research

Phase 1 of the study was conducted in May and June 2019. The sampling in the researched field can be viewed as snowball sampling (Bryman, 2016, p. 425). I started with contacting two artists in my social environment. Afterwards, they introduced me to several other artists, and so forth. Prior to the conversations, I introduced the artists to participant-driven PEI. I asked to take three pictures with them that have something to do with their creative process and their

experience with it. This led to confusion, perhaps because the assignment was broad and unstructured. I had to explain several times that all pictures are appropriate, as long as the pictures had something to do with their creation process. For the two photographers, the assignment needed more explanation because they interpret 'take pictures' as if they had to take artistic pictures. One artist did not want to take the pictures, though they did do the assignment. The artist did explicitly communicate the non-amusement with the homework, which led to tension at the beginning of the conversation. One artist took many more pictures than just three.

The conversations took place in either people's homes, café's, ateliers or other work spaces. The conversations varied from 45 to 90 minutes. Every conversation started with a consent question, because I wanted to videotape the conversations. The goal of videotaping the conversations was to capture non-verbal communication as well as verbal communication. This way, I would be able to gather emotional and behavioral information during the interviews (Nassauer & Legewie, p. 9). Also, the combination of video footage with interviews or other data can strengthen insights on a subject (Nassauer & Legewie, p. 26). Something that needs to be considered in the light of the vulnerable character of the subject is the effect of the camera during the conversations. Filming people makes them vulnerable. The camera had effects on artists, some were reactive towards the camera and therefore conscious of the camera. Reactivity decreased as the conversations progressed (Nassauer & Legewie, p. 24); some artists acted more natural during the conversation than others. One artist seemed to feel quite uncomfortable with the videotaping. The answer to the consent question was that the videotaping was okay, provided that I would send the footage after the meeting because the artist wanted to check whether they looked "stupid" on tape. After the conversation, the artist insistently reminded me about this agreement. In retrospect, it would have been better for both the goal of the video footage (namely capturing non-verbal communication) as well as for the relationship researcher – artist, if the second meetings instead of the first meetings were videotaped.

After consent was given, the conversations started. Some artists printed their pictures, others did not. I did not give explicit instructions about this. The pictures were discussed, any theme that came along was talked about; the story of the artist was leading the conversation. After several conversations, I started to focus on returning topics, though I stayed attentive of the unstructured character of the conversations. After the conversations, I wrote notes on the conversations. One theme which returned in these notes, was the difference between artists who talked about their final products, and artists who talked about the process and what the process meant for them. I noted that after the conversations with the artists who talked about their final products, I felt less satisfied with the information gathered. These notes gave directions to the story I wanted to tell (Marshall, 2008).

Phase 2 of the study was conducted between September and November 2019. After phase 1, I decided that I wanted to return to the artist which I already spoke to in phase 1. Since I did not plan this ahead, the artists had to be willing to invest more time in the study. All artists were enthusiastic and willing to participate again. I asked the artists if they could think of a technique, that could help them to dig deeper into their creative processes. As the question was a bit vague (as I learned from phase 1), I gave examples of options such as an activity (development of pictures in the dark room or a theater rehearsal, which can be seen as participating observation (Bryman, 2016, p. 442)) or a different approach towards the meeting such as taking a walk together (Kinney, 2017). The artists quickly came up with ideas for the meetings. Due to logistic reasons, I did not return to one artist. The meetings varied from 60 minutes up to three hours.

In the following section, I give a description of the artists and the meetings. I describe the conversations of the first phase. Thereafter, the second meetings are described more in-depth due to the differences of the meetings in phase two. I describe what happened during the meetings, the characteristics and the date of the meetings. I incorporate the locations of these meetings because due to the vulnerable character of the topic, and the entanglement of creation processes and matter (and thus space), I considered location important for the setting of the meetings. These descriptions add to the transparency of this research (Tracy & Hinrichs, 2017).

Lou

Lou is a painter who focusses on portraits on assignment and paints free works such as still lives. Before painting, she had a different career but she started studying portrait painting around the age of 40. Due to logistic difficulties, we only met once in her atelier.

