

Arts & Resilience in a Rural Community

The value of arts-based community activities in
resilience-building in Pingjum, northern Netherlands

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december 2017

ISBN (printed version): 978-94-034-0514-8
ISBN (electronic version): 978-94-034-0515-5

English language editing: Giles Stacey, Englishworks (Chapters 2, 3 and 5).
Layout: Douwe Oppewal
Cover photo: Petra Rasker
Printed by: NetzoDruk Groningen

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Arts & Resilience in a Rural Community

The value of arts-based community activities in
 resilience-building in Pingjum, northern Netherlands

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de
 Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
 op gezag van de
 rector magnificus prof. dr. E. Sterken
 en volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties.

De openbare verdediging zal plaatsvinden op

maandag 26 maart 2018 om 11.00 uur

door

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CHAPTERS

Four chapters included in this PhD thesis are reprinted from the following publications:

Chapter 2

van der Vaart, G., van Hoven, B. & Huigen, P.P.P. (2018). The Value of Participatory Community Arts for Community Resilience. In: E-M. Trelle, B. Restemeyer, M.M. Bakema & B. van Hoven (Eds.), *Governing for Resilience in Vulnerable Places* (pp. 186-204). Abingdon: Routledge.

Chapter 3

van der Vaart, G., van Hoven, B. & Huigen, P.P.P. (2017). ‘It is not only an artist village, it is much more than that’¹. The binding and dividing effects of the arts on a community. *Community Development Journal*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsx055>.

Chapter 4

van der Vaart, G., van Hoven, B. & Huigen, P.P.P. (2018). The role of the arts in coping with place change at the coast. *Area*, 1-10, <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12417>.

Chapter 5

van der Vaart, G., van Hoven, B. & Huigen, P.P.P. (accepted with revisions). Creative and Arts-Based Research Methods in Academic Research. Lessons from a Participatory Research Project in The Netherlands. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*.

¹ Quote walking interview Abby (middle-aged woman, “incomer”).

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation for this study

In today's world, many communities are facing economic, social and environmental challenges such as unemployment, closure of local facilities and services, depopulation, ageing and extreme weather events (see, e.g., Davoudi, 2012; Rogers & Spokes, 2003; Steiner & Markantoni, 2013). Though the state of 'perceived uncertainty about global futures' that these challenges cause may not be historically exceptional, it stimulated the current interest in the notion of *resilience* (Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018, p. 225). In the past decades, this term has gained currency in both practice, where it is increasingly used in government policy and strategies (Porter & Davoudi, 2012; Shaw, 2012), and in academia, where it receives considerable attention from a broad range of disciplines, including engineering and ecology, planning, disaster studies, political sciences, psychology, economics and geography (see, e.g. Davoudi, 2018; Pendall et al., 2010; White & O'Hare, 2014). Nowadays, resilience is widely promoted as a promising concept for dealing with uncertainties in the face of economic, social and environmental challenges (van der Vaart et al., 2015) and it has become 'a new powerful lens through which researchers and practitioners assess, discuss and make plans for major matters' (Trell et al., 2018, p. 8).

The question of how to achieve resilience has become a matter of significance at societal and communal levels (Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Davoudi, 2018). White & O'Hare (2014), however, observed that resilience policy and practice to date are still mostly focused on a rather narrow technorational approach and appear to resist more abstract evolutionary approaches (see also Porter & Davoudi, 2012). They noted that in policies, there 'is an overwhelming tendency to interpret resilience as an "engineered" response, where risk is countered in an equilibrist, atomised manner with the definitional concerns and sociocultural aspects mostly unacknowledged' (p. 945). In contrast, Boon et al. (2012) stressed that policies and initiatives should also recognize the importance of 'social connectedness' in building community resilience. They argued that local community programs that increase a community's sense of place and foster stronger links between community members also deserve attention. This thesis builds on this and contributes to resilience thinking by looking at *arts-based community activities* as a potential resource for building community resilience, thereby, giving attention to socio-cultural resources.

The focus of this thesis on arts-based community activities in resilience-building aligns with a trend of the last decades involving increased attention for the value of the arts for communities in general, beyond their aesthetic qualities (Eernstman & Wals, 2013). Scholars noted the value of the arts in connection to: providing opportunities for social interaction, networking and improving understanding and links between people, hence, contributing to a community's social capital (see, e.g., Jones et al., 2013;

Kay, 2000; Matarasso, 2007; Newman et al, 2003); helping to articulate and strengthen links between communities and places (see, e.g., Anwar McHenry, 2011; Jones et al., 2013; Morris & Cant, 2004; Mulligan et al., 2006); increasing economic activity (see, e.g., Anwar McHenry, 2009; Azmier, 2002; Grodach, 2009; Newman et al., 2003; Phillips, 2004); contributing to a range of individual skills and qualities in many areas, including growing self-confidence, self-expression and communication, and project management and teamwork competencies (see, e.g., Kay, 2000; Matarasso, 2007; Mattingly, 2001; Mulligan et al., 2006); giving visibility and voice to those members of society who are rarely heard (see, e.g., Johnston & Pratt, 2010; Mulligan et al., 2006); and encouraging and enabling civic participation and strengthening a community's capacity to act (see, e.g., Anwar McHenry, 2009, 2011; Bradley et al., 2004; Rogers & Spokes, 2003; Wali et al., 2002).

Recently, the value of the arts has also been mentioned in connection to building resilient communities, as colleagues and myself observed (van der Vaart et al., 2015). Kay (2000), for instance, highlighted the role that *participatory arts projects* can play in helping communities deal with challenges they face. He stated that 'local people [...] engage together, develop social and economic skills and assume the power to fashion their future' (p. 415), thus fostering a community's adaptive capacities. On a similar note, Anwar McHenry (2009) proposed that the arts have a so-called 'survival value', by providing the innovation necessary for communities to cope with change (see also Anwar McHenry, 2011; Burnell, 2012; Derrett, 2008).

The aim of this thesis is to explore the value of arts-based community activities for resilience-building. By looking into this matter from several perspectives, insight into their role in community resilience is generated. The thesis draws on a participatory research project that used a mix of creative and arts-based research methods that was conducted in the village of Pingjum in the Netherlands. In exploring the value of arts-based community activities for community resilience, this thesis addresses various themes connected to the relation between arts-based community activities and community resilience: the various dimensions of social capital that participatory community arts can generate (Chapter 2), the binding and dividing effects of the arts on communities (Chapter 3), and the role of the arts in people's emotional connections to landscape and their coping with (potential) place change (Chapter 4). In addition, through reflecting on the conducted participatory research project, the thesis contributes to the discussion on the value of creative and arts-based research methods for researchers, by providing more nuanced, concrete insight into their value (Chapter 5).

This introductory chapter first provides a background to the study by elaborating on community resilience, arts-based community activities, and *why* these could be useful in light of community resilience. Next, the research approach, the research methods and the context of the case study are explained, followed by an outline of the thesis.

1.2 Resilience

Resilience has become a widely used concept in both academia and practice for dealing with changes and uncertainties, as noted earlier. Several scholars, however, have noted the wide variety of interpretations of the concept across and within disciplines (see, e.g., Adger, 2000; Davoudi, 2012, 2018; Hutter & Kuhlicke, 2013; Pendall et al., 2010; Trell et al., 2018; White & O'Hare, 2014). Overall, as Weichselgartner & Kelman (2014, p. 251) observed, a common thread among the various disciplines is 'the ability of materials, individuals, organizations and entire social-ecological systems, from critical infrastructure to rural communities, to withstand severe conditions and to absorb shocks'. A further distinction, however, is often made between *engineering*, *ecological*, and *socio-ecological* or *evolutionary* resilience, which are each briefly discussed below.

Engineering resilience centers around "persistence". This traditional definition of resilience denotes 'the capacity of systems to withstand external shocks and to "bounce-back" to the original stable equilibrium' (Davoudi, 2018, pp. 1-2). Or, as Folke (2006, p. 256) simply put, 'it is about resisting disturbance and change, to conserve what you have'. This interpretation of resilience, with its focus on systems with a single equilibrium, has substantially shaped contemporary natural resource and environment management and is, to date, persistent in many facets of ecology and in the fields of psychology and disaster studies (Folke, 2006; Pendall et al., 2010). In contrast, *ecological resilience* rejects the existence of a single, stable equilibrium and instead, begins from the presumption that a system has multiple equilibria (Davoudi, 2012; Pendall et al., 2010). This resilience conceptualization focuses on whether shocks and disturbances cause a system to move into another regime or behaviour (Simmie & Martin, 2010). Resilience is conceived as 'the *magnitude* of the disturbance that can be absorbed before the system changes its structure' (Holling, 1996, p. 33 in: Davoudi, 2018). A disturbance could have such an effect that instead of returning to the original state, a system moves to an alternative state (Folke et al., 2010). Thus, whereas an engineering perspective is concerned with a single pre-existing equilibrium to which a resilient system "*bounces back*", ecological resilience is concerned with a new equilibrium to which it "*bounces fort*" (Davoudi, 2012). Lastly, *socio-ecological* or *evolutionary* resilience challenges the whole idea of equilibria. These more recent approaches to resilience emphasize "transformability", acknowledging that resilience is an ongoing process and that 'the very nature of systems may change over time with or without external disturbance' (Davoudi, 2012, p. 302). Resilience is not only about being persistent or robust to disturbance but, as Folke (2006)

argued, also involves ‘adaptive capacity [...] that allow[s] for *continuous development*, like a dynamic adaptive interplay between sustaining and developing with change’ (p. 259, emphasis added). In the socio-ecological or evolutionary perspective, resilience is conceived as ‘the ability of complex socio-ecological systems to change, adapt, and crucially, transform in response to stresses and strains’ (Davoudi, 2012, p. 302), which could also come from within the system itself. Importantly, resilience is considered to rest on the ability to ‘be proactive and self-determining, rather than just reactive and outside-determined’ (Weichselgartner & Kelmen, 2014, p. 252).

These different understandings of resilience, each with its own nuances and intricacies, make it difficult to identify an overarching and conceptually clear application of resilience to specific shocks (Pendall et al., 2010). Subsequently, as colleagues and myself observed, it is not easy to implement resilience in practice (van der Vaart et al., 2015). We noted that resilience is often used as a panacea to various problems, with the resilience term running the risk of becoming a heavily contested buzzword (see also O’Hare & White, 2013; Shaw, 2012). Therefore, Porter & Davoudi (2012, p. 329) argued, ‘resilience should command our attention [...] [as] concepts that have the potential to transform the framing of planning problems and interventions deserve further analysis’.

This thesis provides a critical perspective on the value of arts-based community activities for resilience-building. The thesis follows the extended notion of resilience as described above and, in accordance to its focus on communities, it focuses on *community resilience*. To this end, the thesis draws on the definition by Magis (2010, p. 402), who argued that community resilience concerns:

‘the existence, development and engagement of community resources by community members to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise. Members of resilient communities intentionally develop personal and collective capacity that they engage to respond to and influence change, to sustain and renew the community, and to develop new trajectories for the communities’ future’.

It must be noted, though, that there is no universally agreed definition of community resilience, which, actually, might be a good thing according to Wildling (2011). He argued that this ‘means that local people can be free to come up with the definition that works for them [...] ultimately, it doesn’t really matter what this work is called: what matters most is that it helps people future-proof their communities on the basis of agreed values’ (p. 4).

1.3 Arts-based community activities

This thesis is dedicated to the value of arts-based community activities for the “future-proofing” of communities. As noted above, in recent years, there has been increasing attention for the value of the arts for communities in general, with scholars pointing to a broad range of (community) benefits associated with the arts. Brice & Fernández Arconada (2018) focused on “socially-engaged art” in particular, which they placed in the expansion from the arts beyond galleries *into* society. Quoting Bruguera (2011, n.p.), they noted: ‘we [artists] do not have to enter the Louvre or the castles, we have to enter people’s houses, people’s lives, this is where *useful* art is’ (emphasis added). Before elaborating on *why* arts-based community activities can be useful in light of community resilience, some background on “the arts”, “arts-based community activities” and “participatory community arts” is given.

Similar to resilience, “the arts” can also be a confusing term as it means different things to different people (Kay, 2000). Crossick & Kaszynska (2016) observed that work on “cultural value” – ‘the value associated with people’s engaging with and participating in art and culture’ (p. 13) – has tended to be driven by the case for public funding, leading to a focus on the subsidised arts. In their report on the value of arts and culture they broadened the scope of the discussion and also considered the commercial, amateur and participatory arts, because ‘after all, [these] are where most people find their cultural engagement’ (p. 7; see also Ramsden et al., 2011; Wali et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2002). In line with this, this thesis also takes on a broader perspective of the arts, paying attention to the presence of various artists in our case-study village (e.g. visual artists, a goldsmith) and the local places connected to the arts (e.g. podium venues), to activities such as the annual arts weekend and performances in which the community members themselves are involved (see Chapter 3 and 4). To capture this broader perspective, this thesis adopts the term “arts-based community activities”.

Special attention is paid to *participatory community arts* (see Chapter 2). These fall within a recent surge of artistic interest in ‘collectivity, collaboration, and direct engagement with specific social constituencies’ as Bishop (2006, p. 178) noted. There is a broad range of participatory arts practices and different understandings about what participatory art is (Lowe, 2000). Simply put, participatory community arts involve a collective method of art-making in which (professional) artists work together with a community. In line with the “usefulness” of the arts that Brice & Fernández Arconada (2018) referred to, participatory community arts are, in practice, often initiated in the form of arts projects that aim to use “art” as a tool for human or material development (Guetzkow, 2002). Such projects are frequently designed in the context of a larger community development goal, such as improving the image of a

neighbourhood or stimulating a sense of community among neighbourhood residents. The intention is that the involved community members develop themselves and gather knowledge, skills and/or insights – benefits which, subsequently, extend beyond the individual and positively impact the broader community (see Ernstman & Wals, 2013; Matarasso, 2007). Concerns around the “instrumentalisation” of the arts are sometimes expressed though (see, e.g., Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Hawkes, 2001; Khan, 2010; McCarthy et al., 2004; Mulligan et al., 2006). Here, it is noted that the utility and “instrumental” benefits of the arts receive too much attention at the expense of the aesthetic value and other “intrinsic” benefits of the arts. This issue is further reflected on in Chapter 6.

1.4 Arts-based community activities & community resilience

Several scholars argued that the everyday life-world and knowledge available within communities should be incorporated when planning for community development or resilience (see, e.g., Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Reichel & Frömming, 2014; Steiner & Markantoni, 2013; Stuiver et al., 2013; van der Vaart et al, 2015). In order to develop community resilience, Skerrat & Steiner (2013) argued, community members must be able to actively engage in building the capacity to thrive in an environment characterized by change. In this regard, Manzo & Perkins (2006) noted that people’s emotional commitment to their community places influences their ability and willingness to address local problems. They regarded these bonds as critical to the wellbeing of communities and argued that ‘it is essential for those working in community improvement and planning to better understand those emotional connections to place, how they are fostered, and how they might lead to action and effective participatory planning processes’ (p. 348). In this regard, “social” aspects such as place attachment, community identity, community cohesion and social capital are also significant in resilience thinking (Folke et al., 2010; van der Vaart et al., 2015).

Arts-based community activities can enhance the links between people, their community and their surroundings and, in this way, contribute to community resilience. As Shaw (2003, p. 1) stated with regard to deprived communities: ‘the arts do not offer a magic potion, but they can question beliefs and ambitions and help individuals and communities take a new direction’. Stocker & Kennedy (2011), for instance, observed that the arts can act as a catalyst to sustainable action. They concluded that the arts can help people to explore and develop their sense of identity and belonging, which may subsequently, lead to care and stewardship. In this regard, Stocker & Kennedy (2011) assigned the arts as having additional value to “cognitive scientific evidence” in creating awareness and action for sustainability. They explained that ‘emotional and affective responses to the natural world and environmental concerns can be more engaging and decisive than government reports or scientific data’ (p. 99) (see also

Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015). The AHRC film *Imagining Change: Coastal Conversations* also presents a good example of the role the arts can play in communities (AHRC, 2012). It features three projects that showcase different kinds of creative engagements with environmental change in different coastal landscapes. The film aims ‘to show how we need human and natural histories, and artistic as well as scientific perspectives on coastal change’ (AHRC, 2012, n.p.). In so doing, it depicts the bridging role that the arts can play between science, policy, and the interests of people (see also Jones et al., 2012; Jones, 2013).

As noted above, the value of the arts has since recently been mentioned more explicitly in relation to building community resilience (see, e.g. Anwar McHenry, 2009; 2011; Burnell, 2012; Derret, 2008; Mulligan et al., 2006; van der Vaart et al., 2015). It is, for instance, argued that the arts are able to generate social capital and foster community participation, in this way, stimulating and empowering community members to protect and pursue their collective interests (see, e.g., Anwar McHenry, 2011; Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016; Derret, 2003; Guetzkow, 2002; Jermyn, 2001; Newman et al., 2003). In addition, as the examples above illustrate, the arts can help people to explore their sense of identity and belonging, create awareness, and stimulate action. In line with this, scholars observed that the arts can help people to communicate, explore what is meaningful to them, think differently, and envision alternative futures (Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Lawrence, 2008; Shaw, 2003; Stuiver et al., 2013). This fits with the “evolutionary approach” to planning for resilience that emphasizes the ability to be proactive and self-determining (Weichselgartner & Kelmen, 2014).

The arts also provide interesting tools as part of a resilience policy that ‘is being directed towards smaller spatial scales and everyday activities’ (Coaffee, 2013, p. 333). The everyday, lived experiences of people often provide inspiration for artists, and can be used to formulate goals for, or contribute to, community development (see, e.g., Askins & Pain, 2011; Capous Desyllas, 2014). Coaffee (2013, p. 336) noted how ‘this integration of a range of resiliency practices at the local level can be seen to represent the next generation of resilience practices which planners are increasingly adopting as part of their *modus operandi*’.

By looking at the role of arts-based community activities in community resilience from multiple perspectives, this thesis generates more insight into their value for resilience-building. It draws on a participatory research project, which is further introduced below.

1.5 Research approach and methods

In order to understand the role of arts-based community activities in community resilience, a participatory research project was conducted in the village of Pingjum in the Netherlands. Below, the research approach and the research methods used are discussed and, in the section thereafter, the case-study village and the participants are introduced.

For the research project, I adopted a participatory approach. Breitbart (2012) noted that communities are often treated as if they are laboratories, being given no role in the research process and benefiting little from the results of studies conducted within their area. In contrast, my motivations for using a participatory approach were to: 1) actively engage the inhabitants in generating knowledge about their community and its resilience, using their lived experiences as basis for the study; and connected to this, to 2) contribute positively to the community's thinking about and actual resilience. This aligns with Breitbart (2012), who noted that participatory research places great value on the knowledge of those conventionally researched. In light of this, she argued that participatory research can be used 'to build knowledge of community assets and strengths as well as to identify or address problems' (p. 145). This provides input for community resilience-building, since, as Steiner & Markantoni (2013) stressed with regard to investigating resilience at a rural community level, it is necessary to capture and understand the issues that communities face.

With regard to the first motivation, through the participatory research project I aimed to gain insight into the value of arts-based community activities for community resilience. I intended to obtain a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of people's sense of place, of the issues at play in their community (as Steiner & Markantoni (2013) recommended), and of the overall context in which the local arts and artists exist. Adopting a participatory approach is helpful in this regard as this, as Pain (2004, p. 653) argued, 'is designed to be context-specific, forefronting local conditions and local knowledge, and producing situated, rich and layered accounts'.

With regard to the second motivation, through the participatory research project I aimed to contribute positively to the community's thinking about and actual resilience. This corresponds to the objective of participatory research practices to benefit the community from which the research participants are drawn (Breitbart, 2012; Diver & Higgins, 2014; Vigurs & Kara, 2017) and can be regarded as a form of "giving back" to the community (see, e.g., Fortmann, 2014; Gupta & Kelly, 2014; Salmon, 2007). As participatory research actively engages a community, it is more likely to come from and reflect lived experiences and produce more authentic, useful knowledge, and potentially, also leads to actions that address people's real desires and needs (Breitbart,

2012; Pain et al., 2015; Trell, 2013). Through the participatory research project, I hoped to stimulate the research participants to think together about places in their village, (potential) changes related to the issues at play in their community and, where deemed necessary, come up with possible solutions or ways to deal with (anticipated) changes. In addition, the participatory research project worked towards a final exhibition (see below) which aimed to also engage the broader community and generate discussion on the meanings of certain places in the case-study village.

1 The participatory approach consisted of three stages in which creative and arts-based research methods were used: walking interviews, group discussions, and a creative workshop that resulted in an exhibition in the village hall of the case-study village. This mix of methods helped me to understand my participants sensory and affective responses to their village and its surroundings, and in so doing, enabled me to go beyond cognitive ways of knowing (Lawrence, 2008). In this regard, Kelemen & Hamilton (2015, p. 22) argued that, through the use of creative methods, researchers can ‘gain a degree of immersive, embodied experience of other peoples’ “situated knowledges”. Moreover, as Coemans et al. (2015) noted, using “artistic elements” in participatory research can stimulate participants to create ideas for their community. They stated that this very often induces community action and change, which, subsequently, is important in light of community resilience. Below, each stage of the participatory research project is shortly introduced.

The **first** stage of the participatory research project involved walking interviews, which enabled me to get to know the case-study village, the key issues at play in the community, and the participants and their personal experiences with, and opinions on, living in their village. A growing body of academic literature highlights the value of mobile methods, such as walking interviews, in terms of gaining insight into the spatiality of place experiences (Carpiano, 2009; Hitchings & Jones, 2004; Kusenbach, 2003; Lager et al., 2015; Trell & van Hoven, 2010). The capacity to access people’s attitudes and knowledge about their surrounding environment is seen as a major advantage of this method (Evans & Jones, 2011). Moreover, it is praised for allowing an informal way of interaction, making participants feel more at ease and making it easier for them to express themselves in everyday talk (Lager et al., 2015). Further, the method is credited for its ability to reduce the power imbalance between the researcher and those researched by putting the participants “in charge” (Carpiano, 2009; Ecker, 2017). During the walking interviews of my study, the participants took me on a “tour” through their village and showed, and took photographs of, the places that were meaningful to them and places which, in their eyes, were disputed in the community or were facing (potential) changes. In addition to the walking element, the interview questions probed people’s opinions on and experiences with the various arts

activities and artists in their village, the village community, and (potential) changes to the village.

The **second** stage of the participatory research project consisted of group discussions, which aimed to bring the participants together and have a further discussion on the shared and divergent meanings of particular places in their village among people of different age groups. The participants were split up into groups of mixed ages. As starting points for their discussions, the groups were presented with the photographs taken during the walking interviews and some guiding questions on the photographed places and their meanings over time. With the group discussions, I aimed to grasp how certain places in the village are seen and valued in the community. In addition, in light of my project's aim to contribute to the community's (thinking about) resilience, I aimed to stimulate the participants to think about (potential) changes to their village and come up with possible solutions or ways to deal with (anticipated) changes. The group discussions can be seen as a form of focus groups, a method which has received considerable attention from a broad range of academic and applied research areas since the 1990s (Morgan, 1996; Wilkinson, 2004). Benefits of focus groups include that they often lead to the production of more elaborate accounts and can lead to insights that are unlikely to have arisen from individual interviews (see Bostock & Freeman, 2003; Krueger & Casey, 2015; Morgan, 1996; Wilkinson, 2004).

The **third** and final stage of the participatory research project involved a creative workshop that led to an one-day exhibition in the case-study village. During a hands-on creative workshop, the participants were further engaged by asking them to visualize the meanings they assigned to certain places in their village. In this regard, Walsh et al. (2013, p. 121) argued that arts-based research is 'founded on the idea that the arts are useful as a means to engage in research as a participatory act that allow those involved to more directly express their voices through artistic media with the goal of enhanced self-expression'. The participants received assistance from four students from the Minerva art academy in Groningen in order to visualize some of the "stories" attached to certain places in their village that had been collected during the first two project stages. A few weeks later, an one-day exhibition of the participatory research project was organized in the village hall. Here, the artworks that were created during the creative workshop were presented, together with an overview of the photographs taken during the walking interviews. The exhibition aimed to engage the broader community and generate discussion on the meanings of certain places in the case-study village, in order to contribute to the community's (thinking about) resilience. In this context, several scholars have noted that creative and arts-based research can make research findings more accessible for a broader non-academic audience and provoke changes in their understanding (see, e.g., Capous Desyllas,

2014; Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Foster, 2012; Hamilton & Taylor, 2017; Kara, 2015; Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015; Mitchell et al., 2011). Eisner (2008, pp. 6-7), for instance, observed that involving the arts in research can ‘provide deep insight into what others are experiencing’ by ‘promot[ing] a form of understanding that is derived or evoked through emphatic experience’. Mitchell et al. (2011) noted that this can help to open people to the existence of different experiences and views, creating a broader perspective and a deeper awareness of “other”. This, they noted, will make people more prepared to relate to their community and to take action in it.

Participatory research attempts to reverse conventional assumptions about who owns and benefits from research and to minimize the gap between the researcher and participants (Pain, 2004). However, there are different levels / degrees of participation (see, e.g., Arnstein, 1969; Hart, 1992; White, 1996). In the participatory research project in Pingjum, my role as researcher was to provide a framework for the project, by determining the methodology and research themes. This, for instance, meant that I designed the interview guide and organized the group discussions, creative workshop and exhibition. In addition, I conducted the data analysis. The participants’ extent of participation varied throughout the three stages of the project, and increased from stage one (the walking interviews) to stage three (the creative workshop). During the walking interviews, they were “in charge” of the route and the places they wanted to show, talk about and photograph (and how) (see also Carpiano, 2009). During the group discussions, the participants chose the photographs they wanted to discuss further. This is one way in which the control over a group’s interaction can be shared more and which, subsequently, can enable participants to develop those themes that they consider as most important (Wilkinson, 2014). During the creative workshop, the participants decided for themselves with whom they wanted to collaborate and chose a means to express themselves (within the possibilities of the available materials and time). In the aforementioned ways, the control over the data generation and outcomes of the project was partially shifted from the researcher to the participants themselves (see also Vigurs & Kara, 2017). In Chapter 6 I provide a further reflection on the research approach and ethical issues.

Creative and arts-based research methods, such as those described above, are nowadays successfully adopted by researchers from various disciplines (see Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Woodgate et al., 2017). However, Coemans & Hannes (2017) observed a lack of methodological reflection on arts-based methods and, in this light, called for discussions about the process and implications of these methods. This thesis contributes to the discussion on the value of creative and arts-based research methods to academia by reflecting on the conducted participatory research project and its three project stages (Chapter 5).

1.6 Case-study village and the participants

The participatory research project described above was conducted in Pingjum, a village in the province of Friesland in the northern Netherlands. Pingjum is situated along the Wadden Sea coast and is surrounded mainly by agricultural land (see Figure 1, p. 41). Approximately 600 people are living in Pingjum. The inhabitants include *Pingjurers* (people who were born and raised in the village), other Frisians (who moved from within the province to Pingjum) and “incomers” (people who moved to Pingjum from outside of Friesland). Many communities, as noted, face economic, social and environmental challenges (e.g. unemployment, depopulation, extreme weather events). Pingjum is also experiencing some of these challenges. For instance, over recent decades, many of its facilities have disappeared (such as the bakery and supermarket). Nevertheless, the village still has an active village life with many associations, such as the *kaats*-association (*kaatsen* is a typical Frisian sport) and an orchestra². Furthermore, compared to other villages in the (northern) Netherlands, Pingjum has a relatively large presence of artists and hosts many cultural activities. These range from exhibitions and music performances to community arts projects, and involve both professional artists and people who engage in art as a hobby (including musicians, visual artists, graphic designers and a goldsmith). A part of these activities is purposefully intended to contribute to the inhabitants’ sense of place and to a sustainable future of the village and, in this light, have a deliberate participatory character (see also Chapter 3, section 4.3). Pingjum is also home to the artists’ association *Kunst Achter Dijken* (Art Behind Dikes) to which many artists in Pingjum belong. This association organizes an annual arts weekend during which the artists can exhibit their work throughout the village. All these artistic activities have been noticed beyond the village’s boundaries and led to Pingjum having a reputation as an “artist village” in the media (e.g., van Santen, 2013).

The participants for the participatory research project were recruited in several ways. Posters were put up at key places in the village (e.g. at the school and pub), flyers were distributed door-to-door throughout the village and a promotional presentation was given at the annual meeting of the village’s interest group. In addition, an online blog about the project³ was created and snowball sampling was used. In total, 28 inhabitants participated in the project. The participants included thirteen men and fifteen women from different age groups (below 25 years, between 25 and 65 years, and 65 years and above) and both *Pingjurers*, other Frisians as well as “incomers”.

1.7 Research aim and thesis outline

The aim of this thesis is to explore the value of arts-based community activities for resilience-building. By looking into this matter from several perspectives, insight

² See <http://www.dorppingjum.nl/>

³ See <https://onderzoeksprojectpingjum.wordpress.com/>

into their role in community resilience is generated. This study's focus on arts-based community activities can be viewed in the context of resilience policies that strive to include the everyday life-world and knowledge available within communities, and in light of the growing interest in the value of the arts for communities in general.

