

This is an Accepted Manuscript of a book chapter published by Routledge in *Critical Articulations of Hope from the Margins of Arts Education* on 18 September 2018, available online: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351111195>.

## INTRODUCTION

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It could be argued that the globe has reached its highest intensity and turmoil of cultural and natural degradation, international and national conflicts, concerns and threats for the future ever experienced by human beings, communities, and eco-systems. Natural disasters, political crises, prolonged violent conflicts, global corporate greed, and the continuing disrespect for foundational human rights has left many communities impoverished, destroyed, and unsafe. This in turn leads to migration, environmental and economic impoverishment, an increase in hostile attitudes, and can intensify violent conflicts. While it is evident that poverty and child mortality have decreased globally due to vast international efforts and collaboration, the international community faces new and equally complex challenges at an unprecedented speed and diversity. These developments in turn demand renewed approaches for policy development worldwide. United Nations sustainable development goals (UNDP, 2015) depicts a roadmap for tackling these challenges by 2030. While this broad policy document fails to highlight the role of arts and culture in building better societies, many international arts education communities continue working with the Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education (UNESCO, 2010), a revised version of the UNESCO Road Map for Arts Education (UNESCO, 2006). These policy documents, however, are just a scaffolding tool for advocating arts and cultural education. For social change to take place determination, courage, and passion are needed, and this vigor must be channeled towards skilled and willful action.

This edited volume presents several cases of such undertakings from around the world. These cases are situated in underprivileged communities and contexts and thus, represent margins of arts education. The projects discussed in this book are created and conducted in remote locations, in exile, and other positions of displacement. The contributors of this collection are educators, researchers, and artists who have devoted their research and practice in exploring how to utilize arts education to work toward justice, equity, sustainability, and hope when communities or groups of people are faced with most challenging and arduous situations, including forced migration, territorial occupation, and exile, institutionalized confinement and discrimination, economic, ecological, and cultural oppression and marginalization, hatred, prejudice, and violence.

Together, the chapters depict how arts educators working in the margins with limited resources actualize projects that aim towards communal empathy, support, equality, sustainability, and a sense of hope through art. The intent of this book is not to share readily adoptable frameworks, best pedagogical practices, or patterns of successful community arts collaboration. Instead, the aim is to initiate and contribute to dialogues among artists, educators, scholars, and policy makers by making the invisible or marginal efforts to build social justice visible and to share how there is potential for change. Instead of presenting descriptive success stories, this volume depicts hardships, struggles, and failures, but also, and most significantly, celebrates the strength of individuals and communities who strive to make a difference and to work towards fair and just cultures and communities.

The editors and authors of this volume believe that participation in the arts is a basic human right and that diverse cultures and the arts are an integral aspect of healthy lives and sustainable societies. This book builds upon a tradition of arts education for social justice (Anderson, Gussak, Hallmark, Paul, 2010; Boal, 1979, 1992; Greene, 1978, 1995, 2017; Hanley, Sheppard, Noblit, & Barone, 2013; Marcuse, 1978; Quinn, Ploof & Hochtritt, 2011; Regelski & Gates, 2009; Shapiro, 2008; Stinson, 1998; Tavin & Ballengee-Morris, 2012). Arts education practices conceptualized this way are understood as a form of activism driven and guided by hope, love, passion, and search for freedom (hooks, 1994, 2003; Freire, 1970, 1996, 1998a, 1998b, Greene, 1998).

True to this orientation, the ultimate aim for this book has been to highlight the power of the arts in fostering dialogue, healing, and hope, as well as in establishing meaningful cultural and social engagements for individuals and communities. This introductory chapter, and the book as a whole, celebrates the work of artists and arts educators who fight for social justice and actualize projects that bring hope to distressed communities but seldom get recognized beyond the immediate contexts.