Studio Figoer: Jonas and Pippa

Studio Figoer consists of Jonas and Pippa. They create theater performances for children. Two art forms are often used in their theater performances, namely puppets and live video. Jonas is director and studied theater design. The conversation I had with him was at home, in the atelier of his partner Pippa. Pippa is a puppeteer, puppet-creator and assistant-director who also studied theater design. The first meeting was in her atelier. For the second meeting, I was invited by Studio Figoer to join the making-process of a pitch for funding for a new theater performance in their atelier / rehearsal studio. I was able to observe them in contact with their material. Willem (who is also part of this research) was present as well. The moment I got into the atelier, all three were working on their individual parts of the pitch. After some time, everyone went into the rehearsal room to integrate all the parts towards a pitch. They rehearsed several scenes during the meeting. I for instance observed Pippa and Willem while playing with the puppet and Willem randomly making new music (non-participating observer with interaction (Bryman, 2016, p. 444), 04/09/2019).

Faith

Faith is a photographer who nearly only uses analogue photography techniques. For the conversation, I met Faith at the HKU (local art school of Utrecht). For the second meeting, I met Faith at the HKU again. We talked about creative processes and her (bodily) experience with it. Afterwards, we went into the dark room together. During our time there, I was able to observe how Faith worked with material and behaved in general with the material; how she touched the photo paper, how she moved in the dark room, how she managed all the very specific proceedings in the dark room. I also developed one of the pictures (participating observer (Bryman, 2016, p. 442), 09/09/2019).

Willem

Willem is a composer who graduated from Musician 3.0, a multidisciplinary music education which trains students to be music performance artists. His main composing style is 'applied music', for instance in theater performances. For the conversation, we met at his home / workspace. The second meeting with Willem was at his work space at home again. I was invited to join a day composing music. When I arrived, Willem told me that he had gotten into a "crazy flow state" and already finished all the composing, therefore he only had editorial work left. I was able to observe him in

contact with his material. Willem was constantly recording new sounds, he was using all kinds of random utensils (like pepper and salt grinders) to produce these sounds and he was consulting me and embracing me in the process. At some point, we got into a flow state together and time passed by (participating observer (Bryman, 2016, p. 442), 13/09/2019).

Thomas

Thomas is a photographer who prefers to use analogue photography. The first meeting was at the HKU where Thomas works, in a random office. During the second meeting at the HKU in his office, I was able to observe him in contact with his material. Thomas printed up to 60 pictures of a project which he was working on and took two photography books which inspired him for the project. This was the first time that Thomas saw the pictures, and he did not know exactly what the project was about yet. We shuffled through the pictures together and naturally, it started to occur what the project was about. During this meeting, I was able to see what happened when one was giving words to a project. I also saw Thomas in contact with his material, how he touched the pictures, how he talked to the pictures, what the pictures did to him (participating observer (Bryman, 2016, p. 442), 28/10/2019).

Manuel

Manuel is a scenic designer and installation artist who studied interactive performance design. The first meeting took place in a café of his choice. The second meeting was held in his new atelier. We looked through pictures and videos of art projects he did. The second meeting with Manuel was supposed to be in the local art school, because he was mostly working there with materials. Though, last minute (approximately 30 minutes before meeting) he changed the location to his new atelier. I found out when meeting him that the atelier was completely empty and therefore I was not able to observe him while working with matter / material. He thus showed footage of a lot of different projects on his computer and we talked about these projects (unstructured interview (Bryman, 2016, p. 471), 11/10/2019).

Amarilis

Amarilis is an assistant director of a theater company. The conversation took place in an open space in the building where the company is situated. For the second meeting, I went to an introduction speech by Amarilis about a theater performance ("VAL", Dutch for fall) and we talked about this speech in the second meeting in her work space. Due to a premiere, she was not able to invite me to a rehearsal or some other meeting where I was able to observe her working with material. We therefore talked about her creative processes again, though at some point, we were dancing together. It was a dynamic conversation (unstructured interview (Bryman, 2016, p. 471), 07/10/2019).

Isaac

Isaac is a musician who also graduated from Musician 3.0. His music is a combination of dissimilar music genres; he combines punk with classical music. The first meeting took place at the university library. During the second meeting in his new studio space, Isaac had several audio recordings of two songs which were created during an 'intuitive' creative process. We listened to the different versions of the songs, and analyzed the creative process of the song. Isaac played on his piano as well. Also, since the meeting was much later than the other meetings, I was able to discuss several themes of the study

with Isaac (participating observer (Bryman, 2016, p. 442) and unstructured interview, 24/11/2019).