The thesis consists of a collection of published and submitted articles and is divided into six chapters. Each chapter addresses an aspect of the relation between arts-based community activities and community resilience:

Chapter 2 establishes the link between participatory community arts, *social capital* and community resilience. I discuss two participatory community arts projects in order to illustrate the various dimensions of social capital that participatory community arts can generate (bonding, bridging and linking). The chapter elaborates on how this contributes to the resilience of the communities where the projects took place, giving more insight into the value of participatory community arts for community resilience.

Chapter 3 presents an analysis of the various impacts of the arts on communities by highlighting when and how they can have binding and dividing effects on a community. In the discussion, it pays attention to the sense of community that the arts generate, the meeting opportunities they provide and how the community is engaged by some artists.

Chapter 4 zooms in on the role of the arts in people's coping with (potential) place change in light of wind energy developments. It elaborates on the effects of the arts on people's emotional connections to the landscape – the memories, beliefs, meaning and knowledge they associate with the landscape – and the expression of people's attachments through actions. This chapter presents an elaborated example of how artists can be key players in people's interpretations of, and subsequent coping with, (proposed) place change, which underlines the role of the arts in people's responses to (proposed) projects.

Chapter 5 reflects on the participatory research project that was conducted in light of this study. It provides more nuanced, concrete insight into the value of creative and arts-based research methods for researchers. The chapter elaborates on how the three project stages (comprising walking interviews, group discussions, and a creative workshop that resulted in an exhibition) contributed to producing *multifaceted knowledge*, with each project stage providing another facet of this study's topics.

Chapter 6 presents an overview of the main findings from the study and discusses three issues with regard to resilience-building and arts-based community activities, and to creative and arts-based research methods. The chapter also provides a reflection on the research approach.

CHAPTER 2

The value of participatory community arts for community resilience

Abstract

This chapter demonstrates the value of participatory community arts for community resilience. We discuss two participatory community arts projects in order to illustrate the various dimensions of social capital that participatory community arts can generate (bonding, bridging and linking). The chapter elaborates on how this contributes to the resilience of the communities where the projects took place. We argue that participatory community arts can assist communities in developing the capacity and resources to deal with the challenges that they face and to flourish.

2.1 Introduction

Since the early 2000s, the notion of resilience has begun to provide an important conceptual framework for understanding how communities respond and adapt to changes (Wilson, 2012). Resilience is rapidly gaining currency as both a targeted process of societal development and as a research topic in its own right (ibid.). The term, however, has been used to express various meanings by different academic disciplines and these have changed over time (see, for example, Chandler, 2014; McIntosh et al., 2008; Weichselgartner & Kelman, 2014). Beel et al. (2017) noted that ‘within the resilience literature, due to its founding within ecological studies [...] resilience is often framed around the context of how well communities respond to external shocks [such as natural disasters]’ (pp. 460-461). Resilient communities are those that bounce back to how they were before a disturbance, dealing with external shocks as they occur. However, as Weichselgartner & Kelman (2014) noted, other authors have extended this ecology-related notion, ‘aiming to better understand characteristics of vulnerability and resilience of individuals and communities in the face of socio-environmental challenges and changes – that is, how well society could deal with changes and disturbances’ (p. 251). Further, Davoudi (2012) observed that a socio-ecological (or evolutionary) view of resilience challenges the idea of returning to an equilibrium after a disturbance. Rather, drawing on Carpenter et al. (2005), she argued that resilience is about the ‘the ability of complex socio-ecological systems to change, adapt, and, crucially, *transform* in response to stresses and strains’ (p. 302, emphasis added). Weichselgartner & Kelman (2014) noted that these interpretations of resilience ‘have been moving towards “anticipation”, encompassing “capacity” and “capability” – and now coming the full way to being suggested as doing better than before by “bouncing forward”’ (p. 252). Here, resilience has become associated with communities having adaptive capacities that give them some level of control over their future direction, rather than being at the mercy of unmanageable external forces (McIntosh et al., 2008). In this chapter, we emphasize that social capital is one resource that communities can draw on to build such adaptive capacities. In line with the extended notion of resilience used in this chapter, we adopt the definition by Magis (2010, p. 402) who argued that community resilience concerns:

‘the existence, development, and engagement of community resources by community members to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise. Members of resilient communities intentionally develop personal and collective capacity that they engage to respond to and influence change, to sustain and renew the community, and to develop new trajectories for the communities’ future’.

Community resilience can be developed in various ways. Magis (2010) outlined how communities have a variety of internal and external resources (economic, social, cultural, human, political, natural and built) on which they can draw to respond to change. White & O'Hare (2014), however, noted that resilience policy and practice encourages an "equilibrium approach", where resilience is characterized within spatial planning as 'a simple return to normality that is more analogous with planning norms, engineered responses, dominant interests, and technomanagerial trends' (p. 934). As a result, policies related to (disaster) resilience often focus on rebuilding the economic and physical infrastructure of a community. However, since resilience is a communitywide and holistic characteristic, other socio-cultural resources also warrant attention.

In this chapter, we look at participatory community arts as a resource and demonstrate their value for building community resilience, thereby giving attention to other socio-cultural resources. The literature suggests that participatory community arts can be of value to community resilience because of their ability to generate community participation and social capital (see, for example, Guetzkow, 2002; Jermyn, 2001; Newman et al., 2003; Williams, 1997). In line with Healy & Coté (2001), Larsen et al. (2004) and Sampson et al. (1997), we argue that social capital is one of the resources that play a role in a community's resilience because it stimulates community members' ability and willingness to work together for a common good and empowers them to protect and pursue their collective interests. This fits with the "evolutionary approach" to planning for resilience that is attuned to sociocultural conditions and embraces transformability (White & O'Hare, 2014).

To provide a theoretical backdrop for our discussion, the chapter begins by outlining the key aspects of social capital and how these relate to community resilience. We then briefly discuss participatory community arts and their relationship to community development. In building an argument for participatory community arts in building resilience, we examine two international participatory community arts projects. These projects illustrate dimensions of social capital (bonding, bridging and linking) that participatory community arts can generate, and how this contributed to the resilience of the communities where the projects took place.

2.2 Social capital and community resilience

In this section, we first introduce the concept of social capital and distinguish three types of social capital: bonding, bridging and linking (see Hawkins & Maurer, 2010; Magis, 2010; Woolcock, 2001). Following this, we elaborate on the link between social capital and community resilience.

Social capital is a widely debated concept. In the social sciences, Putnam's (1995) view of social capital has been highly influential (Daly, 2005; Hawkins & Maurer, 2010; Woodhouse, 2006; Woolcock, 2001). Putnam defined social capital as 'the features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation to mutual benefit' (1995, p. 67). Social interactions between community members form the basis of social capital. Williams (1997, p. 8), for instance, stated that 'the elements which increase social capital are mainly based on interactions [...] We need the opportunities to interact with a reasonably broad spread of people, and to build up a level of trust through positive rather than negative experiences'. Interaction enhances the formation of social links between community members and, as McCarthy et al. (2004) explained, these social links, or *bonds* and *bridges*, can lead to feelings of trust and expectations of reciprocity and can promote a sense of shared interest or common identity – which are necessary “ingredients” of social capital.

According to Delfmann et al. (2013), Hawkins & Maurer (2010) and Woolcock (2001), social capital encompasses bonding, bridging and linking capitals. *Bonding* capital refers to the close ties between people in similar situations, these are links that tie individuals together on the basis of homogeneity: around social identity (e.g., professional affiliation), sense of purpose (e.g., membership of a social club) or shared demographics (e.g., socioeconomic or ethnic status) (McCarthy et al., 2004). These ties can build trust, reciprocity and a shared sense of identity and belonging (Delfmann et al., 2013). *Bridging* capital on the other hand refers to relationships that are formed between diverse social groups and involves looser ties between people that might otherwise not interact. These looser ties expose people to diversity, enhance people's ability to work with each other and expand the resources available to them (Magis, 2010). Finally, *linking* capital is the extent to which individuals build relationships with individuals and institutions beyond their immediate community that have relative power over them (for instance by providing access to resources or services) (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010). Here, links between people and organizations and governmental bodies are also relevant. Citing Coleman (1988-1989), Magis (2010) argued that this linking social capital is particularly important for 'communities poor in resources' as 'the more they can link with sources of power and wealth, the greater their access to resources, the more opportunity they will have to make their voices heard, and the better situated they will be to take advantage of opportunities' (p. 407).

Scholars have argued that social capital is beneficial in building resilient communities (Anwar McHenry, 2011; Delfmann et al., 2013; Elstow, 2013; McIntosh et al., 2008; Steiner & Markantoni, 2013; Wilding, 2011). Delfmann et al. (2013), for example, show that the availability and use of social capital by a community determines, at least

in part, its ability to cope with stressors and accept changes in a constructive way. In general, social capital is considered to underpin the ability of a community 'to act as (and in the interests of) a community, and to identify and work towards community-based outcomes' (Dibden & Cocklin, 2005, p. 5). Revisiting Magis's definition of resilience, social capital thus supports community members in their personal and collective capacities 'to respond to and influence change, to sustain and renew the community, and to develop new trajectories for the communities' future' (2010, p. 402).

Focusing on community resilience in the context of emergency management, Elstow (2013) provided some concrete examples of how social capital "works". She noted that social capital strengthens group social norms to which community members feel pressure to conform. In the context of an emergency, this is relevant as it could, for example, translate into: 'I am going to check on my elderly neighbour in a power cut or share my provisions or I am going to volunteer because I can see that others are doing it too' (Elstow, 2013, p. 10). Elstow (2013) further suggested that social capital increases access to information, as people are better connected to each other and therefore, 'will be able to pass on where help and assistance is, and what local risks and hazards are' (p. 10).

A community's social capital can, however, be put under pressure by the economic, social and environmental challenges that it faces. For example, processes such as population decline, economic pressures and austerity can lead to the closure of local facilities or services, such as shops, pubs and churches, that are relevant to maintaining social connections. In their study, Skerratt & Steiner (2013) found that such places not only fulfil their primary functions but also play 'an important part in enhancing inter-connectivity of the communities, creating invisible "glue" which helped communities function well' (p. 332). Such places provide opportunities for socializing and their disappearance may have a negative impact on a community's social capital. In addition to the closure of such key places, population decline can also lead to the departure of key players (such as local entrepreneurs and residents who run the community centre) who play an important role in enhancing the social capital of a community and contribute to its resilience (see Delfmann et al., 2013). The processes described above can subsequently impact on a community's ability to respond to other local threats (Lovell, 2009).

The discussion above highlights two important issues. First, social capital is *one* of the resources that contribute to a community's resilience. As Magis (2010) noted, there are also economic, cultural, human, political, natural and built resources from which communities can draw to respond to change. Stehlik (2003) also reminded us

that resilience is ‘much more than just social capital, for it acknowledges that there is ambivalence about this [social] cohesion, that it may not be successful in every situation’ (p. 93). In considering rural communities, McIntosh et al. (2008) noted that it is often not sufficient to possess the necessary social capital to be resilient because the social structures of such communities can be threatened by changes over which they have little or no control, and they could simply lack sufficient scale and critical mass. Second, although social capital was initially thought to be a one-dimensional construct that produced only positive outcomes (see, for example, Larsen et al., 2004), several authors have more recently reassessed the concept and it is generally now acknowledged that there is also a “dark side” to social capital (Beugelsdijk & Smulders, 2009; Lovell, 2009; McCarthy et al., 2004; McIntosh et al., 2008; Portes, 1998). For example, Lovell (2009) highlighted the “polarizing effects” of social capital, acknowledging that it can increase inequalities between different groups. Nevertheless, against the backdrop of economic, social and environmental challenges facing communities, social capital is found to have an important role in determining which communities will thrive and which will not (Woodhouse, 2006). Just as social capital can be regarded as the “social glue” of communities, it can also be regarded as a “lubricant” that facilitates the development of community resilience.

2.3 Participatory community arts in community development

As Bishop (2006, p. 178) noted, there has been a recent surge of artistic interest in ‘collectivity, collaboration, and direct engagement with specific social constituencies’. Such art practices, Bishop (2006) notes, go by a variety of names, such as socially engaged art, community-based art, dialogical art, participatory art and collaborative art. We adopt the term “participatory community arts” in this chapter, referring to ‘a collaborative process between a professional practicing artist and a community. It is a collective method of art-making, engaging professional artists and self-defined communities through collaborative artistic expression’ (Ontario Arts Council, 1998, p. 7). These artistic activities can take on any art form as long as the community members as well as an artist are involved in the process. Bishop (2006) noted that although the output and objectives of artists engaged in community arts can vary enormously, they are all ‘linked by a belief in the empowering creativity of collective action and shared ideas’ (p. 179). As a result, within the field of participatory community arts, both the resulting artwork and the creative process leading to it are regarded as important, with the process being seen as an essential tool for achieving “collective, collaborative, mutually-beneficial” results (Ontario Arts Council, 1998).

Guetzkow (2002) noted that, in practice, participatory community arts are often initiated in the form of projects that attempt to use “art” as a tool for human or material development. Projects are designed in the context of a larger goal (such as learning

about diverse cultures or improving a neighbourhood) and can involve people who are disadvantaged in some way (such as people in a poor neighbourhood, ethnic minorities or at-risk youth). The idea behind such projects is that the involved community members develop themselves and gather knowledge, skills or insights, and that such benefits extend beyond the individual, positively impacting the broader community. Kay (2000) highlighted the role the arts can play in community empowerment and helping communities deal with the challenges they face. Specifically, he stated that ‘local people [...] engage together, develop social and economic skills and assume the power to fashion their future’ (p. 415) thus fostering the community’s adaptive capacities. More recently, Anwar McHenry (2011) maintained ‘that the arts can build resilience by providing an avenue for increased social and civic participation’ (p. 251), implying that the arts can be a vehicle for building resilience.

The recognized benefits noted by Anwar McHenry (2009, 2011), Guetzkow (2002) and Kay (2000) are more broadly supported by a literature review by Newman et al. (2003) that specifically highlighted the social gains achieved through the adoption of community-based arts projects. Based on their review, Newman et al. (2003) identified four social gains: 1) *personal changes* such as being happier, more creative and confident, making new friends, taking up training; 2) *social changes* such as improved organizational skills and greater cross-cultural community understanding; 3) *economic changes* with an improved community image helping inward investment and impacting on the number of new jobs and people finding work; and 4) *educational changes* such as improved school performance. The personal, social and economic changes reflect the development of the necessary “ingredients” for building social capital (see also Anwar McHenry, 2011; Guetzkow, 2002; Jermyn, 2001; Kingma, 2001; Williams, 1997). Newman et al. (2003) noted that only a few unintended negative consequences of the community-based arts projects (such as tiredness after the event) were ever mentioned in the reviewed literature, but observed that there were some reservations expressed as ‘to what extent all sections of a community are reached’ (p. 12) by the projects.

It is important to note that despite the general consensus on the contribution of participatory community arts to community capacity building, relatively few scholars associate this explicitly with the concepts of social capital and/or resilience (see, for example, Azmier, 2002; Matarasso, 1997). This is not surprising given Hutter & Kuhlicke’s (2013) claim that, in general, there has been little research ‘that connects the concept of resilience to existing assumptions, theories and concepts of social science and planning research’ (p. 295). This chapter aims to establish this link.

Having discussed both social capital and participatory community arts, the remainder of this chapter explores in greater depth how participatory community arts projects can generate various forms of social capital (bonding, bridging and linking) using two well-documented participatory arts projects as examples: *Closer* and *Connecting Places: Connected Lives*. It is important to note that our aim is not to present an exhaustive analysis of all participatory community arts projects but rather highlight important aspects in such projects that may contribute to, enrich even, communities' resilience. In our exploration of these two projects, we relied on secondary data, comprising academic articles, project reports, websites and a handbook on the role of the arts in building sustainable communities. We studied the available material and analysed how these projects had contributed to the social capital and resilience of the communities in which they took place.

2.4 Two participatory community arts projects

The first project we discuss is a participatory community arts project that was initiated by a housing organization to revitalize two neighbourhoods and create a thriving community. It demonstrates the potential of participatory community arts to engage community members in regeneration activities and yield benefits for the community. The second project was chosen because, in addition to illustrating the ability of participatory community arts to generate bridging capital, it highlights a specific benefit of an arts-based activity by addressing the role of material aspects in building social relationships. This project also engaged the larger community and was seen by the coordinator of the involved refugee-led community organization as far more successful than more formal activities that were also aimed at bringing the local communities together (Askins & Pain, 2011). These two projects were selected because, in contrast to many participatory community arts projects, they are relatively well documented (see also Daly, 2005; Jermyn, 2001; Reeves, 2002). This is essential for our discussion as we want to illustrate the various dimensions of social capital that participatory community arts can generate (i.e. bonding, bridging and linking), in order to understand the potential of participatory community arts in building community resilience. Furthermore, whereas *Closer* provides an example of a participatory community arts project that was open to the entire community and built social capital in two geographically separated neighbourhoods, *Connecting Places: Connected Lives* presents an example of a project that built social capital in an ethnically separated neighbourhood, with participants being selected based on their age and ethnicity.

In our discussions of the two projects, we first provide information on the communities where the projects took place, including the challenges they faced. We then describe the aim and process of each participatory community arts project. In our discussion,

we draw out how the project addressed social capital and contributed to building resilience in the community by helping community members deal with the challenges they faced. After discussing the two projects, we briefly reflect on three critical issues that came to the fore: the importance of sustaining the impacts of participatory community arts projects, the potential downsides of projects, and difficulties in getting funding and support for participatory community arts projects.

2.4.1 “Closer”

Closer is a community-based arts project that took place in 2001 in two Liverpool neighbourhoods (Speke and Garston) that are home to a total of around 25,000 people (Beedham & Wade, 2005; Carey & Sutton, 2002, 2004). The Liverpool History Society’s (LHS) website (2016) describes the neighbourhoods as the “lost villages” of Liverpool. They are areas of significant deprivation and disadvantage, with statistics indicating a high incidence of poverty and unemployment, low skills and poor educational achievement. From the LHS website, it is apparent that Speke and Garston have been neglected for decades, being low on the regeneration priority scale, resulting in ‘a community suffering from appallingly decayed housing stock, significant social problems, and a high crime rate’ (p.1). The website also mentions that there has been a lack of adequate social and community facilities and that the inhabitants felt that they were often regarded as “outsiders”, an indication of low levels of social capital. This environment of neglect and desperation led to ‘disillusionment, distrust and disenchantment with authority’ as Carey & Sutton (2002, p. 12) noted. They stated that, over the years, the communities in these neighbourhoods had been subjected to many unsuccessful “regenerative” activities. Participation in these initiatives has always been low, and tended to attract the same small group of committed community members. This is particularly indicative of a low level of linking social capital which, as explained above, is particularly important for “communities poor in resources” as it gives them more opportunities to make their voices heard and greater access to resources (see Magis, 2010).

Closer was initiated by South Liverpool Housing (SLH, the largest social landlord in the area) in partnership with Arts in Regeneration (AiR, a locally based community arts organization). The project was an expression of SLH’s mission ‘not just to revitalize the houses and the physical environment, but to work with all the people of Speke and Garston to create a vibrant, thriving community where people are proud to live and work’ (Carey & Sutton, 2002, p. 6). Although the authors did not use the terminology, this project’s mission implies that the activities were targeted at capacity building and aiming to contribute to Speke and Garston’s resilience – so that the neighbourhoods would “bounce forward”.

Closer set out to develop and deliver six arts and culture projects, each involving a professional artist collaborating with local people, in six different locations throughout Speke and Garston. Activities conducted in the context of *Closer* included two environmental arts projects that focused on the development of children's play areas, a video documentary following the redevelopment of the area in which residents were actively involved in the production and content, and an internet radio station that worked with residents from local sheltered accommodation in setting up the station (see Carey & Sutton, 2002, pp. 4-5, 2004, p. 125). In adopting a participatory approach, *Closer* aimed to create a framework for participation that would yield several benefits for the community including training and support for residents in order to increase their participation and self-reliance, and continued skills development after the completion of *Closer* by joining in other regeneration initiatives (Beedham & Wade, 2005). Such benefits contribute to a community's adaptive capacities and make it more resilient by providing the community with some level of control over its future direction (McIntosh et al., 2008).

Beedham & Wade's (2005) handbook on the role of the arts in building sustainable communities cited *Closer* as a successful and exemplary project, largely because of its ability to "bring the community together". In line with this, Carey & Sutton (2002) concluded, in their evaluation report on *Closer*, that the project met its aim of increasing participation. They found that many people were involved in the project as well as in their community. In a later publication, they noted that there was now 'a greater sense of solidarity and commitment to the community from people who live and work in the area' (2004, p. 133), which they viewed as an important long-term legacy of the project. In terms of McCarthy et al.'s definition cited above, this suggests that *bonding capital* had been developed within Speke and Garston. Carey & Sutton (2002) argued that it was the project's arts focus that encouraged people to become involved. They cited (p. 25) a resident who said: 'people are wary of authority, whereas with this being art it's been less formal and friendly'. Participation in the *Closer* project also resulted in the development of a range of individual skills and qualities that Beedham & Wade (2005) and Carey & Sutton (2002) summarized as including: IT and broadcasting skills; organisational, budgeting, intercommunicative and social skills; increased self-confidence and assertiveness. It is noteworthy that at least some residents intended to expand these skills by 'opting to attend personal capacity building courses to maximize their input into the area' (Carey & Sutton, 2004, p. 132).

Benefits of the *Closer* projects extended beyond the boundaries of the individual neighbourhoods. First, Carey & Sutton (2002) emphasized that *Closer* helped to bring the people from the two distinct areas together: prior to the project 'it [was] evident

that residents from both Speke and Garston view[ed] each other with a certain degree of suspicion and distrust – “*them & us*”. This project has gone some way to healing this rift’ (p. 24, original emphasis). They argued that the project’s arts focus had ‘encouraged inclusion through getting different groups of people to work together’ (p. 25). The ability to collaborate, and thus expand the resources available to the community, demonstrates the building up of *bridging capital* (see Magis, 2010). Second, evidence was noted of stronger links with key agencies both within and beyond Speke and Garston (Carey & Sutton, 2004). Beedham & Wade (2005) noted that *Closer* raised the profile of SLH and changed residents’ perceptions of it. They cited the project leader (the New Business Initiatives Manager from SLH), who said: ‘it [*Closer*] brought the community together so it was no longer a struggle to get people involved – now people trust us’ (p. 45). Such relationships between individuals and institutions beyond their immediate community who have relative power over them are associated with *linking capital* (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010). As outlined earlier, and especially for disadvantaged and rundown neighbourhoods such as Speke and Garston, such linking capital is significant in expanding access to resources and opportunities (see Magis, 2010). In addition, Carey & Sutton (2002) noted that *Closer* positively changed people’s perceptions of the value of art as a tool for participation and regeneration, and maintained that the dialogue between the community members and the artists greatly contributed to this. To illustrate this, they quoted a resident who stated: ‘because the artists came out and listened to people and explained what art can be... that was the thing, that got things going’ (p. 26).

To summarize, we can conclude that *Closer* contributed to the development of bonding, bridging and linking capitals in Speke and Garston and, in this way, contributed to the resilience of the neighbourhoods by increasing the capacity of the community members ‘to respond to and influence change, to sustain and renew the community, and to develop new trajectories for the communities’ future’ (Magis, 2010, p. 402).

2.4.2 “Connecting Places: Connected Lives”

Connecting Places: Connected Lives was a participatory community arts project that was conducted in Newcastle upon Tyne in the UK in 2006-2007. It involved children from African refugee and from white British backgrounds. As Askins & Pain (2011) noted, separation and hostility between existing and newly arrived groups were key current social and political issues of concern in the UK (and elsewhere). Connected to this, the notion of “community cohesion” had become a central theme for social policy in the UK, with an ‘acceleration of efforts to bring different communities together’ (Askins & Pain, 2011, p. 804) and the UK government placing a ‘high priority on the promotion of integration and development of resilient communities through the Cohesion Delivery Framework and Guidance on Meaningful Interaction’ (ibid.,

p. 805). Askins & Pain (2011) explained that community cohesion is outlined as an attempt to build communities with four key characteristics: ‘a common vision and a sense of belonging for all; the valuing of diversity; similar life opportunities for all; and strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools, and within neighbourhoods’ (ibid., p. 804). What resonates in this is the need to build *bridging capital* which, as explained above, exposes people to diversity, enhances their ability to work with each other and expands the resources available to them (Magis, 2010). This contributes to a community’s resilience as it creates the “glue” that helps communities to function well and deal with the challenges they face.

2 In fact, it was the researchers Askins & Pain themselves who initiated *Connecting Places: Connected Lives*, which ‘set out to use participatory art to explore emotional topographies, everyday exclusions, and notions of belonging’ (Askins & Pain, 2011, p. 803; see also Pain et al., 2007; Durham University, 2016). The project was conducted in collaboration with African Community Advice North East (ACANE), a refugee-led community organization that aims to ‘support the settlement of asylum seekers and refugees from the African continent, who have been dispersed to the North East region and Tyneside in particular, and to actively promote their integration with the host community so that they can lead full and active lives, and participate in and contribute to the community on an equal basis’ (quoted from Involve NorthEast, 2016). Askins & Pain (2011) explained that although ‘interaction was part of the collaborative framing of what the project was about’, and that ACANE’s manager hoped that there would also be benefits in terms of interaction from the project’s process itself, that ‘the research was not specially designed to facilitate it’ (p. 808).

Connecting Places: Connected Lives involved 21 children aged 5-16 who met at ACANE’s community centre with the researchers. They discussed and expressed their feelings about bullying and commonly held negative images of African countries, using diagrams, cartoons and sketches. Their ideas were then developed into images using acrylic paints. First, the participants focused on African countries, then on Newcastle. Subsequently, the connections between these places were discussed. The paintings were an attempt to promote positive images of African countries and of Newcastle, and highlight some of the connections between them (see Askins & Pain, 2011; Durham University, 2016).

Connecting Places: Connected Lives contributed to the community in Newcastle upon Tyne by providing a meeting place for African and British children. It stimulated the building of *bridging capital* and, in this way, contributed to the community’s resilience. The project engaged the local community, which Askins & Pain (2011) regarded as

crucial for success in a community cohesion initiative. They noted that, for ACANE's coordinator, the project was part of a series of efforts to bring the local communities together, and was seen as far more successful than more formal activities (which are not further specified). A quote from ACANE's coordinator illustrates this: 'I'm happy because they [the two groups] can now even meet, because it used to be that black and white kids were not mixing very much. But I'm happy because we start to have those activities where they can come together and let the community know about the things that are important to them – to try to break this ice between those communities' (ibid., p. 817). Pain et al. (2007) further reported that the participatory art techniques used in the project helped in this process of breaking down barriers between the children in the group. In addition, they were 'useful for expressing feelings, ideas and images of places which are sometimes difficult to put into words' (ibid, p. 2). Not only the paintings themselves, but also the processes and discussion that went into producing them, 'began to identify points of similarity between the young people from different backgrounds' (Askins & Pain, 2011, p. 809).

Reflecting on the project, Askins & Pain (2011) noted that, initially, there were negative interactions between the young participants and that 'dominant social groupings and power relations were played out through the use/control of objects [that were used in the creative process]' (p. 813). In this sense, the divisive social relationships that the participants encountered in their everyday lives were also present on the site of the project. However, they noted that this changed as the project progressed and interactions between the ethnic groups increased. They stated, for example, that 'as young people began to explore *shared* themes about their separate lives in the neighbourhood, unexpected new alliances began to form' (ibid., p. 811, original emphasis) and that 'the young people began to interact with us [the researchers] and each other to develop the key themes and produce artwork around them' (ibid., p. 811). As such, bridges were constructed between the research participants, across the two ethnic groups, thereby generating *bridging capital*.

In their article, Askins & Pain (2011) highlighted 'the materiality of art (the tools) within participatory practices (the doing of it) in contributing to a space where interactions might take place' (p. 803). They highlighted the important role played by the materials with which the participants worked: 'through engaging with materials, then, interaction among the young people increased *and changed* – subtly, but there was a tangible shift in individuals' behaviours with each other' (p. 814, original emphasis). The authors explained that the materials that were used in the project (e.g. pens, tubes of paint) 'appeared to suggest interactions, demand communications, and enable conversations across and between the research participants, and researchers and participants – they were *part of our contact*' (p. 813, original emphasis). For example,

the participants had to share the materials around within the overall group, asked each other questions regarding the use of the materials, and also used the materials in “non-art” ways (such as using paintbrushes as swords in mock sword fights). Askins & Pain (2011) concluded that new social relationships could be prompted or enabled by the physical and embodied experiences of making art and using art-related materials. In their *Connecting Places: Connected Lives* project, they saw how race-based divides began to break down and new relationships were formed (which were also visible beyond the project), specifically through the use of the “stuff” of the art project.

Connecting Places: Connected Lives demonstrates the ability of participatory community arts to generate *bridging capital* – in particular between ethnic groups – that can stimulate community cohesion and help in developing community resources that are beneficial in terms of increasing community resilience.

2.4.3 Critical reflections

Before turning to our conclusions on the value of participatory community arts in building community resilience, it is important to note three critical issues that emerged from the discussed projects.