### **The story of the book**

Throughout our professional lives, we, the editors of this book, have been engaged in several arts education initiatives that aim to disclose discriminatory practices, to dismantle oppressive educational mindsets, and to disrupt the dominant cultural dialogue that prevents the materialization of true democracy, and finally to initiate policy changes at institutional and national level. As we

both are natives of Finland, our orientation has is rooted in the Nordic educational and societal values. For several years we have also been engaged with the international movements of critical pedagogy and social justice. As we became co-researchers within the broad arts education research initiative, ArtsEqual, we discussed how most publications focused on democratic and social justice education are edited and written by scholars from North America and United Kingdom (Dewhurst, 2014; Burnard, Mackinlay & Powell, 2016; Quinn & Hochtritt, 2011; Hanley, Sheppard, Noblit & Barone, 2013). This book thus, presents marginal and geographically less-dominant perspectives by including Finnish authors and their collaborating partners but also authors from diverse contexts and locations. Further, to reflect on the academic institutional dominance (training and art forms) and one's inherent bias built in relation to working contexts, the authors are not all 'academics' but their primary focus may be in practical work.

However, our intent is not to promote a Finnish perspective to arts education and international collaboration but to create dialogues to explore how the *theory and practice for arts education* can be furthered by including the insights emerging from practices that evolved *sensitive to marginal conditions*. The contributors are united in their belief that arts and education can engage individuals and communities in meaningful ways that have potential for long term changes in perceptions, beliefs, and people's ability to relate to one another. Through this profound willingness and ability to relate to one another through art, to establish emotional and sensitive relationalities beyond ration and words, we collectively believe that we can work towards more peaceful communities and foster true caring.

The authors come from diverse backgrounds in the arts, education, and community arts projects. The research orientation and writing utilized in the included chapters is personal, evocative, relatable, and performative, yet connected to wider political and public issues. We tried to ensure diversity in representation of regions and art forms balancing: a) diversity in the arts (dance, theatre, visual arts, music); b) approaches specific to a variety of geographic locations; and c) diversity in the scale problems that are faced by groups of people and communities.

The authors are at different stages in their careers with experiences ranging from long term engagements with scholarship and project leadership to beginning researchers and practitioners with limited interest or experience in academic research. Also, the authors' professional and primary language of communication varies. As an imperative that has guided our mission to open the space for voices from the margins we have prioritized divergence over conformity. However, in order to

facilitate interrelations between chapters and contexts, we gave the authors general guidelines for structure as well as 'prompts' to respond to. Initially, we asked the authors to begin by briefly describing their project and its history and then discuss how this project has evolved specific to the location and how it is sensitive and meaningful to the collaborating people and to diversity (arts, traditions, people, etc). We encouraged the authors to write in a manner and language accessible to various readers and we hoped they would share their stories of working in communities, rather than construct a distanced, academic paper. While this is a foundational element of dialogic relationship when we are face to face with other people, this essential aspect of 'let me tell you a little about myself' is often left unwritten, as if it is not relevant in scholarly or educational writing. Recognizing that true sharing can only take place if we are willing to get to know one another and truly care about one another, we encouraged the authors to include some of their autobiographical information and motivations behind their sustained practice.

Throughout the process of communicating back and forth, reviewing, and editing, we prompted the authors to share key concepts or central themes of their project and reflect on the relationships between critical (understanding problems, adversity, discrimination requiring activism) and hope (e.g. building individual and communal empathy, support, togetherness, and equality). Also, through storied sharing, each author reflects on how theory, practice and/or concepts related to pedagogy, social justice, and democracy have evolved specific to their current partnerships and working contexts.