Data processing

In the course of data processing in this research, I strived to find a method of data processing that honors the data as well as the new materialist approach. I stayed attentive of transcendent thinking, by thinking through zigzagging networks of differences that move beyond dichotomies (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, pp. 276–277). Such a process requires a different kind of thinking, using our bodily faculties and our imaginary (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 173-174). I zigzagged between diffractive and reflective analysis of the data. Reflective analysis is characterized by critical reflections of the data with a focus on sameness through normative reading strategies such as coding. Diffractive analysis focuses on differences and unpredictable outcomes (Lupton, 2019, p. 2001) and honors the intra-active becoming of data-collection and processing (Taguchi, 2012). By zigzagging between both ways of analysis, I attempted to give meaning to the data that occurred during this research while continuously staying attentive of my own body and its knowledge and the data as material (Barad, 2003; MacLure, 2010; Taguchi, 2012; Lupton, 2019).

Phase 1

Transcribing and diffracting

I transcribed 9 videotaped conversations varying from 45 to 90 minutes. All conversations were held in Dutch. Consequently, the citations in the findings section of this thesis are therefore translations of the Dutch transcripts. During the transcription process, I simultaneously looked at and listened to the video footage while writing the transcripts. During the transcribing process, I started to explore the data in a diffractive way. Parts of the conversations spoke to me as a person. I naturally started to focus on what these parts 'did' to me, instead of what they 'meant' (Taguchi, 2012; Lupton, 2019). I recognized these moments mostly due to a response in my body. I had a certain feeling in my stomach. I would feel an emotional response during the transcribing process, the data generated an affective resonance in me (MacLure, 2010). For a detailed reflection of these moments, see p. 63). I started adding time indications in the transcripts to mark these significant moments.

Coding

When a transcript was finished, I printed the transcript (I recognize myself in the creative behavior of working with physical material). I started reading the transcripts, highlighted parts of the transcripts and took notes about what I found notable and why. Themes which are often discussed, are identified by carefully reading the transcripts. This can be considered open coding (Bryman, 2016, p. 569). Thereafter, I started axial coding. The notes that I took during open coding were the foundation for the axial coding phase. I used concept mapping to structure the themes and connect them to categories and to discover the connections within the topics and theme's (Yin, Ruiz-Primo, Ayala & Shavelson, 2005, p. 170). The themes, categories, and codes were digitalized in qualitative data analysis software NVivo. After axial coding, I started selective coding. I selected the core category of this study, namely what the artist constructs as intuitive creative processes. By re-reading the notes and transcripts and capturing my thoughts and themes in concept maps (Yin et al., 2005), I investigated how categories were related to the core category of creation processes without a final product (Bryman, 2016, p. 569). In the table below, the coding of phase 1 and phase 2 is listed.

Phase 2

Observing and noting

I processed the second meetings based on recordings and full field notes written during and shortly after the observations (Bryman, 2016, p. 444). I transcribed the recordings of the meetings and thickened the reports with the full field notes. The reports were written based on my observations which should be considered as my experience of the meetings.

Coding

The reports were coded in qualitative data analysis software NVivo. During the data processing of phase 2, I used the core category and codes which were generated from the first phase. The coding process was of selective and reflective nature (Bryman, 2016, p. 569; Lupton, 2019, p. 2001). An integrated table of phase 1 and 2 of the coding process is listed in the below. The added value of phase 2 becomes clear due to the observation of certain behaviors and attitudes within the intra-active creation process.

Quotes	Codes	Category	Theme
I really need to have all my jars on my desk with all sorts of things in them, and a little this and a little that and a little bit here and a little bit there. Even though I'm not going to use that at that time, I know that I have it all and I can use it.	Working with physical matter Sketching	"Just" making material	Creative behavior
Willem says that he thinks editing the music is a silly job, because he is 'just' putting the recorded fragments into the right place. When observing him during the editing process, I do not agree with his idea of what editing is, because he is not 'just' putting the recorded fragments into place, he is constantly recording new sounds, using new instruments, using new utensils which can create a certain sound such as a pepper and salt grinder. Thereby, by saying he is 'just' putting the fragments in the right place, it sounds like he already knows what the right place is for the fragment before starting the process. This is not the case, if he had a particular plan for the fixation of the material, he would have been done faster with the editing, and he would not record new sounds. It took him more than three hours, several phone calls to his parents that he would be home later "because this really needs to be done!"	Postponing fixation observed	Postponing fixation	Creative behavior
The moment you have no idea where you want to go, you can go in all directions. [...] If you work on intuition without having thought in advance where you could end up, then suddenly you turn out to be able to end up in a lot more places then you could ever have thought off. You can get much further than your head can think.	Creative freedom Intuition No ratio	Working without an idea in mind	Characteristics of the process
This is a picture that I have saved for my décor, somehow this linked to the color, the shapes, the textures, the atmosphere of the performance [...] I will just try it out during the rehearsal with the players and then, eventually it *forms itself.*	Attributing active properties to matter	Matter is addressed as having agency	Characteristics of the process
Willem talks to his sound fragments: *"You have to go over here", "You have to go a little more towards here", "You need to be louder", "Where are you?"*	Talking to material observed	Matter is addressed as having agency	Characteristics of the process