First, in the literature on both projects, the authors identified the importance of sustaining the impacts of the participatory community arts projects. As such a long-term perspective is highly relevant in light of community resilience, which requires communities that can ‘thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise’ (Magis, 2010, p. 402). Although a single participatory community arts event has the potential to facilitate new social relationships, Askins & Pain (2011) argued that ‘policy should recognize the need for repeated activities [...] if any transformative changes in relations between people are to become routinized and a new norm’ (p. 818). On a similar note, Carey & Sutton (2004) stated that the real value of community development is only achieved if participatory community arts projects are sustainable. They argued that a “long-term legacy” should be an important outcome of projects and that, ideally, ‘projects should not “finish”, but should evolve to meet the expanding capacity and aspirations of the community, as well as building on success’ (p. 133). In considering *Closer*, they commented that there was a concern among the residents that involvement would be undermined if the successes of the project were not built upon, and that a failure to do so would undermine residents’ sense of achievement and belonging.

Second, it is important to bear in mind that participatory community arts projects can also have downsides. Matarasso (1997) noted that arts projects can be poorly planned or executed, or produce negative outcomes such as damaged personal or community

confidence. Further, projects could provide unequal opportunities for participation and, in this way, contribute to the exclusion of certain groups in the community (see, for example, Mattern, 2001). Some of the literature tends to ignore these negative aspects, and failed participatory community arts projects are often not documented at all (Belfiore, 2006; Guetzkow, 2002). In contrast, when reflecting on *Connecting Places: Connected Lives*, Askins & Pain (2011) quite extensively reflected on a second, in their eyes less successful, part of the project. This second part involved a local professional artist and was intended to produce a display at an established public art site. Whereas the first part of the project was hands on, this second part was distinctly less participatory, with the artist doing all the work while the young people watched. Askins & Pain noted how this had a negative impact on relationships among the young people: ‘relations between young people that had previously begun to shift from avoidance to interaction to positive encounters seemed to be reverting back to longer held and enacted exclusions’ (ibid., p. 812). Also, when it came to reflecting on *Closer*, Carey & Sutton (2004) provided some more critical reflections on the participatory community arts project. They reflected on some frustrations that were present in the process of planning and managing *Closer* (including in the fundraising process and in the relationships between the artists and managers involved), and noted that the short timescale of *Closer* indirectly led to some residents feeling excluded and disappointed. They explained that, as a consequence of the project’s short timescale (six months), several of the micro-projects were unfinished by the time of the grand finale (a party to showcase the work that had been achieved through the project) and that this created negative feelings among some of the residents who were involved in the unfinished micro-projects.

Third, from Carey & Sutton’s (2004) reflections, it becomes clear that it can be difficult to obtain the necessary funding and support for a participatory community arts project. They commented that accessing funds for *Closer* took considerable effort and was “extremely time-consuming”. Moreover, they observed that ‘some fund-holders’ regulations mitigate against project sustainability by ruling out bids from already existing projects’ (ibid., p. 128), which they saw as a possible threat to any future development.

2.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, we argue that participatory community arts should be considered in community development processes as a means for building community resilience. Resilience policy and practice have to date often focused on rebuilding the economic and physical infrastructure of a community (White & O’Hare, 2014). However, as Boon et al. (2012) observed, community events that support social networks and build a sense of place deserve similar emphasis. Together with other resilience-building

initiatives, they can assist communities in developing the capacity and resources to deal with the challenges they face and to flourish.

2 An evolutionary approach to planning for resilience, i.e. one which is more attuned to sociocultural conditions and embraces transformability (White & O'Hare, 2014), offers a suitable framework for including participatory community arts in community development processes. Participatory community arts projects can positively contribute to “resilience-in-process” (see Davoudi, 2012) because they offer the potential to generate various forms of social capital that contribute to a community's adaptive capacity ‘to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise’ (Magis, 2010, p. 402). Generally speaking, because of the build-up of social capital, community members can become more connected to each other and to their community. Subsequently, they are more willing to contribute to their community and its development (Brennan et al., 2009; Derrett, 2003). This is important for community resilience, as resilience requires (pro-)active communities that are capable of helping themselves (Steiner & Markantoni, 2013), with community members intentionally developing ‘personal and collective capacity that they engage to respond to and influence change, to sustain and renew the community, and to develop new trajectories for the communities' future’ (Magis, 2010, p. 402).

As discussed above, various studies have shown how participatory community arts provide a context for social interaction between various and often very different community members, bringing people together, stimulating direct social interaction and, thus, providing opportunities for building bonds (see, for example, Anwar McHenry, 2011; Guetzkow, 2002; Jermyn, 2001; Kingma, 2001; Newman et al., 2003; Williams, 1997). In the two projects we explored in depth, the arts were specifically credited with helping to involve people and to facilitate interactions. *Closer* targeted community members from two geographically separated neighbourhoods, whereas *Connecting Places, Connected Lives* involved participants from within an ethnically separated neighbourhood. Both projects illustrate the ability of participatory community arts to generate various types of social capital. By supporting social networks and building a sense of place, they are excellent examples of the kind of community events that Boon et al. (2012) urged be included in resilience-building initiatives. It is important to note that the successful projects we discussed both took place in a UK context. Other spatial contexts, as well as processes or events that put pressure on local communities (such as those discussed in other chapters of this book), may require different forms of participatory community arts projects.

Participatory community arts projects often take their cues from the everyday, lived experiences of communities and use these to formulate goals for human development

(see, for example, Askins & Pain, 2011; Derrett, 2003). In doing so, they can offer interesting tools as part of a resilience policy that ‘is being directed towards smaller spatial scales and everyday practices’ rather than ‘a command and control approach from central government’ (Coaffee, 2013, p. 333). Coaffee (2013) further noted that such ‘*letting go*’ by institutions and organizations is needed to ‘creat[e] the necessary framework for action’ (p. 333, original emphasis). He regarded ‘this integration of a range of resiliency approaches at the *local* level’ as representing ‘the latest generation of resilience practices that planners are increasingly being asked to adopt’ (p. 325, original emphasis).

However, Christopherson et al. (2010, p. 9) emphasized that ‘we should avoid assuming that the same drivers of change are at work everywhere and if we just pull the right levers, the appropriate drivers will respond and deliver the required outcomes’. We would therefore like to stress the need to take the specific socio-spatial context in which a participatory community arts project is planned into account when planning for resilience, as each community will have its own characteristics and needs.

In addition, one should be aware of the importance of sustaining the impacts of participatory community arts projects, of the potential downsides of projects, and of the difficulties in obtaining funding and support for projects – critical issues that came to the fore in the two cases we investigated. Mattern (2001) provided a good example of the dividing potential of the arts, showing that they can also act more as a “social solvent”, dividing two groups, than as a “social glue”. Moreover, when discussing the value of participatory community arts in building community resilience, it is important to note, as Burnell (2012) argued, that they cannot alone resolve the complex socioeconomic issues that many communities face. Nevertheless, Burnell (2012) promoted culture as ‘an essential resource for change’ (p. 138), arguing that the arts and cultural resources ‘provide a wide range of diverse opportunities aimed at unlocking intangible assets and social capital – opportunities that can lead to an increase in tangible assets being accumulated with the aim of reducing vulnerability and building more resilient and sustainable communities’ (p. 147). A view which our findings support.

CHAPTER 3

'It is not only an artist village, it is much more than that'⁴. The binding and dividing effects of the arts on a community.

Abstract

The value of “the arts” in community development is increasingly being recognized. This chapter contributes to emerging insights on the various impacts of the arts on communities by highlighting when and how they can have binding and dividing effects on a community. We draw on a participatory research project conducted in Pingjum, a village in the Netherlands that hosts many cultural activities and in which many artists live. We discuss how the arts in Pingjum influence the community in the village. In our discussion, we pay attention to the sense of community that the arts generate, the meeting opportunities they provide and how the community is engaged by some artists. Our study shows that the influence of the arts is context-dependent, with the arts having both binding and dividing effects on the community in Pingjum. In terms of the value of the arts for community development, we emphasize three key issues: that the arts I) do not have only advantages for a community; II) do not engage the entire community; and III) could potentially contribute to community fragmentation. Given these issues, we argue that the arts should be considered as *one* of several supportive means in community development processes. Ideally, they are integrated into a wider community development strategy and planning, and exist alongside other associations and activities in a community. In this way, the arts can contribute to the robustness of a community and assist it in developing the capacity and resources to flourish.

4 Quote walking interview Abby (middle-aged woman, “incomer”).

3.1 Introduction

In 2007, the *Community Development Journal* dedicated a special issue to the arts, community development and democracy. The special issue reflects a growing interest within academic research in the role of the arts in community development (see Meade & Shaw, 2007 and also Anwar McHenry, 2011; Carey & Sutton, 2004; Phillips, 2004; Zitcer et al., 2016). Matarasso (2007, p. 499), for example, highlighted ‘the potential of cultural action to bring people together and to build a foundation for lasting community development work’. Drawing on his research on “voluntary arts development” in the UK and his experience of community cultural projects in southeast Europe, he concluded that arts projects can result in a wide range of community development outcomes. Even if an original project is discontinued, Matarasso (2007) noted that the individual and collective capacities gained through an arts project strengthen the community. Such capacities can include the development of IT skills, project management and teamwork competencies, growing confidence and the build-up of social capital. Various studies, conducted in different contexts, on the role of the arts in development issues support these findings. These include Anwar McHenry’s (2011) research in the Mid-West of Australia, Kay’s (2000) examination of four arts projects in Scotland, and Lowe’s (2000) participant observation study of two community arts projects in the United States of America.

In general, publications such as the above focus on the positive impacts of the arts on communities and ignore any potentially negative impacts (Belfiore, 2006). When failed projects are examined, the focus tends to be on the causes rather than consequences of failure (Guetzkow, 2002). In this chapter, we aim to contribute to emerging insights on the various impacts of the arts on communities by highlighting when and how they can have binding and/or dividing effects on a community. Following Panelli & Welch (2005), we see communities as heterogeneous entities. Consequently, the arts will work differently and have various effects for different individuals and groups of community members. Therefore, when recommending arts-based activities for community development, attention should be given to this heterogeneity since it has consequences for the extent to which community development is actually supported. In the next section, we first provide a brief background of the literature on the impacts of the arts on communities. Then, we introduce our study that involved a participatory research project carried out in Pingjum, a village located in the Netherlands. Following this, we analyse how the arts influenced the community in our case-study village. We focus on the sense of community that the arts generated, the meeting opportunities they provided and how the community was engaged by some artists. The chapter concludes with three key issues concerning the value of the arts in community development.

3.2 Theoretical framework

Eernstman & Wals (2013, p. 1648) noted that nowadays 'there is an increasing recognition that the arts are valuable beyond just gallery and consumption or aesthetic purposes'. In her review on arts impact research, Reeves (2002) pointed to Matarasso's study *Use or Ornament. The Social Impact of Participation in Arts Programmes* (1997) as playing an important role in the increased recognition of the contribution of the arts to social development. She noted that his study had brought the social benefits of the arts fully to the attention of arts funding agencies and policymakers. The value of the arts in community development has increasingly been recognized (Carey & Sutton, 2004; Meade & Shaw, 2007; Phillips, 2004; Zitcer et al., 2016). As we have previously noted (see Chapter 2), participatory community arts projects are often designed in the context of a larger community goal, with the arts being used as a tool for human or material development. The expectation is that, through their involvement in an arts project, community members will develop themselves and gain skills, knowledge or insights, and that, subsequently, these benefits will positively affect the broader community (see also Eernstman & Wals, 2013; Matarasso, 2007).

Several scholars have claimed a broad range of benefits for communities from the arts (see e.g. Balfour et al., 2016; Anwar McHenry, 2011), some of which are relevant in a community development context. McCarthy et al. (2004), for instance, distinguished two general categories of social benefits in the literature on the arts at the community level. First, they observed that some studies focus on the way the arts help to connect members of a community by the 'promotion of social interaction among community members, creating a sense of community identity and helping to build social capital at the community level' (p. 14). These aspects can be beneficial for community development. Lowe (2000, p. 366) explained that working on an arts project can offer community members 'an experience of community life that inspire[s] feelings of belonging and unity'. Such feelings can be enhanced, she noted, because participants are actively encouraging each other's work or are communicating about issues of importance, thereby enabling them to express and discover common concerns. This contributes to a sense of community, implying that people identify with their community and participate in community affairs more (Sjollema & Hanley, 2013). The second category distinguished by McCarthy et al. (2004, p. 14) consists of 'studies maintaining that the arts can enhance conditions conducive to building a community's organizational capacity'. They mentioned three ways in which this is stimulated: 'through the development of local arts groups and leaders, through the promotion of cooperation among arts and non-arts groups, and through the more general process of people organizing and getting involved in civic institutions and volunteer associations'. They referred to these as structural assets that are essential for community mobilization and revitalization.

Based on the above, the arts seem to be an appropriate means for community development. Community-based arts projects indeed appeal to many authorities, Sharp et al. (2005, p. 1004) noted, as ‘they are generally low-cost and yet are perceived to be able to yield benefits beyond the aesthetic that correlate with social policy objectives’. However, such positive outcomes of arts projects cannot be taken for granted and a more nuanced perspective is needed. As Matarasso (1997) observed, the social impacts of the arts are complex since ‘the arts are not fast-food, predictable in content in every place and on every occasion’ (p. 75). He noted that they can have negative as well as positive outcomes, and that some outcomes are both positive and negative, or change from one to the other. Nevertheless, the literature on the impact of the arts on communities tends to focus on the positive impacts of the arts. Newman et al. (2003), for instance, conducted a literature review to explore the extent to which community-based arts projects achieved social gains and noted that only a few unintended negative consequences of projects were ever mentioned.

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Despite the generally positive focus on the effects of the arts on communities, some scholars have paid attention to the less positive sides of the arts for communities. Newman et al. (2003), for instance, did note reservations in their literature review about ‘to what extent *all* sections of a community are reached’ (p. 12, emphasis added) by arts projects. This is related to the extent to which arts projects are in-/exclusive, and provokes the question as to *who* is participating in the arts (see e.g. Anwar McHenry, 2011; McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001) and what the potential barriers to engaging in the arts are (see e.g. Grodach, 2009; Mulligan et al., 2006; Zitcer et al., 2016). People’s backgrounds, for instance, may influence whether they experience barriers to engaging in the arts. Referring to Bourdieu (1993), Balfour et al. (2016, p. 7) stated that ‘those who lack the cultural capital developed through academic and family social processes tend to be segregated as inferior if they create or interact with art, just as an academic credential for an artist or an artist critic is used to legitimize them as being superior’. A subsequent issue that can arise out of these different levels of participation in the arts is that a relatively small number of ‘local activists’ dominate, as Sharp et al. (2005) noted with regards to the production of public art.

In light of the above, Sharp et al. (2005, p. 1002) remarked that the question ‘culture for whom?’ immediately arises when culture is employed as part of regeneration processes. Mattern (2001) provided an illustration of this by pointing to the potential of the arts to divide. In his study on Santa Ana’s efforts to use the arts to promote community development, he found that the arts acted more as a “social wedge” than as a “social bridge”. Although the arts helped to create and develop community within the city, they divided inhabitants ‘along interrelated class and ethnic lines by segregating experience and by providing inequitable opportunities for participation

in the public and civic life of Santa Ana' (p. 302). The creation of an "Artist Village" in downtown Santa Ana, for example, led to gentrification processes that tended to drive mostly Hispanic artists and small businesses out of the neighbourhood. Although the "Artist Village" in itself might have been successful, it had (unintended) side effects which were negative to some.

With regard to the value of the arts in a community development context, it is important to note that some authors raised questions about whether the claimed benefits could be produced in another, more efficient way through other group activities such as competing in a sports team or attending religious services (e.g. Guetzkow, 2002; McCarthy et al., 2004). Matarasso (1997) argued, however, that arts projects are different because of whom they engage and the quality of that engagement. He explained that, more than other human activities, the arts are concerned with meanings and values, which motivate people and make them engaged participants in arts projects and, by extension, in local democratic processes.

This chapter contributes to emerging insights on the various influences of the arts on communities by highlighting when and how they can have binding and/or dividing effects on a community. Unlike scholars such as Newman et al. (2003) and Matarasso (1997), we not only focus on community-based arts projects but take a broader perspective of the arts. This breadth ranges from the presence of various artists in our case-study village (e.g. visual artists, a goldsmith) and the local places connected to the arts (e.g. the podium venues), to activities such as the annual arts weekend and performances in which the inhabitants themselves are involved. In order to examine how the arts influence the community in the case-study village, we draw on opinions and experiences with the arts and artists in Pingjum as expressed by the participants in our participatory research project. In the next section, we introduce the participatory research project and the village where it was conducted.

3.3 Pingjum and the research project

This chapter draws on a participatory research project that was conducted in Pingjum, a village of around 600 inhabitants in the province of Friesland in the Netherlands. The inhabitants include *Pingjumer*s (people who were born and raised in Pingjum), other Frisians (who moved from within Friesland to Pingjum), and "incomers" (people who moved to Pingjum from outside of Friesland). Currently, many rural communities face economic and social changes such as depopulation, ageing, unemployment, insufficient access to and quality of services, school closures and a lack of transport services and affordable housing (Steiner & Markantoni, 2013). Pingjum is experiencing some of these changes. For instance, over recent decades, many of the village's facilities such as the supermarket and bakery have disappeared. Nevertheless, Pingjum still has an

active village life with many associations, such as an orchestra and the *kaats*-association (*kaatsen* is a typical Frisian sport). In addition, compared to other villages in the northern Netherlands, Pingjum hosts many cultural activities and has a relatively large presence of artists. These activities range from music performances and exhibitions to community arts projects, and involve both professional artists and people who engage in art as a hobby, such as visual artists, graphic designers, photographers, musicians, a documentary producer and a goldsmith. The performing arts seem to play the most important role in the economic life of the community with the local performances contributing to Pingjum's reputation (see below) and attracting visitors to the village who, subsequently, might visit the local bar and pizzeria. Pingjum has a small music/theatre podium (that was initiated by one of the inhabitants) and a theatre podium annex workplace (led by an artist couple living in Pingjum). The village also has an artists' association to which many artists in Pingjum belong, that organizes an annual arts weekend during which artists can exhibit their work throughout the village. All this artistic activity does not go unnoticed beyond Pingjum's boundaries, leading to Pingjum having a reputation as an "artist village" in the media (e.g. van Santen, 2013).

3 Our participatory research project was conducted as part of a broader study that addresses the role of the arts in community resilience. It had three stages: walking interviews, group discussions and a creative workshop that resulted in an exhibition in Pingjum. Participants were recruited in several ways, such as by the door-to-door distribution of flyers and giving a presentation at the annual meeting of the village's interest group. In total, 28 inhabitants participated including both men and women, people in different age groups (<25, 25-65, >65) and *Pingjumers*, other Frisians, and "incomers".

The first stage of the participatory research project involved walking interviews. Walking interviews are a good way of accessing community members' connections to their surrounding environment (Evans & Jones, 2011) and offer an informal way of interaction that makes participants feel at ease and able to express themselves in everyday talk (Lager et al., 2015). Here, in order for the researcher to gain an understanding of the participants' *sense of place* of Pingjum, each participant was asked to take the researcher on a "tour" through the village. During the walks, the participants showed and took photographs of places that are meaningful to them and places that, in their eyes, are facing potential changes or are disputed in the community. In addition to the walking part, the interview questions probed people's opinions on and experiences with the arts and artists in Pingjum, their opinions on Pingjum's reputation of being an "artist village", and the positive and negative sides of this reputation, and their views on whether the community values and supports the presence of the arts and artists.

The second stage of the project consisted of group discussions in which the participants further discussed the shared and different meanings of particular places in Pingjum. These took place on one morning, with 16 of the 28 interviewed participants meeting in the village hall. Those absent were either unable to join due to a scheduling conflict or lacked interest. The participants were divided into three groups of mixed ages, which were presented with the photographs taken during the walking interviews and some guiding questions (on the photographed places and their meanings over time) as starting points for their discussions.

The third stage of the participatory research project involved a creative workshop leading to an exhibition. Nine participants were willing and able to take part in this stage, which had as its aim visualizing the meanings that participants assigned to places in Pingjum. The participants gathered for one morning in the village hall and, with the help of four students from the Minerva art academy in Groningen, visualized some of the “stories” attached to certain places in Pingjum that had been collected during the first two stages of the project. During the morning, four groups emerged, resulting in four different artworks. A few weeks later, the artworks, together with an overview of the photographs taken during the walking interviews, were presented during an exhibition in the village hall. The exhibition aimed to engage the audience and generate discussion on the meanings of certain places in Pingjum. In this way, the project aimed to contribute positively to the community’s (thinking on) resilience and development. At the same time, the exhibition served as a closure to the participatory research project.

3.4 ‘Pingjum is known as an “artist village”, but...’⁵

While walking and talking with our participants, it became clear that many of them regard the presence of the arts and artists in their village as something positive, although some expressed annoyances with regards to the influence the arts have had (see below). In our analysis of how the arts in Pingjum influence the community, we focus on: the sense of community they generate, the meeting opportunities the arts provide and how the community is engaged by some artists. Throughout the discussion, we highlight the binding and dividing effects of the arts on the community.

3.4.1 Sense of community

The contribution that the arts can make to a sense of community is seen as an important social benefit (McCarthy et al., 2004). In Pingjum, we found that the arts can indeed contribute to this, but also that, in practice, they can simultaneously have a dividing effect.

⁵ Quote walking interview Abby (middle-aged woman, “incomer”).

As already noted, the presence of the arts and artists in Pingjum has led to Pingjum gaining a reputation as an “artist village”. Dorpsbelang Pingjum (2012), the village’s interest association, wrote the following about this reputation in their vision document:

‘Pingjum is considered to be an artist village by many. It is undeniable that this is reflected in the culture, the economic activities and the atmosphere of the village’ (our translation).

This statement was included in the interview guide and read to the participants during the walking interviews, who were then asked to give their opinion on it. Some participants agreed with the statement and acknowledged the role that the arts play in people’s sense of community. Furthermore, they argued that the arts contribute to people’s feelings of pride, which, in their eyes, also enhances the sense of community in Pingjum. The participants take pride in both the number of events (including arts events) that are organized in their village and the nature of the arts events themselves. Talking about the annual arts weekend, William⁶ (middle-aged man, “incomer”), for instance, noted:

‘I feel some pride then, like gosh, this is organized in tiny Pingjum’.

However, other people in Pingjum are not so happy with the amount of attention the arts and artists receive, both within the village itself and in a larger context. During the research, it became clear that some of the participants are annoyed about the “artist village” reputation and see the arts as too one-sided and dominant in Pingjum’s village life. They argued that the focus on the arts does not do justice to other activities, such as the *kaats*-sport, and people such as farmers, that they saw as more ‘authentic’ within the village. In their eyes, the arts are more like a competitive force in the village, with the risk of becoming too dominant. Abby (middle-aged woman, “incomer”), for example, commented:

‘[Pingjum] is known as an artist village, but it also is a *kaats*-village, it also is a horse village, it is a farming village. It is not only an artist village, it is much more than that’.

She regards Pingjum’s reputation as an “artist village” as too one-sided:

‘You ignore a proportion of the people. There are twenty-five artists who live here, I believe. And then you have some people like me, who can kind of be associated with it... who feel comfortable with it. But there are also people who get really angry about it [the reputation]. [They say] “Yes, coincidentally, quite some artists are living here, but it is still *our* village”. It is as if those other people [non-artists] are just tolerated here [...] yes, a few people who can create something nice are living here, but it is *my* village, that also has the right to exist’.

6 Fictional names are used for the participants.

Although the arts can contribute to a sense of community and feelings of pride, our walking interviews suggest that this is not a universal interpretation. Not everyone in the community appeared willing to identify with Pingjum's "artist village" reputation, making this a contested identity. For some people, the reputation does not contribute to a sense of community. This might reinforce a division of people in the community between those who are engaged in the arts and those who are not.

3.4.2 Meeting opportunities

Over recent decades, facilities such as the bakery and the supermarket have closed down in Pingjum. This not only means that people now have to rely on facilities further away, but also that some of their interactions *in* Pingjum have changed. The facilities that disappeared used to be central meeting points in the village, being everyday meeting places that were important for people's daily interactions. As Elle (middle-aged woman, Frisian) put it during the group discussion:

'In the past you met each other in the store [...] Saturday morning you went to the bakery, because such and such were there, and then you had a little chat, then you got all the news. That is no longer.'

It emerged from our interviews that the arts in Pingjum do provide meeting opportunities in addition to the facilities and associations that are also present/active in Pingjum (e.g. the pub, the *kaats*-society). One of the reasons why the participants seemed to value the arts is because, thanks to the arts, there is more going on *in* their village itself. The arts facilitate meeting opportunities, both in terms of actual meeting places (e.g. the two podium venues) and activities (e.g. the annual arts weekend), during which people can meet. During her walking interview, Elle (middle-aged woman, Frisian) explained:

'[The arts] create a lot of variation in everything that is happening here [...] something is going on, something to do, something to see. I think that is important. It keeps the people *in* the village [...] You see each other again, you have a chat with one another. Look, if you always have to go somewhere else [outside of Pingjum] you do not meet each other.'

By facilitating opportunities for people to meet and interact, to form and strengthen bonds with fellow inhabitants, the arts can have a binding influence on the community (see also McCarthy et al., 2004).

It should be noted, however, that the meeting opportunities facilitated by the arts are of a different, more "specialized" nature than the everyday meetings at the bakery or supermarket. While they have a binding influence, they also have a dividing influence on the community. During the research it became clear that not everyone in Pingjum engages with the arts and, thus, not everyone makes equal use of the meeting opportunities that they provide. This finding finds support in the literature,

where it is acknowledged that there are different levels of participation in the arts (see e.g. McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001; Mulligan et al., 2006). In Pingjum, we found that these different levels of participation resulted in one group strongly bonding with one another. We heard from many of our participants that it is often the same active “core group” that is involved in the arts events in the village and they further reasoned that it is also this “core group” that values and benefits from the arts the most.

During the walking interviews, it emerged that in addition to the people who do not engage in the arts due to a lack of interest, some villagers experience certain thresholds to engaging and thus availing themselves of the meeting opportunities that the arts provide. This underlines the contingent nature of the influence of the arts, showing their potential to divide as it is the same group of people who are meeting each other while others are excluded. The participants mentioned three potential thresholds that might limit people from engaging in the arts in Pingjum. We briefly explain each threshold below.

3 First, even though some participants argued that the active arts “core group” in Pingjum is made up of *Pingjumers* and other inhabitants of the village, others believed that *Pingjumers* are actually more involved in Pingjum’s “traditional village culture” (referring, for instance, to the orchestra) and are less, or not at all, engaged in “the arts” (referring to the professional artists in the village). As a reason for this they pointed out that *Pingjumers* might not be entirely at ease at certain arts events because the events are not related to their “traditional” culture. Thus, in the eyes of these participants, people’s Frisian background might, at least initially, constitute a threshold that limit people from engaging in the arts because they are unfamiliar with that kind of art. John (middle-aged man, “incomer”), for example, noted:

‘It requires practice to start appreciating it [the arts]. But yeah, if you come from the local polder and have only lived in your own little circle – that small, Frisian, village life – then you do not recognize certain art forms... and you also value them less’.

This quote supports the notion of Balfour et al. (2016, p. 7) that ‘those who lack the cultural capital developed through academic and family social processes tend to be segregated as inferior’ (though “stipulated as other” would be more appropriate in this case). However, given the efforts of some artists to involve those community members who are less inclined to engage in the arts (see next section), the cultural threshold could also amount to a form of “self-imposed exclusion”, with those with a Frisian background having the perception of not belonging at certain arts events (see Mulligan et al., 2006).

Second, a few participants pointed out that there might be a financial threshold preventing some people from taking part in all the arts events they might like to (see also Mulligan et al., 2006). Pepijn (>65, man, “incomer”), for instance, noted that one of the podium venues:

‘hosts performances which will cost you fifteen to twenty Euros, well you can understand that this might be difficult [to afford] for the average *Pingjumer*’.

Third, during the walking interviews with the younger participants it appeared that, in their eyes, the majority of the arts in Pingjum are targeted at an older audience. The young participants expressed either disinterest because of the content of the arts events or uncertainty about whether or not some of the events are meant for younger people. An example of how this age threshold is experienced is provided by Sabrina (<25, woman, “incomer”). Despite being an Arts Education student, when asked if she would like to take part in Pingjum’s annual arts weekend with her own artworks she answered:

‘Well maybe, maybe. But I am... perhaps still a bit too young for that, I guess. Because mainly older people are exhibiting things, so I do not know if it would be appropriate for me to do so too’.

As the quotes indicate, all the above three thresholds can prevent villagers from benefiting from the meeting opportunities that the arts facilitate, and show that the arts in Pingjum work differently for different community members. Nevertheless, some artists in Pingjum actively try to make their arts more inclusive, to which we next turn.

3.4.3 Engaging the community

In the literature, reservations are sometimes expressed about the extent to which all sections of a community are reached by arts projects (Newman et al., 2003). Nevertheless, during our research, it became clear that some of the artists in Pingjum put considerable effort into involving inhabitants who are less inclined to engage in the arts, thereby lowering the thresholds described above. As already noted, participatory community arts projects are often designed in the context of a larger goal concerning community development (see Chapter 2). Interestingly, in Pingjum, such efforts come from within the community itself. It appeared that the artists, themselves inhabitants of Pingjum, have a strong place attachment insofar as they aim to actively contribute to it. They aspire to strengthen people’s relationship with their surrounding landscape and to contribute to a sustainable future for their village (see van der Vaart et al., 2015).