In any book, the number of possible authors is limited. We are painfully aware of many significant omissions and want to emphasize that the authors of this book speak for common cause, a mission that many others around the world fight for. However, we did utilize an additional way of including alternative perspectives by pairing up each author with a reflective partner for both further feedback and dialogic engagement. These reflective readers are practicing artists, educators or activists utilizing the arts to further justice and democracy. To initiate further conversations and engage more people in this emerging dialogue, the circle of discussants has complemented, challenged or contradicted the authors to read the chapters in-progress. This happened by reflecting and responding to the texts from their personal standpoint, in contrast to a detached feedback process that is typical to academic publications. We asked these reflective readers to respond from a personal and emotional perspective, to share with the authors who they were and how the storied chapters touched or resonated with them. We paired the contributing authors with partners whose

work and feedback we believed could become mutually beneficial once introduced. The dialogue between reflective partners and chapter authors is further discussed in the final chapter of this book.

As readily adoptable artistic, communal or pedagogical frameworks do not exist, each contributor articulates how they have built their projects and theories specific to each situation and context. The authors share personal experiences in an evocative style, but also tie their work to pedagogical theory and larger human rights and ecological issues that concern educators and policy makers around the world. They share their projects and discuss the motivations that have initiated and continues to sustain these projects through the experienced hardship. Throughout their discussion, the authors contemplate and balance the dualities and contradictions emerging from being simultaneously critical and maintaining hope within themselves and the people they work with. The authors also share how their understandings of humanity, learning, the purpose and functions of the arts and education have evolved in relation to these projects.

As editors for this book, we never asked the authors to commit to any specific type of art nor did we identify that their art, artistic practice or arts education pedagogy should be in any specific way engaged in social justice practice. Within our communications we emphasized self-criticality and ethical considerations, but aimed at centralizing the arts in the activities and research that could have otherwise fallen under many other disciplinary categories. Although authors do not directly discuss their perceptions of or definitions for art, it is evident in these texts that art is understood be a creative and contributing element, a form or mode of understanding, thinking, presenting, and communicating through which change is possible even in the most dire situations. The authors share their experiences and illuminate some of the ways the power the arts have in profoundly changing people's lives and communities. In the following section we, as the editors, outline some frameworks that seem relevant for this kind for artistic and pedagogical practice and the overarching themes explored by the authors included in this volume. These themes include economic, ecological and cultural oppression, exile and forced migration, loss of freedom and hope, exclusion and marginalization due to linguistic, religious, and ethnic identifiers. Key notions within these themes are *arts education for social justice*, *critical pedagogy*, *pedagogy of hope built on humane love and activism*.

**Art as a political, cultural, and social force: Arts education for sustaining hope**

It is easy to dismiss the arts as something frivolous and ‘extra’ in comparison to essential elements required to maintain life, especially during acute crisis and in conflict situations. Yet, art and cultural productions are known to have tremendous capability to change perceptions, attitudes, holistic belief systems, and societies. Art can be seen both as an existential need for human beings and a channel to make sense of personal and shared lived experiences (Bourriaud, 2002; Crowther, 1993; Dissanayake, 1992; 2000; Greene, 1995). Art is an expression of social imagination, a tool for building equitable cultural commons, and a means by which hope can be nurtured. Arts education that is sensitive and responsive to cultural diversity, holistically reflective, critical of its self and society, and aims at building commons through ethical and deeply caring practices has potential to transform individuals and institutions.

Arts education for social change has several theoretical and philosophical roots. One lineage comes from John Dewey, the American educational philosopher who coined the notion of “learning by doing,” and whose work has inspired school reform and progressive education for decades. His seminal work *Art as experience* (1934) lays ground for understanding the educational, social, and communal power of art. Another American educational philosopher, Maxine Greene, has contributed invaluable to the literature on arts education as a social imperative, much in a Deweyan spirit. The critical imperative embedded in this line of thinking is poignantly expressed by Greene (1995):

All depends upon a breaking free, a leap, and then a question. I would like to claim that this is how learning happens and that the educative task is to create situations in which the young are moved to *begin* to ask, in all the tones of voice there are, “Why?”  
(p. 6)

These ‘why’ moments, for Greene, signify a move from the mechanical chain or routine behaviours, towards poetic and social imagination where the arts are a powerful force.

