MATERIALISING CAREERS: THE ROLE OF ARTEFACTS IN CAREER MAKING

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Keep Ithaka always in your mind.
Arriving there is what you are destined for.
But do not hurry the journey at all.
Better if it lasts for years,
so you are old by the time you reach the island,
wealthy with all you have gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.

Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.
Without her you would not have set out.
She has nothing left to give you now.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka won't have fooled you.
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,
you will have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.

CP Cavafy, Collected Poems

Le véritable voyage de découverte ne consiste pas à chercher de nouveaux paysages, mais à avoir de nouveaux yeux. Marcel Proust[1]

[1] The real journey of discovery is not about looking for new landscapes, but about having new eyes (My own translation)

I cease my ideas everywhere. Ideas are like flowers that I bind into a garland – only the string is mine. Michel De Montaigne[2]

[2] quoted by artist Christian Marclay in Thornton (2014)

THESIS ABSTRACT

We know artists from their work. It is a common sense that artists and artworks they produce are the same or entangled and interchangeable. However, in career studies there is little mention of artefacts – i.e. objects made by people – in careers. This lack of attention is curious because in organisation studies for the past decade, there has been a lively interest in the role of materiality in social processes Carlile, Nicolini, Langley, and Tsoukas (2013). In this thesis, I want to apply these emerging ideas to artistic careers.

A review of the literature of creative careers showed that career studies understand creative careers as sequences of steps and transitions organised around artefacts, whereby artefacts signal the skills, networks and identity of the producers (Jones, 1996, 2002; McLeod, O'Donohoe, & Townley, 2011). Creative careers are also understood as highly dependent on the networks or patterns of relationships, to which they are connected (Giuffre, 1999; Jones, 2010). Taking both approaches together, one can think about creative careers as evolving networks organised around artefacts. However, except for just one study (Jones, 2010), artefacts have previously appeared in career studies as passive or as resources for people. Specifically, Jones' study demonstrated that buildings play a role in architects' career development and in the various networks in which they operate. Inspired by that study I wanted to know what the role of artefacts is in career making. Can they be more than a signal for skills, networks and identity? Can we think of them as playing an active role in career making? The initial research question "what role do artefacts play in career making?" was informed by the literature and re-constructed into three research sub-questions: "how does an artefact act upon a career?", "how does an artefact become and remain active", and "what is the relationship between the artefact and its maker in the process of career making?"

To answer these questions, the conventional methods in career research (surveys and interviews) are not satisfactory. Rather, we need a methodology that focuses on the temporal and spatial context in which artefacts move. I draw on Actor-Network-

Theory (ANT) and conducted an ethnographic case study with a single artefact as unit of analysis. The setting was the field of contemporary arts. I shadowed the artwork *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) (NLL I)* of visual artist Berlinde De Bruyckere (BDB). The study relies on a data set that includes more than 250 hours of observations, 17 interviews, and archival resources which were recorded as field notes and pictures, transcripts and documents.

The present study contributes to the knowledge of creative careers in several ways. First, the study challenges two main assumptions within careers literature: the prevailing notions that career action is restricted to people, and that career actors (such as networks, artefacts and the makers) and their relationships are stable. Instead, the study shows first that artefacts are career actors too and second that career actors and their relationships are fluid and multiple. Second, it refines our understanding of networks in career studies by adding symbolic and material networks to social networks. It does so by showing that the network in which *NLL I* is connected, includes ideas, artefacts, spaces, and materials as well and that each of them plays a different role. Symbolic networks such as names, texts, and artworks in situ tell how to understand the oeuvre and career, whereas material networks embody that understanding and enable longevity and travelling. Third, it deepens our knowledge of career making by including a process view on networks and artefacts. In particular, it details how and to what end networks, as well as artefacts, are formed and evolve, and how that evolution impacts the career and vice versa. Fourth, it extends our knowledge by presenting a new perspective for career studies: the "material career" or the oeuvre as materialised career. Fifth, it extends our way of studying careers by foregrounding and using a chronological perspective. The method of shadowing an artefact brought me in the heat of career action. It made me see the accomplishment of an artist's career in real-time.

The present study also contributes to career research methodologically and empirically. The thesis introduces ANT as an appropriate method for showing how artefacts act upon career processes. Empirically, it adds the setting of visual arts to creative career research, a domain within creative industries that received little attention to date (Oakley, 2009).

PREFACE

I met Berlinde De Bruyckere's work in the summer of 1986. That summer Ghent was the place to be for contemporary art. Museum director Jan Hoet organised *Chambres d'Amis*, an event in which international artists showed their work in 51 private houses in Ghent's inner city. Bart Cassiman challenged that event by organising *Initiatief 86*, three exhibitions of Belgian contemporary art made by three international curators in the Saint Peter's Abbey. That time I did an internship at the organisation Amarant and got the opportunity to organise lectures about contemporary art. Amarant was located in the same house as *Initiatief 86*, which enabled me to experience the organisation of such events close up.

Between being graduated as social pedagogue and starting studies in art history, I visited the exhibition *Antichambre 1986*, an exhibition of newly graduated art students in a factory that later would be demolished. Berlinde De Bruyckere was one of the exhibiting artists. Others were Peter Buggenhout and Mario De Brabandere. I was attracted to the work, not necessarily that of Berlinde De Bruyckere's because I did not remember what work she showed, but mainly to the setting, to the materiality and the space. Later in 1998, she told in an interview that that early and first exhibition did roll the ball. There were a lot of people at the opening; she was part of the circuit of promising artists; from that very start onwards there was a critic who enthusiastically promoted her work.

We did not know each other. But I got acquainted with her work. One of my sisters worked with her in 1994 and I heard her stories. I went to exhibitions, I read books and articles, I listened to interviews, and I watched documentaries. It took 29 years before we met in person as part of my doctoral research. It was a great joy that she accepted me in her world. Things have come full circle.

I had a lot of career experience when I started my PhD. I first worked as an employee for art publishers (Artis-Historia and Mercatorfonds) and an art organisation (Antwerp Cultural Capital of Europe 1993). Later I started my company arte&arte, specialised in the organisation and production of artistic events and artworks. I've been a lecturer at LUCA Leuven University College of Arts for 17 years, where I teach future artists

and designers. Most of my professional life I've been combining two jobs. Doing a PhD is a new career experience.

For a part-time student, doing a PhD is a long and solitary journey. That journey has come to an end or rather to a crossroads. A lot of roads come together: previous studies in philosophy, pedagogy, art history, and management; previous professional experiences in organising and teaching; previous interests in reading, travelling and exploration. This seems another full circle. But the crossroads also signposts new roads that I am very keen on exploring them.

It was a long and solitary journey, but I was in good company. First of all, I thank Berlinde and the Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere for giving me access to their work and their reasons to work. Being there was as a real balm for my soul. I thank my supervisors Laurie Cohen, Gerardo Patriotta and Sareh Pouryousefi. Gerardo left the University of Nottingham in the spring of 2017; Sareh joined the supervisory team. Working with three supervisors was a blessing. Their close reading of my texts brought me to results I never would have expected. Without them, I would never have been able to submit the thesis you are going to read now.

During my journey I also became intellectually befriended with people I do not know in person. These friends will pop up in this thesis. I especially thank Bruno Latour (for his inspiration and humour), Annemarie Mol (for her wit and guts), John Law (for his rebellion and modesty), Howard Becker (for his writing on art, on careers, on research and writing), Harry Wolcott (for his writings on writing), and Pat Thomson for her blog on academic writing.

And last, I thank my family, friends and colleagues for their concern and willingness to listen to my stories. Without their support, I would probably have abandoned the PhD several times.

Hannelore Van den Abeele

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THESIS ABSTRACT ..... **I**

PREFACE ..... **III**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **V**

LIST OF TABLES ..... **IX**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **X**

LIST OF PICTURES ..... **XI**

LIST OF APPENDICES ..... **XIII**

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ..... **XIV**

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1. WHY THIS RESEARCH? 1

1.2. ONGOING SCHOLARLY CONVERSATIONS 2

1.3. THE NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH 4

1.4. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAREER RESEARCH 6

1.5. THESIS OVERVIEW: A ROADMAP 7

CHAPTER 2 ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE CAREERS **11**

2.1. ARTISTS' CAREERS 12

2.1.1. The notion of career *12*

2.1.2. Artists at work *15*

2.2. MOVEMENTS IN TIME AND SPACE 17

2.2.1. Movements in time *17*

2.2.2. Movements in space *21*

2.3. ARTEFACTS IN ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE CAREERS 27

2.3.1. Artefacts in organisation studies *27*

2.3.2. Artefacts outside organisation studies *30*

2.4. CHAPTER CONCLUSION 36

CHAPTER 3 ACTOR-NETWORK-THEORY FOR CAREER STUDIES **39**

3.1. ACTOR-NETWORK-THEORY AND ORGANISATION STUDIES 39

3.1.1. An heir of postmodernism *39*

3.1.2. Weak ontology and reflexivity *40*
3.1.3. The use of Actor-Network-Theory in organisation studies *42*
3.1.4. The use of Actor-Network-Theory in career studies *43*
3.1.5. Actor-Network-Theory is controversial in organisation studies *43*
3.2. THE KEY QUESTION AND KEY CONCEPTS 47
3.2.1. ANT's key question: to become and remain powerful *47*
3.2.2. ANT's key concepts to understand the becoming and remaining of power *49*
3.3. THE USE OF ANT IN EMPIRICAL STUDIES IN ORGANISATION STUDIES 56
3.3.1. The use of the model of translation *56*
3.3.2. The use of immutable mobile, boundary object and object multiple *58*
3.4. MAKING A CASE FOR USING ACTOR-NETWORK-THEORY FOR CAREER STUDIES 58
3.4.1. A useful ontology for career studies *59*
3.4.2. Useful concepts for career studies *59*
3.4.3. Useful methods for career studies *60*
3.4.4. Useful accounts for career studies *61*
3.5. CHAPTER CONCLUSION 62

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCESS 65

4.1. RESEARCH DESIGN: SHADOWING AN ARTWORK 66
4.1.1. An ethnographic case study *66*
4.1.2. An ethnographic case study of an artefact *71*
4.2. RESEARCH PROCESS 73
4.2.1. Being a reflexive ethnographer *74*
4.2.2. Getting in, getting on and getting out of the field *76*
4.2.3. Fieldwork: making data (October 2015 - June 2016) *81*
4.2.4. Mindwork: understanding data (April 2016 - December 2018) *90*
4.3. CHAPTER CONCLUSION 94

CHAPTER 5 ORGANIZING CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ARTS 95

5.1. ORGANISING CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ARTS IN THE 2010S 95
5.1.1. Organizing the production *97*
5.1.2. Organising the distribution: making exhibitions and placing artworks in collections *102*
5.1.3. Organising the consumption: watching, buying, and collecting artworks *106*

5.2. THE SAMPLE 107
5.3. CHAPTER CONCLUSION 107

CHAPTER 6 CAREER MAKING BY AN ARTWORK 109

6.1. AN ARTWORK MULTIPLE: A NAME, TEXTS, AND A SPACE 110
6.2. THE NAME SPEAKS FOR THE OEUVRE 111
6.2.1. No life Lost, a name for an exhibition and two new artworks 111
6.2.2. A list of traces 114
6.2.3. The name produces track records and stories 115
6.2.4. The name tells, embodies and performs the oeuvre 116
6.3. TEXTS SPEAK FOR THE OEUVRE AND THE CAREER 119
6.3.1. Introducing the exhibition 119
6.3.2. Longer lists of traces 123
6.3.3. Ordering the past and the present 126
6.3.4. Something that lasts 127
6.4. THE SPACE SPEAKS FOR THE OEUVRE AND THE CAREER 127
6.4.1. The private opening of a solo exhibition 127
6.4.2. A dramatic increase in numbers 129
6.4.3. The artwork-in-situ tells and embodies the oeuvre and the career 130
6.4.4. Strong emotions and attachment 132
6.4.5. The artwork in situ performs the oeuvre and the career 133
6.5. CONCLUSION: AN ARTWORK MULTIPLE INVOLVED IN MULTIPLE PRACTICES 133

CHAPTER 7 THE ARTWORK WAS MADE TO ACT 135

7.1. IT WAS HARD WORK TO ENACT *NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015)* 136
7.1.1. Producing an artwork 139
7.1.2. Transporting and storing a cargo 146
7.1.3. Installing an artwork in situ 150
7.1.4. Showing an artwork to institutional people 157
7.1.5. Collecting an artwork 161
7.2. A SERIES OF DISPLACEMENTS GRADUALLY LEADING TO ABANDONMENT 162
7.2.1. A series of displacements 162
7.2.2. Abandoned by the artist 164
7.3. CHAPTER CONCLUSION 165

CHAPTER 8 CAREER MAKING IN CREATIVE CAREERS 167

8.1. INTRODUCTION 167
8.2. CAREER MAKING 169
8.3. CAREER MAKING BY A SHIFTING WEB 171
8.4. CAREER MAKING BY FLUID AND MULTIPLE ARTEFACTS 174
8.5. THE ARTEFACT AND ITS MAKER 177
8.6. THE OEUVRE: A MATERIALISED CAREER 179
8.7. BEING THERE IN "REAL TIME" 182
8.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY 184

CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION 188

APPENDIX 191

REFERENCES 213

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 4.1 DATASET - MATERIALS OF THE STUDY 82
TABLE 5.1 JOB TITLES AND JOB DESCRIPTION OF PEOPLE WORKING FOR STUDIO BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE, HAUSER & WIRTH GALLERY, AND MUKHA (MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART ANTWERP) 98
TABLE 5.2 TIMELINE BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE 99
TABLE 5.3 TIMELINE NO LIFE LOST 2014-2015 (2015) 101
TABLE 7.1 THE ENACTMENT OF NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015) IN MULTIPLE PRACTICES 137
TABLE 7.2 CHAIN OF TRANSLATIONS IN THE GENESIS OF NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015) 141
TABLE 8.1 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY 168
TABLE 8.2 THREE PERSPECTIVES ON BDB'S CAREER: THE SUBJECTIVE, OBJECTIVE AND MATERIAL CAREER 181
TABLE 8.3 TIME PERSPECTIVES IN THIS STUDY – ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES 185

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 2.1 THE CONCENTRIC CIRCLES MODEL OF THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES (THROSBY, 2008) 16
FIGURE 2.2 MY WANDERING THROUGH THE LITERATURES OF ARTEFACTS 28
FIGURE 2.3 A TEMPORAL-RELATIONAL DIAGRAM OF THE OEUVRE (GELL, 1998) 34
FIGURE 4.1 CASE STUDY AS A TRAJECTORY (THOMAS, 2011) 69
FIGURE 6.1 THE ARTWORK AS NAME – ACTANTS IN NLL I'S NETWORK 115
FIGURE 6.2 THE ARTWORK AS TEXT - INFORMATION SHEET – ACTANTS IN NLL I'S NETWORK 124
FIGURE 6.3 THE ARTWORK AS TEXT - PRESS RELEASE – ACTANTS IN NLL I'S NETWORK 125
FIGURE 6.4 THE ARTWORK AS TEXT - LEAFLET DANCE PERFORMANCE – ACTANTS IN NLL I'S NETWORK 125
FIGURE 6.5 THE ARTWORK IN SITU – ACTANTS IN NLL I'S NETWORK 130

LIST OF PICTURES

PICTURE 5.1 EXHIBITION VIEW OF NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015) 100
PICTURE 6.1 ENTRANCE OF THE EXHIBITION SPACE NO LIFE LOST 112
PICTURE 6.2 ARTWORK NO LIFE LOST I, 2014-2015 (2015) 113
PICTURE 6.3 ARTWORK NO LIFE LOST II (2015) 113
PICTURE 6.4 FILING NOTE OF NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015) IN THE STUDIO'S DATABASE 117
PICTURE 6.5 FILING NOTE OF NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015) PASTED TO ONE OF THE 17 CRATES 118
PICTURE 6.6 INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE EXHIBITION NO LIFE LOST AT HAUSER & WIRTH (EXCERPT OF RECTO) 120
PICTURE 6.7 PRESS RELEASE FOR THE EXHIBITION NO LIFE LOST AT HAUSER & WIRTH, EXCERPT OF PAGE 1, ... 121
PICTURE 6.8 PRESS RELEASE FOR THE EXHIBITION NO LIFE LOST AT HAUSER & WIRTH, EXCERPT OF PAGE 3, ... 122
PICTURE 6.9 PRESS RELEASE FOR THE EXHIBITION NO LIFE LOST AT HAUSER & WIRTH, EXCERPT OF PAGE 3. 122
PICTURE 6.10 LEAFLET ON DANCE PERFORMANCE FOR THE EXHIBITION NO LIFE LOST IN HAUSER & WIRTH, EXCERPT OF PAGE 2 122
PICTURE 6.11 AGNUS DEI (1640) BY ZURBARAN (PRADO) 131
PICTURE 6.12 CRIPPLEWOOD IN BELGIAN PAVILION IN THE 55TH BIENNALE OF VENICE, 2013 131
PICTURE 6.13 SKIN TRADE WORKSHOP IN BRUSSELS (STILL OF A MOVIE BY MIRJAM DEVRIENDT) 132
PICTURE 7.1 TOP VIEW OF BDB'S DESK IN THE OFFICE OF THE STUDIO IN GHENT, TAKEN ON 10 NOVEMBER 2015 139
PICTURE 7.2 STUDIO BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE, 10 NOVEMBER 2015. 143
PICTURE 7.3 STUDIO BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE, 10 NOVEMBER 2015. 144
PICTURE 7.4 STUDIO BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE, 7 DECEMBER 2015. 147
PICTURE 7.5 STUDIO BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE, 7 DECEMBER 2015. 148

PICTURE 7.6 TOP VIEW ON A TABLE IN THE STUDIO BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE, 7 JANUARY 2016. 150
PICTURE 7.7 EXHIBITION SPACE AT THE EXHIBITION NO LIFE LOST, AT HAUSER & WIRTH AT NEW YORK, 25 JANUARY 2016 154
PICTURE 7.8 INSTALLING THE MOONLIGHT. PHOTOGRAPHER IN ACTION. 154
PICTURE 7.9 INSTALLING THE MOONLIGHT. PHOTOGRAPHER SHOWING THE ARTIST THE LIGHTING BOXES 155
PICTURE 7.10 NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015) IN THE EXHIBITION NO LIFE LOST AT HAUSER & WIRTH IN NEW YORK, JANUARY 2016 156
PICTURE 7.11 NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015) IN THE EXHIBITION IN THE EXHIBITION THE EMBALMER AT THE KUNSTHAL IN AARHUS, NOVEMBER 2017 156

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE WORK – DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES 192
APPENDIX 2 EMAIL AND COMMENTARY FOR CANDIDATE ARTISTS (ORIGINALS AND TRANSLATIONS) 193
APPENDIX 3 INTERVIEW GUIDES FOR INTERVIEWS WITH THE ARTIST (THE FIRST INTERVIEW ABOUT NLL I, THE SECOND ABOUT HER CAREER) AND OTHERS 198
APPENDIX 4 ETHICS APPLICATION FORM 200
APPENDIX 5 INFORMATION FORMS FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS FOR THE ARTIST, KEY FIGURES, PARTICIPANTS, AND VISITORS IN THE GALLERY 204

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANT	Actor-Network-Theory
BDB	Berlinde De Bruyckere
NLL	No Life Lost (exhibition)
NLL I	No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) (artwork)
NLL II	No Life Lost II (2015) (artwork)
STS	Science and Technology Studies

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. WHY THIS RESEARCH?

We know artists from their work. It is a common sense that artists and artworks they produce are entangled and interchangeable. When asked about their work, artists, dealers, curators, and collectors put artworks at the front. Art worlds are fully entangled with material practices, spaces, artworks, materials and objects of all kinds. However, in career studies there is little mention of artefacts in careers. Career researchers focus on human career actors - individuals as well as collectives (i.e. families, communities, and organisations) - and on human contextual factors. This lack of attention is curious because in organisation studies for the past decade, there has been a lively interest in the role of materiality in social processes (Carlile et al., 2013). Innovation scholars, for example, showed how artefacts structured knowledge and facilitated collaboration between different communities (Carlile, 2002, 2006; Endrissat & Noppeney, 2013; Nicolini, Swan, & Mengis, 2012). In this thesis I want to apply these emerging ideas to artistic careers. Specifically, I want to decouple artists from the things they produce, to take a step back and to critically examine the role that artefacts play in artists' career making. It might be that this role is critical for career development yet has been overlooked in career studies.

Career studies understand creative careers as sequences of steps and transitions organised around artefacts, whereby artefacts signal the skills, networks and identity of the producers (Jones, 1996, 2002; McLeod et al., 2011). Creative careers are also understood as highly dependent on the networks or patterns of relationships, to which they are connected (Giuffre, 1999; Jones, 2010). Taking both approaches together, one can consider creative careers as evolving networks organised around artefacts. However, except for just one study (Jones, 2010), artefacts have previously appeared in career studies as passive or as resources for people. Specifically, Jones' study demonstrated that buildings play a role in architects' career development and in the various networks in which they operate. I will build on that study by answering the question "what role do artefacts play in career making?". Can we think of them as more than a signal for skills, networks, and identity? Can we think of them as playing an active role in career making?

To answer that question, I conducted an object ethnography in which I focused on one artwork from its conception to its final place in a collection. Theoretically, the study draws upon Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) and more specifically on concepts such as "moments of translation" (Callon, 1984), "immutable mobile" (Latour, 1987), and "object multiple" (Mol, 2002), to explain how an artwork acts upon careers and how it was made to act. The findings of the study not only confirm the perception of artistic careers as evolving networks around artworks, but they also support the argument that an artwork can be a career actor.

The thesis contributes to career theory in several ways. Theoretically, the thesis enhances our understanding of the impact of artefacts in career processes. This is important because human action alone cannot fully explain career movements. Rather, we might consider artefacts as other, unexpected career actors. Methodologically, the thesis introduces ANT to career studies as an appropriate method for showing how artefacts act upon career processes. The ethnographic study with an artefact as unit of analysis enriches a field dominated by surveys and interviews. Empirically, it adds the setting of visual arts to creative career research, a domain within creative industries that has received little attention to date (Oakley, 2009).

The remainder of the introduction situates the thesis argument in the literature of careers and artefacts and presents the research questions of the study (section 1.2.). Second, it argues that a novel approach is needed for responding to the research questions (section 1.3.). Third, it summarises the theoretical contribution of the thesis (section 1.4.). The introduction ends with the thesis overview (section 1.5.).

1.2. ONGOING SCHOLARLY CONVERSATIONS

Careers have been understood as movements in time and space (Collin & Young, 2000). These two dimensions provide a useful framework for organising the review of research into creative careers. Creative careers have been studied as sequences of steps and transitions culminating in fame (Jones, 1996; McLeod et al., 2011). Creative workers move from one stage to another and pass through transitions. The sequences of stages are organised around artefacts such as buildings, films, and artworks (Jones, 1996, 2010; McLeod et al., 2011). Career movements and success depend on the

assessment of artefacts: films in the film industry (Jones, 2002), and ads in advertising (McLeod et al., 2011).

Creative careers are also studied as movements in space. Career researchers use the metaphor network to refer to social space, or to the structure of interpersonal relationships between social actors (e.g. Inkson (2004); Jones (1996, 2012). The prevalent approach considers networks as resources for career processes and outcomes (e.g. Blair (2009)). A second approach looks at networks as context (e.g. Crossley (2009)). A dynamic perspective on networks and careers combines temporal and spatial perspectives and understands careers as evolving networks (Ibarra & Deshpande, 2007). Careers are the effects of evolving networks and careers affect evolving networks. The advocates of this perspective call for empirical studies showing that careers are affected by networks and vice versa. My empirical study in the field of visual arts answers that call.

Once again, artworks appear in these network studies (Jones, 1996, 2010; McLeod et al., 2011), and once again, they appear as signals around which social and symbolic networks are built and stabilised. In contrast with this trend, Jones (2010) took a different approach, highlighting the active role of artefacts in career development and in various networks in which career actors operate. She conceptualised artefacts such as buildings as "boundary objects" (i.e. an object that enables diverse groups to work together). The concept of "boundary object" explains why an artefact can have an impact on career processes. In architecture, for example, a building coordinates between architects, builders, clients and critics. Regrettably, Jones' study was not picked up in career research, and in that body of work the role of artefacts continues to be under-theorised. This is the second thread that I will pick up on in this thesis.

In sum, the review elucidates the need to move beyond individual career actors to explain processes through which creative careers are made. Rather than focusing on the individual, we should incorporate others and look at careers as made by others and as evolving networks. Additionally, and significantly, we also need more than human networks to explain processes through which creative careers are made. To do this, we should incorporate artefacts and look at careers as evolving networks organised around artefacts (Jones, 2010). The artefacts that appear in previous studies are passive or used by people in career making processes. Jones (2010) is a notable exception and showed

an alternative way to understand artefacts' roles in creative careers. If we follow Jones, we need a new conceptual framework to show how artefacts play an active role. We need to understand why some artefacts can be active and organise careers and others not. We need to know how an artefact acts and how it becomes and remains a career actor. We need to investigate the interactions between the maker and her artefact, the entanglement and separation, and the resistance between both. In short, we need to know how artefacts can produce, stabilise, and reproduce careers.

Career studies have neither theories nor methods to study active artefacts and thus to answer these questions. However, they have been answered in fields outside career research. Therefore, I reviewed literature on active artefacts outside career studies, first in organisation studies, next in art history, anthropology and sociology. Reading these diverse literatures taught me how to speak about, how to think about and how to investigate active (cultural) artefacts. It introduced me to concepts such as "boundary object", "life and work", and "oeuvre"; to object-centred methods; and to ANT as a way of thinking.

The literature review informed the initial research question "what role do artefacts play in career making?" and de-constructed it to three research sub-questions: "how do artefacts act upon careers?", "how do artefacts become and remain active?", and "what is the relationship between artefacts and their makers in the process of career making?".

To answer these questions, the conventional methods within career research (surveys and interviews) are not satisfactory. Rather, we need a methodology that focuses on the temporal and spatial context in which artefacts move. Advocates of the "material turn" in organisation studies show the way in ethnographies in which they followed active artefacts (Carlile et al., 2013; Orlikowski & Scott, 2008).

1.3. THE NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH

The unit of analysis of this study is an artwork. This was never done in career studies. Therefore we need a theoretical framework and research design that can register the movements and actions of that artefact. ANT has been suggested as particularly suited to analyse processes of organizing in which artefacts are involved (Czarniawska, 2004, 2014b; Czarniawska & Hernes, 2005a; McLean & Hassard, 2004). Artistic careers,

which are social processes evolving around artworks, are eligible to be analysed with ANT.

The key question for ANT scholars is how power is established and how it evolves (Law, 1992). For ANT scholars, power means having an effect on how others think and act. ANT explains the establishment and evolution of power by focusing on artefacts, networks and processes. ANT scholars use the term "network" as a methodological concept, rather than as a type of organisation (Powell, 2003) or a pattern of interpersonal relationships as used in career studies. The concept of "network" is a tool which is used to describe connections between points in a decentred, reciprocal structure or grid. The key question for ANT scholars is how some connections become stabilised and how they are reproduced. Artefacts play an important role in that process.

ANT has a long tradition of qualitative case studies (archival and ethnographic) in the fields of science and technology. The studies reveal how innovation and knowledge are established and how they evolve. These case studies point at the importance of artefacts such as texts, drawings, computers, and laboratories for science making (e.g. Callon (1984); De Laet and Mol (2000); Latour (1999a); Latour and Woolgar (1979/1986); Law (1994); Star (1999)). I argue in the thesis that career making can be studied using a similar approach, by focusing on how a career is established and how it evolves, and by investigating the role of an artefact in that process.

Out of the extensive body of ANT writings, I selected the concepts of translation (Callon, 1984), "actor-network" (Latour, 1987), "immutable mobile" (Latour, 1987), "boundary object" (Star & Griesemer, 1989), and "object multiple" (De Laet & Mol, 2000; Mol, 2002). Callon's (1984) model of translation has been successfully used to understand the division of roles between actors in a process of gaining power and is therefore useful to understand the process in which artworks become and remain active artefacts in career making. The other concepts have been successfully used to understand how artefacts stabilise and reproduce social processes and are therefore useful for understanding how the artwork's active role is played out detached from its producer. I will talk about these concepts in chapter 3.

As the careers literature presents creative careers as evolving networks around artefacts, ANT is a particularly promising approach for the study of creative careers.

It is useful because of its "sensibility to materiality, relationality, and process" (Law, 2004a:157). These sensibilities enabled me to see multiplicity, emergency, materiality, and action in career processes. It is useful because of its key issue, the becoming and remaining of power and helped me to tell the case of an artwork that impacts its maker's career.

In the line of ANT, I conducted an ethnographic case study between October 2015 and April 2016. The study relies on a data set that includes more than 250 hours of observations, 17 interviews, archival resources which were recorded as field notes and pictures, transcripts and documents (Angrosino, 2007; Silverman, 2010, 2011). It is a single case study and it is instrumental (Stake, 1995, 2005) because it is used to understand and explain how an artwork can be a career actor. New for career research is that the unit of analysis was one single artwork that I shadowed from its conception until its final place in a collection (Bruni, 2005; Czarniawska, 2014b).

The setting for this study is the global visual art world in which artists, galleries, museums, and exhibitions act on a worldwide level. All these actors work together to place artworks in "good collections" (i.e. collections that keep artworks visible in a context that the artist wishes). I shadowed one artwork – *No Life Lost I (2014-2015) (2015) (NLL I)* - made by a Belgian artist – Berlinde De Bruyckere (BDB)- on its trajectory along production, distribution, and consumption. The artwork was made for a solo exhibition at Hauser & Wirth Gallery (H&W) in New York that opened on 28 January 2016.

1.4. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAREER RESEARCH

The present study contributes to the knowledge of creative careers in several ways. It confirms and extends extant knowledge about careers and networks and it offers new ways for studying and understanding careers such as the materialisation of careers and a chronological perspective.

First, the study challenges two main assumptions within careers literature: the prevailing notions that career action is restricted to people, and that career actors (such as networks, artefacts and the makers) and their relationships are stable. Instead, the study shows first that artefacts are career actors too and second that career actors and their relationships are fluid and multiple.

Second, it refines our understanding of networks in career studies by adding symbolic and material networks to social networks. It does so by showing that the network in which *NLL I* is connected, includes ideas, artefacts, spaces, and materials as well and that each of them plays a different role. Symbolic networks such as names, texts, and artworks in situ tell how to understand the oeuvre and career, whereas material networks embody that understanding and enable longevity and travelling.

Third, it deepens our knowledge of career making by including a process view on networks and artefacts. In particular, it details how and to what end networks, as well as artefacts, are formed and evolve, and how that evolution impacts the career and vice versa.

Fourth, it extends our knowledge by presenting a new perspective for career studies: the "material career" or the oeuvre as materialised career.

Fifth, it extends our way of studying careers by foregrounding and using a chronological perspective. The method of shadowing an artefact brought me in the heat of career action. It made me see the accomplishment of an artist's career in real-time.

1.5. THESIS OVERVIEW: A ROADMAP

The next chapter (Chapter 2) reviews what is known about the role of artefacts in creative careers. The first section sets the boundaries of the topic of this study - artistic careers. I use a notion of career that is inspired by sociological and critical perspectives. I understand careers as "abstracts of an individual's history of participation in a social collective" (Barley, 1989:53) and as "discourses that provide meaning and rationale" (Grey, 1994:481). Because there is little research into artistic careers, I also include studies of creative careers in the literature review. Despite differences between artists and creative workers such as architects, filmmakers, and advertising, and despite the critic on the equation of both in the literature of creative industries, both types of occupation share enough characteristics to generate new insights. In the second section, I review that literature and structure it as movements in time and space. This process made me understand creative careers as evolving networks around artefacts. This conceptualisation of career made me turn towards literature which explains the role of artefacts in social processes in and outside

organisation studies. The literature review grounded the study in existing and ongoing research on (creative) careers, led to the research questions, and suggested a theoretical lens to use in the empirical study.

Chapter 3 makes a case for using ANT to study careers. Section 3.1. discusses how ANT contributed in organisation studies to a theoretical understanding of how artefacts enable collaboration, innovation, communication, and policy. The chapter further counters the critic that ANT arouses (section 3.1.5). It presents the key issue and question – how to become and remain powerful – and it presents some of the key concepts that explain this process. It shows how those concepts were useful for empirical studies in organisation studies (section 3.2. and 3.3.) and proposes that the same could be the case for career studies (section 3.4.).

Chapter 4 discusses the research design and process based on ANT. I designed a qualitative single case study, and more specifically an ethnography of a single artefact. I used an object-centred method, namely shadowing an artefact. The chapter explains how I conducted the research: how I negotiated access, how I generated data (observations, field conversations, pictures, interviews, and documents), how I analysed the data (coding, describing, analysing, and interpreting), and how I constructed the text (dissertation).

Chapter 5 introduces the empirical setting and the sample of the study: the contemporary visual arts and the artwork *NLL I* made by artist BDB. It introduces the key actors in the production, the distribution, and the consumption of *NLL I*. It explains why, despite its specificity, it is useful to focus on one artwork.

The findings are presented in two empirical chapters. The first chapter answers the first research sub-question – "how do artefacts act upon careers?" – and focuses on the artwork as career actor. The second chapter answers the second and third research sub-questions – "how do artefacts become and remain active?" and "what is the relationship between artefacts and their makers in the process of career making?" – and focuses on how the artwork was made to act by different networks and on the relationship between BDB and *NLL I*. In the first empirical chapter (chapter 6) I present three ways in which *NLL I* acts upon BDB's career in multiple versions; as name, as discourse and as material artwork in situ. *NLL I* can be conceptualised as an actor-network and as an object multiple. The chapter draws on observations in the

studio and gallery, conversations with the artist, assistants and gallery staff, and documents.

The second empirical chapter (chapter 7) is about the becoming of an artwork and how that artwork was made visible. It focuses on how *NLL I* was made to act by an evolving network in multiple practices. It demonstrates how *NLL I* was enacted by an artistic network in production to become a material artwork, how it was enacted in transport by a logistic network to remain the artwork that was produced and to travel, how it was enacted in the installation process by the collaboration of an artistic and commercial network to be shown to an audience, how it was enacted in exhibitions by a multitude of networks to be valued by visitors, and how it will be enacted in the collection. It was hard work to enact *NLL I*. The series of displacements shows that gradually *NLL I* was made visible, and in turn abandoned by BDB, which can be seen as entailing the artwork's agency (De Laet & Mol, 2000).

Chapter 8 discusses the findings of this thesis in the light of existing career theory and generates new questions and new answers for careers research. It offers an updated notion of the career actor: a fluid network that includes people, objects and ideas and introduces a new perspective for career studies, the material career, and advocates a chronological time perspective to study careers.

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by reminding us why it matters to know the role of artefacts in career making, by showing the study's implications for research and practice, and by discussing the limitations of the present research.

CHAPTER 2 ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE CAREERS

The literature review in this thesis is the result of the careful reading of academic literatures of artistic and creative work of artefacts over the years of my doctoral studies. It is a reflection of my "adventurous" wanderings in books and notes (Eco, 2015:104). The ambition was not so much to provide a "detailed and uncontroversial map or sorting-machine" (Alvesson, 2010:210), but rather to facilitate clearer choices for an exploratory study of artistic careers. I identified (or rather constructed) recurrent themes and approaches as they appear in the literature and these themes and approaches inspired me to think about and do empirical research.

The review is a mix of mapping and rhetorical moves. Excellent overviews of the literature of artistic and creative careers are made by Menger (1999); Throsby (1994); Throsby and Zednik (2011); Wassall and Alper (1985); Eikhof (2013); Mathieu (2012); McKinlay and Smith (2009); Umney and Kretsos (2013). My review is highly selective to maintain a relevant focus and avoid losing the thread in the detail of studies and debates. I must also alert the reader that many of the theorists chosen for this chapter are not representative of the dominant perspectives in career studies. To reveal aspects that were taken for granted, I needed to explore at the fringes rather than the centre of the discipline. The literature review enabled me to see new avenues for research. It enabled me to make a case for an empirical exploratory study with a novel focus, and to make some contributions to career research.

The chapter will proceed as follows. I start with an introductory section (2.1.) on the topic of the thesis by discussing the two key terms: career and artist. Firstly, I highlight the notion of career and the approach I will take in this thesis; secondly, I focus on artists and creative workers and the differences between them. The next section (2.2.) is about creative careers and how they have been understood and studied as movements in time and space. It makes clear that two aspects of creative careers are unexplored in careers in general: symbolic networks and artefacts. In the third section (2.3.) I make an excursion outside career studies into some literatures in organisation studies to understand artefacts' activities. I conclude (section 2.4.) with how the review brought

new insights, a refinement of the research questions and a methodology to answer the questions.

2.1. ARTISTS' CAREERS

2.1.1. THE NOTION OF CAREER

It has been argued that the concept of career might have limited value or even is dysfunctional for some occupational groups because of its connotation of continuity and cumulativeness (Thomas & Inkson, 2007) and has been demonstrated for artists (Brooks & Daniluk, 1998). Yet, I will argue that the notion of career, or at least a specific notion of career, is inspiring for exploring artists' occupational lives.

The etymological meaning of the word "career" comes from the track carriages made and followed through landscapes. Animals as well as humans walk through landscapes and through times and leave tracks; they leave signs of passage and signs for the future. Tracks refer to the past as they have been used by many, and they refer to the future as they show the way to go. Therefore, tracks are social: they have been used and shall be used by many of all kinds. Artists as well leave tracks which have been recorded since the Renaissance (Vasari, 1568/2008).

In the second half of the 20th century career studies became a discipline within organisation studies that focused on organisational careers and the match between individuals and organisations. Organisational psychologists dominated the discipline and focused on the "organisation man" (Whyte, 1956), or the individual working for an organisation. "A career is a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered (more-or-less predictable) sequence" (Wilensky, 1961:523). This definition is a good example of the expression of career as a modernistic concept of progress, rationality and individualism (Gowler & Legge, 1989; Grey, 1998; McKinlay, 2002). That focus has its most extreme form in the conceptualisation of the "protean career" (Hall, 1976), a career driven by the individual.

Since the 1980s the individualistic and organisational approach has been challenged from different angles. Vocational psychologists Collin and Young (1986) called for contextualism in career studies and advocated ecological, biographical and

hermeneutical approaches. They emphasised that career is not a universal concept but a construct, not a social phenomenon but a social construction; and that career is not individual but contextual and relational, not traditionally developmental but variable. Later, the normative and positivist approach in work and organisational psychology was criticised and calls were made to integrate other perspectives such as interpretivism, critical theory and postmodernism (Arnold & Cohen, 2008; Symon & Cassell, 2006). Sociologists challenged the dominant notion of career as vertical mobility in hierarchical organisations of jobs or as something people owned and managed (Evetts, 1992)

Another challenging voice was organisational theorist Barley (1989), who called for a re-reading of the writings of the first users of the career concept in social research. In the first Handbook of Career Theory (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989), Barley highlighted the (almost forgotten) legacy of the Chicago School of Sociology from the 1930s to the 1950s. He pointed at how those early researchers used career as a lens for peering at larger social processes such as institutions and how they considered careers as movements gauged against social backdrop. Barley argued that the study of careers is helpful for the study of organisations because careers link persons to institutions. Careers are the bridge between the micro- and macro-organisational behaviour.

I answered Barley's call and re-read the writings of Hughes (1937, 1958) and his students (Becker, 1951, 1952; Becker & Strauss, 1956). In Hughes' (1937:409-410) seminal article I read:

> A career consists, objectively, of a series of statuses and clearly defined offices… Subjectively, a career is the moving perspective in which the person sees life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions, and the things which happens to him. ...Careers in our society are thought of very much in terms of jobs, for these are the characteristics and crucial connections of the individual with the institutional structure. ...But the career is by no means exhausted in a series of business and professional achievements. There are other points at which one's life touches the social order, other lines of social accomplishments - influence, responsibility, and recognition. …It is possible to have a career in an avocation as well as in a vocation.

This definition does not focus on the sequence of jobs, on formal organisations and on vertical movements in a hierarchy, but rather on the embeddedness in a social context and on a process. Therefore, the concept can be used for all kinds of occupations and beyond. It is that double orientation on (social) relations and on process that makes

career an interesting conceptual lens for looking at individuals and institutions, and at artefacts as will become clear in this thesis.

Barley (1989) discerned four related themes in Hughes' definition of career: career as a fusion of the objective and subjective, as entailing status passages, as the properties of collectives and as a link between individual and social structure. In the latter half of the 20th century, this holistic conception of career largely disappeared in career research. Moreover, most of the scholars narrowed their area of career to that of professional issues, work or jobs. Wilensky (1961), one of the critics of the Chicago School, pointed clearly to what Hughes left out of his definition of career: the absence of succession of jobs, the formal organisation, and the vertical directions. Wilensky's definition of an "orderly career" (1961:523) has been dominant in career studies for many years. Since artists have a less clear division of work and life, work outside organisations and have other ideas of progress, Hughes's definition which abandons connotations of jobs, formal organisation and progress makes it relevant for studying artistic careers.

After Hughes, Becker and Strauss (1956) developed a sociology of occupations in which they studied the careers of a professional dance musician (Becker, 1951), a Chicago public school teacher (Becker, 1952), marijuana users (Becker, 1953), artists (Becker, 1982/2008). These empirical studies used the concept of career as a method or a lens to locate people in time and space (Abbott, 1997; Becker & Strauss, 1956).

It is this notion of career that inspired me. First, because it is a sociological approach that emphasises the social boundedness and embeddedness of career actors. Second, because it is used as a lens that focuses on how the individual interacts with the social background. The notion of career is used as a method that looks into individuals' past and future; as a method to construct and reconstruct a path. My doctoral research follows Hughes, Becker, and Barley and looks at careers as "abstracts of an individual's history of participation in a social collective" (Barley, 1989:53). It understands career making as constructing an abstract by selecting what happened in the past and order that selection in a specific way. I will come back to this notion of career at the end of the chapter. For now, it is important to remember that career making is about constructing that abstract.

2.1.2. ARTISTS AT WORK

Little research has been published on artistic careers (Forkert, 2013; Oakley, 2009). Reasons might be that artists are a small group in society (and thus not seen as significant), that artistic careers develop outside of organisations (and thus are not in the centre of organisation studies), and that artists seem to be absorbed or equated with creative workers in creative industries (and thus not studied as essentially different).

Despite this, an increasing number of studies has been published on artists' socio-economic situation in the labour market, often commissioned by public arts administration bodies or artists' associations, and providing descriptive statistics of different countries (Jeffri (2001, 2004); Jeffri and Greenblatt (1989) on the US; Throsby (1994); Throsby and Zednik (2011) on Australia; Towse (2011) on Britain; Karttunen (1998) on Finland; Menger (1989, 1999, 2001, 2002) and Benhamou (2011) on France; Siongers, Van Steen, and Lievens (2016) on Flanders). Because the focus of my research is on careers (i.e. protractedness), and not on the socio-economic situation of artists (i.e. studies of work), I will not review that literature. A summary of Jeffri's (2004) and Menger's (1999) description suffices for the reader of this thesis, namely that artists make up about one per cent of the world's labour population; that that small group is male; and that although highly educated, artists' earnings are lower than in the general workforce. Moreover, the distribution of artists' income is skewed and strongly biased toward the lower end of the range. Merely ten per cent can make a living of their artistic production. Artists combine multiple jobs to support their art-making: teaching has long been one of the most subsidiary jobs. Private or public grants are petty for their income, although they can play a role for the artist's visibility in the marketplace, especially at the outset of an artistic career.

Menger (1999) used the concepts of bureaucratic, professional and entrepreneurial career forms (Kanter, 1989/1992), "portfolio worker" (Handy, 1989/2002), and "role versatility" (Nash, 1957) to describe and explain artists' strategies to cope with uncertainty, namely multiple job-holding and role versatility.

A decade later, studies of artists' socio-economic situation were carried out in a new research domain, that of cultural, and later creative industries where artists are seen as the core of creative industries (see Fig. 2.1. The concentric circles model of the cultural industries, (Throsby, 2008)). Artists are perceived of as a small, yet critical group of

workers within creative industries because the cultural industries derive innovation and education from the arts (Throsby, 2008).

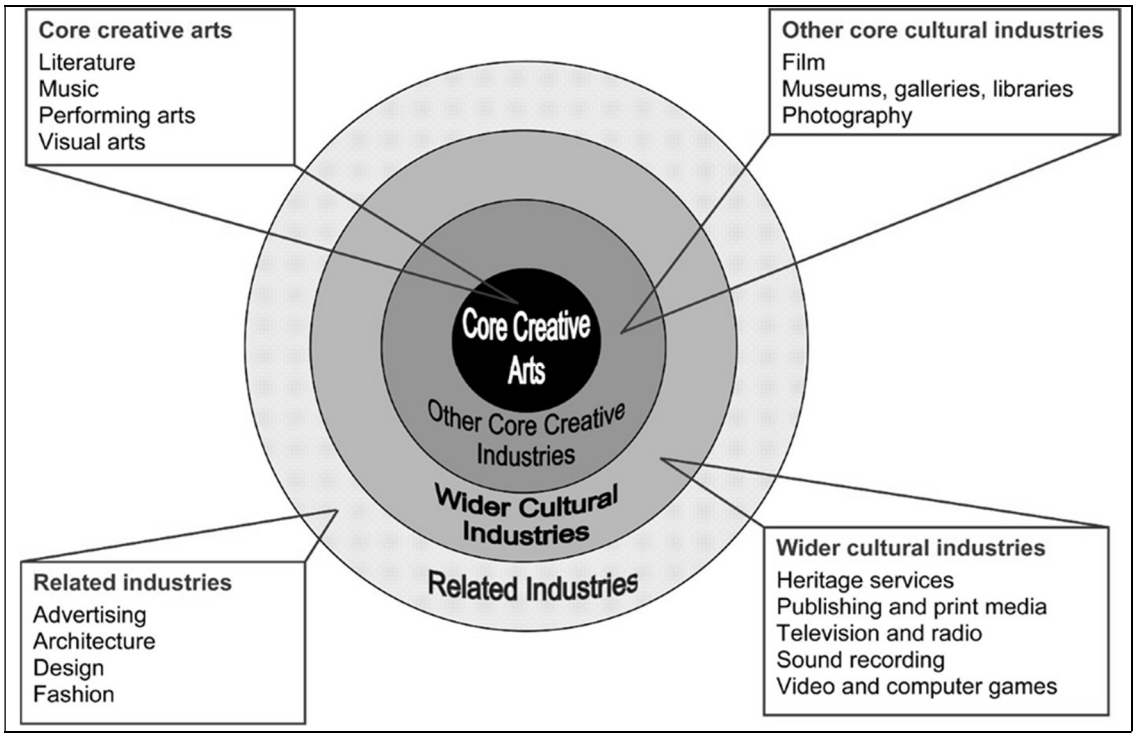


Figure 2.1 The concentric circles model of the cultural industries (Throsby, 2008)

This move from artists described by Menger (1999) towards creative workers was discussed in Lingo and Tepper (2013). From being bohemian outsiders, artists became the best pupil in class within creative industries and Post Fordist economies (Menger, 2002). Very different disciplines and contexts are now studied as a whole (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Haunschild & Eikhof, 2009; McKinlay & Smith, 2009). Scholars contested this move from artists into creative industries (Bain & McLean, 2012; Garnham, 2005; Oakley, 2009), criticised the utopian discourse of creative industries (Creative Britain, 2008) (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009) and highlighted the inherent tensions (Eikhof, 2013; Rowe, 2019). These scholars go beyond the conceptualisation of creative careers as exemplary for the new career paradigms, and also point to the dark sides of those "boundaryless" careers, such as precarious employment, low and sometimes non-existent wages, emotional labour, gendered constraints, intense competition leading to high failure rates, and multiple job-holding to sustain both livelihoods and cultural production (Eikhof, 2013; Lingo & Tepper, 2013; Mathieu & Stjerne, 2012; McKinlay & Smith, 2009; Menger, 1999; Scott, 2012).

Since its inclusion in the study of the creative industries, artistic labour has been studied from an organisational perspective, also the common perspective in career studies (Eikhof, 2013; Eikhof, Haunschild, & Schössler, 2012; Mathieu, 2012; Umney & Kretsos, 2013). The careers in the four circles share characteristics such as contingent and project-based work and multiple job-holding. Therefore, a review of the empirical studies and theories that takes the careers of the four circles together might be useful. It might also be useful to careers literature in general because it explores areas unknown to organisational career research (Barley, Bechky, & Milliken, 2017). Yet, artistic and creative careers differ in several ways (for a detailed analysis see Appendix 1). Whereas creative careers develop often in project networks, artistic careers rather develop in fields without a clear organisational setting (for musicians see e.g. Kirschbaum (2007); Umney and Kretsos (2013); for painters see Accominotti (2009)). Artistic careers are more complex due to the multiple jobs and roles, and due to the significant role of artefacts, peers, and field.

2.2. MOVEMENTS IN TIME AND SPACE

Career is a valuable concept for positioning people in time and space (Collin & Young, 2000). In what follows, I use temporal and spatial dimensions for organising my review of research into creative careers. Although time and space are entwined, I review the spheres separately for analytical purposes and label them based on the dominant focus.

This section reviews theories and empirical studies of artistic and creative careers. It is not a coherent cumulative review: the papers come from different disciplines, use different theories, and are published in different journals. I use the term artist for both artist as well as creative worker, and art world for both art world as well as creative industry. In other words, the review is selective: it focuses on career studies and on concepts that might be relevant for answering my research questions.

2.2.1. MOVEMENTS IN TIME

The concept of career itself is dynamic. Career studies explicitly examine the effect of the passage of time on people. Time structures careers by slicing careers into stages and cycles making it more manageable and predictable. Besides this traditional

conceptualisation of time as duration, Berends and Antonacopoulou (2014) distinguished two more conceptualisations: first, as timing with a focus on moments in time; rhythm, timeliness, synchronicity and windows of opportunity; second, as past, present, future with a focus on retrospection and planning and how actors subjectively incorporate the past and future in the present. In the next section, I first review studies that use a traditional perspective on time (i.e. a linear career with stages). Second, I review the few studies that use unexplored perspectives and suggest new avenues.

2.2.1.1. Traditional time perspectives: stages and transitions

Career theory has a long tradition in investigating stages and cycles (Super, 1957; Levinson, 1978; Nicholson, 1984; all mentioned and discussed in Inkson, Arnold, and Dries (2015) and Gunz and Peiperl (2007)). The traditional approach is focused on sequence, linearity and progress with clear transitions. Stages and cycles make careers predictable and manageable. Time structures (professional) life: it divides in stages and even establishes norms. Individuals' biographies are evaluated according to the rate and sequence with which they pass through status passages. The relation between age and career has become highly structured and formalised: career timetables and timetable norms (Roth, 1963) define goals and reference points for groups of professions.