The artists try to make their arts more inclusive in two ways. First, they involve the village itself in their arts. The artists use the lives and stories of the inhabitants themselves as inputs, such as their personal experiences of the changes in agriculture (see Bolswards Nieuwsblad, 2013), and they try to appeal to people's place attachment and connect to concerns that inhabitants currently have about their village and its future. People are, for example, stimulated to think about and reflect upon their connections to Pingjum's landscape in the context of plans for a new windfarm (see van der Vaart et al., 2015). Second, the artists seek collaboration with other associations and institutions in Pingjum, such as the local orchestra and school. This can lower the cultural threshold that some people might experience by interweaving the arts with "traditional village culture". Both efforts strive to engage more inhabitants in the arts, making the arts more of a binding influence in Pingjum by becoming more inclusive.

An example of an arts event that tried to involve Pingjum's community was provided by Pepijn (>65, man, "incomer"), who pointed to a performance that took place in the village some years ago (see also Bolswards Nieuwsblad, 2013):

3
'You know what worked well? *Boer Vond Vrouw* [Farmer Found Wife⁷]: old farmers, how they met their wife, how they are working at their farm. That was something that people could identify with, and then they overcame the barrier to stepping into that weird building [the podium venue]. And then, if there is a woman who spouts out some modern language [as part of the performance] they take it as part of the bargain. Because it is their own people who are also performing, making it familiar to them'.

Efforts such as *Boer Vond Vrouw* seem to have been successful in involving villagers who were less inclined to engage in the arts, with some participants noting that, over the years, such people were becoming increasingly familiar with the arts and more engaged with them in general.

As noted earlier, the arts in Pingjum contribute to people's feelings of pride. We found that people's own involvement in the arts seems to play a role in these feelings. This corresponds with Lowe's (2000) findings that working together on an arts project can offer people 'an experience of community life that inspire[s] feelings of belonging and unity' (p. 366). The following comment by Kees (middle-aged man, "incomer"), who talked about the arts making the inhabitants feel more connected to Pingjum, captures the above:

'[the arts] bring people together. And many of those things they [the artists] organize are quite unique to Pingjum. So I think some villagers take some kind of pride in that, like "look, we did this together"'.
⁷

⁷ Its name is inspired by the popular reality television series *Farmer wants a Wife*.

Kees stressed the sense of ownership that people can feel, something which Sharp et al. (2005) mentioned as a key component of inclusion. They noted that this depends on the extent to which, and how, people are included in processes of producing public art. By actively engaging the community in their arts, some artists in Pingjum are contributing to people's feelings of pride and sense of ownership and, linked to this, their sense of community. Ultimately, the artists hope to contribute to the sustainable development of their community.

Nevertheless, when looking deeper into *who* mentioned these efforts by artists to engage Pingjum's community in the arts, a certain pattern emerges. Mostly it was the middle-aged participants who mentioned these efforts, while only a few of the older participants and none of the younger participants mentioned them. Given our earlier observation about the potential age threshold, it seems that the efforts of the artists are not targeted at engaging everyone in Pingjum. This in itself does not have to be problematic, but it might become an issue if the artist "core group" becomes dominant (see Sharp et al., 2005), and suppresses other community activities leading to a further fragmentation between those who are regularly engaging in the arts and those who are left out.

3.5 Conclusions

The value of the arts in community development is increasingly being recognized (Carey & Sutton, 2004; Meade & Shaw, 2007; Phillips, 2004; Zitcer et al., 2016). To date, however, little attention has been paid to the variable influence of the arts on communities. Our participatory research project in Pingjum contributes to the emerging insights on the various impacts that the arts may have on communities by highlighting both the binding and dividing influences they can have in practice. Our study shows that the influence of the arts is context-dependent, with the arts having various effects for different groups of community members. With regard to community development, we found that, in Pingjum, the arts generate community participation and social capital and contribute to a sense of community. This plays a role in people's willingness to contribute to their community and its development (see Chapter 2). In addition to the various effects on Pingjum's community described above, we noted that the arts have other effects, such as generating custom for the local bar and pizzeria.

Overall, with regard to the value of the arts in terms of community development, we would emphasize three key issues:

First, that the arts do not have only advantages for a community. As Matarasso (1997) noted, the social impacts of the arts are complex. Our study demonstrated that while,

on the one hand, the arts can have benefits for some people, can contribute to a sense of community, are something to derive feelings of pride from and provide meeting opportunities; on the other hand, for others, this sense of community is contested, and the arts are seen as more of a competing force in their village, with the risk of becoming too dominant.

Second, the arts do not engage the entire community. As became clear during our research, some people do not engage with the arts and some of these might want to but experience cultural, financial or age thresholds that restrain them from taking part to the extent they might like to.

Third, and linked to the above, there is a danger that the arts might contribute to community fragmentation (see also Mattern, 2001). In Pingjum, the efforts of some artists to engage the local community enhances the binding influence of the arts. However, there is a risk that the artist “core group” becomes too dominant and the arts start to suppress other activities and exclude people in the village (see also Sharp et al., 2005). This could fragment the community into those who are engaged in the arts and those who are not.

Given these three issues, we suggest that the arts should be considered as *one* of several supportive means in community development processes (see also Belfiore, 2006; Burnell, 2012; Matarasso, 2007). Ideally, the arts would be integrated into a wider community development strategy and planning (Burnell, 2012; Kay, 2000; Phillips, 2004;) and exist alongside other activities and associations in a community. As noted by Abby (middle-aged woman, “incomer”), Pingjum ‘is not only an artist village, it is much more than that’. Here, the arts, for instance, exist alongside the *kaats*-association, which also plays a considerable role in bringing community members together and developing people’s sense of community (albeit with its own binding and dividing influences). Adopting this perspective, the arts can contribute to the robustness of a community and assist it in developing the capacity and resources needed to flourish.

CHAPTER 4

The role of the arts in coping with place change at the coast

Abstract

This chapter explores the role of the arts in people's coping with (potential) place change at the coast in light of wind energy developments. In doing so, we elaborate on the effects of the arts on people's emotional connections to the landscape; the memories, beliefs, meaning and knowledge they associate with the landscape; and the expression of people's attachments through actions. We draw on 28 walking interviews and 3 group discussions which were conducted in Pingjum, a village along the Dutch Wadden Sea coast. A key feature in Pingjum's landscape is the Gouden Halsband, a late medieval dike surrounding the village. Recently, the area around Pingjum (including this dike) was designated as a potential location for the construction of a new windfarm. In our study, we found that the arts in Pingjum fuelled people's emotional connection to their (coastal) landscape and the Gouden Halsband, enhanced their knowledge of both and triggered them to reflect on the meanings they assign to them. In addition, the arts enhanced people's awareness and stimulated their assessment of the windfarm plans. The arts framed people's interpretation of the windfarm plans, mainly bringing potential negative impacts on the landscape to their attention. In this way, the arts encouraged action, stimulating both efforts to preserve the Gouden Halsband and protests against the proposed windfarm plans.

4.1 Introduction

In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the value of the arts, beyond their aesthetic qualities (Eernstman & Wals, 2013). The American Planning Association, for instance, pointed out that ‘the arts and culture activities’ can be used to ‘improve a community’s overall understanding of history and heritage of place; foster tolerance and celebration of identity; and possibly provide opportunities for community residents to more actively participate in community visioning and planning processes’ (2011, p. 2). These aspects support previous research that argues that the arts can help to articulate and strengthen links between communities and places (see, e.g., Anwar McHenry, 2011; Hall & Robertson, 2001; Morris & Cant, 2004).

Several authors have highlighted the arts as tools to (re)frame and engage with controversial topics. Miles (2010) and Weik von Mossner (2013), for example, argued that the arts can contribute to shifts in awareness and attitudes towards (dealing with) climate change. Stocker & Kennedy (2011) noted the arts can act as a catalyst to sustainable action. Their research is interesting since it addresses artistic representations of Australian seas and coasts in a similar way to our study. They concluded that the arts can help people to explore and develop their sense of identity and belonging on the coast, which may subsequently, lead to care and stewardship. Stocker & Kennedy (2011) regarded the arts as having additional value to ‘cognitive scientific evidence’ in creating awareness and action for sustainability, as ‘emotional and affective responses to the natural world and environmental concerns can be more engaging and decisive than government reports or scientific data’ (2011, p. 99). However, as Stuver et al. (2012) reminded us, the arts are never neutral. They noted that ‘a community-based art project could turn into a platform for a dismissive “not in my backyard” attitude among local inhabitants or for alternative spatial scenarios that have not been considered by the planners’ (2012, p. 308).

In this chapter, we draw attention to the role of the arts in people’s coping with (potential) place change at the coast in light of wind energy developments. Place changes in light of new energy infrastructures can trigger forms of “place protective” action such as engaging in collective protest or signing petitions (Devine-Wright, 2009). People’s interpretations of place change are socially constructed, with various people, groups and institutions influencing one another (see, e.g., Batel & Devine-Wright, 2015; Stedman, 2002; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001). This chapter zooms in on the role of artists in this context. The chapter begins with a theoretical contextualisation of people’s coping with place change and the role of others in this context. We then introduce the geographic location of our study and the research project. Next, we turn to our findings. We first discuss interpretations of our participants of the potential place change in their village. Subsequently, we zoom in on various arts activities in Pingjum and clarify how they, as seen from the perspective of our participants, influence people’s place attachments and their coping with the possible introduction of a windfarm.

4.2 Coping with place change

Researchers have been interested in the impact of place change on people and communities, especially those induced by (renewable) energy infrastructures received much attention (see, e.g., Bailey et al., 2016; Batel & Devine-Wright, 2015; Devine-Wright, 2009, 2011a, 2011b; Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010; McLachlan, 2009; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001). However, before we can explain people's responses to (renewable) energy projects, we first need to explain the concepts of place change and place attachment (see also Devine-Wright, 2009).

Place change can both be material/physical (such as the demolition of buildings) as well as non-material (such as a change in an area's social status) (Wester-Herber, 2004). The literature on place change has a predominantly negative conception of it and has repeatedly noted its upsetting nature, pointing to (potential) feelings of anxiety, grief or loss, disruption to social networks and diverse coping strategies (Devine-Wright, 2011b; Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010). Here, place change is often named as being a source of disruption to people's place attachment, while it actually may enhance people's place attachment too (Devine-Wright, 2011b).

Place attachment – on the contrary – is described by Brown & Perkins (1992, p. 284) as 'positively experienced bonds, sometimes occurring without awareness, that are developed over time from the behavioural, affective, and cognitive ties between individuals and/or groups and their sociophysical environment'. In the extensive literature devoted to place attachment, it is considered as an integral part of human identity and it is usually implicitly defined as positive, seen as filling people's life with meaning (Giuliani, 2003; Lewicka, 2011). However, people can hold ambivalent feelings or have alienated relationships toward places too (see, e.g., Bailey et al., 2016).

To deepen the understanding of public responses to unwanted local developments such as (renewable) energy projects, Devine-Wright (2009) proposed a multidimensional framework which draws upon processes of place attachment. He distinguished the following stages of responses to place change: becoming aware, interpreting change, evaluating change, coping responses, and in certain circumstances, acting (e.g. behavioural resistance or support). Ultimately, it is how change is interpreted and evaluated that determines people's response, not the form of place change per se. The symbolic meanings that people adopt and construct about the (proposed) project and whether those meanings "fit" with the symbolic meanings they assign to the place involved are crucial. When there is a good "fit", people's place attachment might be enhanced rather than disrupted and be a significant, positive predictor of project acceptance (Devine-Wright, 2011b). This was demonstrated in the study of McLachlan (2009), in which she assessed the formation of support and opposition to a wave energy project. She found various 'symbolic logics' of support and opposition, which arose

from the “fit” between multiple interpretations of both the place (e.g. as economically vulnerable, as a resource) and the technology (e.g. as commercial, as experimental).

A number of studies have shown that other people, groups and institutions (such as local opposition groups, developers, the media) are an important shaping factor in people’s interpretations of place change, as they influence each other’s way of thinking (see, e.g., Batel & Devine-Wright, 2015; Devine-Wright, 2011a; Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001; Wester-Herber, 2004). Batel & Devine-Wright (2015, p. 318), for example, argued that ‘responses to RET [renewable energy and associated technologies] need to be examined as social representations, that is, as co-constructed, relational, contextual, dynamic and rhetorical meaning-making’. They noted that some groups or institutions might be more powerful than others in making their representations prevalent, leading to some representations being valued more or having more legitimacy in society than others that are circulating within the lay sphere. McLachlan (2009), for instance, explained that dominant or “official” assessments of what a place is may obscure the plurality of meanings given to a place. Drawing on historic images of a place could enhance the validity and credibility of claims to define the “essence” of a place. Subsequently, activities that do not correspond to this are regarded as being out of place and thus, unacceptable (McLachlan, 2009).

In light of the above, when looking at people’s interpretations of (potential) place change, attention should also be paid to others beyond the individual (Batel & Devine-Wright, 2015; Manzo & Perkins, 2006; Stedman, 2002). In our chapter we focus on one group in particular which has received little attention until now: artists. We aim to discuss the role of their arts in people’s coping with (potential) place change at the coast in light of wind energy developments. In order to clarify the various ways in which the arts influence this we, in our analysis, draw on Brown & Perkins’ (1992) distinction between three psychological aspects that are involved in people’s connections to places: affect, cognition and behaviour (see also Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Firstly, *affect* involves people’s emotional connections to a place, in which place attachment is grounded. People’s relationship with a place can represent an array of emotions, from love to fear and hatred. Secondly, *cognition* concerns the memories, beliefs, meaning, and knowledge that people associate with a place and which makes it personally important. Thirdly, *behaviour* concerns the expression of people’s attachment through actions (such as pilgrimages) (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

4.3 Pingjum and the Gouden Halsband

The village of our case study is a village of around 600 inhabitants in the north of the Netherlands, called Pingjum. It is situated along the Wadden Sea coast and is surrounded mainly by agricultural land, see Figure 1. In the media, Pingjum is

presented as being an open and tolerant village, and has the reputation of being an “artist village”, hosting many cultural activities and a relatively large presence of artists/“creatives” (see, e.g., van Santen, 2013).



Figure 1 Pingjum and the *Gouden Halsband*.

A key feature in Pingjum’s landscape is the *Gouden Halsband* (translation: Golden Collar), a late medieval dike surrounding the village (see Figure 1). This dike is one of the oldest dikes in the Netherlands, built to protect Pingjum from flooding. However, it lost this original function in the late 19th century when the sea dikes nearby were improved. Historian Karstkarel remarked that after these improvements, ‘the *Halsband* seemed like a joke. In terms of sea-defence this might be true, but as one of the earliest traces of human control of the sometimes terrifying nature, the *Halsband* is still a monument of great significance’ (2011, p. 41, authors’ translation). He highlighted the dike’s current cultural-historical value. However, after the dike lost its (coastal) defence function, there was little investment in its maintenance and it deteriorated (Bolsward Nieuwsblad, 2014). Parts of the dike were used for heavy agricultural traffic and were excavated, which caused further damage. In 2009, a committee for the “Preservation and Restoration” of the *Gouden Halsband* was formed by concerned inhabitants. They attempted to increase attention of authorities (such

as the municipality) for the, in their view, cultural historical monument (Pingjumer Gulden Halsband, 2016). After some years, the committee was successful in obtaining funding from the Province and the EU. This meant they could start to further develop and implement their plans, such as conducting an archaeological research on the age of the dike, the restoration of a damaged part and the creation of a walking trail. Since 2013, a large part of the *Gouden Halsband* is included in the largest hiking-network of The Netherlands, meaning that the dike nowadays also has a recreational value. Recently, the area around Pingjum (including the *Gouden Halsband*) was designated by the Province as a potential location for the construction of a new windfarm. Pingjum already has a history with wind energy, as in the 1980's the village was one of the first villages in the Netherlands to have its own wind turbine. The construction of a new windfarm would mean an increase of the sustainable energy function of the area. However, local responses to the new plans, which involve the construction of 40-60 wind turbines of 200 meters height, are mixed. Some people are worried about the effects on the open landscape around the village and the *Gouden Halsband* (see, e.g., Bouma, 2012).

4.4 Methods

In this chapter, we draw on a research project that was conducted in Pingjum. The participants for this project were recruited in several ways, such as by giving a presentation at the annual meeting of the village's interest group and door-to-door distribution of flyers. As a result, 28 participants were recruited, comprising people from different age groups (<25, 25-65, >65).

For this chapter, we draw on the first two phases of the project. In the first phase, walking interviews were conducted. Each participant was asked to take the researcher on a "tour" through Pingjum to show (and take photographs of) places of significance to them, and places which in their eyes are facing potential changes or are disputed in the community. In addition, the interview questions during the walking interviews focused on the participants' opinion on the role of the various arts activities and artists in Pingjum, the village community, and their opinion on (potential) changes for the village. Walking interviews are a good way of accessing community members' connections to their surrounding environment and, compared to indoor interviews, generate more place-specific data (Evans & Jones, 2011; Kusenbach, 2003). This makes walking interviews a valuable method for research on people's coping with (potential) place change, even though they have not been deployed much in this context up to now (but see Wheeler (2016) who used this method in her research on the long-term impacts of existing windfarms on local residents).

The second phase of the project consisted of group discussions in which the participants further discussed the meanings of particular places in Pingjum. In total, 16 of the participants took part in those group discussions (those absent were either unable to

join due to a scheduling conflict or lacked interested in participating). The participants were divided into three small groups of mixed ages and used the photographs taken during the first phase as starting points for their discussions.

Before each phase of the project, the participants were given more background on the research project, its aim and content, possible uses of the data generated by it, and the possibility of being identifiable by others by taking part in the project. Then, the participants were asked to complete and sign an informed consent form. In this form, they could indicate their wishes with regards to how their names, quotes and photographs would be treated (e.g. usage of photographs in which they are recognisable).

The walking interviews and group discussions were audio recorded and transcribed afterwards. The transcripts were analysed in Nvivo, using codes that emerged both from the literature and from the data itself.

4.5 Findings

In light of the focus of this chapter, it is important to note that a key theme that emerged from the data collection was the appreciation of Pingjum's open landscape (and the *Gouden Halsband*). In addition, participants named several artists and recalled artistic activities in the village that engage with the landscape (including representational and performative arts).

Below, we first discuss two ways in which the participants perceive the potential place change at their coast. Then, we discuss how the arts in Pingjum, as seen from the perspective of our participants, influence the cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions of people's attachments to the *Gouden Halsband* and their coping with the potential of place change because of wind energy developments. Although these dimensions are interconnected, we follow Brown & Perkins' (1992) analytical distinction in order to clarify the various ways in which the arts influence this.

4.5.1 Perceiving the potential place change at the coast

As noted, people's responses to place change are determined by how change is interpreted and evaluated (Devine-Wright, 2011b; Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010). During the walking interviews, two key ways in which people perceive the potential place change at their coast emerged.

The first way indicates a mismatch between the symbolic meanings people associate with Pingjum's landscape and those they assign to the windfarm plans. This mismatch entails several elements: the location of the new windfarm, the quantity of wind turbines, and their height (see also Langbroek & Vanclay (2012) on this). These elements cause some of the participants to see the plans as an intrusion in the coastal

landscape, conflicting with the tranquillity and space of it that they so greatly value. The following quote illustrates their views:

‘if many more [wind turbines] are added soon, well, I think it will be over with the nice views. And I would pity that, because yeah, I would think “build them in the sea or somewhere else” [...] This is *one* of the areas in the Netherlands which is so beautiful and peaceful, with nature and so on’ (Kees, man, 25-65).

The second way in which the potential place change is perceived indicates a better fit between the symbolic meanings associated with Pingjum’s landscape and the windfarm plans. These participants put the plans in a larger perspective (e.g., acknowledging the area’s history with windmills) and experienced the new plans as less disrupting. During the group discussion, Pepijn (man, >65), for example, noted:

‘In the past, the Netherlands was full of windmills. The VOC built boats with wood that was sawed by the mills. The polders were made dry [reclaimed] by the mills [...] Windmills belong to the Netherlands [...] the question is “how do we fit it [windfarm] in?”, not “*should* it come?”, but “*where* should it come?”. In my opinion, if you fit the windmills in in a good way, on industrial sites, along the road, in the landscape, then I do not have a problem with it at all. Then my sense of space, of freedom, of development... I feel okay with it’.

Similar results were found by Wheeler (2016), who discovered that the specific historical context of windmills in one of her research areas emerged as a particular reason behind the relative support for the local windfarm, with several of her participants making connections between the region’s traditional wind-pumps and the modern wind turbines.

4.5.2 Artistic activities

4.5.2.1 Cognitive dimension

On the cognitive level, the arts in Pingjum were found to: 1) enhance people’s knowledge of Pingjum’s landscape and the *Gouden Halsband*, and to trigger people to reflect on the meanings they assign to both; and 2) play a role in enhancing people’s awareness and stimulating their assessment of the potential place change at their coast.

The enduring artistic initiative *Nieuw Atlantis* provides a good example. During the walking interviews, *Nieuw Atlantis* was mentioned several times as having a kind of “leading role” in the village. The website of this initiative reads:

‘*Nieuw Atlantis* wants to signal the actuality, strengthen the relationship between human and landscape, and challenge residents of *Friesland* [the Province] to look with different eyes to their environment. To

achieve this, we create crossovers between art and science in and around Pingjum. Together we imagine thé village of the future, in which we sustainably and creatively interact with the landscape and our local identity' (Nieuw Atlantis, 2016, authors' translation).

Nieuw Atlantis organizes several events in which inhabitants are invited to think and talk about Pingjum's landscape, covering both the landscape's history, current state and future. They also pay attention to threats and opportunities for the landscape, such as climate change and the wind energy developments. Local experts, researchers, other artists and civil servants are invited to these events, which instigates and contributes to a substantive dialogue between the attendees.

Our participants confirmed that *Nieuw Atlantis* encourages people to think about Pingjum's landscape, how they are interacting with it, and what kind of threats for Pingjum('s landscape) exist. Sarah (woman, 25-65), for example, noted:

'*Nieuw Atlantis* is really making an effort to map [...] the state of the landscape and eh, have people talking about that'.

Talking about the *Gouden Halsband* specifically, she argued:

'[I think] that more people started to think about the condition of the *Halsband* [...] and of course [*Nieuw Atlantis*] did... some stuff on this, such as symbolically closing the dike with buckets of sand [...] it definitely contributes to the awareness'.

As appears from this quote, the arts can enhance the cognitive dimension of people's place attachment as they stimulate people to think about and reflect upon their connections to their landscape, raise their awareness of potential place change at their coast, and provide food for thought to assess this change. These findings correspond to earlier work from Eernstman & Wals (2013), Miles (2010) and Stocker & Kennedy (2011), as referred to before.

In our study, we found that the arts framed people's interpretations of the windfarm plans, for instance, by bringing only certain (potential) impacts of the construction of more wind turbines to people's attention. In this regard, we found that the arts mainly encouraged an interpretation of the potential place change in which the windfarm plans are regarded as disrupting Pingjum's landscape (see also Figure 2).

4.5.2.2 Affective dimension

The arts in Pingjum contributed to the affective dimension of people's place attachment, understood here as referring to people's emotional connections to a place (Scannell & Gifford's, 2010). By using (parts of) the landscape as their input and/or setting, the arts bring Pingjum's landscape to people's attention and, sometimes, give them an experience *in* the landscape itself. This can enhance people's emotional connection to

the landscape (see also Weik von Mossner (2013) on how documentaries can provoke strong affective responses from viewers).

A good example is the outdoor theatre play *Dijk vol Dromen* (translation: Dike full Dreams) which was performed several times in 2014. The performance “told, played, portrayed and voiced” stories about Pingjum, including stories about the *Gouden Halsband* and the windfarm plans (Hooghiemstra, 2014). The initiators of the play wanted to let people experience their familiar landscape in a different way, with a part of the play being performed on site.

One of our participants, Elle (woman, 25-65), participated in the performance of *Dijk vol Dromen*. She explained she loves those kind of (outdoor) arts activities, partly because:

[they] present you a different direction of thinking [...] when you are occupied with your work and household, your thinking has a limited perspective. And when you add arts and culture [to your life], that is... just as with those outdoor theatre plays, it is something special that you can attend, it offers you another insight’.

Another actor of *Dijk vol Dromen*, an 80 year old woman who has lived in Pingjum for 20 years, commented on the website of the artists association of the village:

‘I see the entire performance as a true ode to *Friesland* and the landscape. An ode to the gorgeous panoramic views, starry skies and sunsets. That is what I fell in love with when I moved to *Friesland*’ (Kunst achter Dijken, 2014, authors’ translation).

Her choice of words (i.e. fell in love with) illustrates her emotional connection to Pingjum’s landscape. In addition, she explained that she appreciates that the play puts Pingjum on the map again, noting that she thinks it is important that the history and stories about the village stay alive:

‘I think it is lovely and important that, for instance, this magnificent medieval dike, the *Pingjumer Gouden Halsband*, is being put in the spotlight again during the performance’ (ibid.).

By staging the play partly on the dike and including stories about it, *Dijk vol Dromen* can enhance the affective dimension of people’s place attachment, bring the dike to people’s attention and make them feel more for the *Gouden Halsband*.

4.5.2.3 Behavioural dimension

The arts in Pingjum also enhanced the behavioural dimension of people’s place attachment, stimulating both efforts to preserve the *Gouden Halsband* and protests against the windfarm plans.

A clear example is the painting in Figure 2, which was made by a painter who lives in Pingjum. It was displayed during an exhibition in the village. During her walking interview, Nina (woman, 25-65) referred to this exhibition, noting:

‘At that time the debate on the wind turbines was also actual, and he [the painter] had made all kinds of paintings about it. I liked that. You can visualize that discussion a bit thanks to the paintings [...] I think the message was perfectly clear’.

For her, the painting visualizes the negative impacts of wind turbines, which she sees as “an intrusion in the landscape”. The painting also featured on the website of the committee for the Preservation and Restoration of the *Gouden Halsband*, where it is introduced as follows:

‘Three years ago, Felix Roosenstein made this painting as a signal for everyone who is warm-hearted for the Frisian landscape to be alert to the disastrous plans of the wind-entrepreneurs around the *Pingjumer Gouden Halsband*. Now, they are back with their unwholesome plans. Let them know that you do not want this to happen and sign the petition’ (Pingjumer Gulden Halsband, 2016, authors’ translation).



Figure 2 Painting of Felix Roosenstein (source: Pingjumer Gulden Halsband, 2016).

Referring to Devine-Wright's (2009) framework on people's responses to place change, the painting can be said to cause inhabitants to *become aware* (or be reminded) of the windfarm plans. Furthermore, it potentially influences people's *interpretation* and *evaluation* of the plans, as it frames wind turbines in a dark, dominating way, instigating a sense of concern or fear. These stages are related to the cognitive and affective dimensions of people's place attachment. Last but not least, however, the painting also influences people's *acting*, as it is connected to a call to sign a petition against the windfarm plans and thus, is meant to stimulate people's expression of their place attachment. In this particular case, the arts are deliberately used in order to increase attention for the *Gouden Halsband* and to gain support for its preservation.

4.6 Conclusions

Taking the role of the arts in people's coping with place change into account can help to better understand people's responses to (potential) place change. Our study demonstrates that artists, with their arts, can influence people's interpretations of (potential) place change at the coast. We found that, in the eyes of our participants, the arts in Pingjum enhanced the: 1) *cognitive* dimension of people's place attachment, both enhancing their knowledge of their landscape and the *Gouden Halsband* and triggering them to reflect on the meanings they assign to them; and enhancing people's awareness and stimulating their assessment of the windfarm plans. The arts brought certain (potential) impacts of the plans to people's attention, hereby framing people's interpretation of the potential place change at their coast and mainly encouraging an interpretation in which the windfarm plans are regarded as disrupting Pingjum's landscape; 2) *affective* dimension of people's place attachment, making people feel more emotionally connected to the *Gouden Halsband* and Pingjum's (coastal) landscape; 3) *behavioural* dimension, encouraging action by stimulating both efforts to preserve the historic dike and protests against the windfarm plans.

However, it should be kept in mind that the arts have a limited and uneven influence. Some of our participants, for instance, argued that the arts only work for people who value the arts or who are already engaged in them, and many noted that this often comes down to the same active "core group" (see Chapter 3). Moreover, issues of legitimacy and power relations can be at play (Batel & Devine-Wright, 2015), and there can be tensions on the "instrumentalisation" of the arts (see, e.g., Stuiver et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, in the context of people's coping with place change at the coast, the arts, at least in our research, are a player not to be ignored. In our study the arts mainly encouraged an interpretation of renewable energy plans (such as wind energy) as disrupting the landscape and stimulated actions against such plans. On the other hand, however, as Clarke et al. (2013) noted, the arts could also play a role in resolving coastal

(governance) challenges. Following Manzo & Perkins (2006, p. 347), acknowledging the role of the arts can 'provide lessons about what mobilizes people, and what feelings about place are at the root of their reaction [to (potential) place change], which can help move a community toward conflict resolution or even consensus'. As they further pointed out, people's emotional commitment to places in their community influences their ability and willingness to address local problems. Therefore, Manzo & Perkins (2006, p. 348) argued, these bonds are critical to the wellbeing of communities and is it 'essential for those working in community improvement and planning to better understand those emotional connections to place, how they are fostered, and how they might lead to action and effective participatory planning processes'. In the context of renewable energy projects, artists can be key players in people's interpretations of, and subsequent coping with, proposed projects. In addition, Stuiver et al. (2012, p. 309) proposed that planners could include artists 'as consultants of the immaterial values' of the, by a proposed plan, affected citizens. In this way, 'local input still can have impact' before definite plans for a region are made.