Critical pedagogy shares this thrust of constant questioning and imagining. Dewey’s (1934) work, especially his ideas on democratic education and his demand on “a language of possibility”, are significant for the evolution of critical pedagogy (Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2017). However, it is the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1972, 1996, 1998a, 1998b) who is considered by many the most influential educational philosopher regarding critical pedagogy (Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2017). Freire (1972) speaks about the necessity for humans to be able to be constantly engaged in

inquiry and creative transformation. Within critical pedagogy human beings are seen as being in the process of becoming and aware of their incompleteness and historicity. Because reality is always transformational, education is an on-going process. Moreover, education is a prophetic and hopeful process that entails perceiving reality as limiting, but not fated and unalterable, and thus challenging (Freire, 1972). Indeed, Freirean pedagogy of hope (1996) is the driving force and impetus for this book. He pronounces that, “I do not understand human existence, and the struggle needed to improve it, apart from hope and dream” (Freire, 1996, p. 8). Freire’s thoughts are echoed in several chapters, and definitely, in our thoughts during the process of compiling the book.

As female academics, however, we are aware on and in many ways agree with feminist critiques towards critical pedagogy. Darder, Baltodano and Torres (2017) write how these critiques focus on “the underlying *carte blanche* acceptance of the Enlightenment’s emphasis on the emancipatory function of cognitive learning” that underpin “critical philosophical views of human beings, knowledge and the world” (p. 15). They continue,

Hence, in an effort to challenge the privileging of reason as the ultimate sphere upon which knowledge is constructed, feminists have passionately argued for pedagogical embodiment through the inclusion of personal biography, narratives, a rethinking of authority, and an explicit engagement with the historical and political location of the knowing subject. (p. 15).

Thus, feminist underpinnings permeate our work and allow for personal, evocative, and embodied approaches to writing. We have allowed for ruptures, adversities, and vulnerabilities to be present throughout the book. We agree with Sonia Nieto (2003b) for whom “anger, hope and love are among the reasons that a group of urban teachers have stayed in teaching—despite everything” (n.p.). Some of the aspects that sustain successful educators according to Nieto (2003a, 2003b, 2009), include *autobiographical experiences* with social justice movements; *love* for their students built on confidence, admiration, and trust in their strength; *hope* and continued belief in the *promise* and *possibility for shaping the future*; *hate and desperation* for things that are unjust and wrong and working through *democratic practice*; and *engagement in continued intellectual work*.

In articulating a pedagogy of possibility, feminist scholar bell hooks (1994) writes how she perceives the classroom as a location of possibility. We understand the ‘classroom’ of possibility to be all places of learning, creation, and art where there is interaction among people, be those art

institutions, market places, places of exile, institutions intended to only temporarily host people, empty swimming pools, roof tops or online video sharing platforms. In these classrooms, “we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand ourselves and our comrades, an openness, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom” (hooks, 1994, p. 207). Further, quoting Giroux and McLaren (1994), hooks (1994) argues that,

those critical thinkers working with issues of pedagogy who are committed to cultural studies must combine “theory and practice in order to affirm and demonstrate pedagogical practices engaged in creating a new language, rupturing disciplinary boundaries, decentering authority, and rewriting the institutional and discursive borderlands in which politics becomes a condition for reasserting the relationship between agency, power, and struggle” (p. 129).

Finally, for us, providing a rich contextual texture has been important, so that we, and all readers, can imagine the conditions and circumstances for the projects and events depicted in the various chapters. In composing this book, we have been influenced by the work of Elizabeth Ellsworth (2004, Ellsworth & Kruse, 2012) who in her writing and other projects combines place-specific learning with aesthetic experience and public pedagogy. Nato Thompson (2015) calls the space, location, and context specific approach “a geographic approach to ideas” and referring to Gramsci’s idea of counter-hegemony he promotes “the importance of counter-institutions, alternative spaces, and collective environment” (p. viii).