Table 1: Codes, categories and themes.

Diffractive re-reading

After coding the reports, I started writing my findings section. At this point, I turned back to diffractive readings of the data. I re-read both the transcripts of phase 1 and the reports of phase 2 with an 'open' mind and with respect to the material. The connections between the core category and the other themes, categories and codes (Bryman, 2016) were revised and reconsidered through concept mapping (Yin et al., 2005, p. 170). Many of the significant fragments that I highlighted in phase 1, ended up in the findings and were leading me in my understanding of what this study was about (MacLure, 2010, p. 282). The entanglement of the researcher, the material and the process towards this study (Barad, 2003), were thus of essential importance during this stage of the data processing.

Qualitative Quality

What has become clear, is that the knowledge that I generate through this study is dependable on the intra-action between researcher, apparatus and researched (Barad, 2003). The classic positivistic quality norms for research are thus not applicable to this study. Though, I am still concerned with the quality of this study, by using eight quality values (Tracy & Hinrichs, 2007). A worthy topic (1) is described as a topic that is relevant, by for instance challenging taken for granted assumptions in theory and methodology in the established research paradigm (Tracy & Hinrichs, 2017, pp. 2-4). Rigor (2) is demonstrated in the methodology by being transparent about data collection and analysis by disclosing details about interviews and descriptions of data processing (pp. 4-5). Sincerity (3) is achieved through self-reflexivity, honesty, transparency and being vulnerable as a researcher (p. 5). Qualitative researchers attain credibility (4) through the use of thick descriptions and reflection during the data-analysis process (crystallization) (pp. 6-7). Resonance (5) can be described as the impact that the paper has on the audience. The text is designed in such a way that readers can connect the findings to their own life and research (p. 7). Significant contribution (6) is two-fold; a study should significantly contribute to the theory that is available about a subject and methodological contribution can be met by examining a subject qualitatively which has mainly been researched quantitatively or experimentally (p. 8). Ethical considerations in qualitative research (7) are guaranteeing anonymity of the participants and being aware of the potential impact of the research on the participants. Meaningful coherence (8) refers to overall consistency and rationality in the study (p. 9).

In the introduction and theoretical framework, I explained why the topic and the way of researching this topic are worthy (1). I attempted to move away from a positivistic paradigm in which creation has been understood towards a new understanding of creation (1, 2 and 6). In the findings section, I gave thick descriptions of the data (4) and added pictures to represent the data (5 and 8). The data are anonymized, I asked permission to print the pictures in the study and I tried to be considered towards the artists by being conscious of the vulnerable aspects of the subject for them personally and by being available for them after the data collection. I for instance stayed in contact with two artists (3 and 7). Meaningful coherence is aimed for by being consistent in the literature I presented and the research question and data that resulted from this. The discussion section is consistent with the literature and the findings (8). By explicating the train of thought which is the basis of my interpretation of creation processes, I showed sincerity and rationality (3 and 8). In the methodological section, I show transparency by being self-reflective (3) as a researcher and by giving thick descriptions of the data gathering and analysis process (2 and 4). In the reflections, which still follow in the below, I gave insight on my own experience with the topic and the creation process of this research, to show entanglement of researcher and researched (5). I tried to be consistent with the new materialist movement in several ways. While writing this paper, I was careful with the use of words, for

instance the difference between the assumptions underlying creativity and therefore using the word creation to avoid these assumptions. Also, I did my best to be ongoing aware of my own becoming(s) during, and entanglement with, this study. Lastly, a little piece of feminist activism, which aligns with the new materialist movement (Dolphijn & Van Der Tuin, 2010, p. 46), has been hiding in the references of this research, I aimed at an equal representation of female/male (first) authors: 27 out of 51 references are written by a female first writer. I am aware of the dichotomy of sexes based on names that I am using to differentiate between people, though I found it extremely important to be attentive of the representation of women in academics.