CHAPTER 5

Creative and arts-based research methods in academic research. Lessons from a participatory research project in the Netherlands.

Abstract

This chapter contributes to the discussion on the value of creative and arts-based research methods to academia. Based on a participatory research project conducted in a Dutch village that used a mix of these methods, we provide more nuanced, concrete insights into their value. In our discussion, we elaborate on how the three project stages (comprising walking interviews, group discussions, and a creative workshop that resulted in an exhibition) contributed to producing *multifaceted knowledge*. We conclude that, despite some challenges, creative and arts-based research methods have much to offer researchers. We found that they: 1) generate deep insight by providing new ways of understanding people's real lived experiences and views, by going beyond rational-cognitive ways of knowing; and 2) present ways to "give back" and contribute to a community, potentially igniting a spark among community members to engage in action and contribute to their community's resilience. This aligns with the, currently often articulated, aims of research to directly benefit those involved and to share research findings with a broader non-academic audience.

5.1 Introduction

The early 21st century is seen as ‘a dynamic and exciting time for research methods’ (Kara, 2015, p. 3), with methodological boundaries expanding across all social science disciplines. A century ago, research was considered a neutral activity, somehow separated from society, and researchers were seen as having no effect on the research process or its outcome. In the second half of the 20th century, things started to change and a new paradigm emerged. Kara (2015, p. 34) noted that:

‘researchers began to view their work as value laden, symbiotically linked with society and inevitably affected by the researchers themselves [...] researchers began to reach out beyond the bounds of conventional research to the arts, other research methods and technology, to find more useful ways to explore the world around us’.

Nowadays, creative and arts-based research methods are also to be found in a researcher’s toolkit and researchers from various disciplines have successfully adopted these methods in their work (Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Woodgate et al., 2017).

However, Coemans & Hannes (2017) noted a lack of methodological reflection on arts-based methods. They argued that, for researchers in this field, discussions about the process and implications of these methods could be very helpful. In this chapter, we explore what creative and arts-based research methods offer researchers by reflecting on a participatory research project that we conducted using of a mix of these methods. Below, we first provide a brief introduction to creative and arts-based research, explain why these methods are appealing to researchers, and note that it can be challenging for researchers using these methods to deal with academic conventions. Next, we introduce Pingjum, the village where we conducted the participatory research project, and the project itself. We describe the three consecutive stages of the project, giving background on the research methods used and explaining how we used them in Pingjum. Following this, we discuss the participatory research project by elaborating on how the several project stages contributed to producing *multifaceted knowledge*, with each stage providing another facet of the topics of our research. We conclude by reflecting on what creative and arts-based research methods can bring academia.

5.2 Creative and Arts-Based Research

Arts-based research is seen as ‘any social research or human inquiry that adapts the tenets of the creative arts as a part of the methodology [...] the arts may be used during data collection, analysis, interpretation and/or dissemination’ (Jones & Leavy, 2004, pp. 1-2). There are many dimensions to arts-based research reflecting the large variety of art genres (such as performance, writing, painting, photography, collage and installation art) and these genres can be used in a variety of ways (for

example, as a method or as technical, communication or aesthetic elements) (Franz, 2010). Furthermore, as Kara (2015) stressed, creativity in research is context-specific, depending on the knowledge, skills and abilities of those involved, when and where the research is carried out and other contextual factors.

Artist – researcher collaborations are a part of the emerging, expanding “research genre” of research involving the arts (Knowles & Cole, 2008). Foster & Lorimer (2007) remarked how this “coming together” of researchers and artists seems to be the mood of the moment (at least for some researchers and artists). Being themselves a cultural-historical geographer and an environmental artist who had enjoyed a three-year alliance, they reflected on their own practice of collaboration. In general, they argued that ‘all kinds of art-geographical relationship make it possible to learn from each other’s way of intervening in the world, and to offer better informed critique of respective practices’ (p. 431). Hawkins (2011, 2012) also highlighted researchers’ (specifically geographers’) embrace of a broad terrain of creative and artistic “doings”. She noted that this includes geographers working as artists, collaborating with artists in creating work, participating in curatorial projects and, more extensively, also their engagement with a wider field of creative practices. Hawkins (2012, p. 65) argued that such ‘practices provide a means to engage with, and to convey, aesthetic – embodied, sensory – experiences that are suited to the demands of site, topic or theory’. This “coming together” of researchers and artists is a two-way process as, on the other hand, artists employ geographical theory and use research methods (such as interviews, participant observation, questionnaires) as a starting point or as the main body of their work (Hawkins, 2011; O’Donoghue, 2011). In this context, Hawkins (2011) noted that discourses on art and geography both share questions of space and community. Site-based socially engaged art practices, for instance, can benefit from ‘the sorts of site-sensitive critical frameworks [...] that geographers are well suited to develop’ (Hawkins, 2012, p. 59).

In this chapter, we focus on the use of creative and arts-based research methods. Researchers using such methods are often situated within the qualitative research tradition (Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Knowles & Cole, 2008). However, as Kara (2015) rightly observed, in quantitative methodologies, there is also very creative work going on. She explained that creativity involves ‘knowing about various methods but not being bound by that knowledge, such that, if the need arises, you can manipulate and develop theories and methods, within the constraints of good practice, to help you answer your research questions’ (pp. 21-22).

5.3 Why Bother?

There are several reasons why researchers may be interested in creative and arts-based research methods. First, these methods can provide fresh approaches and different perspectives (Dunn & Mellor, 2017). They can be used to ask questions of one's own conventions and disciplinary practices (Foster & Lorimer, 2007; Hawkins, 2011). O'Donoghue (2011, p. 649) noted that artists 'will bring to research [...] very different ways of seeing, imagining, understanding, articulating, and inquiring, which leads to better questioning and more robust inquiry practices'. He explained that artists' freedom and ability 'to work on an edge and between borders of the familiar and the emergent create new possibilities for knowing and working together differently' (ibid.). On a similar note, Eisner (2008) argued that, compared to conventional forms of research, arts-informed methods of inquiry may do a better job when it comes to generating questions or raising awareness of important complex subtleties.

Second, creative and arts-based research methods can add value when it comes to *answering* research questions that cannot (or, at least, not fully) be answered using more traditional research methods such as interviews or questionnaires (Dunn & Mellor, 2017; Franz, 2010; Kara, 2015). Dunn & Mellor (2017) argued that the emotional and symbolic aspects of people's experiences might not be accessed by such mainstream methods that rely on people's verbal or written competence. Quoting Ellsworth (2005, p. 156), they added: 'some knowings cannot be conveyed through language'. In this regard, Lawrence (2008) observed that, by engaging the senses, the arts provoke strong, affective responses for both the creator and the witness of art. Our emotions, she continued, can subsequently provide a catalyst for learning beyond traditional, cognitive ways of knowing. Johnston & Pratt (2010), for example, co-wrote a testimonial play that drew on research on domestic care work. The play transformed conventional research transcripts from interviews with Filipino migrant domestic workers, their children, Canadian employers and nanny agents into a performance installation, and aimed to bring academic research to a wider public in an immediate and engaging way. The authors (ibid., p. 133) reflected that 'the play forced a sensual exchange, involving much more than words, often evoking an emotional, visceral response'. In this regard, Eisner (2008, p. 7) argued that 'the arts in research promote a form of understanding that is derived or evoked through emphatic experience', which provides deep insight into what others are experiencing. Moreover, creative and arts-based research methods can offer a safe space for participants to express themselves and foster dialogue, especially about sensitive topics such as experiences of trauma or depression, and topics that are difficult to verbalize such as community and identity (Askins & Pain, 2011; Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Dunn & Mellor, 2017). Furthermore, Kara (2015) observed that one of the defining features of creativity in research is that it tends to resist categorical or binary thinking, and that instead, creative methods

value contextual specificity and are able to reflect the multiplicity of meanings existing in social contexts more accurately. Given this perspective, creative and arts-based research methods are often combined with other practices and methodologies in order to enrich or compliment traditional (qualitative) approaches and achieve a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under study (Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Franz, 2010).

Third, creative and arts-based research methods are highly suitable for participatory, community-based and action research. Coemans & Hannes (2017) noted that, thanks to their participatory nature and openness to different ways of understanding, the use of arts-based methods in community-based settings can seem a natural fit. They explained that these methods can be used to overcome power imbalances between the researcher and those researched by conducting research *with* the participants rather than *on* them (for more on participatory (action) research see, e.g., Bostock & Freeman (2003) on their research with young people; Cahill (2007) on her project with young women of colour; Salmon (2007) on her research with Aboriginal women whose mothering experiences include substance use and foetal alcohol syndrome/foetal alcohol effects). Many scholars who adopt these methods, as Coemans & Hannes (2017) noted, hope that they will give a voice to their participants, facilitate richer reflection and dialogue, and enable them to better articulate participants' unique experiences. Moreover, creative and arts-based research methods have a flexible application in a variety of contexts and can serve as an effective bridge between generations, cultures, socioeconomic classes and people who are divided along habitual lines determined by existing agendas and interests (Anwar McHenry, 2011; Askins & Pain, 2011; Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Taylor & Murphy, 2014). Anwar McHENRY (2011) argued that they are useful in engaging with and empowering participants through increasing their confidence and facilitating understanding and the development of a stronger sense of place. In line with this, Capous Desyllas (2014) argued that arts-based research has the ability to transform and empower, and has the potential to create social change through creativity. Her own research project with sex workers is a good example. She conducted an arts-based project involving photovoice, which aimed to 'highlight sex workers' visual voices and their subjective experiences, through a process that increased their involvement, creativity and investment in the research process' (p. 478). Her participants used photography to create art, and in this way, collaboratively generated knowledge and raised community awareness of their needs. The resulting exhibition provided a forum for the participants to share their artworks, their perspectives and lived experiences with individuals beyond academia, including policymakers, influential community advocates and the broader public. Their art was used as a form of activism and resistance to sex-work-related stigmas that lead to discrimination, stereotyping and violence.

The above three arguments help explain why creative and arts-based research methods are so appealing to some researchers. Compared to other creative and interactive research methods such as mental maps, photo or video projects, diary keeping (see, e.g., Trell & van Hoven, 2010), arts-based research methods more actively engage people's senses and provoke strong, affective responses, hereby going beyond cognitive ways of knowing (Lawrence, 2008). Coemans & Hannes (2017) conducted a scoping review focused on the use of arts-based methods in community-based research and found similar reasons to those discussed above for why scholars had decided to use arts-based methods in their research. They summarized:

'to overcome the limitations of conventional qualitative research approaches as a way of addressing power imbalances between researcher(s) and researched, to give (more vulnerable) participants a voice, to enrich reflection and dialogue, to investigate issues that are difficult to verbalize, to heighten the interest of participants and to share the findings with a broader non-academic audience' (p. 44).

Despite creative and arts-based research methods having tremendous appeal for a variety of reasons, it can be challenging for researchers using these methods to deal with academic conventions, an aspect to which we now turn our attention.

5.4 Challenges

Several scholars have observed that creative and arts-based research methods challenge the dominant assumptions and conventions concerning what constitutes "research", "knowledge" and "impact", and that this can make it difficult for scholars using these methods to obtain funding or publish their arts-based data (see, e.g., Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Foster, 2012; Hamilton & Taylor, 2017; Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015; Lawrence, 2008). Foster (2012), for instance, noted that arts-based research produces less tangible knowledge than the more traditional forms of social inquiry that produce familiar, "robust" data which can be tested for objectivity, reliability and validity. While the arts can make "embodied experience" central to the process of knowledge (co-)creation (Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015), such emotional and embodied ways of knowing are often ignored and dismissed in the dominant Western culture where rational-cognitive ways of knowing are prized (Lawrence, 2008). Coemans & Hannes (2017) added that the analysis of arts-based data can be difficult. They noted that researchers using creative and arts-based methods can be overwhelmed by the amount of data generated and their diverse and multi-layered nature. Subsequently, as they observed, it is often not clear what exactly counts as data, and conventional modes of analysis do not always seem appropriate for interpreting the collected data. Here, Lomax (2012) addressed the difficulties of interpreting image-based data while Green & Kloos (2009) noted that the number of images generated in a photovoice project can overwhelm conventional modes of analysis and discussion.

With regard to the notion of “impact”, Pain et al. (2015) argued that although “impact” has become an important dimension in how research is evaluated and funded, the way in which it ‘is conceptualized and measured tends to be very narrow, and unreflective of the diverse approaches to creating knowledge and affecting change that researchers today utilize’ (p. 4). Here, Kelemen & Hamilton (2015) indicated a more co-productive approach to knowledge that involves new forms of engagement between academics (those traditionally seen as “knowledge makers”) and those traditionally seen as “research subjects” (or even “consumers” of academic knowledge). Pain et al. (2015) stated that the dominant current understanding and measurement of “impact” is especially problematic for such co-produced or participatory research (where research is conducted together by a community, organization or group with academic researchers). We would argue that this equally applies to research that employs creative and arts-based research methods. As Hamilton & Taylor (2017) noted, advocates of these research methods are also asking important questions, such as ‘how can we decentre subject expertise and interact with research sites in more democratic ways?’ (p. 134) that are relevant given the current focus on “impact” in research.

5.5 Pingjum and the Research Project

For this chapter, in which we explore what creative and arts-based research methods can bring researchers, we draw on a participatory research project that was conducted in Pingjum. By discussing a research project in which a mix of creative and arts-based research methods was used, and elaborating on each project stage in detail, more nuanced, concrete insights into the value of such methods for researchers can be obtained.

Pingjum is a village of approximately 600 inhabitants located in the northern Netherlands. It is situated along the Wadden Sea coast and surrounded by mainly agricultural land. Relative to other villages in the northern Netherlands, Pingjum hosts many cultural activities and has a relatively large presence of artists (see Chapter 3). In the media, Pingjum is presented as being open and tolerant, and has the reputation of being an “artist village” (e.g. van Santen, 2013).

The research project was conducted as a part of a broader study addressing the role of “the arts” in the resilience of communities. We adopted a participatory approach consisting of three stages in which creative and arts-based research methods were used: walking interviews, group discussions, and a creative workshop that resulted in an exhibition in the village (see also below). Our participatory research project had two main aims:

First, we aimed to gain a thorough understanding of the key issues at play in the community and a deep insight into people's sense of place. Through this, we intended to obtain a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the context in which the local arts and artists exist since this would enable us to better grasp the role of the arts in the community's resilience. Pain (2004) argued that adopting a participatory approach is useful for research 'where people's relations with and accounts of space, place and environment are of central interest' (p. 653). She stated that, in being designed to be context-specific, participatory research often results in thick descriptions of place and produces situated, rich and layered accounts. Furthermore, research that actively engages a community is more likely to come from and reflect lived experiences, creating more authentic and multi-faceted knowledge (Pain et al., 2015). Moreover, our employment of a mix of creative and arts-based research methods, as part of our participatory approach, helped us to understand people's sensory and affective responses to their village and its surroundings. In so doing, we were able to go beyond cognitive ways of knowing (Lawrence, 2008). Kelemen & Hamilton (2015, p. 22) noted that, through the use of such methods, researchers can 'gain a degree of immersive, embodied experience of other peoples' "situated knowledges".

Second, and connected to the first aim, we sought to contribute positively to the community's thinking about and actual resilience. This second aim can be regarded as a form of "giving back" to the community (see, e.g., Fortmann, 2014; Gupta & Kelly, 2014; Salmon, 2007) and is in line with an objective of participatory research practices, namely to benefit the community from which the research participants are drawn (Diver & Higgins, 2014; Vigurs & Kara, 2017). We hoped that the participants, through their involvement in the project, would be stimulated to think together about important places in their village and (potential) changes and, where deemed necessary, come up with possible solutions or ways to deal with (anticipated) changes. Through the three consecutive stages, the participatory research project worked towards an exhibition in the village hall. The aim of this exhibition was to engage the broader community and generate discussion on the meanings of certain places in Pingjum. The above constitutes a somewhat intangible form of research "legacy" that Kelemen & Hamilton (2015, p. 24) described as 'something left behind for others to use or think about while they engage in their own practices' (e.g. new ideas that others may build on, changes in attitudes and culture, or new connections and working relationships). In this regard, Coemans et al. (2015) noted that the use of "artistic elements" in participatory research can stimulate participants to create ideas for their community (and their own lives). They further stated that this very often induces community action and change, which is subsequently important in terms of community resilience (see also Chapter 1). On a similar note, Mitchell et al. (2015) argued that the "empathic power" of the arts can help open research participants to the existence of different experiences and

views, creating a broader perspective and a deeper awareness of “other”. This, they noted, will make people more prepared to relate to their community and to take action in it.

The participants for our participatory research project were recruited in several ways, such as by giving a promotional presentation at the annual meeting of the village’s interest group, the door-to-door distribution of flyers, an online blog about the project⁸, and snowball sampling. In total, twenty-eight villagers participated in the project, including thirteen men and fifteen women from different age groups (below 25 years, between 25 and 65 years, and 65 years and above).

Below, we describe each stage of the participatory research project in more detail, giving background on the methods used and explaining why and how we used them in Pingjum.

5.5.1 Stage 1: Walking interviews

The first stage of the participatory research project comprised 28 walking interviews that would enable the researcher to get to know Pingjum, the key issues at play in the community, and the participants and their personal experiences with, and opinions on, living in Pingjum. A growing body of academic literature highlights the value of walking interviews (and other mobile methods) in terms of gaining insight into the spatiality of place experiences (Carpiano, 2009; Hitchings & Jones, 2004; Kusenbach, 2003; Lager et al., 2015; Trell & van Hoven, 2010). Evans & Jones (2011) noted that the method’s capacity to access people’s attitudes and knowledge about their surrounding environment is seen as a major advantage. They considered walking to be an intimate way to engage with landscape and an approach that can provide insights into both the place and self, resulting in walking interviews being able to generate more place-specific data than “traditional” interviews. Trell & van Hoven (2010) argued that, when producing knowledge about place (experiences) in “standard” interview settings, some small details or “layers” of place (experience) might be lost because participants need to draw on their mental image, or memories, of the place, without visual, audible, olfactory or tactile stimuli. They stated that ‘sometimes, it is necessary to see, hear, smell or feel a place in order to make sense of it and to communicate it to outsiders’ (p. 92) and that therefore, researchers, have started to explore research methods that take participants “into the field”. Hitchings & Jones (2004) illustrated that, when walking “in place” with participants, they were taken closer to the ways in which people encounter their environment, thereby producing richer data. Walking provided an array of unfolding prompts for discussion, triggering conversations and insights that might well have been overlooked during an interview indoors.

8 <https://onderzoeksprojectpingjum.wordpress.com/>

Walking interviews are also praised for allowing informal interaction, making participants feel more at ease and making it easier for them to express themselves in everyday language (Lager et al., 2015). Further, the method is credited for its ability to put participants “in charge”, effectively empowering them in the research process as the researcher is the one “going along” (Carpiano, 2009; Ecker, 2017). In this way, walking interviews can reduce the power imbalance between the researcher and the participants.

During the walking interviews in our study, the participants were asked to take the researcher on a “tour” through Pingjum and show the places that were meaningful to them and places which, in their eyes, were disputed in the community or were facing potential changes. A camera was taken along during the walks and the participants were asked to take photographs of the meaningful places they showed the researcher during their tour through Pingjum. Such a participant-driven approach, by creating opportunities for the participants to be more meaningfully involved, partially shifts the control over data generation from the researcher to the participants themselves (Vigurs & Kara, 2017). In addition, as Woodgate et al. (2017) noted, such a participatory *visual* approach enables participants to reflect on issues that are significant to them and to think through how they want to represent their own perspectives and experiences around a given topic. Since we informed our participants about the walking part of the interview process in advance, they could already think about the route and the places they wanted to show and talk about prior to their walking interview taking place. We did not provide detailed instructions to the participants about how the walk should be completed. The participants were free to take the researcher to any place they thought appropriate, take whatever route and as long as they wanted. In addition to the walking element, there were interview questions focused on people’s opinions on, and experiences with, the arts and artists in Pingjum, the village community and changes and potential changes to the village.

The walking interviews generated situated knowledge on participants’ personal village experiences and their views on key issues at play in the community. The outcomes of this first stage were intended as input for the second and third stages of the research project (see below).

5.5.2 Stage 2: Group Discussions

The second stage of our participatory research project consisted of three group discussions. We aimed to bring the participants together and have a further discussion on the shared and divergent meanings of particular places in Pingjum among people of the different age groups (<25, 25-65, >65). In this way we could grasp how certain places are seen and valued in the community and, as noted above, hoped to stimulate

the participants to also think about (potential) changes and come up with possible solutions or ways to deal with (anticipated) changes in light of our project's aim to contribute to the community's (thinking about) resilience.

The group discussions can be seen as a form of focus group, a method which has received considerable attention from a broad range of disciplines since the 1990s (Wilkinson, 2004). Bostock & Freeman (2003) explained that focus groups are a form of group interview in which data are generated through the communication between the participants, and that they aim to encourage debate and to examine what people think, how and why. Kamberelis & Dimitriadis (2013) noted that focus groups encompass a wide range of discursive practices, ranging from formal structured interviews around clearly delimited topics to less formal, open-ended conversations that can unfold in myriad and unpredictable ways. Generally, the researcher acts as a moderator, but rather than presenting the participants with a set of questions, the researcher can instead present stimulating materials (such as photographs or video clips) or ask them to engage in a specific activity (such as a rating exercise or card-sorting task) (Wilkinson, 2004).

A benefit of focus groups is that they can result in insights that are unlikely to have arisen from individual interviews. Wilkinson (2014) described how the researcher's control over a group's interaction is reduced simply by virtue of the number of participants simultaneously involved, making focus groups a relatively "egalitarian" method. This subsequently enables participants to develop those themes that they see as most important, discussing topics that might have gone unnoticed or given insufficient attention by the researcher. In addition, focus groups often lead to the production of more elaborate accounts. Wilkinson (2004) noted that they can create a "synergistic effect" by enabling participants to react to, and build upon, responses by other group members. Participants, for example, do not always agree with one another and may force each other to justify or defend their beliefs. Moreover, participants may feel empowered by a sense of group membership and cohesiveness (Sim, 1998). On a note of caution, a potential disadvantage of focus groups is that they may lead to bias in the results as some people talk more than others and dominate the discussion because of different personalities or power differences within a group (Bostock & Freeman, 2003).

For this second stage of the participatory research project, the participants were invited to the village hall, for one morning, to discuss further the meanings of the places they photographed during their walking interviews. Sixteen of the participants joined the meeting. Those absent were either unable to join due to a scheduling conflict or lacked interest in participating. The participants were divided into three "discussion groups"

of mixed ages. The morning started with an icebreaker game, so the members of each discussion group could get to know each other (insofar as they did not already) and a relaxed environment was stimulated. This promotes openness and willingness to talk, which are important factors in the success of a focus group (Barnett, 2007). All the photographs of public places taken during the walking interviews were printed and spread out on the tables. In the icebreaker game, each participant was asked to choose one photograph that particularly appealed to her/him. Subsequently, the participants were asked to shortly introduce themselves and explain why they chose that particular photograph.

Following this, each discussion group started with the main goal of the morning: discovering each other's opinions on, and experiences with, certain places in Pingjum and reflecting more deeply on the significance of those places. The photographs from the walking interviews were again used as stimuli, serving as starting points for the group discussions. We particularly wanted to see if there were any differences with regard to how different age groups saw and valued certain places in their community. Therefore, each "age group" within the three discussion groups was asked to select one or two photographs they would like to discuss in their group. As each discussion group included at least one person from each age group (<25, 25-65, >65), all groups discussed three to six photographs. Discussing photographs can help participants to better reflect upon and explain their perceptions and experiences, and promotes dialogue concerning issues (Loeffler, 2005; Purcell, 2007). In addition to the photographs, the discussion groups were given some guiding questions to support their discussions of their chosen photographs:

- What does this [photographed] place mean to you personally?
- Why does this place have this meaning for you?
- Has this meaning changed over time? How?
- Do you think this meaning will change in the future? Why (not)?
- Are there differences [with regard to the above] between the younger and older members in your discussion group?

In addition to the photographs and guiding questions, the discussion groups were provided with large sheets of paper and coloured pencils and asked to make a poster with which they could present the main results of their discussions to the entire group. This stimulated the participants to keep their discussions focused on the photographs/ places and their shared and/or divergent meanings over time, and encouraged each discussion group to reflect on their discussion and summarize its main points. After approximately one hour, each discussion group was asked to briefly present their poster so that all the groups could get a sense of each other's discussions. After these three poster presentations, the morning ended with a concluding discussion on the main results of the morning.

The group discussions generated co-produced knowledge on the discussed topics and revealed shared and divergent intergenerational views that existed within the community on the meaning of particular places in Pingjum. Together with the personal village experiences captured during the walking interviews, these outcomes served as input for the final stage of the participatory research project, described below.

5.5.3 Stage 3: Creative Workshop and Exhibition

The third stage of our participatory research project involved a creative workshop that resulted in an one-day exhibition in the village. This final stage served two purposes, the first, during a hands-on creative workshop, being to engage the participants further by asking them to visualize the meanings they assigned to certain places in Pingjum. In this regard, Walsh et al. (2013, p. 121) commented that arts-based research is ‘founded on the idea that the arts are useful as a means to *engage* in research as a participatory act that allow those involved to more directly express their voices through artistic media with the goal of enhanced self-expression’ (emphasis added). By asking the participants to visualize the meanings they assigned to certain places in Pingjum, we offered them a different means of communication to those used earlier (see below, and Coemans et al., 2015; Foster, 2012). It is important to note that the main function of the artworks is not aesthetic but, rather, to provide a medium through which the participants can exchange their ideas and thoughts (Hamilton & Taylor, 2017).

The second purpose of the third project stage was to “give back” to the village, by exhibiting the participatory research project and trying to engage the broader community and generate discussion on the meanings of certain places in Pingjum. Several scholars have noted that creative and arts-based research can make research findings more accessible for a broader non-academic audience and provoke changes in their understanding (see, e.g., Capous Desyllas, 2014; Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Foster, 2012; Hamilton & Taylor, 2017; Kara, 2015; Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015; Mitchell et al., 2011). Diver (2014) explained how local communities are often excluded from knowledge production because academic research uses specialized “academic” language and tends to rely on the written word. In comparison, collaborative research methods with artistic outputs can be a means of “giving back” to communities by reducing the focus on the written word by looking at other means of communication (Coemans et al., 2015; Foster, 2012). In this regard, Sorin et al. (2012) noted that images of art can transcend words and consciousness to, quoting Russell-Bowie (2006, p. 3), ‘embody and communicate emotions, ideas, beliefs and values; to convey meanings through aesthetic forms and symbols; and evoke emotive responses to life with or without words’. As Lawrence (2008) noted, the arts invite a conversation with the viewer by being able to stir up emotions by touching something deep inside them. Subsequently, they can be stimulated to connect to a personal experience of their own,

to tap into empathic connections with issues of (universal) concern, or ‘to envision alternative realities for a more promising future’ (p. 75). This could be important in terms of community action and change and, as noted, community resilience.

Nine of the participants were willing and able to take part in the creative workshop (six of whom had also attended the group discussions), which required them to come to the village hall for another morning. At the start of the morning, the participants were introduced to four students from the Minerva art academy in Groningen who would assist them in their visualization processes. Collaborating with art professionals (or, in our case, art academy students) can ease the artistic process for those with little or no expertise or skill in the arts (Kara, 2015). Just as the group discussions built on the photographs taken during the walking interviews, this final stage also built on the materials gathered during the previous project stages. A few weeks before the creative workshop, the participants were sent a printed “inspiration booklet” compiled by the researcher. This booklet contained an overview of the photographs (of public places) taken during the walking interviews and a selection of corresponding quotes from the walking interviews and group discussions. As such, the “inspiration booklet” presented the participants with an overview of the results of the first two project stages and stimulated them to contemplate the deeper meanings behind the photographs and quotes. Whereas in the previous stages there had been a lot of talking about the meanings of the places photographed, the aim of the hands-on creative workshop was to visualize some of these “stories” attached to these places in Pingjum. The participants could decide for themselves with whom they wanted to work during the morning. Four groups emerged (two groups consisting of two people, one of four people, and one person worked on his own), and each received assistance from one of the art academy students. In addition to the materials that some participants brought with them, the participants were offered a range of materials (i.e. paint, pencils, the printed photographs, different sizes of paper, old magazines) such that, to an extent, they were free to choose a means to express themselves. At the end of the morning, the groups were asked to present their artworks so everyone could see and hear about each other’s work.

A few weeks after the creative workshop, a one-day exhibition of the participatory research project was organized in Pingjum’s village hall. The exhibition featured an overview of the photographs of public places taken during the walking interviews and the four artworks created during the creative workshop (see Figures 3 and 6). Each artwork was accompanied by a short text that explained its theme. Although the participants were given the opportunity to write these texts themselves, only one group delivered input for the text. The exhibition also presented opportunities for the visitors to respond to the artworks as an aim was to engage the audience and generate discussion on the meanings of certain places in Pingjum in order to contribute to the

community's (thinking about) resilience. Each artwork had its own sheet of paper on which the visitors could write their own opinions on, and experiences with, the themes of the artworks (stimulated by guiding questions printed on these sheets). For example, two sheets of paper were hung next to the artwork photographed in Figure 6. One asked 'What do you experience when you are standing on the dike', and the other 'Which "side" are you most focused on: the Wadden Sea (like Ria) or the inland landscape (like Pepijn)? Why?'. These questions were intended to stimulate the visitors to reflect on their own feelings, experiences and views on Pingjum's coastal landscape (see below for more background on the artwork).

