

# To Research is to CREATE

## Conversation – Revision – Exploration – Authority – Thoughtful – Experiential

**Conversation:** Making art is an expression of new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations. By providing attribution to relevant previous research, you not only participate in the conversation, but help move it forward. Your work is a way for you to enter this on-going conversation and contribute to the discourse, or build on the work of others. It is important to recognize the contributions of other thinkers in order to contextualize your work and place it in relation to the larger context of art history, ideology, and social communities.

How can I apply this to my practice?

- Through multiple channels (in-person viewing, print materials, online), actively seek out artists working in media or conceptual themes similar to your ideas and work, both historic and contemporary.

**Discussion Question:** How does my work build on the work of others?

**Activity:** On another piece of paper, draw a map of artists, techniques, media, and themes that relate to your work in some way; once you do this, do some searching on these topics and see if you can find more/new information to add

**Revision:** Artists create, go through critique, research, and revise their work in order to develop images and formats that most accurately represent their vision. Similarly, information creation is a process that requires the mental flexibility to research, create, revise, and disseminate information. Just as the development of your work is an iterative process, so too is the research process as you will ask increasingly complex or new questions that lead you to different lines of inquiry.

How can I incorporate this into my practice?

- Recognize that your idea or work may begin initially as one thing, but may change through the critique process and further research.

**Discussion Question:** How do you exercise mental flexibility when creating new work or researching?

**Exploration:** Creative research is a non-linear process in which one identifies a need and seeks the best resource to meet that need. Like inspiration, quality information can often be found where it's least expected, through serendipitous means, and through a very intentional, strategic approach. It's important for one to cultivate mental flexibility in their learning process and art practice and observe how one informs the other. Considering a range of resources to begin any creative endeavor furthers the process of exploring, interpreting, and analyzing all types of relevant media which in turn will guide you through this iterative phase of learning.

How can I incorporate this into my practice?

- Develop a search strategy that will help you find the best type and quality of information that you are seeking.

**Discussion question:** Describe how you typically start research and then identify three ways you could change or improve your approach—what tools would help you?

**Authority:** Your work, be it visual or printed, formal or informal, reflects your expertise and credibility. While you are the authority on your own creative work, it is shaped by the context in which work is presented or used. Additionally, there are many different types of authority to acknowledge and grapple with, including professional experience, subject expertise, public office, and personal experience. When incorporating others' work, for inspiration or as a resource, it is important to critically consider and evaluate the authority of those creators and their contributions to your field or discipline.

How can I incorporate this into my practice?

- Know that information you incorporate into your work will reflect and inform, is not neutral, and gives credibility to your work.

**Discussion question:** Given the context of your work and that which you'd like to install it, who would you identify as an "authority" or voice that would help inform your work? Why?

How might their perspective bring an element of social activism to your work?

**Thoughtful:** Continually asking increasingly complex or new questions can inspire future lines of inquiry for creative work. To further enrich your work, strive to consider every possible solution and angle one can approach a creative project from (Design thinking). It is important to brainstorm ideas that are both possible and impossible, as well as challenge any of your own or others' assumptions or bias that may arise in this process. Self-reflection and the critical evaluation of ideas will help you synthesize what you have learned to deepen your understanding, interpret meaning in your work and others', and help you create informed artwork and design solutions.

How can I incorporate this into my practice?

- Identify assumptions, questions, different worldviews, and experiences as possible research inquiries.

**Discussion question:** What assumptions might you want to confront through researching and making this work? Are they your own or someone else's?

**Discussion question:** What critical questions are you trying to answer through your work?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

**Experiential:** Whether it be processing past experiences or exploring new avenues of inquiry, the work is an expression of one's own observations and understandings. While a "traditional" research process can lead to inspiration and focus, all of the materials experimentation, sketches, false starts, and iterations are a kind of tactile/haptic research and are an important part of the creation of a piece. These experiences are "affected by the cognitive, affective, and social dimensions" of the artist and it is their synthesis that produces the work.

How can I apply this to my work?

- Identify the cognitive, affective, and social dimensions at work when you are "making"

**Discussion question:** How is making a form of knowing for you?