Only a couple of empirical studies explicitly used stages for the investigation of creative careers (Brooks and Daniluk (1998) for female artists, Wohl (2019)for visual artists, Giuffre (1999) for photographers, Kirschbaum (2007) and Umney and Kretsos (2013) for jazz musicians, Faulkner (1974) for orchestra musicians, Montanari, Scapolan, and Gianecchini (2016) for dancers, Jones (1996) for filmmakers, Jones (2010) for architects and McLeod et al. (2011) for advertising people).

Stages assume moments of transition. Creative workers evolve from one stage to another, passing through transitions in which they are assessed by relevant others. It is a process in which artists sequentially gain recognition (i.e. esteem within the art world) and renown (i.e. esteem outside the art world, in the wider society) (Lang & Lang, 1988). The sequences of stages are organised around artefacts such as buildings, films, and artworks (Jones, 1996, 2010; McLeod et al., 2011). Artefacts thus can be

considered as the "pegs" around which individuals' careers are draped (Kadushin, 1976). From this perspective, career movements and success are based on what has been produced and seen by others. In the film industry, for example, prior work functions as a signal in the process of matchmaking between producers and buyers of film projects (Jones, 2002). In advertising, producing a "break-through ad" or a first award-winning piece of work rouses peer recognition, and this kind of recognition must emerge in the first five years, if not the novice will not be noticed (McLeod et al., 2011). Only those who consistently produce quality work, remain in the business ("You're only as good as your last job").

Transitions of roles or turning points in careers can be studied through the concept of "rites de passage" (Mayrhofer & Iellatchitch, 2005). A rite de passage is a well-established ceremonial event, in which significant others are enlisted to serve as the supporting cast for the social drama, and which is also a signifying device for a wider social group. Whereas in organisational careers "rites de passage" are usually organised for groups or cohorts of people, in creative careers they are associated with individual achievements (Jones, 2002, 2010; McLeod et al., 2011). Historically, artistic careers were always structured by masterpieces of work evaluated by the guilds (Hauser, 1975; White & White, 1965/1993). A journeyman had to prove that they had the skills needed to end one stage and go for the next or to become a master and these skills were assessed by the members of the guild or peers. In creative careers literature, only the transition student-first work (Royseng, Mangset, & Borgen, 2007) and the transition work - retirement (Jeffri, 2005) have received attention.

Yet, artistic careers also challenge the dominant time perspective in careers. First, artists do not have one career that can be divided in a sequence of stages; they have simultaneously multiple jobs and play multiple roles in multiple sectors (Eikhof, 2013; Menger, 1999; Throsby & Zednik, 2011). Between those jobs a series of micro transitions takes place. Artists combine artistic work with arts-related and non-arts-related work in portfolios (Throsby & Zednik, 2011). Artistic careers are a mix of the ideal types of professional and entrepreneurial career forms (Kanter, 1989/1992; Menger, 1999), and because one of the most popular combinations for artists has been artist-teacher (Adler, 1979; Lam, 2019), their careers also often have a bureaucratic aspect. Combining different career forms, different jobs and different roles produces tensions (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Lam, 2019; Rowe, 2019). Second, artistic

careers challenge the dominant perspective on upward mobility in organisations. Because organisations have been replaced by projects and employment by employability, it has been argued that creative careers should be understood as "boundaryless" (Jones, 1996), or "boundary-crossing" (Mainemelis, Nolas, & Tsirogianni, 2016). In sum, artistic careers challenge the traditional time perspective because of the multiple jobs and roles they play simultaneously in multiple projects.

2.2.1.2. Unexplored time perspectives

For a discipline in which the passage of time is so crucial, it is curious that only a very restricted perspective of time has been used. In organisation studies scholars have pointed at other perspectives on time, such as timing (Hassard, 1997); orientation on past, present and future (Hassard, 1997); temporal structuring (Orlikowski & Yates, 2002), processes of becoming and flux (Chia, 1995). These unexplored perspectives might be of interest for career studies.

Why are they absent? Because common methodologies do not give access to such events and processes? Most of the research is based on retrospection on what people say about their careers. Interviews produce narratives in which people construct their careers. Often the narratives of artists are about luck or being at the right place at the right time (Atkinson, 2006; Diaz de Chumaceiro, 2004). That right time or timing is constructed afterwards in narratives. Careers are orderings of the past and the future and events are used as ordering mechanisms. This resonates with a critical approach to career research that conceptualises careers as discourses, as organising and regulative principles that make sense of past and future (Fournier, 1998; Grey, 1994, 1998; McKinlay, 2002). What would happen if researchers would be able to share that "once in a lifetime opening" for career actors? What would happen when researchers follow careers-in-the-making?

Another unexplored perspective of time is the focus on becoming and ongoing processes. The focus on retrospection in career studies means that a career is often seen as the result of a process and this leads to a focus on the causes or the climate necessary for that result. Little research focuses on the process itself, on the mechanisms of that process. What would happen if researchers would be able to share that process and experience the career process in real-time? It would bring them in the flux and mess

of career processes and might bring them to a different understanding of time. It might give them access to the longitudinality of careers and provide an alternative for the dominant cross-sectionality of career research: the ongoing process instead of a series of snapshots.

In my study I want to explore these avenues further. In line with scholars who make a case for overcoming dualistic perspectives on time (Czarniawska, 2004; Orlikowski & Yates, 2002), I will integrate different time perspectives. I will combine ordered retrospective views with messy in real-time experiences of career making. I want to be in the process of career making, in the accomplishment of careers and look at artefacts' roles in that accomplishment.

From this section about temporal aspects in creative careers I want you to hold two points until the end of the chapter. First that artefacts are signals used to move from one career stage to another, but that they can also be more than that. Second, and this is a methodological point, that being in real-time with career actors might give a different view on career processes than one that is based on narratives afterwards constructed by career actors.

2.2.2. MOVEMENTS IN SPACE

Collin and Young (2000:94) noticed that the aspect of time in the study of careers could lose relevance in favour of space or the "focus could shift from constructing the future in primarily temporal terms (time-line; trajectory; directional continuity) to more spatial terms (horizontal; non-directional continuity)". This is clearly the case for the study of creative careers in which networks and other spatial metaphors are prominent.

2.2.2.1. Social space in creative careers

"Space" is the root metaphor for social relations. In career research, the most widespread metaphors for social space are "world", "scene", "field" and "network" (Bottero & Crossley, 2011; Crossley & Bottero, 2015).

Becker (1982) used the metaphor "world" to describe and analyse the relations of people who produce, distribute and consume art. He defined an "art world" as "all the

people whose activities are necessary to the production of the characteristic work which that world, and perhaps others as well, define as art" (1982/2008:34).

The second metaphor – social space as "field" – has been used in different ways. Bourdieu (1983) used the metaphor "field" for the "structure of objective relations" and connected it to two other metaphors: habitus (i.e. an agent's specific disposition shaped by social trajectory) and capital (i.e. an agent's resources to get and maintain a position in the field). The notions of field, habitus and capital have been used in career studies since the 2000s (e.g. Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2011; Duberley & Cohen, 2010; Iellatchitch, Mayrhofer, & Meyer, 2003; Mayrhofer et al., 2004). Social capital is a notion that is often used in career studies, whether or not referring to Bourdieu (Kwon & Adler, 2014; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001). Bourdieu's idea of the conversion of different forms of capital is used in career studies (Dowd & Pinheiro, 2013; Kirschbaum, 2007; Scott, 2012). For instance, Scott (2012), who showed how music entrepreneurs without economic capital generated buzz by converting their social, cultural and symbolic capital. The network was the resource for creating buzz.

The metaphor of "field" has also been used by DiMaggio and Powell (1983), yet differently from Bourdieu. DiMaggio and Powell used the term "organisational field" as an alternative to the term "industry" (Hirsch, 1972) which was commonly used to study cultural organisations. Whereas the term "industry" is limited to a set of competing or related producers (Anand & Watson, 2004), the term "organisational field" is broader and includes vertical and horizontal connections among constituent elements such as producers, occupational groups, regulators, suppliers, and customers. Their conceptualisation of field differs from Bourdieu's in that Bourdieu focuses more on the struggle for power.

A less used spatial metaphor in career research is "scene", mainly used for careers in music (Crossley, 2009; Crossley & Bottero, 2015). The most commonly used spatial metaphor in career research is "network". In the next section, I will review empirical studies focusing on networks.

The meaning and operationalisation of the four concepts of social space in empirical studies are sometimes very different and the assumptions that are inscribed in some of the concepts are not always taken over. For instance, the analytical and empirical use

of the concept of network differs from study to study as will become clear in the next section.

2.2.2.2. Empirical studies focusing on networks

Networks are very important in creative industries (Faulkner & Anderson, 1987; Giuffre, 1999; Jones, 1996). Ibarra and Deshpande (2007) discerned three perspectives for understanding the relationship between networks and careers. The first considers networks as resources for career outcomes. The second examines networks as the context or the setting in which careers develop. Both perspectives consider networks as producing effects on careers. A third perspective understands careers and networks as reciprocal causal and as co-evolving, rather than as a one-way causal relationship (Ibarra & Deshpande, 2007; Ibarra, Kilduff, & Tsai, 2005; Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). It sees careers as effects of evolving networks and affecting evolving networks. Kilduff and Tsai (2003) discerned two processes in networks: goal-directedness and serendipity or whether network trajectories are goal-directed or not, and whether network trajectories are formed and change, deliberately or not.

I draw on Ibarra and Deshpande (2007) and Kilduff and Tsai (2003) to review empirical studies of creative careers. Most of the studies perceive networks as resources for career development and success (Alvarez & Svejenova, 2002; Blair, 2009; Delmestri, Montanari, & Usai, 2005; Dunn & Jones, 2010; Jones, 2012; Jones & DeFilippi, 1996; Montanari et al., 2016; Mulkay & Chaplin, 1982), a few as the settings in which careers develop (Accominotti, 2009; Crossley, 2009; Faulkner & Anderson, 1987; Jones, 1996), and only one as co-evolving with careers (Giuffre, 1999).

Networks are resources for creativity, continued employment, and artistic success. Networks are tools to connect (Granovetter, 1973). Informal networks of contacts are critical for continued employment in the film industry (Jones, 1996). Different networks serve different aims. Jones (2012) showed how a sparse network with collaborators and an extensive network with promotors afforded architect Frank Lloyd Wright creativity and recognition. Networks are reputational signals. They signal the current and probable future status of the individual (Ibarra et al., 2005). “Signalling theory” (Spence, 1973, 1974) explains how individuals who do not have complete

information or are uncertain of the position they should take on a matter, will draw inferences based on cues from whatever information is available. In temporary projects, the need for signals about people to work with is high. People's networks then signal the knowing who, why, and how to potential employers, clients or collaborators; they signal the identity and skills of the career actors.

Most of the research on creative careers takes a "resource" perspective and focuses on the goal-directed use of networks. It is expressed in concepts such as "active networking" (Blair, 2009) and "relational work" (Montanari et al., 2016). A lot of research investigates the structural characteristics of networks such as quality and quantity of nodes, size, and ties. In Jackson Pollock's case, it was the painter together with a critic and a sponsor who created the breakthrough of the painter and abstract expressionism in the US (Mulkay & Chaplin, 1982). In Frank Lloyd Wright's case, it was a sparse collaborative network and extensive promotional network that was responsible for the architect's artistic reputation (Jones, 2012). Other studies show how musicians and music producers convert deliberately one form of capital into another (Dowd & Pinheiro, 2013; Kirschbaum, 2007; Scott, 2012). Studies that consider social networks as resources for career outcomes often use the concept of "social capital" to explain the causal relationship between the resource and the outcome.

The second perspective looks at situational characteristics that shape career possibilities. Networks then are referrals and opportunities that affect career processes. This type of research is more complex because of the interdependency of several factors. Accominotti (2009) demonstrated how artistic movements to which individual painters belonged gave rise to peaks of creativity. Alvarez and Svejenova (2002) showed how a symbiotic network of the brothers Almadovar resulted in creativity of their films. Crossley (2008) showed how an urban network in the late 1970s in Manchester was a fertile ground for the emergence of punk music. Creative people or creative events need a critical network (i.e. the right people), and not a critical mass (i.e. a certain number of people), to "breakthrough" (see also Crossley (2009)). In this group of studies, networks are much more seen as serendipitous – situations in which people meet each other –, even though goal-directed behaviour is possible as well.

Only a few studies explore the interaction between social networks and career processes (Staber, 2008). Most research tends to neglect issues of network origin and

network change and thus assumes that networks are stable. One study with a dynamic approach of networks in artistic careers is Giuffre's (1999). She argued that it is not networks as such, but the history of networks that influences career paths and artistic success. The history of the shape of networks – loosely knit, tightly knit, or sporadic connections – of photographers with their galleries, creates respectively stars, college or strugglers. Therefore, she suggested looking at careers as transitions through positions within a constantly shifting web of relationships and to replace the metaphor of career ladder by another metaphor, that of a sandpile. Instead of moving step by step up to the top, the career actor moves, but at every step, the pile changes for everyone. The metaphor highlights the co-evolution and inter-dependency of artist and gallery: the success of each actor is dependent on the other. The metaphor of sandpile has later been challenged by Dubois and François (2013) who instead proposed "rebound" or "trapdoor" which emphasise the length and irregularity of artists' careers. Giuffre's ideas have not been followed in career studies, except for scholars who developed her quantitative methods (block modelling and sequence analysis into a dynamic index of prestige by de Nooy (2002) and optimal matching analysis by Dubois and François (2013)). I did not go in that direction but developed Giuffre's ideas by including artefacts in the shifting web.

Other studies that focus on the co-evolution of careers and networks are Crossley (2008) who focused on the formation of a critical network around the punk group/singer and Montanari et al. (2016) who focused on a choreographer's relational work with organisations in order develop and implement an artwork.

The empirical studies discussed above do not always explicitly define the term network and use it in different ways. Yet, common to all these studies is that they understand networks as structures of interpersonal relationships. It can be about relationships between a couple of individuals or (parts of) organisations. A network is social, defined by the membership of a group of people. Boundaries divide one group of people from another. The number of people can go from two (Alvarez & Svejenova, 2002), three (Mulkay & Chaplin, 1982), up to hundreds (Crossley, 2009). Only one study includes other sorts of networks: Jones (2010), who included symbolic networks (i.e. based on aesthetics or ideas) as relevant for architects' eminence. I will discuss this work further in the next section.

The review of empirical studies of artistic and creative careers thus far brought the idea of career as a shifting web, an idea that was not followed in career studies. It integrates temporal aspects in the studies of networks and emphasises the importance of processes of becoming and remaining. Therefore, I want to build on that concept.

2.2.2.3. Beyond social networks: symbolic and material networks

Jones (2010, 2012) pointed at different social networks doing different things, but she also pointed at symbolic networks doing something different as social networks. Being part of a specific symbolic network seems to be of high value for the career and reputation of artists (Accominotti, 2009; Braden, 2009, 2018; Jones, 2010; Lang & Lang, 1988; Lena & Pachucki, 2013). Symbolic networks are mostly created and certainly confirmed by others and symbolically connect actors. Critics, curators or other people connect artists who share a style or a theme. The connected artists do not necessarily know each other; sometimes they even live in other times and places. Jones (2010) investigated the role of symbolic networks for architects and argued that social networks are important for recognition during early stages in the career and symbolic networks for recognition in late career and eminence after death. Lang and Lang (1988) mentioned symbolic networks as one of the clues for etchers' renown. Accominotti (2009) showed how membership of an artistic movement gave rise to an early breakthrough with French painters. Braden (2009, 2018) showed how group exhibitions in MOMA make a place in art textbooks more likely. Lena and Pachucki (2013) showed how sampling in rap music creates artistic status and thus success.

In addition to the symbolic networks, the review of empirical studies of creative careers brought also material networks to my attention. I will discuss this unexplored domain for career studies in the next section.

So far, the review of empirical studies of creative careers as movements in time and space highlights the importance of evolving networks consisting of people, ideas and materials. Creative careers can be understood as evolving social, symbolic, and material networks.

2.3. ARTEFACTS IN ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE CAREERS

The field of arts has not only a high degree of symbolism, but it also has a high degree of materiality. However, as for symbolic networks, material networks of artefacts are hard to find in the studies of artistic and creative careers. And yet artworks such as movies, buildings, and advertising campaigns play an important role as signals around which social and symbolic networks are built and stabilised (Jones, 1996, 2002, 2010; McLeod et al., 2011). Career actors use these artefacts as reputational signals. Only one study goes a step further and highlights the active role of artefacts in career development and in various networks in which career actors operate (Jones, 2010). Regrettably, that study was not picked up in career research, which means that the role of artefacts in creative careers continues to be under-theorised. Intrigued by the potential power of that active artefact, I delved into the literature on artefacts and materiality in organisation studies. Figure 2.2 shows the map of that wandering.

2.3.1. ARTEFACTS IN ORGANISATION STUDIES

Artefacts made their entrance into organisation studies in the 1980s, first introduced as material representations of organisational culture (Schein, 1984), and later as social actors (Barley, 1986, 1990; Gagliardi, 1990). One group of scholars argued that artefacts are more than symbols, but kept adhering to the symbolic value of artefacts (Gagliardi, 1990; Rafaeli & Pratt, 2006). Another argued that artefacts are social actors and focused on the action, rather than on meaning and how meaning can be a reason to act (Barley, 1986; Orlikowski, 1992). The empirical setting of both streams is different: the first is more varied, the second more technological. The second stream is influenced by anthropological methods and Science and Technology Studies (STS).

The "material turn" in organisation studies has been well documented (Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009; Bechky, 2008; Boxenbaum, Jones, Meyer, & Svejenova, 2018; Carlile et al., 2013; Gagliardi, 1990; Leonardi, Nardi, & Kallinikos, 2012; Nicolini et al., 2012; Rafaeli & Pratt, 2006) and many empirical studies have highlighted the role of artefacts in processes of organising. Most of the empirical studies that highlight the role of artefacts in processes of organising focus on collaboration (Bechky, 2003; Endrissat, Islam, & Noppeney, 2016; Endrissat & Noppeney, 2013; Nicolini et al., 2012; Sapsed & Salter, 2004; Scarbrough, Panourgias, & Nandhakumar, 2015),

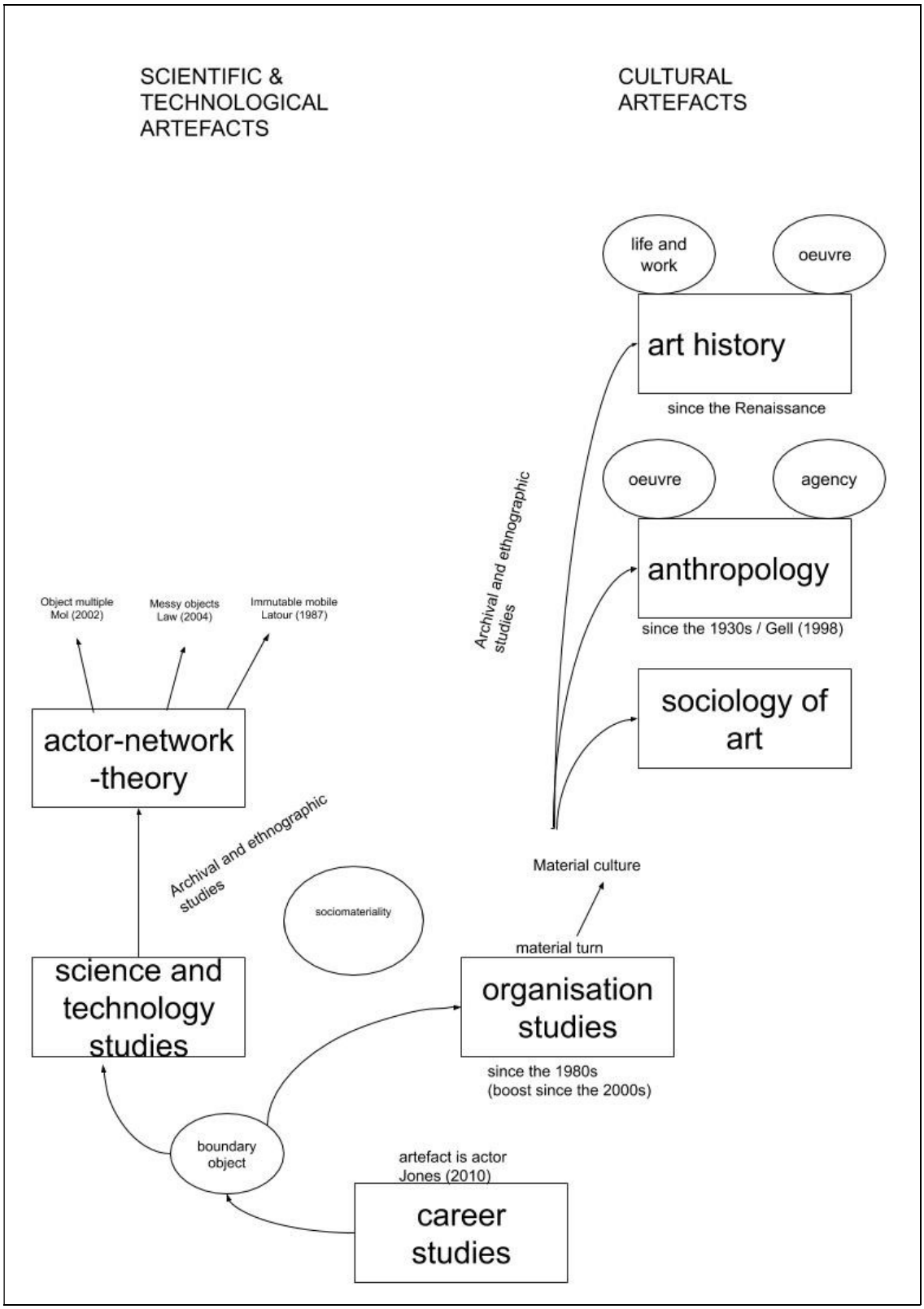


Figure 2.2 My wandering through the literatures of artefacts

creativity (Duff & Sumartojo, 2017), knowledge sharing (Carlile, 2002, 2006), communication (Ashcraft et al., 2009), institutional work (Monteiro & Nicolini, 2015),

and identity and logics (Tryggestad & Georg, 2011). These studies often refer to ANT of which I will discuss the main concepts in the next chapter.

In an early book on artefacts and organisations, Gagliardi (1990:3) defined a corporate artefact as "(a) a *product* of human action which exists independently of its creator, (b) *intentional*, it aims, that is, at solving a problem or satisfying a need, (c) *perceived by the senses,* in that it is endowed with its own corporality or physicality" [*sic*]. That definition differs from the conventional meaning of artefacts in organisation studies (e.g. Schein (1984)) in which artefacts are defined as visible expressions of a culture, including objects, physical arrangements, patterns of behaviour such as rituals on the one hand, and, on the other, abstract productions or mental representations such as stories. Gagliardi critiqued Schein that he conceptualises artefacts as the most superficial "layer" of culture. Gagliardi's understanding of an artefact as an intentional product of human action perceptible through the senses is useful for artworks. This meaning of artefacts is also closer to the etymological meaning of artefact (i.e. ars + factum or art made).

The essays in Gagliardi's book illustrated how artefacts are pathways of action as well as remains and markers of corporate life. As pathways of action artefacts have the power to steer and canalise social processes; as remains and markers, they reflect social and cultural dynamics. Artefacts have a pragmatic and hermeneutic dimension. The pragmatic dimension is about the relationship between artefacts and organisational action, the hermeneutic about what and how may artefacts speak to us when we are seeking to interpret the culture of an organisation.

Gagliardi challenged the emphasis on mental processes and cognition in organisation studies and offers three perspectives on corporate life: logos, ethos, pathos respectively dealing with cognitive, moral, and aesthetic experiences (1990). Logos and ethos have been privileged in organisation studies. Artefacts can provide a key or privileged access to the sensory and aesthetic dimensions of corporate life or the way we perceive and "feel" reality (and its representations in what we call art). The sensuous experience can give rise to feelings of attraction and repulsion, pleasure and disgust, suffering and joy and is like the other experiences cultural conditioned.

Artefacts provide some benefits in the study of organising. They are less susceptible to social desirability and more apt to reveal "enacted" themes as opposed to

“espoused” themes because people cannot live for too long in an artefactual setting inconsistent with the "pathos" of our culture (Gagliardi, 1990). It is a matter of perceptual dissonance: either we adapt the setting (e.g. cloths, design or architecture) to how we feel, either we adapt our feelings to the setting. Therefore, artefacts can function as "lapsus" of the collective unconscious (i.e. a slip or involuntary mistake), revealing profound modes of feeling different from or opposed to the rationalisations that the members of the culture offer, in perfect good faith, even to themselves. They evade censorship because they endure over time and being "ornaments", or "innocent forms", apparently without influence on the "important things" which are said and done (1990:33). Therefore, they are helpful for uncovering unconscious messages. Artefacts can reveal the root metaphor which explains the cultural order and its translation into the organisational order (1990).

An encounter with an artefact is an “affective event” that results in sense-making along three dimensions - instrumental, aesthetic, and symbolic. Artefacts create emotion for organisations (Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004b). In an empirical study, Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004a) and Vilnai-Yavetz and Rafaeli (2006) showed how a newly designed green bus was not accepted by the public because the colour evoked negative emotions.

This stream of thought gave me two further insights for constructing a set of research questions that I will elaborate at the end of the chapter. First, it showed that artefacts play a role in organisations because they signal and keep the past (i.e. are the remains of organisational life) and because they steer the future (i.e. are the pathways for organisational life). These roles can be relevant for careers as well and might answer the first research question “how does an artefact acts upon a career?”. Second, it also emphasises the advantages of studying artefacts in organisation studies because they give access to emotions and unconscious domains of the organisation (and makers of artefacts).

2.3.2. ARTEFACTS OUTSIDE ORGANISATION STUDIES

Whereas the material turn in organisation studies is a recent phenomenon, the Humanities have a long tradition of studying cultural artefacts. STS were the forerunners for organisation studies in their attention for scientific and technological

artefacts. Therefore, I leave organisation studies and make an excursion into these other disciplines to explore how they study artefacts. The first two sections highlight cultural artefacts in art history, anthropology, and sociology; the third section scientific and technological artefacts in STS.

2.3.2.1. Cultural artefacts in art history

The discipline of art history draws on two paradigms: "life and work" and "oeuvre". Humanities have been dominated by the glorification of "great men" (Bourdieu, 1983:311-312), a practice that started with Giorgio Vasari's "The Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects" (Vasari, 1568/2008). Vasari wrote the biographies of 35 artists of the Italian Renaissance, starting with Cimabue in the 13th century and culminating 300 years later with Michelangelo. Vasari drew on an Antique literary tradition of artistic lives (Plinius, Naturalis Historia). The book was the start of a genre - a developmental approach of the lives and work of artists. The portraits followed a linear chronology that started in childhood and culminated in the most famous works. Vasari presented the lives and work as a progression.

Vasari's book was a forerunner of the notion of "oeuvre"[3]. Art history as an academic discipline, as well as artistic practices, were grounded on the notion of oeuvre. Three conditions were needed to become that foundation. First, it needed Winckelman's (18th century) aesthetic concept of art as an evolving phenomenon with a rise, growth and decline. Second, it needed the development of "connoisseurship" (i.e. expertise in the fine arts) from the 17th century, but mainly the 18th century. Thirdly, it needed the cult of the genius (i.e. the artist as genius) from the Renaissance, but mainly from Romanticism. These three conditions – art as evolution, connoisseurship, and the cult of genius – enabled three things. First, that the aesthetic concept of art as evolution was applied to the stylistic evolution of artistic oeuvres. Second, that it became important for "cultivated" citizens to recognise artistic personalities and oeuvres Third, that artists were seen as geniuses. Under these conditions, and from the 1880s on, art history was established as an autonomous academic discipline that used partly historical methods to authenticate artworks through signed or archivally documented artworks. These authenticated and attributed works made the oeuvre of the artist.

[3] Many thanks to Joost Vander Auwera for his commentary on the notion of "oeuvre".

Additionally appeared the artist's monograph (i.e. a single book on a single artist that follows the "life-and-work" model) with a "catalogue raisonné" (i.e. comprehensive, annotated listing of all the known artworks by an artist), also stimulated by the art market.

White and White (1965/1993), Moulin (1967) and Simpson (1981) elucidated the interdependency of the art market, oeuvres and careers. They showed how building an oeuvre became a necessary condition for establishing a career in a commercial system. It is the oeuvre that differentiates one artist from another and that inscribes them in art history. The oeuvre is a signal for the market because it labels artists with a genre and style.

The "life and work" model structured not only the discipline of art history but also daily artistic practices for a long time. It is the foundation for how artists and their work are presented in publications and exhibitions. The model expresses an equation of life and work and assumes that knowing an artist's biography is necessary for understanding her work or the meaning of her art. Life is transformed into work and work is transformed into life. Life and work or existence and art are entangled (Guercio, 2006). The life and work model is materialised in many ways: monographs, textbooks, and CV's. It structures the discourse or what and how is told and written about artists and their work. The model and its most common expression, the monograph, has been criticised by recent voices in Anglo-Saxon art historical research for its relation with the art market (Guercio, 2006). However, due to their relationship with the art market, monographs remain.

The life and work model, as well as the notion of oeuvre, have a lot in common with the notion of career. All the notions express a modernistic view of subjectivism, rationality and progress on life and work. They all order life and work for theoretical and practical reasons. Yet, they also differ. The life and work model equates life and work, whereas in the notion of career the work is absent. The similarities and differences between these concepts may help to develop new insights in career studies, despite the critique from art historians. This will be further developed in the discussion chapter.

2.3.2.2. Cultural artefacts in Gell's anthropology of art and the New Sociology of Art

Anthropology has always focused on the "material world" (Malinowski, 1953; Reynolds, 1987). Since the "linguistic turn" in social sciences, anthropologists have been interested in material culture as language, using structuralist theories, concepts, and methods (e.g. Levi-Strauss, 1949). The reduction of material culture to a semiotic representation has been criticised and challenged as the "tyranny of the subject" by Gell (1998) and Miller (2005). I will not analyse Gell's anthropology of art, which has been done by others (Bowden, 2004; Chua & Elliott, 2013), but instead will focus on his ideas about oeuvre and artworks as agents.

Anthropologist Gell (1998) used the Western concept of oeuvre for his work on the Melanesian culture. Work by an artist of renown can be disseminated in various collections, reassembled for retrospective exhibitions, or published in a "de luxe edition" with a complete "catalogue raisonné". Gell referred to the terminology which has been used in cultural history to refer to an artist's oeuvre: corpus, complete works, the numbering of an opus. Gell understood an oeuvre as an "externalized and collectivized cognitive process". Oeuvres are not restricted to individuals, they can be the product of communities as well. It is the inner personhood of a community or individual that is replicated and externalised in a corpus of objects. This resonates with organisation scholars such as Schein (1984) and Gagliardi (1990), who would say that the oeuvre embodies the identity of a community or an individual. Gell (1998:223) continued:

> The idea of personhood being spread around in time and space is a component of innumerable cultural institutions and practices. Ancestral shrines, tombs, memorials, ossuaries, sacred sites, etc. all have to do with the extension of personhood beyond the confines of biological life via indexes [i.e. artworks] distributed in the milieu.

An oeuvre is a spatio-temporally dispersed "population" of artworks. It is distributed in time and space and can thus be understood as a distributed object.

Oeuvres can be the result of either prior design (e.g. a china dinner set consisting of 216 separate items in a 24-place luxury set), or the result of historical accretion (and deletion) via a network of social relations (e.g. Marquesan art). An oeuvre not only consists of finished works,but it can also include preparatory studies, series (lineages), copies and replicas of previous work. All these types and stages of work are interrelated. "Any given work of art, in gross terms, considered in the context of its

maker's oeuvre, is likely to be both a 'preparation' for later works, and a 'recapitulation' of previous works" (1998:234). A specific artwork in the oeuvre refers to the past as well as to the future. Therefore, rather than being a mere accumulation of datable artefacts, "the ensemble of an artist's works is a dynamic, unstable, entity" (1998:242).

Gell developed a model in which four types of work – precursor, sketch, recapitulation and copy – are mutually related in two different relations with two different strengths (weak and strong protention (as prospective or future-oriented relations) and weak and strong retention (as retrospective or past-oriented relations) (see Fig. 2.3.). He applied his model to Malangan memorial carvings produced in northern New Ireland in the Oceanic area and to 20th century artist Marcel Duchamp's oeuvre. Duchamp's oeuvre consists of one single distributed object, in that each of Duchamp's separate works is a preparation for, or a development of, other works of his, and all may be traced, by direct or circuitous pathways, to all others. This was an intentional and explicit action by Duchamp (Gell, 1998:245).

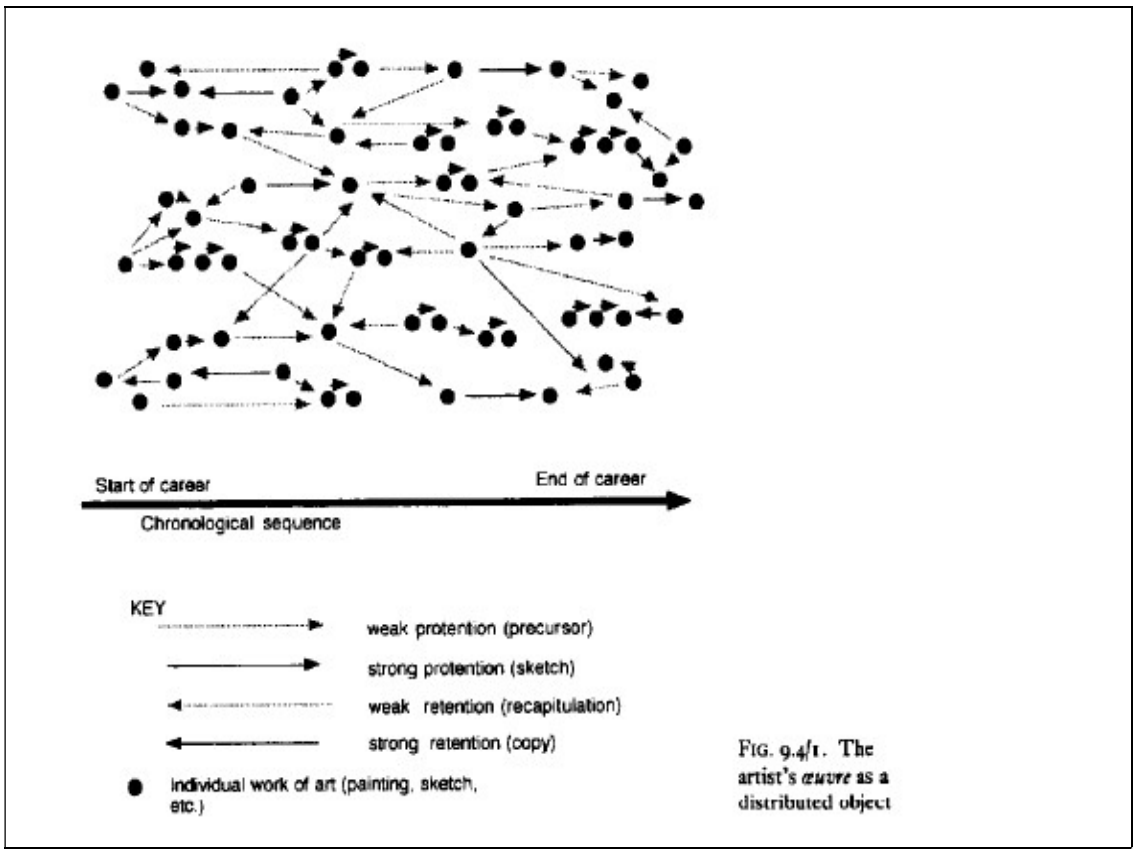


Figure 2.3 A temporal-relational diagram of the oeuvre (Gell, 1998)

The second interesting concept of Gell is that of artworks as agents. Gell defined "agency" as persons and things "who/which are seen as initiating causal

consequences" (1998:16). He made a distinction between primary agents or intentional beings, and secondary agents or things that make the primary agents effective or instruments or tools without which the primary agents would not be agents (1998). Artworks are the outcomes and/or instruments of social agency, they mediate social relations. "…I place all the emphasis on agency, intention, result, and transformation. I view art as a system of action, intended to change the world rather than encode symbolic proportions about it" (1998:6). This resonates with how artefacts are understood in organisation studies as "pathways for action and remains and markers for organisation life" (Gagliardi, 1990), as discussed in the previous section.

Gell's insights mainly remained in the domain of anthropology and have always been highly controversial (Bowden, 2004; Chua & Elliott, 2013). His insights of artworks' agency are picked up outside anthropology by a small group of sociologists. These advocates of a New Sociology of Art challenged classical forms of sociology of art which were mainly interested in "what art causes" instead of the "causes of art" and suggested studying the productive role of art (Acord, 2010; De la Fuente, 2007). This group of scholars combined Gell's insights about artworks' agency with ANT's ideas and conducted empirical studies that investigate the structuring role of artworks in art production, art installation, and art exhibition (Acord, 2010; Acord & Denora, 2008; Born, 2010; De La Fuente, 2010; Rubio, 2012, 2014; Rubio & Silva, 2013). These studies show that artistic production emerges and evolves from a material engagement within the world and is not reducible to individual intentions or to socio-historical factors or constraints (Gherardi & Perrotta, 2013; Rubio, 2012). They follow "object-trajectories" (Rubio & Silva, 2013) which reveal how artworks, as they move in space and over time, require creative adaptations and negotiations. In the spirit of ANT, these researchers opened the "black box" of art-in-the-making and revealed how artworks structure the boundaries, judgements and practices of the field of arts (Rubio & Silva, 2013). Other "object-centred" research showed how artistic objects mediate curatorial work in a museum (Acord, 2010).

I'm convinced that Gell's ideas about oeuvre are relevant for creative careers. Gell provides a vocabulary and diagrams to represent an oeuvre. Whereas art history considers the oeuvre as an expression of progression, subjectivity and authorship, Gell considers oeuvre as a spatio-temporally dispersed population of artworks, that consists of finished and unfinished works, that can be made by an individual or a collective,

and that can be planned or afterwards constructed. Gell thinks of an oeuvre as the externalisation or materialisation of a collective cognitive process. Just as careers are orderings of past and future, the oeuvre can be seen as a materialisation of that collective ordering. I will further explore these ideas in chapter 6 where I analyse the actions of the artwork, and in the chapter 8 where I develop a third perspective of career, namely the materialised career.

Gell's conceptualisations of the agency of artworks and oeuvre are important for the construction of my research questions. He was the first who explicitly theorised about the "agency of artworks" and the "body of work" or oeuvre, two concepts that I will further develop for research of creative careers. Gell put me on the way of thinking about the materialisation of careers and oeuvre as "spatio-temporal distributions" of artworks. The object-centred methods that sociologists developed based on Gell's work will be further discussed in chapter 4.

2.3.2.3. Scientific and technological artefacts in Science and Technology Studies

Alongside art history and anthropology is a third field with a long tradition of studying artefacts: Science and Technology Studies (STS). STS pay attention to the mediating role of scientific and technological artefacts in social processes. STS researchers use historical and anthropological methods and develop many concepts. Barley (1986) and Orlikowski (1992) introduced concepts such as boundary object, sociomateriality, and epistemic objects, as well as methods such as ethnography into organisation studies. Nicolini et al. (2012) offered a model that integrates the existing perspectives of the role of artefacts in cross-disciplinary collaboration – as infrastructure, boundary object, epistemic object, and activity object.

ANT is one of the key approaches in STS. Because my fieldwork draws on ANT, and one of the methodological contributions of the thesis is the use of ANT for career studies, I will give ANT the attention it needs in the next chapter.

2.4. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The literature review is more than an inventory and critical review of the state of knowledge of artistic careers. It enabled me to construct an argument for my research.

It helped me to focus and establish research questions and taught me methods to answer those questions. To conclude, let me briefly recapitulate the argument so far.

I build on the literature of creative careers that understands creative careers as evolving networks around artefacts. Networks in creative careers are not limited to social networks, but also include symbolic and material networks which connect ideas and materials. Jones' (2010) study about architects triggered me from the very start of the review: the study alluded very briefly that the buildings of the architects structured their profession and careers and explained that ability to act with the concept of "boundary object". That study brought me to my initial research question: What is the role of artefacts in career making? Further, that study made me de-construct my initial research question into a first sub-question: how do artefacts act upon careers? That study also took me to literatures outside the careers literature, first within organisation studies to literature about organisational artefacts, second outside organisation studies towards cultural and technological artefacts. Organisation scholar Gagliardi (1990) provided concepts to understand the roles of organisational artefacts: as remainders of an organisational past and pathways for an organisational future. He also pointed at the advantages to use artefacts as a methodological tool because they reveal things that are not accessible by the common cognitive methods. This convinced me to use artefacts not only as an object of study but also as a method. The excursion outside organisation studies, and more specifically to anthropologist Gell pointed at the same double-track – artefacts as subject and method. Furthermore, Gell developed the concepts to understand the agency of artworks. He showed how an oeuvre or body of work (artworks) is constructed and how it consists of multiple types of work. I saw a parallel with the notion of career as ordering the past and the future. It set me off to explore the interplay between career and oeuvre.

Whereas the first sub-question was mainly developed with the help of the literature discussed above, the second and third sub-questions were developed thanks to ideas developed in STS and mainly in Actor-Network-Theory (ANT). Because my conceptual framework or lens draws on ANT, I will discuss this further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3 ACTOR-NETWORK-THEORY FOR CAREER STUDIES

A research design with an artefact as the unit of analysis needs an analytical framework that can to register the movements and actions of that artefact. Scholars such as Czarniawska (2004, 2014b); Czarniawska and Hernes (2005a); McLean and Hassard (2004) have suggested that Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) is particularly suited to analyse processes of organizing in which artefacts are involved. As creative careers are social processes evolving around artworks (Jones, 1996, 2010; McLeod et al., 2011), it can be expected that they are particularly eligible to be analysed with ANT. In this study, I explore ANT's suitability for career studies. I examine how ANT as a method of enquiry can inform our understanding of the role of artefacts for careers.

This chapter presents one of the most controversial approaches in organisation studies. It starts with ANT's relation to other postmodern styles of thinking within organisation studies. It clarifies the ontology and epistemology on which these postmodern perspectives build, shows how ANT has been used in organisation studies in general and career studies specifically and unpacks ANT's unconventionality and controversiality. The second section discusses the origin and evolution, the key issues, and some of the main concepts of ANT. The third section presents some empirical studies using concepts and methods from ANT. The fourth section makes a case for using ANT in career studies. The chapter ends with a conclusion.

3.1. ACTOR-NETWORK-THEORY AND ORGANISATION STUDIES

In this section I situate ANT within postmodernism, I explain the relevance of postmodernism for organisation studies and career studies and I argue that ANT might be relevant for career studies.

3.1.1. AN HEIR OF POSTMODERNISM

ANT has been presented as an heir of postmodernism (Calas & Smircich, 1999). Postmodern perspectives have been used in European organisational sociology and organisational studies since the 1990s (Alvesson & Deetz, 1997; Calas & Smircich, 1999; Chia, 1995; Cooper & Burrell, 1988; Linstead, 2004; Manning, 1995; Parker,

1992, 1995). They challenge modernity that stands for objectivity, efficacy and profitability (Latour, 2005). They challenge dominant functionalist views, as well as approaches to organisation theory that conceive of organisations as discrete entities focused on the harmonious, conflict-free co-operation of sub-systems. Postmodern perspectives draw mainly on Derrida and Foucault – to a lesser degree on Baudrillard, Deleuze and Guattari, Laclau and Mouffe. They focus on the centrality of discourse; fragmented identities; the critique of the philosophy of presence; the loss of foundation and master narratives; the knowledge/power connection; hyperreality; research as resistance and indeterminacy (Alvesson & Deetz, 1997). Postmodern thinking styles changed organisation studies radically (Chia, 1995). Subjectivity is more a textual and relational effect than an intrinsic property of actors (Latour, 1999b; Manning, 1995).

3.1.2. WEAK ONTOLOGY AND REFLEXIVITY

All research is designed and conducted based on how we think the social world is (i.e. ontology) and how we think we can know that world (i.e. epistemology).

Ontological and epistemological assumptions are often taken for granted and thus not made explicit. Postmodernism and its heirs differ in their ontological and epistemological assumptions from modernist approaches: they are based on a weak (and not strong) ontology and are reflexive (and not positivist).

Postmodern thinking differs from modernist thinking about organisations in three ways (Chia, 1995). First, it considers organisations as processes rather than as entities.

Second, it focuses on the structure and logic of organising rather than facts. It considers organising as the structuring of space and time. Third, it draws on an ontology of becoming rather than being, or on a weak ontology rather than a strong ontology. This resonates with Weick's (1969) plea for a wider used of gerunds in organisation theory (mentioned in Czarniawska (2008)) and Law's (Law, 1994) call for a "sociology of verbs".

Weak ontologies are based on process philosophy and ethnomethodologies (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). Process philosophy focuses on processes and performativity and gives theoretical priority to microscopic change (i.e. becoming and how mechanisms) (Cooren, Matte, Taylor, & Vasquez, 2007). Tsoukas and Chia (2002:568) argue that the shift from a strong to weak ontology or the "reversal of ontological priorities" gives

organisation scholars some advantages. First, it can offer a more complete understanding of the micro-processes of a phenomenon. Second, it can offer a more complete understanding of how that phenomenon is accomplished. Third and practically, it can make change programs succeed when change is looked at as an ongoing process, a stream of interactions and a flow of situated initiatives.

Postmodern thinkers in organisation studies are known for a more reflexive knowledge making. Reflexivity can be understood as the awareness of the situatedness of scientific knowledge (Hardy, Phillips, & Clegg, 2001). Postmodern ontologies and epistemologies tarnished the belief that "competent observers" can "with objectivity, clarity, and precision report on their observations of the social world" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:11). They convinced us that the social world is "constructed" and that linguistic, social, political and theoretical elements are woven together in ways that shape the knowledge-development process (Calas & Smircich, 1999). Or in Denzin & Lincoln's words:

> Poststructuralists and postmodernists have contributed to the understanding that there is no clear window into the inner life of an individual [and her social world]. Any gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:11).

Postmodern thinkers argue that metanarratives are incredible, that meaning is undecidable, that there is a crisis of representation, and that subjects and authors are problematised (Calas & Smircich, 1999). Metanarratives are replaced by multiple paradigms, related to multiple disciplines (Calas & Smircich, 1999; Schultz & Hatch, 1996), or by "post paradigm organisation studies" (Hardy & Clegg, 1997; Hassard & Wolfram Cox, 2013). Representationalist thinking is replaced by the idea that realities are constructed by researchers, that there are no realities out there, no facts, no essence.

As heir of postmodernism, ANT preaches the same ontological and epistemological beliefs. It challenges five assumptions about reality in Euro-American metaphysics: that there is a reality out there (out-thereness); that that reality is independent of our actions and especially of our perceptions (independence); that reality precedes us (anteriority); that reality has a set of definite forms or relations (definiteness); that the world is shared, common, the same everywhere (singularity) (Law, 2004a). Contrary to Euro-American common sense, ANT tells us that it is not possible to separate (a) the making of particular realities, (b) the making of particular statements about those

realities, and (c) the creation of instrumental, technical and human configurations and practices, the inscription devices that produce these realities and statements (Law, 2004a). Or in Law and Singleton's words (2005): what is, and the knowledge of what is, are produced together. Ontology and epistemology are inextricably entangled.

ANT can be situated as a third stream besides functionalism and interpretivism (Schultz & Hatch, 1996). Functionalism relies on a realist ontology (there is a world out there) and a positivist epistemology (that world can be known with objective methods). Interpretivism is based on the idea that the world is socially constructed. For ANT things are not just socially constructed, they are "assembled into being", materially "assembled" and "reassembled" (Alcadipani & Hassard, 2010). Realities are not constructed but enacted (Law, 2004). The social is materially heterogeneous: talk, bodies, architectures, all of these are implicated in and perform the social (Law, 1994).

3.1.3. The use of Actor-Network-Theory in organisation studies

ANT was introduced to organisation studies by Hassard, Law, and Lee (1999), Czarniawska (2004, 2014a), Czarniawska and Hernes (2005a) and has been used widely since the "material turn" (Carlile et al., 2013; Leonardi et al., 2012). Latour's insights became an inspiration for ethnographers of work (Czarniawska, 2014a). Latour proposes a symmetrical anthropology in which all actors are equal. He gives voice to non-humans, follows a chain of translations, tracks objects and attempts to document that chain of translations step by step.

ANT differs from prevailing institutional and discursive perspectives in organisation studies by focusing on processes and practices of organizing, and importantly socio-technical organizing. It is a relational and process-oriented perspective that treats agents, organisations, and devices as interactive effects (Law, 1992). This is the case for the study of the role of texts in organisations, where it is clear that texts stabilise organisational activities and repeat them over time. For ANT scholars texts perform organisations not as discourse, but as hybrid agents. The hybrid association between humans and nonhumans enables people to do things they could not do otherwise. First, the mere presence of texts is enough to trigger someone's behaviour, as the note on a Post-it that reminds us of something that has to be done, or a checklist for a pilot that

set in motion a series of actions (Cooren, 2004). Second, the human appropriates the agency of text (what the text is doing) or attributes the text agency. In other words, the human does something with the help of the text. Because it is a hybrid, it means that no one of the actors itself is foundational. So, ascribing agency to texts never means that humans completely disappear from the picture. On the contrary, textual agency functions to the extent that texts are recognised as being purposely produced for some specific effect (Cooren, 2004). ANT thus overcomes the dualism between discursive and material foundationalists. It goes beyond social constructivism, where discourse is understood as filter through which members co-construct and constitute the organisation, and beyond materialism, where discourse is understood as reflecting something already constituted (Cooren, 2004).

3.1.4. The use of Actor-Network-Theory in career studies

Whereas other postmodern perspectives such as social constructivism and critical management studies are known and since the 1990s have been used increasingly, ANT has not. Reviews of postmodern approaches in career studies, do not even mention ANT (Arnold & Cohen, 2008). I argue that ANT with its focus on processes, its problematisation of the subject, and its attention for active artefacts, can help to understand artistic careers. Therefore, I aim to introduce ANT as a valuable approach for career research.