Approximately thirty-five visitors came to the exhibition, including the four art academy students, seven of the participants (six of whom participated in the creative workshop) and their families and friends, and other villagers of Pingjum. After the exhibition, the researcher took the four art academy students to the local pizzeria to thank them for their help and engage in an evaluative group talk on the exhibition.

The third project stage generated "affective knowledge" on the participants' sense of place (see also below). As noted, arts-based research methods actively engage people's senses and can place "embodied experience" central in the process of knowledge creation (Eisner, 2008; Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015). As Lawrence (2008) observed, the arts can provoke strong, affective responses in both the creator and the viewer of art that, subsequently, can provide a catalyst for learning beyond traditional, and dominant, cognitive ways of knowing. In this regard, Eisner (2008, p. 7) noted that involving the arts in research can 'promote a form of understanding that is derived or evoked through empathic experience' and provide deep insights into what others are experiencing.

5.6 Multifaceted Knowledge

Our participatory research project provided a rich insight into Pingjum's village life, the key issues at play in the community and the participants' sense of place and village experiences. Through its three stages, we gained *multifaceted knowledge*, with each project stage providing another facet of these topics. This helped us to understand the context in which the local arts and artists exist and the role of the arts in the resilience of the community. A major theme that emerged from the participatory research project was our participants' appreciation of Pingjum's open landscape. In light of our study on the role of the arts in the resilience of communities, this is an interesting theme. It relates to people's place attachment and their coping with (potential) place change (see Chapter 4) and, ultimately, the community's resilience. During the walking interviews, several participants took us to personal favourite and/or meaningful places from which they encounter and enjoy Pingjum's landscape. Others, who did not select specific places related to the landscape during their walking interviews, expressed

their appreciation of Pingjum’s landscape in general terms. Overall, during the first project stage, it emerged that the participants greatly value the tranquillity and space of Pingjum’s surroundings. During the second project stage, Pingjum’s landscape again emerged as one of the discussed topics. The group discussions revealed shared and divergent views, with people, for instance, valuing different elements in the landscape (e.g. trees vs. the open views). During the creative workshop, one group specifically created an artwork around Pingjum’s coastal landscape (see Figure 6 and below for more background on this artwork) and another person visualized his “future wish” for Pingjum, painting a landscape in which human beings are intertwined with the landscape (see Figure 3). Marc (man, 25-65) introduced his painting as follows:



Figure 3 Painting Marc (own photograph).

‘This is actually just a view, from Pingjum towards the meadows, to the landscape. And these [*pointing to the white shapes*] are humanlike beings in the landscape, who are a bit intertwined with the landscape. A lot of people are intertwined with the landscape, I think, at least in spirit. But perhaps we should grow even more with the landscape, so we no longer live *on* and *against* the earth, but a bit more *with* and *through* the earth [...] so we are *part* of the earth instead of standing apart from it’.

With his painting, Marc shared his “future wish” for Pingjum, calling for more consideration of the landscape and the earth in general (i.e. ‘we should grow even more with the landscape’ and ‘we are *part* of the earth instead of standing apart from it’). This links well to our study on community resilience, as it concerns people’s place attachment and care for their landscape (see also Stocker & Kennedy, 2011).

As noted, we also gained an understanding of key issues that are at play in the community through the participatory research project. Some of these could potentially induce place change and inflict changes on Pingjum's landscape. In earlier work, we reflected on the role of the arts in people's coping with potential place change in light of wind energy developments (see Chapter 4). During our project, it became clear that, for many participants, the plans for the construction of a new wind turbine park were difficult to reconcile with their feelings for, and attachments to, Pingjum's open landscape. Acquiring *multifaceted knowledge* on people's sense of place, Pingjum's village life and the key issues at play, helped us to understand the role of the local arts and artists in people's interpretations of, and dealing with, potential place changes in light of the wind energy developments (see Chapter 4).

In order to provide more nuanced, concrete insight into what creative and arts-based research methods can bring researchers, the next section reflects on the participatory research project by elaborating on how the various project stages contributed to producing *multifaceted knowledge*.

5.6.1 Personal, In-Place Accounts

During the first stage of our research project we got to know Pingjum, the key issues at play in the community and our participants. As noted earlier, walking interviews are praised for their capacity to access people's attitudes and knowledge about their surrounding environment (Evans & Jones, 2011). Walking with our participants through their village provided an opportunity to gain in-depth understanding of their personal sense of place and village experiences (including their opinions on, and experiences with, the local arts and artists). We learned about the places which are meaningful to our participants and which, in their eyes, are disputed in the community or facing (potential) changes. The walking interviews resulted in "thick" descriptions of the places and personal situated and rich accounts (Pain, 2004). As we were "in place" with our participants, we were brought closer to the ways in which they experience their village and given a feeling for their sense of place. Instead of only hearing the participants describe the places they wanted to discuss, the researcher walked with them through their village and experienced the places first hand, also seeing, hearing, smelling and feeling the places herself. Moreover, as the places themselves provided prompts for discussion, the walking interviews also triggered new conversations (see also Hitchings & Jones, 2004; Trell & van Hoven, 2010).

An example of a personal, in-place account generated through the walking interviews is provided by Abby (woman, 25-65), who took the researcher to a personally meaningful place during her walking interview (see Figure 4). Abby explained that she selected this spot on the outskirts of Pingjum as it is one of the places in Pingjum that are important to her. She noted:

Abby: 'Here, I became emotional for the first time [while being in Pingjum's landscape], I thought "what a nice spot" [...] that curvy little ditch, those horses and those flowers [...] Here I can really find peace and also something nostalgic, I think'.

Interviewer: 'What makes it so special?'

Abby: 'I very much love green, that is my favourite colour. And also because it is not that tight, that curvy ditch. There is plenty of space, the horses that are walking around. In spring, the foals are walking around here, playing during the evening. It is the slowing down. Just having a look, enjoying'.



Figure 4 One of Abby's personally significant places in Pingjum (photograph Abby – walking interview).

This quote shows Abby's appreciation of Pingjum's landscape, its tranquillity and space. Actually being in the place during the walking interview, rather than recalling from a mental image or memories of the place, resulted in an in-place account of this personally meaningful place. The place itself played an active role in Abby's explanation of her sense of place, as illustrated by her pointing out the horses and choice of words (i.e. 'here', 'those'). Seeing the horses during her walking interview triggered Abby to reflect on her memories of the place, of being there in springtime and seeing the foals playing around. Abby also invited the researcher to look at the place together (i.e. 'just

having a look, enjoying’). In this way, the researcher was taken closer to the way in which Abby experiences Pingjum’s surroundings as she could herself experience the peace (i.e. ‘the slowing down’) that Abby finds there. This corresponds to the ideas of Kelemen & Hamilton (2015, p. 22), who noted, that when using creative and arts-based research methods, researchers can ‘gain a degree of immersive, embodied experience of other peoples’ “situated knowledges”.

5.6.2 Shared and Divergent Intergenerational Views

During the second project stage, our participants from different age groups (<25, 25-65, >65) were brought together to discuss further the meanings of the places they photographed during their individual walking interviews. As already noted, creative and arts-based research methods can serve as a bridge between generations, cultures, socioeconomic classes and people who are divided along habitual lines determined by existing agendas and interests (Anwar McHenry, 2011; Askins & Pain, 2011; Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Taylor & Murphy, 2014). By bringing the participants together in discussion groups, a “synergistic effect” emerged. The participants were reacting to and building upon each other’s responses, leading to elaborated accounts of the issues discussed (see also Wilkinson, 2014). By sharing their views, the participants co-produced knowledge on the topics discussed and revealed shared and divergent intergenerational, views that exist in the community on the meaning of particular places in Pingjum.

In addition, the group discussions led to the disclosure of issues, anecdotes and ideas on Pingjum and its future that had not been raised (or perhaps thought of) during the walking interviews. This benefit was also identified by Pain et al. (2015) who observed that new ideas can be sparked through the process of people coming together (with each person bringing ideas, expertise and skills). The ideas that emerged during our second project stage (such as constructing an underground parking lot just outside Pingjum and building a “village bench” to stimulate interaction among community members) showed that the participants were thinking and discussing about ways to deal with (potential) changes and to improve village life. This aligns with the aim of our research project to contribute to the community’s (thinking about) resilience. A similar finding was noted by Brice & Fernández Arconada (2018) when reflecting on their arts project in Somerset, UK. They noted that the project provided a starting point for the participants to develop and share ‘new frames of reference’, with some participants ‘seiz[ing] the inspiration to imagine possible responses to current and future challenges’ (pp. 237-238). The concluding discussion and poster presentations at the end of the project’s second stage provided an overview of the discussion groups’ most important places and “core values” of Pingjum.

To illustrate the facet that the participatory research project's second stage added to our knowledge on Pingjum, the key issues at play in the community, and our participants' sense of place, we take a closer look at the discussion on the overview of photographs featuring Pingjum's landscape (see Figure 4) that took place in one of the discussion groups. The following exchange took place between Jenny (woman, >65) and Vera (woman, 25-65). Talking about the shell path alongside the water on the west side of Pingjum (top-left photograph in Figure 5, taken by Pepijn (man, >65) during his walking interview), Jenny noted:

Jenny: 'If you look at the shell path, which we all walk with our dogs, a tree regularly falls down there, and it is never replaced by a new one. And the trees that are there are quite poor. Yes, I think that is all a shame. I would like to see things differently'.

Vera: 'Perhaps that is something we could accomplish together?'

Jenny: 'No, that is not going to happen, because I once talked about it with the municipality's gardener. It [planting trees] does not belong in this area, people are more fond of meadows and stuff. I think that is a pity, that we do not have a park'.

This exchange illustrates that the participants reacted to each other's experiences and views. For example, after Jenny pointed out the poor conditions of the trees in Pingjum, Vera proposed joining forces to work on this. The exchange also provides an example of new information that came forward during the group discussions. Jenny had not, to this extent, expressed her appreciation of the trees in Pingjum('s landscape) during her walking interview, but now, seeing someone else's photograph during the group discussions, it appeared that she was strongly in favour of trees being part of Pingjum's landscape and had even discussed this matter with the municipality's gardener.

Figure 5 Overview of photographs featuring Pingjum's landscape (as used during the group discussions) (photographs made during the walking interviews, by: ❶ Pepijn (man, >65), ❷ Henry (man, 25-65), ❸ Donald (man, >65), and ❹ Eric (man, >65).



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Pepijn (man, >65), who was also part of this discussion group himself, also reflected on the overview of photographs featuring Pingjum's landscape:

Pepijn: 'I love the space, I love the agricultural farm, I love farms. This is a village where, if you step out of your front door, you look outside at once. Nowadays that no longer happens anywhere. Here, you have it [the views] on all sides [of the village]. You are completely outdoors. That gives me so much space. I think it is very beautiful. You [referring to Jenny] are in favour of parks, I am not a fan of parks at all. On the contrary [...] I love the space as it has developed through agriculture over the centuries.'

Vera: 'But you do not have to agree with each other, I believe.'

Jenny: 'But one does not exclude the other, right? I also love the space. Of course, I think it is wonderful that we can still see the horizon.'

Pepijn: '...the sky, those old dikes...'

Jenny: 'But I am extremely annoyed by the spraying with pesticides, which we all suffer from. So [looking at Pingjum's surrounding], I see different things than you do'.

Reacting to Jenny's earlier remarks on the trees in Pingjum's landscape, Pepijn shared his personal view on Pingjum's landscape. As already noted, discussing photographs can help participants to reflect on and explain their experiences and perceptions (Loeffler, 2005; Purcell, 2007). In this case, the photographs served as stimuli and illustrations for the discussion by the participants. Jenny, for instance, used them to point out the trees, and Pepijn to illustrate the open views from the various sides of the village. As becomes clear from the two quoted exchanges, these two participants had divergent views on Pingjum's landscape and they each value different elements within it (i.e. trees vs. the open views). Together, they co-produced knowledge on Pingjum's landscape, with each of them expressing a different view and highlighting different elements in the landscape (i.e. 'I see different things than you do'). By listening to each other, the participants become aware of the existence of different views and experiences, and a broader perspective on Pingjum's landscape is created. This corresponds to the literature in the field of creative methodology, which, as Hamilton & Taylor (2017) noted, is beginning to show effects on the participants of arts-based projects such as improved empathy for other people and new experiences and ways of thinking. As noted, such effects can make people more prepared to relate to their community and to take action in it (Mitchell et al., 2015), changes which are beneficial with regard to the community's resilience.

5.6.3 Deep Insights through Empathic Experiences

Research methods that rely solely on verbal or written competences can, as previously noted, provide limited access to emotional and symbolic aspects of people's experiences (Dunn & Mellor, 2017). Compared to the first two stages, the final stage of the participatory research project allowed the participants to communicate their views and feelings in a different way (see also Coemans et al., 2015; Foster, 2012). During the hands-on creative workshop, the participants were asked to visualize the meanings they assigned to certain places in Pingjum. As Dunn & Mellor (2017) commented, this enables participants to draw on both their cognitive capacities and their emotions, experiences and imagination. The four artworks/visualizations that resulted from the creative workshop provided deep insights into the participants' sense of place and also exposed issues that has not previously come to the surface. Eisner (2008) explained that this deep insight into what others are experiencing can be obtained because 'the arts in research promote a form of understanding that is derived or evoked through empathic experience' (p. 7).

To illustrate the above, we consider one of the created artworks in more detail (see Figure 6). At the end of the morning of the creative workshop, Ria (woman, 25-65) introduced this artwork (which she had made together with Pepijn (man, >65)) as follows:

'This is the dike [pointing to the horizontal line in the middle of the painting], and we are standing back to back with each other. I am watching the Wadden Sea because the Wadden Sea is the reason why I have come to live here. And Pepijn is looking at the other side, to the open landscape. We have painted from these two perspectives. So the sea, of course [pointing to "her" side of the artwork]. What I like so much about the Wadden Sea is the vastness. But also the entire trench system, because it so strongly reflects the dynamics of the Wadden Sea, and that is also something I feel for, so therefore I included that [in the painting]'

Both Ria and Pepijn have a strong attachment to the coastal landscape around Pingjum. The creative workshop stimulated them to reflect on and talk about their feelings. This outcome is supported by Lowe (2000), who noted that working on an arts project can give participants the opportunity to talk about their experiences. In this way, she argued, they can discover common concerns and shared definitions of the situations in their neighbourhood. In the case of Ria and Pepijn, different interpretations of the "coastal landscape" concept emerged. Whereas Ria is more oriented towards the *seascape*, Pepijn is more oriented towards the *landscape*. Through their mutual painting, they each tried to capture the elements of the landscape that appeal to them and for which they feel an attachment (i.e. 'I am watching the Wadden Sea [...] Pepijn is looking at the other side').



Figure 6 Ria and Pepijn's artwork hanging at the exhibition (own photograph).

The artworks that were created during the creative workshop were displayed during an exhibition in the village hall. With this in mind, Ria, during her introduction of their artwork, remarked that some elements were still missing:

'What also belongs to this, and which we hope to include during the final exhibition, look.. this is two dimensional, and when you look outside or actually, when you are standing there [on the dike], you see everything as three dimensional. But you *experience* it as four dimensional because the senses are also added. Because the Wadden Sea has a certain smell, and you feel the wind through your hair, and you can taste something. So we hope we can include some odours and sounds in our work, or around it. To complete the picture. And that will be very much in line with what we both strongly experience here'.

As noted, the creative workshop stimulated Ria and Pepijn to reflect on their personal experiences while standing on the dike. Thinking about how to convey these, they realized that they needed to include material additional to their painting in order to present a more complete expression of their sense of place on the dike (i.e. 'to complete the picture'). As can be seen in Figure 6, Ria and Pepijn indeed added extra material to their artwork during the exhibition. On the left side of the painting, they added a box with materials they found along the coastline and a note saying '*look, smell, and admire*'. On the right side, they added a box with recorded sounds of the coastal landscape and a note '*hear, listen, and grow quiet*'. By including the materials and sounds, Ria and Pepijn added several layers or dimensions to their artwork (i.e. 'you *experience* it as four dimensional because the senses are also added'). In this way, they appealed even more to the visitors' emotions and imagination, offering them an "empathic experience" and insight into what they experienced when standing on the dike (see also Eisner, 2008).

As the above example illustrates, the third project stage generated affective knowledge, providing deep insights into the participants' sense of place through empathic experiences. Compared to the first two project stages, the hands-on creative workshop enabled the participants to communicate their views and feelings in a different way, and move beyond cognitive ways of knowing. In this regard, Lawrence (2008) observed that experiential learning opportunities are present in both the creating and the witnessing of art. Quoting Burnard (1988), she noted that 'affective knowledge' or the 'experiential domain of knowledge' can be 'gained through direct personal encounter with a subject, person, place, or thing. It is the subjective and affective nature of that encounter that contributes to this sort of knowledge' (p. 69).

5.7 Discussion and Conclusions

Our reflection on our participatory research project conducted in Pingjum provides nuanced, concrete insights into what creative and arts-based research methods can bring to academia. The three project stages produced *multifaceted knowledge*, with each stage providing another facet of Pingjum's village life and the participants' sense of place and village experiences. The walking interviews generated personal, in-place accounts of people's village experiences and their views on key issues at play in the community (see also Pain, 2004; Trell & van Hoven, 2010). The group discussions brought the participants together and revealed both shared and divergent intergenerational views that existed within the community on the meaning of particular places in Pingjum (see also Wilkinson, 2014). Lastly, the creative workshop provided deep insights into people's sense of place through empathic experiences (see also Eisner, 2008; Lawrence, 2008). In addition, both the second and third stages of the project disclosed issues that had not been previously raised. This adds support to the practice of combining more traditional research methods with creative and arts-based research methods in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study (Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Franz, 2010).

Our participatory research project had two main aims: to actively engage the inhabitants in generating knowledge about their community and its resilience and, linked to this, to contribute positively to the community's thinking about and actual resilience. With regard to the first, we can conclude that the project helped in gaining deeper insights into people's sense of place and village experiences and in comprehending the key issues at play in Pingjum's community. The creative and arts-based research methods, by actively engaging the participants' senses and provoking strong affective responses, enabled us to go beyond cognitive ways of knowing (see also Lawrence, 2008). These findings are in line with the views of scholars such as Capous Desyllas (2014) and Woodgate et al. (2017) who argued that, with the help of creative and arts-based research methods, a more meaningful understanding of the complex realities of

people's lives can be obtained. The *multifaceted knowledge* that was produced enabled us to get a good grasp of the role of the arts in the resilience of the community. We, for instance, found that the arts play a role in people's interpretations of, and dealing with, (potential) place change (see Chapter 4) and that the influence of the arts is context-dependent, with the arts having both binding and dividing influences on the community (see Chapter 3).

In terms of our second aim, we can conclude that the participatory research project: a) stimulated the participants, and the visitors to the exhibition, to think about and discuss their community and their attachments to it, (potential) changes in the village, and ways to deal with these, and to improve village life; b) brought together some community members who would normally rarely meet or did not even know each other (especially those of different age groups); and c) generated discussion on the meanings of certain places in Pingjum and, thereby, opened people up to the existence of different views and experiences (e.g. different interpretations of the "coastal landscape"). As noted, this can lead to a broader perspective and deeper awareness of "the other", which, subsequently, can make people more prepared to relate to their community and to take action in it (Mitchell et al., 2015). These three outcomes amount to an intangible research "legacy" that the community members can use or continue to think about outside the research project (see also Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015). As an example, during the group discussions, the participants were expressing their wishes, and had some ideas for the construction of a "village bench" to stimulate interactions among community members. Although these were only ideas, the participants might follow them up and be inspired to work together to achieve the installation of a "village bench". This could stimulate the build-up of social capital, which would further contribute to the community's resilience by stimulating people's willingness and ability to work together for a common good (see Chapter 1).

Having discussed the positives, we must also address some of the hurdles and challenges in using creative and arts-based research methods. We initially noted the challenge of accommodating this kind of research within academic conventions, and we now reflect on other challenges in using creative and arts-based research methods encountered during our research project.

First, engaging the community in our participatory research project was not easy. Although we received positive feedback from the participants once they were engaged, it took quite some effort in the first place to find villagers willing to take part in our project. Moreover, despite the positive feedback, we "lost" some participants over the course of the project. Whereas the project started with twenty-eight walking interviews, the group discussions involved only sixteen participants and the creative workshop

just nine participants. In addition, although approximately thirty-five people visited the exhibition, this is only a small proportion of Pingjum's 600 inhabitants. Further, the people who attended the exhibition did not use the opportunities provided to respond to the artworks to the extent that we had hoped. Macpherson et al. (2017) reported a similarly weak level of participation by the general public when reflecting on the challenges and tensions they encountered in a collaborative exhibition they organized. Despite our slight disappointment, our visitors did at least take their time to wander around the exhibition space and talk and have a drink with one another.

Second, there was quite some uncertainty linked to our participatory research project. Coemans & Hannes (2017) have observed that it is common in arts-based research for not all the details of the process, conclusions and possible impacts to be known in advance, and this was certainly true for our project. With our creative and arts-based research methods, we, to a certain extent, put our participants "in charge" (see also Carpiano, 2009; Trelle & van Hoven, 2010). They could decide which places they wanted to show the researcher and discuss during their walking interviews, which photographs to discuss during the group discussions, and which meanings and places to visualize (and how) during the creative workshop. This meant that, at the start of our project, we did not know which topics would emerge and what the final exhibition would look like. Such uncertainties make creative and arts-based research methods both challenging and exciting (see also Askins & Pain, 2011). More importantly, however, through actively engaging the participants in this way, our research was more likely to come from and reflect the lived experiences of the community members (Pain et al., 2015), and be relevant to the community's resilience (see Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018).

Third, conducting such a participatory research project took considerable time for all those involved. Participants and art academy students had to be found, time-costly walking interviews had to be conducted, the group discussions, creative workshop and exhibition had to be planned and prepared, and the gathered data had to be transcribed and analysed. Maybe these demands were a reason why community members might have been reluctant to get involved in the research, or dropped out along the way. Coemans & Hannes (2017) also highlighted this time-consuming nature of arts-based research methods, and added that costs can be another practical limitation of these methods (e.g. costs related to organizing an exhibition, collaborating with artists, or buying equipment of good quality such as digital cameras).

Despite these challenges, our study shows that creative and arts-based research methods can deliver substantial benefits and, therefore, have much to offer researchers. Specifically, our reflection on our participatory research project in Pingjum

demonstrates that creative and arts-based research methods can: 1) generate deep insight by providing new ways of understanding people’s real, lived experiences and views, by going beyond rational-cognitive ways of knowing (see also Hamilton & Taylor, 2017); and 2) present ways to “give back” and contribute to a community, potentially igniting a spark among community members to engage in action and contribute to their community’s resilience. This is in line with currently often articulated aims of research, namely to directly benefit those involved and to share research findings with a broader non-academic audience (Macpherson et al., 2017).

CHAPTER 6

Conclusions & discussion

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to explore the value of arts-based community activities for resilience-building. The focus on arts-based community activities aligns with resilience policies that seek to include the everyday life-world and knowledge available within communities, and can be viewed in the context of the growing interest in the value of the arts for communities in general. The thesis draws on a research project that was conducted in Pingjum, a village in the northern Netherlands. The project adopted a participatory approach consisting of three stages in which creative and arts-based research methods were used: walking interviews, group discussions, and a creative workshop that led to an exhibition in Pingjum's village hall. In this final chapter, an overview of the main findings from the preceding chapters is presented, followed by a discussion of three issues with regard to resilience-building and arts-based community activities, and to creative and arts-based research methods. Then, reflections on the research approach are provided.

6.2 Summary of the main findings

The preceding chapters addressed various aspects of the relation between arts-based community activities and community resilience: the various dimensions of social capital that participatory community arts can generate (Chapter 2), the binding and dividing effects of the arts on communities (Chapter 3), and the role of the arts in people's emotional connections to landscape and their coping with (potential) place change (Chapter 4). Altogether, they contribute to a greater understanding of the value of arts-based community activities for community resilience. In addition, Chapter 5 contributes to the discussion on the value of creative and arts-based research methods for researchers by reflecting on the participatory research project carried out in Pingjum.

In **Chapter 2**, it was noted that community resilience can be developed in various ways as communities have a variety of internal and external resources (e.g. economic, social, political, natural) on which they can draw to respond to change (Magis, 2010). In this chapter, I established the link between social capital and community resilience. In line with scholars such as Brennan et al. (2009), Derrett (2003) and Larsen et al. (2004), it was argued that social capital is one of the resources that play a role in a community's resilience. Due to the build-up of social capital, community members can become more connected to each other and their community and, subsequently, more willing and able to work together and contribute to their community and its development.

I discussed two international participatory community arts projects in this chapter in order to illustrate the various dimensions of social capital that participatory

community arts can generate (i.e. bonding, bridging and linking) and how this contributed to the resilience of the communities where the projects took place.

In the discussed projects, the arts were specifically credited with helping to involve people and to facilitate interactions. Both projects illustrated the ability of participatory community arts to generate various types of social capital. By supporting social networks and building a sense of place, they provided excellent examples of why participatory community arts can be beneficial with regard to resilience-building (see also Boon et al., 2012). Based on these findings, the chapter concluded that participatory community arts should be considered in community development processes as a means for building community resilience. They can assist communities in developing the capacities and resources to deal with challenges that they face. Though, I stressed that the specific spatial context in which a project is planned must be taken into account when planning for resilience, as each community will have its own characteristics and needs (see also Christopherson et al., 2010).

In **Chapter 3**, the various impacts of the arts on communities are discussed. It was observed that the literature in this regard generally focuses on the positive impacts and ignores potentially negative impacts of the arts (Belfiore, 2006). Following Panelli & Welch (2005), this thesis regards communities as heterogeneous entities. Hence, in this chapter, I argued that a more nuanced perspective on the impacts of the arts on communities is needed as the arts will work differently and have various effects for different (groups of) community members.

In the chapter, I discussed how the arts in Pingjum influence the community in the village. In so doing, I drew on the opinions of, and experiences with, the arts and artists in Pingjum as expressed by the participants in my participatory research project. In the analysis, I paid attention to the sense of community that the arts can generate, the meeting opportunities they can provide, and how the community can be engaged by some artists.

The case-study in Pingjum showed that the influence of the arts is context-dependent, with the arts having both binding and dividing effects for different (groups of) community members. I emphasized three key issues: the arts do not have only advantages for a community, they do not engage an entire community, and they could potentially contribute to community fragmentation. On the one hand, my findings demonstrated that the arts can have benefits for some people, being something to derive feelings of pride from, contributing to a sense of community, and providing meeting opportunities. On the other hand though, my findings indicated that for others, this sense of community is contested and the arts are seen as more of a

competing force, with the risk of becoming too dominant in the village. The case-study also revealed that some people decided not to engage with the arts and that some might want to, but experience cultural, financial or age thresholds that prevent them from taking part to the extent they might like to. Based on these findings, I suggested that the arts should be considered as *one* of several supportive means in community development processes, as their various effects have consequences for the extent to which community development is actually supported. In light of contributing to a community's robustness and resilience, it would be ideal when the arts are considered alongside other associations and activities in a community and are integrated into a wider community development strategy and planning (Burnell, 2012; Kay, 2000; Phillips, 2004).

In **Chapter 4**, I explored the role of the arts in people's emotional connections to their landscape and in their coping with (potential) place change at the coast in light of wind energy developments. Taking the role of the arts into account in this regard can help to better understand public responses to local developments and move a community towards more effective participatory planning processes (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). Place change could trigger forms of "place-protective" action, such as engaging in collective protest or signing petitions against proposed plans (Devine-Wright, 2009). People's interpretations of place change are socially constructed, with various people, groups and institutions influencing one another (see, e.g., Batel & Devine-Wright, 2015; Stedman, 2002; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001). In the chapter, I specifically focused on the role of artists in this regard, a group which, in this context, has received little attention until now. Several scholars though, observed that the arts can help to articulate and strengthen links between communities and places (see, e.g., Anwar McHenry, 2011; Hall & Robertson, 2001; Morris & Cant, 2004) and mentioned the arts as tools to (re) frame and engage with controversial topics, such as dealing with climate change (see, e.g. Miles, 2010; Weik von Mossner, 2013).

Chapter 4 zoomed in on the role of the arts in Pingjum in the participants' interpretations of, and dealing with, local wind energy developments in relation to a key feature of their village's landscape, a late medieval dike called the *Gouden Halsband*. Recently, the area around Pingjum (including this dike) was designated as a potential location for the construction of a new windfarm. Drawing on the walking interviews and group discussions, I elaborated on the role of the arts in people's emotional connections to their landscape and the expression of their attachments through actions.

My findings showed that the arts in Pingjum fuelled people's emotional connection to their landscape and the old medieval dike, enhanced their knowledge of both and triggered people to reflect on the meanings they assign to them. With regard to the

windfarm plans, my findings indicated that the arts enhanced people's awareness and stimulated their assessment of them. They mainly brought (potential) negative impacts on Pingjum's landscape to people's attention, framing people's interpretations of the plans. In this way, the arts encouraged action, stimulating both protests against the proposed windfarm plans and efforts to preserve the *Gouden Halsband*. Based on these findings, I concluded that in the context of people's coping with (potential) place change, artists can be players to be taken into account. Pointing to Stuiver et al. (2012, p. 309), I proposed that they could be included 'as consultants of the immaterial values' in planning processes. In this way, 'local input still can have impact' before definite plans for an area are made. In light of community resilience, this aligns with resilience policies that strive to include the everyday life-world and knowledge available within communities.