Presenting the data

How to (re)present the data and contextual knowledge of this study in a way that honors both the topic as well as the philosophical movement of new materialism? I considered arts-based practices as suitable in this thesis (Leavy, 2015). Several poems and stories arose during the process of creating this study. The new materialist theory has critiqued language and its power play in the becoming of the world (Barad, 2003), and thus I struggled with 'representing' the data via words, though I feel free and intuitive during writing thus I chose to include a story and a poem anyhow. The opening story of this research was written after the conceptual version of this paper and incorporates my own experiences which are in line with the interpretation of the experiences of the artists in this study. Also, I wrote several poems and included one of them in this study. It can be viewed as an interpretive poetry, with a merging of participants words as well as my perspective as researcher (Leavy, 2015, p. 82). I thereby used visual arts to represent the data (Leavy, 2015, pp. 233-239). I used several pictures of the artists in phase 1 and stills of ateliers of the videos to honor the matter / materials. Lastly, I used a visual art work of my own as the cover of my paper). It is a work that arose during an *intuitive* intra-active creation process (see reflectivity of the researcher in the below). All the cords, or lines, consist of the same matter (the same mixed green color and water to change the color and paper) though they all have different kinds of boundaries. I think this painting therefore honors this study in both the topic and the new materialist framework that I used.

Reflexivity of the researcher

Several aspects of me, as researcher and becoming artist, influenced the collecting / processing / of the data and the creating and presenting of the findings. It is important to note and to be aware of these factors as a researcher, because as a researcher, I am entangled in this study (Barad, 2003). Noting these aspects and reflecting on them, contributes to transparency and sincerity of me as researcher (Tracy & Hinrichs, 2017). In the following section, personal moments are described which took place during the process of the creation of this paper. These moments made me conscious of the influence that I, as a person, and as a researcher and artist in becoming, have on this investigation (Barad, 2003; Tracy & Hinrichs, 2017). The people who were not a part of this study, that I described in these moments such as classmates and teachers from art school, gave permission on me using our intra-action in these reflections.

Zigzagging between the old and the new paradigm

I am meeting my supervisor for the first time. I am excited, and also a bit nervous. I hear myself talk about the subject that I want to investigate: creativity. My supervisor asks me what kind of part of creativity I want to look into. I explain two options. I can dig into creativity in organizations and for instance to conduct a mixed methods research with surveys on creativity and personality traits. Differently, I am very intrigued by a certain magical feeling that I have experienced during a creative process. Luckily, my supervisor advises me to go for the second option.

Several months later, I am receiving feedback on a draft of my literature study from my supervisor. We discuss the comments during a meeting and I address the topic of positivistic writing. Several comments were reminders that I am still writing in a way that resembles my positivist education. She asks me if I am willing to break down my established paradigm during this research process and I can only say; yes!"

In this research process, a returning topic was my struggle with my prior education and research methods and my desire to break free from that paradigm. Many times, during the analysis, I was confronted with my positivist paradigm in ways that I could not have thought beforehand. Apparently, the established paradigm was rooted so deep into my academic skills, that even my use of words had to move away from positivism. After the feedback on this abovementioned draft, I asked my supervisor to point out any positivist tendencies because I experienced blind spots. This helped me to stay attentive of my (previous) paradigm. I zigzagged between my old and a new paradigm. The data processing part of this study accurately reflected this dance between paradigm. I chose to do both reflective and diffractive analysis. One would expect that in the light of this research, I would have only chosen diffractive analysis. Notwithstanding, I still had to make sense of all this. I needed some categories in some form thus I coded and categorized the data. In the end, I value this research as an integration of the best of both worlds.

A significant moment

I am transcribing the conversation with Pippa when she says: "You can do the cutting above a garbage bin, but ... You're just there, you're just in there [makes hand gesture which portrays extreme focus on the foam block] and if you are working on it, you are not concerned about your environment and that the environment should be neat during that moment". I stop typing. I am only looking at the video of Pippa, and how she moves her hands from her eyes to the table, mimicking a tunnel vision. I replay the part and look at it again. Wow.