3.1.5. Actor-Network-Theory is controversial in organisation studies

Although ANT's insights and developments mostly originate from empirical sociological investigations in organisations, it is an unconventional and controversial social theory (Alcadipani & Hassard, 2010; McLean & Hassard, 2004; Sayes, 2014). It has its critics (Whittle & Spicer, 2008) and advocates (Alcadipani & Hassard, 2010; Latour, 2005; McLean & Hassard, 2004; Mol, 2010). Critical Management scholars Whittle and Spicer (2008) argue that ANT is apolitical or lacks a substantive political critique and that despite its ontological, epistemological and political claims. These scholars worry that ANT relies on a realist ontology (and not on anti-essentialism, anti-dualism, and anti-determinism), a positivist epistemology, and a political conservatism. Therefore it cannot develop an account of how the capacities of actors are emergent and interpretively flexible (i.e. anti-essentialism), of how the split

between humans and non-humans is created in social practice (i.e. anti-dualism) and how actors escape the process of translation (anti-determinism). However, the critics do not completely dismiss ANT as a useful approach to studying organisations: it can help in understanding how relationships can be organised and stabilised to create a durable and robust network. In sum, Whittle and Spicer argue that ANT is not sufficient for a critical story but will do for an empirical one.

Alcadipani and Hassard (2010) answered the critique by saying that analysing organizing rather than organisation is not just a methodological issue, but a political one. It is necessary to understand how domination, exclusion, power (the issues of critical management studies) are constructed to create effect and to change a state of affairs. They argued that ANT's approach, in contrast to what the critics state, de-naturalises organisation(s) (i.e. recognises that the way things are is neither natural nor inevitable and therefore could be otherwise); can deliver critical performativity (i.e. moves beyond the sort of means-end rationality that reinforces existing power relations towards considering possibilities for new forms of social order); offers a reflexive approach to management and organisational knowledge (i.e. rejects the positivistic assumption that reality exists "out there" waiting to be captured by the researcher in favour of recognizing the role of the analyst in the construction of knowledge). I agree with Alcadipani and Hassard (2010) that revealing the process of becoming powerful shows simultaneously the possibility of becoming powerless or less powerful. Focusing on processes of becoming makes it possible to explain why some artefacts become powerful for career making and other artefacts are not.

The critique has been disputed by ANT writers as well. Law (1999, 2004a) argues that the tensions in the term "actor-network" have been lost due to the translation from French into English. In English, the notion has come to sound more definite, clear, fixed, planned and rationally centred than in French. Law (1999) regrets how complexities got lost in the process of labelling. Tensions intentionally built in the term actor-network have been lost as actor-network has been converted in a theory that has (too) simply and easily been displaced, criticised or applied. The term Actor-Network-Theory describes an achievement that evolves in a direction that the originators did not plan and that they, therefore, reject (Callon, 1999; Latour, 2005; Law, 1999; Mol, 2010). For that reason, Law suggested the name "sociology of ordering" and Latour and Callon "sociology of translation". But since the term Actor-

Network-Theory is used by many and since the term orders thoughts and writings, the term persists. Therefore, I will use ANT as an acronym, and not speak of a “so-called Actor-Network-Theory”, because that would be uncomfortable clunky. By using the acronym, I avoid discussions whether it is a theory or not, and whether complexities are denied or not. I use ANT as an umbrella for a various group of writings that draws on key concepts that I will explain in the next section.

The founders of ANT especially refute the fact that they do not talk about power. In the tradition of symbolic interactionism, Law (1986, 1991) wrote a lot about power.

> Both [symbolic interactionism and Actor-Network-Theory] deny that the powerful are powerful in the nature of things. But actor-network-theory tells stories about the reflexive sociotechnologies of silencing, whereas symbolic interactionism is a language which generates stories from the underworld, stories which contest those silences (Law, 1994:105).

ANT has always attended to power, but in a reversed way: power as the effect, not as the cause. For ANT power must be explained and does not explain. Power is a performance of social relations, embodied in a series of corporeal, textual, natural, and technical materials. Law contrasts ANT, or sociology of ordering, with order sociologies.

> Ordering sociologies prefer to explore how hierarchies come to be told, embodied, performed and resisted. But to choose to look at hierarchy in this way is neither to ignore it, nor to deny it. Rather, it is to tell stories about its mechanisms, about its instances, about how we all do it, day by day (Law 1994:134).

The idea of how hierarchies (i.e. dominant orderings) are told, embodied, performed and resisted is relevant for my study that looks at oeuvre and career as ordering. I will explore that in the empirical chapters and discussion.

A second critique, expressed by some sympathisers of ANT, is that ANT often focuses on powerful actors (Gherardi & Nicolini, 2005; Star, 1999; Star & Griesemer, 1989). Gherardi and Nicolini (2005) noticed that an entrepreneurial version of ANT was favoured over an ecological one. An entrepreneurial version focuses on the powerful actors and their capacity to mobilise relevant resources and thus analyses a focused agency. An ecological version pays attention to partially planned and partially fortuitous coming together and alignment of "social worlds" and thus focuses on relationships and attention to powerless actors or dissidents within the enrolled actors and thus analyses dispersed agency. In my study, I include seemingly powerless actors

in the evolving networks that constitute careers: by putting artefacts in front I favour the ecological version of ANT.

A third critique expressed by Latour is that ANT should go further than just describe in a very general way what actors do (Latour, 2013), but also show how actors are active and relationally being made active.

Yet, advocates and opponents of ANT, both are convinced that ANT is a useful method for empirical studies to follow the process of the establishment and evolution of power.

3.1.5.1. Because it is not a theory

One of the reasons why ANT is controversial is because it is, despite its name, not a coherent theory.

> ANT is not a "theory", or, if it is, then a "theory" does not necessarily offer a coherent framework, but may as well be an adaptable, open repository. A list of terms. A set of sensitivities. If Actor-Network-Theory is a theory, then a theory helps to tell cases, draw contrasts, articulate silent layers, turn questions upside down, focus on the unexpected, add to one's sensitivities, propose new terms, and shift stories from one context to another (Mol, 2010:253).

ANT has a very specific language, uses a lot of metaphors, and deliberately does not clearly define its concepts (Mol, 2010). It has been argued that Latour operates just like a contemporary artist, that he uses strategies to rethink the world, its structures, and relations that are, at heart, aesthetic strategies (Halsall, 2016). Latour, for instance uses a lot of war terminology: conquer, allies, and mobilise.

For Latour (2005) ANT is no more than a method or rather a grid, exposing connections, vehicles, and attachments. For Law (2007:595) ANT is:

> a “diaspora”, a disparate set of “tools, sensibilities and methods of analysis that treat everything in the social and natural world as a continuously generated effect of the webs of relations within which they are located. It assumes that nothing has reality or form outside the enactment of those relations.

ANT would be better understood as a methodological approach that offers tools that can be applied to all kind of organisational processes and practices (Alcadipani & Hassard, 2010).

It is in this sense that I will use ANT: as a set of conceptual and methodological tools that enables to investigate how connections between heterogeneous elements become established, how associations are made and unmade, how different elements inter-associate with each other, and how assemblages and facts emerge as outcomes of such processes. ANT is a tool that shows how things could fail or be otherwise and is thus a political approach.

3.2. THE KEY QUESTION AND KEY CONCEPTS

ANT started as a study of processes and practices of socio-technical organizing and history (Alcadipani & Hassard, 2010). In the 1980s the main concepts of ANT were defined and employed in empirical studies. A conference in 1997, named "ANT and After", took stock of the field and set the stage for further developments. Existing concepts were deepened and refined, new concepts were coined, and all of them were employed in empirical settings outside science and technology. The emphasis on relationality increased and it was argued that nothing exists autonomously without relations that sustain entities (Mol, 2002). The acronym ANT in the thesis explicitly includes the writings of scholars referred to as "ANT and After". Today, ANT is a method (Latour, 2005) or a set of tools used in a variety of disciplines in organisation studies (Alcadipani & Hassard, 2010) al.), economics (Callon, 1999), informatics, health (Law & Singleton, 2005; Mol, 2002), geography, sociology, anthropology, feminist studies, and education (Decuypere, 2015).

In this section, I explain the key question and the key concepts of ANT. These are the concepts that I used for the exploration of my fieldwork. In the next section, I will discuss some empirical studies in organisation studies that used ANT concepts, because they showed me how I could use ANT concepts for understanding careers. The sections below are written based on a selective reading of ANT writings from the 1980s on.

3.2.1. ANT'S KEY QUESTION: TO BECOME AND REMAIN POWERFUL

The key question for ANT scholars is how power is established and how it evolves (Hassard et al., 1999; Law, 1992). An early writing of Callon and Latour (1981) is a good introduction to the key issues of ANT. The key question in that book chapter is

“how to become powerful” or how to become a “macro-actor” as Callon and Latour call them? Callon and Latour argue that powerful actors have successfully “translated” other actors' will into a single will for which they speak and thus became spokespersons for others and can speak for them. Actors impose their language upon others and make others see in their ways. To do that, human actors can use symbolic relations such as ideas and durable materials such as texts and figures. Powerful actors not only successfully translate others’ will, but they also successfully reify this translation in such a way that none of them can desire anything else any longer. This means that the vision of some is accepted as “the” vision. They “black box” or close the debate, or make others indifferent or unknown to it. Some debates get “black boxed”, others not. It is the sociologists’ role to open the black boxes and to show how translations got reified. This means that sociologists will have to show how and with what means powerful actors imposed their vision upon others and explain how it comes that others take that vision for the legitimate one.

So rather than being an attribute of someone or something, power is a consequence of many elements coming together and acting as if they were one (Czarniawska & Hernes, 2005a). It is a performance of social relations embodied in a series of corporeal, textual, natural and technical materials (Law, 1999). ANT writers speak of durability and stability rather than of power, and investigate how material practices, organisations and institutions are “made durable” (Latour, 1991) or how “what appears to be stable is being held in place” (Steen, Coopmans, & Whyte, 2006:305). Thus, power conceptualised as durability and stability is an achievement rather than a natural state. Nothing is inherently strong or weak but only becomes strong by assembling other allies. These social and institutional processes can be investigated in empirical studies. ANT aims to understand how various kinds of matter come together and manage to hold together, however temporarily, to form associations that result in power and other effects.

3.2.2. ANT'S KEY CONCEPTS TO UNDERSTAND THE BECOMING AND REMAINING OF POWER

3.2.2.1. Translations

One of the most important contributions of Callon and Latour is that they use the concept of translation to explain the general functioning of organised systems (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2003). Because of the importance of translation for ANT, many refer to (and prefer) the name sociology of translations (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2003; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1997; Gherardi & Nicolini, 2005; Latour, 1987, 1999b, 2005; Latour in Law, 1986; Lindberg & Czarniawska, 2006). A sociology of translation explains how a few obtain the right to express and to represent the many silent actors of the social and natural worlds they have mobilised.

Callon and Latour (1981:279) describe translation as:

> all the negotiations, intrigues, calculations, acts of persuasion and violence, thanks to which an actor or force takes, or causes to be conferred on itself, authority to speak or act on behalf of another actor or force.

It is a process – not a product – of negotiations towards a legitimation of a legitimate spokesperson. In his seminal paper on the attempt by marine biologists to domesticate scallops in the bay of St. Brieuc, Callon (1984) discerned "four moments of translation": problematisation, interessement, mobilisation, and enrolment. The model explains how actors (i.e. marine biologists) successively present an analysis and solution for a problem and present themselves as an "obligatory passage point" to the other actors (i.e. fishermen and other scientists) in order to succeed (first moment); how they make the others interested and lock them into the roles that had been proposed for them in that programme (second moment); how they define and interrelate the various roles they had allocated to others (third moment); how they use a set of strategies to ensure that supposed spokesmen for various relevant collectivities were properly able to represent those collectivities and not betrayed by the latter. Fifth, the translation can fail due to dissidence (as was the case in Callon's study).

For Latour and Callon, translating is thus more than linguistics or diffusion. Latour discerns a linguistic and a geometric meaning of translation. The linguistic meaning relates versions in one language to versions in another one. This meaning is not limited to words: an idea can be translated into images, in music, in poetry. The geometric

meaning moves something from one place to another (Latour, 1987:117). For Latour, every translation is displacement and a mobilisation. Translations are done by mediators, who not only offer new interpretations but also enrol people and convince them to see things in that new way. “Mediators transform, translate, distort and modify the meaning of the elements they are supposed to carry” (Latour, 2005:39).

Translating is a slow process. It takes time and many little steps to translate something and to convince others to see things in that way. It is a chain of transformations: it is about production and reproduction, assembling and stabilizing. “To set something in a new place is to construct it anew” (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005).

3.2.2.2. Actor-networks

ANT takes a radical approach to agency, much more radical than other postmodernist thought. It explicitly challenges conventional categories of actors. From the early writings (e.g. Callon and Latour (1981)), action was not limited to humans. They contested the notions of actor and agency because of the anthropocentric vision of the intentional actor (Latour, 2005). They challenged what is commonly assumed about actors, namely that they act intentionally and that intentions are reserved to humans. ANT’s insistence that humans and non-humans must be treated analytically in the same way, is the point that sceptics of ANT often find hardest to accept. It frees agency from qualities that are often ascribed to it, such as intentionality, subjectivity and identity. ANT does not disallow humans, but neither does it give them a privileged role in the analysis of social processes and they do that grounded in empirical studies. The success of a conservation project is as much dependent on the scallops in the bay of Brieux as on the fishermen and marine biologists.

For Latour, agency is not owned by an actor, but is a temporal effect, emerging out of the network. It is distributed and located in a network, not in a single actor. Action is about making a difference, not a difference to what, just a difference: “if an actor makes no difference, it’s not an actor” (Latour, 2005:130). Law (1994) summarises ANT’s notion of agency as follows: first, agents can be treated as relational effects; second, agents are an effect of more or less unsuccessful ordering struggles and “agency […] a precarious achievement” (1994:102); third, there is no social order, only endless attempts of ordering.

For Czarniawska (2004) action is a movement or an event, to which an intention can be attributed a posteriori. Intentions are not a priori states, but a posteriori interpretative attributions. Actions precede actors: "a writer is somebody who has written, not somebody who has a visiting card with the word *writer* on it" (Czarniawska, 2008:20). Effects are noticed afterwards. For Latour, an actor is a list of effects and the effects are not always planned; there is not always a mastermind. "[Action] is not a coherent, controlled, well-rounded, and clean-edged affair. Action is borrowed, distributed, suggested, influenced, dominated, betrayed, translated" (2005:46). So, agency is not defined in terms of intentionality but in terms of actions or effects. Instead of using terms such as agency and power, ANT prefers the more neutral notions of effect and outcome.

The oxymoron actor-network combines actor and network, whereby the actor is defined as having effect on others and network as topography and performance, rather than as a final or original state (Callon, 1986). ANT challenges the duality between agency and structure. In the agency-structure debate, ANT starts in the middle: not with an agent, not with a structure. Agency and structure are entangled. "An actor is what is *made* to act by many others" (Latour, 2005:46). The origin of the action is in the network or an actor is an actor because of the network. "Attachments are first, actors are second" (2005:217). If we speak of an actor, we should always add the large network of attachments making it act. For Latour actors are always actor-networks. Actor-networks that endure in time and space need new associations to persist in their existence and this requires the recruitment, mobilisation, enrolment, and translation of many others. Powerful actors are well-attached by many and strong connections to other actors.

Another complication with ANT is that in the translation from French into English the initial meanings of concepts change, as for "acteur-reseau" (actor-network). This entails that the English terms for some of the key concepts are for some founders of ANT problematic. Latour suggested replacing actor by "actant" because the English term "actor" is often limited to humans, because actant emphasises the ongoing process instead of the entity, and because not all actants are actors in the sense that they act or perform. Whereas an actor has effect upon others and is defined by what it does, an actant has the potentiality of having an effect upon others yet did not accomplish it. By actant, Latour thus means anyone or anything that might be deemed

to make a difference in a given situation. The same goes for network and actor-network. In the translation to English, these terms lost their fluidity and tensions. Latour suggested the term "worknet", emphasizing the work that is done to maintain the net, but if it would not be too much of a jargon. Other alternatives such as "action net" (Czarniawska, 2004; Lindberg & Czarniawska, 2006), net, and web, were never widely used, although they better connote the more decentred, reciprocal structures of grids, of structures and the action that is needed to maintain the network. Czarniawska (2004:780) for instance, prefers "action net" for its attention to knotting, or connecting, as a central activity in organizing. Nonetheless, like Latour, I will continue to use the terms actor and network, but keep in mind that actors are only actors if they have a temporary effect upon others, and that network is just a tool to describe the list of traces, and is not what in English is referred to as a network as such.

Since the 2000s the concept of actors and agency in ANT writings have become more fluid. In a study of a durable (i.e. powerful) bush pump, De Laet and Mol (2000) did not focus on the personality of the designer of the bush pump, but rather on the actions, movements and effects of the pump itself by tracking people, objects, interactions and their effects. The conceptualisation of the actor evolved from a network builder, a heterogeneous engineer, and a power-seeking strategist in Latour and Law's writings to a serviceable (or even submissive) inventor. The actor dissolved on behalf of action in the public domain; the actor abandoned agency rather than assumed it. The pump became durable just because of this. It got "agency through abandonment" (Gomart & Hennion, 1999). This development in ANT is specifically relevant for my study because it focuses on the relationship between the designer and his pump. This relates to my third research sub-question about the relationship between the artefact and its maker in the process of career making.

A second relevant concept from the later ANT writings is that of "actor-enacted" (Law & Mol, 2010), another oxymoron that aims to overcome the dualism of agency-structure. In contrast to actor-network, it adds fluidity. Law and Mol explain that during the foot and mouth disease in 2001, the Cumbrian sheep was differently enacted in four practices: as a veterinary sheep, as an epidemiological sheep, as an economic sheep and as a farming sheep. In each practice a slightly different sheep is "done" but they are related to each other in a complex way. It was not a unified and coherent sheep, but rather a "sheep multiple". It appeared to be more than one. Multiplicity is

not plurality; there are complex and intricate relations between the various versions. The Cumbrian sheep in 2001 could only be known if we explore the practices. The central question becomes then: how are the multiple versions coordinated? "Acting and being enacted go together. What is more, an enacted-actor is not in control. To act is not to master, for the results of what is being done are often unexpected" (2010:58). The reality of an entity is never exhausted. It is fractal. An actor is the "moment of indeterminacy that generates events and situations, the site where we situate what surprises us post hoc" (2010:74). The concept of "actor-enacted" is interesting because it focuses on the work that is needed to be done to become and remain an actor. This relates to my second research sub-question about how an artefact can become and remain a career actor. It points at the relationship of the artefact with the networks, at the various versions of the artefacts and the various practices is which it is enacted.

3.2.2.3. Messy objects

Objects play a key role in ANT writings. Objects are necessary for durable social connections (Latour & Venn, 2002; Lindberg & Czarniawska, 2006). Law and Singleton (2005) proposed four conceptualisations to study objects: object as region, the object as network (immutable mobile), the object as fluid (multiple) and the object as fire. Because the focus in my research is on objects, I will discuss these conceptualisations more in detail.

The first conceptualisation, that of an object as region (or a volume), is the taken for granted conceptualisation in social research (and other research); ANT writers developed three other conceptualisations. The second conceptualisation understands objects as networks. The concept of "immutable mobile" was coined by Latour (1987:227). An "immutable mobile" or stable mobile is an object that can travel (i.e. is mobile) and maintain its shape (i.e. is immutable). Immutable mobiles are inscriptions that are produced by "inscription devices" or machines that "transform pieces of matter into written documents" (Latour, 1987:227). For instance, soil samples from the forest-savanna transition in the Amazon were transformed into diagrams, and as diagrams, they became immutable, presentable, readable and combinable (Latour, 1999a). The soil was made assimilable by and transportable to every text in the world. To include the forest in the debate was not possible, it needed to be transformed into words, signs, and pictures. "What we lose in matter through

successive reductions of the soil, we regain a hundredfold in the branching off to other forms that such reductions – written, calculated, and archival – make possible" (Latour, 1999a:55). The written documents became seen as nature itself and were therefore used by others as if they were reality. The documents spoke for nature.

A document or photograph of an artwork is a beautiful example of an immutable mobile. Four attributes of "immutable mobiles" explain their impact on social processes. First, they travel easily over distance and do that much easier than the matter (e.g. the artwork itself) or the producers of the documents (e.g. the artist, critic, gallery owner) (Latour, 1999a). "Left to their own devices human actors and words do not spread very far at all" (Law, 1994:24). Second, they reduce complex realities into a homogeneous perspective or story (Latour, 1987). They synchronise meanings and actions across time and space and multiple actors. Third, they represent an "obligatory passage point" (i.e. role of gatekeeper) in the sense that once they are accepted as a representation of reality they are necessarily acknowledged by successors (Latour, 1987). Fourth, they draw together and integrate a wide range of sources and authors and stabilise temporarily patterns of relationships (Latour, 1987). These four attributes make that an "immutable mobile" such as documents and photographs can produce and reproduce entities such as artworks in the world.

The impact of an "immutable mobile" on social processes is temporary. It is a temporary effect of the network, not an attribute of the object. For example, the diagram of soil samples affects scientific papers, and the scientific paper affects the scientific conversation. The origin of the diagram's action is in the network of soil samples, field researchers, and other actors. Although the impact of immutable mobiles is temporal, they stabilise patterns of relationships. If a translation succeeds, and a new meaning is accepted by others, the "immutable mobile" can speak for the network. A spokesperson is someone who speaks for others who, or which, do not speak (Latour, 1987). For example, by the time the diagram is published in a scientific paper, it speaks for the Amazon soil, for the scientists involved in the fieldwork in the forest, and for the scientific community.

The third conceptualisation understands objects as fluid. The "immutability" of the concept "immutable mobile" has been challenged by other ANT writers. Star and Griesemer (1989) critiqued Latour's focus on the protagonist in social processes and

suggested a more ecological and dynamic concept that also considers the multiple viewpoints of the multiple social worlds who are involved in an organisation – the concept of "boundary object". Star and Griesemer (1989) investigated how a heterogeneous group of people in a museum of natural history could collaborate. Objects played a key role and were conceptualised as "boundary objects" and defined as adaptable to different viewpoints and robust enough to maintain identity across them. Star and Griesemer (1989) discerned four types of boundary objects of which one – the standardised forms (e.g. methods of common communication across dispersed workgroups) – resembles the "immutable mobile".

De Laet and Mol (2000) and Mol (2002) emphasised that the immutability of the mobile is a very temporal affair and thus cannot be a stabilisation or endpoint. They suggested conceptualising the object as a "mutable mobile" or as an "object multiple". The latter concepts not only stress the mutability of the object by including temporality and fluidity in their concepts but also that an "object multiple" needs to be enacted to be able to act. In their empirical studies, the scholars show what actors do to keep other actors active (De Laet & Mol, 2000; Law & Mol, 2010; Mol, 2002). De Laet and Mol (2000) extended the concepts of immutable mobile and boundary object: the immutable mobile became mutable and the boundaries of the boundary object became less firm. A boundary object moves between (social) worlds in which it gets interpreted in different ways: boundaries remain firm and interpretation in the different worlds vary. An object multiple is not only interpreted differently, but it is brought into being differently. The object and world are intertwined. This ended in concepts of the "object multiple" (Mol, 2002) and "actor-enacted" (Law & Mol, 2010). The body is multiple because it is enacted in multiple practices. Realities are not immutable – they are shaped, enacted and contested. Realities might be different; things can fail or be otherwise.

Law and Singleton (2005) developed a fourth conceptualisation in their paper: the object as fire. A messy object, such as alcoholic liver disease, was conceptualised as a pattern of presences and absences. Alcoholic liver disease was brought to presence by describing and defining it and was made absent by not talking about it. A fire object is an object that "juxtaposes and transforms discontinuous realities that cannot be held together or brought to presence" (2005:344). It is a series of different but closely,

related absences and presences. The transformations are not gentle flows, but rather jumps and discontinuities, hence the name fire object.

3.3. THE USE OF ANT IN EMPIRICAL STUDIES IN ORGANISATION STUDIES

ANT is known for its archival and ethnographic case studies that elucidate the process through which innovation and knowledge are established and evolve, particularly in the fields of science and technology. These case studies highlighted the impact of artefacts such as texts, drawings, computers, and laboratories on science making (e.g. Latour, Callon, Woolgar, Law, Star, and Mol).

Two concepts of ANT writings have been used widely in empirical studies in organisation studies: the model of translation and immutable mobile and its successors boundary object and object multiple which I discussed in the previous section. This section has a double aim: it first shows how the concepts were used to clarify and explain social processes, and second demonstrates how ANT as a method works. The presented studies were a source of inspiration for my empirical study in career studies.

3.3.1. THE USE OF THE MODEL OF TRANSLATION

Callon's (1984) model of translation that I discussed above, has been used in studies of innovation (Christiansen, Varnes, Gasparin, Storm-Nielsen, & Vinther, 2010), collaboration in cultural production (Strandvad, 2011), entrepreneurship (Barinaga, 2017), and policy (Hamilton, 2011) and enabled researchers to explain how products, projects and programs succeeded or failed. All studies focus on the process and how different actors (also artefacts) in different stages play a different role. Below I discuss studies that inspired me for my research in terms of methods, concepts and writing style.

Akrich, Callon, Latour, and Monaghan (2002a, 2002b) challenged the prevailing "model of diffusion" in innovation studies and used the "model of interessement" to explain successes or failures of innovations. It is its capacity to interest more and more actors and to create adhesion between numerous actors, that defines the success of an innovation, and not the intrinsic qualities of a product as is commonly understood. To adopt an innovation is to adapt it, and this adaptation generally results in a collective

elaboration (Akrich et al., 2002a). “To interest and to transform are two faces of the same reality” (Akrich et al., 2002a:209).

Christiansen et al. (2010) used the “model of interessement” to explain the enduring success of a design icon – the Egg chair of Arne Jacobson introduced in 1958. Callon’s model enabled to see value as a relational process rather than as a stable entity established by simple transactions. They demonstrated how value is constructed by continuous negotiations in networks incorporating different actors and how qualification and requalification processes, carried out by framing devices that frame the product, attaches, and detaches actors. The strength of the Egg chair is its ability to be simultaneously flexible and stable. At its core is the design of a mastermind, yet it can adapt to today's changes and tastes. Through its ability to transform and connect in new ways, keeping its core, it becomes strong. In their archival study, the researchers identified the actors, networks (relationships), and qualities that enable the value construction to be stable for a period.

To explain collaboration in film production, Strandvad (2011) focused on one stage of the model of translation: “enrolment” (Callon, 1984) or rather “attachment” (Gomart & Hennion, 1999). She argued that it was the materialisation process from idea to text to film that enabled collaboration. It was an evolving object that became actively involved in the organising of the film. First, the idea got detached from the maker and materialised in a written draft. Second, that evolving object did (or did not) generate feelings of attraction which lead to attachments with others. Third, the object evolved and maintained its mutability and, in that way, postponed closure. Her findings relate to my third research question about the relationship between the maker and the artefact.

Barinaga (2017) used the concepts of translation and qualification (Callon, 1984) for understanding the process of social entrepreneurship, and more specifically how qualities are attached to products. She conducted an auto-ethnography and action research. She also used the concept of “tinkering” (Mol, 2010) for identifying the fluid adaptation process. Hamilton (2011) used the model of translation and the “obligatory passage points” (Callon, 1984) for explaining the success of an education policy program. She drafted stories of moments in the program followed by commentaries on the processes identified, which is a writing style that inspired me for chapter 7 where I write about the processes of becoming and remaining an artefact.

3.3.2. THE USE OF IMMUTABLE MOBILE, BOUNDARY OBJECT AND OBJECT MULTIPLE

The concept of "immutable mobile" has been used in cultural studies (Strandvad, 2011), economic geography (Barnes, 2002), and communication studies (Cooren et al., 2007) and enabled researchers to understand how communication and collaboration at distance was possible. The concept of "boundary object" has been used in studies of careers (Jones, 2010), occupational identity (Bechky, 2003), global project management (Sapsed & Salter, 2004) and innovation (Carlile, 2002) and enabled researchers to understand how different professions could collaborate. The concept of "object multiple" has been used in education (Fenwick & Edwards, 2011) and tourism (Ren, 2011) and enabled researchers to understand the multiple ontologies that often coexist in respectively policy and tourism environments (i.e. the ontological variance).

Cooren et al. (2007) conceptualised the mission statement of a humanitarian organisation as an immutable mobile. This study was an ethnographic study in which the researchers shadowed people with a video-camera. They not only assumed that a mission statement (Discourse) must be embodied, materialised or even incarnated in text or talk (discourses) for it to be reproduced, sustained and transported from one point to another, but also that "a specific discourse is never powerful 'on its own' but comes with specific devices composed of arguments, people, numbers, documents, etc. that participate in its mobility and stability" (Cooren et al., 2007:183). A given Discourse can maintain its shape across time and space only if a lot of interactive work is done to assure the stability of its associations in the ordinary day-to-day activity of the people who embody it. It is like an acrobat who is continuously correcting her imbalances (Bateson, 1979).

3.4. MAKING A CASE FOR USING ACTOR-NETWORK-THEORY FOR CAREER STUDIES

Whereas Latour and others analyse technological and scientific artefacts, I will analyse artefacts made during careers and more specifically artistic artefacts made by an artist. The similarities between science and art have been emphasised by several scholars (Mukerji, 2007; Woolgar, Coopmans, & Neyland, 2009) and empirical studies show the possible translation of concepts and methods (Acord, 2010; Rubio, 2012; Rubio & Silva, 2013; Yaneva, 2003a, 2003b). Therefore, I argue that the study of artistic careers may gain insights by using ANT. Moreover, I argue that ANT is a useful approach for

career research because of its ontology, concepts, methods, and accounts. Below I explain why.

3.4.1. A USEFUL ONTOLOGY FOR CAREER STUDIES

ANT's idea of symmetry between humans and non-humans directly challenges the overriding assumption in career research that individual human beings plan and conduct career action. It suggests that career actors are not merely human, but are precarious assemblages. Career actors are assemblages – moving in a web of relations with other assemblages – of variously distributed human and nonhuman materials that can collectively generate power, and that can extend themselves across space and time to act at distance. Contrary to the humanist view, no one thing can be identified as a cause or source of force. Instead, as I mentioned earlier in section 3.2.2.2., for ANT agency is distributed and located in a heterogeneous network and is a temporal effect.

ANT's controversial ontology resonates with career processes characterised as evolving networks around artefacts. ANT challenges the passivity of artefacts, perceives the world as a network and understands everything as an effect of networks of relations. Therefore, I argue that it is an appropriate theoretical framework for looking at creative careers.

3.4.2. USEFUL CONCEPTS FOR CAREER STUDIES

Up to now, the concepts discussed above have not appeared in career studies, except for "boundary object" in a single investigation (Jones, 2010). This is curious because careers are processes and ANT is a process approach. It is curious for several reasons: because careers are conceptualised as evolving networks and ANT is a method to study the formation and stabilisation of networks; because creative careers highlight the importance of artefacts; and because ANT propagates a symmetrical anthropology populated with hybrids of human and nonhuman actors. Therefore, my study will introduce ANT to career research and will explore the usefulness of some of its concepts to investigate creative careers.

Out of the extensive body of ANT writings, I selected the concepts of translation, actor-network, immutable mobile and object multiple, because they enable us to register and analyse the actions of an artwork and explain how an artwork produces,

stabilises, and reproduces a career. First, I used Callon's (1984) model of translation (section 3.2.2.1.) which has been successfully applied to the division of roles between actors in a process of gaining power and therefore useful to understand the process in which artworks become and remain active artefacts in career making. Second, I used the concepts of "actor-network" (Latour, 1987), "immutable mobile" (Latour, 1987), "object multiple" (De Laet & Mol, 2000; Mol, 2002) (section 3.2.2.3.). They have been successfully deployed to understand how artefacts stabilise and reproduce social processes and therefore are useful for understanding how the artwork's active role is played out detached from its producer.

The restriction to ANT concepts also has its limitations, as every perspective silences something else. The meaning of particular artworks is left out in this study. Instead, artworks are seen as resources for and actors of career making. Thus, using ANT will not focus on meaning as such, but rather on how that meaning is told, embodied, performed and resisted by artefacts.

I entered the fieldwork with these concepts or theoretical lens because I agree with Karl Weick that:

> Ideas […] gain their value from what they allow us to see in organizations. Evocative ideas need to be cultivated by theorists from the beginning because belief, not scepticism, precedes observation… If believing affects seeing, and if theories are significant beliefs that affect what we see, then theories should be adopted more to maximize what we see than to summarize what we already have seen (Weick (1987:122) mentioned in Gagliardi (1990:34)).

3.4.3. USEFUL METHODS FOR CAREER STUDIES

A posthuman ontology necessitates new methods. Law and Urry (2004) called for "messy" methods, able to deal with the fleeting, the distributed, the multiple, the sensory, the emotional, the kinaesthetic. "We need to find ways of elaborating quite methods, slow methods, or modest methods (Law, 2004a:15). STS used such methods in ethnographies (e.g. Latour and Woolgar (1979/1986) and let us see the relative messiness of practices (Law, 2004a).

ANT's ethnographies are especially sympathetic to what Marcus (1995) called "multi-sited ethnography" that links data across different geographical spaces and times rather than focusing on a bounded local context as anthropologists have traditionally done.

"As actions move around" (Law & Mol, 2010:72), ethnographers have to move around as well. Researchers follow or "shadow" people (Cooren et al., 2007; Latour, 1999a), objects (Bruni, 2005), and actions (Czarniawska, 2004; Lindberg & Czarniawska, 2006). Shadowing (Czarniawska, 2007, 2014b) includes long-lasting participant observation, conversations with people in the field, pictures and movies, and documents.

Latour (1987) presented two movements of conducting empirical research. The first – going upstream – is historical and pays great attention to details that explain how people, objects and facts became powerful. It is a retrospective, documentary approach where the researcher goes back to the origin of the phenomenon to understand the success or failure of that phenomenon. The second – going downstream – investigates the consequences or effects of (powerful) actors. It can be done with a documentary or ethnographic approach. My study moves in two directions: in chapter 6 I went downstream, in chapter 7 I went upstream.

The founders of ANT and the researchers who used their concepts do not reveal much about the methods they used. Also, there is no unitary approach to analysis (see Law, 1999). I followed Czarniawska's very general advice (2007, 2014a) – first, identify the actants, second, analyse the associations between the actants. It is ANT's insistence on attending to these minute interactions that challenges many assumptions underpinning certain conceptions of organising, such as human-centric views of agency, identity, ideology, and power; conceptions which are also predominant in career research.

3.4.4. USEFUL ACCOUNTS FOR CAREER STUDIES

A lot of the criticism of ANT is about the accounts of ANT: in particular that they are too descriptive and lack analysis. ANT aims for "accurate, faithful, interesting, and objective accounts" (Latour, 2005:127) "that are able to register differences, to absorb multiplicity, to be remade for each new case at hand" (Latour, 2005:121). In his advice for a novel anthropologist, Latour (2013:35) emphasises that the accounts of researchers should not just tell that something is an "actant" without concretely showing how it is active and relationally been made active. He tells her a story:

> Although our anthropologist is rather proud of her discovery, her enthusiasm is tempered a bit by the fact that, while following the threads of the networks, she notices that she has lost in specificity what she has gained in freedom of movement. It is quite true that, thanks to the networks defined in this way, she really can wander around everywhere, using whatever vehicle she chooses, without regard to the domain boundaries that her informants want to impose on her in theory but which they cross in practice just as casually as she does. And yet, to her great confusion, as she studies segments from Law, Science, The Economy, or Religion she begins to feel that she is saying almost *the same thing* about all of them: namely, that they are "composed in a heterogeneous fashion of unexpected elements revealed by the investigation". To be sure, she is indeed moving, like her informants, from one surprise to another, but, somewhat to her surprise, this stops being surprising, in a way, as each element becomes surprising *in the same way* (Latour, 2013:35).

I hope not to tell the same thing over and over again, for instance, that artists, artworks and careers are the effects of heterogenous networks or that artworks are career actors decisive in the establishment of artistic careers. I hope my account persuades because it illuminates and explains.

The review provided me with inspiring examples of how to make an account that is useful for career studies, for instance, the combination of vignettes and commentaries (Barinaga, 2017; Bruni, 2005; Cooren et al., 2007; Hamilton, 2011), or "photo-philosophical accounts" (De Laet & Mol, 2000; Latour, 1999a; Mol, 2002). Due to textual space, writing a dissertation is always a very harsh selection of the initial accounts. I had to re-shuffle and re-assemble parts of the initial account. I had to start the account somewhere in the middle and had to bracket the account temporally (Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, & Van De Ven, 2013) and spatially.

3.5. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The careers literature presents creative careers as evolving networks around artefacts. In this chapter, I have argued that given these characteristics, ANT is a particularly promising philosophical and conceptual framework to apply to the study of creative careers. It is useful because of its "sensibility to materiality, relationality, and process" (Law, 2004a:157). These sensibilities enabled me to see multiplicity, emergency, materiality, and action in career processes.

ANT is useful for the study of careers because its key issue – the becoming and remaining of power – helped me to tell the story of an active or powerful artwork. It brought me to my second sub-question "How do artefacts become and remain active?"

Further, ANT is useful for the study of careers because its ontological approach makes us look different at career actors and career action: career action is distributed and located in a heterogeneous network and is a temporal effect. ANT is useful for the study of careers because it offers a "list of terms" to understand career processes such as translation, actor-network, actor-enacted, immutable mobile, and object multiple. ANT is useful for the study of careers because of its archival and ethnographic methods: shadowing in documents and in real-time. And last, it is useful because of its accounts which deliberately foreground the agency of non-human actors, and which offer a lot of details. The examples in the accounts are theoretically motivated choices.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCESS

> Legitimate knowledge can only be written in small stories or modest narratives, mindful of their locality in space and time and capable of disappearing as needed (Calas & Smircich, 1999:664).
>
> [we need]…methods capable of making versions of the real that distribute agency more generously and less parsimoniously, allocating it in a manner that is less dualist, less prone to treating the natural as passive, reacted upon, brute. …methods that were slow, uncertain, that stuttered to the stop, the attention to the process (Law, 2004a:151).

A method chapter aims to guide the reader from the research questions to a paradigm or perspective, to the empirical world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), or to the logic in the methods which ties together the research question, data collection, analysis, and theoretical contribution. It shares the "trail of evidence" (Bansal & Corley, 2011:236). The literature chapter situated the research questions in ongoing conversations in career research and beyond and concluded with a formulation of the key research question "What role do artefacts play in career making?" and the first sub-question "How does an artefact act?". The previous chapter presented the theoretical lens through which I will explore the empirical material: it discussed the ontology, the concepts, and the methods of Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) that I used for the description, analysis, and interpretation of that material. The key question in ANT writings brought me to the second research questions: "How does an artefact become and remain active?" and "What is the relationship between the artefact and its maker in the process of career making?". It is one of the aims of the thesis to evaluate the usefulness of that approach for career research. This chapter will discuss the research design and process of the study.

As I want to understand "how and why" artworks shape artistic careers, and how this process is "situated", qualitative research and more specifically ethnography seems appropriate. Ethnography enables researchers to "be there" and come back with a microscopic level analysis, fine-grained observational, conversational, and/or documentary details (Yanow, 2006). An artefact was the unit of analysis or the focal point from which other actors within the art world, such as artists, collectors, critics, artworks, and spaces were approached.

The research design and process were entangled. A lot changed along the way as I will explain in this chapter. One of the most radical changes was that I left out the artwork *In Flanders Fields (1999-2000) (IFF)*, for which I designed a "genealogical approach" (Latour, 1987; Mukerji, 2007) and for which I gathered all the material. I consoled myself hoping to write papers on it in the future.

This chapter starts with the research design as it was devised in the spring of 2015. It justifies the choices that were made. The second section discusses the research process as it evolved since the first contacts with the sample in the summer 2015 until the writing up of the research in 2019 and covers issues such as access, making data, describing, analysing and interpreting data, and writing up.

4.1. RESEARCH DESIGN: SHADOWING AN ARTWORK

4.1.1. AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY

My study aims to understand how artworks make artistic careers. This is a process-oriented and context-dependent, qualitative study. Qualitative research is great for addressing "how" questions - rather than "how many"; for understanding the world from the perspective of those studied (i.e. informants); and for examining and articulating processes (Pratt, 2009). It follows a theoretical rather than a statistical logic; it generates theories, rather than empirical generalisations (Silverman, 2010). It generates new accounts or explanations out of rich data, rather than test existing theories (Richards, 2015). Whereas quantitative case studies aim to explain and control complex phenomena, qualitative case studies aim to understand them. Qualitative data are messy, and records are not easily reducible immediately (or perhaps ever) to numbers. If we want to understand numbers and relations between numbers, we need to understand the socially constructed reality. We need inductive research; we need the understanding of participants in their words. One type of qualitative research is ethnography.

4.1.1.1. Ethnography

Ethnography has been defined as a method or fieldwork activity (a way of doing), as a paradigm (a way of thinking) and as a narrative (a way of writing) (Bate, 1997). Ethnography is about understanding the rules of the game of a particular group of

people and looks particularly at meanings and actions, rituals, customs and symbols, and structures and processes within that group (Rosen, 1991; Waring, 2013). Ethnographers learn something in a very natural way. Just as in daily life they participate, observe, ask about and read to understand. In research on the contrary, interviews and focus groups are dominant (Richards, 2015). Ethnographers spend a long time in a "natural" environment and gather naturally occurring data, rather than manufactured data (Silverman, 2010, 2013). As a method ethnography is primarily based on direct observation, and uses conversations, interviews and documents as ancillary sources of information (Gobo, 2011). Ethnographies are not just narratives. They are not about creating evocative descriptions of personal experience (one's own or others'); they are about the "analysis of social action and social organisation" (Atkinson, 2014:7).

Ethnographies are used to study complex social issues, that are context-dependent and process-oriented and not clearly understood (Angrosino, 2007). Careers are such issues: researchers need to look at the relations of which they are part, the contexts in which they are located, the practices that construct them socially, and the other actors that cross their trajectories. Ethnographies can engage with messy, complex, and chaotic organisational forms (Law, 2004a).

ANT is well known for its ethnographies of science (Callon, 1984; Latour & Woolgar, 1979/1986; Law, 1994) in which they study the "tribe of scientists". This tribe is not vastly different from any other tribe.

> Scientists have culture. They have beliefs. They have practices. They work, they gossip, and they worry about the future. And, somehow or other, out of their work, their practices and their beliefs, they produce knowledge, scientific knowledge, accounts of reality (Latour & Woolgar, 1979/1986:17).

The same goes for people who produce art (Adler, 1979; Atkinson, 2006; Becker, 1982/2008; Rosen, 1985).

Organisational ethnography has its origins in anthropology and sociology (Bate, 1997; Bruni, 2005; Neyland, 2007; Rosen, 1991). Both disciplines brought their strengths into this new research domain: anthropology its historical, contextual, processual and actor-centred methodology (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992), sociology its urban-industrial topics. Most organisational ethnographical studies focus on people and the

collective creation of meaning, drawing on constructivism and interactionist traditions in sociology (Atkinson, 2006; Fine, 2004; Korczynski, 2011; Orr, 1996). Since the 2000s ethnography has grown exponentially and has received a fashionable status (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This growth is related to the diffusion of postmodernist and critical perspectives in organisation studies (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Linstead, 1993).

(Organisational) ethnography has changed tack the last decades in three ways: the degree of the researcher's participation has fallen, sites have been extended, and attention to objects has increased. A "mobile ethnography" (Marcus, 1995; Neyland, 2007) follows people, things, metaphors, plots, stories, or allegories, lives or biographies, and conflicts and can be done both in a pre-planned or opportunistic way. The "mobile ethnographer" needs to take on multiple roles (Fine, 2004) and needs to renegotiate identities in different sites as one learn more about a slice of the world system rather than a detached anthropological scholar.

Bate (1997) summarised the qualities of good ethnography in his review of organisational ethnography: it has a "being there" quality, it evidences the mundanity and everydayness, it provides the polyphony and rich description and has a point and punch line. I hope the ethnography in the next chapters will embrace these qualities.

4.1.1.2. Case study

Case studies have been used in qualitative as well as in quantitative research and are currently the most common framing in studies employing mixed methods. Case studies are the preferred strategy when "how" or "why" questions are being posed when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context (Yin, 1994/2014). Case studies rely on interviewing, observing, and document analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

A case study is not as much a methodology, rather a selection, framing or "casing" (Ragin, 1992) of what one is going to study (Flyvbjerg, 2006). A case is always a "case of" and thus a claim: "Cases are always hypotheses" (White, 1992:122). A case is a research operation constructed by the researcher and not an easy thing to do (Ragin, 1992).

I conducted an in-depth single case study which is an appropriate approach for inductive refinement of existing theories in areas where there are gaps, contradictions or apparent inconsistencies (Austin, Hjorth, & Hessel, 2018).

Out of the many typologies of cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Ragin, 1992; Stake, 2005; Thomas, 2011; Yin, 1994/2014), I use Ragin's and Thomas' typology to introduce the case of this study. Ragin (1992) based his typology on two dimensions: "empirical unit or theoretical construct" and "specific or general phenomena". This results in four types of cases: cases as found (empirical and specific), as made (theoretical and specific), as objects (empirical and general) or as conventions (theoretical and general). I "cased" my study as conventional: an artwork is a theoretical construct and a general phenomenon; as a case, it was not unique. I entered the field with this taken-for-granted framing, but from the very first conversation with the artist, as will become clear later, I realised that the artwork was not that conventional as I thought and that it was as much made in the course of the research.

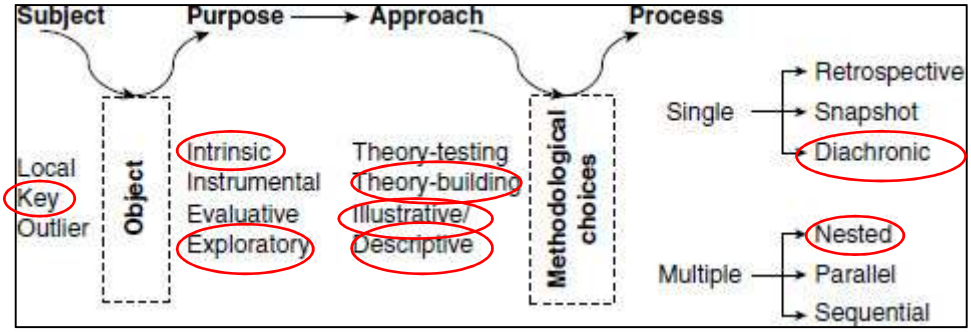


Figure 4.1 Case study as a trajectory (Thomas, 2011)

Thomas' (2011) typology presents a case study as a trajectory in the course of which choices need to be made (Fig. 4.1.). First, the subject of my case was key, not local or deviant, and thus provided "exemplary knowledge" (Thomas, 2010). Second, the case has an intrinsic and explorative purpose, not an instrumental or evaluative one. It is a novel approach in career studies leading to new empirical material, a new methodological approach, and new insights. Third, the approach of the case contributes in an illustrative and descriptive way and to theory-building, not to theory-testing. And fourth, the process of the case study was a single and diachronic, possibly expandable to a multiple nested case study – not a retrospective or snapshot single case study, nor a parallel or sequential multiple case study.

Qualitative case studies are grounded in theory and aim to contribute to theory. It has been argued that case studies are "likely to produce the best theory" (Walton, 1992:129).

> Research involving case data can usually get much closer to theoretical constructs and provide a much more persuasive argument about causal forces than broad empirical research can. [...] One needs to convince the reader that the conceptual argument is plausible and use the case as additional (but not sole) justification for one's argument (Siggelkow, 2007:22-23).

Case studies are useful because they motivate research questions by demonstrating in a real-life situation why it is important to answer the questions; they inspire to novel ideas by letting theory emerge from the data; they are illustrations of theoretical constructs or processes. This is what my case study does. It motivates why it is important to investigate an artwork as career actor; it gives new insights such as material career; it illustrates how networks impact careers. It is an exploratory case grounded in a theoretical question: what role do artefacts play in career making?.

The empirical setting for this investigation is the contemporary visual arts field. This setting is particularly interesting because the production, distribution and consumption of artefacts is central to this field. Therefore, it seems evident for examining how artefacts come into being and how people and networks are involved in that process. Additionally, it is a relevant setting because visual artists, like other creative workers, are dependent for future work on how others value their work (Eikhof, 2013; Jones, 1996; McLeod et al., 2011).

The sampling of the case study was theoretically driven or grounded in theory: an artwork of the Belgian artist Berlinde De Bruyckere (BDB). It was a snowball sample (Gobo, 2008; Silverman, 2010): I first selected an artist - a mid-career artist, then an artwork, and then more people, more artworks, more events, more spaces, and more artefacts. Additionally to snowball sampling, it was an "opportunistic" sampling (Riemer (1977) mentioned in Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007:20)): I selected what was easily accessible. Sampling in ethnographic inquiry is not necessarily performed on just one occasion: it is an interactive (i.e. reacts upon incidents as and when they arise), iterative (i.e. repeated) and progressive process (i.e. the appropriateness of the incidents is revealed as the research proceeds) (Gobo, 2008).

4.1.2. AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY OF AN ARTEFACT

The unit of analysis of this study is an artwork. Whereas such a focus is common in disciplines such as art history, anthropology, and archaeology, it is less in organisation studies and is non-existent in career studies. I put the artefact front and centre in my research.

Bechky (2008) argued that theories of organizing would be greatly enriched by adopting the study of artefacts as an analytic method or a lens. Object-centred methods, developed within Science and Technology Studies (STS) (Latour, 1987; Law, 1986; Star, 1999), are beneficial for organisation studies and career studies for three reasons. First, they elicit better stories due to their situatedness and lived properties (Rowsell, 2011) – people like to talk about 'their' objects and do it easily. Second, they make it possible to go beyond language, which still is the dominant analytical approach. Material reality is the vehicle through which ineffable or tacit knowledge - which generally escapes the control of the mind – is communicated (Gagliardi, 1997). Third, they make it possible to align with a turn in sociology towards micro-sociology, micro-ethnography, and small-group practice (Acord, 2010).

Social scientists spend too little time on objects and too much time on humans, misled by the fact that humans can talk, and can, therefore be spokespersons even for networks composed primarily of non-humans (Czarniawska, 2014a). Centring artefacts decentres human actors from the heart of social analysis, but does not exclude humans and thus intention, meaning, social relations, skills, and behaviour. Artefacts also include texts and discourses, but not in a way that focus on linguistic, intertextual, and cultural circulations that preoccupy post-structural analyses. Object-centred methods lead to a shift away from meaning (hermeneutic, narrative and interactionist approaches) and a shift away from objects as traces of something assumed to be "culture" as in conventional anthropological accounts (Fenwick, 2010). The material lens can be as an additional component of the other lenses such as discursive or psychological lenses, but it can also stand on its own. I used the lens on its own and focused on the practical mediatory role of artworks in career processes.