Socially engaged art as described by Helguera (2011) operates in the junctions of arts, pedagogy, and social work, utilizing each of these frameworks and many others to create interactions and transitions, to create temporary ambiquity. Socially engaged artists work through and with people and with topics relevant or problematic to local and global cultures and societies transitioning (Helguera uses ‘snatching’) these topics from the art contexts and institutes to relevant contexts where there is potential for change. Helguera explains: “It is this temporary snatching away of subject into the realm of art-making that brings new insights to a particular problem or condition and in turn makes it visible to other disciplines” (p. 5). The authors of this book not only share their work but illuminate visions for disrupting oppressive, normative, and marginalizing and instead portray glimpses of a reimagination, a vision that is hardly comprehensible and difficult to bend into words but may become possible through art.

## Outline of the book

The book begins with a musician and educator-activist Shoshana Gottesman's chapter entitled "Dialogical musical spaces: Hearing, witnessing, sharing, resisting, and evoking." Portraying and exploring her work alongside Palestinian and Israeli youth in a music education–encounter dialogue programs she asks: How can we struggle for existence, coexistence, and co-resistance in small and large ways of our choice within and outside of the musical space? In her chapter Shoshana discusses the symptoms among youth caused by the systemic separation between Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Arabs that is sustained through separate schools and school systems, divided neighborhoods, travel restrictions, and a myriad of physical and psychological barriers. She speaks for a dialogical musical space that allows for a plasticity of identities and claims that within such educational process, critical thinking and empathy are experienced hand in hand. As the conflict, occupation, and systemic violence continue, Shoshana contemplates that such educational experiences may enable a multiplicity of possibilities for youth to resist the normalization of violence, inequality, and injustice.

These themes are also addressed in next chapter, entitled "Documentary theatre as a platform for hope and social justice" by Finnish authors, actor Jussi Lehtonen and researcher Sari Pöyhönen. They describe a documentary theatre project *Other Home* (original title in Finnish, *Toinen koti*), created within the Finnish National Theatre institution, and focus especially on the experiences and role of an Iraqi actor Bakr Hasan. His experiences within the Finnish migration system as an artist facing prosecution is one of many, since among the over 34, 000 asylum seekers Finland received in 2015 alone were hundreds of artists. The authors depict how taking part in this project supported Bakr's career as an artist and offered him a sense of belonging and hope, and how his experiences as an asylum seeker in Finland became integrated in the artistic process of *Other Home*. They also explore how people from different cultural backgrounds come together to create a hybrid community of artistic expression, as well as the process of its members moving from being refugees to artists, or from artists to civil activists.

The Middle East continues to be the geographic and cultural backdrop for the next chapter, "Sustaining dance education in exile: Contemporary perspectives of dance teaching and learning inside and outside of Syria" written by a dance educator and scholar Rose Martin from New

Zealand. Through investigating the stories of three Syrian dancers in exile in Europe, she explores the complex nuances of sustaining dance education in light of the Syrian Civil War and in so doing, contributes to a contemporary history and record of dance education inside and outside of Syria. Descriptive narratives and stories that have emerged through ethnographic enquiry offer unique understandings of the relationship between dance, education, and hope. Through revealing, extending, and critiquing political and cultural narratives, Rose explores the potential to recognize the multifaceted layers of hope that exist within dance practice and education. Simultaneously, the three dancers' experiences contribute to diversifying the understandings of personal, embodied, and physical experiences of war. Also, this chapter intends to fill a void within current discourse, contributing to new knowledge of dance, culture, and education in a Syrian context.

Another void to be filled in arts education literature is related to the experiences children who live in institutions. The next chapter, also from the field of dance explores hope as an embodied phenomenon. In her chapter entitled "The embodiment of hope: A dialogue on dance and displaced children" Eeva Anttila engages in a dialogue with her Danish colleague, Anamet Magven, whose experiences as a dance educator at a Russian orphanage shed light on a setting rarely discussed in arts education literature. Other partners in this dialogue are scholars and authors who have explored hope as action and as affect. Eeva asserts that critical arts educators who are animated and mobilized by hope may be able to encounter disengaging and immobilizing forces in society. She discusses the significance both social and material relations have as elements that form the core of critical arts education, and in so doing, connect posthuman discourse to critical arts education. She aims at understanding the notion of hope from the perspective of sensing, living body, its social and material connections.