In this fragment, I gracefully used the videotapes that I made during the first conversations with the artists. This specific fragment, and the way that I indicated this moment, is in line with many other key moments during the research. Pippa's body posture, mimic, intonation and use of voice changed. Whereas she first was focused on me and the conversation, she is now focused on her hand gesture. Her use of voice changed when saying 'in'. The sound of her voice changes towards a higher volume and she puts a lot of emphasize on 'in'. Also, her body posture changes, she uses a non-verbal gesture to image what she experiences during a moment of 'being in there'. Her facial expression changes from open to a more focused expression while making the gesture (Nassauer & Legewie, 2018, pp. 11-14). The changes in face and body combined with the change of voice and the emphasize on 'in' grabbed my attention. Thereby, I was guided by my bodily matter as knowing subject instead of just the mind (Braidotti, 2002, p. 63). Using bodily faculties during the process of constructing knowledge in research (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 173-174) helps to move away from the idea of our mind as the knowing subject. Therefore, I approach my bodily matter as knowing subject (Braidotti, 2002, p. 63). I felt a response in my body during this moment; during this moment, I had a certain feeling in my stomach; the same feeling as when I freefall in a rollercoaster. Also, during this moment, the data generated an affective resonance in me (MacLure, 2010). I felt very intrigued by this moment. During other moments, I felt excitement, happiness, amazement and surprised. Many of the moments, which I indicated this way, ended up in the findings section of this research paper. One needs to note that I felt *it* first, and afterwards I was able to analyze why these moments would resonate, based on nonverbal gestures and emotional responses.

Cloudy judgement

I am meeting Amarilis for the second time and we talk about creation processes. At some point, she says that the theater performance was "just emerging" and I caught myself saying "yes I know exactly what you mean but I can't explain it either". At this point I feel that my judgment is cloudy, because the point of this research is to understand that process happens prior to this 'just emerging' of an artwork the.

During the second phase of this research, I started art school. Therefore, I am educated to become my own researched group. Since I am becoming my own research group, I am in a sense 'going native' as described by Bryman (2016). Going native is when an ethnographic researcher starts to adopt the worldview of their researched group in such a manner that they 'forget' that they are researchers. Due to commitment and prolonged immersion in the research group, a researcher can go native. It becomes harder to collect and analyze data from a scientific angle (2016, p. 445). This description resembles my experience during this research process, though there are ways that I adopted to escape the negative effects of going native. It is important to remind oneself constantly of the goal during observations (Bryman, 2016, p. 445).

In-group love

I am meeting Studio Figoer for the second time. At the end of the meeting, Pippa, Willem and I are chit-chatting about my research and they ask what my plan is when I am done with my thesis. I answer that I will finish my year at the HKU first and think about the future later. Willem hesitantly asks me if I am currently in art school; yes, I am. Pippa looks at me and asks in a surprised manner: "Oh so you did the admission process and got in?!". My answer is yes again. Both Pippa and Willem start nodding approvingly and we keep on chit-chatting about creative processes and my own experience with it.

In the meetings in phase 2, I mentioned that I started at the local art academy. Many of the artists responded enthusiastic. It seemed to me that the attitude of the artists towards me changed when I mentioned this. The idea of me being one of them, could have benefited this research. During the research process, I became an art school student and therefore I proved myself to be worthy for the standards of artistic education. They can identify me as artist, which is their in-group (Dasgupta, 2004). This could have had beneficial effects on the relationship between researcher and artist; people tend to be more open and trustful towards their in-group. I experienced these benefits in several meetings in phase 2.

"Interview the material, have a conversation with *it*!"

During our last still-life drawing lesson, we are making blueprints for our final work. Our teacher built a still-life with a mounted pheasant and a mounted grebe, some vegetables and sticks and other random attributes. Everyone is quite blown away by the mounted animals and we talk about our inability to draw this still-life. Our teacher intervenes; "Look at it with different eyes, just talk to the material! What does it say back to you? Interview it, have a with it conversation! And get to know it! So that you can put its essence on your paper! And you need to turn your phone off, otherwise you won't get into the right mindset".

In addition to the conversations and meetings I had with nine artists, I had intensive contact with other members of the researched group from September on. Without any preexisting purposes for this research, I am becoming a (covert and overt) Full Member of my research group (Bryman, 2016, p. 441) and thus I was able to observe naturally occurring creative behavior (Toulouse, 2018; Piirto, 2018). Ethically, this put me in a difficult position. I

sometimes felt like an intruder but then again, I am also part of this group, without any research purposes. I was therefore always open about my research to my teachers and classmates. At some point, unintentionally, I started to look at my education and the people around me with researcher's eyes. I heard how they / we talk, how they / we work, how they / we experience creation processes. I also gained insights in what is important for specific artists to get into a certain creation mode or mindset. These insights have guided me to understand what conditions are important in the creation processes which I described, but also to experience the attitude of artists in the creation process.