4.1.2.1. Object-centred methods

Putting artefacts front and centre in research needs other methods: object-centred methods. Below I discuss the methods that I used in this study: shadowing, artefact tales and artefact biographies.

Shadowing is one of the means of doing "multi-site ethnography" (Marcus, 1995). The "mobile ethnographer" moves through and between multiple field-sites. Shadowing is studying the actor's interactions in real-time while keeping an eye open to the past and future. Following objects has been a tradition in STS (Callon, 1984; Woolgar et al., 2009) and has been recently introduced in studies of cultural production (Acord, 2010; Rubio, 2012; Rubio & Silva, 2013; Yaneva, 2003a, 2003b). Scientific and artistic objects were followed in everyday practices, from one controversy to another, resulting in a fine-grained and lively picture of how these objects are constantly redone, and "become". Bruni (2005) was the first to follow an organisational object. He drew on Star's (1999) "ethnography of infrastructure" and "shadowed" (Czarniawska, 2007, 2014b; Sachs, 1993) a digital clinical record system in a hospital. He analysed the relational game in which that record system was involved. I used shadowing because it reveals the relational game of *NLL I*.

Collecting "object narratives" (Humphries & Smith, 2014) or "artefact tales" (Bechky, 2008) is a second object-centred method. Artefacts can be more than evidence in narrative analysis, they have the power to produce narratives and play a role in organisational sensemaking (Humphries & Smith, 2014; Hurdley, 2007; Rowsell, 2011; Sheridan & Chamberlain, 2011). Object narratives can be collected through the object's materiality, practices and biography (Humphries & Smith, 2014). "Object materiality" (what does the physical constitution of objects say to us?) can highlight the significant networks of forces, materials, and people – and therefore episodes and actors – that engage with and through objects. "Object practices" elicit how humans define what stories objects can tell while objects reciprocally influence the latitude of human performance. "Object biography" (what is said through the life stories of objects?) provides a strategy to map the connections and transitions that occur over the life-course of an object, which can, in turn, unravel a changing web of organisational relations. The object's materiality, practices, and biographies interplay. In my fieldwork I gathered *NLL I*'s narratives through its materiality, practices, and biography because it enabled me to see NLL's role in career making.

The third object-centred method draws on Latour's (1987) methodology of "going upstream". Yaneva (2012) used it for explaining why an architecture project failed. She followed the controversies unfolding in time and space and mapped the debates that buildings triggered. In my study, I went upstream to understand how an artwork became and remained powerful for career making.

Object-centred methods are beneficial for understanding the role of artefacts in career making because they elicit better stories, give access to non-cognitive domains, and enable minutely accounts.

In sum, the research design of the present study is an ethnographic single case study of an artwork. It is an ethnography characterised as a historical, contextual, processual and actor-centred study (Bate, 1997) with one single artwork as the unit of analysis. It is an in-depth single case study of a key case, with an intrinsic and explorative purpose, an illustrative and descriptive approach contributing to theory, and a single diachronic case study (Thomas, 2011).

4.2. RESEARCH PROCESS

The design process was iterative, progressive, and interactive. It did not proceed in a straight line, but in a series of loops, because each step led me to reflect upon, and even revisit, earlier steps.

It was an iterative process in which I combined literature, data, and personal experiences in the field of visual arts. A researcher does not enter the field with an open mind (or rather an empty mind), she enters with a mind full of literature and experiences. It was the literature that gave depth to the data collection and analysis and provided the foundation on which a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) was built. Theory functioned both as a lens and as a filter during data collection and analysis. However, additionally, I needed to learn or know the language of the field: a strong familiarity with the basic definitions, techniques, and measurements helped me not only in gaining access, credibility and common ground for discussion but also in understanding concerns, motivations and actions (Rosen, 1991). The data offered a microscopic richness to the literature. My experiences as an art professional, my readings of art, and my visits to art exhibitions surely influenced my entrance and stay in the field.

It was a progressive process because I gradually came to understand what happened and developed insights into why it was happening. Mol's (2002) ontology of the body multiple only gradually became more seminal in my understanding as I struggled to make sense of the process of career making with the metaphors of ANT. It is difficult to fully account for this iterative, reflexive process between reading, field studies and analysing, as I can simply not sort out the "order of things" in the research process.

It was an interactive process because it was an ongoing dialogue between the literature, the participants, my supervisors, and me. I was open to suggestions and often changed tack. As a participant observer, I was an inevitable part of what I was studying.

This section makes the research process transparent (Bansal & Corley, 2011). It is reflexive about how the methods, researcher, research community and society impact what goes into the research and what is represented. It then discusses access to the field, the generation of material, the analysis of the generated material and writing about the material.

4.2.1. BEING A REFLEXIVE ETHNOGRAPHER

ANT has a long tradition of producing radical reflexive ethnographies (Neyland, 2007; Woolgar et al., 2009). For instance, Latour and Woolgar (1979/1986) engaged in a thorough and detailed analysis of the ethnographer's attempts to make sense of the world while those being studied are making sense of their world. Instead of an assumption that the world exists outside the ethnography, the world is made apparent and rendered available through ethnography (and also the reader plays a role).

As Agar (1980/1996) already stated, you never go into the field as a passive recorder of objective data. Some of the selections may be consciously made, others are forced by the weight of the personal and professional background that you bring to the field. Since the "reflexive turn" in organisation studies (Weick, 1999), researchers are explicitly reflexive, especially when conducting ethnographic studies. Instead of trying to erase the effects of the researcher completely, we should set about understanding them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This section is about how this study is affected by the methods used, the researcher, the research community and society.

Researchers can be reflexive on four levels (Hardy et al., 2001; Holland, 1999): the used methods, the researcher, the research community, and the interaction with the

world outside the research community. The four levels impact what goes into the research (data collection and reduction) and what will be represented (data representation). The first two levels of reflexivity are based on the idea that there is one world "out there" (ontology) and that every researcher has a specific access to a specific knowledge (epistemology). It is assumed that the researcher's bias should be eliminated or at least made explicit so that the readers of the study can decouple the data from the interpretation.

Methodological reflexivity takes methods for granted and neglects that methods are productive. Methods are performative because "they have effects; they make differences; they enact realities; and they can help to bring into being what they also discover" (Law & Urry, 2004:392). I did the research as a "reflexive pragmatist" (Alvesson, 2003) and used different angles and let talk the "object multiple". The shadowing, the interviews, the pictures, and the documents produced the account of one artwork that was made visible to the researcher during a couple of hours during a couple of months. It simultaneously silenced most hours during that same period.

The second level of reflexivity focuses on the researcher as an instrument and aims to be as explicit as possible about the researcher's "habitus" (Johnson & Duberley, 2003; Pezalla, Pettigrew, & Miller-Day, 2012). This type of reflexivity needs to be done with care. Only "if that attention is instrumental to spotting excluded voices and if it serves as a data platform for thinking more deeply" about certain topics, it makes better theory (Weick, 1999:803). If not, it is nothing than a narcissist activity which is also boring for the reader.

I entered the field as a 52-year old lecturer from LUCA Ghent (Leuven University College of Arts) living in Antwerp and doing theoretical research at the University of Nottingham. I had a long and diverse career and therefore knew a lot about artists and their careers. In the studio, I worked as a temporary archivist. Compared to the artists by whom I was surrounded, I had a theoretical background (I have degrees in art history, pedagogy, MBA) and organisational and educational experiences in the field. I took on multiple roles and thus spoke different languages. How will these changes in roles and languages be perceived by the participants, and how will they affect the research? Will I be able to be explicit and reflexive about it? My initial plan was to make an account of the experiences and tensions of my position as "marginal native",

first after two months in the field, and then again after the visit to New York, but I never did.

The third level of reflexivity focuses on the research community as a whole. To receive a PhD at the Business School in Nottingham, to present at conferences, and to publish in journals, I had to construct artworks as research subjects within career studies. That construction was not easy. First, because I had to make myself familiar with that community. I needed academic training, I needed supervision, and I needed to pass a viva voce to be able to master the writing conventions and make theoretical contributions. Whenever I was outside that community, I realised that the research community had its own rules unknown and unloved in other communities. Second, that community needed to be convinced of my argument grounded in the literature and evidenced with findings. To keep my much-appreciated supervisor, I needed to contribute to career studies and thus produce the artwork as an interesting research subject for career studies. I also needed to reduce a lot: I left out a second artwork (*IFF)*, I left out a lot of details because for the strength of the argument (and thus silenced voices that did not support the argument).

The fourth level of reflexivity takes the social consequences of research into consideration. Research can shape the climate in which political and practical decisions are made, and it may even directly stimulate particular sorts of action and change the character of the situations that were studied (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). I will come back to this in chapter 9 when I talk about the practical implications of this research.

4.2.2. GETTING IN, GETTING ON AND GETTING OUT OF THE FIELD

4.2.2.1. Getting in: access to the field

During the summer of 2015, I made a list of 10 artists I wanted to approach for my research. They were all Belgian distinguished mid-career visual artists, and I planned to investigate an early work that created a breakthrough and a present work that had to be launched. By the end of August, I sent an email to number one on my list, Berlinde De Bruyckere (BDB). The email provided a brief description of the research project and an offer to do some administration or other work in return for the research (personal correspondence, email, 27 August 2015; see appendix 2). I got the idea from

some classic ethnographies I read that summer, in which for instance Whyte was the driver for the key informant in the ghetto (Simpson, 1981; Whyte, 1943/1993; Wolcott, 1973/2003; Zorbaugh, 1929/1976).

I did not get an answer and sent a reminder two weeks later. The studio manager answered promptly that they did not have time yet to discuss it, that is was not a typical question and that the workshop was busy. I lost faith and sent another email to number two on my list, Hans Op de Beeck (personal correspondence, email 10 September 2015). Hans Op de Beeck never answered.

Advised by my supervisors I called BDB's studio. I got the number thanks to a friend who had been appointed by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Ghent (SMAK) as liaison for BDB's exhibition in the Venice Biennale in 2013. My friend assured me that if BDB would be interested, I would know it soon. I spoke the studio manager who said that they were considering my request and offer and that it could be a win-win situation. It was a busy period and as BDB was not in the country, she had not been in the position yet to discuss it with her. Finally, on the 12th of October, I got the answer that she – the manager – was happy to meet me two days later and that BDB would join us at the end of the meeting after her meeting with a camera crew. They had not yet discussed it, but they might need an archivist. On the 14th of October, it so happened that the camera crew had already left and that BDB was available from the start and met me all by herself. I was overwhelmed and euphoric by that first conversation. BDB was thoughtful and sensitive. I felt trust, that we were on the same wavelength and that there was no fuss between us. In my field notes of that day I wrote:

> It's a nice conversation and she immediately challenges me with the concept of "artwork". Today she rather works for a space, and work is made in dialogue with it. So the classical concept may no longer be applicable. It is a dialogue with the space. She talks about the exhibition she is working on (opening 28/1/16 in New York) and shows me the exhibition plan. The show will feature a group of works, old and new works, and re-created works. We agree that for the time being, I will follow the whole show and not just one work from it.

After the meeting, BDB gave me a guided tour through the studio and the workshop. The studio is housed in an old school. We decided that I would start working as an archivist on the 19th of October and that I would come on Mondays and Tuesdays, the days her artistic assistants were there too. For six months on a rhythm of 2 days a week,

I went in and out of the field and combined my fieldwork with teaching art students in LUCA School of Arts.

The negotiations for access proceeded smoothly (only six weeks!). I realised I was lucky to have my number one on the list and that the first meeting was so promising. Further access in the field was provided by BDB. She made me a list of relevant people to interview, she gave me access to her archive, and to all the spaces in the studio, she allowed me to attend meetings and she initiated the negotiations for access to the gallery.

4.2.2.2. Getting on: being in the field (October 2015 - June 2016)

As a participant observer I was part of what I was studying. That double role was always in conflict. "This is not something requiting apology and it is certainly not in your power to rectify. It is not bad (or good) for your project, just central to it" (Richards, 2015:53). I could manipulate what happened or not, but if I did, it had to be done reflexively. One of the most difficult things for an ethnographer is to find a balance between being an insider to find out what is going on in the organisation and being an outsider to produce an ethnographic analysis.

As the temporary archivist, I was allocated a place in a room on the first floor. A shelf on trestles was my temporary desk in between two oak cabinets, one containing the archive of BDB, the other the archive of her husband, the artist Peter Buggenhout. I classified pictures, press articles, magazines and books that waited for filing since her return from Venice in 2013. I was often in that room and had access to the archives. It was a good job to enter and get familiar with the setting. It was also how I was presented to others. After the job was done, I started to collect all the material on the old work that I followed, *IFF*. It was a place where I could retreat to complement my fieldnotes, and where I could gather archival documents for *IFF*. At the beginning of the fieldwork, my working days were often short due to previously planned arrangements. But from November on I was a part-time archivist.

Fortunately, I regularly could step out of the organisation. The job as archivist made it possible to retreat in my room on the first floor, as well as my daily trips on the train back home and the days I was not in the field. Then I could reflect on who the

participants were, what they were doing and how to successfully cultivate a participant identity.

Being an archivist provides another advantage for an ethnographer. It is a role associated with documents and with note-taking. Wolcott (1994) recommends "constant note-taking" from the start, so that people see it as normal independent of that what is said. It made it less strange that I was there looking at them, asking them silly questions, making notes, and taking pictures. In the beginning, I could play the role of "acceptable incompetent" like the detective Colombo (Lofland (1971) in Neyland, 2007), but after a while, that was not possible anymore. Following Latour's (2005) advice, I entered the field with four notebooks in four different colours: a yellow logbook to register what I saw, heard, smelled and felt; a red one to be reflexive; a green one with writing trials which I finally left empty; a blue one as a filing box with terms and analytical concepts and thoughts such as "making exhibitions", "group exhibitions", "Hauser & Wirth Gallery". In the end, I only used the yellow notebook for the whole period of fieldwork, and it was in that notebook that I wrote all my notes.

I observed in two places: the studio in Ghent and the gallery in New York. My hope to end with observation in a collection was dashed. In the studio, days were structured by morning and afternoon coffee and lunch breaks which I tried to join. Once "in" the organisation, I asked whether I was where the action was taking place, where else the action might be taking place, whether there were other places where the action was taking place.

The studio manager was both an important gatekeeper and an important informant. She was the gatekeeper to BDB, to *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) (NLL I)* and to other people and spaces important for my research. That was already clear from the first negotiations for access: I first had to pass her which is a formal way to enter an organisation. She also was an important informant. BDB was often abroad, so she was my main point of contact. She made me feel welcome. She gave me the materials and space to do my job as an archivist. She was my teacher in the field and I "the informant's apprentice" (Agar, 1980/1996): she gave history about people, explained why things happened the way they did, and why some actions were important and others not. All these things I noted in my fieldnotes. Did this dominant perspective on the case silence other perspectives? To avoid leaving a single voice from the field as

the arbiter of "truth" (Van Maanen (1979) in Neyland, 2007), it was important to take initiatives independent from the gatekeeper and speak people independent from her.

I consider myself as a "marginal native" (Freilich, 1970): "native" because I have been working professionally in art education and art mediation for more than 25 years and made sculptures as an amateur; "marginal" because I'm not a professional artist myself. This ambiguous position was beneficial for accessing the field (Bruni, 2006) and for being familiar with the field, but probably also caused some prejudices. Other descriptions of this ambiguous position are "migrant" (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992), "professional stranger" and "the informant's apprentice" (Agar, 1980/1996).

"Becoming native" or "going native" is a risk when being for a long time in the field. It happens when a researcher loses ethnographic distance and loses the sense of doing an ethnographic investigation. As Gagliardi (1990:31) says:

> […] a long stay in the setting hampers rather than fosters the capacity for reflection: the researchers – like the newcomers – adapt rapidly to the perceptual context so as to reduces the sensory overload, to harmonise with the physical setting and to give themselves over to what they best control – the relationship between their mind and the organisation as a "body of thought".

So I had to cherish my marginality to the field by actively being reflexive and working harder to treat aspects of the setting as strange, and to take nothing for granted (Neyland, 2007). I had to live with the paradox of "detached involvement" (Agar, 1980/1996) and not become a friend because I was there to conduct research.

4.2.2.3. Getting out: leaving the field

Time was an important issue in the study. I followed an artwork while it was produced, distributed, and consumed. I entered the field while it was in production in Ghent, I followed it to the gallery in New York and I hoped to follow it to its final destination with a new owner. For the studio, the duration of my stay was related to my work as an archivist and defined by the presence of the artwork and the number of available days a week due to my professional activities. My investigations for the old work ran in the background on spare moments in between.

After a first period of observation (between October 2015 and April 2016), I returned to the field several times to conduct interviews with BDB and her husband or to finalise

the archival work. These returns allowed me to ask about the fate of *NLL I* and to further observe the activities in the studio.

I shadowed *NLL I* and when *NLL I* stopped moving, I stopped moving. My observations ended in April 2016 when the archival work was more or less done; I had the third and last interview with BDB in June 2016; I stopped reading documents in October 2017; I had the last conversations about *NLL I* in May 2018. "A good basic principle is that once the field site feels like home it is time to leave: fieldwork should be uncomfortable. Once it is feeling familiar, it is time to move on" (Delamont, 2007:214).

4.2.3. FIELDWORK: MAKING DATA (OCTOBER 2015 - JUNE 2016)

Between October 2015 and June 2016, I "assembled and handled material" to investigate (Mol, 2002:157). I made, rather than collected data. Reality is not out there depending on researchers to collect it, and data do not simply reveal reality. Data making is a process in which three sources are in dialogue: the literature, the researcher with her experience and the participants (Silverman, 2013). It is important to keep these three sources separated, but let them make a dialogue (Richards, 2015).

I used four sources – observations, interviews, documents, and pictures (Table 4.1) - in an integrative and complementary way, each of them for their strengths. Initially, I did not plan to use visuals in the analysis (rather as prompts to remember), but when starting the analysis I realised that the pictures as a whole showed what the eye of the mobile ethnographer had thought was relevant on the trajectory of the artwork. And that because of the profusion of material in the artist's studio, a second, a third or a fourth glance would add extra data. Sources such as pictures, field notes and documents were made and used in real-time, interviews in which people were asked about what happened or reflect on what happened were retrospective. Fieldnotes can make the static pictures more dynamic and give more context by adding the researcher's comments and observations, as well as those of other actors who the researcher involves.

I used an interview guide (Appendix 3), but not an observation guide nor a picture guide. For the observations and pictures, I followed Czarniawska's (2007, 2014b) advice and identified the actants around *NLL I* and their connections.

Table 4.1 Dataset - materials of the study

interviews (I)				
date	place	name	time	
20/01/2016	Ghent, Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere	Katrien Driessen, manager Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere	77,58	
5/02/2016	New York, Hauser & Wirth Gallery	Cristopher Canizares, Senior Director Hauser & Wirth	33,11	
5/02/2016	New York, Hauser & Wirth Gallery	Marc Payot, Vice President Hauser & Wirth	21,48	
29/02/2016	Ghent, private home parents	Leopold De Bruyckere and Walburga Van Laere, parents	73,55	
29/02/2016	Ghent, Workshop Guy Cuypers	Guy Cuypers, technical support	45,11	
3/03/2016	Ghent, Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere	Berlinde De Bruyckere, artist	99,27	
7/03/2016	Antwerp, private home, Flor Bex, home	Flor Bex, former director MUKHA	78,12	
15/03/2016	Ghent, Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere	Anna De Paepe and Karen Dumortier, assistants artist	73,35	
17/03/2016	Ghent, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine	Paul Simoens and Marjan Doom, staff Faculty of Veterinary Medicine	62,41	
23/03/2016	Zaventem, Office Mobull	Mario Festjens and Jeroen Staes, staff Mobull, transport	64,43	
29/03/2016	Ypres, Office Museum In Flanders Fields	Piet Chielens, Director In Flanders Fields Museum	76,31	
31/03/2016	Antwerp, MUKHA	Lisa Van Gerven, collection management MUKHA	45,13	
31/03/2016	Ghent, Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere	Mirjam Devriendt, photographer	95,58	
12/04/2016	Nottingham, University, skype and phone call	Sylvia Bandi, project coordinator Hauser & Wirth	62,24	
27/05/2016	Ghent, Private home Berlinde De Bruyckere	Peter Buggenhout, artist and husband Berlinde De Bruyckere	68,47	
8/06/2016	Ghent, Private home Berlinde De Bruyckere	Berlinde De Bruyckere, artist	72,24	
27/06/2016	Ghent, Private home Berlinde De Bruyckere	Berlinde De Bruyckere, artist	119,04	

Total minutes			1167,42	
Total hours			19,457	
Total hours with artist			4,8425	
observations (O)				
date	place		hours	
19/10/15 - 20/1/16	Ghent, Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere	During production *NLL I*	149	22 days
25/1 - 5/2/16	New York, Hauser & Wirth	During distribution *NLL I*	43,5	6 days
23/2 - 4/4/16	Ghent, Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere		50	6 days
total			242,5	34 days
pictures (P)				
date	place			
19/10/15 - 20/1/16	Ghent, Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere			
25/1 - 5/2/16	New York, Hauser & Wirth			
23/2 - 4/4/16	Ghent, Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere			
total			500	
documents (D)				
	information Sheet			
	Press Release			
	Leaflet Dance Performance			

Data records are central to research. Once you start making records, you have started analysis – and irrevocably affected the quality of the analysis – by naming it, describing it, sorting it, annotating it, writing about it in a memo, linking it to related data, store information about attributes of the case (Richards, 2015). It is the recording and storage of observations and conversations that makes research.

This section is about the first step – the assembling of diverse types of materials; the next sections will deal with data analysis and writing.

4.2.3.1. Observations, field conversations and pictures: observing and recording

Materials: 34 days of observation (243 hours), written up in fieldnotes, transcribed in 27.130 words and captured in 558 pictures (October 2015 - April 2016).

At first, I felt hesitant. It took me a couple of days before I started to observe, and even more to take notes and pictures while I was observing. I took notes in a notebook and pictures with my smartphone. I did it overtly, but in the background sitting on a chair against the wall (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Making notes on my laptop was not possible because the environment was full of wax and dust. The fieldnotes focused on naturally occurring, situated interactions of every day, and I was the instrument. The field notes were written accounts that filtered members' experiences and concerns through the person and perspectives of the ethnographer (Emerson et al., 1995).

The observations were translated four times. At my workspace in the studio, I elaborated the jottings during the day; on the train on my way back home, I further complemented them with more details, comments, and interpretations. I didn't write full fieldnotes until I was away from the field and back in Nottingham for a month (April 2016). There, on evenings, far away from other obligations and with a glass of wine, I transcribed the fieldnotes. I translated the jottings and headnotes from the yellow notebook with visual and olfactory traces from the field into a digital transcription of full notes with detailed and textured descriptions of actions, interactions, and conversations. It was a task of remembering, elaborating, filling in, and commenting. It was a sort of preliminary analysis of interaction because I had to decide what to include, what to leave out. This second translation resulted in 38 narratives of the days in the field (see for instance the excerpt of the day of the

encounter with BDB in the previous section). The descriptions of the days entailed dialogues, characters, sketches, and episodes. In addition, they were annotated with two types of analytic texts (Emerson et al., 1995): asides (in purple) or brief, reflective bits of analytic writing that succinctly clarify, explain, interpret, or raise questions about some specific happening or process described in the narrative, and personal commentaries (in green); and analytical memos (in red) or starting points for later analysis. These narratives are the fieldnotes I refer to in this thesis. Third, I selected and thus reduced what got into analysis by coding the fieldnotes in the qualitative data analysis computer software package NVIVO and writing analytic memos looking for and understanding sequence of moves and changes of meanings, patterns, differences, and similarities. Fourth, I selected what supported my argument in the dissertation and thus will be read by the reader of this dissertation.

The first three forms of the fieldnotes were never read by an audience. Only the fourth translation is available, and this is a very, very small percentage of what has been written during and after the observations.

During the observations, I took 500 pictures. They are another form of field notes. They preserve, store, or represent information.

> In this sense, photographs should be seen as analogous to code-sheets, the responses to interview schedules, ethnographic field notes, tape recordings of verbal interaction or any one of the numerous ways in which social researchers seek to capture data for subsequent analysis and investigation (Emmison, 2011:236).

Visuals capture the particular, local, personal and familiar while suggesting the bigger landscape beyond and challenging to draw the connection between the two. In this thesis, I used the pictures as supportive and illustrative to the text.

4.2.3.2. Interviews

Materials: 17 interviews (20 hours), tape-recorded and transcribed ad verbatim in original language (January - June 2016)

Researchers cannot be everywhere. I only shadowed for 243 hours (on 34 days) of the six months and as often the action happened elsewhere. Afterwards, people told me what happened, and how they experienced it. Researchers are for a large part dependent on what is told. Van Maanen (1979) made a difference between operational

and presentational data or what is done (behaviour) and what is said about what is done. As will become clear later in the thesis, I experienced that difference often in what I saw while observing people at work and then later when people told me afterwards about what they did.

The interview is the predominant method of social research, yet challenged by many because it does not offer direct access to the details of naturally occurring interaction nor to how people actually perform in a wide variety of daily activities (Alvesson, 2003; Atkinson, 2006; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Silverman, 2010, 2017). As a retrospective study, interviews are likely to offer inaccurate information (Silverman, 2010:192). It is difficult to find out what happened in the past by asking present-day respondents, not because they lie, but simply because we all view the past through the lens of the present. Therefore it is better to appreciate interviews as "narrated" realities, in which people present themselves (Atkinson, 2006; Goffman, 1978; Silverman, 2010, 2017) and this is important in a zeitgeist in which the production of selves and lives is significant (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997). This "biographical work" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) is situated and locally produced and thus depends on when and to whom it is done. Every interview will be different and thus will result in different data. Therefore Silverman (2010) suggested not regarding interviews as a major research tool in ethnography, but instead advised researchers to observe and record naturally occurring talk and interaction and use interviews to ask members about the specific use and meaning of specific local terms and phrases.

In a study of operatic careers, Atkinson (2006) reflected on the meaning of interviews for career studies. He considered interviews as performed identities, mediated, and framed by culturally shared forms and genres. "The notion of a career is a retrospective imposition here. It is a construct of either the analyst or the narrator." (Atkinson, 2006:164). "Careers" are not naturally unfolding sequences of events (Alvesson, 2003; Atkinson, 2006; Silverman, 2010). Careers are given shape and meaning retrospectively. The interview – whether for a researcher, mass media, or publicity purposes – is one key occasion on which a career is accomplished and a working life retold (Atkinson, 2006). Thus, rather than framing personal accounts of social experience as causing or motivating action, it should be framed as justifying or explaining it.

I asked BDB who she thought was important for the two artworks I set out to shadow. She made me a list of whom most granted me an interview (see Table 4.1 – dataset). I started the interviews in January after being three months in the field. For *IFF* I interviewed two museum directors, a museum registrar, two members of the staff of the veterinary faculty at Ghent University; for *NLL I* I interviewed three members of the staff of the gallery and two members of the staff of the carrier. For both artworks, I interviewed the photographer, assistants, technical support, the manager, the parents, and the husband. All the interviews, except those with the staff of the gallery, were conducted in Dutch and transcribed in Dutch. I only translated pieces into English when used in the dissertation. The interviews were taken in the work or private spaces of the interviewees. Four interviews were duo interviews (the assistants, the parents, staff of the veterinary faculty, and the staff of the carrier) and one was on the phone (skype with a bad internet connection in a seminar room at the university). I used an interview guide with open questions (see Appendix 3).

After each interview, I recorded my first impressions and general feelings in a research diary. For every interview, I made a note with comments on the process of the interview, which I considered while analysing the interviews. The transcription of the interview was done immediately after the interview so that I could ask for clarification in the next interviews.

Despite the limitations, interviews yield some benefits for my research. They are the most acceptable research tool for participants, and most people like to talk about their work to an interested outsider. It was simultaneously a good entry in a new setting or a confirmation of existing relationships. Additionally, I could ask about the decision process of the production and installation and the meaning of the artwork for different participants.

4.2.3.3. Documents

Materials: leaflets of the exhibition, press articles (assembled between January and April 2016)

The dominant perspective in researching documents in social research is as containers of content (Prior, 2011). Prior argued that the analysis of content is important, but that we also need to focus on how documents are assembled, how they are used and how

they can function in episodes of interaction. Prior focused on the processual and relational properties of the documents which provide them with power. He developed a framework to study documents in four modes: as a resource – what is "in" the document?; as a topic – how the document came into being (archaeological approach)?; in use – how the document is used as a resource by human actors for purposeful ends?; in action – how the document functions and impacts social interaction and organisation?. The last mode resonates with the concept of "immutable mobile" (Latour, 1987) that I discussed in the previous chapter.

> As agents documents have effects long after their human creators are dead and buried… And as agents, documents are always open to manipulation by others; as allies, as resources for further action, as opponents to be destroyed, or suppressed (Prior, 2011:94).

For Prior documents are broader than textual forms, they can also be photographs or artworks.

I used Prior's framework to analyse the documents included in this study. I did not use them to support or validate other data but regarded them as data in their own right or as "documentary realities" (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011). Like many contemporary social settings, the field of arts is self-documenting and thus a rich source for study. The studio produces, circulates, reads, stores, and uses two types of documents: record-keeping documents (mostly for internal use) and self-presentation documents (mostly for external use). The filing note of an artwork is an example of a record-keeping document. It gives a description and a photograph of the artwork and it travels between the administrations of the studio, gallery, and carrier (Picture 6.4 – Filing Note of *NLL I*). It is used for loans, for storage, for transport, for factoring, … The leaflets at the gallery are an example of the self-presentation documents and are a collaboration of the studio and gallery (Pictures 6.6 – 6.10 – Leaflets).

4.2.3.4. Ethics

Due to the intensity of ethnographic field relations, ethics can be particularly important (and difficult) for ethnographers (Ellen (1984) mentioned in Neyland, 2007). The University of Nottingham shares this concern and provides some guidelines. The research design was first submitted to and approved by the Nottingham University Business School Ethics Committee (see Appendix 4). In this section, I cover the ethics

of conducting such research: covering participant consent, privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality.

In private spaces where I observed overtly – the artist's studio and the gallery – I ensured participants' "informed consent" by giving them a "Brief Commentary Doctoral Research" (see Appendix 5). This covers information about keeping data securely locked away and protected. Transcripts and recordings were unavailable to anyone apart from myself. I used three different research information sheets (see Appendix 5): one for the artist, the maker of the artwork; one for people intimately involved with the artwork as the collector, the dealer, and the critic; one for the public (which was the same as the short introduction I used wherever I talked informally with people on the artwork's trajectory).

The data was not anonymised for the key actors, except when explicitly asked by the participant. Anonymity for a case study on an artwork moving in the art world is not advisable for several reasons. Most of the actors, and surely the artist and the critic, operate largely in the public domain which makes their work publicly available anyway. Anonymity would deprive the actors their context. Moreover, the "ego" or "persona" of the actors is an essential element in the art world. Finally, in a small world, as the art world is, anonymity cannot be guaranteed among the participants and the readers of the research. Additionally, the study did not collect confidential data nor deal with sensitive topics, the chances of harm for participants was minimal. For these reasons there was no need to keep data anonymous. With their consent, I even used the first names of people in the empirical chapters.

For participants in public spaces such as the gallery, participants remained anonymous. They happened to be there, they were not searched for or selected by the researcher. It is this group of participants that I observed covertly and/or approached and asked for their experiences informally. To contextualise the observations I mentioned the location, time and date of the visit, and age and gender as perceived by myself. In the gallery, the visitors were given a notice at the exit of the exhibition room saying that research was taking place and that if someone wanted more information, or wanted to opt-out, they could ask it at the reception. Then the receptionist could come and find me to give some more information or leave the data out. The consent was asked

afterwards in order not to influence behaviour. No one of the hundreds of visitors asked me to opt-out.

4.2.4. MINDWORK: UNDERSTANDING DATA (APRIL 2016 - DECEMBER 2018)

> You learn something ("collect data"), then you try to make sense of it ("analysis"), then you go back to see if the interpretation makes sense in light of the new experience ("collect more data"), then you refine your interpretation ("more analysis"), and so on. The process is dialectic, not linear (Agar (1996:562) in Wolcott, 2009).

Simultaneously with making the data, I started to analyse them. Data analysis was an iterative process of reading the materials, coding the materials, re-reading the materials and the literature, re-coding and so on. Following two artworks resulted in a huge amount of data, much of which I needed to get rid of. For Wolcott (1994) the two most critical tasks of the qualitative researcher are data reduction and data analysis. Later, he argued that the real "work" of a qualitative research lies in mindwork, not in fieldwork (Wolcott, 2009). Understanding is a constant movement between data and ideas (registered in notes). This section is about my mindwork and discusses how I coded, described, analysed, and interpreted the data.

4.2.4.1. Coding the data (2016 - 2017)

Coding facilitates the de-construction and re-construction of data. It facilitates thinking. I processed and reduced the data by coding them. I imported the transcriptions of the interviews and the fieldnotes and a selection of documents and photographs in NVIVO. This software enables the researcher to connect a web of data, keep track of emerging ideas and stimulates reflexion by revising codes and making notes. I focused on actions and processes rather than on themes and structures (Charmaz, 2011) and coded them with gerunds, as "sharing a story", "making documents", and "installing" (Saldaña, 2016). Besides this analytical "process coding" or "action coding", I used descriptive codes for organising, remembering, and systematizing the data. I used the codes to reduce the materials, to classify them by giving extracts a name, to sort and classify them. NVIVO made it possible to play with the materials and to read and re-read the material from all kinds of angles. Coding is a tool to control that process and to make it visible to oneself and others. It makes the world observable and reportable.

My frequent play with these codes resulted in memos on recurrent patterns and critical dimensions. I went from open to focused coding, from documents to categories, and from categories to themes and aggregate dimensions (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013). Finally, this play made it possible to write a first descriptive chapter.

St. Pierre (2011:622) critiqued coding in qualitative research as a positivist practice and argued that "we teach coding because we don't know how to teach thinking". NVIVO treats words as "brute, uninterpreted data rather than as already interpreted words we must explain" (St. Pierre, 2011:621). I struggled a lot with that issue in 2016-2017: for the first time in my life, I had to think about what thinking is and how thinking could be generated. It was Wolcott (1994, 2009) and Richards (2015) who showed me how to do it. In the end, it was not the coding, but rather the reading and re-reading of the data, the reading of others' papers, presenting early findings on seminars, an annual review, conferences in the spring and summer of 2017, and the writing of empirical chapters for my supervisors, that made me think.

Qualitative research transforms data in three stages: it describes, it analyses and it interprets data (Wolcott, 1994). First, I focused on what was going on (i.e. data description). Second, I searched for themes and patterns and how things worked (i.e. data analysis). Third, I addressed processual questions of meanings and contexts and what it all meant (i.e. data interpretation). Every stage needs a different attitude from the researcher: the first needs a researcher who is perceptive to details and meticulous in reporting; the second a researcher who is "cautious, controlled, structured, formal, bounded, scientific, systematic, logico-deductive, grounded, methodical, objective, particularistic, carefully documented, reductionist, and impassive"; the third a researcher who is "freewheeling, casual, unbounded, aesthetically satisfying, idealistic, generative, and impassioned" (Wolcott, 1994:12). Not all research contains the three parts in the same proportions. Wolcott (1994) described research as a teeter-totter with description as fulcrum, and a balance between analysis and interpretation. Whereas for Wolcott analysis is a good stopping place for doctoral students, the Nottingham University Business School asks them for a theoretical contribution. The next section shows how I transformed the data.

4.2.4.2. Describing the data (March 2017)

I made a storyboard based on the pictures and annotated it with excerpts from the field notes, interviews, and documents. Consistent with ANT, I decided to focus on the actors moving in time and space and on the interactions between the actors. The pictures structured these day-by-day ”thick descriptions” (Geertz, 1973) that described the artwork’s trajectory in time and space. These chronological case studies gave me some initial insights into the context of the production, transport and exhibition of an artwork, the actors involved and the critical dimensions of production, transport, and exhibition (Jarzabkowski, 2008; Maitlis, 2005; Stadtler & Van Wassenhove, 2016).

ANT writers (e.g. Latour, 1987, 2005) and others (e.g. Wolcott, 1994) emphasise the importance of descriptions for qualitative research and argue that many answers to questions can be found in rich descriptions of processes. Process writers grapple with the difficulty of finding the balance between description and analysis, or how to go beyond a thick (and thus long) description to end up with a powerful analytical text without losing essential details and processes that can explain how things became what they are now.

4.2.4.3. Analysing the data (April 2017 - December 2018)

My analysis was, in part, conducted through writing. Through organizing the writing and doing the writing of ethnography, much of the ethnographic analysis is completed (Neyland, 2007). It took me several rounds before I came up with the empirical chapters as presented in this thesis. Initially, I stayed close to ANT (Czarniawska, 2007; Czarniawska & Hernes, 2005b) and planned to write the three stories of the three trajectories of the key actors: the old work, the new work and BDB. I started with an important moment in the trajectory of *NLL I* – the gathering of actor-networks in New York. It resulted in timelines and maps (April 2017). The first empirical chapter was evaluated by my supervisors in April 2017. It was then that I was advised to abandon (or park) the old work because there would be too much material to deal with. The second draft focused on how *NLL I* acted and was enacted in the gallery in New York (November 2017). I reduced the scope of data to those related to the gallery show by using a strategy of “temporal bracketing” (Langley, 1999). I selected some critical days in the artwork’s trajectory. A third draft focused on the production of the artwork (February 2018). It was only in February 2018 that I changed track. After having

written an outline with a strong argument, I was able to write a chapter with a convincing analysis (December 2018).

That chapter was the result of three versions. The first version was based on four levels of data presentation: 1) a "pure" ANT analysis which lists associations between actants in a very detailed way, 2) a chronicle which puts in a chronological order what I had seen, heard, and smelled and which was registered in fieldnotes and pictures (first part of the excerpt in a box), 3) a zoom in, in which I re-organised the material in patterns (second part of the excerpt), 4) a zoom out, in which I searched for patterns that were found in the five processes but also which related the five processes to each other (third part of the excerpt). The second version re-shuffled the descriptive and commentary parts and mingled them. The third and last version is what you find in this thesis.

4.2.4.4. Interpreting the data (January 2019 - March 2019)

It was only in the final stage of analysis, that I was able to reach beyond what I could strictly derive from empirical findings and arrived at richer and more expansive theoretical conceptualisations.

4.2.4.5. Writing the data - textual construction

Ethnographies are textual constructions of reality (Atkinson, 1990). They are arguments that are constructed and conveyed with the help of literary and rhetorical conventions. For Latour, a good account is one that "traces a network". "A good ANT account is a narrative or a description or a proposition where all the actors *do something* and don't just sit there" (Latour, 2005:128). ANT accounts are reflexive narratives and not realist or processual ones. "The accounts of realities and the realities that they describe are produced together" (Law & Singleton, 2005:342). Czarniawska (2009) argued that Science and Technology Studies are much better written than Management and Organisation Studies. The writings of Latour, Mol and Law are almost literature. They are unique examples that inspire, but at the same time intimidate a doctoral student who only makes her first steps in academia.

The attention to empirical detail that is the signature of ANT-inspired studies demands textual space (Barinaga, 2017). A solution to the conflict between space and empirical attention is to shorten the period analysed and to write "vignettes" (Carlile, 2002) or

"snapshots" (Billaud, 2016). I used that strategy and focused for instance on the opening of the exhibition, the selection of what will be made and shown, and making documents. The choice of these moments in the process of becoming a powerful artwork was a theoretical choice.

What is important for the academic ethnographer might not be relevant for the organisation or vice versa. My ethnography is *of* an artwork and its allies (an organisation), not *for* the artwork and its allies (an organisation) (Neyland, 2007). I could translate it to become an ethnography for practitioners in the arts field but was initially, it was designed for a research audience, not for practitioners. It aims to contribute to career theory, to career methods and to extend career studies with a new empirical setting. This made it difficult for me to talk about my research when working and living in other settings.

4.3. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the design and the process of the present study. The study aims to understand how an artefact makes career. I designed a study that focused on a visual artist's career-in-the-making. I conducted an ethnography of a single artwork that I shadowed for six months. I made the research process transparent by talking about the access, about ethics, about making various data, about analysing data, and about writing data. I also discussed my work in a reflexive way, namely that the present dissertation is the result of a specific method, a specific researcher, a specific research community and a specific society in which the researcher and the research community live.

CHAPTER 5 ORGANIZING CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ARTS

The setting for this study is the world of contemporary visual arts. Velthuis (2015:1) defines contemporary art as "a privileged type of art made in the present, which is heavily institutionalised and which circulates in a specific organisational framework of contemporary art museums, biennals, art centers, art galleries, and the like, and which is made sense of by means of a specific art critical discourse constructed around terms like innovation, originality, transgression, and critique".

The setting of contemporary visual arts has been used in organisation studies to study innovation (Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016; Sgourev, 2013, 2015); entrepreneurship (DiMaggio, 1982); status and fame (Crane, 1987; Heinich, 2012; Lang & Lang, 1988); gatekeeping and mediators (Moulin, 1967, 1995); value creation (Moulin, 1994, 1995); and careers (Giuffre, 1999). Acord (2010) argued that it is also a good setting for investigating the active role of artefacts because art is both a knowledge society and expert setting, which, as (Acord, 2010) Knorr Cetina (1999) observed, are characterised by object-centred relations more than person-centred relationships.

I shadowed one artwork on its trajectory of production, distribution, and consumption. The artwork *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) (NLL I)* was made by Berlinde De Bruyckere (BDB) for a solo exhibition at Hauser & Wirth Gallery (H&W) in New York that opened on 28th of January 2016.

This chapter introduces the setting for the investigation and presents the key players in the research: the artwork *NLL I* and its maker BDB. It presents how contemporary visual arts is organised in the 2010s and specifically how it is organised for the sample (section 5.1.). Then, it focuses on the sample, the artwork *NLL I*, and introduces the spaces, the people, and the materials with which it is connected (section 5.2.).

5.1. ORGANISING CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ARTS IN THE 2010S

In organisation studies the visual arts have been conceptualised as a system (White & White, 1965/1993), an industry (Hirsch, 1972), a field (Bourdieu, 1983; Schüßler & Sydow, 2015) and a world (Becker, 1982/2008; Thornton, 2008/2009). All these

concepts emphasise the interdependency of various actors who produce, distribute, and consume artworks. The ultimate goal of the system is the survival and longevity of artworks which is done through getting them into museum collections. Museums provide legitimacy which offers a higher chance of survival. Therefore cultural producers struggle primarily for legitimacy rather than for-profit (Bourdieu, 1983). Organisation scholars often focus on one domain, as the market and consumption (Bourdieu, 1985; Moulin, 1967; Velthuis, 2005, 2011; Velthuis & Baia Curioni, 2015), participation (DiMaggio, 1982), production (Becker, 1982/2008; Bourdieu, 1983; Crane, 1987; DiMaggio & Hirsch, 1976; White & White, 1965/1993).

The world of visual arts has been ruled by peers, experts, and money. By the end of the 19th century a new system of production, distribution and consumption of paintings emerged (White & White, 1965/1993; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000). The dominant centralistic system of the French Academy ruled by peers was then replaced by a system ruled by experts driven by innovation. Previously, it had been the Academy who controlled the education, production, distribution, and consumption of artworks. From then on, the roles were divided amongst painters, dealers, and critics: the painters – impressionists – produced paintings, the critics provided the legitimation for the paintings and the dealers marketed the paintings. The dealer-critic system ruled the world of contemporary arts for more than a century (Moulin, 1967, 1994). It is argued that nowadays critics have disappeared from the system and have been replaced by collectors (Thompson, 2008; Velthuis, 2013) and that the system rather than be ruled by peers or experts, is now ruled by money alone (Thompson, 2008) or by a combination of money and experts (dealers and curators) (Velthuis, 2013). Contemporary visual art has evolved from an expert game, based on "connoisseurship" for which the breadth of knowledge was the prerequisite, to a money game.

Velthuis (2013) argued that the contemporary art world is simultaneously in flux and stasis: in flux, because of globalisation, commercialisation and financialisation; in stasis, because it still is local, experts still play a role, and it still remains an elitist market. As a result, multiple systems are at work together and simultaneously, and this makes of the contemporary art world a complex and adversarial world. This multiplicity is confirmed by others. For instance, Herman (2016) distinguished four different art worlds in contemporary visual art: the marketable art of international galleries; the policies of governments about public art; curated thematic exhibitions;

collection presentations of art institutions or museums. The subsidised and commercial worlds are highly interwoven. Thornton (2008/2009:xix) perceived the art world not as “a "system" or smooth-functioning machine, but rather a conflicted cluster of sub-cultures - each of which embrace different definitions of art”: an auction – art as investment and luxury good; an art school – art as an intellectual endeavour, lifestyle, and occupation; an art fair – art as fetish and leisure activity; the Turner Prize – art as museum attraction, media story, and evidence of the artist's worth; an art magazine – art as an excuse for words; an artist’s studio – art as all above; The Biennale in Venice – art as alibi for networking, an international curiosity and chief ingredient in a good show. An artist is rarely successful in all these sub-cultures or islands.

In the following sections, I discuss how the production, distribution, and consumption of visual arts in general, and specifically for BDB and *NLL I* were organised. *NLL I* was produced in the artist’s studio, was distributed by an art handler, carrier, and gallery, and was consumed by exhibition visitors and will hopefully be consumed by collectors.

5.1.1. Organizing the production

5.1.1.1. Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere

Artists’ studios can be small (the lone artist) or large (the artist with up to hundreds of members of staff). Artist Damien Hirst, for instance, employed 150 people in 2013 and 250 people at the height of the preparation of the auction in Sotheby’s (Thornton, 2015). BDB’s studio employed at the time of the study three people. Table 5.1 shows the division of labour in the Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere. As explained before, artists not only produce artworks, they often play multiple roles and have multiple jobs (Menger, 1999; Thornton, 2015). Artist Luc Tuymans, for instance, not only produces artworks but also curates exhibitions, publishes books, was president of an artist’s organisation and thus spokesperson for artists’ needs; artist Damien Hirst collects artworks.

Table 5.1 Job Titles and job description of people working for Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere, Hauser & Wirth Gallery, and MUKHA (Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp)

Job titles	Job descriptions
Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere	
Artist (Berlinde De Bruyckere)	Leader
Studio manager (Katrien)	Communication, administration, organisation "voice" of the artist (as mentioned in the interview)
Artistic assistants (Anna and Karen)	Prepare and finish new artworks Installation of artworks in exhibition spaces Restauration of older artworks "left and right hand" of the artist (as mentioned in the interview)
Technical assistant (Guy) – freelance	Production of moulds, strengthening of casts Installation of artworks in exhibition spaces
Photographer (Mirjam) – freelance	Exhibition views
Husband: artist Peter Buggenhout	Trust, companionship, critique
Hauser & Wirth Gallery	
Vice President (Marc)	
Senior Director (Cristopher)	Responsible for sales in the US
Project coordinator or "artist liaison" (Silvia)	production of works (material, financial issues) coordination of exhibitions (loans, transport, publications (photographs, texts, publishers) artist's archive
Technical staff	Art handling, art packing Installation of artworks in exhibition space
Registrar	Transport, storage, loans of artworks of represented artists
MUKHA (museum)	
Director	Management
Curator	Makes exhibitions, writes texts
Registrar	Collection management (loans, restauration, condition checks, plans of installation, protocols, courier)

The boxes and timelines below present the artist and her timeline, as well as the artwork, *NLL I*, on which this study is based, and its timeline. As noted above, these are based on secondary and primary sources.

Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere

Since the late 1980s, BDB (1964) has been exhibiting drawings, sculptures and installations. She is a renowned artist and was selected to represent Belgium in 2013 at the Biennale in Venice, where she presented a monumental sculpture *Kreupelhout – Cripplewood (2012-2013) (2013)* in collaboration with novelist J.M. Coetzee. BDB works around themes such as war, refugees, fragility and power, and compassion. The themes are elaborated in series of artworks, such as the "blanket women", horses, and *Schmerzensman*. Four kinds of materials recur in her body of work: blankets, lead, wax and horse skins, each time displayed on re-cycled tables, showcases, and pedestals. She makes assemblages of casts of often thrown away materials she finds and cherishes, as dead bodies, fallen trees and branches, antlers, and skins. She recycles these materials and makes something new of them; she creates with casts.

The Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere in Ghent is located in an old boys' school that she bought with her husband Peter Buggenhout (an artist himself) and where they both occupy two former classrooms, BDB on the ground floor, PB on the first floor. In the studio, one can find a clear division of labour between BDB and her assistants. BDB leads the studio and is supported by Katrien, a fulltime manager, two artistic assistants who work three days a week, and out-sourced technical assistants who occupy a workshop in the same compound of the school building. BDB makes the

exterior of the sculpture or "makes the skin", as one of the technical assistants beautifully expressed it in an interview, and gives the artwork her "signature", as BDB herself explained it. The two artistic assistants have their areas of expertise and specialities: Anna, graduated in painting, takes the lead in the material wax (which is essentially painting in wax) and Karen, graduated in textile, takes the lead in the horses (which is essentially working with skins). The artistic assistants "prepare" for and "finish" the work of BDB. The technical assistants make the interior of the sculptures and "strengthen" what was made by the artistic assistants before they start finishing the work. Because the amount of work for the exhibition at H&W was considerable and the time was short, the regular team of two artistic assistants was increased to six, and the technical assistants to three.