In **Chapter 5**, the focus was shifted to the lessons learned from using creative and arts-based research methods. To contribute to the discussion on the value of such methods to academia, I reflected on the conducted participatory research project in Pingjum in order to provide nuanced, concrete insights into the value of creative and arts-based research methods. In the chapter, I elaborated on how the walking interviews, group discussions and creative workshop that resulted in an exhibition contributed to producing *multifaceted knowledge*.

My findings demonstrated that a rich insight into Pingjum's village life, the key issues at play in the community and my participants' sense of place and village experiences was obtained. Each project stage provided another facet of these topics, leading to *multifaceted knowledge*. The first stage, comprising the walking interviews, generated personal, in-place accounts of the participants' village experiences and views on key issues at play in their community (see also Pain, 2004; Trelle & van Hoven, 2010). The second stage, consisting of the group discussions, brought the participants together and revealed shared and divergent intergenerational views that existed within the community on the meaning of particular places in the village. The third stage, comprising the creative workshop and exhibition, provided insight into the participants' sense of place through empathic experiences (see also Eisner, 2008; Lawrence, 2008). Further, the second and third project stages disclosed issues that had not been previously raised.

The creative and arts-based research methods proved to be useful with regard to meeting the two main aims of the participatory research project, i.e. to actively engage the inhabitants in generating knowledge about their community and its resilience and, linked to this, to contribute positively to the community's thinking about and actual resilience (see also Chapter 1). With regard to the first aim, the methods

helped in gaining insight in the participants' sense of place and village experiences, the issues at play in their community, and the overall context in which the local arts and artists exist. As Steiner & Markantoni (2013) noted, it is essential to capture and understand the issues that communities face when investigating community resilience. Ultimately, the *multifaceted knowledge* that was produced through the creative and arts-based research methods contributed to a greater understanding of the value of arts-based community activities for the community's resilience. With regard to the second aim, I concluded that the project might potentially have ignited a spark among the community members to engage in action and contribute to their community's resilience (see also Fortmann, 2014; Gupta & Kelly, 2014; Salmon, 2007 on "giving back" to communities). The project contributed to a cultural practice already existing in the community, which entails deliberate efforts of (some) artists to strengthen the inhabitants' relationship with their surrounding landscape and to contribute to a sustainable future for their village (see also Chapter 3, section 4.3). The research project added to this practice. It stimulated the formation and strengthening of links between some community members by providing meeting opportunities. In addition, the project stimulated the involved inhabitants to think about and discuss their community and their attachments to it, (potential) changes in the village, and ways to deal with these and to improve village life.

In chapter 5, I also elaborated on the hurdles and challenges in using creative and arts-based research methods. In addition to the challenge of accommodating this kind of research within academic conventions (see also section 6.3.3), I reflected on three challenges that I encountered during the participatory research project in Pingjum. These concern: the efforts to engage the community in the project, the uncertainty linked to the project (i.e. the details of the process, outcomes and possible impacts were not known in advance, which makes these methods challenging (and exciting!)), and the considerable time demands of the project to all those involved.

Despite these challenges, I concluded that creative and arts-based research methods have much to offer to researchers as they deliver substantial benefits. My reflection on the participatory research project indicated that these methods can: 1) generate multifaceted insight by providing new ways of understanding people's real lived experiences and views, by going beyond rational-cognitive ways of knowing (see also Hamilton & Taylor, 2017); and 2) present ways to contribute and "give back" to a community.

In sum, by looking into the role of arts-based community activities in community resilience from several perspectives, the chapters of this thesis come to aid in answering the question of how to achieve community resilience. The chapters presented an image of arts-based community activities as being a significant potential resource

for resilience-building. By generating various types of social capital, participatory community arts were found to be able to assist communities in developing the capacities and resources to deal with challenges that they face and to flourish (Chapter 2). Especially with regard to resilience policies that seek to include the everyday life-world and knowledge available within communities, arts-based community activities appeared to be an interesting means. When looking at people's coping with (potential) place change, the various arts activities and artists in Pingjum were found to be able to frame people's interpretations of, and dealing with, proposed developments (Chapter 4). They proved to enhance people's emotional connections to their landscape and influence people's expression of their attachments through actions (e.g. signing petitions against proposed plans). In this light, taking the role of the arts into account can help to move a community towards more effective participatory planning processes (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). Further, as suggested in Chapter 4, artists could be included in planning processes 'as consultants of the immaterial values' (Stuiver et al., 2012, p. 309). Through site-specific and community-based arts projects (that actively involve the citizens in creative processes), the local knowledge of the citizens, that are affected by a proposed plan, can be made explicit. Here, it should be added that the role of artists in this regard 'is to facilitate cultural artistic expressions that capture the local uniqueness on people's own terms' (Stuiver et al., 2012, p. 300). In this way, the local context will be more involved when planning for community development. However, a nuanced perspective on the role of arts-based community activities is required, as the arts appeared to have both binding and dividing effects on the community in Pingjum (Chapter 3). Therefore, the arts should preferably be integrated into a wider community development strategy and planning. When the arts exist alongside other associations and activities in a community, they can truly contribute to the robustness of a community. Lastly, when looking at the potential for academic research to contribute to a community in this regard, creative and arts-based research methods were found to present researchers ways to "give back" to a community and potentially contribute to its resilience (Chapter 5).

6.3 Discussion

Having discussed the main findings of this thesis, the next section elaborates on three issues with regard to resilience-building and arts-based community activities, and to creative and arts-based research methods: 1) the degree of caution required regarding both community resilience and arts-based community activities; 2) concerns around the "instrumentalisation" of the arts; and 3) the position of creative and arts-based research methods in academic research.

6.3.1. No "magic potion"

In this section, it is stressed that both resilience and arts-based community activities

are not a ‘magic potion’ (Shaw, 2003, p. 1) and, therefore, require attention when employed. First, some cautionary notes with regard to resilience and the necessity to take the local context into account when planning for resilience are discussed. Then, the focus turns to arts-based community activities. Although they appeared to offer an interesting means in this light, they, as highlighted next, also have to be employed with caution.

According to White & O’Hare (2014), resilience appears incontestable as it portrays a desirable goal relevant to practically any given issue in the field of many public and social policy initiatives. Several scholars, however, argued that the concept needs to be approached with a degree of caution, both conceptually and when transferred into practice. Resilience is often used as a panacea to various problems and, in this way, runs the risk of becoming a heavily contested buzzword (see, e.g., Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Hutter & Kuhlicke, 2013; O’Hare & White, 2013; Shaw, 2012; van der Vaart et al., 2015; White & O’Hare, 2014). For instance, when translating the resilience concept from the natural to the social world, Davoudi (2012, p. 306) observed a challenge relating to ‘power and politics and the conflict over questions such as, what is a desired outcome, and resilience for whom?’. She emphasized that in the process of resilience-building, some people gain while others lose. Hence, issues of justice and power relations are always at stake and, therefore, deserve attention when developing resilience strategies (van der Vaart et al., 2015). In addition, several scholars pointed to potential dangers in a *neoliberal* interpretation of resilience, which entails a strong emphasis on self-reliance, with people and places being seen as being responsible for developing their own resilience (see, e.g., Davoudi, 2012, 2018; Porter & Davoudi, 2012; Shaw, 2012; White & O’Hare, 2014). In this regard, Porter & Davoudi (2012, pp. 331-332) warned that ‘resilience concepts are quietly beginning to justify policy directions that demonise those people or places who are deemed to be “just not resilient enough”, and support a withdrawal of state services’.

In accordance to the above, during my research, the necessity to take the local context into account when planning for resilience emerged. In this regard, Brice & Fernández Arconada (2018, p. 225) rightly pointed out that ‘top-down implementations of resilience planning [...] raise questions of how resilience objectives are identified and achieved, and by what methods these initiatives can be kept relevant to specific places and specific communities’. As stressed in this thesis, each community has its own characteristics and needs. Therefore, rather than being used as a broad generic aspiration, resilience strategies should take the specific socio-spatial context of a community into account (see also Christopherson et al., 2010; Hutter & Kuhlicke, 2013; O’Hare & White, 2013; Zitcer et al., 2016). Correspondingly, the local knowledge present in communities should be incorporated when developing resilience strategies

(see, e.g., Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Reichel & Frömming, 2014; Steiner & Markantoni, 2013; Stuiver et al., 2013). In this regard, McEwen et al. (2013), for example, drew attention to folk songs as informal archives of flood narratives and memories. They noted that these convey ‘material collected not by the professional documenter, but rather created by people in response to their own situations’ (p. 15). This local knowledge can, McEwen et al. (2013) concluded, form a key resource in communities’ flood resilience – their learning to live with uncertainty and changing flood risk.

In this thesis, arts-based community activities emerged as an interesting means for resilience policies that strive to include the everyday life-world and knowledge available within communities. In a previous publication, colleagues and myself saw a potential role for the arts in enhancing exchange and trust between community members and policy makers/professionals (van der Vaart et al., 2015). We argued that the arts could assist in ‘translating between [their] different lifeworlds and types of knowledge – between theory and the reality of everyday life, working with professional and lay understandings, different types of authority, skills, perspectives and narratives’ (p. 165 and also see Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Jones, 2013). However, as highlighted in Chapter 3, the influence of the arts is context-dependent, with the arts having both binding and dividing effects for different (groups of) community members. The arts do not have only advantages for a community, do not engage an entire community, and could potentially even contribute to community fragmentation (see also Mattern, 2001). Therefore, when discussing the arts in terms of their usefulness, the question whose interests are served, and how, becomes relevant (Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Sharp et al., 2005).

Other critical notes with regard to the value of arts-based community activities for community resilience that emerged throughout this thesis include: the importance of sustaining the impacts of participatory community arts projects; the difficulties in obtaining funding and support for projects; the fact that the arts could work out differently than anticipated (Stuiver et al., 2012); and the notion that the arts cannot alone resolve the complex challenges that communities face (Burnell, 2012). Issues such as these have to be taken into account when incorporating arts-based community activities in resilience-building strategies, as they have consequences for the extent to which community resilience is actually supported.

6.3.2. Concerns around the “instrumentalisation” of the arts

This thesis highlights arts-based community activities as a significant potential resource for resilience-building. However, ‘in becoming “useful”’, Brice & Fernández Arconada (2018, p. 229) observed, ‘artists risk subjecting their practice to

instrumentalisation through the implicit and explicit agendas of commissioning and funding bodies'. Here, the arts, and especially participatory or socially-engaged art, are being embraced as a form of "soft social engineering", with the idea that they can be useful to effect concrete changes in society (Bishop, 2012). This section briefly discusses three common concerns that are raised by this instrumentalisation of the arts: the downplaying of the "intrinsic" benefits of the arts, the debate on how to understand "quality" in the arts and how to judge it, and the reality that not all artists might want to deliberately contribute to resilience-building with their arts.

6 First, several scholars noted that there is a strong emphasis on the so-called "instrumental" benefits of the arts in arguments for public investment in the arts (see, e.g., Hawkes, 2001; Khan, 2010; McCarthy et al., 2004; Mulligan et al., 2006; Otte, 2015). These "instrumental" benefits, which are indirect outcomes of arts experiences, are not the sole benefits of the arts though. Instead, there are other, so-called "intrinsic" benefits, which are inherent in the arts experience itself (McCarthy et al., 2004). Such benefits can include, for instance, being given pleasure and emotional stimulation, gaining a new perspective and an expanded capacity for empathy (see, e.g., Gielen et al., 2014; McCarthy et al., 2004; Otte, 2015). The "intrinsic" benefits are actually, McCarthy et al. (2004, p. 3) observed, 'the fundamental layer of effects leading to many of the instrumental benefits that have dominated the public debate and the recent research agenda' (p. 3). However, because of this dominant focus on the "instrumental" benefits of the arts, the "intrinsic" benefits tend to be downplayed (McCarthy et al., 2004). With this in mind, many arts advocates expressed concerns with regard to only funding the arts based on their instrumental benefits (Belfiore, 2002; Gielen et al., 2014; Khan, 2010; McCarthy et al., 2004). In case the arts fail to sufficiently prove to be a cost-effective means of delivering certain social or economic benefits, they are likely to lose the competition for funding against other areas of public spending (e.g. investments in education, sports, infrastructure).

Second, the instrumentalisation of the arts provokes debate on how to understand "quality" in the arts and how to judge it (see, e.g., Bishop, 2006; Kester, 2006; Matarasso, 2013). In this regard, Brice & Fernández Arconada (2018) pointed out that socially-engaged artists are: 'caught between *aesthetics* on the one hand and *utility* on the other [...] [they] are left to ask what kind of practice most closely reflects both the interests of participants and the aspirations of artistic practice, as opposed to social provision, governance, or activism' (p. 230, emphasis added). Brice & Fernández Arconada (2018) argued that socially-engaged artists extend the parameters beyond the aesthetics, as they 'attempt to find new ways of making meaningful work, or making work meaningful' (p. 229). Here, as Belfiore (2002) noted, more value and emphasis tends to be placed on the artistic *process* (with its empowering effects) than on the artistic *product*.

Third, and related to the above, not all artists might want to deliberately contribute to resilience-building (or other societal or policy goals) with their arts, or demand certain preconditions when they are involved in such processes. Stuver et al. (2012), for instance, experienced that artists can explicitly demand to work completely independent and without interference from planners, as they refuse to become instruments in the hands of policy makers. In this context, Lippard (1984, p. 341) already stressed a few decades ago (with regard to activist art) that: ‘I don’t think it is necessary for all artists to make activist art’. Consequently, some art forms or artistic standards could be less well-represented in resilience-building processes.

6.3.3 The position of creative and arts-based research methods in academic research

As this thesis illustrates, research using creative and arts-based methods can deliver substantial benefits. The reflection on the participatory research project in Chapter 5 indicated that these methods can produce multifaceted knowledge and contribute and “give back” to the community where the research is conducted. Researchers using such methods, however, can encounter difficulties in defending and financing their work because it often challenges dominant assumptions and conventions around what constitutes “research”, “knowledge” and “impact” (see, e.g., Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Foster, 2012; Hamilton & Taylor, 2017; Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015; Lawrence, 2008).

Currently, an increasingly important factor in obtaining public funding and support for research is societal impact (Bornmann, 2012; Pain et al., 2015). In the Netherlands, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (which funds scientific research at public research institutions), requires applicants, since 2013, to describe how their research could contribute to society and to the economy. In the so-called “knowledge utilisation” section, applicants have to provide plans for sharing their research results outside the scientific community (NWO, 2017; and see also van Dijck & van Saarloos, 2017; see for the UK case, e.g., ESRC, 2017; Research Councils UK, 2007).

Several scholars, however, noted that academia seems to somewhat stuck in narrow approaches to knowledge creation and argued that the notion of “impact” is problematic (see, e.g., Bornmann, 2012, 2017; Macpherson et al., 2014; van Dijck & van Saarloos, 2017). When looking at, for instance, the main funders and main audit of UK research, Pain et al. (2015, p. 4) observed that ‘the way in which impact is conceptualized and measured tends to be very narrow, and unreflective of the diverse approaches to creating knowledge and affecting change that researchers today utilize’. Along similar lines, Macpherson et al. (2014, p. 30) expressed the concern ‘that only *some* of th[eir] impacts on and between participants and key agencies are easily captured and would be measurable under the current REF [UK Research Excellence Framework] criteria for impact’ (emphasis added).

The currently still persistent “academic climate” sketched above (though see Wiles et al., 2013) can be highly disadvantageous for researchers using creative and arts-based research methods. As noted in the reflection on the research project in Chapter 5, these methods could involve quite some uncertainty (e.g. with regard to the details of the process, outcomes or possible impacts). In addition, it can take considerable time to find suitable community partners and to establish a genuine co-working agenda, and there can be certain impacts that are hard to measure or take time to emerge (Bornmann, 2012; Macpherson et al., 2014). In light of these issues, it can be difficult for researchers using creative and arts-based research methods to obtain funding and support for their research, given that many funding agencies are in general more inclined to honour proposals with clear, predictable and demonstrable outcomes involving few risks (see also Bornmann, 2012; Carey & Sutton, 2004). In the Netherlands, however, one of NWO policy’s key areas of interest aims ‘to provide plenty of opportunities for scientific creativity and unrestrained science’ (NWO, 2017, n.p.).

Though I do not provide a concrete solution to the challenge pointed out above, I would like to draw attention to the need of accommodating research using creative and arts-based research methods more in academic research (see also Kelemen & Hamilton, 2015; Macpherson et al., 2014). As illustrated in this thesis, such methods can deliver substantial benefits for both researchers and communities and hence, they deserve more recognition.

6.4. Reflections on the research approach

For my research project, I adopted a participatory approach consisting of three stages in which creative and arts-based research methods were used. A reflection on these stages, comprising walking interviews, group discussions and a creative workshop that resulted in an exhibition in the case-study village, is already provided in Chapter 5. In this section, then, I briefly reflect on the research approach adopted and on an ethical consideration that arose concerning this approach.

My participatory research project contributes to a greater understanding of the value of arts-based community activities for resilience-building. However, more research in *different contexts* is needed to provide further support for the claims made. In this light it would also be fruitful to conduct more *longitudinal* research. As observed by several scholars, certain benefits of the arts can take considerable time to emerge (see, e.g., Belfiore, 2006; Mulligan, 2006). Therefore, it would be interesting to study a community and the relations between its arts-based community activities and community resilience in more depth for a longer period of time. In addition, potential differences in *types* of arts-based community activities in resilience-building processes

could be further explored. Otte (2015), for instance, pointed to several “art-languages” that can be used in art practices, i.e. visual arts, literature, dance, theatre, new media, music. It would be interesting to investigate whether arts-based community activities with different dominant ‘art-languages’ affect community resilience differently. In this way, more insights in what constitutes good practice with regard to resilience-building can be obtained.

The participatory approach that I adopted aligns with the currently more frequently articulated aims of academic research to directly benefit the people that are involved (Macpherson et al., 2017). By actively engaging the inhabitants of Pingjum in generating knowledge about their community and its resilience, I intended to keep my research and its outcomes relevant to the community members involved. As noted, with the research project, I aimed to contribute positively to the community’s thinking about and actual resilience. Several scholars observed that when community members are actively engaged in a research, the research is more likely to come from and reflect lived experiences and, potentially, lead to actions that address people’s real desires and needs (Breitbart, 2012; Pain et al., 2015; Trell, 2013). In light of community resilience this is important because, as noted, local knowledge and everyday experiences of people should be incorporated when developing resilience strategies (see, e.g., Brice & Fernández Arconada, 2018; Reichel & Frömming, 2014; Steiner & Markantoni, 2013; Stuiver et al., 2013; van der Vaart et al., 2015).

However, an ethical consideration concerning the *sustainability* of my research project needs to be considered. In Chapter 2, the importance of sustaining the impacts of participatory community arts projects was identified, especially in light of community resilience. It was noted that the real value of community development is only achieved if such projects are sustainable. In this regard, Carey & Sutton (2004, p. 133) argued that a “long-term legacy” should be an important outcome of projects and that, ideally they ‘should not “finish”, but should evolve to meet the expanding capacity and aspirations of the community, as well as building on success’ (see also Askins & Pain, 2011).

With the above in mind, questions around the sustainability of my academic research project arise (see also Mattingly, 2001). To what extent did it truly make a difference to the resilience of the community in Pingjum? This remains a question that is difficult to answer with certainty. As noted, the project can be placed in a cultural practice already existing in Pingjum, which entails deliberate efforts of (some) artists to strengthen the inhabitants’ relationship with their surrounding landscape and to contribute to a sustainable future for their village. I noted that my research project stimulated the formation and strengthening of links between some community

members, and stimulated them to think about and discuss their community and their attachments to it, (potential) changes in their village, and ways to deal with these and to improve village life. By doing this, the research project might potentially have stimulated the involved community members to engage in (further) action and contribute to their community's resilience. However, a humble attitude in this regard is highly appropriate, given the project's relatively small scale and time frame.

Ultimately, taking the time to listen and speak to community members might be the starting point in successful resilience-building. As Donald (man, >65) remarked at the end of his walking interview:

'It is so wonderful you are doing this, doing this research project and that it concerns your PhD. But it is already nice because that man that is living here on his own [referring to himself], he enjoys to be involved once, being asked questions which make him think "gosh I never thought about this", "how to explain this?", "is it like that?", "oh, does it also has that side to it?". Well, I made all those discoveries. Applause, applause!'

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Kunst & Veerkracht in een Dorpsgemeenschap

De waarde van kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten in het opbouwen van veerkracht in Pingjum, noord Nederland.

Introductie

Veel gemeenschappen worden geconfronteerd met economische, sociale en ecologische uitdagingen zoals werkloosheid, de sluiting van lokale voorzieningen, krimp, vergrijzing en gevolgen van klimaatverandering. Hoewel de hieraan gekoppelde onzekerheid over de toekomst wellicht niet historisch uitzonderlijk is, heeft dit de huidige interesse in het begrip *veerkracht* gestimuleerd. Inmiddels is het vraagstuk *hoe* veerkrachtig(er) te worden zowel op maatschappelijk als gemeenschapsniveau belangrijk geworden. Het beleid en de praktijk rondom veerkracht is tot nu toe echter grotendeels gericht op een vrij beperkte aanpak. Hierin is weinig aandacht voor sociaal-culturele aspecten, terwijl zaken zoals bijvoorbeeld sociale verbondenheid ook van belang zijn voor de opbouw van veerkracht in gemeenschappen. Dit proefschrift bouwt hierop voort en onderzoekt kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten als potentieel middel voor het opbouwen van veerkracht. Deze focus past bij een trend van de laatste decennia waarin er toenemende aandacht is voor de waarde van kunst voor gemeenschappen, bovenop haar esthetische waarde. Daarnaast sluit het aan bij het opkomende veerkrachtbeleid dat 'zich richt op kleinere ruimtelijke schalen en dagelijkse activiteiten' (Coaffee, 2013, p. 333, vertaald) en op de kennis aanwezig in gemeenschappen zelf. De alledaagse ervaringen van mensen bieden namelijk vaak inspiratie voor kunstenaars en kunnen gebruikt worden om doelen te formuleren voor en/of bij te dragen aan gemeenschapsontwikkeling.

Onderzoeksproject en methoden

Dit proefschrift is gebaseerd op een participatief onderzoeksproject uitgevoerd in het Nederlandse dorp Pingjum. De keuze voor een participatieve benadering kwam voort uit de wens om: 1) de inwoners actief te betrekken bij het genereren van kennis over hun gemeenschap en haar veerkracht; en, hieraan gekoppeld, 2) positief bij te dragen aan het denken over, en de daadwerkelijke, veerkracht in de gemeenschap. Participatief onderzoek hecht grote waarde aan de kennis van diegenen die onderzocht worden en is daarom geschikt ‘voor zowel het opbouwen van kennis over de *assets* en sterke punten van een gemeenschap als voor het identificeren of aanpakken van problemen’ (Breitbart, 2012, p. 145, vertaald). Op deze manier kan participatief onderzoek input verschaffen voor het opbouwen van veerkracht, aangezien het hiervoor noodzakelijk is om een goed beeld en begrip te hebben van de uitdagingen waar gemeenschappen mee te maken hebben.

De participatieve aanpak bestond uit een drietal fasen waarin creatieve en kunstgeoriënteerde onderzoeksmethoden zijn gebruikt. De eerste fase bestond uit wandelinterviews waardoor ik kennis kon maken met het dorp en de belangrijkste zaken die in de gemeenschap speelden. Daarnaast maakte ik kennis met de deelnemers aan het onderzoek en hun persoonlijke ervaringen met, en meningen over, het leven in het dorp, inclusief haar verschillende kunstenaars en culturele activiteiten. Alle deelnemers namen me mee op een “tour” door het dorp om plekken te laten zien die betekenisvol voor hen waren, die in hun ogen betwist werden in de gemeenschap of die geconfronteerd werden met (potentiële) veranderingen. Daarnaast werden deze plekken ook door de deelnemers gefotografeerd tijdens de wandelinterviews.

De tweede fase bestond uit groepsgesprekken waarvoor de deelnemers bijeengebracht werden om in groepen van verschillende leeftijden verder met elkaar in gesprek te gaan over de verschillende betekenissen van bepaalde plekken in hun dorp. Als startpunt kreeg iedere groep de foto’s van de wandelinterviews en enkele begeleidende vragen over de gefotografeerde plekken en hun betekenis door de jaren heen (verleden, heden, toekomst). Door middel van de groepsgesprekken wilde ik meer inzicht krijgen in hoe bepaalde plekken in het dorp werden gezien en gewaardeerd in de gemeenschap. Daarnaast probeerde ik de deelnemers te stimuleren om na te denken over (potentiële) veranderingen voor hun dorp en mogelijke oplossingen of manieren te bedenken om met (verwachte) veranderingen om te gaan.

De derde fase omvatte een creatieve workshop die leidde tot een eendaagse tentoonstelling in het dorp. Tijdens de workshop werden de deelnemers gevraagd om de betekenissen, die ze hadden toegewezen aan bepaalde plekken in hun dorp, te visualiseren. Hierbij kregen ze hulp van vier studenten van de Groningse kunstacademie

Minerva. Een paar weken later vond de tentoonstelling in het dorps huis plaats. Hier werden de uitkomsten van de workshop en een overzicht van de wandelinterview-foto's gepresenteerd. De tentoonstelling had als doel om de bredere gemeenschap te betrekken en een discussie op gang te brengen over de betekenissen van bepaalde plekken in het dorp, om zo bij te dragen aan (het denken over) de veerkracht van de gemeenschap.

Casestudie dorp en deelnemers

Het participatieve onderzoeksproject is uitgevoerd in Pingjum, een dorp in de provincie Friesland. Pingjum ligt dicht bij de Waddenzeekust in een landbouwgebied. Er wonen ongeveer 600 mensen, bestaande uit Pingjumers (mensen die in het dorp geboren en getogen zijn), andere Friezen (die vanuit de provincie naar Pingjum zijn verhuisd) en "import" (mensen die van buiten Friesland naar Pingjum zijn verhuisd). In totaal hebben 28 inwoners aan het onderzoeksproject deelgenomen: 13 mannen en 15 vrouwen vanuit verschillende leeftijdsgroepen (<25 jaar, 25-65 jaar, en >65 jaar), en zowel Pingjumers, Friezen als "import".

Zoals gezegd staan veel gemeenschappen voor economische, sociale en ecologische uitdagingen – zo ook Pingjum. In de afgelopen decennia zijn er bijvoorbeeld veel winkels uit het dorp verdwenen. Niettemin heeft Pingjum een actief dorpsleven met veel verenigingen, zoals de kaats- en muziekvereniging. Bovendien kent Pingjum, in vergelijking met andere dorpen in (noord) Nederland, een relatief grote aanwezigheid van kunstenaars en vinden er veel culturele activiteiten plaats. Deze variëren van exposities en muziekoptredens tot *community art* projecten, en betrekken zowel professionele kunstenaars als mensen die zich met kunst als hobby bezighouden (zoals musici, beeldend kunstenaars, grafisch ontwerpers en een goudsmid). Een aantal van deze activiteiten zijn bewust bedoeld om bij te dragen aan de *sense of place* van de inwoners en aan een duurzame toekomst van het dorp. Al deze activiteiten zijn niet onopgemerkt gebleven buiten de dorpsgrenzen en hebben ertoe geleid dat Pingjum een reputatie heeft als kunstenaarsdorp.

Resultaten

Het doel van dit proefschrift is om de waarde van kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten voor het opbouwen van veerkracht te onderzoeken. Door vanuit verschillende perspectieven hiernaar te kijken, draagt elk hoofdstuk bij aan het verkrijgen van inzicht in hun rol in gemeenschapsveerkracht. In de verschillende hoofdstukken wordt een beeld van kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten geschetst als zijnde een belangrijk potentieel middel voor het opbouwen van veerkracht in gemeenschappen.

Door het genereren van verschillende soorten sociaal kapitaal (i.e. *bonding*, *bridging* en *linking*) bleek participatieve *community art* in staat om in gemeenschappen bij te dragen aan de ontwikkeling van capaciteiten en middelen om met de uitdagingen waarmee zij geconfronteerd worden om te gaan (Hoofdstuk 2). Dankzij de opbouw van sociaal kapitaal kunnen inwoners namelijk meer met elkaar en met hun gemeenschap verbonden raken en, vervolgens, meer bereid en beter in staat te zijn om samen te werken en bij te dragen aan hun gemeenschap. Omdat elke gemeenschap haar eigen kenmerken en behoeftes heeft, dient hierbij echter rekening te worden gehouden met de specifieke context waarin een kunstproject wordt gepland.