Consulting between material and artist

"I'm so frustrated!!! I just got another round of critique from Tesse [our spatial design teacher] because I am executing an idea. At my previous study, I always had to work towards a product. I've finally managed to do that, and now I need to unlearn it again. Why isn't it just okay if I work towards a final product?". I hear my classmate raging and I almost feel her pain. I go up to her and try to comfort her. I explain what the added value of working without a final product in mind is. I hear myself say: "You just have to be open to what the material can give you, instead of looking at the material as something that can be molded into what you want it to be".

Two days later, the same classmate comes up to me and gives me a hug: "Thank you so much for the pep talk Jante, I'm now just randomly doing stuff and listening to the material. I feel so much freer in my process and I love it".

In this moment, I realize that it is possible to endorse creation processes based on an approach to matter that is in line with the Baradian view on matter (2003). Even though my classmate has already a certain foundation that favors creation, it seems that by stimulating and explaining her the ideas that I presented in this research, she was able to feel freer in her creation process. The terms of the virtual as described in the findings and discussion, helped her to work *in* the virtual (Deleuze, in Jeanes, 2006). I am eager to find out how these consulting practices between human and nonhuman matters can be applied in organizational context.

Flow

After a lesson where painting and dancing / moving are integrated towards one working method, I feel inspired and go into an atelier at school. I grab my tools, paint and paper and 'just' start making. I'm playing a song on repeat, getting into a certain vibe in my head. After painting one, follows painting two, and painting three follows as well. I mix my favorite type of blue (Prussian blue) with a bit of yellow and this amazing deep blue color becomes greener and greener, so beautiful. I'm taking the lesson which I learned today and start dancing, literally. I dance with my body and with my brush on the paper. The color is so beautiful, but I'm almost running out and mixing the color again will never lead to exactly the same color, so I keep on adding water so that the color stays the same but I don't run out. And I keep on dancing. And then it's done.

The results of this 'intuitive' creative process is the painting which became the front page of the research. I started to experience the intuitive creative processes myself, which the artists describe in the conversations. I am learning to let material guide me instead of working towards a final product, I 'just started' and suddenly something emerged. I experienced this flow-state, that the artists described as well. I completely disappeared into the process and time just passed. I experience what happens when the *it* does not pre-exist the intra-action (quite pleasant). This is only example of a personal experience in which I recognized the characteristics and creative behaviors that I described in the findings of this research. I used these experiences of the

creative process to reflect on creation processes as well as getting a more comprehensive understanding of it. This enriches the data and findings in the sense that I am able to look at the subject from a research point of view and also from an artist' point of view. I am able to understand the subject I am studying from the perspective of the researched group. Yet, I always aimed to stay attentive of the pitfall of looking for verification of my findings / beliefs by for instance diffractive (re-)readings of data (Lupton, 2019, p. 2001).

When researcher and artist become together: a parallel process

"I don't really know anymore, where I'm going". I am talking to one of my best mates from my masters. He reminds me of the advice I have given him when he was at this point in his research: just start free-writing, and just go. *And I went, I took the first Intercity. While on the train, I started writing in my notebook, or sketchbook, I just started writing.*

I started this process without a clear direction in which I was going, I did not have a clear idea of what my research would be about, *it* did not pre-exist the intra-active becoming of this research (Barad, 2003). Everything in between had to become during the process. There are so many parallels that can be drawn between my topic, the becoming of this research, my process and my development as researcher and artist. First, I literally have been wayfaring during the creation of this research. Also, I granted agency to my material, the material has guided me throughout this process. Thereby, I worked sketch-like by for instance free-writing (Marshall, 2008). The research became, due to the intra-action between me and the material, but I also became as researcher due to this intra-action. I challenged my established research paradigm. I did not adopt the working methods that were used before; just because it worked in a different context does not mean it will now. Even my notebook / sketchbook became one at a certain point. On an even deeper level, I am becoming my own research group (Bryman, 2016, p. 441). Lastly, I made changes until the very end, and I am still thinking of ways to postpone the fixation of this research.

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