Table 5.2 Timeline Berlinde De Bruyckere

1986	First group exhibition *Anti-Chambre* 5Ghent°
1987	Second group exhibition with Peter Buggenhout and Mario De Brabandere, text by Hans Martens Acquisition of an old boys' school in Ghent
1988	Marriage with Peter Buggenhout
1989	First solo exhibition in Galerie Lanzenberg (Brussels)
1990	First contacts with Flor Bex, director of MUKHA (Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp) Prize Jeune Peinture Belge Acquisition of *Kooi* by Flemish Government
1992	Acquisition of *Kooi* by SMAK (Museum for Contemporary Art Ghent)
1993	Working grant in Germany
1995	Solo exhibition in Middelheim Museum (Antwerp)
1997	Start of collaboration with assistant Nele De Roo (first assistant) Acquisition of *C. Reybrouck (1997)* by FRAC Nord Pas de Calais
1998	Solo exhibition at Campo Santo (Ghent) Acquisition of *I never promised you a rose garden (1991)* by SMAK (Museum for Contemporary Art Ghent)
1999	Residency in In Flanders Fields Museum (Ypres) Acquisition of *Spreken (1999)* by MUKHA (Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp)
2000	Start of collaboration with photographer Mirjam Devriendt Solo exhibition *Poten* (Lokeren) Solo exhibition *In Flanders Fields* in In Flanders Fields Museum (Ypres) Selection of 4 drawings by Drawing Centre (New York), (Director Catherine De Zegher, Designer Luc Derycke) Representation by Galleria Continua (Italy)
2001	Start collaboration with technical assistant Guy Cuypers Solo exhibition at MUKHA (Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp) Acquisition of *IFF* by MUKHA (Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp) Group exhibition *Sonsbeek 9* (Netherlands), curator Jan Hoet
2002	Solo exhibition in Caermersklooster (Ghent), curator Hans Martens
2003	Group exhibition in Biennale of Venice Representation by Hauser & Wirth Gallery
2006	Series of *Schmerzensman*
2007	Prize Cultuurprijs Vlaanderen (together with David Claerbout, Anouk Declercq)
2008	Start collaboration with Katrien Driessen (later studio manager)
2009	Prize Vlaamse cultuurprijs Beeldende Kunst (together with Edwin Carels en Johan Grimonprez)
2011	Acquisition of *Into One Another* by Gemeentemuseum Den Haag (Netherlands)
2012	Start collaboration with dancer Romeu Runa (first as a model) Start collaboration with assistant Anna De Paepe Solo exhibition in Aster, Istanbul (Turkey)
2013	Solo exhibition in Belgian Pavilion at the Biennale of Venice First assistant Nele De Roo leaves the studio
2014	Start collaboration with assistant Karen Dumoulin Solo exhibition at SMAK (Museum for Contemporary Art Ghent) Publication of monograph

2015	Solo exhibition in Gemeentemuseum De Haag (Netherlands) Collaboration with opera house De Munt in Brussels for scenography for opera *Pentiselea* Honorary Doctorate at University of Ghent
2016	9th exhibition at Hauser & Wirth (2nd in New York) Solo exhibition *Suture* at Leopold Museum (Vienna) Solo exhibition at the National Gallery of Iceland (Reykjavik) Collaboration with Alain Platel (Ballets C de la B) for scenography for dance performance *Nicht Schlafen* at the Ruhr Triënnale (Bochum, Germany)
2017	Solo exhibition *Embalmed* at Kunsthal Aarhus (Denmark)
2018	Solo exhibition at Sara Hildén Museum (Tampere, Finland) Solo exhibition *Berlinde De Bruyckere. It alsmost seemed a lily* at Museum Hof van Busleyden (Mechelen)

5.1.1.2. The artwork *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

When I started the fieldwork in October 2015, *NLL I* was not finished yet. I was lucky to be able to spend so much time with the artwork because usually artworks are hidden. Below is an exhibition view:



Picture 5.1 Exhibition view of No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) *in the solo exhibition* No Life Lost *by Berlinde De Bruyckere in Hauser & Wirth Gallery, New York, 2016.*

No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)
The origins of *NLL I* went back to 2014. In a skin trader's shop floor opposite the slaughterhouse in Anderlecht (Brussels), BDB saw how the hides of flayed animals came in on rails, were cleaned hanged on metal constructions, stacked on metal pallets with salt in between, and sold for further treatment in the leather industry. The colours, smell, and darkness of the place, the materiality of skins and salt, and the gravity and rhythms of the workers left a lasting impression on the artist. In an interview, she told me that the experience "haunted her" for months until she got a commission from the director of the De Munt opera house in Brussels for a scenography for the new opera *Penthesilea*. Reading the libretto by Von Kleist– a love story situated during the war between the Trojans and Amazons- made her realise that she could "do something with that experience". The story of the war and the masses of dying soldiers evoked the stacked anonym hides in a world of

blood and salt, which were treated with care by the workers at the hide trader's shop floor. BDB underscored the role of that commission in one of the interviews:

> I would have never made the hides if I did not have the commission from the opera. […] The source of inspiration was already there. It is not that I found it while doing the opera, it was already there. Only, at that specific moment, I couldn't do anything with it, because there was no need to do that. And I wouldn't have thought of making wax sculptures in the first place. It is only because I was busy with the libretto of the opera, that I found a translation for it.

The coupling of the experience in the skin trader's shop floor and the scenography for the opera led to a new expression of an old theme. Once more, the theme of war and compassion got expressed, yet in forms and materials of the skin trader's shop floor: compiled, hung, and wide opened hides, metal pallets, pickles, and rails, and dark colours. BDB designed the costumes, sculptures and lighting for the opera which was created in March 2015.
In the months after the opera, three sculptures of the opera scenery were developed into free-standing sculptures: the pallet with compiled hides, the three rows of hanging hides, and the metal standards. The new series of works referred to the materials, objects, and people from the skin trade workshop as well as the opera. The workers in the skin trade workshop inspired with their movements, the materials they used and handled (specifically the salt and hides), and the light in which the work was done. The photographer was asked to take pictures of these events in the skin trade workshop which landed up on the wall in the studio as a kind of storyboard of handling hides. Additionally, BDB was fascinated by an unintended outcome in the execution of her designs by the opera's production team. She wanted to repeat the accidental effect of remaining hairs in the polyester casts for the opera scenery with her regular material wax. For weeks she and the moulder experimented with materials and techniques to end up with the appropriate type of cow skins that could create the same effect.
The new series of work was successively shown in the exhibitions *The Embalmer* in Kunsthaus in Bregenz (DE) in 2015, *No Life Lost* in Hauser & Wirth Gallery in New York in 2016, *Loss. In memory of Babi Yar* in Pinchuk Art Centre in Kyiv (UKR) in 2016, in *Berlinde De Bruyckere* in the National Gallery in Reykjavik (IC) in 2016, and in *The Embalmer* in Kunsthal in Aarhus (DK) in 2017. *NLL I* was one of those works out of the new series and was specially conceived of for the exhibition space in New York.

Table 5.3 Timeline No Life Lost 2014-2015 (2015)

2014		BDB visits a skin trader's workshop (Brussels) BDB is called by Peter De Caluwe (Opera house De Munt in Brussels) for the scenography of the opera *Penthesilea* Photographer Mirjam Devriendt takes photographs and films in the skin trader's workshop; the photographs were hung on the walls in the studio BDB feels a new theme (hides)
2015		Collaboration with the workshop of the opera house for the production of, among others, 45 pieces in polyester made by Guy Cuypers (first elaboration of the theme)
	March	Creation of the opera *Penthesilea*
	April	Solo exhibition in Bregenz (second elaboration of the theme) Experiments with the material hide
	June	Visit from the Senior Director Cristopher (H&W) at the studio in Ghent
	September	Final go for the exhibition at H&W in New York Start of the production for the exhibition (third elaboration of the theme)
	October	Search for the appropriate hides More hands More space
	November	Administration for the transport of the artworks Naming of the exhibition Evolution from 25 copies towards 17 individuals Dancer Romeu Runa visits skin trader's workshop and suggests the name *Apollo and Sybille*
	December	Rehearsal of dance performance
	7 December	

		packing by Aorta and transport by Mobull of 17 crates for *NLL I* and extra crates for hanging and lighting system in 3 containers
2016	7 January	Assembling *NLL I* in paper
	13 January	Too much wind in New York, containers need to be unloaded manually Drafting the press release at the studio in Ghent
	14 January	Start of the installation of the artworks in the exhibition
	25 January	Installation of the light in the exhibition under the guidance of photographer Mirjam Devriendt
	28 January	Private opening of the exhibition *No Life Lost* (29 January – 2 April 2016) Press view, dance performance, private opening, dinner
	29 January	Public Opening Dance performance (private)
	30 January	Dance performance (public)
	24-25/2 and 1-2/4	Dance performance
	April	In depot in H&W (New York)

5.1.2. ORGANISING THE DISTRIBUTION: MAKING EXHIBITIONS AND PLACING ARTWORKS IN COLLECTIONS

> [we] try to get Berlinde a museum show, try to place it in the best possible collection, try to get the New York Times to review her show. Marc Payot, Vice President Hauser & Wirth

The art market is very specific because of the high symbolic content of artworks and because of the uniqueness of every piece (Velthuis & Baia Curioni, 2015). The symbolic value of artworks is mainly made by a variety of intermediaries who construct value by discursive practices, selections for art fairs and exhibitions (Baia Curioni, Forti, & Leone, 2015; Khaire & Wadhwani, 2010); the economic value is made by collectors. This means that the art market has a complex structure and that the interdependency between commerce and artistic judgement is high. Throughout the history of art, the relative importance of the different actors changed (Velthuis, 2013; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000).

Making exhibitions is central in the world of contemporary arts. Artists make new work for exhibitions; galleries, museums and biennales organise exhibitions; critics write about exhibitions; and collectors and public visit exhibitions to watch and buy artworks. Group exhibitions show work from different artists whether selected by a curator or for a theme. Solo exhibitions show new work or an overview of the work of one artist. Retrospective solo exhibitions in museums provide a chronological overview of an artist's work, often a selection of the best works of the oeuvre. Retrospectives are narratives that attempt to give artists a place in the canon of contemporary art history. A retrospective in a famous museum such as the MOMA is the ultimate label of quality (Heinich, 1996). Exhibitions can be understood as "field

configuring events" (Delacour & Leca, 2011; Lampel & Meyer, 2008; Schüßler & Sydow, 2015). They configure and maintain the field of contemporary art by facilitating interactions between actors of the field, by negotiating value, by structuring resources, and by facilitating structures of dominance.

Many actors are involved in the distribution of contemporary arts. Below I discuss galleries, museums and curators, arts fairs and biennales, critics, and art carriers, all of which appeared in my fieldwork. H&W, one of the galleries that represent BDB, is described in the box below.

Galleries brand, promote and sell artworks (Bystryn, 1978; Moulin, 1967; Peterson, 1997). They use exhibitions and publications to insert their artists' work into the taste-making machinery of the art world (Velthuis, 2013). "Branded" dealers such as H&W do no sell paintings, they "place" them (Thompson, 2008). They try to do that in a specific order: first in museums, then with branded private collectors, then with collectors with whom the dealer has a long-standing relationship or with "young collectors" who are being encouraged. A new buyer with no track record at the dealer has little chance of being high on the list to purchase a hot artist (Thompson, 2008). Collectors need to earn the right to buy an artwork. Galleries are selective. They try to control to whom they sell by working with waiting lists of who can buy the work, with blacklists of buyers who are speculative or won't loan works, or with contracts by which they have the first right to buy the work back with resale (Velthuis, 2011). Galleries do not sell at the highest price because they fear that with the highest price comes the risk of speculation.

Hauser & Wirth Gallery

BDB is represented by two galleries: the Italian gallery Continua since 1999 and the Swiss gallery Hauser&Wirth since 2000. H&W belongs to the "top segment of the global art market where the art of superstar artists is exhibited in a select number of the most consecrated spaces, promoted by a small number of powerhouse dealers such as Gagosian, David Zwirner, White Cube or Hauser & Wirth" (Velthuis & Baia Curioni, 2015:24). H&W operates on a global market that is concentrated in art capitals such as New York, Berlin or London. Galleries within these capitals often represent artists from many different countries while their clientele may likewise be dispersed geographically. H&W was founded in 1992 in Zürich (Switzerland) and has exhibition spaces in Zürich, New York, London, Somerset, and Los Angeles. It opened its first exhibition space in uptown Manhattan in 2009, followed by a second one downtown in 2013. H&W is one of the biggest galleries in the world with six exhibition spaces and a staff of more than 200 people. In 2015 the owner of the gallery, Iwan Wirth, was nominated as the most influential person in the contemporary art world according to Art Review's Powerlist. H&W represents artists and artists' estates (i.e. bodies of work of deceased artists). The representation involves organising solo exhibitions for each of them every couple of years, representing the artists on fairs, making books on their works, managing the loans of the artworks for exhibitions, and selling the works. To do all of this, H&W works together with external photographers, architects, curators, publishers, and designers of exhibition architecture, books, and

corporate identity. The gallery participates in art fairs, collaborates with other galleries and museums, is member of various committees of art institutions, and has been acclaimed not only as a gallery but also as a restaurant (*Hauser & Wirth. 20 years*, 2012). A huge image database of all the artworks by the represented artists, as well as a strict organisational hierarchy, makes the variety of global activities possible.

In New York, the gallery is located in Chelsea. With 400 galleries, Chelsea has the highest density of art galleries in the world. Other powerhouse dealers such as Gagosian Gallery, Gladstone, and David Zwirner, as well as hundreds of others, have exhibition spaces in that small area that can be worked through in a couple of hours. The density of galleries in Chelsea makes it possible for curators, collectors, and critics to combine several visits when visiting a new space or a new exhibition and creates a potentially large exposure for an artist.

The H&W venue in downtown Manhattan is a former warehouse, later converted into the Roxy discotheque and re-opened in 2013 as H&W's Chelsea exhibition space. It is a single, vast, column-free venue, adapted for its new function by the architect Annabelle Selldorf, who has been acclaimed for her work in the art world. The exhibition space abuts the HighLine (a trendy walking promenade on an old train track) and is situated in the same street (18th street) as the Frank Ghery building, close to the building *100 Eleventh Avenue* of Jean Nouvel. The acclaim of all these architects radiates on the new exhibition space.

The exhibition *No life Lost* was BDB's ninth solo show with H&W, the second solo show with them in New York, but the first in the large, formerly industrial space. The studio interacted "on a daily basis" with the Vice President, the Senior Director, and the "artist liaison" (for job titles and descriptions see Table 5.1).

Organising a Belgian artist on American soil was not that surprising for a Swiss gallery. H&W had a long history of working with Belgian as well as American artists (*Hauser & Wirth. 20 years*, 2012). American artists such as Jason Rhoades, Richard Jackson, Paul McCarty, and Raymond Pettibon, were shown first in Switzerland, and later throughout Europe. The first Belgian artist the gallery exhibited was Marcel Broodthaers (in 1995 and 1998), followed by a representation of David Claerbout (2002). The gallery also worked with the Belgian architects Robbrecht and Daem Architects (2000) for the design of one of the exhibition spaces, the H&W Collection in St. Gallen (Switzerland). These architects have a reputation for integrating contemporary art in their architectural work. Both lines throughout the gallery's history – exhibiting and representing Belgian artists and working with Belgian architects for designing their exhibition spaces – explain how a Belgian artist comes to New York in a Swiss exhibition space. It illustrates the gallery's global orientation.

Other exhibitions and performances were taking place at the same time in New York, enabling visitors of *No Life Lost* to combine a gallery visit with other cultural activities. At the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) an exhibition of sculpture by Picasso (finishing the 7th of February) was followed by a retrospective of the Belgian artist Marcel Broodthaers. The yearly art fair, Armory Show, took place in March. Other Belgian artists were exhibiting or performing in New York. Visual artist Ann Veronica Janssens exhibited in Bortolami Gallery (Chelsea) and director Ivo Van Hove made his Broadway début with Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge* and showed several of his theatre productions in Manhattan. So from the end of January on, there were plenty of opportunities for "amateurs" of contemporary art to experience a Belgian presence in New York or to discover a Belgian artist.

When I asked the gallery's Vice President what he contributed to BDB's career, he answered:

> [we] try to get Berlinde a museum show, try to place it in the best possible collection, try to get the New York Times to review her show.

A show in New York is a big step for artists' careers, as the gallery's Vice President emphasised in an interview:

> …America, especially New York, remains the number one place for an artist's career. That the artist is globally successful, has to be successful in New York. It's a, it's a turning, a market place which has to be taken seriously.

Since 2000 BDB has grown along with super-star dealer H&W. H&W operates as a "promotional gallery" or a gallery that brands, promotes and sells her work.

Museums of contemporary art are gatekeepers for the survival and longevity of artworks (Braden, 2009; Crane, 1987). Crane (1987) showed how artists who were accepted by New York museums between 1940 and 1980 were provided with national and international reputation; they – and it was only a small group of artists – got into virtually every museum of modern art. Braden (2009) showed how the MOMA filtered artists to be included in history textbooks a century later. Museums of contemporary art can be understood as "reputational entrepreneurs" (Allen & Lincoln, 2004) who provide legitimacy by producing much of the discourse within a field of cultural production; their intellectual authority is derived from their ability to frame their aesthetic judgments within the context of specific cultural schemas. Museums act as benchmarks for galleries. Galleries aim for "museum-quality" in their spaces, exhibitions, publications, and programs.

Boundaries between museums and collectors always have been blurry in the US, witnessed by the presence of private museums, collectors in the boards of public museums, and private collections in public museums. This practice has now become global.

It is curators who organise museum exhibitions. During my fieldwork curators came to the studio or to the exhibition in New York to discuss next exhibitions at their museums, as a solo exhibition at Leopold Museum in Vienna in 2016, and the featuring of *NLL I* in a museum exhibition at the Kunsthal in Aarhus in 2017.

Art fairs and biennales have become more and more important for the diffusion and consecration of artists in global art markets. Art fairs are a new phenomenon in the 21st century; they are like supermarkets of easily tradable artworks which attract international sellers and buyers. However, *NLL I* is too huge to be shown at an art fair.

In 1989 former Tate Gallery Director Alan Bowness (1989) said: "Critics used to create the verbal language that allows us to talk about art, contribute to critical debate and create critical consensus, and sort out what happened in the last twenty years". Two decades later it was argued that critics had lost that power (Thompson, 2008; Thornton, 2015; Velthuis, 2011). This opinion is expressed by Samuel Keller, the director of Art Basel: "When I entered the art world, critics had an aura of power; now they are more like philosophers, respected but not as powerful as collectors, dealers and curators" (quoted in Thompson, 2008:41). H&W organised a press preview for the

new exhibition and provided documents and photographs for critics to be published in magazines and newspapers. However, at the private opening of the exhibition, the attendees were mainly curators and collectors. Whereas critics were invited for a private press review and press articles were collected and distributed by BDB as well as H&W, they were excluded from the private opening, private dance performance, and private dinner. During my fieldwork, I hardly met or saw critics at work.

Making exhibitions is not only an artistic and commercial activity, but also a logistical one. Artworks need to be packed, handled in and out of crates, and transported from one exhibition space to another. Transport and storage have recently become a highly specialised industry of which the conditions are stipulated by insurance companies which insist that museums, galleries, collectors, and artists work with carriers who guarantee acclimatisation. Acclimatised crates are built up in different layers - wood, a thick and a thin foam layer, and foam filling- and buffer against a potential climate shock or an immediate shift from hot to cold. The climate inside the crate remains stable for 8 until 12 hours before it adapts itself very gradually to the new climate outside the crates. A climate shock is the worst that can happen to artworks because of their unpredictable reactions. It can cause mildew because of immediate higher humidity; it can dehydrate; it can crack.

5.1.3. Organising the consumption: watching, buying, and collecting artworks

People watch, buy, and collect artworks. Collectors are important for contemporary visual arts, they fund the art world and give visibility to the work (Fol, 2017). Artists and dealers look for collectors with a coherent collection and a willingness to loan work for exhibitions. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the power of collectors or the power of money is continuing to increase in contemporary visual arts. Global art galleries, such as H&W, aim to the 200 à 300 collectors and not to buyers (Reyburn, 2015), or the so-called “branded collectors” (Thompson, 2008).

Besides collectors, ordinary people visit exhibitions to see artworks. Until now (2019), *NLL I* has only been viewed, not sold.

5.2. THE SAMPLE

BDB and *NLL I* are not representative of the contemporary visual arts. That was not the aim of the sampling. I do not want to generalise from this sole case, but I want to understand how career making by an artwork works for this artist. The single case study has a very specific sample. Another artist and artwork could have been chosen to make the same argument. That this artist and this artwork were selected is partly because of their importance in the Belgian art world, partly, because for opportunistic reasons. I had access to the studio and there is plenty of primary and secondary literature about the artist and the artwork. I contend that if the argument about active artworks presented here is credible for this artwork, it is extendable to other artworks.

I focused in this study on the island of marketable art of international galleries, although BDB operates in all the subcultures of contemporary art (see intro of section 5.1.). It was the island to where *NLL I* brought me while shadowing it. It is a very small part of the art market with only a couple of players. Only half of the Flemish artists work with a gallery of which only a small amount collaborates with a gallery that has access to the international art market (Leenknegt, 2016). BDB's work is sold in the primary (i.e. first sale from artist to collector) as well as secondary art market (i.e. resale market); she is active in the consecrated circuit of the art market and she is active globally as well as locally (Velthuis, 2011).

5.3. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the empirical setting and the sample of the study: contemporary visual arts in the 2010s and *NLL I* made by BDB. It is an outstanding setting to study an artefact's action in career making. Although the sample is unique, it can provide insights for other artworks, other artists, other creative people, and other occupations.

In the next two chapters I will first present the findings of *NLL I*'s impact on BDB's career, and second how *NLL I* was made to act.

CHAPTER 6 CAREER MAKING BY AN ARTWORK

I explored the empirical material from the fieldwork through the theoretical lens of Actor-Network-Theory (ANT). ANT provided me with an ontological, conceptual, methodological, and stylistic apparatus to understand and elucidate how the artwork *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) (NLL I)* acted upon Berlinde De Bruyckere's (BDB's) career and was enacted by an evolving network.

Drawing on ANT careers can be understood as the effects of heterogeneous relations and their ordering (Law, 1994). Career making is a process of ordering. In a Foucauldian sense (Fournier, 1998; Grey, 1994; Savage, 1998), career is a discourse or a logic that structures past, present and future. People use the notion of career to order professional life and use the notion of oeuvre to order artistic work. My aim is to show how that ordering is "told, embodied, performed and resisted" (Law, 1994) by an artwork.

The findings of my ethnographic study are presented in two chapters. The first chapter focuses on the artwork's actions upon the career and describes and analyses how the artwork as name, as text and as space speaks for the artist's career. It answers the first research question "How does an artefact act upon careers?". It answers that question by focusing on the actants and their associations. The second chapter focuses on how the artwork was enacted by networks in multiple practices and explains how the artwork was made to act. It answers the second and third research question "How does an artefact become and remain active?" and "What is the relationship between the artefact and its maker in the process of career making?". It answers these questions by focusing on the processes of becoming, shifting, and remaining.

The research questions were translated into ANT-terminology and a methodology. The question "How does an artefact act?" became "What are the consequences of being an active artefact?" and was answered by "going downstream" (Latour, 1987) or by looking at the effects of that active artefact. It shows the effects of *NLL I* upon BDB's career. The second question "How does an artefact become and remain active?" became "What are the conditions for an artefact to become and remain active?" and is answered by "going upstream" (Latour, 1987). It might seem counterintuitive to

present first the artefact's action and then the becoming of that artefact. Yet, it was a deliberate move. I followed the chronology in the writings of ANT in which the early writings focused on the active artefact (the actor-network), and the later (written after the conference of ANT and After) on how the actor was enacted. The two empirical chapters of this thesis reflect that evolution and understand the artwork as an actor-enacted, whereby the first chapter focuses on the "actor" and the second on the "enacted" (although this is an artificial division).

In this chapter, I will discuss how the artwork as name, as text and as space acted upon BDB's career. I'm not interested in what the artwork means, but rather what it does and how it works. The chapter draws on an ANT-analysis in which I first identified all the actants in *NLL I*'s network (visualised in Figures 6.1 – 6.4) and second examined what happened in the associations between *NLL I* and actants (see also section 3.4.3. (Czarniawska, 2007, 2014b)). Both chapters use observations in the studio and gallery, conversations with the artist, assistants and gallery staff, and documents.

The chapter is structured as follows. It starts with the multiple versions of an artwork. It further focuses on three versions – the artwork as name, the artwork as text, and the artwork as space. I show the artwork's involvement in rhetorical, material, and relational practices and how it can speak for the oeuvre and career. The chapter ends with the key point, namely that the artwork is a multiple actor-network involved in multiple practices.

6.1. AN ARTWORK MULTIPLE: A NAME, TEXTS, AND A SPACE

I had a rather clear idea about what the artwork, that I wanted to shadow, would be. But as soon as I entered the field – on the very first meeting with BDB – I was warned. BDB challenged the idea of following a discrete artwork, because, as she told me, artworks only were artworks because of the space and every space performs another artwork. Later her husband Peter Buggenhout (PB) challenged the idea of the uniqueness of artworks and suggested that I look rather at a series of works that made a theme. I should have known. The notion of a fixed, defined and determined artwork was already challenged in the literature (Becker, Faulkner, & Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2006; Gell, 1998; Rubio & Silva, 2013; Strati, 2006; Yaneva, 2003a, 2003b). Once in the field, *NLL I* appeared to me, not as a "single" artwork, but rather as an "artwork

multiple" (Mol, 2002). It appeared in multiple versions: not only as a material object, but also as a sketch, as a model, as a name, as a text, as a photograph, as a collage of cut out photographs, as a spatial object, as a series of works, as copies, and as derivations. *NLL I* included all these versions and all their interconnections. In Gell's (1998) words: *NLL I* is a "spatio-temporally dispersed population of artworks".

In this chapter, I focus on three versions of *NLL I*: the name, the texts, and the artwork in situ. These versions changed a lot during the fieldwork and after. To be able to analyse their actions in-depth, I will freeze them at one moment and in one space, namely the private opening of the exhibition on 28 January 2016 at H&W gallery in New York. That moment *NLL I* was presented to the gathered field of visual contemporary arts.

6.2. THE NAME SPEAKS FOR THE OEUVRE

6.2.1. NO LIFE LOST, A NAME FOR AN EXHIBITION AND TWO NEW ARTWORKS

The artwork was named at the end of November 2015, a couple of weeks before the opening of the exhibition. Hauser & Wirth (H&W) needed a title for the exhibition because they had to send the invitations out to prospective guests. The name was invented collectively by the artistic network around BDB. The name of the artwork – *No Life Lost I, 2014-2015 (2015)* – is an extension of the exhibition title *No Life Lost* (Figure 6.1). When I asked BDB why she used the same name for the exhibition and the two new works in the exhibition (Figure 6.2 and 6.3), she answered:

> …we had a very beautiful name for the exhibition, a title that covered everything, and the two new works – an installation with horses and an installation with hanging hides – are produced especially for that exhibition. I think that is very beautiful to give the works the same name as the exhibition because it then is part of the story. The exhibition becomes a story and those works will be forever linked to that exhibition.

This quote indicates that BDB uses names to communicate meaning. She wants the name to tell a story, but at the same time allows the audience to make their meaning. The origins of BDB's names are diverse. In the past, she had been using the names of the models for her sculptures (e.g. Romeu or Elie), or identification numbers on the materials such as hides or showcases (e.g. K36), or phrases from a novel (e.g.



Picture 6.1 Entrance of the Exhibition Space No Life Lost *at Hauser & Wirth, New York with in the background a view on NLL II. - First use of the name* No Life Lost *for the exhibition.*



Picture 6.2 Artwork No Life Lost I, 2014-2015 (2015) - *Second use of the name for the artwork* NLL I*. Exhibition View at Hauser & Wirth, New York.*



Picture 6.3 Artwork No Life Lost II (2015) - *Third use of the name for the artwork* NLL II*. Exhibition view at Hauser & Wirth, New York.*

Cripplewood by Coetzee). For the artwork understudy, she used the name of the exhibition in which it was shown for the first time. She continued:

> For me, titles are very important, but also very difficult. That is the reason titles often come last minute. A title for an artwork is as a name for your child. It must live with it, and it will be named as forever.

It is because titles matter to BDB, that I consider the name of the artwork as an important appearance in the artwork's life and pay attention to it in this section.

In addition to the words, the name *No Life Lost I, 2014-2015 (2015)* also includes a number, a timespan, and a date. The date (2015) indicates that the work was made in 2015; the timespan 2014-2015 refers to the origin and development of an artistic theme. By making the timespan part of the name, which is a common practice for BDB, she establishes the artwork as a process in which themes, materials and people get gradually involved. With the date 2014, she implicitly refers to the source of her inspiration (a visit to a skin trade workshop in 2014), to other works developed out of that inspiration (such as the scenography for the opera *Penthesilea* in the winter of 2015), and to the collective quest for materials and techniques (in the summer of 2015). The numbers in the name indicate that the creation of the artwork was a lengthy process and embeds it temporally and spatially in BDB's oeuvre, as well as in other practices such as tanning, opera, and casting. The number "I" refers to a series of works with the same name. In contrast to *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*, *No Life Lost II (2015)* has no timespan in the name because it was made in the autumn of 2015 and had no history going back earlier.

6.2.2. A LIST OF TRACES

The artwork's name is a "list of traces" (Latour, 2005). It has traces of past organizing in it (Cooren, 2004). It represents traceable associations. The name with its multiple references "brings back" relations and processes of the artwork's past and gives it a history (see also Czarniawska's (2007) comment on Latour's reminder that the word "reference" comes from the Latin "referre" which means "to bring back"). The name generates a network of people, materials, and spaces and thus tells the story of the artwork's becoming.

Fig. 6.1 shows that network. It shows the actants generated by the name and how they are associated. The circled actants in the network make a difference to one or more

actants, thus act upon each other. Actants can be individuals (e.g. the artist), organisations (e.g. the gallery), events (e.g. the opera *Penthesilea*), objects (e.g. the artwork *NLL I*), time (e.g. 2015) and space (e.g. New York). Human and nonhuman actants are approached equally or symmetrically in an ANT-analysis: the database is as much an actant as the artist when it comes to career making. In the next sections I will focus on the red circled actants and their associations because they are particularly relevant for career making.

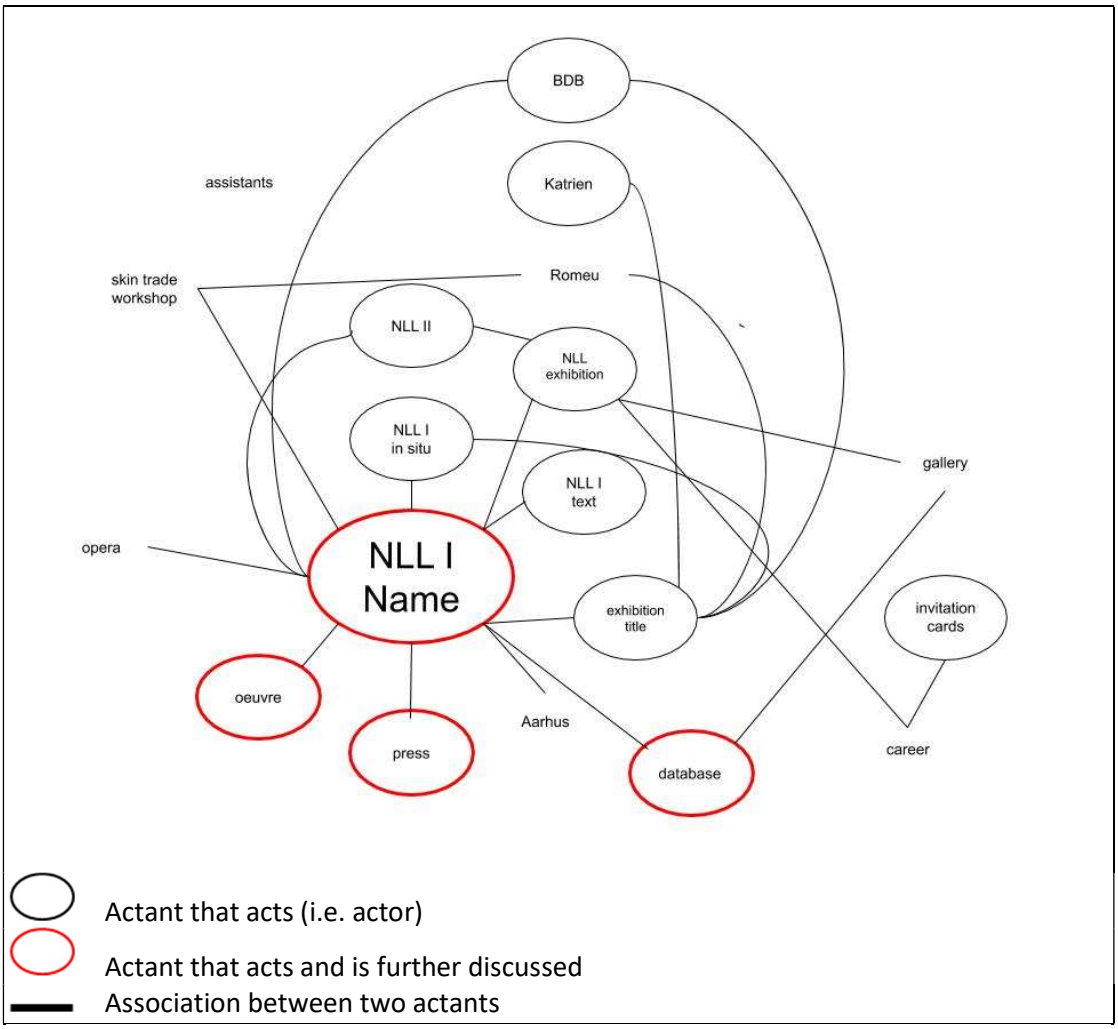


Figure 6.1 The artwork as name – Actants in NLL I*'s network*

6.2.3. THE NAME PRODUCES TRACK RECORDS AND STORIES

The second step in an ANT-analysis is to examine what happened in the associations (i.e. relationships) between the artwork's name and the other actants. In this section, I focus on the associations between the name and the databases and the name and press articles because databases and press articles facilitate the artwork's inserting in the art world.

The name acted upon the gallery's and studio's databases. The name extended the databases with a novel item. That novel item or entry will collect a lot of data about the artwork such as technical features (e.g. size, materials, entry number), exhibitions spaces, and appearances in publications (Picture 6.4). The name facilitates an easily recognizable entry and output of the database. The name became an identification tool for administration and was rapidly reproduced on multiple documents for factoring, storage, and transport (Picture 6.5). Databases keep track of the exhibitions, publications, loans and sales of artworks and that track record or pedigree or "list of traces" (Latour, 2005) is crucial for the artwork's further opportunities for exhibitions or sale. It impacts the artist's reputation, pricing and financial arrangements between galleries and artists. A lineage or pedigree signals the value of an individual artwork. A new entry is also connected with other items in the database. The name's action was possible because it was connected to other names in the database and to documents on crates and invoices which enacted the new name. The database is updated daily by the artist liaison and the studio manager.

The name itself is not only a list of traces but also helps other actants to generate lists. It enables databases and press articles to produce track records of artworks and stories of artworks. Once nested in databases and press articles a name affects the ordering of the oeuvre.

6.2.4. THE NAME TELLS, EMBODIES AND PERFORMS THE OEUVRE

First, the name evoked the oeuvre by putting a recurring theme (nothing gets lost) into new words (no life lost). By doing this it re-shuffled the oeuvre, made new connections, and framed the existing oeuvre in a new way. For instance, it connected the opera scenography, the exhibition in Bregenz and the new work, and highlighted that connection. It spoke for the oeuvre by using dates which refer to older works. In doing this, the name presented a new ensemble that is highly interconnected. It reinforced the oeuvre by evoking some works of the oeuvre and making a new ensemble of it. The name is involved in rhetorical practices; it tells people how to understand the work in relation to the oeuvre.



TITLE: **No Life Lost I, 2015-2016**

YEAR: 2015

MATERIAL: wax, iron, steel, epoxy, TL-lights

DIMENSIONS SKINS:
nr 1: 285 x 25 cm / nr 2: 335 x 38 cm / nr 3: 286 x 33 cm / nr 4: 295 x 35 cm
nr5: 295 x 43 cm / nr 6: 312 x 60 cm / nr 7: 283 x 40 cm / nr 8: 300 x 30 cm
nr 9: 285 x 33 cm / nr 10: 288 x 52 cm / nr 11: 330 x 39 cm / nr 12: 330 x 42 cm
nr 13: 302 x 52 cm / nr 14: 335 x 41 cm / nr 15: 300 x 56 cm / nr 16: 340 x 75 cm
nr 17: 310 x 75 cm / nr 18: 340 x 50 cm / nr 19: 290 x 50 cm /
DIMENSIONS INSTALLATION: app. H 450 x 300 x 500 cm (rough estimate – depends on location, position of light elements, etc.

DESCRIPTION: Wax sculptures hanging from steel bars, with iron light armature

INSIDE: iron armature and epoxy

CRATES:

COMBI CRATE 1: 314 X 97 X H 90 CM
COMBI CRATE 2: 365 X 125 X 100 CM + **HOOKS**
COMBI CRATE 3: 315 X 98 X 85 CM
COMBI CRATE 4: 325 X 110 X 95 CM
SINGLE CRATE 5: 350 X 85 X 90 CM
SINGLE CRATE 6: 315 X 75 X H 105 CM
COMBI CRATE 7: 360 X 145 X 110 CM
SINGLE CRATE 8: 365 X 65 X H 90 CM
SINGLE CRATE 9: 330 X 80 X H 110 CM
SINGLE CRATE 10: 370 X 135 X H 110 CM
SINGLE CRATE 11: 325 X 85 X H 85 CM
SINGLE CRATE 12: 370 X 100 X H 130 CM

COLLECTION: /

EXHIBITIONS:
No Life Lost, Hauser & Wirth, NY, 2016
Embalmed, Kunsthal, Aarhus, 2017

PHOTOGRAPHER: Mirjam Devriendt

Picture 6.4 Filing Note of No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) *in the studio's database.*



Picture 6.5 Filing Note of No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) *pasted to one of the 17 crates ready for transport, Studio in Ghent, 7 December 2015.*

Second, it embodied that new ordering in a new name, a name that can be used in databases, in press articles, in talks. The name is a materialised list of traces. The temporary network of 2015 is materialised in the name. The name is a remainder of what was once there and the name will remain, as BDB said: "[the artwork] has to live with it and it will be named as forever". Once the name has entered the database and has been used in press articles and publications, there is no way back. The artwork cannot be denied anymore, it has a name and has become an "obligatory passage point", as Callon (1984) calls it (see section 3.2.2.1.). The artwork also has an unofficial name, "the hanging hides", which directly refers to the series of works made of hides in the period 2014-2017.

The concept of "immutable mobile" (Latour, 1987) is useful to understand how a name can stabilise a career. The name *NLL I* is an "immutable mobile" or an object that can travel (i.e. is mobile) and maintain its shape (i.e. is immutable). It is a transformation of a physical object (the artwork) into a written form (the name). The name in its intangible form travels much more easily than the material artwork over distance in time and space. As a name, the artwork entered databases, press articles and life and career stories, something that was not possible for the artwork. The name also reduces a complex story of processes and relations to one phrase and numbers. It integrates

and stabilises what was important in 2015. This reduction – of physicality and complexity – makes it easy for the artwork to travel.

Third, it performed the new ordering by ordering the oeuvre and by reproducing itself in new works. Later the name became a kind of family name. Along the production process of *NLL I*, BDB decided to change the plan of making 25 copies of hanging hides. Eventually, she made 17 "individuals" instead of an installation of 25 "copies" and gave each individual its name (e.g. *NLL I* number 1). The name was reproduced 17 times and thus reinforced. And even later, the name became a kind of surname, covering different installations. This happened in 2017 for an exhibition in Aarhus (Denmark), where a selection of seven hides were exhibited as *NLL I*. The initial name changed and continues to change. These reproductions make the name more stable and thus more difficult to ignore.

6.3. TEXTS SPEAK FOR THE OEUVRE AND THE CAREER

6.3.1. INTRODUCING THE EXHIBITION

The second version of the artwork which is relevant for career making is the artwork as text, as a discursive object. At the gallery reception desk, a visitor to the exhibition found three documents which were intended to introduce the exhibition: an information sheet, a press release, and a leaflet on the dance performance *Sybille*, which was to take place several times during the exhibition. The three leaflets have a different content. The Information Sheet (Picture 6.6) is a 2-page inventory, with an exhibition view (i.e. a photograph of the artwork in the exhibition) for each of the ten exhibited artworks, the title, size, used materials, and an H&W-database number. It looks like a print-out of the gallery's database. The second document, the press release (Pictures 6.7, 6.8, 6.9), gives background information about the artist, the artworks, and the exhibition. It discusses the prominence of the artist, the inspiration for the show and the features of the exhibited artworks. The third document is an announcement of the dance performance *Sybille*, by Romeu Runa (Picture 6.10). The documents were helpful for visitors who wanted to know more about the exhibition and the exhibited works because in the exhibition space neither titles nor background information, was provided. These documents, therefore, provided visitors with the official story of the exhibition, the story that the artist, as well as the gallery wanted to disseminate.

HAUSER & WIRTH

Berlinde De Bruyckere, No Life Lost, HWNY18 2016

1. **Berlinde De Bruyckere (b. 1964)**
No Life Lost II, 2015
2015
Horse skin, wood, glass, fabric, leather, blankets, iron, polyester,
237.5 x 342.9 x 188 cm / 93 1/2 x 135 x 74 inches



DE BR72367

2. **Berlinde De Bruyckere (b. 1964)**
to Zurbaran, 2015
2015
Horse skin, fabric, wood, iron, polyester
116.8 x 160 x 127 cm / 46 x 63 x 50 inches



DE BR72362

3. **Berlinde De Bruyckere (b. 1964)**
No Life Lost I, 2014-2015
2015
Wax, iron, steel, epoxy, light elements
330.2 x 406.4 x 762 cm / 130 x 160 x 300 inches



DE BR72368

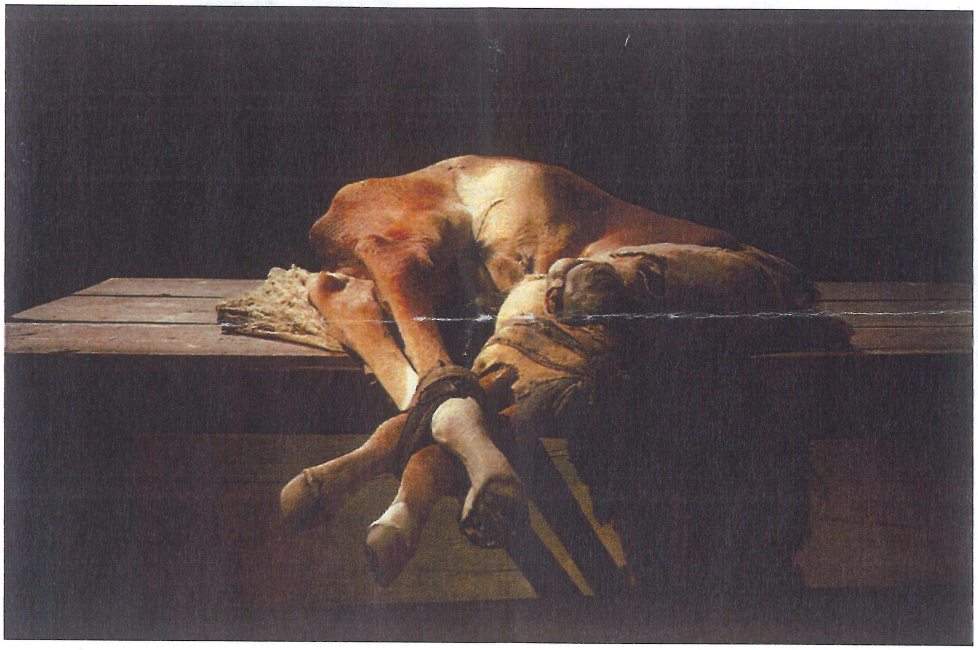
Picture 6.6 Information Sheet for the exhibition No Life Lost *at Hauser & Wirth (excerpt of recto)*

HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

Berlinde De Bruyckere No Life Lost

Hauser & Wirth New York, 18th Street
28 January – 2 April 2016
Opening: Thursday 28 January, 6 – 8 pm
Performance: 'Sibylle' Saturday 30 January, 2 pm; Wednesday 24 & Thursday 25 February, 7 pm; Friday 1 April, 7 pm; Saturday 2 April, 2 pm



New York... Beginning 28 January 2016, Hauser & Wirth is pleased to present 'No Life Lost', an exhibition of recent sculptures and drawings by internationally admired Belgian artist Berlinde De Bruyckere. The centerpiece of the exhibition is De Bruyckere's monumental project 'Kreupelhout – Cripplewood, 2012 – 2013' (2013), shown here for the first time in the United States. The largest and most ambitious work by the artist to date, this massive, darkly beautiful and acclaimed installation – a collaboration with Nobel Prize novelist J M Coetzee – debuted at the Belgian Pavilion of the 55th edition of the Venice Biennale in 2013.

Picture 6.7 Press Release for the exhibition No Life Lost *at Hauser & Wirth, excerpt of page 1, mentioning a Nobel Prize winner and a famous art festival as justification for exhibiting a rather unknown artist in New York and reproducing an exhibition view of* To Zurbaran (2015).

About the Artist

Berlinde De Bruyckere was born in Ghent, Belgium in 1964, where she currently lives and works. Since her first exhibition in the mid-1980s, De Bruyckere's sculptures and drawings have been the subject of numerous exhibitions in major institutions worldwide. Her most recent solo exhibitions include 'The Embalmer', Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bregenz and Kunstraum Dornbirn, Dornbirn, Austria (2015); 'Berlinde De Bruyckere', Gemeentemuseum den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands (2015); major survey 'Sculptures & Drawings 2000 – 2014', S.M.A.K, Ghent, Belgium (2014); 'In the Flesh', Kunsthaus Graz, Graz, Austria (2013); and the exhibiton in dialogue with works by Philippe Vandenberg 'Innocence is precisely: never to avoid the worst', which started at De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg, Netherlands (2012) and travelled to La Maison Rouge – Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris, France (2014).

In April 2016 the Leopold Museum in Vienna will present a comprehensive solo exhibition with the artist.

Picture 6.8 Press Release for the exhibition No Life Lost *at Hauser & Wirth, excerpt of page 3, mentioning a list of ongoing worldwide exhibitions and a collaboration with another artist from H&W.*

De Bruyckere has long employed horsehides in her sculptural work, but it was only in 2014 that she first visited a skin trader's workshop in Anderlecht, Belgium. This experience has strongly influenced her work ever since and is made particularly tangible in 'No Life Lost I, 2014 – 2015' (2014 – 2015) an installation comprised of three rows of hanging skins cast from wax and secured onto iron beams. Of this tribute to the rituals of the tannery, De Bruyckere recalls: 'Maybe it was the amount of available skins, neatly stacked on iron pallets, or the smell of freshly slaughtered animals, the salt on the ground mingling with blood into a wet slush… I still don't know, but I saw powerful images. I was unable to avert my eyes… I knew I had witnessed something I needed to transcribe. Never have I experienced death and life as intensely as I did there.'

Picture 6.9 Press Release for the exhibition No Life Lost *at Hauser & Wirth, excerpt of page 3.*

Runa connects the ambiguity and fine line between the decay and preservation he witnessed at the workshop to another one of Ovid's myths – 'The story of Apollo and the Cumaen Sibyl'. The tale describes how Apollo offered to grant Sibyl a wish in exchange for her virginity. Sibyl, taking a handful of sand, asked to live for as many years as the grains of sand in her hand. Sibyl refusing Apollo's love, was then punished. Her body withered with time because she failed to ask Apollo to bestow eternal youth. As time progressed, her body grew smaller with age until there was nothing left but a lump of flesh in a jar – wherein Sibyl pleaded for her life to be ended. This myth and the association between eternal life and perpetual death inspired Runa to entitle his performance 'Sibylle'.

To symbolise the dualistic nature of decay and preservation – a component present in both the work of skin traders and Ovid's myth – Runa begins his performance recumbent on a mountain of salt. The use of this material explores the ambivalence of something that is at once painful and healing.

Picture 6.10 Leaflet on Dance Performance for the exhibition No life Lost *in Hauser & Wirth, excerpt of page 2*

6.3.2. LONGER LISTS OF TRACES

I did an ANT-analysis of the three texts. I identified the networks of actants that were generated by the texts and analysed what happened in the associations (Figures 6.2, 6.3, 6.4). Like the name of the artwork, the texts about the exhibition are "lists of traces" (Latour, 2005), albeit more extensive. The texts have more words to qualify the artwork, the artist and the exhibition and use many more references. The list of traces includes not only artworks, artists, and spaces, but also institutions, publications, exhibitions, prizes, and acquisitions. The latter perspective is the one of the gallery which aims to highlight the artist's path along institutions and the institutional recognition received.

Like the name, the texts can be understood as "actor-networks" (Latour, 2005) speaking as one voice for the actants in the network. The Information Sheet, for instance, spoke for the exhibition by identifying the exhibition as organised by H&W, by making a list of the exhibited artworks, by making an overview, and by speaking at distance. Below I focus on the press release because that text explicitly talks about oeuvre and about career and that is the main interest of my study.

The press release was a collaborative work of the studio manager and the gallery's press office. Both had a different interest that they wanted to communicate. The studio wanted to frame the exhibition and the exhibited works within an artistic context and did it by telling the story of where the artworks came from, how they were produced and how they were inspired or influenced by other artworks and events. The gallery wanted to justify why an artist relatively unknown in New York deserves a solo exhibition in one of the largest exhibition spaces in town and used the longevity of career, her passage through major art institutions, and her collaborations with the family of gallery as justifications (Figure 6.11). The Press Release is a compromise between two interests: an artistic one with a focus on oeuvre (i.e. the body of work and its connections to other artworks and artists) and a commercial one with a focus on career (i.e. an abstract of achievements in (art) institutions).

