

Public Abstract

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Title:Re-matriculation in the studio arts: What are the perceptions of mid-life non-traditional students in graduate fine arts?

A current phenomenon in higher education is the ever-expanding numbers of adults pursuing Post BA instruction. The present study considered the phenomenon of re-matriculation within the narrow framework of the studio arts, identifying threads of art-making interlaced with mid-life identity themes. The resulting collage of individual reflections on self and art sheds light on a shared essence of the human condition related to tapping into the aesthetic core in the adult years, a timeframe traditionally associated with application of skills rather than schooling. The contemporary issue raised here focused on several components, namely that these re-matriculating adults were still questing for a venue of self-expression and were interacting with a social frontier that among other things offered them a second opportunity to access institutions of higher learning with the purpose of exploring their creative gifts. From the rich tapestry of narratives came tales of self-reflection perhaps common to us all.