A personal narrative, embracing embodied experiences represents another context rarely discussed in Western arts education literature. In her chapter "Shifting tides: Re-searching values for critical Pacific dance pedagogy" a dancer, dance educator, and an emerging scholar Teuila Hughes shares her personal journey towards approaching and articulating Pacific dance pedagogy. She explores the challenges and negotiations that she has encountered as a result of the intercultural shifts of content within educational contexts that presented new ideologies, pedagogies, and expectations. These discussions are informed by the author's cultural background as Samoan and the evolving influences this cultural heritage and knowledge has had on her pedagogical approaches. Teuila examines the broader cultural and political stereotypical perceptions surrounding the "Pacific" and offers considerations for the development of critical Pacific dance pedagogy. With her values that

tie together unity and diversity, she articulates Pacific dance as an opportunity to develop hope for the appreciation of both the connections and distinctions between Pacific ways of knowing, doing, and being within our current global society.

The next chapter illuminates experiences from yet another remote geographical location. In their chapter “Accessibility, mutual learning, and new pedagogical approaches: Developing a professional theatre school in Mato Grosso, Brazil” Marcio Aquiles, Ivam Cabral and Rodolfo García Vázquez take the readers to Cuiabá, the capital of Mato Grosso State, an area between the Amazon Forest and the Pantanal, where people continue to have a limited access to education and professional development. The authors discuss a pedagogical system entitled “Covalent Pedagogy” that they have developed and applied through curriculum and pedagogy at the MT Theatre School in Mato Grosso. Within this pedagogical system, the authors suggest that the concept of social inclusion be replaced by the notion of access. They claim that instead of special opportunities and benefits, people in vulnerable positions should have access to literature, culture, education, and a meaningful professional life. This chapter depicts how the development of the MT Theatre School has taken place and discusses its impact on the local communities.

Moving then to the United States, and to visual arts education and teacher preparation, the next chapter tackles an immense, yet all too rarely addressed social problem that has deep roots in social injustice. In her article entitled “Teacher preparation during an epidemic of mass incarceration: The challenge and hope of arts and education” Courtnie Wolfgang examines the complicated intersections of privilege and oppression and their impact on education in the United States of America. She discusses how the political and social climate in the USA appears increasingly hostile toward underserved populations. Courtnie points out that the factors that contribute to underservedness in communities are linked to a severe problem in the USA: the school to prison (or confinement) pipeline. These connections have led the author to consider if, or how, as teacher educators we are working to best prepare future art educators to effectively teach some of our most vulnerable populations of students. She asks, what role, if any, do the arts have in combatting the school to prison pipeline, and in so doing, considers the possibilities of art education as occupying *hopeful spaces*.

Another approach to teacher education within the visual arts is presented by Nurit Cohen Evron. Her chapter, “Building mutual respect and trust through co-dependency and deep collaboration through co-teaching art” returns us to the Middle East and is based on a case study of Israeli-

Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish teacher-trainees who participated in an experimental art education program. The trainees belonged to two different cultural, linguistic, and religious communities, and co-taught arts lessons at Arab and Jewish schools. While gaining their first experiences as arts teachers, they had to learn to work cooperatively against the background of the ongoing, violent Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Planning lessons and teaching together led the teacher-trainees to rely on one another, overcome fears, and resist the common culture of conflict characterized by negative collective images of each other. The case study demonstrates how empathy and new interpretations of one another were established without ignoring the complexity of the conflict. This development was achieved through sustained interaction of heterogeneous learning groups, intentional intergroup encounters with a common mission, equal status, and over-arching goals which demand cooperation and interdependency.