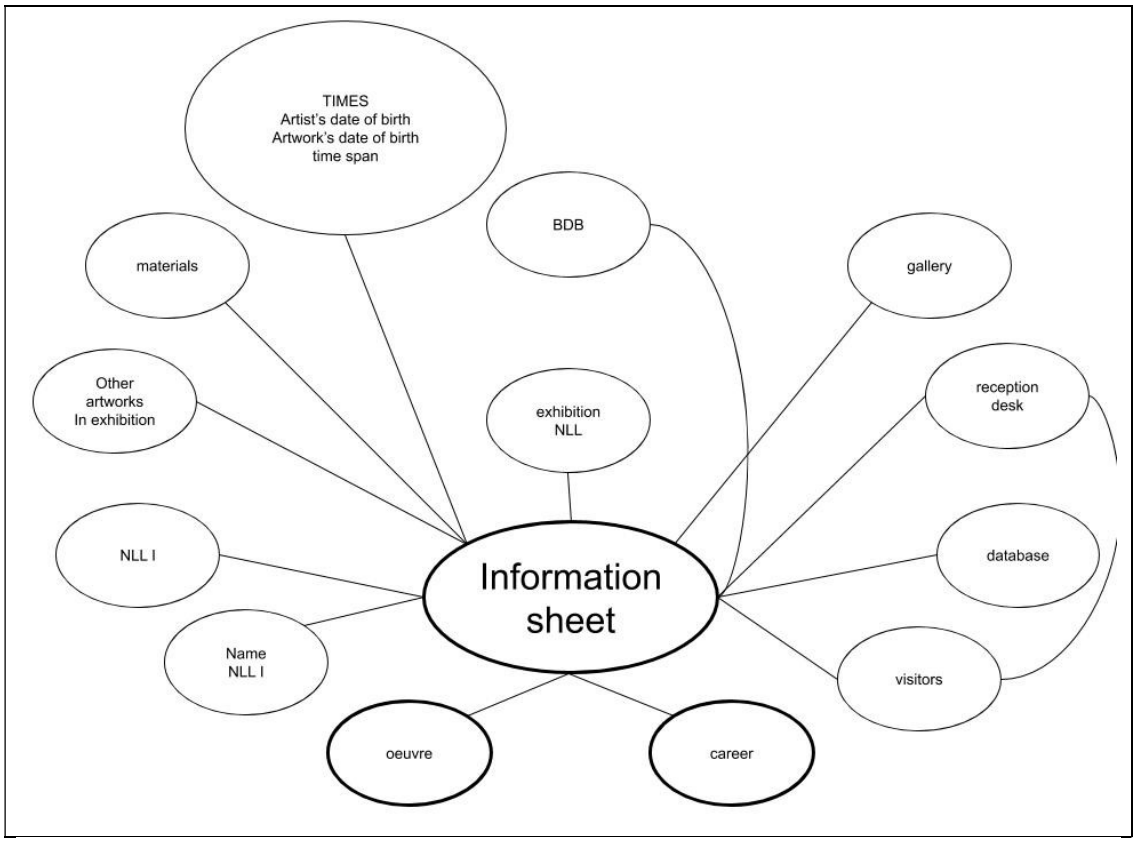


Figure 6.2 The artwork as text - Information sheet – Actants in NLL I*'s network*

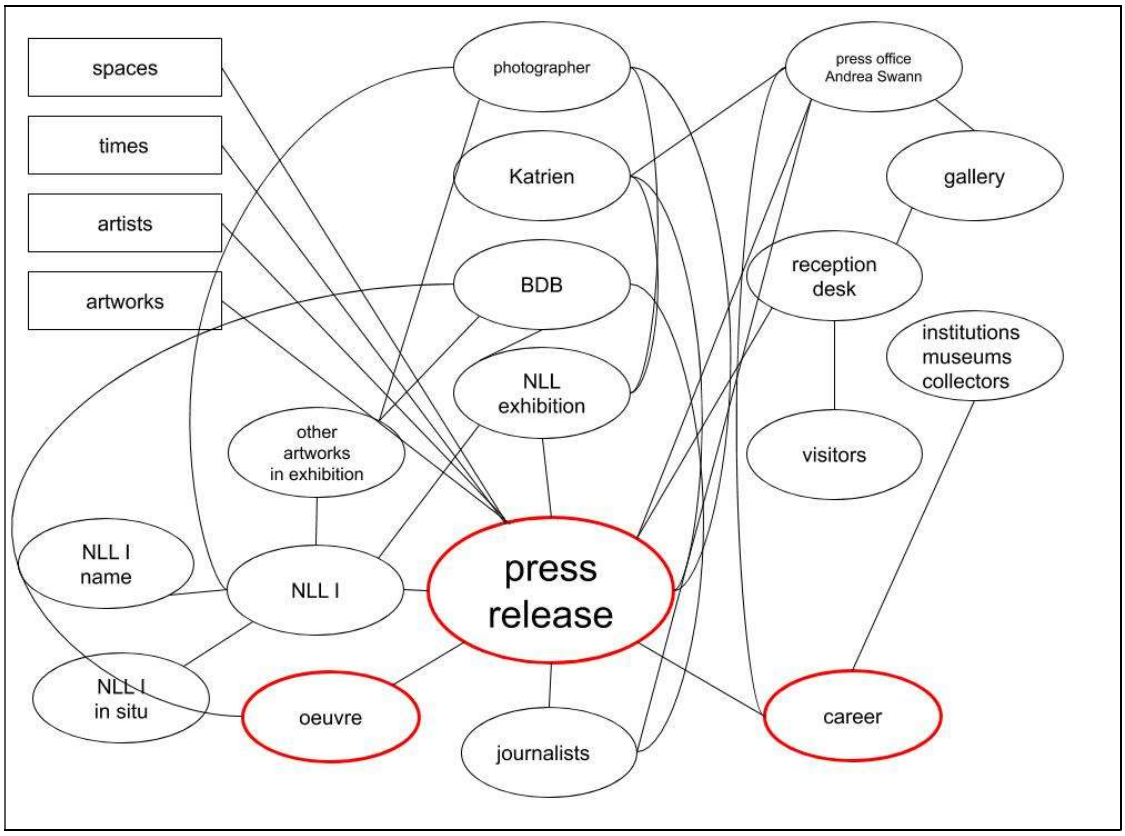


Figure 6.3 The artwork as text - Press Release – Actants in NLL I*'s network*

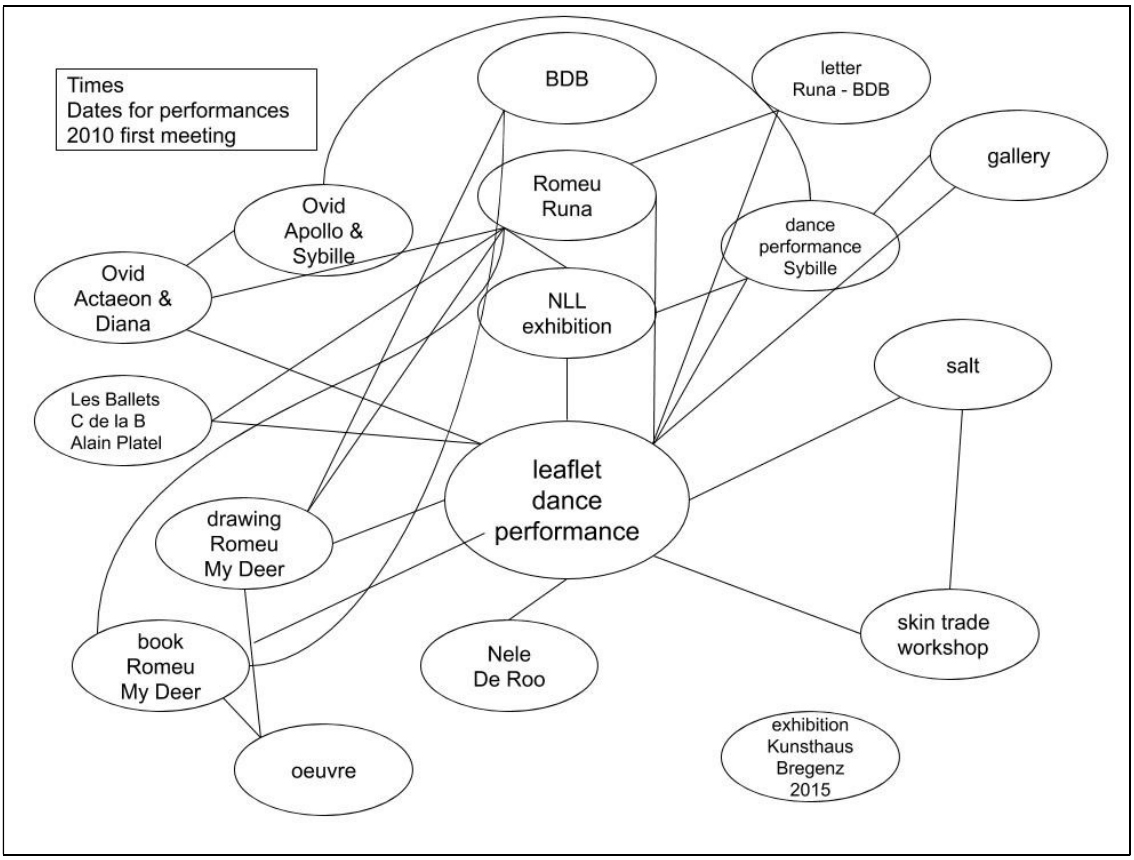


Figure 6.4 The artwork as text - Leaflet Dance Performance – Actants in NLL I*'s network*

6.3.3. ORDERING THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

The press release orders the oeuvre and career. It introduces a new work to the oeuvre and tells the readers and visitors how to understand it. It gives the new work a place in the existing oeuvre by connecting it to recurrent materials in her work – "De Bruyckere has long employed horsehides in her sculptural work" – and an experience that inspired her since 2014 – "this experience has strongly influenced her work ever since" – (Picture 6.9). The text makes the new work fit in an existing and evolving oeuvre. It selects older work (sculptural work with horsehides) to make connections with similar but not identical work (because the new work is made with cow skin) and orders the new whole from a new perspective (a powerful experience about death and life in a skin trade workshop). The press release not only situates the new work in the oeuvre, but also introduces the exhibition and the oeuvre as a whole. It emphasises the artist's embeddedness in European traditions – "Traditions of the Flemish renaissance … legacies of the European Old Master and Christian legacies … mythology and cultural lore" – which is important for a public not familiar with her work.

The press release orders BDB's career as well. It introduces her with name, date of birth, and place of residence and work, and emphasises the longevity of a career – more than 30 years and still on-going (referring to a future exhibition). It presents BDB's career path as a passage through institutions of contemporary art and introduces the new exhibition as a new and special entry on the track record, the first large exhibition in the US. The exhibition becomes a milestone in BDB's career because the document says it is. Curriculums vitae are rhetorical presentations of the self and careers (Gowler & Legge, 1989; Metcalfe, 1992; Miller & Morgan, 1993); they frame how others should see us. The document further embeds BDB in the gallery's family of artists by referencing Belgian artist Philippe Vandenberg, one of the estates represented by the gallery. The gallery uses the document to justify the presence of an unknown artist at H&W in New York. The document talks about *Kreupelhout – Cripplewood, 2012-2013 (2013)*, an artwork that was made for the 55th edition of the Venice Biennale in 2013 in collaboration with the Nobel Prize winner novelist J M Coetzee. That celebrated artwork was shown for the "first time" to an American audience at H&W in New York.

The rhetorical moves in the press release can be understood by Callon's (1984) model of translation: the press release presents an interpretation of the artwork and the artist

as embedded in a network. The press release aims to interest the readers partly because of that interpretation.

6.3.4. SOMETHING THAT LASTS

Several times BDB pointed out the importance of making "something that lasts" or something that goes beyond the short exhibition for a small group of people. The photographer said more or less the same by highlighting the importance of texts and photographs for further steps in their careers (next exhibitions, sales, …). Documents "keep on communicating", while artworks often reside in crates.

The textualisation of the artwork and the artist's career is an important moment in the trajectory of an artwork and an artist. Like the name, the press release not only orders the oeuvre and career, it also materialises that ordering. Like the name, the texts also act as "immutable mobiles" (Latour, 1987). Embodied in paper and digital form, the discourse might live longer and travel further than talks by the artist and gallery. It can be multiplied, travel and speak for the oeuvre and career at distance, wherever it was taken or sent.

6.4. THE SPACE SPEAKS FOR THE OEUVRE AND THE CAREER

6.4.1. THE PRIVATE OPENING OF A SOLO EXHIBITION

28 January 2016 (excerpt from the fieldnotes)

The day of the private opening of an exhibition always is a highlight for the gallery, the artist, and the artwork. *NLL I* was seen for the first time by a large group of people. Various groups were invited for various parts of the program. The day started with a press view for critics at 11am. A group of 20, mostly young women dressed in black, gathered around BDB in one of the two exhibition spaces that were veiled in a kind of moonlight. In a simple, personal, and down to earth way, BDB told how the show and the works came into being. It is the same story as the one that was written in the press release. How she was inspired by a visit in a skin trader's workshop, and how she used that inspiration first for a scenography for an opera. The group was guided through the two exhibition spaces. The tour ended in a small space with the glass domes. Except for the last space, it was too dark to make notes. After the tour, the press was invited in the bar for European food (cheeses, tapas, charcuterie) and drinks (wine and Belgian beer Stella Artois).

The press view was followed at 12 noon, first by a dance performance to which family, friends, assistants, artists and guardians of artists' estates, curators and collectors were invited. In a semicircle, people were seated around a pile of salt, in which, at first sight, a wax sculpture of BDB could be noticed. After a while, the sculpture started to move, or rather the muscles of that piece of a human body started to move. Little by little the movements became more expansive. The body wallowed in the salt, made animal sounds, threw up the salt, urinated in the salt and left the room after 40 minutes, leaving a salt trace like a slug. The audience seated in the moonlight and in great silence left the room in a subdued mood. Afterwards, guests were invited for lunch in the bar.

Later that day, at 6pm, the exhibition and the bar opened to a wider audience. Between 6pm and 8pm people were expected for the private view of the exhibition. People came in, most of them in couple, some of them on their own. A lot of young people. They walked from one work to another, stayed and talked in silence. Some of them took the information sheet from the desk, but it was difficult to read in the scarce light. There was a hum of voices in the moonlight, mostly English and Flemish. People of the gallery, of all ranks, explained to visitors what the work was about, although not always correctly. One of the attendants for instance, explained to his friends that *NLL I* was made from horse skin, while it was cow skin. The artist was permanently in conversation. I followed some of the visitors, trying to eavesdrop and this is what I caught: "There should be a story behind this cruelty"; "She probably started to make a sculpture and thought it is easier to…"; "Très macabre". During the opening, the bar was full of people; the Stella Artois was free.

Afterwards, BDB told me she was happy with the opening because people stayed for a long time, because she talked with a lot of people, and because everyone was alike due to the light. Due to the moonlight, people were silent and respectfully approached the exhibited works. People could only see each other (and the works!) when very near, so all the festive outfits became a tone of grey, like "grisailles" (i.e. paintings in grey tones).

At 7.30pm taxis brought about 70 people to "Bouley Botanical" in Tribeca for a celebratory dinner. The artist and her husband sat with curators, collectors, and the vice-president of the gallery, at the honorary table. The evening started with a speech by Marc Payot, Vice President of H&W, who thanked the artist, the studio, the staff of the gallery, the husband, and her sons. At 11.30pm the dinner was over, and people faded into the city. The artist and friends dove into the New York nightlife.

In total, nearly 700 people showed up that day. The day after was the public opening and was a day without ceremonial features.

The private opening of the exhibition was meticulously planned. The artist took care of the exhibition: she delivered and installed the artworks and designed the space and the moonlight. The gallery took care of the rest: invitations, press views and tours, food and drinks, and sales. The day of the opening followed a script of successive activities from 11am until midnight. The program alternated between activities in the exhibition spaces and food and drinks in the bar. It was a well scheduled coming and going of guests. Not all the guests were invited for the full programme. The dance performance at 12 noon, for instance, was a "friends & family performance". Groups of people took turns. Press, family and friends, artists and guardians of artists' estates, collectors, and curators, they all appeared one after the other. The script of the private opening made it possible for some groups to mingle – like the press and friends and family before the dance performance at the bar – and made it least likely for other groups – like the press and curators and collectors. While various groups of people moved around the artworks, the artworks themselves remained silent and in place.

The ceremony was organised in two exhibition spaces and the bar. *NLL I* was exhibited in the first exhibition space and shared that space with one older work – *To Zurbaran (2015)* – and two new works – *No Life Lost II (2015)* and *Penthesilea*. The small showrooms, meeting rooms, library, offices, kitchen, and toilets, which were open during the installation of the exhibition, ended up behind closed doors. Only the press,

accompanied by the artist during the press tour, and collectors and curators, accompanied by the staff of the gallery, were allowed to enter these rooms and see some of the new artworks – the *glassdomes* – that were not part of the exhibition because of lack of space.

A lot of people were invited for the private opening of which only a few counted for the gallery manager. The private opening (and the exhibition!) was organised for that small group of "institutional people" or people who came on behalf of institutions such as museums, collections, newspapers, or art magazines. The exhibition was planned in a period in which the Armory Show, a yearly contemporary art fair, also took place (3-6 March in 2016). The Armory Show is one of the moments for which institutional people come to New York. During the exhibition, BDB received weekly a list of names of "important people" or the names of collectors, curators, and museum directors (not the press). So, the private opening of the exhibition was a public event developed for private purposes or the public who works for the private.

6.4.2. A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN NUMBERS

Like the name and the texts, the artwork in situ presented itself as an actor-network. Since *NLL I* received its name and texts have been written, the network was progressively extended with heterogeneous actors (Figure 6.5). As name, the artwork was a small actor-network constituted of actants largely coming from the artistic world. As text, the artwork was a bit larger and constituted of actants associated with the gallery (commerce) as well as the studio (art). The private opening of the exhibition showed a "dramatic increase in numbers" (Latour, 1987:107) or a "multiplication in people, money, documents, [and] stories" (Latour, 1987:247): 700 people of different kinds and with different interests, ten artworks, hundreds of materials such as wax, salt, skin, leaflets, food and drinks. Becker (1982/2008) used the metaphor of the credits of a movie to illustrate the multitude of people involved in producing, distributing and consuming artworks in the art world. It was this multitude of people (and objects) that gathered in the gallery to celebrate a new exhibition.

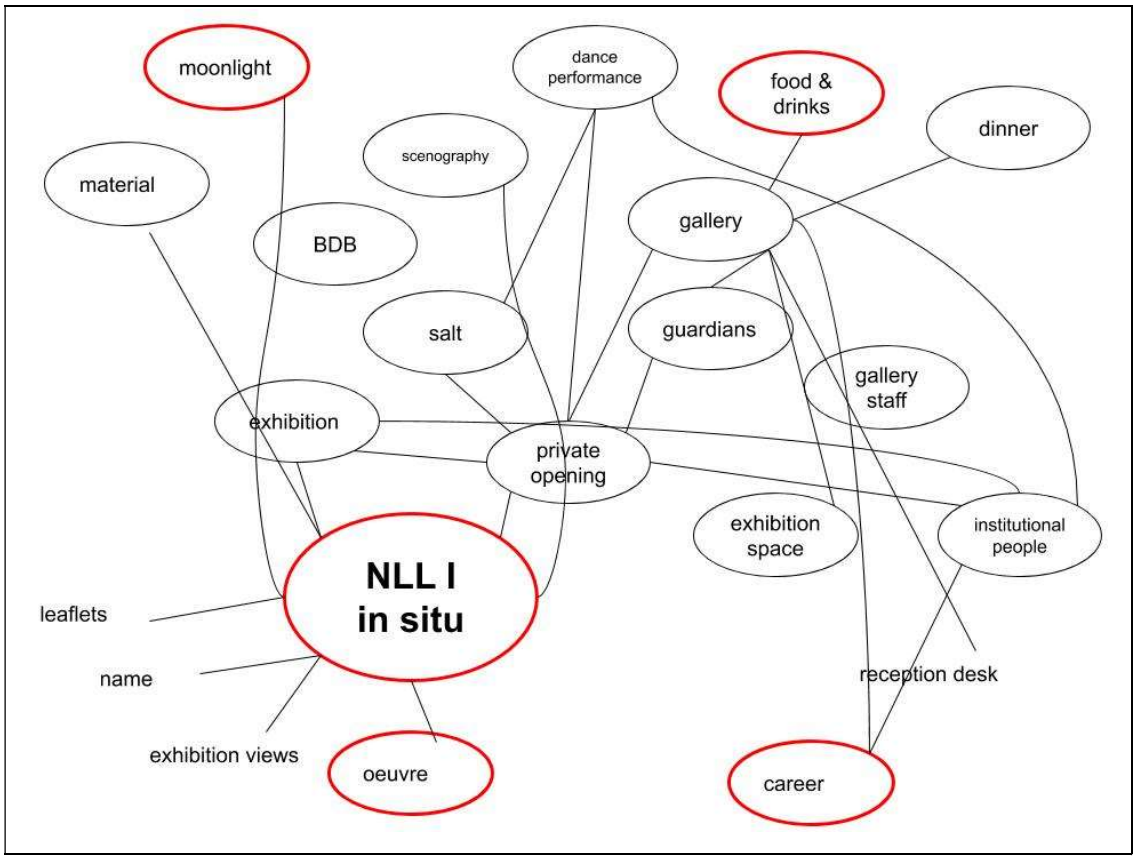


Figure 6.5 The artwork in situ – Actants in NLL I*'s network*

6.4.3. THE ARTWORK-IN-SITU TELLS AND EMBODIES THE OEUVRE AND THE CAREER

NLL I was designed as an "artwork in situ". That means that it was designed specifically for the large exhibition space of H&W in New York. The scenography of the exhibition was designed especially for this space. It refers to the darkness of the skin trader's shop, the scenic light of the opera, the movements of the workers, the hanging hides. Like the name and the texts, the scenography was a materialised list of traces. The traces of the darkness of the skin trader's shop, the scenic light of opera, the movements of the workers, and the meat were materialised in space. It was a spatial ordering of artworks that embodied the oeuvre.

Two spatial elements played a key role at the private opening: the moonlight in the exhibition space and the refreshments at the bar. Both framed *NLL I*. The first within the oeuvre, the second within Europeanness. This was important because it was the first time that BDB showed her work in this space. Additionally, both spatial elements affected the visitors physically (and emotionally) and had social effects.

BDB chose a moonlight effect because of its reference to the painting *Agnus Dei* by Zurbaran in the Prado of Madrid (Picture 6.11), the installation of *Cripplewood* in the Biennale of Venice (Picture 6.12) and the skin trade workshop in Brussels (Picture 6.13). The moonlight acted upon the visitors. It evoked a subdued atmosphere in which the guests spoke softly, neared the artwork very closely to see some detail of the textures, and became invisible for each other. BDB was happy with this effect. It made everyone equal and part of a moment not to forget. The moonlight framed the exhibition and the artwork: it made a new ensemble of the separate artworks.

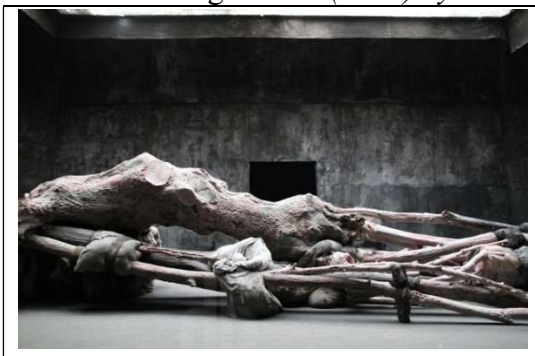
The refreshments that were offered at the bar did the same. They framed the exhibition, the artist, and the gallery as European and connected those who were present; they created a sphere of celebration and made people interact and stay longer.

The artwork in situ or the artwork as space was not only involved in rhetorical (i.e. telling how to understand the artwork) and material (i.e. embodying that understanding) practices, but also in relational practices. It connected the guests.

Inspiration for moonlight



Picture 6.11 Agnus Dei *(1640) by Zurbaran (Prado)*



Picture 6.12 Cripplewood *in Belgian Pavilion in the 55th Biennale of Venice, 2013*



Picture 6.13 Skin Trade Workshop in Brussels (still of a movie by Mirjam Devriendt)

6.4.4. STRONG EMOTIONS AND ATTACHMENT

I heard a lot of stories of shared pasts and futures that day. First, there are the shared stories of the artist and the gallery. BDB and the gallery manager, for instance, emphasised respectively in the press tour and at the speech at dinner, that it was the first solo exhibition in the large space in the US, but that it was already the 9th exhibition they did together. Further, they mentioned that *NLL I* was specially made for the exhibition space and that it was installed for the first time in that space. The exhibition and the catering highlighted their shared European background. Second, there was a collector who told me her story in the taxi to the dinner. Her horse was used for one of the horses for *NLL I*. A third example is the shared history of BDB and the dancer that started by modelling for BDB. They share a past and future, explained in the leaflet and the press tour and it was embodied in the performance. Every story generated networks, actor-networks. The private opening was an opportunity to retell shared histories and that contributed to collective or organisational sensemaking. It helped to reduce uncertainty concerning the exhibition and the new works and confirmed the interdependency of the storytellers.

The experience of the artwork in situ differs from the experience of an artwork as name, text, or picture. The size of the artwork as well as the space, the materials and texture of the materials, and the darkness evoked strong emotions. The exposure to the artwork in situ was an "affective event" that provoked a process of affective reactions (Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004a). The artwork in situ not only appealed to logos and ethos, it also appealed to pathos (Gagliardi, 1990). The moonlight, the food and drinks, the dance performance, the material artworks affected people. These uncommon actors created emotions, which is essential in the process of sensemaking (Rafaeli & Vilnai-

Yavetz, 2004a). It attached people to the artwork and each other. This made that guests were enrolled and were likely to accept the new interpretation and were mobilised and were likely to defend and consume the new interpretation. They spoke for the exhibition, and thus the oeuvre and career. They ordered the oeuvre and career temporarily.

It was clear that the artworks raised questions and emotions and that they were scrutinised. A lady challenged the girls at the reception desk about the information on the materials of *NLL I* delivered on the Information Sheet. Attendants provided visitors with information. The artist liaison asked me about the materials and production process of *NLL I*. When asked about their experiences about the artwork, visitors asked me about the materials and when I replied that they were casts of wax, they returned fascinated. The Vice President of the gallery told me in an interview that people either completely rejected or understood the exhibition.

6.4.5. THE ARTWORK IN SITU PERFORMS THE OEUVRE AND THE CAREER

A multitude of interests were represented that day. Institutional people came with their specific goals: curators wanted to organise exhibitions, collectors wanted to buy, and galleries wanted to sell, and journalists wanted to publish. Some of them achieved their goal. New exhibitions in Reyjkavik (Iceland) and Kyiv (Ukraine) were arranged for later that year; *Cripplewood* was sold to an American collector in Kentucky; a second exhibition for *NLL I* was planned in Aarhus (DK) in 2017. These outcomes were made possible or accelerated through the artworks at the private opening.

The night before the opening the photographer made exhibition views of all the artworks. The artwork in situ was materialised in exhibition views, which made it possible to be published in magazines and books. The artwork has become an "immutable mobile" and can travel to people who were never able to come to the exhibition in New York.

6.5. CONCLUSION: AN ARTWORK MULTIPLE INVOLVED IN MULTIPLE PRACTICES

In this first empirical chapter, I used ANT to analyse how an artwork acts upon an artist's career. It tells the story of how an artwork tells, embodies, and performs the oeuvre and career. Drawing on early ANT writings I highlighted that action or agency

is the effect of a heterogeneous network: from that perspective *NLL I* can be understood as an actor-network. Drawing on later ANT writings I highlighted that that effect was done by multiple versions of the artwork and that it was a temporal effect: from that perspective *NLL I* can be understood as an artwork multiple.

That "artwork multiple" was involved in rhetorical, material, and relational practices. It tells people how to see the oeuvre and the career. That interpretation got materialised and became simultaneously stable and mobile. The materialisation process or the process of "matter-ing" (Law, 2004b) was a collaborative endeavour of the artist, assistants, collaborators and the gallery. The artwork was involved in relational practices. This was especially the case on the private opening of the exhibition, where the artwork was presented to the guests. The artwork affected and connected people to the artwork, to each other, and to all the actants in the network. Relational practices facilitate enrolment and mobilisation of actants for the career. It spoke for many.

CHAPTER 7 THE ARTWORK WAS MADE TO ACT

> You cannot learn what a sheep is by staring at a picture. It helps more to unravel the practices in which sheep figure, in which they are enacted in one way or another. If we do this we do not discover a sheep that is unified and coherent. Instead we find a 'sheep multiple'. This is because a slightly different sheep is done in each practice. Even so, this multiplicity is not plurality. Instead there are complex and intricate relations between the various versions of a sheep (Law & Mol, 2010:65-66).

The previous chapter focused on how the artwork *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) (NLL I)* acted upon Berlinde De Bruyckere's (BDB's) career. It demonstrated how *NLL I*, as an "artwork multiple", contributed to career making. It showed how *NLL I* spoke on behalf of BDB's oeuvre and career. That action is possible because *NLL I* was made to act in multiple practices by an evolving network. *NLL I* is an "actor-enacted" (see section 3.2.2.). It was not BDB on her own who enacted *NLL I*; it was a shifting web of actors that put a lot of effort into the making of *NLL I*.

This chapter focuses on the enactment of *NLL I.* It will demonstrate how *NLL I* was enacted in production to become a material artwork, how it was enacted in transport to remain the artwork that was produced and to travel, how it was enacted in the installation process to be shown to an audience, how it was enacted in exhibitions to be valued by invitees and visitors, and how it will be enacted in the collection.

The previous chapter focused on the first research question "How does an artefact act upon careers?", this chapter answers the second and third research questions: "How does an artefact become and remain active?" and "What is the relationship between the artefact and its maker in the process of career making?". The chapter first focuses on the enactment of the artwork (section 7.1.), then on its relationship with the maker (section 7.2.)

In the previous chapter I "went downstream" to understand how an artwork can act upon a career, in this chapter I "go upstream" to investigate how that artwork became and remains a career actor. The chapter rewinds the film about *NLL I* to 2014 and focuses on how *NLL I* was and still is enacted. It tells the story of *NLL I* in a chronological way. I focus on just one version of the artwork multiple, namely the material artwork as it was produced, transported, installed and exhibited in between

October 2015 and April 2016. This sole version generates a multitude of people, ideas, and materials that were involved in the becoming and remaining of *NLL I* and is exemplary for other versions of the artwork. Both chapters together explain the power of an artwork: first by showing how it acts upon a career, second by showing how that powerful artwork came into being and how a network keeps putting effort in it.

The long process of enacting *NLL I* shows a series of displacements which gradually lead to visibility and to BDB's abandonment of *NLL I*, which finally might secure a long life (De Laet & Mol, 2000).

The chapter goes as follows. It starts with five chronicles each followed by commentaries. The second section (section 7.2.) zooms out from the different processes of production, distribution and consumption and looks at the process as a whole.

7.1. IT WAS HARD WORK TO ENACT *NO LIFE LOST I 2014-2015 (2015)*

This section highlights the hard work that was needed to enact *NLL I*. I focus on who and what acted upon the artwork since 2014 and I focus on the processes of production, transportation, installation, exhibition, and collection. The section chronicles and analyses how *NLL I* became and remains an active artwork. Chronicles are a common style of presenting material in empirical studies of ANT (Bruni, 2005; Hamilton, 2011; Latour, 1999a; Law, 1994; Mol, 2002). The chronicles are put in boxes and followed by commentaries that analyse remarkable and recurrent aspects in the processes of the enactment of *NLL I*. Table 7.1 recaps the essence of this section.

The next section (7.2.) pulls together the analyses of the commentaries and observes a pattern: a series of displacements leading to visibility as well as abandonment. These movements and outcomes will be further discussed in the next chapter (chapter 8).

Table 7.1 The enactment of No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) *in multiple practices*

	Producing *NLL I*	**Transporting and storing *NLL I***	**Installing NLL I**	**Exhibiting NLL I**	**Collecting NLL I**
Hard work	Producing 17 individual sculptures for an installation	Making crates and attachments, handling artworks, transporting crates in containers over the ocean	Installing *NLL I* in exhibition spaces	Guarding artworks, inviting visitors, communicating about the exhibition, selling, negotiating future exhibitions	Collecting
By an evolving heterogeneous network	Artistic network consisting of artist, assistants, artistic collaborators, hides, opera scenes, previous artworks, …	Logistic network consisting of art handler, carrier, studio manager, crates, depots, …	Artistic, technical and commercial network consisting of artist, photographer, technical staff of the gallery, exhibition space, light, …	Commercial and institutional network consisting of journalists, curators, collectors, visitors, gallery staff, museums, exhibition space, food and drinks, documents, photographs, …	Commercial network consisting of gallery staff, collectors, artist, exhibition space, …
Enacted the artwork	Enacted as artwork (name, text, material artwork) (artwork multiple (Mol, 2002), immutable mobile (Latour, 1987), actor-network (Latour, 1987))	Enacted as cargo (object that can travel undamaged) (immutable mobile (Latour, 1987))	Enacted as artwork in situ; enacted as commodity	Enacted as artwork, a commodity (affective event (Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004))	Enacted as artwork and property Part of a collection (agency by abandonment (De Laet & Mol, 2000))
Role of artist	Controls objects and people Tinkers	Well prepared, but responsive to space and artwork	Well prepared, but responsive to space and artwork	Assists the artwork	
A series of displacements (process)	In the studio	From the studio (Ghent) to the gallery (New York) From the gallery (New York) to Kunsthal (Aarhus)	From the studio to the technical staff H&W; From the studio to the technical staff Kunsthal	From studio to visitors (audience, curators, collectors, press)	Not yet in a collection

	Producing *NLL I*	Transporting and storing *NLL I*	Installing NLL I	Exhibiting NLL I	Collecting NLL I
A series of translations	Translated into an installation, documents	From Kunsthal (Aarhus) to the depot of the gallery (Zurich) <u>Storage</u> Since April 2016 in New York; Since February 2018, 7 hides in Zurich Translated into freight	Translated into technical issue	Translated into institutional world	
Effect on Visibility Detachment/attachment	Visibility limited to the studio and collaborators Attached to BDB	Invisible (in crates)	Visibility limited to technical staff, to collaborators and accompanied people	Publicly visible (trace in a list of traces)	Detached from BDB, attached to a collection
most striking	Chain of translations and fluidity (see table 7.2)	Promise for travelling and longevity	Importance of space and materials	Visibility	Abandonment

7.1.1. PRODUCING AN ARTWORK

An artistic network consisting of the artist and her assistants and collaborators, materials such as hides and wax, and previous experiences and realisations produced *NLL I* during the Autumn of 2015 (Table 7.1). *NLL I* is one the works of a series of work inspired by a visit to the skin trader's workshop in 2014 (see section 5.1.1.2. for a description and timeline of *NLL I*). The conception of *NLL I* was the result of a series of translations (see table 7.2). The initial plan was revised during the production process, which had some consequences for *NLL I*'s future.

7.1.1.1. The initial plan



Picture 7.1 Top view of BDB's desk in the office of the studio in Ghent, taken on 10 November 2015. Floor plan of the exhibition space of Hauser & Wirth in New York with cut out artworks. The artwork that later came to be known as NLL I *is represented by an installation made for the scenography of the opera* Penthesilea *in De Munt opera house in Brussels (circled).*

It was not clear until September 2015 if the exhibition space in New York would still be available in 2016. Once confirmed, BDB and the gallery manager agreed on the selection of works and scheduled transport for 1 December. In November I found the materialisation of that agreement on BBD's desk (Picture 7.1). It was a floorplan of the gallery with photographs of the selected works and the works yet to make. The exhibition space was divided into two spaces by a wall. The left space was destined for *Cripplewood*, the right space for the new works of which *NLL I* was one, and the corridor to the bar for a series of small works (glassdomes and drawings). The new works yet to be made were represented by

photographs of older works. *NLL I* was represented by its model, a sculpture of three hanging hides that was part of the scenography for the opera *Penthesilea*.

The deadline was very short, so it was all hands-on deck. The steady team of three assistants (see Table 5.1 for the division of labour in the studio) was extended up to eight with former assistants, assistants of her husband, an assistant of the moulder, a volunteer, and an intern. That team started to produce the new works for the exhibition, among which an installation of three rows of 25 hanging hides modelled on the sculpture of the opera scenography (Picture 7.1). The model consisted of polyester casts, each of them made out of one mould so that the backsides were left open. BDB planned to make a similar installation, but to adjust it to specific requirements for a freestanding installation. As people in an exhibition space can watch the artworks from close up and walk around the artwork, the material execution becomes important. Therefore, BDB planned to make casts in wax and not in polyester, to close the casts, and to pay attention to the texture of the sculptures. To do that, five moulds were made, each of which consisted of three parts so that 25 pieces could be cast. Variation between the 25 pieces would be obtained by varying colours.

Commentary 1: the initial plan highlights a heterogeneous network, an incremental process, and a chain of translations

In this first commentary of a series of twelve, I foreground some aspects that are also relevant in other chronicles. I choose to analyse each aspect only once because otherwise the commentaries would become too repetitive and too tedious. When an aspect is sole for one practice, I will mention that explicitly.

The artistic network that produced *NLL I* consisted of the artist herself, her assistants, regular collaborators, volunteers, and interns, but also people with whom she did not work before such as the staff of the opera house and the workers in the skin trade workshop. Besides people, the network also consisted of spaces, materials, and practices. For instance, the space, the practices, and the materials in the skin trade workshop inspired BDB in her design for the opera scenery and series of artworks that followed after that commission and of which *NLL I* was one. Or for instance, the use of scenic light in the opera that she employed for the exhibition. It was a heterogeneous artistic network consisting of symbolic, material, spatial and social actants (see also

Table 7.2 Chain of translations in the genesis of No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)

Translations	*Material translation:* From skins into polyester *Spatial translation:* from skin workshop into opera scene *Institutional translation:* from trade into opera	*Material translation:* from polyester into wax *Spatial translation:* from opera scene into museum (Bregenz) *Institutional translation:* from opera into museum	*Material translation:* from polyester into wax *Spatial translation:* from opera scene into gallery (H&W New York) *Institutional translation:* from opera into gallery	*Material translation:* from skin and wax into dance *Spatial translation:* from skin workshop and studio into gallery *Institutional translation:* from trade and visual arts into dance	*Material translation:* from wax into documents (leaflets, photographs) *Spatial translation:* from studio and gallery in texts *Institutional translation:* from visual arts into documents
					
when	Winter 2015 (January-March)	Summer 2015	Autumn 2015	Autumn 2015	January 2016
Evolving network involved in the translation	People: BDB and opera workshop	Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere	Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere, Guy Cuypers, gallery	BDB, Romeu Runa, studio manager	BDB, studio manager, press office gallery, photographer
Trigger for translation	Call Opera House	Call Museum Bregenz	Call Gallery H&W for exhibition in large exhibition space	Opening solo exhibition H&W	Opening solo exhibition H&W

chapter 3 on ANT). *NLL I* is the result of an incremental production process: *NLL I* was a new expression of an existing theme that integrated previous experiences, practices, perspectives, and realisations not only from the artist but also from others (e.g. skin traders). The production process can be understood as a "chain of transformations" (Latour, 1999a) (Table 7.2). It started with the experience in the skin trader's workshop that is translated in a scenography for the opera, then in sculptures for a museum, and then into a sculpture for a gallery show (see also timeline in chapter 5). Every translation was a transformation: materials changed, spaces changed, the institutional context changed. Successful translations result in the enrolment and mobilisation of people, materials, and spaces (see section 3.3.2. – Callon's model of translation).

7.1.1.2. Revising the plan

The initial plan of making 25 copies out of five moulds changed along the way. BDB and her assistants abandoned the idea of making "copies of reality" and started to combine the different parts of the moulds. For instance, part 1 of mould 2 was combined with part 3 of mould 4. Also, the simultaneous presence of multiple moulds and trials of casts in the studio created opportunities to combine casts and moulds that were not meant for *NLL I*. The combination resulted in huger and more expressive hanging hides and made BDB leave the initial plan:

… because I saw a lot of individual sculptures [in the new sculptures]. The first we made, as copies of reality, needed each other, they needed a kind of series to function as an image, they were not so strong in themselves. And this is something very strange, something I have been noticing all my life, it is that when I just make the perfect copy of something, that it is very stiff and dead, whereas when you work with the same mould but give it a twist, or manipulate it, or stretch it, or deform it, then it becomes much more lively, much more physical, much richer. Thus, knowing that, I'm never afraid of leaving the path of reality

BDB embraced this unintended outcome due to a coincidence and started from then on to produce more expressive and larger pieces, "fully-fledged sculptures" or "individuals" as BDB called them. In an interview BDB recalled how the work in the studio gradually "evolved from obediently copying towards something that I would never have expected". She continued: "Making something or changing what has been planned is something that you decide along the way." In an interview, the assistants remembered that moment of change as if a "new breath came into the work".



Picture 7.2 Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere, 10 November 2015. The first three "fully fledged sculptures" or "individuals" of the installation No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015).



Picture 7.3 Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere, 10 November 2015. Assistants working on the installation No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) - *assembling parts from different moulds.*

Eventually, the planned installation of a series of 25 copies became an installation of a group of 17 "individuals". Each "individual" got a number, for instance, *NLL I* number 3 or the third individual that was produced (Pictures 7.2 and 7.3).

Commentary 2: Revising the plan highlights an iterative and collective process and the performativity of space and materiality

The chronicle shows that in addition to being incremental, the production process was also iterative and collective. The initial plan of producing 25 copies changed by chance towards a plan of making a series of "individual" sculptures. Rather than being an example of "planned happenstance" (Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999), the production process is an example of receptiveness for happenstance. BDB embraced the unexpected in the production process, to what space and materials showed her. Such a process of fluid adaptation along the way has been described as "tinkering" (Barinaga, 2017; Czarniawska, 2008; Mol, 2010), which suggests a "persistent activity done bit by bit, one step after another, without an overall plan" (Mol, 2010:265). BDB had a plan but revised it. BDB took the lead, but the production process was also collective. From 2014 on, an increasing number of people got gradually involved in the production of *NLL I*. Collectively, people made sense of what they were doing, they translated and inserted *NLL I* into their world.

The chronicle also shows the importance of material and spatial elements for what *NLL I* finally became. Regarding materials: the new casts, originated by happenstance, showed BDB their individuality and made her abandon her initial plan. Regarding space: because the studio worked simultaneously at different artworks in the same room, moulds were used interchangeably, and trials of other works were available to include in new works. The result of such material and spatial opportunities was that works that were produced together have a high material connectedness. It resulted in a new artwork that was highly connected to the other artworks in the exhibition and the existing oeuvre, and thus a powerful artwork in the oeuvre.

7.1.1.3. Unintended outcomes of the revised plan

The transition from "copies" to "individuals" had consequences for *NLL I*'s installation and sales. As the individual figures became too large and too heavy to be installed in the studio (4 metres high and 100 kg apiece, or more than 600 kg on one bar on the ceiling), they would have to be installed in the exhibition space without a usual rehearsal in the studio (see Picture 7.3 with five hides hanging on a hook in the studio). Additionally, because *NLL I* became an installation of seventeen individual sculptures rather than a series of copies, it became an artwork in permanent flux. The installation would be re-conceived and re-made for every exhibition space and after every sale. It was already the case for the second exhibition of *NLL I*. In New York, the 17 hides were installed together, in Aarhus only seven hides were installed in a different formation. Future exhibitions will feature other compositions and formations of *NLL I* and will depend on space and the availability of the individual sculptures. The installation *NLL I* will be an installation in which individual sculptures will come and go.

The transition from copies to individuals had commercial consequences as well. An "individual" could be sold separately and be replaced in the installation by a new "individual", not a copy of the figure that has been sold. It made it a much easier commodity in the art market than the huge installation.

Commentary 3: The outcome of a revised plan: the birth of a fluid artwork that is easier to show and to sell

The unintended transition from copies to individuals had an important impact on BDB's career because it became more likely to show the "individuals" in exhibitions and thus become more visible, and it became more likely to sell them separately instead of one huge installation.

So far, shadowing *NLL I* while it was produced, taught me that producing *NLL I* was a slow, gradual process that started in 2014 with a visit to a skin trader's workshop. It showed the process as a chain of translations, whereby actants were enrolled and

mobilised with the result that they can speak for the new artwork. Third, it showed me *NLL I* as a highly referenced or a highly connected artwork within an artistic network. And finally, it revealed *NLL I* as a fluid artwork that adapts to space, to sales, to … These four disclosures resonate with ANT writings that understand artefacts as fluid networks. This is important for my study because it shows that becoming a career actor needs hard work.

7.1.2. TRANSPORTING AND STORING A CARGO

It was a logistical network that transported and stored *NLL I*. It consisted of people such as registrars, art handlers, art carriers, but also of documents, crates, cranes, containers, warehouses, the weather, and climatological parameters (Table 7.1). That network enacted *NLL I* as cargo that needed to be delivered unscathed to the exhibition space.

7.1.2.1. Transporting *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

The transport of the artworks was meticulously prepared. The studio manager made the arrangements with the registrar of H&W, the art handler Aorta, and the art carrier Mobull (see Table 5.1 for the division of labour in the gallery). The registrar controlled the storage and transport of artworks, Aorta made custom-made crates and packing materials, and Mobull took care of the customs, administration, and transport. On the day of the departure, the 7th of December 2015, the playground of the former school was full of people and large crates waiting for three sea containers to take the artworks to New York (Picture 7.4). The wooden crates, panelled with foam and filled with bags with packing foam peanuts protect *NLL I* against the cold, the heat, and shocks on future transports and during storage. Mobull managed that the containers would be stowed "below water level" because of the low temperature and lack of sun and rain.

There was a bit of panic that morning. The studio manager was on the phone and BDB was talking to the manager of Aorta. For three artworks – two *Penthesileas* and the showcase of *No Life Lost II (2015)* – the crates were too small. So, either the crates had to be enlarged, or the artworks had to be reduced. Aorta had surveyed the artworks on beforehand, but BDB changed the size of the artwork and forgot to inform them. Reducing the artworks was not possible as both the shields of Pentiselea and the wooden panels are in one piece. The only solution was to enlarge the two crates immediately, so that they could leave with the last container that day.

Another issue was that the studio's system of labelling of the crates was different from that of the carrier and it took a while before the two systems corresponded. The studio's codes on the crates did not work

for the carrier, so they had to translate it in their system and put their codes on it (Pictures 7.4 and 7.5). My fieldnotes of that day report on this "moment of translation" that took a couple of hours:

They [the staff of the art carrier] have a plan (with A, B, C, and Ds) of how the crates should be stowed into the containers. The crates are not labelled that way by the studio. The carrier came with three men. The "principal", a French-speaking macho, is continuously on the phone. They have to measure everything again to make it fit their system. Finally, they write manually a letter on the crates. The studio's system is not adopted. (excerpt of fieldnotes 7 December 2015)

Both issues got resolved and all the artworks that were produced for the exhibition departed as scheduled. *NLL I* left the studio in about 20 crates - 17 hides each in a crate and some more crates for lighting, hooks, and other material. The three containers arrived at H&W on the 13th of January, a windy day that made it impossible to use a crane for lifting and placing containers in the exhibition space.



Picture 7.4 Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere, 7 December 2015. One of the crates of NLL I *with a new code made by staff members of Mobull on the spot.*



Picture 7.5 Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere, 7 December 2015. Three staff members of Mobull figuring out a new plan for stowing the crates into the containers.

Commentary 4: The transport of *NLL I* highlights the collaboration between two networks and material issues

The chronicle reports on the collaboration between an artistic and logistic network. The collaboration was not easy. A lot of translation was needed. For instance, it took hours to translate the studio's codes into the carrier's. Only after this translation, all the crates could be stowed in the container. It also took hours to adjust the crates and load the *Penthesilea*s.

The artist and the studio manager initiated and controlled the transport as is clear in the chronicle above: they decided the crates had to be heightened, they decided that the artworks had to be taken out on the street in New York without a crane. Following the exhibition, it was the artist who decided which pieces stayed in New York after the exhibition and which went to Aarhus and thus decided about the future possible exhibitions for *NLL I*.

Yet, *NLL I* also played an important role in its transport and storage. The material wax and the large size of *NLL I* necessitated a particular type of crate, storage, and transport. Its material features asked to be handled with care and defined its place in the ship. As was evidenced above, some artworks resisted to enter the crates and imposed themselves, but in the end, all the artworks that were produced left the studio that day.

Without all the hard work of the studio, the handler, the carrier, and the technical staff of H&W, *NLL I* would not have been exhibited as it was produced in Ghent.

7.1.2.2. The storage of *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

In November 2017, after having been stored for more than a year in the warehouse of H&W in New York, seven of the seventeen hides left their crates again for a solo exhibition in Aarhus (DK) as part of the festival Cultural Capital of Europe. Afterwards, in 2018, they travelled on to H&W's largest warehouse in Zurich (CH). The other ten hides remained in New York. The divided storage of the installation is convenient for the gallery as well as for European and American exhibition makers, as transport of huge installations is expensive and makes it less likely to be chosen for an exhibition. Curators and collectors can more easily choose one or more hides and BDB can make a new installation. *NLL I* became an installation that is re-conceived and re-made at every sale and for every exhibition space.

Commentary 5: Hidden in crates, but assured of a long life

Since the 1990s hundreds of artworks have left BDB's studio and are dispersed around the world. Only a few of these are visible to the public. Most of the time they reside in crates in the depots of the artist, of the two galleries, collectors or museums and are looked after by registrars. Crates and depots are important in the life of an artwork. They not only enable artworks to travel and become visible, they also are the permanent residence for most artworks. Artworks can survive in crates and safe storage is crucial, as the longevity of artworks is one of the clues to the durability of an artist's reputation (Lang & Lang, 1988, 1990).

In sum, the logistic network, in charge for transport and storage, makes it possible for an artwork to live long, to travel, and finally what is the most important to be visible to an audience. The chronicles above make clear that visibility in an exhibition space depends on mundane things like the size of crates, the sea level, the wind, … The processes of transport and storage are similar to those of the production: they are iterative (e.g. the search for workable codes for stowing) and they are collective or collaborative. Because transport needs collaboration between two different networks, the need for translations is even more arduous.

7.1.3. INSTALLING AN ARTWORK IN SITU

NLL I was installed for the first time in H&W's large exhibition space in New York. It was made as an "artwork in situ" as I discussed in the previous chapter (see section 6.4.3.). Once installed and illuminated it was ready to be shown to an audience and to become an "exhibition view" (i.e. a photograph of the artwork in the exhibition space). After New York, other installations followed (or not). The next section chronicles the preparation of the first installation in New York, the installation itself, the lighting, and the second installation in Aarhus.

7.1.3.1. Preparing the installation of *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

The installation was well prepared by the studio. The studio manager informed the gallery about what was needed on the spot. By the time BDB's technical team came, the gallery's technical team had converted the exhibition space by covering the rooftop skylights to block out the daylight and by building a wall to divide the space into two and by painting the walls. The majority of the materials, however, were shipped together with the artworks: four lighting boxes, three metal bars and 17 hooks. On the flight to New York BDB prepared the order of hanging for the hides in the installation with paper cut-outs made from printed photographs (Picture 7.6).



Picture 7.6 Top view on a table in the Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere, 7 January 2016. Paper cut-outs of the hanging hides, used on the plane to New York to prepare an order of hanging.

Commentary 6: Preparing for the unknown

The installation *NLL I* still needed to be assembled. Because it was such a huge installation and it would take hours if not days to assemble the real pieces, BDB worked with a model that she easily could manipulate (even on the plane). This practice shows how the installation became a fluid artwork, an artwork that can be adapted to any demands. BDB's puzzle "in abstracto" was done before materials and space imposed their demands. Once in the exhibition space with the seventeen individual sculptures at hand, the concrete installation started.