Er is echter een genuanceerd perspectief nodig op de effecten van kunst voor gemeenschappen. De casestudie in Pingjum liet zien dat de invloed van kunst contextafhankelijk is. Kunst kan zowel verbindende als verdelende effecten voor verschillende (groepen) inwoners hebben (Hoofdstuk 3). Enerzijds bleek dat kunst voordelen kan bieden: voor sommige mensen draagt het bij aan een gemeenschapsgevoel, biedt het ontmoetingsplekken en is het iets waar men gevoelens van trots aan kan ontlenuen. Anderzijds werd echter duidelijk dat dit gemeenschapsgevoel niet voor de gehele gemeenschap opgaat. Ook bleek dat kunst concurrerend kan zijn met andere activiteiten in een gemeenschap, met het risico deze te verdringen en te overheersend te worden in het dorp. Drie kwesties zijn hierbij benadrukt: dat kunst niet alleen voordelen voor een gemeenschap heeft, dat het niet een gehele gemeenschap betreft, en dat het mogelijk bij kan dragen aan fragmentatie in een gemeenschap. Aangezien kunst variërende effecten kan hebben, zou het beschouwd moeten worden als één van de ondersteunende middelen in het opbouwen van veerkracht. De variërende effecten kunnen namelijk gevolgen hebben voor de mate waarin de ontwikkeling van een gemeenschap daadwerkelijk wordt ondersteund. In het kader van het opbouwen van veerkracht zou kunst idealiter geïntegreerd moeten worden in een bredere gemeenschapsontwikkelingsstrategie en planning. Wanneer kunst naast andere activiteiten bestaat, zonder te dominant te worden, kan zij daadwerkelijk bijdragen aan de robuustheid van een gemeenschap.

Kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten lijken met name een interessant middel te zijn voor veerkracht-beleid dat toegespitst is op de dagelijkse leefwereld en lokale kennis in gemeenschappen. Kijkend naar de omgang van mensen met (potentiële) plaatsverandering, bleek bijvoorbeeld dat de kunst in Pingjum van invloed was op de wijze waarop inwoners lokale windenergie ontwikkelingen interpreteren en daar vervolgens mee omgaan (Hoofdstuk 4). Zo wakkerde kunst de emotionele banden van mensen met hun landschap aan, vergrootte het hun kennis van de omgeving en zette het mensen aan om te reflecteren op de betekenissen die ze aan hun landschap toekennen. Met betrekking tot de windenergie ontwikkelingen werd duidelijk dat

kunst het bewustzijn van inwoners van de plannen vergrootte en hun beoordeling ervan stimuleerde. Hierbij werden voornamelijk (potentiële) negatieve effecten van de plannen op Pingjum's landschap onder de aandacht gebracht. Kunst spoorde mensen aan om hun emotionele banden te uiten. Zo werd het ondertekenen van een petitie tegen de voorgestelde windmolenpark plannen bijvoorbeeld gestimuleerd. Door bij (potentiële) plaatsverandering rekening te houden met de mogelijke rol van kunst kan een beter begrip van publieke reacties op ontwikkelingen verkregen worden. Dit kan vervolgens resulteren in effectievere planningsprocessen in gemeenschappen. Daarnaast zouden kunstenaars in deze processen betrokken kunnen worden 'als adviseurs over de immateriële waarden' (Stuiver et al., 2012, p. 309, vertaald). De lokale kennis van inwoners kan expliciet worden gemaakt door plaats-specifieke en gemeenschaps-gebaseerde kunstprojecten, die de inwoners actief betrekken in het creatieve proces. De rol van kunstenaars in dit opzicht 'is het faciliteren van culturele kunstzinnige uitingen die de lokale uniciteit op mensen hun eigen voorwaarden vastleggen' (ibid., p. 300, vertaald). Op deze manier kan de lokale context meer en actiever betrokken worden in de planningsprocessen voor gemeenschapsontwikkeling.

Tot slot bleek in de reflectie op het uitgevoerde participatieve onderzoeksproject dat creatieve en kunst-georiënteerde onderzoeksmethoden mogelijkheden bieden aan onderzoekers om bij te dragen en "terug te geven" aan gemeenschappen (Hoofdstuk 5). In het geval van Pingjum resulteerde dit in een "vonk" die mogelijk onder de inwoners is aangestoken om (actiever) bij te dragen aan de veerkracht van hun gemeenschap. Het onderzoeksproject stimuleerde de vorming en versterking van connecties tussen sommige inwoners. Ook stimuleerde het hen om na te denken en samen te discussiëren over de gemeenschap, hun banden ermee, (potentiële) veranderingen in het dorp en manieren om hiermee om te gaan en het dorpsleven te verbeteren. Een bescheiden houding is in dit opzicht echter uiterst gepast, gezien de relatief kleine schaal en het beperkte tijdsbestek van het project.

Daarnaast toonde de reflectie op het onderzoeksproject aan dat de creatieve en kunst-georiënteerde onderzoeksmethoden hebben bijgedragen aan het verkrijgen van een rijk inzicht in de dorpservaringen en *sense of place* van de deelnemers, de kwesties die in de gemeenschap speelden, en de algemene context waarin de lokale kunst en kunstenaars zich bevinden (Hoofdstuk 5). Voor het onderzoeken van gemeenschapsveerkracht is het essentieel om een goed beeld en begrip te hebben van de zaken die in een gemeenschap spelen. Elke projectfase leverde hier een eigen bijdrage aan, wat uiteindelijk resulteerde in de productie van veelzijdige kennis die zorgde voor een beter begrip van de waarde van kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten voor gemeenschapsveerkracht. Zo genereerden de wandelinterviews persoonlijke, plaatselijke verhalen van de deelnemers over hun dorpservaringen. De groepsdiscussies onthulden gedeelde en uiteenlopende,

intergenerationele opvattingen die in de gemeenschap bestaan over de betekenis van bepaalde plekken in het dorp. De creatieve workshop verschaftte meer inzicht in de *sense of place* van de deelnemers door “empathische ervaringen”, daarbij toevoegend aan “cognitieve manieren van weten”. Daarnaast brachten zowel de tweede als derde fase van het onderzoeksproject zaken aan het licht die nog niet eerder naar voren waren gekomen. Alles bij elkaar genomen werd geconcludeerd dat creatieve en kunst-georiënteerde onderzoeksmethoden veelzijdig inzicht kunnen genereren, doordat ze onderzoekers nieuwe manieren bieden om de ervaringen en opvattingen van mensen te begrijpen.

Discussie

Bij bovenstaande bevindingen dient een drietal kanttekeningen geplaatst te worden. Ten eerste, dat zowel veerkracht als kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten geen wondermiddel zijn, en er daarom een zekere mate van voorzichtigheid vereist is wanneer ze worden toegepast. Veerkracht wordt vaak gebruikt als een soort panacee voor verschillende problemen, terwijl er altijd machtsverhoudingen en rechtvaardigheidskwesties spelen wanneer het toegepast wordt in een sociale context. Hier horen vragen bij zoals ‘wat is een gewenste uitkomst, en veerkracht voor wie?’ (Davoudi, 2012, p. 306, vertaald). In overeenstemming hiermee kwam in dit proefschrift de noodzaak naar voren om bij het (plannen van het) opbouwen van veerkracht rekening te houden met de lokale context en de kennis aanwezig in een gemeenschap. Kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten bleken in dit opzicht een interessant middel te zijn. Zo zou kunst kunnen helpen met het verbeteren van de interacties en het vertrouwen tussen inwoners en beleidsmakers. Echter, zoals dit proefschrift aantoont, is de invloed van kunst contextafhankelijk. Derhalve, wanneer kunst in termen van haar bruikbaarheid wordt bekeken, wordt de vraag *wiens* belangen gediend worden relevant. Andere kritische punten die in dit proefschrift naar voren kwamen betreffen: het belang van het verduurzamen van de effecten van kunstprojecten, de moeilijkheden om financiering en steun voor projecten te verkrijgen, het gegeven dat kunst anders uit kan werken dan verwacht en dat kunst niet in haar eentje de uitdagingen waarmee gemeenschappen geconfronteerd worden kan oplossen. Wanneer kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten ingezet worden in het kader van het opbouwen van veerkracht dient met dergelijke zaken rekening te worden gehouden.

Een tweede kanttekening betreft de zorgen omtrent de “instrumentalisering” van kunst. Door ‘nuttig te worden’, zoals Brice & Fernández Arconada (2018, p. 229, vertaald) opmerkten, ‘riskeren kunstenaars dat hun praktijk onderworpen wordt aan instrumentalisatie door de impliciete en expliciete agenda’s van opdrachtgevers en financiering verstrekkers’. Hier kan kunst omarmd worden als een vorm van

“*soft social engineering*”, met het idee dat kunst bruikbaar is om veranderingen in de maatschappij teweeg te brengen. Deze instrumentalisatie werpt echter zorgen op omtrent de verwaarlozing van de “intrinsieke” waarde van kunst en veroorzaakt daarnaast discussie omtrent hoe de “kwaliteit” van kunst begrepen en beoordeeld dient te worden. Hierbij draait het om spanningen tussen esthetiek en bruikbaarheid, en het artistieke proces en product. Bovendien willen niet alle kunstenaars (bewust) bijdragen aan het opbouwen van veerkracht of andere maatschappelijke of beleidsdoelen met hun werk, of stellen zij bepaalde randvoorwaarden wanneer zij betrokken zijn bij dergelijke processen. Als gevolg hiervan zouden sommige kunstvormen of artistieke standaarden minder goed vertegenwoordigd kunnen zijn in processen rondom het opbouwen van veerkracht.

De derde kanttekening betreft de positie van creatieve en kunst-georiënteerde onderzoeksmethoden in academisch onderzoek. Tegenwoordig is maatschappelijke impact een steeds belangrijkere factor in het verkrijgen van financiering en steun voor onderzoek. Verscheidene wetenschappers hebben echter opgemerkt dat de academische wereld in dit opzicht enigszins vast lijkt te zitten in een beperkte benadering van kenniscreatie en impact. Dit academische klimaat kan erg nadelig zijn voor wetenschappers die gebruik maken van creatieve en kunst-georiënteerde onderzoeksmethoden, omdat hun werk vaak dominante veronderstellingen en conventies omtrent wat “onderzoek”, “kennis” en “impact” is uitdaagt. Daarnaast, zoals bleek uit de reflectie op het uitgevoerde onderzoeksproject, kunnen deze onderzoeksmethoden behoorlijke inspanningen vereisen om een gemeenschap bij een project te betrekken. Ook kunnen ze onzekerheden met zich meebrengen (van tevoren waren bijvoorbeeld de details van het proces en de uitkomsten nog niet bekend) en een aanzienlijke tijdsinvestering vereisen van alle betrokkenen. Dergelijke kwesties kunnen het vinden van financiering en steun voor wetenschappers die deze onderzoeksmethoden willen gebruiken lastig maken, aangezien veel financieringsverstrekkers over het algemeen meer geneigd zijn om onderzoeksvoorstellen met voorspelbare en aantoonbare resultaten met weinig risico's te honoreren. Desalniettemin, zoals dit proefschrift aantoont, kunnen creatieve en kunst-georiënteerde onderzoeksmethoden aanzienlijke voordelen opleveren voor zowel onderzoekers als gemeenschappen. Dit onderstreept de noodzaak om dergelijk onderzoek meer erkenning te geven en beter in te passen in academisch onderzoek.

Tot slot

Dit promotieonderzoek draagt bij aan een beter begrip van de waarde van kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten voor het opbouwen van veerkracht. Er is echter meer onderzoek in verschillende contexten nodig om de gemaakte claims verder te onderbouwen. Het zou daarnaast interessant zijn om meer longitudinaal

onderzoek uit te voeren. Zoals opgemerkt door verschillende wetenschappers kan het namelijk een aanzienlijke tijd duren voordat bepaalde voordelen van kunst duidelijk worden. Het zou daarom interessant zijn om een gemeenschap en de relaties tussen haar kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten en veerkracht voor een langere periode en in meer diepte te onderzoeken. Daarnaast zouden mogelijke verschillen tussen soorten kunst-georiënteerde gemeenschapsactiviteiten in het opbouwen van veerkracht nader onderzocht kunnen worden. Op bovenstaande manieren kan verder inzicht in succesvolle praktijken van het opbouwen van gemeenschapsveerkracht verkregen worden.

NAWOORD

Zonder al te dramatisch te willen klinken: met het schrijven van dit nawoord komt er voor mij een einde aan een tijdperk. Toen ik in september 2008 als eerstejaarsstudent de Blauwe Zaal binnen liep had ik nooit kunnen bedenken dat ik bijna een decennium later nog steeds op de faculteit rond zou lopen. Inmiddels ben ik een Bachelor, een Research Master, een aantal student assistentschappen, een junior researcher-positie, en nu dus (bijna) een voltooid PhD-traject verder!

Het doen van zo'n PhD... tja, daar kun je je eigenlijk geen goede voorstelling van maken als je het niet zelf hebt gedaan. Ik vind het dan ook – nog altijd – lastig om aan mensen van buiten de academische wereld uit te leggen wat het nou allemaal precies inhoudt. Want hoe kun je zo veel jaren bezig zijn met één onderzoek?! Nou, het kan toch echt, en ik ben daar één van de levende bewijzen van. Tijdens mijn PhD-traject heb ik vooral wat betreft het schrijfwerk de spreekwoordelijke “pieken en dalen” meegemaakt. Soms leek het onmogelijk om de woorden goed op papier te zetten en de afronding van mijn PhD mijlenver weg, met het verdedigingsfeest slechts als een favoriet fantasie-onderwerp voor tijdens het hardlopen. Andere tijden zat ik juist in een enorme flow en kon ik haast ongemerkt hele dagen (en nachten) doortikken achter mijn computer. Gelukkig was dit laatste ook het geval op het einde. Afgelopen september had ik mezelf voorgenomen om mijn proefschrift 1 december volledig in te leveren. Ik heb dit voornemen wijd verspreid in mijn omgeving en me er vervolgens in vastgebeten. Ja, door de combinatie met mijn nieuwe contract op de faculteit en andere bezigheden was het de afgelopen maanden wel echt enorm druk en was mijn proefschrift iets wat haast constant in mijn hoofd zat als ik er niet voor bezig was. Maar de “zwaarste loodjes”? Het leek juist wel of ik het einde van mijn PhD kon ruiken en in een super-flow terecht kwam! Misschien had dit te maken met de spreekwoordelijke “wortel” die mijn promotor Paulus mij regelmatig voor heeft gehouden. Hij vertelde dan *hóé* fijn het is als je proefschrift eindelijk af is: ‘dan is het gewoon klaar, en dat geeft dan toch zo'n fantastisch gevoel’! Bettina, mijn co-supervisor, wees er dan altijd op dat het *dóén* van een PhD toch ook fantastisch is, want: (relatief) ongestoord meerdere jaren volledig aan je eigen onderzoek spenderen, wie wil dat nou niet...? Voor mij ligt de waarheid uiteindelijk ergens in het midden: ja, het geeft een héérlijk gevoel dat het nu ein-de-lijk af is, dat het gewoon gelukt is, dat het helemaal voltooid is! Maar stiekem, ondanks mijn mindere periodes af en toe, dat op academisch niveau schrijven en herschrijven tot je een goed stuk hebt, het samen sparren over de data en wat ze nu eigenlijk zeggen, ja, dat is toch ook mooi.

Met dit nawoord is nu de tijd gekomen om stil te staan bij een aantal mensen en hun te bedanken voor hun ondersteuning (op allerlei manieren) in bovenstaand proces: Ik begin met mijn co-supervisor dr. **Bettina van Hoven**. Bettina, het lijkt wel alsof jij altijd “aan” staat. Dit, samen met het feit dat je enorm begaan bent met mensen en met de wereld, laat zich ook zien in je werk. Je ontwikkelt uitdagende, wellicht veeleisende, maar bovenal leerzame vakken, stopt er alle tijd en moeite in om een interessante summerschool te organiseren, plant etentjes bij je thuis voor de PhD-ers die je onder je hoede hebt, en ook in je onderzoek richt je je op mensen die wat (extra) aandacht kunnen gebruiken: jongeren, ouderen, vluchtelingen, gevangenen, enzovoorts. Naast dat deze sterke betrokkenheid jou tot een goed mens maakt, maakt het je ook tot een goede supervisor. Interessante mensen werden altijd door jou aan me voorgesteld, publicaties gerelateerd aan mijn PhD-onderzoek naar me doorgemailed, mijn tientallen versies schrijfwerk van goede feedback voorzien, en indien nodig een extra gaatje in je drukke agenda voor mij gezocht. Daarnaast stimuleerde je me altijd (terecht) om mijn werk naar een hoger analytisch niveau te tillen. Ook al voelden je opmerkingen bij mijn stukken soms als een oneindige stroom, ze zorgden er altijd voor dat mijn papers beter werden en stimuleerden mijn ontwikkeling als onderzoeker. Ook op onderwijsvlak heb je me kansen geboden om me te ontwikkelen. Je hebt me gevraagd voor gastcolleges en me betrokken in jouw Broadening Module en bijbehorende summerschool voor het Honours College. Samen met een uiteenlopende groep studenten de diversiteit en leefbaarheid in zowel Groningen als Vancouver onderzoeken, wat een mooie kans en wat een interessant proces (incl. het therapie-shoppern in het Museum of Anthropology :-)). Bettina, vanaf het begin tot het einde heb jij, voor mijn gevoel althans, geloofd in mijn PhD-onderzoek, mijn (nochtans) ietwat onconventionele onderzoeksmethoden, en mijn kwaliteiten als onderzoeker. Als ik zelf soms de draad kwijt was, niet geloofde dat een bepaald onderdeel in mijn project zou lukken, of dat het me überhaupt ooit zou lukken om mijn proefschrift af te krijgen, dan wist jij me te verzekeren dat ik het in me had. Voor al dit bovenstaande wil ik je bij deze hartelijk bedanken!

Dan, mijn promotor prof. dr. **Paulus P.P. Huigen**. Paulus, jij bent iets later betrokken geraakt bij mijn PhD-onderzoek, nadat mijn oorspronkelijke promotor Johan Woltjer vertrokken was naar de University of Westminster. In die tijd klopte ik op je kantoordeur om te vragen of jij niet alsjeblieft mijn promotor zou willen worden. Stiekem wist ik wel dat je eigenlijk – gezien je toentertijd aankomende pensioen – niet meer aan nieuwe dingen begon. Maar tja, ik voelde me bij je op mijn gemak omdat ik altijd elke vraag aan je kon stellen (en jij dat ook andersom deed met je “hé whizzkid”-vragen) en ik hoopte dat ik voor mijn PhD-onderzoek, net als mijn toenmalige kantoorgenoot Debbie, ook mocht putten uit jouw wijsheden. Gelukkig streek je over je hart en accepteerde je mijn verzoek. In het begin klapperden je oren volgens mij af en toe van al dat “participatory community arts”-gepraat en was het je een poosje onduidelijk wat ik nou allemaal in Pingjum had uitgespookt. Maar toen ik eenmaal zo

ver was dat we mijn data konden bespreken vond je het vanaf het eerste moment reuze interessant. Samen met “B” hadden we hele gesprekken over hoe de vork precies in de steel zat of welk “vlak van de kubus” iets belichtte. Paulus, je zette me altijd aan om echt tot de kern van iets te komen en vaak was ik na onze gesprekken helemaal verlicht en geënthousiasmeerd om weer verder te gaan met het schrijven. Buiten onze eigenlijke meetings hadden we regelmatig gesprekken over Familie, de Faculteit, goede Films en sport. Toch jammer dat dat laatste dan niet óók met een “F” begint hè... Om eer te doen aan jouw prachtige initialen zal ik het bij deze corrigeren in: (Fishing-)sport. Want vooruit, dat vliegvisseren is toch ook een sport op zich. Paulus, al liep je vanwege je welverdiende pensioen de laatste maanden van mijn PhD-tijd niet meer dagelijks door de gangen van de faculteit, voor mij ben je gevoelsmatig nog altijd onlosmakelijk met de FRW verbonden. Ik wil je bedanken voor je gedeelde wijsheden, voor je immer openstaande deur, en voor het feit dat je toentertijd mijn verzoek inwilligde.

Naast Paulus en Bettina zijn er nog meer mensen die op de faculteit rond (hebben ge)lopen die ik hier wil bedanken voor hun steun tijdens mijn PhD-traject:

Beginnend bij “kamer 203”, waar ik vrijwel de gehele periode van mijn PhD heb gezeten. Voor het langst heb ik deze kamer gedeeld met **Koen** en **Debbie**. Eigenlijk waren jullie samen een perfect voorbeeld voor mij toen ik als kersverse PhD-er op de kamer kwam. Koen met zijn “recht voor z’n raap no-nonsense mentaliteit” (over mooie management bullshit bingo-woorden gesproken) en Debster met haar ijverige, nauwgezette manier van werken. Maar wat konden wij drieën soms toch ook mooi met elkaar ouwehoeren over de laatste trends in de maatschappij of over een of andere gekke e-mail of gebeurtenis op de faculteit. Toen Debbie haar PhD afrondde en uit de kamer vertrok kwam Lili er voor terug. *Lili, thank you for being such a nice office-mate. It was great fun to exchange stories with you and thanks to your sweet souvenir from Mexico I could always drink two “shots” of tea from the machine.* **Patrick**, jij hebt ook een poosje in kamer 203 gezeten. Bij jou moet ik echt denken aan het spreekwoord “stille wateren hebben diepe gronden”. Wat kon je af en toe toch mooi gevat uit de hoek komen. *Angelica, together with Lili we were the ladies of 203 for a while. When I think back to the way you used to enter the office in the morning, I always picture a smiling Angelica, enthusiastically greeting everyone and full of attention for how I was doing.* **Angelo**, you were also in room 203 for a while. You are very passionate about your research, and also life in general. You were always all ears for my rugby stories, which I (of course) think is awesome! **Lara**, you joined the room at the end of my time in 203 and one could almost think it was meant to be: you as an Aussie coming to Groningen, and me as a Groninger (soon to be) going to Brisbane. On top of that, I got a temporary position as a Junior Researcher (partly) thanks to you! Dankjewel for everything, also for being so understanding when my to-do-list was super swamped when December 1st was approaching.



Ook buiten kamer 203 zijn er collega's (en vrienden vermomd als collega's) die ik wil bedanken. **Richard, Dani, Marten, Anna** en **Suzan**, wat een gek groepje zijn we eigenlijk. Van het verstoppertje van 16 zakken Doritos in iemands huis, het kijken van Heel Holland Bakt met een zowat vloeibare monchoutaart (credits to Marten), tot het (vooralsnog eenmalig) spelen van D&D – ik kan er van genieten! En ik voel me vereerd dat onze whatsapp-groep nog steeds de naam *Gwendor the Terrible Fans* draagt. **Richard**, jij ook bedankt voor het zijn van mijn paranimf! Mooi hoe wij elkaar tot van alles kunnen aanzetten. Voor je het weet zit je 232 kilometer op de racefiets tijdens de Elfstedentocht, banjer je door de modder bij een survivalrun ergens in een uithoek van Friesland, scheur je er vandoor op je eigen pas gekochte motor, of ren je de halve marathon over het circuit van Spa Francorchamps. Stuk voor stuk mooie herinneringen! **Muffy**, *how nice to have a friend around at work who is always more than ready for a hug. A big "thank you"-hug from your Lady Bear!* **Jannes**, fijn dat ik ook op de faculteit van jouw humor kon blijven genieten. **Elen, Britta** en **Melanie**, ik kijk met plezier terug op onze geslaagde organisatie van de internationale workshop *Resilience – Just do it?!*. Altijd als ik kibbeling eet zie ik onze mooie groep in Termunterzijl weer voor me.

Daarnaast hierbij een welgemeende “bedankt” voor **alle andere FRW-ers**: het bonte, immer interessante gezelschap van de basiseenheid Culturele Geografie en natuurlijk de collega's van de andere basiseenheden. Met elkaar kleuren we het leven op de faculteit – en soms ook daarbuiten. Want over de jaren heen maak je toch een boel mee: samen door de modder ploeteren bij de survivalruns in Boerakker, tijdens de Lauwersloop als team van Leeuwarden naar Groningen hardlopen, na werktijd beachvolleyballen bij de Aclo, tot grotere hoogtes komen in de klimhal bij Bjoeks, en niet te vergeten: als faculteitsteam 3^e worden bij 4 mijl (van alle RuG-recreanten teams)! Planologen, en in het bijzonder **Koen, Mohammed** en **Naim**, bedankt voor het warme welkom op de 3^e verdieping.

Onmisbaar in mijn PhD-onderzoek waren de **28 Pingjurers** die deel hebben genomen aan mijn onderzoeksproject. Nogmaals hartelijk bedankt dat jullie mij verwelkomt hebben in jullie dorp en bereid waren om mee te werken aan mijn onderzoek. Hier wil ik ook **Eline Leenders, Fiana de Raaf, Esmee Eijzenga** en **Lisanne van der Hoek** noemen, de Minerva-studenten die me geholpen hebben met de creatieve workshop en de tentoonstelling in Pingjum, bedankt! **Bob** en **Gerda**, jullie bedankt voor de gastvrijheid met alle koppen thee en het nachtje in de bedstede in Pingjum!

Zoals ik al schreef aan het begin: het is soms moeilijk om uit te leggen wat het doen van een PhD behelst. Het is dan fijn om familie en vrienden om je heen te hebben die ondanks dat toch belangstelling en geloof in je blijven houden, of juist niet zo veel vragen stellen en de nodige afleiding bieden. **Pap** en **mam**, bedankt voor jullie onvoorwaardelijke steun. **Irene** en **Kees**, en natuurlijk kleine **Stijn**, ook jullie bedankt voor de support. Ik vind het echt fantastisch om straks het moment van mijn verdediging met jullie allen te kunnen delen. **Leonie**, wij hebben soms aan één woord of blik genoeg (zie hier het effect van samen kamperen in de Canadese middle of nowhere). Super fijn om te weten dat je altijd voor me klaar staat, no matter what. **Josien**, onze ontspannende bezoekjes aan de sauna's door heel Noord-Nederland hebben zeker bijgedragen aan mijn mentale gezondheid. **Marjolein**, jij hebt grotendeels gelijktijdig in hetzelfde PhD-schuitje gezeten, hoe fijn was het om regelmatig samen in de kantine te lunchen en onze PhD struggles en successen te bespreken! **Jandries**, jij maakt me altijd aan het lachen. Ik vind het *súper* om samen met je voor de rugby-kids te staan. En nee, je mag me niet plagen (zo, hier heb je je antwoord zwart-op-wit gedrukt, nu nooit meer vragen hè). **Reanne**, al lang niet meer mijn oude buurmeisje van vroeger, je hebt altijd vertrouwen in mij gehouden als “doctor Gwenda” en *allé dat is ja erg plezant!* **Muriël**, **Melvin**, **Martijn** en alle andere zwemmers en vrijwilligers van **Stichting De Brug regio Westerkwartier**, bedankt voor alle fijne uren in het zwembad! **Mientje**, **Karijnienos**, **Marijtje**, **Lottie**, **Poekie** en **Donut**, zo langzamerhand zitten we verspreid over de hele wereld, wat eigenlijk alleen maar betekent dat ons heksengelach op nog meer plekken te horen is – bedankt voor alle lachbuien! **Marlot** en **Sietske**, onze tijd in Gainesville ligt inmiddels al 5 (!) jaren achter ons, maar nog altijd voorzien we elkaar van goede adviezen via de Holland House app, fijn om op deze manier nog bij elkaar betrokken te zijn. **Jonita**, ik ben blij dat ook wij nog altijd contact hebben gehouden, ik waardeer je blijvende belangstelling en wijze adviezen enorm. **Patricia**, **Julia** en **Suzanne**, mijn buddies van het Augustinus, we treffen elkaar niet zo vaak meer (die drukke agenda's ook...), maar het bijkletsen is altijd tof. **Leo**, soms is alles wat een mens nodig heeft een rondje ploffen op de motor, en jij begrijpt dat als geen ander!

“Een gezonde geest in een gezond lichaam” zeg ik vaak, en dus kan in mijn nawoord de rugbysport onmogelijk ontbreken. Maar eigenlijk is rugby zo veel meer... één grote familie, zo voelt de **Rugbyclub Groningen** voor mij. Niet alleen samen trainen en met elkaar strijden op het veld, maar ook gezamenlijk het glas heffen in het clubhuis, uit volle borst rugby-liederen zingen, na afloop van een wedstrijd soep en broodjes eten met de tegenstander, op trip gaan naar het buitenland, mossels eten tijdens de traditionele mosselavond, weken later nog zand in je oor vinden na het Ameland beachweekend, blauwe plekken delen via foto's in de app, prachtige wedstrijdverslagen lezen (special thanks to **Sietse**), bevroren handen krijgen tijdens de jeugdtraining,



enzovoorts... In al haar facetten heeft rugby er tijdens mijn PhD-traject er zeker voor gezorgd dat ik *sane* bleef in zowel lichaam als geest! Toppertjes van een **benjamins** (en **ouders**), bedankt dat ik mijn rugby enthousiasme met jullie mag delen tijdens de jeugdtrainingen en TBM-dagen. **Heren 1 & 2**, en hierbij in het bijzonder **Henk de Vries**, bedankt dat ik al anderhalf jaar op de dinsdagavond met jullie mee mag trainen. **Douwe**, bedankt voor je goede zorgen omtrent de layout van mijn proefschrift. **Wendy**, al jaren geleden afgesproken, bedankt voor het zijn van “paramilf”! Allerleukste **Lady Bears**, bedankt dat jullie al zo veel jaren mijn fantastische rugbyteam zijn! ♥ you!

Tot slot, lieve **Tim**, bedankt voor het zijn van je authentieke zelf en je uitmuntende chill-lessen. Let’s get on that plane to Australia!

Gwenda - 31 December 2017