Ville Sandqvist, Helena Korpela, and Michele Cantoni provide another vantage point to the Israeli-Palestine conflict in their chapter on “Experiencing Palestine through performing arts exchanges”. Here, the authors, representing theatre and music, share their experiences regarding artistic and educational projects in Palestine. Their aim is to provide an insight into the conditions of a country under occupation, and to unravel how art and culture can become a means of survival through creativity and expression. In this, exchanges between artists and pedagogues from Palestine and other countries – in this case, Finland and Italy – seem important. The chapter begins by actor Ville Sandqvist’s experiences about his initial visit to Palestine. He also describes how his path crossed with Michele Cantoni’s (a violinist) and Helena Korpela’s (theatre artist and educator). Followed by this, Helena and Michele share their experiences, preceded by an account on the context: Palestine, a country under occupation.

The tenth, and last invited chapter, is a story about developing music education school and program in a remote location. In “CASA San Miguel: Art as the practice of hope in a local community” classical violinist and music teacher Alfonso “Coke” Bolipata draws from both his personal experience as the director and founder of CASA, as well as secondary literature on education and cultural theory, to describe the formation, vision, and the challenges of running CASA. This community outreach arts foundation in rural Zambales, Philippines combines dedication to the European classical music tradition with local communal engagement. Detailing the origins of the foundation and some principles of the pedagogical structure of the program, the author sets CASA within local and international frameworks in order to highlight its social significance. He considers the place of the program in implementing community-building and self-empowerment among

students, before concluding with a consideration of the program's political and philosophical resonance.

Although the authors and reflective readers who have contributed to this book rarely claim themselves as activists, they emphasize the importance of the cultural and political work done in public spaces. On smaller and broader scales, each author articulates commitments beyond their immediate working contexts, and in essence, directly or indirectly proclaim their aims as actively working towards 'better' futures. These futures are established in various embodied, emotional, sensuous, felt and/or rationalized conceptualizations of hope that seem to emerge from a foundational belief that our work matters both individually and collectively. Moreover we, as artists and educators, possess the tools and the knowledge to create spaces for cultures built on equality, equity, justice, and profound acceptance and appreciation for diversity.

In the article "Pedagogical Hope" Raquel Ayala Carabajo (2012) proclaims that "it is hard to conceive of a good educator without hope" (p. 136) but then questions if we really know what the essence of hope is. She explores hope through two guiding questions: "Why is the educational responsibility of many adults imbued with hope? What is the nature of hope?" (p. 136). She characterizes pedagogical hope as founded on reality, whereas we have asked the authors to frame their accounts with criticality towards the complex political, social, and cultural realities that frame their work; this criticality is what helps them construct and conceptualize the realities that frame the art and pedagogy and from where their projects built on hope stem from. Ayala Carabajo also identifies aspirations as generating better pedagogies, an educator's ability to wonder to generate hopeful expectations for future (daydreaming), hopeful educators as being encouraged even by the smallest glimpses of joy, progress or improvement, and these educators as consciously forming emotional and caring bonds that foster one's ability to tolerate worry and concern with trust in the hopeful outcome and futures. Perhaps most importantly, hope also opens possibilities to truly experience and perceive the other.

Significantly for us, Ayala Carabajo (2012) poses a question: "Why is it that we live constantly hoping—expecting instead of living in hope?" and then responds to it: "Only trust can convert the act of expecting into hope" (p. 139). As editors we have worked closely with the authors and reflective readers of this book and familiarized ourselves also with their work elsewhere. With this, we claim that *living in hope* characterizes this book. By sharing their experiences, frustrations, contempt, anger, conflicting feelings of hopefulness and insufficiency each author and reader has

contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of hope that the chapters of this book epitomize. We assert that *hope is ontological* for educators and artists working for social justice, something so foundational that it would be hard to comprehend our work in any other way.

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