7.1.3.2. Installing *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

NLL I had never been installed before. That was not unusual. BDB had often conceived works for specific spaces and the monumental size of her recent works made final rehearsals in the studio impossible. This means that artworks often get installed for the first time in the space where they will be shown and that existing artworks get re-installed in a new space, as was the case for *Cripplewood*. Although "installations in situ" were familiar for her, BDB anticipated some difficulties with the installation of *NLL I*, which created a lot of stress as BDB expressed in one of the interviews:

[…] the installation in New York was very stressful because I knew that there were still a lot of decisions to make. So, the light, the moonlight, we had never seen it. We didn't know how we had to do it. The hanging hides, will there be enough of them, will they be too many?

Therefore, and also because *NLL II* was not finished yet and because *Cripplewood* needed some welding on the spot, BDB planned to go three weeks before the opening of the exhibition with a team of five assistants and collaborators. On the spot her team worked together with the technical staff of the gallery on the installation of *Cripplewood*, *NLL I* and *NLL II*. A lot of decisions were taken and the initial plan for the hanging system changed. In an interview, the technical support, who joined BDB's team for the installation, reflected on that iterative installation process:

the work itself, the parts or the hides were ready, but how the hides were to hang kept us busy for two days. The construction to hang the hides was too large and was cut and re-welded. The height and directions had to be tried out. It was improvisation. We had to leave, and then in the last hours, we found some metal in the depot so that we could weld things together.

On the spot, BDB had to negotiate between space, light, artworks, her team, and the gallery's team. The interplay between the exhibition space and the artworks imposed the position of the artworks in the space. BDB uses three criteria for allotting an artwork a place in the exhibition: the space, the way visitors move in and through the space, and the dialogue between the artworks.

every time anew … for me it also has a lot to do with how do you approach it, what is the distance between the [artworks]…, do you come from there, or from there, or that way [BDB makes movements

on a sketch of the exhibition plan], you almost have to hang them in a different order … these difficulties will remain. Because you cannot lay it down, because it depends on the space and on how you approach the artworks in that space.

Once *NLL I* was allotted a position in the room, the exhibition space continued to impose its terms. It made BDB see that the bars were too long, that only two points of attachment to the ceiling were available, that the colour rust in which the bars and hooks were painted, did not work, and that four lighting boxes did not function. Upon this, BDB decided to cut down and strengthen the bars, to re-paint the bars and hooks in grey, and to reduce the lighting boxes from four to three.

Due to space constraints, not all artworks that were shipped were installed. On the spot, BDB felt that the corridor was too narrow to host the *glassdomes* and drawings and that the beams in the first exhibition space were too intruding for a second *Penthesilea*. As a result, the *glassdomes* and one *Penthesilea* were omitted from the exhibition, although for a couple of days after the opening the *glassdomes* were displayed behind closed doors, visible only to accompanied press and collectors.

Commentary 7: Tinkering with space and materials and collaboration

Spatial and material aspects play a key role in the enactment of *NLL I*. The chronicle shows how BDB and her team responded to space. In advance, the exhibition space was adapted for the artworks yet to come. However, on the spot, space and materials resisted the initial plan (see also Picture 7.1). Artworks were taken out or adapted to the exhibition space by cutting a lighting box and painting bars and hooks as was in the case of *NLL I*. BDB "tinkered" the installation of *NLL I* by taking into account the interplay between spatial dimensions such as beams, the passage through the space, the relationships between artworks in the space, and the material features of *NLL I* such as size, height, and colour. The studio manager admires BDB for her talent to play with space.

BDB tried to obtain extra space for the glassdomes. She hoped for one of the small showrooms in the gallery where the gallery exhibits artworks behind closed doors. But it didn't work out. "A Picabia raises much more money than a BDB", she explained me. What was finally shown depended on the interplay between space and material features.

The installation of *NLL I* was a collaboration of an artistic, technical, and commercial network. The monumentality of *NLL I* made that BDB needed a lot of hands, equipment, and materials for its installation. For three weeks BDB's team worked together on the spot with the gallery's technical team. An increasing number of people,

materials and space appeared: the gallery manager, the gallery's technical staff, the artist's liaison, the photographer; fork trucks, ropes, light; and an exhibition space. The studio and gallery collaborated, but hold fast to their values, practices, materials, and equipment. BDB took the lead and translated what she wanted. She finally enrolled and mobilised the technical and commercial staff of the gallery. BDB succeeded: *NLL I* got installed "as she wanted".

7.1.3.3. Illuminating *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

After *NLL I* was installed, it needed to be illuminated. That was what I observed when I entered the exhibition space on the 25th of January (Pictures 7.7, 7.8, 7.9). Light has become very important in BDB's exhibitions and it is even more in spaces where no daylight comes in. BDB told me that she wanted "a cold light because warm light is not beautiful on wax, it turns it into real meat. The technical staff is not used to work with my light." That day, the photographer took the lead in the installation of that light for *NLL I* and directed the gallery's technical staff. Height, position, and intensity were adjusted by trial and error. The beams in the ceiling made that only three of the four lighting boxes that were shipped to the gallery were used. Six people worked for hours to adjust the light of which four adjusted the height: two people lowering and raising the lighting boxes with the help of ropes, one person on the bridge, another in the exhibition space.

The collaboration between the studio's and gallery's team was not easy. Most of the time, the teams worked separately with their equipment. BDB and her assistants finalised *NLL II*, while two men on a fork truck were installing the lighting for *Cripplewood* and three men and a woman on another forklift truck and with ropes were installing the lighting of *NLL I*. There was a lack of understanding from both sides. BDB told me that the gallery's team had to install the showcase of *NLL II* three times before it was stable and that this took them a week. And the photographer expressed her doubts about their way of working as well. The gallery's manager's assistant, on the other hand, told me that BDB was "meticulous" in the installation, that she is someone for whom "every detail count", and that it has been a "long installation".

It was difficult for the technical staff to understand what exactly BDB wanted. With a lot of talk and trial and error they adjusted the place, the height, and the power of the lighting. At noon I heard them saying "we figure it out". They left for a couple of hours. In contrast with the discomfort of the technical staff, BDB's assistants worked in silence at *NLL II*.

By the end of the day, the lighting was installed. *NLL I* was illuminated, ready to be photographed and become an "exhibition view", and ready to be seen by the New York audience.



Picture 7.7 Exhibition space at the exhibition No Life Lost*, at Hauser & Wirth at New York, 25 January 2016 Installing the moonlight. A member of the technical staff in action.*



Picture 7.8 Installing the moonlight. Photographer in action.



Picture 7.9 Installing the moonlight. Photographer showing the artist the lighting boxes while members of technical staff adjust the height.

Commentary 8: Translating "my light"

The illumination of *NLL I* was hard work. It was hard work for the gallery's technical staff to translate BDB's language into their own. It took a lot of words and thoughts, and thus time to be able to understand BDB's light. To execute BDB's requests, the technical staff needed to translate "the cold light" into technical parameters they can control such as height, position, and intensity and into materials and equipment, they are familiar to work with such as fork trucks, lighting boxes and ropes.

7.1.3.4. Subsequent installations of *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

In November 2017 *NLL I* was installed for the second time. It was a completely different installation: seven instead of seventeen hanging hides, two rows instead of three rows, the bars attached to the walls instead of the ceiling and illuminated by the dark Scandinavian winter daylight instead of artificial moonlight. The exhibition *The Embalmer* in the Kunsthal in Aarhus (DK) featured older and new work. *NLL I* and *NLL II* were accompanied by *Embalmed – Twins, 2017*, a monumental installation of two fallen trees, cast in wax, lying on the floor like crippled giants. *NLL I* was installed in the Kunsthal's octagonal space with skylight as the main source of light. This time, BDB's team worked together with the technical staff of Kunsthal Aarhus to install *NLL I*.



Picture 7.10 No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) *in the exhibition* No Life Lost *at Hauser & Wirth in New York, January 2016*



Picture 7.11 No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) *in the exhibition in the exhibition* The Embalmer *at the Kunsthal in Aarhus, November 2017*

Commentary 9: A fluid artwork in practice

The pictures 7.10 and 7.11 show different installations of *NLL I*. It is a consequence of the transition from copies to individuals. The result is that for every invitation to an exhibition, a new installation can be made: new in the number of hides, new in the lighting system and new in the illumination. *NLL I* has become a fluid artwork that adapts to spatial conditions or opportunities. *NLL I* has become easier to transport – less sculptures and thus less expensive. On the other hand, it will be space and materials that define future opportunities for *NLL I*. If and how *NLL I* will be shown will depend on the material and spatial dimensions of future exhibition spaces.

In sum, the installation process in which the artwork was enacted as an artwork in situ shows an increasing number of actants. Different networks collaborated, a lot of actants played a role and especially spatial and material aspects came to the foreground. BDB was simultaneously well prepared and responsive to the network, space, and artwork. Yet, it was BDB who took the lead, and the technical staff who followed her instructions and installed and illuminated the artwork "as she wanted".

7.1.4. SHOWING AN ARTWORK TO INSTITUTIONAL PEOPLE

After months of production, transport, and installation, *NLL I* was finally shown in an exhibition to an audience, first in 2016 in a commercial venue – the most spacious exhibition space of H&W in New York (Picture 7.10), second in 2017 in a public venue – the Kunsthal of Aarhus (Picture 7.11). Becoming visible to an audience is an important step in an artwork's trajectory.

In the previous chapter, I showed how *NLL I* acted upon the oeuvre and career during the private opening of the exhibition. Here I focus on how *NLL I* was enacted in the exhibition and more specifically on how visitors enact *NLL I* as an artwork and as a commodity. The next section discusses exhibition spaces, audiences, and emotions. This section is without pictures, partly because it was too dark, partly because of privacy.

7.1.4.1. Exhibition spaces for *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

In February 2016, the curator of the Kunsthal in Aarhus came to the Studio Berlinde De Bruyckere to discuss the participation of *NLL I* and *NLL II* in one of the three planned exhibitions for the cultural event Aarhus Cultural Capital of Europe 2017. It was the second exhibition space for *NLL I*. A third possible exhibition space was Palermo (IT) in 2018 where *NLL I* would be exhibited in the event *Manifesta 12*. However, after a visit to the space BDB abandoned that opportunity. She made a new work instead: *Mantel I, 2016-2018* (Coat).

Commentary 10: Exhibitions leave lists of traces

The two exhibitions – in the commercial gallery H&W and the subsidised Kunsthal – are exemplars for how the boundaries between private and public exhibitions got blurred (see also section 5.2.2. on different types of exhibitions). Both venues hosted a "museum-like" exhibition, i.e. they combined old and new work, paid a lot of attention to the scenography, employed guards to look after the artworks, and gave free entrance, which is not common for public museums. However, some differences remain. They differ in funding, as the gallery is self-funded and the Kunsthal by various private and public funders. They differ in audiences, as public exhibitions attract a wider audience and a higher number of visitors. Public funded organisations mostly work with curators, organise events and make publications, although the latter was not the case for the Kunsthal. Curators provide the exhibited work with a quality label or represent "a step on the ladder of consecration", as Peter Buggenhout

explained. Galleries such as H&W behave more and more the same as the public-funded organisations: they use curators, organise public events and make publications.

Yet, BDB thinks it is important to show her work outside the commercial circuit:

> …very often when you have a gallery show, all the works are sold and go to a collection, but then, they were never really shown in relation to other sculptures, or to a wider audience.…because a gallery show, whichever way you look at it, you can make the most beautiful show, it remains a commercial affair […] the sculptures are exhibited once, only in the gallery, and then they go to a collection. Also, often, collection, it does not mean that they are exhibited, often they are stored in crates, and I think that is a bit of a pity for the sculptures and a pity for the people who did not see it.

The quote above shows that BDB wants to show her work in relation to other artworks and in relation to the space in which it is exhibited. As the chronicle shows, finding an exhibition space is an interplay between the artist, curators, places, and other artworks. Aarhus met these requirements, Palermo did not.

Exhibitions are not only important for visitors; they are also important for the traces they leave behind. Exhibitions become records in CV's and databases as I discussed in the previous chapter. The list of exhibitions is the artist's track record of a series of achievements. That list or CV constructs and presents the artist in the context of contemporary art (Miller & Morgan, 1993). It is an "abstract of an individual's history of participation in a social collective" (Barley, 1989:53). The list shows the quantity, the quality, and the variety of exhibition venues.

7.1.4.2. Audiences for *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

The audience on the private opening was diverse: from people who were familiar with BDB's work and contemporary art to people who are not; from professionals to amateurs; from Americans to Europeans. Each came with their aims. Ordinary visitors came to watch. Institutional people, as the gallery manager called them, came for the institution they work for: curators came to organise next exhibitions or to buy for a public collection; collectors came to buy. Some encounters between BDB and curators during the first days of the exhibition resulted in new exhibitions, such as the group exhibition *Loss. In memory of Babi Yar* in Pinchuk Art Centre in Kiev (UK) and the solo exhibition *Berlinde De Bruyckere* in the National Gallery of Iceland in Reykjavik (ICE), both from 21 May 2016 on.

Commentary 11: Visibility to whom?

The show was the result of the work and collaboration of an increasing number of actants of artistic, logistic, commercial, and institutional networks. Yet, the real

increase in numbers came with the thousands of visitors who came to the exhibition and the thousands of readers who saw the articles with exhibition views in publications. Peers (other artists, students, …), institutional people, and ordinary people came in great numbers.

The artist and her team stayed for a couple of days after the opening. BDB played the key role and spoke for her artworks and she additionally made space, texts, photographs, and a dance performance speak for the artwork. She brought journalists, curators and collectors close to *NLL I* and talked about it. She told them how to understand it. She translated *NLL I* for the audience, so that people could insert it in their worlds and could write about it, could include it in a next exhibition, and could buy it.

After a couple of days, BDB left and handed *NLL I* and the other artworks over to the gallery. From then on the reception staff, guardians, press officers, salespersons, managers – a whole firm – looked after *NLL I*. They communicated about it, invited people to view it, welcomed people with information and a possible drink in the bar, protect it, try to sell it, … in sum, spoke for *NLL I* to a variety of visitors. Most of that work was and is not visible. It happened and happens behind closed doors.

7.1.4.3. Strong emotions for *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015)*

My fieldnotes of Saturday 30 January report on the visitors' behaviours and experiences. The first Saturday of a gallery show is usually one of the busiest days during the exhibition. 628 visitors showed up that day, 1682 in the first week of the exhibition, followed by 10,856 vistors in total.

In contrast to the private opening two days earlier, it was silent when I entered the exhibition space. Two girls at the desk were drowned in their laptops. Two guards were strolling through the exhibition space. A bartender served a couple of visitors. The other members of the staff were back office. Visitors trickled in the exhibition space, approached the artworks closely, whispered, stayed for a couple of minutes, and left.

The exhibition evoked strong emotions among the visitors. Below is a selection of answers to my question about their experiences:

"Strong and disturbing, beautiful and sad" (man)

"I feel attraction and repulsion. It is strong, ambiguous and dark" (man)

"It is grotesque and at the same time serene" (2 male artists)

"Great show, very strong. I really like the hides. I don't know if I bring the kids, they will cry" (female teacher)

"I will come back. […] I think I like it. I'm still processing it" (female painter)

Waw. I don't know what to do with it. What is it? The tree is alone. […] The dead horses, I don't want to see them. It's too much." (man)

"Brutal, but in a good way. It is not easy to look at. The tree is nearly human." (three young people)

"I make associations with Post War in Europe, with decay. It could also be an artist after the war. I see a reference to [Joseph] Beuys." (young couple)

Not all visitors were moved, some of them criticised the exhibition, because "the light is missing, a lot of work is missing." Obviously, the exhibition space was too dark and empty for this visitor.

For the American audience, the exhibition was obviously extreme and radical, as was confirmed by one of the directors of the gallery:

…certainly, the relationship to the body, human, animal, plants, any of those things within Berlinde's work is something that, in my impression, is particularly jarring and striking for Americans. When you consider that the American audience consuming art, whether it is from a pure perspective of the flaneur or whether it is from a collecting perspective, […] having such an inexplicit relationship to the body, and to the body that in some cases feels like a body rejective ... is not something Americans could super accustom to.

Another (Spanish) director of the gallery told me about the difficulty of the dance performance for the American audience: "Americans are shocked about sex, liquids, and pissing". The same comments were expressed by BDB's entourage: the photographer said that "dead animals freeze them"; the assistants said that "the exposition had an enormous impact in the US"; her husband suggested that:

… within 10 or 15 years [the Americans will maybe buy it], … when the work will be consecrated and will be enough in museums … That's the way Americans are, I think it's awful, but yes, this is different … The sense of rawness of life, or how should we say this, is in Europe much higher than for the slick Americans.

The materiality of the artworks and the space in which they were shown played an important role in how people experienced the artworks. Most of the visitors did not realise that the sculptures were not real trees, real horses, real hides, but instead wax casts of trees and hides and polyester casts covered with horse skin. The materiality fascinated and caused ambiguity, as was expressed by a man saying, "I try to figure out how it was made."

Commentary 12: Strong emotions and the need for translations, and potential attachment

In absence of BDB, the artworks played a key role in the exhibition space. In its material and spatial appearance *NLL I* attracted and repulsed visitors. The quotes of ordinary (American) people and the interpretations of the directors of the gallery as well as the artist's husband demonstrate that the artworks did not leave the visitors indifferent (see also section 6.4.4. for quotes of the institutional people). They affected the visitors and urged the visitors to make sense of the ambiguous experiences. It was hard work for the visitors to translate *NLL I* into their world. If the translation

succeeded and they were "enrolled" (Callon, 1984), they could speak for the artworks, the exhibition, BDB and her oeuvre.

In sum, *NLL I* was made visible to a relevant group of people. The aim of the exhibition was to bring people to the gallery, to get the artworks in collections, and to leave a trace in a list of exhibitions (and vice versa).

7.1.5. COLLECTING AN ARTWORK

The final destination of an artwork is a collection. *NLL I* has not yet been sold; it does not yet belong to a collection. The only work sold out of the exhibition in New York was *To Zurbaran*. The studio manager told me that she expected it to be difficult to sell *NLL I* because of its solemnity and its size. This is in contrast to BDB's initial thought that having 17 "individuals" would make it easier to exhibit and sell the work. What happened to *Cripplewood* demonstrates how the sale of a huge installation can be achieved. *Cripplewood* featured in the exhibition *No Life Lost* and was sold a year later to an American private collector in Kentucky (US). *Cripplewood*'s track record shows that a huge installation needs a well-considered "public life" to end up in a good collection. Before it was sold, *Cripplewood* had been exhibited five times: at the Biennal in Venice in 2013, at the Museum of Contemporary Art SMAK in Ghent in 2014, at Kunsthaus Bregenz in 2015, at H&W gallery in 2016 and the Holland Festival as scenography for Maria Vespers in 2017.

It is hard work for the network to get an artwork in a collection and most of that work is covert, not observable to a researcher. It is hard work for the gallery. The gallery's staff approaches collectors, invites them to openings, dinners, organises meetings with the artist, makes and rejects offers, and finally sells. Getting an artwork in a collection is the result of a long-term relationship between a gallery and a collector. It is hard work for the collector as well. The collector looks for a work that fits into the collection, provides the money, and becomes the new owner. She becomes responsible for the further movements and the conservation of the artwork. As the new owner, she controls the further life of the artwork – its longevity and visibility.

Thus, the ownership of an artwork in a collection changes from the artist to the collector. It becomes part of a new family, a new network, consisting of other artworks, crates and depots, money, collectors, art handlers and carriers and museums. It is

detached from the maker and attached to the collector. It is abandoned by the maker and looked after by the collector. As part of a collection, *NLL I* will speak for the artist and her oeuvre as well as the for the collector and his/her collection.

BDB has the final say in selling an artwork to a collection, and thus on its chances for longevity and visibility. BDB and H&W will thus look for collectors who easily loan artworks to exhibitions. However, once in a collection, it will be the collector, not the artist or the gallery, who will look after *NLL I* and decides on its travels.

7.2. A SERIES OF DISPLACEMENTS GRADUALLY LEADING TO ABANDONMENT

The previous section zoomed in on how an evolving network, mediated by BDB, produced, transported, installed, and exhibited *NLL I*. The chronicles introduced an increasing number of actants and described the hard work that was done to make *NLL I* visible to get it in a collection. It showed how that hard work consisted of translating BDB's world into other worlds and how that translation process was, rather than a linear, a process of tinkering. It showed how the network evolved and how it consisted of heterogeneous actants. It described the processes of becoming a fluid artwork and the processes of making that fluid artwork visible. It showed how those processes resulted in attachment of those involved and in lists of traces. The section described how an evolving network made *NLL I* to act upon BDB's career.

This section zooms out from the practices of production, transport, installation, and exhibition and focuses on two emerging patterns in the whole trajectory of *NLL I*: the displacements of *NLL I* and, related to this, BDB's gradual abandonment of *NLL I*. It focuses on the relationship between the artwork and its maker and aims to answer the third research sub-question "What is the relationship between the artefact and its maker in the process of career making?".

7.2.1. A SERIES OF DISPLACEMENTS

On its trajectory, *NLL I* was displaced multiple times (Table 7.1). It left the studio in crates in December 2015, was transported from Ghent to New York, was installed in the gallery in January 2016, was stored in the gallery's depot in New York in 2016-2017, was transported from New York to Aarhus, was installed in the Kunsthal in 2017, was transported from Aarhus to Zurich, and is stored in the gallery's depot in

Zurich. In the displacements, *NLL I* not only crossed geographical boundaries, but also crossed professional and institutional boundaries, demarcated domains with their values, conventions, routines, logics, and equipment. Professional boundaries separate professions such as artists, carriers, gallery managers, and journalists; institutional boundaries separate studios, galleries, and museums.

NLL I was not only displaced several times, but it was also handed over from one network to another. To do that, networks made a connection and temporarily worked together. For example, the studio, art handler and art carrier worked together on the day of the departure of the artworks for New York. As has been evidenced in the previous sections, the collaboration was not always easy and created ambiguity. When *NLL I* came in new hands – those of carriers, or the technical staff of a gallery or museum, or the visitors – it asked the network for collective sense-making.

ANT conceives of displacements as translations. For Latour (1987) a translation is more than a linguistic act, it also is a geometric one. An idea or an object that is displaced is also constructed anew and inscribed in the new world. It is transformed. The start of a transformation is an ambiguous experience that needs effort to make sense of it. The ambiguity that initiates the translation or transformation is understood by ANT as controversy. Every time *NLL* I was brought into a new network, it generated ambiguity, or it created a controversy and had to withstand the critics to survive and become durable (Latour, 1987).

I observed this at the moment of packing the artwork in the crates and the crates in the container. The two coding systems for packing artworks – the studio's and the carrier's – did not match. It took a while before the carrier's staff had translated the studio's system into their own. I observed this again when the gallery's staff who needed a lot of words to translate "my light" into a light that was producible in the exhibition space. And again, when I observed the visitors, who needed "to process" what they had experienced in relation to something they already knew. To overcome the ambiguity that *NLL I* created, the carriers, technical staff and visitors translated *NLL I* into their values, conventions, routines, logics, and equipment. To be shipped, *NLL I* needed to enter the ordered crates and the containers, it needed to be adapted to the conventions and routines in art transport. To be illuminated *NLL I* needed to make use of the technical infrastructure of the gallery. To be accepted by the audience, *NLL I* needed

to use the interpretive templates of the audience. When the translation from one network to another has turned out well, the artwork spoke on behalf of that new network (Callon, 1984). As evidenced, *NLL I* spoke for the carrier, spoke for the gallery's technical staff and the gallery's visitors. *NLL I* became a career actor that could speak for all the networks by which it was displaced and thus spoke for the career.

7.2.2. ABANDONED BY THE ARTIST

The series of displacements made *NLL I* gradually visible to various audiences. BDB continuously seeks exhibition spaces to show *NLL I*, because, as she said: "once in a crate, you're not seen, and then you're forgotten quickly". Only visible artworks can have an impact on career making (Eikhof, 2013). However, moments of visibility for artworks such as *NLL I* are scarce and brief. So, the series of displacements of *NLL I* not only showed how *NLL I* became gradually visible but also mainly how brief moments of visibility were interspersed with long periods of absence.

Peers were the first to see *NLL I*. They saw *NLL I* during the production process in the studio, during the installation in the gallery, at the private opening of the exhibition and during the exhibition. "Peer regard" is very important in career processes of creative professions (Boutinot, 2012; Boutinot, Joly, Mangematin, & Ansari, 2017; McLeod et al., 2011; Pratt, 2006). The peers were followed first by institutional, second by ordinary people.

The series of displacements of *NLL I* also resulted in moments of being together with BDB alternating with moments of separation from BDB. To make *NLL I* visible, BDB had to abandon it – literally by separating from it. *NLL I* needed to go into the crates, on a ship, installed in another place than the studio, and shown to others. But also, by leaving it to others to care for. While BDB gradually abandoned *NLL I*, others got the possibility to attach to it. While others got attached to *NLL I*, BDB gradually got detached from *NLL I*. In its final destination, a collection, *NLL I* will finally be detached from BDB. Space and materiality played an important role in attachment. The material artwork in situ in its physical and spatial capacity facilitated attachment (see also section 7.1.4.2.). Because it was perceived by the senses, it elicited strong emotions which led to attachment or detachment (Gagliardi, 1990; Gagliardi, 1997;

Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004a). Attachment is a condition for valuation and consumption. So, without visibility and attachment, an artwork cannot be rewarded which is a condition for career making (Eikhof, 2013).

7.3. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on how *NLL I* was enacted by an evolving network as an actor-network and artwork multiple. It answered the second research sub-question "How does an artefact become and remain active?" by demonstrating the effort that was put into making the artwork and making it visible. It demonstrated how *NLL I* was enacted by an artistic network as a material artwork, how it was enacted by a logistic network as cargo able to travel and remain sound, how it was enacted by the collaboration of a technical and artistic network as an artwork in situ, how it was enacted by a commercial network as a commodity to be seen and sold. It showed how the artwork had to adapt and change shape if it is to survive (Law & Singleton, 2005) and how BDB tinkered these adaptations (Barinaga, 2017; Mol, 2010). It answered the third research sub-question "What is the relationship between the artefact and its maker in the process of career making?" by demonstrating how BDB gradually became more detached from *NLL I* as other actors became more attached. To become visible, *NLL I* needed to be separated from BDB; to become active, BDB needed to abandon *NLL I*. I will further explore the usability of the concepts visibility, attachment, and abandonment for career studies in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8 CAREER MAKING IN CREATIVE CAREERS

> Theory is a matter of words not worlds; of maps not territories; of representations not realities (Van Maanen, 1995:134).

How can my study change existing conversations in the careers literature? This chapter discusses the findings presented in the empirical chapters and their implications for theory. It explains how this thesis deepens our understanding of the role of networks and artefacts in career making. It does so by highlighting the processes of becoming and evolving of networks and artefacts; by focusing on the active role of artefacts in networks; and by unravelling the concepts of oeuvre (i.e. the body of work made during one's professional lifetime) and career (i.e. the trajectory along institutions). These new insights refine our knowledge of career making in creative careers and allow us to frame career making differently.

The chapter starts with a brief summary of what I have done thus far. It continues with a discussion of career action, networks, artefacts, and the relationship between the artefact and its maker. It will further reflect on oeuvre and time in career research and will conclude with a summary of the empirical, methodological, and theoretical contributions of this thesis.

8.1. INTRODUCTION

I started this thesis by problematising the role of artefacts in the literature on creative careers. Creative careers have been understood as evolving networks around artefacts, whereby artefacts appear as tools to signal networks, skills, and identities of the makers. Career studies perceive artefacts as passive tools used by people. Jones' (2010) study is a notable exception in career research, drawing attention to active artefacts in career development. She demonstrated how buildings organise architects' profession and careers and used the concept of "boundary object" (Star & Griesemer, 1989) to explain buildings' activity.

Jones' (2010) study inspired me and brought me to Actor-Network-Theory (ANT). I decided to investigate creative careers through the lens of ANT to understand, in-depth, the activity of artefacts. I conducted an ethnographic study of an artefact in the

tradition of ANT and shadowed an artwork from its conception until its sale to a collection. Using an ANT perspective made me look differently at networks, artefacts and the interaction between the artefact and its maker. It made it possible to uncover assumptions in careers literature and to present a new conceptualisation of career making in creative careers.

The ethnography made me see gaps in our knowledge about networks, artworks and career making in creative careers. To address these gaps, I proposed three sub-questions that guided the empirical stage of this doctoral research. The findings I presented in chapters 6 and 7 are summarised in the following table Table 8.1):

Table 8.1 The research questions and key findings of the study

Research questions	Key findings
Key research question: What role do artefacts play in career making?	
Sub-question 1: How does an artefact act upon a career?	*NLL I* speaks for the oeuvre and the career. It acts in multiple practices (rhetorical, material, and relational). It can be understood as an artwork multiple (as a name, as a text and as a material artwork in situ) and an actor-network. (chapter 6)
Sub-question 2: How does an artefact become and remain active?	*NLL I* is enacted by a heterogenous evolving network in multiple practices It is produced as artwork, transported as cargo, installed as material artwork in situ, shown as commodity to a public, sold as commodity to a collection. (chapter 7)
Sub-question 3: What is the relationship between the artefact and its maker in the process of career making?	*NLL I* was gradually abandoned by BDB and became detached from her and attached to others. (chapter 7)

The first empirical chapter draws on insights from early ANT writings (e.g. Callon, 1984; Latour, 1987; Law, 1994) and focuses on how an artefact speaks or acts. In the chapter, I went downstream to investigate the consequences of being an active artefact. It made us understand *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) (NLL I)* as an "artwork multiple" and an "actor-network". The second chapter draws on later ANT writings (Law & Mol, 2010; Law & Singleton, 2005; Mol, 2002) and focuses on how *NLL I* was made to speak or act. In that chapter, I went "upstream" and showed how much effort and on-going action that making-of demands.

The findings have important implications for our understanding of career making, and more specifically for our understanding of the role of networks and artefacts in career making. In what follows, the first three sections of this chapter discuss the three key

concepts which are grounded in careers literature and which permeate the thesis – career making, networks and artefacts. The next three discuss underdeveloped themes and approaches in the study of creative careers, notably the relationship between artefacts and their makers and new perspectives on oeuvre and time. The chapter ends with a summary of the chapter and the theoretical contributions of the thesis.

8.2. CAREER MAKING

In the careers literature, career making is described as career building, career construction (Savickas et al., 2009), career design, and career crafting (Akkermans & Tims, 2017). All of these concepts refer to the fact that careers do not unfold, but rather are built, constructed, designed, and crafted by individuals who exert power to create and direct their careers. The concepts assume that individuals intend, direct, and control their careers, that they can choose between alternatives and make decisions leading to greater career satisfaction and success. The concepts furthermore assume that career making is a process in which the individual navigates and negotiates his or her career.

In career studies, the notions of intention, direction and control have been studied as career action or career agency (Inkson et al., 2015). In social theory, there is a long-standing debate on the concept of "agency". It has been broadly defined as the capacity of an agent to act in a world (Parzefall & Seeck, 2008) and is often juxtaposed to the term structure, which is the social structure in which the individual plans and acts. Career action is mainly studied in career development theories and is then understood as a goal-directed, intentional behaviour of human beings, whereby human beings can make choices and impose these choices on the world (Parzefall & Seeck, 2008). The most radical conceptualisation of career action is that of the "protean career" (Hall, 1976, 2004), named after the Greek sea-god, Proteus, who changes forms when needed. This kind of conceptualisation involves a "career orientation in which the person, not the organisation, is in charge, where the person's core values are driving career decisions, and where the main success criteria are subjective" (Hall, 1976; 2004:1).

As mentioned in section 2.1.1., the focus on individual agency in career studies has been challenged by more sociological approaches which argue that context matters to

career making (Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2011; Cohen & Duberley, 2015; Gunz & Mayrhofer, 2011; Gunz, Mayrhofer, & Tolbert, 2011; Mayrhofer, Meyer, & Steyer, 2007). From these perspectives, it is not just the individual who controls or owns the career. Rather, career making then is the result of a "distributed agency" (Garud & Karnøe, 2003), not of individual agency alone. Career agency is distributed among individuals (e.g. Bosley, Arnold, and Cohen (2009); Kram and Isabella (1985)), as well as among ideology, structural features and "proximal events" (Cohen & Duberley, 2015).

This thesis takes us one step further. Like the studies above, it suggests looking at career agency as distributed among different actors, but, using an ANT-perspective, it also challenges the restriction to human actors. I argue that artefacts must be included in the study of career agency, which extant compilations in this area did not (Arthur et al., 1989; Gunz & Peiperl, 2007; Inkson et al., 2015). I challenge that absence of artefacts as actors in career research and theory.

Action is a key issue in ANT writings, where it is conceptualised in a very specific way. For ANT, action is about making a difference and having an effect and is understood as the result of a heterogeneous network (Czarniawska & Hernes, 2005b; Latour, 1987; Law, 1994) (see section 3.2.2.). For Law (2004a:34) action is a "matter of degree". Thus, the action of an artwork goes from being a mere tool, to being a signal, to being an actor. Studying careers from an ANT perspective involves understanding career development and career outcomes as the results of a heterogeneous network. The findings of my investigation make us look differently at career action, career agency and career ownership.

The thesis understands career action as a series of rhetorical moves, or as an ordering of achievements of the past and future. Careers are orderings of what is permanently evolving. The notion of career is helpful for people for making sense of life and to act. The thesis investigated the role an artefact plays in that ordering. This perspective aligns with how career was used by Hughes and his students in the 1950s, namely as a method and not a subject matter, as a method to understand the individual's position in the larger social context (see section 2.1.1.). Drawing on that perspective, the thesis showed how the artwork *NLL I* told, embodied, performed and resisted that ordering.

First, the findings show how *NLL I* acted upon the oeuvre and the career as a multiple actor-network (Latour, 1987; Mol, 2002) (see chapter 6). As a name, as text and as a material artwork in situ *NLL I* was involved in rhetorical, material, and relational practices. It told people how to see the oeuvre and the career. It embodied or materialised that interpretation with the result that it became simultaneously stable and mobile. It performed the oeuvre and the career in relational practices by affecting and connecting the network. The artwork made, maintained, and changed the career. Second, the findings demonstrate how *NLL I* was enacted by an evolving network in multiple practices (see chapter 7). It was enacted by an artistic network as a material artwork, it was enacted by a logistic network as cargo able to travel and remain in good shape, it was enacted by the collaboration of a technical and artistic network as an artwork in situ, it was enacted by a commercial network as a commodity to be seen and sold. It showed an artwork that adapted to the evolving network and it showed how Berlinde De Bruyckere (BDB) tinkered these adaptations (Barinaga, 2017; Mol, 2010).

Overall the findings present *NLL I* as an "actor-enacted" (Law & Mol, 2010), as a career actor for which acting upon and being enacted go together. The findings deepen our understanding of what it means to be an actor and more specifically a career actor. They lead to an updated notion of career actor as a fluid network that includes people, objects, and ideas.

8.3. CAREER MAKING BY A SHIFTING WEB

Studies examining creative careers have pointed to the importance of networks for career development and outcomes (Accominotti, 2009; Crossley, 2009; Dunn & Jones, 2010; Giuffre, 1999; Jones, 1996, 2002, 2012; Montanari et al., 2016). They show how job matches, innovation and recognition are affected by networks. Because they focus on the causal relationship (the what), rather than on how it works (the how), they tend to overlook how networks affect career outcomes. The findings presented in this thesis challenge three assumptions on which existing theories about the role of networks in creative careers are built. Problematising these assumptions opens up space for deepening our knowledge of or for new conceptualisations of the role of networks in creative careers (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011; Sandberg & Alvesson, 2011).

The first assumption is that networks are entities with boundaries or types of organisations to which one belongs or not. This results in a static view of networks in most career research which is problematic for a domain that studies evolving phenomena in an evolving world. Giuffre (1999) is an exception arguing for a dynamic view of networks which she conceptualises as shifting webs. The findings of my study support such a view. They show a vast overlap between the different networks by which *NLL I* was enacted and thus challenge the assumption of a network as an entity with boundaries. The artistic network (that produced *NLL I*) and the logistic network (that brought *NLL I* to the gallery) shared many actants: at least the artwork, the artist, the artist liaison, the gallery's technical staff, crates, and customs documents. Rather than moving from one network to another, *NLL I* moves within a web of relations with other assemblages (of actants) (Fenwick & Edwards, 2011). The findings thus support Giuffre's (1999) conceptualisation of a shifting web or a structure that in itself is in a state of flux and that changes whenever new connections between actants are made. Connected actants become actors when they affect other actants, or when they "make a difference" in Latour's words. The findings further show how shifts in the web happened when the artwork was displaced. *NLL I*'s displacements re-shuffled the actants in the network into a new constellation driven by a new logic. Handlers, crates, and carriers came to the foreground, became active, were driven by a logistic logic and enacted *NLL I* as cargo. In this process, the studio and its materials and assistants receded to the background. In sum, my findings present a network that is "fluid" (i.e. evolving) and "multiple" (i.e. different versions of a "single" network). This reinforces not only the importance of studying networks as processes rather than entities but also of studying what happens in the shifts. How various actants come together, manage to hold together, and come to speak as one; or how a translation is accomplished.

The second assumption is that networks are social networks, i.e. networks of people constructed by the people themselves, as is expressed in the idea of "networking" (Blair, 2009; Blustein, Palladino Schultheiss, & Flum, 2004). This is problematic because restricting the concept to networks between people and self-constructed and maintained networks may make us blind for two points. First, that networks can arise and sustain by ideas, objects and spaces (Carlile et al., 2013), and second that networks can be constructed by others or simply emerge by happenstance (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). These overlooked points were highlighted by a couple of studies which pointed

at the importance of symbolic networks for career making (Jones (2010), Braden (2018), De Nora (1995), Lang and Lang (1988, 1990), and Lena and Pachucki (2013)). In these studies, networks of aesthetics and ideas connect artists and are constructed by critics and curators. The findings support the importance of symbolic networks by highlighting how BDB constructed symbolic networks by giving the artwork a name, by producing text, and by including it in a gallery exhibition. The name, the texts, and the material artwork in situ frame how readers and visitors should see the artwork. Whereas symbolic networks yield recognition for the living creative career actor, networks of materials, artefacts, and spaces, secure eminence after death (Jones, 2010). Yet, material networks are absent in career studies. ANT pointed at the importance of materials for temporarily stabilising connections between actants and how these material networks are important for the construction of knowledge and durable social connections (Latour, 1991; Latour & Hermant, 2006; Star, 1999). They explained that ability with concepts such as "immutable mobile" which explain how materials not only stabilise the networks, but also make it possible to be active at distance. Later these concepts were developed into more fluid concepts such as "mutable mobile" (Law & Singleton, 2005) and "object multiple" (Mol, 2002). My findings show the importance of material networks for career making. Spaces and materials are inserted into the oeuvre and the career. The skin trade workshop, the opera scene and exhibition space are inserted in the name, the texts, and the material artwork in situ and thus in the oeuvre. Different trades (with their own materials, relationships, and practices) are enrolled and mobilised for the career. The insertion of the opera impacts her career. In sum, the findings show a shifting web consisting of people, objects, and ideas: a heterogenous network of social, material, and symbolic actants. This reinforces the importance of including more and different actors, especially material actors in career research.

The third assumption in career studies is that networks are understood and empirically investigated as resources or as context (Ibarra & Deshpande, 2007) (see section 2.2.2.2.). This is illustrated in studies where career actors use networks (Jones, 2010) and the history of networks (de Nooy, 2002; Dubois & François, 2013; Giuffre, 1999) as reputational signals, or in studies where networks are investigated as a fruitful context for creation (Crossley, 2009) and innovation (Accominotti, 2009). Both types of studies highlight the causal relations between the networks and career development

or outcomes. Yet, they do not focus on the interdependency between career actors and networks. In contrast, my findings not only support the idea of co-evolution and reciprocal causation, but they also show that networks can be more than reputational signals (i.e. resources) or contexts. First, they show how a shifting web enacted *NLL I* in multiple ways – as an artwork, as cargo, as a material artwork in situ and as a commodity. The findings show the hard work that was done by the network. They show how actants temporarily connect to get things done, as during the transport of the artwork where packers, carriers, and the studio worked together to organise the storage and transport of *NLL I*. This reinforces the importance of studying the action of networks and to consider networks as "actor-networks" and thus more than resources and contexts. Second, the findings also show how *NLL I* simultaneously acted upon the shifting web and thus spoke for the oeuvre and the career and affected and connected it. After a series of successful translations *NLL I* became the spokesperson for the oeuvre and career (Table 7.1 and 7.2). *NLL I* defined how people should see the oeuvre and the career (problematisation), it interested people, it enrolled ideas, people and materials, and it mobilised ideas, people and materials (Callon, 1984).

Overall, the findings make me understand how networks as fluid and multiple actors make careers. The findings provide evidence for understanding networks as actors or in ANT terms "actor-networks", and not as mere resource or context. As actor-network it speaks for the network. Furthermore, the findings support the argument that career theory should look beyond the individual and beyond people in career agency.

8.4. CAREER MAKING BY FLUID AND MULTIPLE ARTEFACTS

Studies examining creative careers have pointed to the importance of artefacts for career development (Eikhof, 2013; Jones, 1996, 2002, 2010; McLeod et al., 2011). Career actors use artefacts to signal identity, skills and networks (Jones, 1996); artefacts stabilise and structure careers (Jones, 2010). Studies focusing on time consider creative careers as sequences of steps and transitions in which artefacts appear as the "pegs" around which individuals' careers are draped (Kadushin, 1976). Studies focusing on space consider creative careers as evolving networks in which artefacts appear as signals around which social and symbolic networks are built and stabilised (Jones, 2010). Despite their structuring role for careers, artefacts have not been studied

in-depth, so that there is a lack of clarity about how some artefacts can make careers and others cannot. The findings in this thesis offer a different perspective from existing theories.

The findings in this study challenge two assumptions about artefacts in the careers literature. First, that the artefact is stable and thus does not change; second that the artefact is passive and thus aligns with the career actor's plans. My findings reveal an unstable rather than a stable artwork, and an active as well as a passive artwork.

Prior studies that considered artefacts as reputational signals (Jones, 2002), have not paid attention to the process of becoming and remaining an artefact. Studies on art production, on the other hand, have highlighted that artworks are not stable and that they are ongoing processes even after the production and installation (Becker et al., 2006; Rubio & Silva, 2013; Strati, 2006; Yaneva, 2003a, 2003b). Drawing on these studies I argue that becoming and remaining reputational signals needs work. Although the visibility of artefacts is recognised as being very important (Jones, 2002; McLeod et al., 2011), career researchers have not investigated how artefacts are made visible. ANT made me focus on these processes. My findings give evidence for both processes: making an artwork and making that artwork visible. I showed how the artwork *NLL I* was produced (section7.1.1.), how it was installed for the first time in New York and how it was re-installed as a new artwork in Aarhus (section 7.1.3.). I also showed how the artwork was made visible (section 7.1.4.): how it had to be transported (section 7.1.2.), how it had to be installed (section 7.1.3.), and how the gallery had to communicate about it so that the right people came and saw it (section 7.1.4.). My study extends the knowledge about reputational signals because it adds a processual view and it shows how the artefacts are fluid and thus not stable.

Jones (1996, 2002) not only demonstrated how career actors use artefacts as reputational signals, but she also extended that understanding in a later study by showing how artefacts act upon career actors (Jones, 2010). In that study, she suggested that we should pay closer attention to artefacts such as buildings because they organise the profession and careers of architects. This unique study in career research showed how buildings provide a collective sense of identity; facilitate coordination and enable communication within and across professions; represent, translate, and transform knowledge (Carlile, 2002, 2006). My findings confirm this

organising capacity of artefacts for careers. They show how an artwork tells, embodies, performs and resists the oeuvre and the career. Jones (2010) explained the buildings' action with the concept of "boundary object" (Star & Griesemer, 1989). My findings extend the understandings of "boundary objects" by adding a process view, i.e. by understanding the artworks as fluid and multiple. The findings show an "actor-enacted" or how acting and being enacted go together. *NLL I* acted as name, as text and as material artwork in situ, and was enacted as artwork, cargo, commodity, entertainment, and heritage. The artwork is multiple, not only because different groups look at it differently, but also because it is enacted as different artworks in different sets of relations and contexts of practice (Law & Singleton, 2005). The artwork is multiple because it is enacted in multiple practices. This insight is important because it shows how the artwork and the world are intertwined. There is not such a thing as an artwork separate from the evolving network by which it is enacted.

ANT offers new insights into what I've seen in the field. Law and Singleton (2005) conceptualised complex objects (see section 3.2.2.3.). Their conceptualisation of objects – as region, as network, as fluid and as fire – enabled me to attend a complex artefact as *NLL I* and provided novel ways of understanding *NLL I*'s role in career making. The conceptualisation of *NLL I* as a network or a set of connections made me understand how an artwork can act upon a career as I evidenced in chapter 6. The power of the artwork lies in the network: the better tied, the more powerful. The three versions of the artwork – name, the texts, and the artwork in situ – were all well-tied networks that spoke for the networks they generated. They imposed a way to see the oeuvre and the career. The name spoke for the oeuvre; the texts and the artwork in situ spoke for the oeuvre as well as for the career. However it is not just the question of being well-tied, it is also a question that this needs to be seen by relevant others. Without being named, read, and seen in an exhibition, the artwork as a well-tied network has no power. Thinking of *NLL I* as fluid was useful for understanding how the artwork gradually shifted and adapted itself on its trajectory, or how it acted in multiple practices and simultaneously was enacted in multiple practices. Just as the bush pump (De Laet & Mol, 2000) gradually shifted and adapted itself to different contexts. Looking at *NLL I* as a fire object might be useful to understand the series of shifts between being present and absent to diverse audiences and thus its possibilities to attach. Just as the Cumbrian sheep (Law & Mol, 2010) and the alcoholic liver

disease (Law & Singleton, 2005), NLL I was enacted in multiple practices and was enacted as different realities.

Using ANT as a perspective forced me to deal explicitly with ontological issues.

> [ANT] tools, sensibilities and methods of analysis that treat everything in the social and natural worlds as a continuously generated effect of the webs of relations within which they are located. It assumes that nothing has reality or form outside the enactment of those relations (Law (2008:1412) mentioned in Fenwick and Landri (2012)).

Such an ontological stance made me understand networks, artefacts, actors, connections as fluid and multiple, rather than as stable entities. Compared to ANT, social constructivism deals with a purely epistemological, not an ontological question. Career studies can benefit from using a different ontological stance that understands career actors as relational processes.

The previous sections discussed the artefact as network (relational perspective) and fluid (processual perspective), the next section will discuss the artefact as enacted in multiple practices as object multiple.

8.5. THE ARTEFACT AND ITS MAKER

The relationship between the artefact and its maker has thus-far received little or no attention in careers literature because it is considered non-problematic. This view is the result of two assumptions: first that the relationship is controlled by the maker, and second that the relationship between the artefact and its maker is stable. My findings challenge both assumptions.

It is assumed that the maker strategically uses the artefact as a signal and that the artefact simply carries out the maker's plans (Jones, 2002) (see section 2.2.1.1. and 2.2.2.2.). The findings offer evidence for such a "strategic action" (Jones, 2002), for instance when BDB let speak *NLL I* with the help of the leaflets she provided at the gallery entrance. In this case, BDB used *NLL I* to speak for or to signal her oeuvre.

But the findings also give evidence for a less strategic or a less controlled relationship between the artefact and its maker and show an active and sometimes re-active artefact. First, the findings demonstrate how at several points *NLL I* guided BDB. For instance, this was the case in the production process when BDB decided not to continue producing a series of 25 "copies", and instead started to produce an installation of 17

"individuals". She deliberately abandoned control in the production process and was receptive to others' suggestions, especially to the suggestions of the artwork. The findings show that the production of *NLL I* was not just the execution of BDB's plan, but rather that the artwork itself played an important role in what it finally became (see also Chan, Bruce, & Gonsalves, 2015; De La Fuente, 2010; Rubio, 2012). The relationship between the artefact and its maker is controlled by the artist as well as the artwork. BDB not only relinquishes control of *NLL I*, but she also abandons *NLL I*, as when she leaves the artwork to the gallery after the opening of the exhibition. A technical and commercial constellation of the network took over control.

Second, the findings challenge the stability of the relationship between the artefact and its maker. They show that the relationship between the artefact and its maker not only changes (i.e. is fluid) but also oscillates between being present and absent (i.e. is fire). The displacements of *NLL I* resulted in periods in which the artefact and its maker were separated and other periods in which they were together. In other words, in some periods *NLL I* was present to the artist (and the network) and in other periods *NLL I* was absent to the artist (and the network). The findings challenge concurring and co-evolving trajectories of the artefact and its maker. In addition, every displacement caused a re-shuffling, and thus a new configuration of actants and connections in the network. Some actants came to the foreground, others went to the background. BDB's artistic assistants went to the background during the transport and came back for the installation in the gallery; crates came to the foreground during the transport and went to the background in the gallery.

The conceptualisation of objects as fire (Law & Singleton, 2005) might be helpful for understanding artefacts' roles for career making. The artefact is elusive, it shifts between being present and absent, between being visible and not visible. I argue that being separated from the artist is necessary for the artefact to become and remain a career actor. This challenges the idea of a concurring and co-evolving relationship between the artefact and its maker and resonates with what De Laet and Mol (2000) described as "agency by abandonment". The series of displacements gradually led to abandonment by the artist. BDB managed her own dissolution and prepared the artwork for a life in a collection. BDB left *NLL I* in crates, installed it in another place than the studio, and will leave it to a collection. BDB left *NLL I* to others to care for. While BDB gradually abandoned *NLL I*, others had the opportunity to attach to it.

While others were attached to *NLL I*, BDB was gradually detached from it. In its final destination, a collection, *NLL I* will finally be totally detached from BDB. BDB attempts to organise *NLL I*'s visibility and longevity in the future by guaranteeing it to be in future publications, exhibitions, and collections.

8.6. THE OEUVRE: A MATERIALISED CAREER

> In things reside the traces and memories of our past, the witness to our present experiences, our desires and our dreams for the future (Gagliardi, 1997:569).

One of the first things that BDB said to me, is that she was reluctant to use the word career when looking at her working life. For BDB the term career evoked a planned affair. When she talked about the past and the future, about why she made specific choices in her life, she talked about artworks and spaces. She talked about how gradually a body of work was built and how that body of work defined what was to come. It was the body of work or the oeuvre that was put at the front when she sought a name for the artwork, when she made texts about it, when she created and installed the artwork. What drives BDB is making new works. BDB expresses an artistic perspective and practice on her trajectory as an artist. On the other hand, when the gallery manager talked about the past and the future, about the choices that were made, he talked about her passage through institutions. When making texts about selecting, installing, and exhibiting artworks, he put the track record of exhibitions and collections at the front. He makes exhibitions to sell artworks to a good collection. The gallery manager expresses an institutional perspective on the trajectory of the artist.

From the very beginning, careers have been studied from a subjective and objective perspective (Hughes, 1937:413). Subjectively as the "moving perspective in which persons orient themselves with reference to the social order", objectively, as the sequence of posts in institutions. The findings show evidence for both perspectives. Subjectively, BDB is very happy with her life and proud of what she has been doing for already 30 years; objectively, her career is the list of exhibitions and the list of collections to which her artworks belong. However, the findings also show something else. Materially, BDB's career is the body of work kept in collections, in photographs and publications. It is the work that is enlisted and described in the "catalogue raisonné" (see section 2.3.2.1.). It is the body of work that leaves traces and remains,

rather than the sequence of posts through institutions. Therefore I suggest adding a third perspective on careers: the materialised career or the oeuvre.

The concept of oeuvre has been developed and used in the discipline of art history (Vasari, 1568/2008) (see section 2.3.2.1.). Career and oeuvre both are methods to order achievements in the past and future and are remains of dominant modernist thinking: the notions are grounded in the aspiration for progress, individuality, and rationality. The notion of oeuvre differs from the notion of career in its focus on material elements and material forces. The findings show how the artistic network is rather focused on material actants, relationships and events, while the gallery is focused on institutional actants, relationships and events. The artistic network foregrounded the oeuvre when speaking about the artist's trajectory: they spoke about artworks, spaces, photographs, texts, … Moreover, there seems to be an interplay between the three perspectives on careers that can be further investigated. Would it be possible to make a career through institutions (i.e. an objective career) without having an oeuvre (i.e. a material career)? Does the oeuvre or body of work impact the individual experience of the artist or what is the impact of the materialisation on how the artist perceives herself as an artist (i.e. subjective career)? It seems as if the objective and subjective career perspectives depend on the material career perspective.

The concept of oeuvre provides some benefits for career studies. Like the concept of career, it enables to study the body of work from an individual as well as a collective perspective, from a prospective as well as a retrospective perspective, and as an outcome as well as a resource for reputation and identity. Secondly, the notion of oeuvre emphasises the connectedness of the individual works in the body of work: an oeuvre is a highly referential system, referring internally to all the works within the oeuvre itself, and externally to ideas, people, and objects in the art world. Thirdly, individual artworks, as well as the oeuvre can be considered as a multiple object, participating in different worlds, and thus carrying multiple meanings and objects. The notion of oeuvre constitutes a dynamic entity, not a mere accumulation of datable artefacts. Fourth, as a temporally and spatially "distributed object" (Gell, 1998) (see section 2.3.2.2.), the oeuvre helps us understand how careers are stabilised in time and space, an understanding that parallels that of "immutable mobile".

Table 8.2 Three perspectives on BDB's career: the subjective, objective and material career

	Subjective career	Objectve career	Material career
Definition	"a moving perspective in which the person sees life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions, and the things which happens to him" (Hughes, 1937)	"a series of statuses and clearly defined offices" (Hughes, 1937):	Materialised in artefacts (oeuvre, documents, events) (thesis)
Highlights	Experience of life as a whole	Passage through institutions	Materialisation
Represented as	Personal life story and experience	CV as a list of exhibitions, purchases by institutions, and sales on auctions, Job, money, and institutional anchorage	Body of work, oeuvre
Function in the career	An urgency to make work, a mission to make work	The mean to achieve the mission	Result, outcome; what remains
Evidence in the thesis	In interviews: "Do what I want to do" "Happy with my life and proud of what I have been doing for 30 years" The mission to make work The urgency to make work	In documents, websites, publications	In interviews: "A beautiful coherent world" (PB) oeuvre distributed in collections, publications, photographs, stories, … artist is no longer owner oeuvre represented in catalogue raisonné

In sum, the findings show how an oeuvre and a career got materialised; the oeuvre in names, texts, photographs, artworks, and spaces; the career in texts, track records and a body of work. Both concepts are relational and temporal and position the "life and work" of the artist in a whole. For the artist, the oeuvre is the point of reference, for the gallery the career.

8.7. BEING THERE IN "REAL TIME"

This thesis understands the notion of career as an ordering of achievements. Most of career research is based on data from interviews and surveys, where people talk about and reflect upon what happened in their careers. Career studies analyse and interpret these retrospective and prospective orderings or narratives people make. My study, based on shadowing an artefact in real-time, revealed events that are usually hidden ("black boxed" in ANT-terminology, see section 3.3.1.) and filtered out in the emergent narratives (Czarniawska, 2014b). Shadowing provides a time understanding that is barely used in career research.

Shadowing offers a "Chronos" perspective – named after the Greek god of time –, whereas interviews offer a "Kairos" perspective - named after the Greek god of the right time or proper time (Czarniawska, 2004). The field notes and pictures made while shadowing the artefact, resulted in chronological accounts of minutely registered time (see section 4.2.3. – thick descriptions and narratives). The accounts are constructions of the researcher who shared real time with the career actors. It was the researcher who selected what to write down or what to photograph. Chronological time organises the present and immediate future and is the raw material, for researchers' as well as participants' narratives.

The data from the interviews and documents are expressions of participants' kairotic time perspective. They are the narratives in which career actors reflect upon their and others' career and present an ordering. These accounts are constructions about a "once in a lifetime opening", or "important events" in their lives. Events must be made important or unimportant. Usually, people are not aware that an important event is happening when it is taking place. Kairos is the construction of a story with a character, a context, and a beginning. While "chronology organizes the present (extended to the immediate future)", "the past and the distant future are governed by kairotic time"

(Czarniawska, 2004:776). Chronological time dominates actual organising, kairotic time rules organizing accounts. “Kairotic time cannot be directly experienced…; it must be created” (Czarniawska, 2004:776). Career studies are based on kairotic accounts.

My study is based on chronological as well as kairotic accounts. Both perspectives provided me with a different understanding of what is happening and what happened. The field notes and pictures give an insight in the messiness of a career process and resulted in a fine-grained description of how a career is actually “accomplished” and not in a “post mortem dissection” of that process (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002:568). The field notes and pictures offer a processual perspective on career and show a career-in-the-making, before the ordering. It is a performative account, not a synoptic one; it is an account of the potential career, not the realised career. The field notes and pictures also offer a relational perspective on the career and show the multitude of career actors. “In the heat of action, there is no architect but several, no decision-maker but a multitude, no single plan but ten or twenty which confront one another (i.e. a muddle of hastily made decisions)” (Akrich et al., 2002a:194). Each of the multitude of actors with dissimilar competences and projects as insignificant as they may seem at the time, may turn out to be absolutely crucial at the end of the line. It is only afterwards, in the stories, that this becomes clear.

The data from the interviews and documents are constructions of the raw material of the present; they give insights on how career actors reflect upon and construct their and others’ careers, how they order careers. They show how things got ironed out and stabilised in the course of retrospective telling.

Combining the two time perspectives resulted in a deeper understanding of career processes, for instance, in what was finally shown in the exhibition. What I observed differed from what I was told in interviews and read in the leaflets for the exhibition. In the weeks before the transport, I observed in real-time how the studio worked very hard to finalise as many artworks as possible to show as many artworks as possible in the exhibition. A couple of months later, after the opening of the exhibition, I noticed that not all that work was in the exhibition. I asked the artist as well as the artist liaison how that came, and both told me that is was due to limited space. Both had constructed a story why several artworks were left out of the exhibition and the leaflets. The

exhibition space and the corridor were too small or too narrow to show the six drawings, six *glassdomes* and a second *Penthesilea*. The extra showroom BDB hoped for, was not made available, because, according to BDB, it would make a lot more money to sell a Picabia than a BDB. I would never have known that some of the artworks, produced against the clock, stayed in their crates, instead of being installed in the exhibition space if I would not have been shadowing *NLL I* from the beginning. So, some of these artworks were not able to play a role in BDB's career, not because they were not there, but just because there was no place for them in the exhibition space. They remained invisible and thus non-existent. The use of both perspectives of time in my study made me attentive to hidden things, to contingency, to happenstance. In sum, it made me attentive for messiness – as Law (2004a) calls it – which can be investigated with "slow methods" (Law, 2004a). ANT has a long tradition in doing research in the heat of action by using slow methods such as shadowing.

Chronological and kairotic perspectives are complementary. Shadowing gets to time differently: it grasps the longitudinality, not the cross-sectionality (see section 2.2.1.2. – unexplored perspectives on time). This approach is barely used in career studies. Longitudinality is mostly captured by a series of snapshots. However, shadowing also has some limits. Shadowing alone cannot grasp simultaneous events or invisible events because a researcher cannot be everywhere all the time, nor see everything all the time.

8.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter presented grounded theoretical insights. The ideas set out above were developed out of the literature, out of my research experience – but above all in response to stimuli from my supervisors. By revealing some of the assumptions underlying the research of creative careers, I was able to challenge, refine, deepen, and extend existing theories. In summary, I argued that this research contributes to the knowledge of creative careers in five ways:

1) It challenges two main assumptions within creative careers literature. First, it challenges the prevailing notions that career action is restricted to people and second, that career actors (such as networks, artefacts, and the makers) and their relationships are stable. Instead, it provides an updated notion of career

Table 8.3 Time perspectives in this study – advantages and disadvantages

	Chronos perspective	Kairos perspective
Used method	Shadowing	Interviews and documents
Resulting in specific materials	Fieldnotes of observations Pictures In the present – in real-time	Narratives from interviews and documents Retrospective and prospective
Advantages of the perspective	Not yet constructed by career actors Highlights collective action Highlights the importance of material issues in career processes Slow process, grasps longitudinality	Selected and constructed by career actors Reflection of the career actors Narratives materialised in documents made by career actors and others
Disadvantages of the perspective	Time-consuming Produces a lot of irrelevant data Not aware of the importance of events Not present at moments when it happens Not everything is visible Cannot grasp simultaneity	Alvesson (2003) problematises research interviews as a tool to reveal reality

actor that includes artefacts and that considers career actors and their relationships are fluid and multiple.

2) It refines our understanding of networks in career studies by extending people's networks with ideas, artefacts, spaces, and materials. Different networks play different roles for career making: symbolic networks such as names, texts, and artworks in situ tell how to understand the oeuvre and career, whereas material networks embody that understanding and enable longevity and travelling. It deepens our knowledge of career making by including a process view on networks and artefacts. In particular, it details how and to what end networks, as well as artefacts, are formed and evolve, and how that evolution impacts the career and vice versa.

3) It extends our knowledge by presenting a new perspective for career studies: the "materialised career" or oeuvre.

4) It extends our way of studying careers by foregrounding and using a chronological time perspective. Shadowing an artefact brought me in the heat of career action and made me see the accomplishment of an artist's career in real-time.

The thesis contributes to the different streams of research on creative careers as follows:

1) It empirically demonstrates how an artwork impacts a visual artist's career and adds to the few existing empirical studies of architects and filmmakers (Jones, 1996, 2010).

2) It introduces methodological and conceptual tools from ANT in career studies. Shadowing an artefact in real-time was never done before in career studies. It enabled me to understand what the artefact did moment-by-moment. ANT sensibilities make visible the messy objects that enact careers, the micro-negotiations that mobilise and stabilise (and destabilise) these assemblages, and the multiple ontologies that often coexist in arts fields. ANT is a promising approach for career studies because it enables one to go further than conventional analyses based on interviews and surveys, enabling the researcher to observe the efforts undertaken day-to-day as well as the role played by the

objects in day-to-day practices. The thesis also introduces ANT's ontological and epistemological perspective in career studies and makes us understand networks, artefacts, and people as multiple and fluid actors. It unsettles categories that have become reified, such as network, artefact, and instead show them as very messy, slippery, and indeterminate. It suggests new methods to grasp the messiness (Law, 2004a).

3) By using qualitative methods, it extends the few quantitative studies of evolving networks in career making (de Nooy, 2002; Dubois & François, 2013; Giuffre, 1999). Unlike quantitative studies which analysed the differences between fixed points in the time, my study analysed the process itself. An ethnography is an appropriate method to register and understand the constantly re-shuffling of the actants and connections.

4) It refines studies on networks and careers by adding material to social and symbolic actors in networks.

5) It deepens studies on artefacts in organisation studies by perceiving them as career actors.

6) It extends career studies by highlighting artefacts and understand them as fluid and multiple career actors fluid and multiple career actors (Law & Singleton, 2005).

CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION

The previous chapter discussed the findings of this thesis in light of existing career theory and came up with new questions and new answers for career research. It offered an updated notion of career actor: a fluid network that includes people, objects, and ideas; it introduced a new perspective for career studies: the materialised career or oeuvre; it promoted a chronological time perspective to study careers. This chapter reminds us why it matters to have answers to these questions, shows the implications for further research, and discusses the limitations of the presented research.

So why does this thesis matter to career studies, the field in which I locate my study? The study started with a puzzle. On the one hand, I observed a lack of attention to artefacts in research on creative careers. It seems as if the obvious had been neglected and that the maker and the artefact had been understood as the same one thing. On the other hand, I observed an omnipresence of artefacts in creative industries; I observed a current lively debate on materiality in organisation studies; and I observed how the "life and work paradigm" and the notion of "oeuvre" still rule art practices. The starting point for my study was to understand that puzzle in the literature and to find out why artefacts had been left out in career studies and second what the role of artefacts in careers could be. I wanted to understand the material characteristics of a career and how that materialisation impacts a career. The result of that exploration is reviewed in the literature chapter and discussed in light of the findings and concepts from outside career studies.

The puzzle that captivated me was not only theoretical but also practical. I was not only puzzled as a career researcher but also as a teacher in a school of arts and as a professional in the arts fields. I wanted to understand how an artwork impacts a career and what the conditions and the consequences are for an artwork to play a role in an artist's career. To answer these questions I carried out an empirical investigation. Drawing on Actor-Network-Theory (ANT), I conducted an ethnographic study in which I shadowed for more than six months an artwork by a visual artist.

The literature and discussion chapters enabled me to initiate a debate in career studies about the role of artefacts in career making in analogy to the recent debates in organisation studies about the role of artefacts in innovation and collaboration.

Essentially, my study brought new data, new questions, and new theoretical possibilities to career theory.

What are the implications of this thesis? One of the aims of this thesis has been to demonstrate that ANT can be a productive conceptual lens for exploring careers. As a new methodological approach in career research, ANT, is not only useful for the study of artistic and creative careers, but also for other settings in which people produce artefacts in their careers. The "sensibility to materiality, relationality and process" (Law, 2004a:157), which characterises ANT enables us to understand how artefacts act upon careers. I would not have known the contingency of becoming an artwork and of becoming visible. I would not have known that the process of becoming and remaining an active artefact is slow and that outcomes are only gradually achieved. Therefore, I argue for the inclusion of artefacts in the understanding of career making, to conceptualise career making as an effect of networks of people, ideas and objects, and to highlight the process of becoming an artefact, a network and a career.

One of the limitations of this study is the very restricted sample: a monumental art installation that was created in Belgium in the mid-2010s by a renown visual artist in her mid-career. One of the aims of the study was to introduce ANT in career research. Drawing on ANT I shadowed a single artwork to map the networks and see how that artwork acted upon a single career. The restriction to one artwork made it possible to fully understand the actions of that single artwork, but can this restriction explain possible actions of other works of this artist or possible actions of other artists' artworks? Limitations are invitations to new avenues of research. Further research can investigate the trajectories of other artworks from the artist and shadow earlier artworks, or those that did not leave the studio, or changed ownership and became part of a collection. For this study I also shadowed an earlier monumental installation – *In Flanders Fields* made in 1999 – that was perceived of by many as a turning point in Berlinde De Bruyckere's (BDB's) career. I gathered interviews and archival documents, but I gradually left that avenue for reasons of focus and time. It would be relevant to compare the trajectories and impact of the two artworks from different stages in her oeuvre and career. And the same could be done for the very early works in her career.

The mid-career artist BDB operates in a very specific circuit (see section 5.2.). Future research might investigate artworks by other visual artists, but also artworks of other disciplines in the arts such as music and performing arts and creative industries such as design and architecture. Furthermore, empirical settings beyond arts and creative industries could be investigated. The variety of empirical settings and cases will deepen our understanding of artefacts' roles in career making. This explorative case study can be pursued by quantitative research.

Another limitation of the study is the choice of method. Methods produce realities (Law, 2004a). Shadowing *No Life Lost I 2014-2015 (2015) (NLL I)* made me see a lot about little (Silverman, 2010), but at the same time obscured a lot. The more focused, the more details of less. And even the aimed focal point, is not always visible to the researcher. As Czarniawska (2014b) cited Wolcott (1973): "The researcher is never there where it happens". This study is thus a series of snapshots which are the result of where I was as researcher, what was visible to me as a researcher, what I was focused on, and what others let me see. It is a limitation which is not only related to the method of observation, but also to the conventions of writing about the process. This doctoral thesis is a rhetorical piece of writing and thus has to make a severe selection of the findings in order to make a strong argument.

Further research might benefit from the use of different methodologies. Other qualitative methods such as narratives and discourse analysis might focus on the interpretations of the actors that made connections with the artwork. Surveys can confirm what was found in the explorative study.

A third limitation is that I only used a small part of the data I generated. I took for instance more than 500 pictures of *NLL I*'s trajectory. Only a few pictures are reproduced in the thesis; they are used as mere illustration (e.g. to literally show *NLL I*). It was too difficult to use them as data because the pictures do not show the artwork's action, or the network enacting the artwork. The pictures remain "still-lives" of the actions. Further research could focus on that aspect and tell the story based on the 500 pictures.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1 Artistic and creative work – differences and similarities

	Artistic work	Creative work
Differences		
Throsby's concentric model of cultural industries (2008)	Inner circle: "core creative arts": literature, music, performing arts and visual arts	second circle: "other core cultural industries": film, museums, galleries and libraries and photography third circle: "wider cultural industries": heritage services, publishing and print media, sound recording, television and radio and video and computer games fourth circle: "related industries": advertising, architecture, design, and fashion.
Description of the population	Menger (1999); Throsby (1994); Throsby and Zednik (2011); Wassall and Alper (1985) Census data are problematic for descriptive statistics (Menger, 2001)	Eikhof (2013); Mathieu (2012); McKinlay and Smith (2009); Umney and Kretsos (2013)
Similarities		
Employment status is continuum	Self-employment – self-employed freelancer (McKinlay & Smith, 2009) – self-employed employee (Haunschild & Eikhof, 2009) - employee	
Organisational context is continuum	Field-embedded (Kirschbaum, 2007) – informal project-oriented (Umney & Kretsos, 2013) - in temporary projects (Jones, 1996) – from one organisation to another (McLeod et al., 2011) - in organisations	
Labour market	Over-crowded Young population	
Tensions	Between autonomy and commissions Between art and business: in literature: Bourdieu (1983); in theatre: Eikhof and Haunschild (2007); in jazz music: Umney and Kretsos (2013) Between political arts and non-political creative industries (Oakley, 2009)	
Strategies for coping with occupational risk	Portfolio of entrepreneurial and professional career forms (Menger, 1999) Artists subsidised by stable employment (i.e. teaching) (Adler, 1979; Umney & Kretsos, 2013) Multiple job-holding (Throsby, 1994) Three markets for arts graduates: creative work, arts-related work, and non-arts labour market (Throsby & Zednik, 2011) Role versatility (Menger, 1999)	

Appendix 2 Email and commentary for candidate artists (originals and translations)

Persoonlijk bericht voor Berlinde De Bruyckere

Van den Abeele Hannelore <lixhv3@exmail.nottingham.ac.uk>
Thu 27/08/2015 16:55

Geachte mevrouw De Bruyckere,

In het kader van mijn doctoraal onderzoek zoek ik een kunstenaar die mee wil bestuderen hoe een werk dat iemand maakt zijn/haar loopbaan bepaalt. Dus hoe een kunstwerk het leven en werk van een kunstenaar vormgeeft. In bijlage vind u een toelichting bij mijn onderzoek. Het situeert zich binnen de sociale wetenschappen en meer bepaald de 'organisation studies'.

Voor mijn onderzoek zou ik graag twee van uw werken willen volgen in al hun 'bewegingen':

1. Een ouder werk dat uw atelier verlaten heeft: dat zou ik enerzijds stroomopwaarts willen volgen tot aan de bron, en anderzijds stroomafwaarts tot vandaag (en verder).
2. Een tweede werk waaraan u nu werkt: dat zou ik graag kunnen volgen van bij de geboorte in het atelier.

De bewegingen van beide werken wil ik in kaart brengen door middel van archiefonderzoek, gesprekken en observatie.

Concreet zou ik gedurende drie maanden (van september tot december 2015) archiefwerk willen doen, en op regelmatige tijdstippen in uw atelier willen vertoeven, maar ook op andere plekken waar uw kunstwerk (tijdelijk) verblijft.

Ik realiseer me dat dit geen evidente vraag is. Misschien kan ik een soort stagiaire zijn, inzetbaar voor allerlei klussen: administratie, praktische hulp, chauffeur, … In die -uiteraard onbezoldigde- functie zou ik dan kunnen opzoekingswerk doen, observeren en gesprekken voeren.

Ik besef dat mijn vraag wellicht vooral nieuwe vragen bij u oproept. Als u graag concretere informatie wil, kom ik graag eens tot bij u om kennis te maken en dieper op de mogelijkheden in te gaan.
Met vriendelijke groeten,

Hannelore Van den Abeele
Doctoral Researcher, University of Nottingham,
Email: lixhv3@nottingham.ac.uk
Mobile Belgium: 0032 468 151297

Toelichting doctoraal onderzoek

‘Shadowing Art Works. The “making-of” of the artistic career’

> *The life of men and women of our time is very much like that of tourists-through-time: they cannot and will not decide in advance what places they will visit and what the sequence of stations will be; what they know for sure is that they will keep on the move, never sure whether the place they have reached is their final destination.* (Zygmunt Bauman, 1995)

Loopbanen van kunstenaars krijgen steeds meer aandacht. Kunstscholen worden aangemaand kunstenaars voor te bereiden op een artistieke loopbaan. Succesvolle artistieke loopbanen worden dan toegeschreven aan persoonlijkheidskenmerken van de kunstenaar (bijvoorbeeld ondernemingszin), en aan sociale (networking), economische (kapitaal) en politieke factoren (subsidies).

Zelden wordt de rol van het gemaakte werk in rekening gebracht, terwijl dat ‘ding’ ongetwijfeld een actieve rol speelt in de evolutie van de loopbaan van een kunstenaar. Ik wil begrijpen hoe dat gaat.

Kunstenaars en hun kunstwerken bewegen in tijd en ruimte. Soms lopen de wegen van de kunstenaar en kunstwerk samen, soms lopen ze uiteen. Die bewegingen (loopbanen) zijn niet zozeer lineaire, rationeel geplande trajecten, maar eerder aarzelende, meanderende zoektochten. Voor mijn doctoraal onderzoek spits ik mij toe op de bewegingen van een kunstwerk, de ‘practices, talks and spaces’ van dat kunstwerk. Hoe geven die de loopbaan van een kunstenaar mee vorm? Ik wil het dagelijks leven van het kunstwerk begrijpen, hoe het handelt, hoe het spreekt en hoe het beweegt met andere actoren in de kunstwereld. Die ‘actieve’ rol van het kunstwerk in de ontwikkeling van de loopbaan is nog onderbelicht in de ‘organisation studies’, de tak binnen sociale wetenschappen waarin het menselijk gedrag in organisaties (bijvoorbeeld de kunstwereld) bestudeerd wordt.

Voor mijn onderzoek laat ik mij inspireren door de Franse antropoloog/socioloog Bruno Latour. Hij toont onder meer aan dat het lot van iets in de handen van de latere gebruikers ligt. De kwaliteit ervan is dus eerder een gevolg, dan de oorzaak van collectieve actie.

Toegepast op de kunsten: het lot van het kunstwerk ligt niet in handen van de kunstenaar, maar in de handen van velen, mensen zowel als dingen. Telkens als het kunstwerk handelt, spreekt of beweegt wordt het sterker, maar verandert het ook. Een werk waar niets mee gebeurt, wordt vergeten, en bestaat niet meer, … tot het weer wordt opgepikt. Waarom komen sommige kunstwerken in collecties, musea en boeken terecht en andere niet? Welke kunstwerken worden opgemerkt en blijven in de belangstelling?

Om die vragen te beantwoorden breng ik minutieus het traject van een kunstwerk in kaart. Ik volg een kunstwerk in zijn dagelijkse bewegingen in tijd en ruimte en kijk hoe connecties worden gemaakt met andere actoren in de kunstwereld: de maker, de collectioneur, de criticus, de galeriehouder, het publiek, andere kunstenaars, andere kunstwerken, plaatsen, … Kortom iedereen of alles waarmee het kunstwerk een relatie aangaat. Ik kijk daarbij hoe het kunstwerk bij elke connectie (voor Bruno Latour: associatie) verandert en tegelijkertijd ook al de andere actoren verandert, en vooral de (loopbaan van de) kunstenaar.

Dit is een empirische en geen theoretische of ideologische vraagstelling. Om deze bewegingen in kaart te brengen, te analyseren en te begrijpen volg ik een dubbele weg: een archivalische met documenten en teksten, en een etnografische met observatie en gesprek.

kijk hoe connecties worden gemaakt met andere actoren in de kunstwereld: de maker, de collectioneur, de criticus, de galeriehouder, het publiek, andere kunstenaars, andere kunstwerken, plaatsen, … Kortom iedereen of alles waarmee het kunstwerk een relatie aangaat. Ik kijk daarbij hoe het kunstwerk bij elke connectie (voor Bruno Latour: associatie) verandert en tegelijkertijd ook al de andere actoren verandert, en vooral de (loopbaan van de) kunstenaar.

Dit is een empirische en geen theoretische of ideologische vraagstelling. Om deze bewegingen in kaart te brengen, te analyseren en te begrijpen volg ik een dubbele weg: een archivalische met documenten en teksten, en een etnografische met observatie en gesprekken.

Case Study: twee werken van Berlinde De Bruyckere.
Een ouder werk, 'In Flanders Fields' (1999) volg ik stroomopwaarts tot aan de bron, en stroomafwaarts tot vandaag (en verder). Een nieuw werk, 'No Life Lost' (2016), dat wordt gemaakt tijdens de periode van mijn gegevensverzameling, volg ik van bij de geboorte in het atelier.

Hannelore Van den Abeele, Doctoral Researcher, University of Nottingham

Promotoren: Laurie Cohen (Professor Organisational Behaviour University of Nottingham), Gerardo Patriotta (Professor of Management and Organization University of Nottingham), Anneleen Forrier (Associate Professor Organisation Studies KULeuven)

Translation of the email for candidate artists

Dear Ms De Bruyckere,

For my doctoral research, I am looking for an artist who wants to contribute to the study of how a work that a person makes determines his/her career. So how an artwork shapes the life and work of an artist. In the appendix you find a commentary of my research. It is situated within the social sciences and more specifically the 'organisation studies'.

For my research I would like to follow two of your artworks in all their 'movements':

1. An older work that already left your studio: I would like to follow it upstream to the source, and downstream up to today (and beyond).

2. A second work on which you are working on now: I would like to be able to follow it from birth in the studio.

I want to map the movements of both works through archival research, conversations, and observation.

In concrete terms, I would like to do archival work for three months (to be discussed in more detail, but ideally to start in 2015), and to stay in your studio at regular intervals, but also in other places where your artwork (temporarily) stays.

I realise that this is not an obvious question. Maybe I could be a kind of intern, employable for all kinds of jobs: administration, practical help, driver, ... In this -unpaid- position I could then do research work, observe, and have conversations.

I realise that my question probably raises new questions for you. If you would like more concrete information, I would like to come over to meet you and to discuss the possibilities.

Kind regards,

Hannelore Van den Abeele

Doctoral Researcher, University of Nottingham,

Email: lixhv3@nottingham.ac.uk

Mobile Belgium: 0032 468 151297

Translation for commentary for candidate artists

Commentary doctoral research

Shadowing Artworks. The "making-of" of the artistic career.

The life of men and women of our time is very much like that of tourists-through-time: they cannot and will not decide in advance what places they will visit and what the sequence of stations will be; what they know for sure is that they will keep on the move, never sure whether the place they have reached is their final destination. (Zygmunt Bauman, 1995)

The careers of artists are receiving more and more attention. Art schools are urged to prepare artists for an artistic career. Successful artistic careers are then attributed to the personality characteristics of the artist (e.g. entrepreneurial spirit), and social (networking), economic (capital) and political factors (subsidies).

The role of the work made by people is rarely considered, while this 'thing' undoubtedly plays an active role in the evolution of an artist's career. I want to understand how that works.

Artists and their artworks move in time and space. Sometimes the paths of the artist and the work of art go hand in hand, sometimes they diverge. These movements (careers) are not so much linear, rationally planned trajectories, but rather hesitant, meandering quests. For my doctoral research, I focus on the movements of an artwork, the 'practices, talks and spaces' of that artwork. How do they shape an artist's career? I want to understand the daily life of the artwork, how it acts, how it speaks and how it moves with other actors in the art world. This 'active' role of the work of art in the development of the career is still underexposed in the 'organisation studies', the field within social sciences in which human behaviour in organisations (e.g. the art world) is studied.

For my research, I am inspired by the French anthropologist/sociologist Bruno Latour. Among other things, he shows that the fate of something lies in the hands of its end users. Its quality is therefore, more a consequence than the cause of collective action.

Applied to the arts: the fate of an artwork is not in the hands of the artist, but in the hands of many, people as well as things. Each time the artwork acts, speaks or moves, it becomes stronger but also changes. An artwork with which nothing happens, is forgotten, and no longer exists, ... until it is picked up again. Why do some artworks end up in collections, museums, and books, while others do not? Which artworks are noticed and remain in the spotlight?

To answer these questions, I meticulously map out the trajectory of an artwork. I follow an artwork in its daily movements in time and space and see how connections are made with other actors in the art world: the maker, the collector, the critic, the gallery owner, the public, other artists, other artworks, places, ... In short, everyone or everything with which the artwork enters into a relationship. I look at how the artwork changes with every connection (for Bruno Latour: association) and at the same time also all the other actors, and especially the (career of the) artist.

This is an empirical and not a theoretical or ideological question. To map, analyse and understand these movements, I follow a double path: an archival one with documents and texts, and an ethnographic one with observation and conversations.

Hannelore Van den Abeele, Doctoral Researcher, University of Nottingham

Promoters: Laurie Cohen (Professor Organisational Behaviour University of Nottingham), Gerardo Patriotta (Professor of Management and Organization University of Nottingham), Anneleen Forrier (Associate Professor Organisation Studies KULeuven)

Appendix 3 Interview guides for interviews with the artist (the first interview about NLL I*, the second about her career) and others*

Appendix 3.1. Interview guide for the artist

General questions
Related to the works
I'm interested in careers – can you tell me about your career?
How does this work fits in your career trajectory?
How did/does it make your career move forward?
What did/does this work mean at this point of your career at this moment?
What can you tell me about the trajectory of the work? Who or what influenced the trajectory, and how?

Focused on the career in general
What are your thoughts about your career when you were young? How does that compare with your thoughts about your career now? How do you account for the difference?
Are there any turning points in your career related to materials, staff, themes, sales, …?
What is your favourite work and why? A milestone? A peak? A turning point?
When got the ball rolling, and why, and how?
You seem to look for soulmates to work with? How does it work?

<u>First interview about artwork No Life Lost I</u>
These were detailed questions (in Dutch) about the production, the distribution and the consumption of NLL I

<u>Second interview about In Flanders Fields</u>
What can you tell me about the trajectory of the work? Who or what influenced the trajectory, and how?
How does this work fits in your career trajectory?
How did/does it make your career move forward?
What did/does this work mean at this point of your career at this moment?
+ detailed questions (in Dutch) about the production, the distribution and the consumption of NLL I

<u>Third interview about her career</u>
What are your thoughts about your career when you were young? How does that compare with your thoughts about your career now? How do you account for the difference?
Are there any turning points in your career related to materials, staff, themes, sales, …?
What is your favourite work and why? A milestone? A peak? A turning point?
When got the ball rolling, and why, and how?
You seem to look for soulmates to work with? How does it work?
What are the works that speak for you as an artist?
What is your and the public's favourite one?
+ detailed questions (in Dutch) about production, distribution and consumption

Appendix 3.2. Interview guide for the others

On the artwork
When and how came the artwork in your life?
How would you describe the relationship you have with the artwork?
How would you describe your contribution to this work-in-the-making?
Can you explain me what you do exactly with the work?
Did the artwork change after your connection with it?
How would you describe the position of the artwork in the oeuvre of BDB?
How would you describe the position of the artwork in the art world?
How does this work fits in Berlinde's career trajectory, and your career trajectory?

On Berlinde
When and how came Berlinde in your life?

How would you describe the relationship you have with her?
How would you describe your contribution to Berlinde's trajectory?
Has this changed over time?
How does the collaboration with Berlinde fits in your career trajectory?

Appendix 4 Ethics Application Form

Nottingham University Business School

NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL
RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW CHECKLIST: STAFF/DOCTORAL RESEARCH

Research ethics approval is required for every research project that involves human participants or their data, whether that project is externally funded or not. Research projects may not start without ethical approval.

Please complete this form electronically and email it to Stella Fuller (stella.fuller@nottingham.ac.uk), along with any annexes, from your UoN email account.

Research Project Title:	PhD Artistic Careers

Doctoral students should name their supervisors under "co-investigator" and add [PhD] before the project title.

Principal Investigator	Hannelore Van den Abeele
Co-Investigators (and affiliation)	Laurie Cohen, Gerardo Patriotta
Project Funder(s)	

Project start/finish dates	2012-2017	**Date of Ethics Application**	13/10/2015

Questions about the appropriate REC to review the application:		
Will the study involve recruitment of patients through the NHS or the use of NHS data or premises and/or equipment?		N
Does the study involve participants age 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent? (e.g. people with learning disabilities)		N

If the answer to either of these questions is 'yes', then you may need to seek approval through an NHS Research Ethics Committee. If this applies to you, please contact the University's Research Governance team (sponsor@nottingham.ac.uk) (and cc adam.golberg@nottingham.ac.uk) before proceeding with this application.

NUBS LREC cannot approve projects which involve: the administration of drugs, placebos etc to research participants; tissue collection; the infliction of pain; or invasive, intrusive or harmful procedures.

Questions about involvement of researchers from outside NUBS:		
Are colleagues from another school or institution involved in the research?		N
If you are leading the project, does this application cover their involvement?		N
If they are leading, have they obtained ethical approval for your involvement?	Y	N

If a project is led from outside NUBS, ethical approval by her institution will normally be accepted in lieu of a NUBS REC review. In such cases, please complete this page only and attach a letter confirming ethical review. Similarly, NUBS REC will normally be willing to write to external project partners to confirm that we have reviewed the project. It would be up to their respective institutions to decide whether to accept our review or to carry out their own – you should not assume agreement.

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University of Nottingham's Code of Practice on Ethical Standards and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. **This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.**

Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the

research should be notified to the School Research Ethics Officer (adam.golberg@nottingham.ac.uk) and may require a new application.

Brief summary of project goals:

My study aims to understand how art works shape artistic careers. In a case study I will follow one single artwork of a Belgian visual artist in documents, in talks and in practices. I will follow the artwork while making associations with other actors such as the artist, the collector, the critic, and other art works. I follow the relational game of the artwork in time and space and let the artwork define the boundaries of the research. My focus will be on the capacity of art works to be performant within the art world, and more specifically to be performant in shaping artistic careers. One cannot say in advance which artefacts do and which ones do not exercise career agency. Neither how artefacts structure or perform careers. The process of objects' agency thus remains a 'black box'. I want to open that 'black box' and explore which objects do and which ones do not exercise career agency; how objects structure or perform this process? And how objects resist people's intentions? For this aim, I will use methods developed within object-centred research, by following art works' trajectories, careers, and biographies.

Brief description of research methods to be employed:

Qualitative single case study of an artefact (= art works of a Belgian visual artist)

The methodology is object-centred. In order to understand how art works shape artistic careers, I will map the networks of the artwork with others, collect narratives about the artwork and describe the process of career development and career construction of the artwork and the artist. I will follow two tracks. The first track goes downstream and will be revealed mainly by using ethnographical methods. The artwork is followed 'in real time' while it is making associations with other actors such as the artist, the collector, the critic, and other art works. The second track goes upstream and will be revealed mainly by a retrospective documentary analysis. The controversies or debates unfolding during the object's biography will be mapped.

1) Ethnography of objects by shadowing an art work wherever it went and goes and observe (participant and direct) and talk (ethnographic interviews) with the people involved
   - Places: artist's studio, museums, collector's house, galleries, books
   - People: artists, collectors, critics, dealers, public
2) Documentary analysis
   - Archives of artist
   - Press
   - internet

I consider myself as a 'marginal native': 'native' because I have been working professionally in art education and art mediation all my career and I made sculptures as an amateur, so I know what is going on and what the language is; 'marginal' because I'm not an artist.

Timing: data collection: October 2015-January 2016

Questions about consent	**Y**	**N**
Does the research involve vulnerable groups: children, those with cognitive impairment, or those in unequal power relationships (e.g. students)		N

Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and/or full informed consent at the time? (e.g. covert observation)?	Y	
Questions about confidentiality		
Will research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given? Will data collected be (or potentially be) used for any other purpose?		N
Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?		N
Will any payments, compensation, expenses, or incentives be offered to participants?		N
Questions about the potential for harm		
Will the study involve discussion of personal or sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, commercially or legally sensitive topics)?		N
Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?		N
Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?		N
Is there a possibility that the safety of the researcher may be in question beyond everyday risks (e.g. in some international research in trouble spots)?		N
Location of the research		
Will any of the research take place outside the UK?	Y	

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the questions above, please explain your reasons below, and any steps you will take to deal with the ethical issues raised. Please note that answering 'yes' will not in itself adversely affect the chances of approval. For guidance on completing this section of the form, please contact adam.golberg@nottingham.ac.uk

CONSENT

Overt and covert observation

People will be observed in their relation to the artwork overtly and after consent in their private spaces (as will be the case for the artist, the collector, or the dealer), and covertly in public spaces (as will be the case in museums, galleries or exhibitions). In the case of covert observation people will be given a notice at the exit of the room saying that research is taking place and that if someone wants more information, or want to opt out, they can ask it at the reception. Then the receptionist could come and find me to give some more information or leave the data out.

I choose for covert observation in public spaces, because observing people of all ages (individuals, couples, groups, and families) looking at art or dealing with art in such spaces is not sensitive and the chances of harm are thus minimal. And because, additionally, the observed behaviour will be anonymous. Moreover, asking for consent will affect their approach and relation with the artwork (that people for instance would look and talk longer at and about the work).

Ethnographic Interviews

I will use 3 different research information sheets (see appendix):

1) one for the artist, the maker of the artwork,
2) one for people intimately involved with the artwork as for instance the collector, the dealer, and the critic,
3) and one for the public (which will be the same as the very short introduction I will use wherever I want to talk informally with people on the artwork's trajectory).

LOCATION

The research will take place in Belgium.

The participant information sheets and the interviews will be in Flemish, French and English, depending on the language of the participant and will be translated for analysis and report.

To what degree will individual research participants and organisations be anonymised in the research outputs? Please list any potentially-identifying characteristics that you may wish to use. Please attach a copy of your participant information sheet and/or consent form (where appropriate) as annexes.

The data will not be anonymised for the key actors, except when explicitly asked by the participant, but cannot be done for the artist or the artwork. Anonymity for a case study on an artwork moving in the artworld is by the way not advisable for several reasons. Most of the actors, and surely the artist and the critic, operate largely in the public domain which makes their work publicly available anyway. Anonymity would deprive the actors (artwork and artist as well as the others) their context. Moreover, the 'ego' or 'persona' of the actors is an essential element in the artworld. Finally, in a small world as the artworld is, anonymity cannot be guaranteed among the participants and the readers of the research. For these reasons I will probably leave participants who want to be anonym out of the research.
For participants in public spaces such as museums participants will be anonymous. They happen to be there, they are not searched for or selected by the researcher. It is this group of participants that will be observed covertly and/or could be approached and asked for their experiences informally. To contextualize the observations the location, time and date of the visit, and age and gender as perceived by the researcher, will be mentioned.

Useful links:

A link to the University of Nottingham Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics can be found on Nexus
http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/business/nexus/index.phtml?sm=645&smt=6&st=222

ESRC Framework for Research Ethics
http://www.esrc.ac.uk/about-esrc/information/research-ethics.aspx

UK Research Integrity Office Code of Practice for Research
http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/code-of-practice-for-research/

Appendix 5 Information Forms for Research participants for the Artist, Key Figures, Participants, and Visitors in the Gallery

Appendix 5.1.

Information for Research Participants - Artist

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research project. Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you may change your mind about being involved in the research at any time, and without giving a reason.

This information sheet is designed to give you full details of the research project, its goals, the research team, the research funder, and what you will be asked to do as part of the research. If you have any questions that are not answered by this information sheet, please ask.

What is the research project called?

Shadowing Artworks. The "making-of" of the artistic career

Who is carrying out the research?

Hannelore Van den Abeele, Doctoral Researcher Nottingham University Business School

What is the research about?

In my doctoral research I aim to understand how artistic careers develop and are constructed. I specifically curious about the role of the artwork in shaping the career. I focus on the movements of an artwork in the artworld. In order to understand how the practices, talks, and spaces shape the artist's career, I follow or shadow that artwork. I want to understand the daily life of that artwork, how it acts, how it talks, how it moves with other actors in the artworld such as the artist, the collector, the dealer, the critic, the public, but also other artworks, places, things. Briefly, I want to map the network of everyone or everything with whom the artwork associates or was associated, and see how the artwork changes at every association and simultaneously changes the other actors, and specifically the artist ('s career). With this research I hope to contribute, not only in an academic way to career research, but also in a practical way to improve policy and education of professional lives of artists. (For more details see Commentary Doctoral Research)

What groups of people have been asked to take part, and why?

All the actors with which the artwork makes an association will be approached by the researcher: artist, collector, dealer, public, and other artworks. I follow the artwork in time and space and let the artwork define the boundaries of my research or the people and things that I will address for my research. You are chosen because you have a relationship with the artwork.

What will research participants be asked to do?

Observation and conversations with them will take place wherever the artwork goes: studio, gallery, collection, and exhibition. Research participants in public spaces will be observed while being involved with the artwork, and will eventually be asked about their experiences with the artwork. The conversations will be informal and will last a couple of minutes. Research participants with more intimately relationship with the artist will be observed in private as well as public spaces and will be interviewed after consent. These interviews will last approximately last one hour.

Observation and conversations with them will take place wherever the artwork goes: studio, gallery, collection, and exhibition. Research participants in public spaces will be observed while being involved with the artwork, and will eventually be asked about their experiences with the artwork. The conversations will be informal and will last a couple of minutes. Research participants with more intimately relationship with the artist will be observed in private as well as public spaces and will be interviewed after consent. These interviews will last approximately last one hour.

During observations photographs can be taken, and conversations can be recorded. If you do not agree, observations and interviews will be done without camera or tape recorder.

What will happen to the information I provide?

All information (audio, photographs, video, notes) that is collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential by the researcher. The information (digitalised, and as paper, audio and image) will be kept and protected by the researcher.

This information will be used to analyse the results of the study, and to illustrate the conclusions of the research by means of quotes.

What will be the outputs of the research?

The information collected will be analysed by the researcher to obtain a doctoral degree. During this process and after the research outputs will be used to write academic and professional publications, to participate in academic and professional conferences, and to teach.

The research is not funded and participants are not paid for taking part in this study.

Contact details

Researcher:

Hannelore Van den Abeele, Doctoral Researcher University of Nottingham

Email: Lixhv3@nottingham.ac.uk, Mobile Belgium 0032468151297

Supervisors: Laurie Cohen, Professor Organisational Behaviour University of Nottingham; Gerardo Patriotta, Professor of Management and Organization University of Nottingham

Complaint procedure

If you wish to complain about the way in which the research is being conducted or have any concerns about the research then in the first instance please contact Hannelore Van den Abeele or the supervsiors.

Or contact the School's Research Ethics Officer:

Adam Golberg

Appendix 5.2.

Nottingham University Business School
UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Information for Research Participants
Key figures in the Art World

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research project. Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you may change your mind about being involved in the research at any time, and without giving a reason.

This information sheet is designed to give you full details of the research project, its goals, the research team, the research funder, and what you will be asked to do as part of the research. If you have any questions that are not answered by this information sheet, please ask.

What is the research project called?

Shadowing Artworks. The "making-of" of the artistic career

Who is carrying out the research?

Hannelore Van den Abeele, Doctoral Researcher Nottingham University Business School

What is the research about?

In my doctoral research I aim to understand how artistic careers develop and are constructed. I specifically curious about the role of the artwork in shaping the career. I focus on the movements of an artwork in the artworld. In order to understand how the practices, talks, and spaces shape the artist's career, I follow or shadow that artwork. I want to understand the daily life of that artwork, how it acts, how it talks, how it moves with other actors in the artworld such as the artist, the collector, the dealer, the critic, the public, but also other artworks, places, things. Briefly, I want to map the network of everyone or everything with whom the artwork associates or was associated, and see how the artwork changes at every association and simultaneously changes the other actors, and specifically the artist ('s career).

What groups of people have been asked to take part, and why?

All the actors with which the artwork makes an association will be approached by the researcher: artist, collector, dealer, public, and other artworks. I will follow the artwork in time and space and let the artwork define the boundaries of my research or the people and things that I will address for my research. You are chosen because you have a relationship with the artwork.

What will research participants be asked to do?

Observation and conversations with them will take place wherever the artwork goes: studio, gallery, collection, and exhibition. Research participants in public spaces will be observed while being involved with the artwork, and will eventually be asked about their experiences with the artwork. The conversations will be informal and will last a couple of minutes. Research participants with more intimately relationship with the artist will be observed in private as well as public spaces and will be interviewed after consent. These interviews will last approximately last one hour.

During observations photographs can be taken, and conversations can be recorded. If you do not agree, observations and interviews will be done without camera or tape recorder.

What will happen to the information I provide?

What will happen to the information I provide?

All information (audio, photographs, video, notes) that is collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential by the researcher. The information (digitalised, and as paper, audio and image) will be kept and protected by the researcher.

This information will be used to analyse the results of the study, and to illustrate the conclusions of the research by means of quotes.

What will be the outputs of the research?

The information collected will be analysed by the researcher to obtain a doctoral degree. During this process and after the research outputs will be used to write academic and professional publications, to participate in academic and professional conferences, and to teach.

The research is not funded, the participants are not paid for taking part in this study.

Contact details

Researcher:

Hannelore Van den Abeele, Doctoral Researcher University of Nottingham

Email: Lixhv3@nottingham.ac.uk, Mobile Belgium 0032468151297

Supervisors: Laurie Cohen, Professor Organisational Behaviour University of Nottingham; Gerardo Patriotta, Professor of Management and Organization University of Nottingham

Complaint procedure

If you wish to complain about the way in which the research is being conducted or have any concerns about the research then in the first instance please contact Hannelore Van den Abeele or the supervsiors.

Or contact the School's Research Ethics Officer:

Adam Golberg
Nottingham University Business School
Jubilee Campus
Nottingham NG8 1BB
Phone: 0115 846 6604
Email: adam.golberg@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix 5.3. Information for research participants

Doctoral Research
Shadowing Art Works. The "making-of" of the artistic career

PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why we are doing this research and what we will ask you to do if you agree to help us.

Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

As a teacher and a mediator in arts, I can confirm how difficult it is to build out an artistic career. I want to understand how art works shape artistic careers, and specifically how one single art work shapes a career.

What is the plan of the study?

In a case study I collect, analyse and aim to understand the practices, talks and spaces of an single art work. This will be done by means of documentary analysis, observations and interviews.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been asked because you are involved with the art work. We are asking all the people and things involved with this work.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do agree to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form (a copy of which you will keep). Once you have agreed to take part you are still free to change your mind and withdraw at any time and without giving any reason. A decision not to take part or withdrawal from the study will give no cause to any prejudice or negative consequences.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

If you agree to help with this study, the researcher will start the study with planning to collect documents, make observations and do interviews. You will be asked to collaborate.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept **strictly confidential by the researcher. This information will be used to analyse the results of** the study.

Before staring the study we will make some 'rules' on anonymity. We can guarantee your anonymity if you want.

Who is organising the research?

The research is being organised by Hannelore Van den Abeele, doctoral researcher at the University of Nottingham. The information collected will be analysed by the researcher to obtain a doctoral degree.

Who is funding the research?

Nobody

Will I be paid for taking part in this study?

No

Contact for further information

If you have any questions about this research, please contact:

Hannelore Van den Abeele, Doctoral Researcher University of Nottingham

Email: Lixhv3@nottingham.ac.uk, Mobile Belgium 0032468151297

Supervisors: Laurie Cohen, Professor Organisational Behaviour University of Nottingham; Gerardo Patriotta, Professor of Management and Organization University of Nottingham

Appendix 5.4.

Information Sheet Research Participants
'Shadowing Art Works. The "making-of" of the artistic career'

In my doctoral research I aim to understand how artistic careers develop and are constructed. I'm specifically curious about the role of artworks in shaping careers. Therefore I follow the artwork wherever it brings me and map and see what happens in the network of associations between the artwork and the other actors in the artworld (artist, collector, dealer, critic, public, other artworks, places) with a special focus on the artist's career. You're one of the actors with which the artwork has made an association and that is why I'm interested in your experiences with the artwork.

Contact details

Researcher:

Hannelore Van den Abeele, Doctoral Researcher University of Nottingham

Email: Lixhv3@nottingham.ac.uk, Mobile Belgium 0032468151297

Supervisors: Laurie Cohen, Professor Organisational Behaviour University of Nottingham; Gerardo Patriotta, Professor of Management and Organization University of Nottingham

Complaint procedure

If you wish to complain about the way in which the research is being conducted or have any concerns about the research then in the first instance please contact Hannelore Van den Abeele or the supervisors.

Or contact the School's Research Ethics Officer:

Adam Golberg
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Email: adam.golberg@nottingham.ac.uk

Research is taking place on the art works in the current exhibition.

You might be observed as a visitor. If you want more information, or want to opt out, you can ask it at the reception.

Script for public
'Shadowing Art Works. The "making-of" of the artistic career'

In my doctoral research I aim to understand how artistic careers develop and are constructed. I'm specifically curious about the role of artworks in shaping careers. Therefore I follow the artwork wherever it brings me and map and see what happens in the network of associations between the artwork and the other actors in the artworld (artist, collector, dealer, critic, public, other artworks, places) with a special focus on the artist's career. You're one of the actors with which the artwork has made an association and that is why I want to talk about your experiences with the artwork.

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